

The Newsletter of Virginia's Circuit Court Records Preservation Program ■ No. 16 ■ Fall 2024

CCRP NEWS



LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA



CCRP NEWS

No. 16 ■ Fall 2024

This newsletter is published twice a year to keep circuit court clerks informed about the court records preservation program for the Commonwealth of Virginia. Reader participation is invited.

LIBRARIAN OF VIRGINIA
Dennis T. Clark

STATE ARCHIVIST & DIRECTOR OF
GOVERNMENT RECORDS SERVICES
Greg Crawford
gregory.crawford@lva.virginia.gov
804.692.3505

LOCAL RECORDS SERVICES PROGRAM MANAGER
Vincent Brooks
vincent.brooks@lva.virginia.gov
804.692.3525

SENIOR LOCAL RECORDS ARCHIVIST
Tracy Harter
tracy.harter@lva.virginia.gov
804.692.3639

SENIOR LOCAL RECORDS ARCHIVIST
Eddie Woodward
eddie.woodward@lva.virginia.gov
804.692.3650

CONSERVATOR
Leslie Courtois
leslie.courtois@lva.virginia.gov
804.692.3511

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
Michelle Washington
michelle.washington@lva.virginia.gov
804.692.3605

GRAPHIC DESIGNER
Christine Sisc

COPY EDITOR
Ann Henderson


LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA
LOCAL RECORDS SERVICES
800 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219
804.692.3505
804.692.2277 fax
www.lva.virginia.gov



CONTENTS

Conservation: Broken Post Binders	3
Connis Brown's Surveys of the Central Western Virginia Circuit Court Clerks' Offices	6
Preventive Conservation: The Importance of Proper Environmental Conditions	11
The Circuit Court Records Preservation Program Annual Report	14
Virginia Circuit Court Records Preservation Grant Program FY2024 Grant Cycle Awards	18

Above: Virginia state archivist Connis Brown, Roanoke County circuit court clerk Elizabeth Stokes and Virginia state Senator David Thornton in the circuit court clerk's vault in the Roanoke County Courthouse, in Salem, July 15, 1971. (Papers Related to County Records Survey, ca. 1970, Library of Virginia.)

Cover images: Top row, left to right: Pulaski County Courthouse, May 9, 2022; Floyd County Courthouse, August 23, 2023; Downtown Pearisburg across the street from the Giles County Courthouse, August 22, 2023. Second row from top, left to right: Franklin County Courthouse, August 24, 2023; Montgomery County Courthouse, August 9, 2021; Bedford County Courthouse, December 5, 2017. Third row from top, left to right: Giles County Courthouse, August 24, 2023; Downtown New Castle across the street from the Craig County Courthouse, December 6, 2017; Carroll County Courthouse, August 10, 2021. Bottom row, left to right: Craig County Courthouse, May 26, 2022; former Roanoke County Courthouse (currently Francis T. West Hall at Salem College), November 13, 2019; the stone archway at the Pulaski County Courthouse, August 26, 2016. (All photos Local Government Records Collection, Library of Virginia.)

Conservation: Broken Post Binders

Broken post binders are not the most glamorous of conservation issues, but they still warrant treatment (or at least hardware replacement). As with broken sewn bindings, broken post binders can result in detached, torn or damaged pages, or worse.

Often, broken post binders are identified by the circuit court clerk staff and brought to the attention of CCRP consulting archivists on their regular visits to clerks' offices. Broken post binders manifest themselves in a number of ways, the most obvious of which is the inability to open, close or fasten the post binder latch. When a volume cannot unlatch, the pages become inaccessible. When a volume will not fully latch, the pages can become loose or detached. And when a volume will not fully fasten at all, it will not retain the pages. An inoperable post binder latch can be the result of overuse, leading to twisting and bending mechanisms, or in some instances it can result from rusted mechanisms, possibly as a consequence of being stored in less-than-optimal environmental conditions. Sometimes the binder actually loses one or all of the posts, resulting in nothing for the pages to be bound to, or nothing for the volume's hinges (attached to the boards and spine) to latch onto. Sometimes the actual latching rod that connects to the posts can become bent, misaligned or can go missing, and in other instances, just as with a

sewn binding, a post binder can have a detached spine. When post bound volumes reach this level of deterioration, it is not uncommon for researchers to be prohibited from using them (or the faulty volumes are removed from the records room altogether).

On the upside, the replacement of a broken or malfunctioning post binder offers an opportunity for basic maintenance and repair to the volume. Lately, CCRP archivists have been using the replacement of post binders to rehabilitate volumes by not only replacing the binder, but also to surface clean, mend and deacidify the pages (when necessary). As with the rebinding of their sewn binding counterparts, this is also usually a good opportunity to treat any attachments, either by removal from the adhesives attaching them to the paper, basic mending, reorienting and/or the use of folded encapsulation (where appropriate). This is also a chance to mend or replace any damaged or lost index tabs if necessary.

A more complicated post binder issue occurs when a sewn bound volume has been converted into a post bound volume by adding small plastic post hole tabs to the signatures. Although little is known about this process, it involved a sewn bound book being completely disbound — with all of the sewing removed — but leaving the signatures intact. The signatures then had three small slits



Left: A portion of the mechanism for Appomattox County Deed Book 17, 1916–1917, has rusted and become detached.

Right: The rings where the rod should latch on Appomattox County Deed Book No. 35, 1935–1936, have become bent and misaligned.

cut lengthwise into and along the signature folds where the small plastic post hole tabs were inserted so that the signatures could be stacked up and post bound. These converted books function essentially like traditional post bound volumes except for the fact that the complete signatures and not each page was formatted for a post binder.

These plastic post hole tabs, which are usually red, tend to go unnoticed until they pull through or break off, loosening or detaching the signatures from the post. If these converted signature/post bound plastic tabs have not broken off yet, it's only a matter of time before they do. As with many conservation treatments, this is another instance of undoing an ill-fated great idea, and the simplest and

easiest solution for treatment is to reverse the process, rebinding the signatures by removing the post hole tabs and sewing them up in a case binding again. As with the broken post binders, this is another opportunity to surface clean and mend as needed before the signatures are rebound in a new binding.

Compared to other conservation issues, post binders might be considered a low priority that usually can wait until other more pressing conservation problems have been taken care of, such as cellulose acetate lamination or tape stripping. However, if pages or signatures are detached and coming out of a post bound volume, conservation, whether post binder replacement or a rebinding, should be a serious consideration. ■



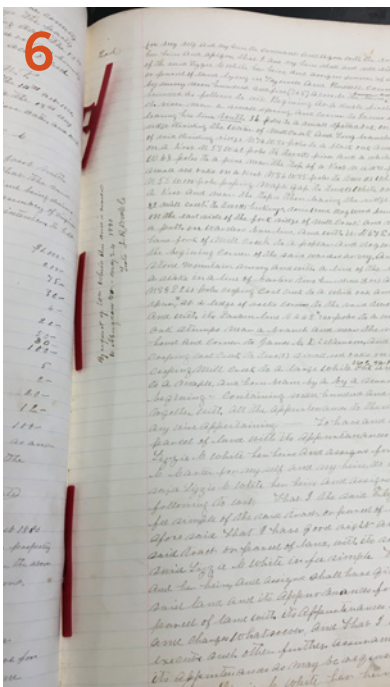
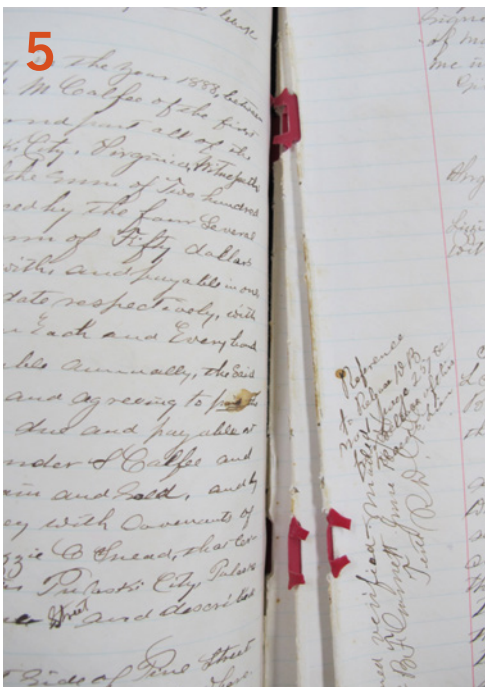
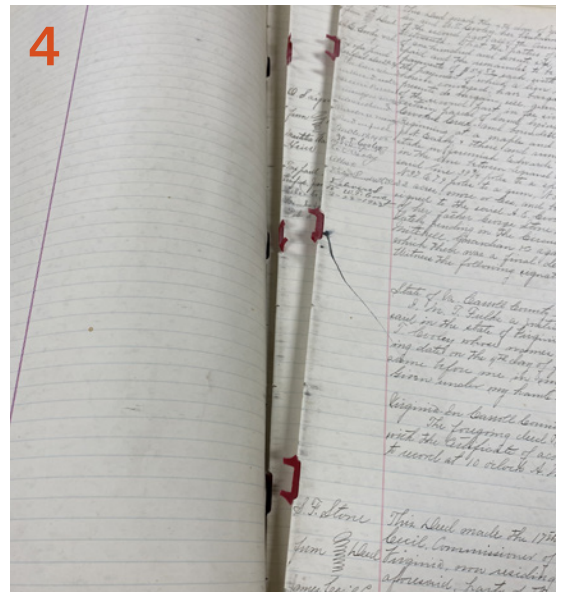
Left: The end of the rod on Dickenson County Chancery Order Book 6, 1921-1926, has broken off, making unlatching it difficult (if not impossible).

Below left: The post binder mechanism for Floyd County Maps of Lands Acquired for Blue Ridge Parkway, Floyd, Va., has rusted out.

Below middle: One of the rings on Pittsylvania County Marriages Vol. 2, 1861-1900, has become mangled, making it impossible for that portion of the hinge to connect to the spine.

Below right: The mechanism for Wise County Book 141, 1920, is rusting out and appears to have lost the post necessary for the pages to be bound.





1. All of the binding mechanisms for one side of Wise County Deed Book 18, 1914, have been lost and the posts appear to be holding the pages in with a custom-formed piece of metal (possibly a hanger).
2. When the plastic post hole tabs are functioning properly, as with Buckingham County Deed Book 14, 1907-1908, the tabs are aligned with the fold in the signature, keeping the signature attached to the post binder.
3. This image of Franklin County Common Law Order Book 9, 1842-1847, shows how the plastic post hole tabs stack the signatures on the posts in the post binders.
4. The plastic post hole tabs on Carroll County Deed Book 23, 1894-1899, have broken and the signatures are detached from the post binder.
5. The plastic post hole tabs on Pulaski County Deed Book 12, 1888-1890, have broken and the signatures are detached from the post binder.
6. A broken post hole tab on Tazewell County Deed Book 17, 1880-1882, is pulling through at the signature.

Connis Brown's Surveys of the Central Western Virginia Circuit Court Clerks' Offices

What could be more enjoyable for an archivist than working in an archival program that has its own unique history? Archivists with the Library of Virginia's Circuit Court Records Preservation Program are in that fortunate situation. While the program has been in existence since the early 1990s, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Library of Virginia can trace their court records preservation efforts back to the Civil War and possibly earlier. Library resources, such as the records of state archivists, state government records, Library publications, the voluminous "Locality Receipt Files," and periodic courthouse inventories and surveys all help to document various aspects of these preservation efforts.

Among the surveys housed at the Library of Virginia are those produced in the early 1970s by Connis Brown, the Virginia State Library and Archives' first local records archivist. Brown traveled across the state interviewing circuit court clerks and surveying the collections and their condition as he lobbied for the establishment of a local records program. Brown's lively, entertaining and descriptive travelogue-style surveys offer a no-holds-barred assessment of the collections; their physical, environmental and storage conditions; and often the personalities of the clerks themselves. The surveys offer a wealth of information and sometimes include rudimentary inventories and hand-drawn diagrams of the layout of the records rooms and/or vaults.

Because of the large number of surveys, sharing them by geographic region might provide a sense of the state of local records preservation prior to the establishment of the Local Records department and, eventually, the Circuit Court Records Preservation Program. CCRP consulting archivist Eddie Woodward, who sometimes works out of Salem, thought that grouping some of localities in that region might be a worthwhile approach for introducing them.

Although Bedford, Carroll, Craig, Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Montgomery,

This photograph of the 1930 Bedford County Courthouse in Bedford was taken in May 1971, two months before Connis Brown's July 16, 1971, inspection of the circuit court clerk's office there. (Visual Studies Collection, Library of Virginia.)

Pulaski and Roanoke counties are not the only localities this central western area, they're the ones that routinely participate in the CCRP grants program and, as a result, are visited by CCRP field archivists.

"I am now in the clerk's record vault in the **Bedford County Courthouse**," begins Brown's narrative of his visit to the Bedford County circuit court clerk's office. The blow-by-blow description, typical of his narrative surveys, continues in the next paragraph: "I am now in the clerk's record room, a large spacious area, certainly one that is one of the better that I have visited since I have been on this survey." He then gives a detailed description of the layout and physical makeup of the 1930 courthouse of "masonry brick, . . . standing on high ground here in Bedford," with specific details regarding the security and environmental conditions of the vault and records room with their "large steel, roll-down windows," and localized air conditioning. With all of the loose records in Woodruff drawers and all of the volumes "in order on the shelves," Brown pronounced the records room as "well done." Additionally, he deemed the clerk, "Mr. Page Scott," competent, and he was impressed by his diligence and candor regarding his records. He bemoaned "the fact that all of his papers showing the original signatures of Thomas Jefferson have disappeared from his files over the years."



Although it has since moved, in 1971, the **Carroll County** circuit court clerk's office was still located in the original 1875 Carroll County Courthouse, the scene of the now infamous 1912 Hillsville shootout. "The courthouse itself is a rambling wooden structure with masonry outside and with asbestos shingle roof, a two-story structure with a bell tower atop," Brown wrote. According to Brown, "the clerk," who remained nameless throughout the narrative, realized that he had "almost no protection from the outside in that he has plain windows with screen wire on them opening into his records room." In other words, no steel shutters as would be found in a traditional fireproof vault setup. In contrast to the Bedford County clerk's office, the archivist was not as impressed with the orderliness of the Carroll County circuit court clerk's office: "The old books are in good shape," however the loose records were an "undetermined quantity," and "difficult to examine because of such a crowded piled condition where the old records exist." A local genealogist that Brown met in the records room acknowledged the "poor storage conditions," and as far as any missing records, or "thievery," the clerk and the genealogist had suspicions regarding a certain likely suspect. The Carroll County circuit court clerk's office moved into a new courthouse a few blocks behind the old historic courthouse in 1998.

When Brown traveled to the **Craig County** Courthouse in New Castle, he proclaimed it, "a typical country, mountain courthouse. The courthouse proper is a two story brick building with four large pillars supporting it," with "white trim, tin roof on the wings to the front. The building gives an appearance of massiveness and is well situated," on the courthouse green. "I am now in the clerk's outside vault, Record Room #1," the archivist wrote, and although it had "a concrete ceiling, concrete floor, thick masonry walls," and was "well maintained and clean," it was "not a true vault in that the windows are protected only by a glass sandwiched over metal screening." The archivist's survey concluded that the records, "are in pretty good shape except for being slightly cluttered in the inner



Above: This photograph of the 1875 Carroll County Courthouse in Hillsville was taken in the 1960s. (Leveque Collection of Virginia Courthouses, Visual Studies Collection, Library of Virginia.)

Left below: This photograph of the 1852 Craig County Courthouse in New Castle was taken in the 1960s. (Visual Studies Collection, Library of Virginia.)

Right below: This photograph of the Craig County circuit court clerk's office vault door was taken by a Circuit Court Records Preservation Program archivist during a visit to the clerk's office on July 20, 2016. (Local Government Records Collection, Library of Virginia.)



1



2



1. This photograph of the 1951 Floyd County Courthouse in Floyd was taken in the 1960s. (Leveque Collection of Virginia Courthouses, Visual Studies Collection, Library of Virginia.)

2. This photograph of a Floyd County circuit court clerk's office vault door was taken by a Circuit Court Records Preservation Program archivist during a visit to the clerk's office November 30, 2018. (Local Government Records Collection, Library of Virginia.)

vault with a number of old papers crammed into open shelving." Brown noted that, "The courthouse is open from 9:00 until 5:00."

When Brown arrived at the **Floyd County** Courthouse, his brief report described the 1951 building as a "three-story red brick structure," of "new modern type construction, masonry, concrete, tile floors." Brown noted that there was, "a clammy, damp feeling within the record room," and in his conversations with the clerk, Margaret H. Harman, he suggested, "that the best thing she could do for her records at this point would be to air condition her record room," which would "certainly affect the longevity of the books." In addition to the current records "stored in the upstairs record room," the archivist had concerns about records in the basement, some "stacked on the floor."

Brown was impressed with the 1910 **Franklin County** Courthouse in Rocky Mount, "a large two-story building with pillars . . . of masonry construction . . . separated from the street by a small courthouse green." The vault, which functioned as the records room, was supposed to be fireproof, however the new clerk, "Mr. Walker," indicated that he doubted "the wisdom of this because it has twenty windows," all closed except for the three with window unit air conditioners. The records, according to Brown, were in good shape, but because of some, "thievery going on," access to loose records had been closed by the clerk. Additionally, the clerk had learned that at some point in the past some of the older volumes had been stolen and had turned up at nearby universities and at the Virginia State Library. As a result, he was under a lot of pressure by local residents to recover the items and "wanted to know the procedure for pursuing this matter." The archivist was impressed by Mr. Walker and noted that he was, "a young clerk and is very anxious to improve the operations of his office."

At the **Giles County** Courthouse in Pearisburg, Brown discovered another fireproof vault with windows. He described the 1836 courthouse as, "a two-story red brick structure painted red. Rather an older courthouse," with a courthouse green. Even with the windows

3



4



3. This photograph of the 1910 Franklin County Courthouse in Rocky Mount was taken in July 1971, two month before Connis Brown's September 20, 1971, inspection of the circuit court clerk's office there. (Visual Studies Collection, Library of Virginia.)

4. This photograph of the 1836 Giles County Courthouse in Pearisburg was taken by a Circuit Court Records Preservation Program archivist during a visit to the clerk's office on July 14, 2021. (Local Government Records Collection, Library of Virginia.)

and no shutters, the archivist considered the records in the vault to be, “as well protected as or better so than most offices” he had visited. While Brown mentioned the “basement storage area,” he did not elaborate on the environmental conditions there. The archivist thought that all of the records appeared to be there and were “well kept,” and probably in “better shape than in many” other clerks’ offices he had surveyed. On the day of his visit, the clerk, “Mr. O. G. Caldwell” was out, so Brown met with his deputy clerk, “Mr. B. D. Shelden,” who had worked in the office since the end of World War II, when he was hired by the previous clerk, who also happened to be his father. When his father died, “the judge refused to appoint the deputy to fill out his father’s unexpired term,” and according to Brown, the deputy was still unhappy about the situation.

The 1836 **Montgomery County** Courthouse that Brown visited in Christiansburg (remodeled in 1909) was demolished a few years after his survey. Brown described it as a “3-floor structure of concrete with brick and stone above,” located in a “typical village town situation.” According to the archivist, the bygone courthouse had a proper fireproof vault, “constructed in 1901, remodeled in 1950,” and the records there were as secure “as in most counties.” The bulk of the records were stored in the clerk’s office except “a few of the older county court papers,” which were “stored in the basement.” The clerk, “Mr. John Myers,” who had “been clerk only 4 years,” was, according to Brown, “not one of the more knowledgeable clerks”

he had encountered during his travels across Virginia. However, Brown thought that the clerk was “making very effective use of the space” that he had in the rather “crowded office.” After the 1836 courthouse was razed, the Montgomery County circuit court clerk’s office moved into a new courthouse in 1976 and then into the current courthouse in 2012.

When Brown arrived at the **Pulaski County** circuit court clerk’s office, he made mention of the courthouse, which was divided into two sections: the old, iconic 1896 rough-cut limestone courthouse and the newer, ca. 1958 two story “modern brick concrete structure,” in which the clerk’s office was (and is) housed. In assessing yet another vault with glass windows, Brown noted that at least it was “protected by steel bars over the windows and thick glass.” He recorded that the volumes were in “good shape,” and everything appeared to be in order. However, Brown shared that while he was trying to interview him, the clerk was occupied “a good part of the time” talking to two “ladies that came in concerning some mountain land that” was being cut for “timber that had been apparently the property of the father of one of the ladies.” The father “had signed the deed selling the property but had died before the deed was recorded, and had never signed the deed actually, only had the name typed in and deceased written above it,” and on and on. This was Brown’s way of saying that, as a result of the clerk’s preoccupation with the women, he “was unable to make any extended discussion



This photograph of the 1836 Montgomery County Courthouse (remodeled in 1909) in Christiansburg was taken in the 1960s. The courthouse moved into a new building in 1976 and then into its current location in 2012. Sometime along the way the old 1836 courthouse was demolished. (Leveque Collection of Virginia Courthouses, Visual Studies Collection, Library of Virginia.)



This photograph of the current 1958 Pulaski County Courthouse in Pulaski was taken in the 1960s. (Leveque Collection of Virginia Courthouses, Visual Studies Collection, Library of Virginia.)

1



2



3



with the clerk.” The archivist was not as impressed with the clerk as he would have liked (although for all intents and purposes, Brown believed that the clerk supported the establishment of the local records program).

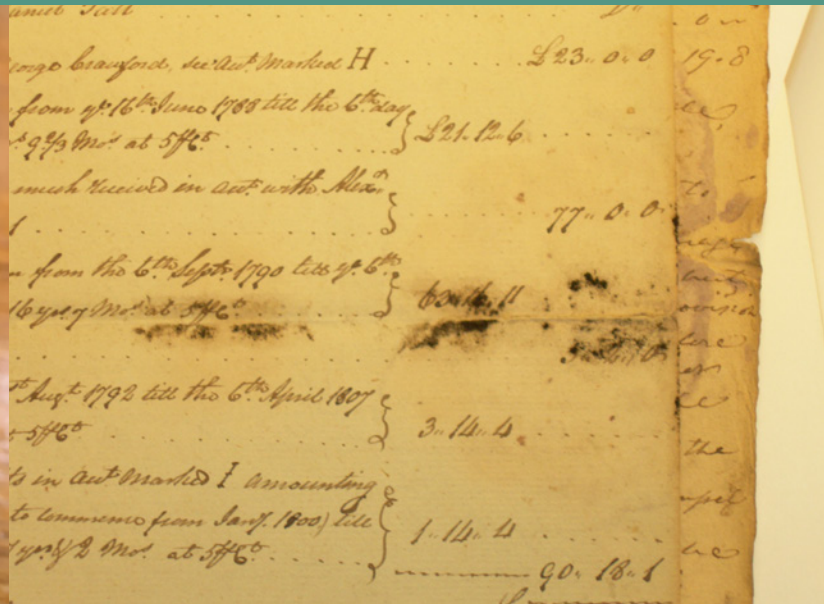
The **Roanoke County** circuit court clerk’s office that Brown visited in Salem would remain in the historic 1910 Roanoke County Courthouse until 1985, when it moved to a new facility next door. The “three story brick structure with apparently a full basement,” that “stands at the center of Town,” on Main Street, would eventually become a part of Salem College, which was “across the road” behind it. Brown noted that, “the courthouse is not fireproof although the clerk’s vault is described as fireproof.” He later acknowledged that there was a true fireproof vault in the basement, however, the records stored there, “could just as well be destroyed in most cases.” The records room was “lined with roller shelving and the main part of the room is filled with counter top roller shelving. There are few vacant roller shelves left,” and “most of the document files are completely filled.” While the clerk, “Miss Elizabeth Stokes,” appeared to be fairly new in the position, Brown thought very highly of her. The archivist noted that she had recently recovered Plat Book No. 1, 1879–1923, and some other records that were being stored at the offices of the school board. In another instance, after she learned that records had been removed before she took office, through “several months of negotiation and threats,” she was able to have the missing records returned. Not surprisingly, Brown noted, “She is sympathetic to our cause as far as the preservation of the old records,” and “is well aware of the historical value of the records.” In summary, the archivist concluded, “the records here are well maintained.” “I am impressed with Miss Stokes.” ■

1. The 1896 Pulaski County Courthouse was destroyed by a fire on December 29, 1989. It was rebuilt and reopened in 1992 and today houses county offices and a county history museum. The Pulaski County circuit court clerk’s office is located in a 1958 courthouse building directly behind. (Visual Studies Collection, Library of Virginia.)

2. This photograph of the Pulaski County circuit court clerk’s office records room was taken by a Circuit Court Records Preservation Program archivist during a visit to the clerk’s office on July 12, 2021. (Local Government Records Collection, Library of Virginia.)

3. This photograph of the 1910 Roanoke County Courthouse in Salem was taken on June 23, 1969. The courthouse moved into a new building in 1985 and the former courthouse is now a part of Salem College. (Visual Studies Collection, Library of Virginia.)

Preventive Conservation: The Importance of Proper Environmental Conditions



By Leslie Courtois, Library of Virginia Conservator, and Greg Crawford, Virginia State Archivist

The primary purpose of the Circuit Court Records Preservation Program is the preservation of local circuit court records that have historical, genealogical and administrative value. A definition of preservation is the activity or process of keeping something intact or free from damage or decay. Preservation of historic records can be done through conservation work, such as heat set mending, tape removal, delamination, rebinds, etc. Damage done to the records is repaired, allowing the records to be preserved for years to come. Preservation can also be done through reformatting, previously to microfilm and now to digital format. Reformatting results in less public access to the original records, or preferably none, thereby ensuring that they remain intact or not damaged.

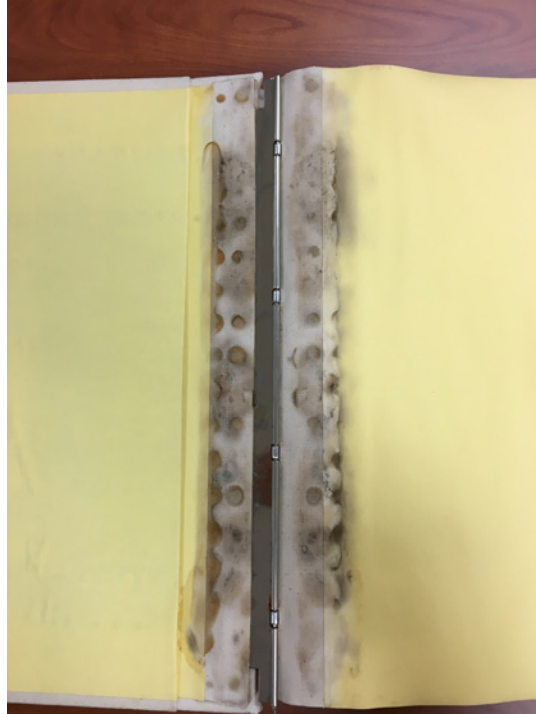
The most critical form of preservation is proper control of environmental conditions. Proper environmental conditions are produced by constantly maintaining appropriate temperature and humidity in areas where records are stored. Heat and humidity pose a tremendous threat to records preservation. High heat can remove moisture found in paper records, making them extremely brittle. High humidity provides the moisture necessary to create harmful chemical reactions in materials.

Fluctuations in temperature and humidity are damaging. Pre-20th-century records readily absorb and release moisture. They respond to changes in temperature and humidity by expanding and contracting. Constant changes in temperature and humidity accelerate deterioration and lead to visible damage such as cockling paper, flaking ink and warped book covers.

The greatest threat to archival records caused by improper environmental conditions is mold. High humidity in combination with high temperature encourages mold growth and insect activity. Should humidity exceed 70% for a lengthy period, mold growth can occur within 24–48 hours. The source of the mold is found in the records. Due to centuries of poor storage conditions, mold spores embedded themselves in the volumes and papers stored in clerks' offices. Mold remains in a state of hibernation until poor environmental conditions "wake it up" and it starts to spread.

Over the last ten years, circuit court clerks around the Commonwealth have contacted CCRP staff about mold outbreaks on the covers of volumes. CCRP consulting archivists examining records for potential





item conservation grants have identified mold on volume covers and inside volumes. Some of the volumes identified had been recently conserved through CCRP grant funding. The mold outbreaks had nothing to do with the age of the courthouse. One of them occurred in a recently built courthouse.

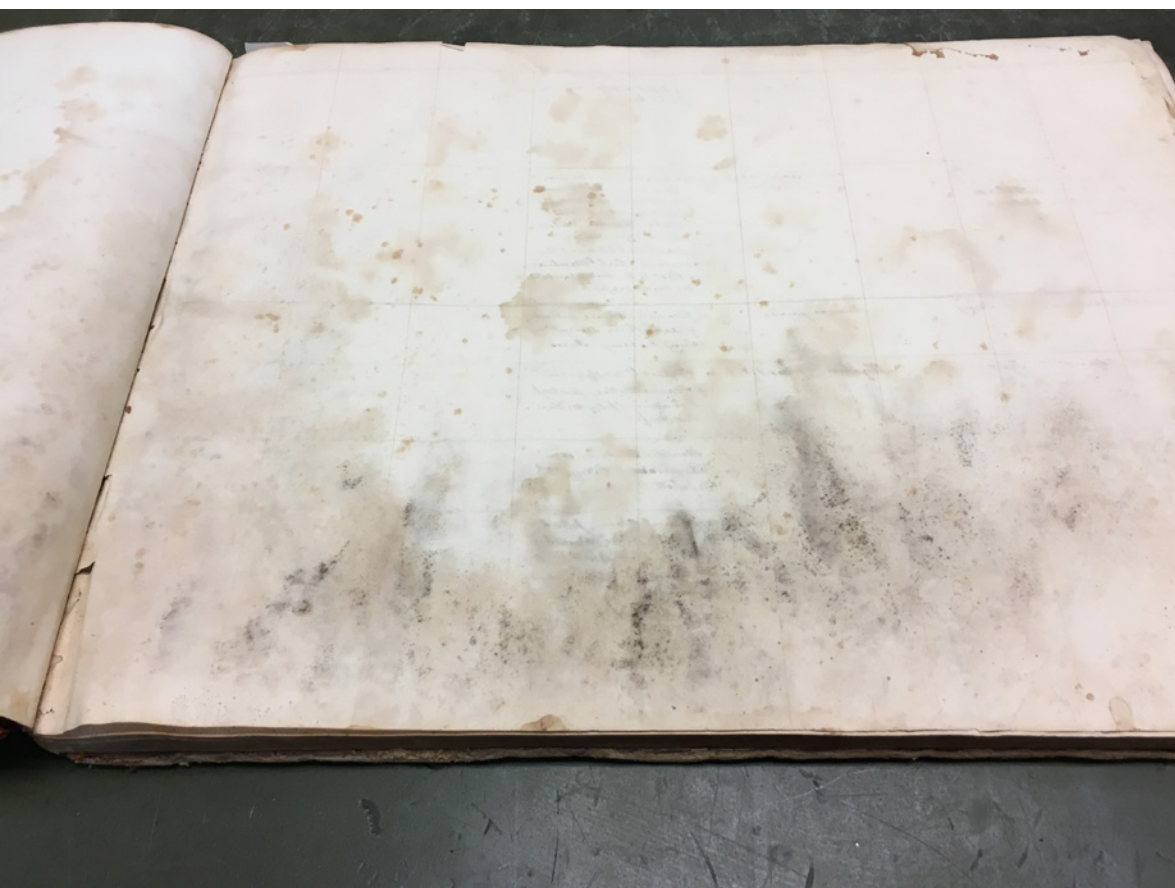
Ensuring proper environmental conditions can help to impede records deterioration considerably. Recommendations are a stable temperature no higher than 70°F and a stable relative humidity between a minimum of 30% and a maximum of 50%. Humidity levels

closer to 30% are preferable, since deterioration then progresses at a slower rate. In general, the lower the temperature the better. HVAC system temperature and humidity in records rooms should be adjusted if they are not within the recommended ranges.

More importantly, temperature and humidity should be maintained within the recommended ranges 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The climate-control system should never be turned off, and settings should not be adjusted at night, on weekends or at other times when the office is closed. Temperature and relative humidity should continue

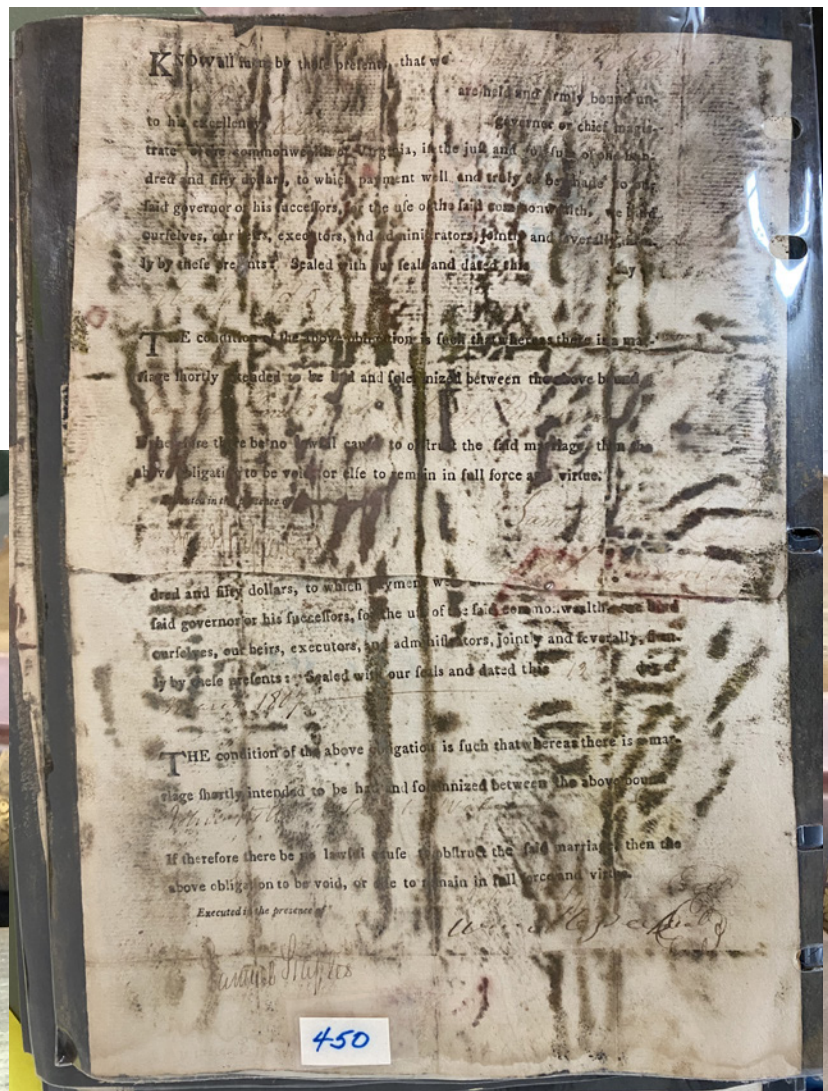
to be regularly measured and recorded to ensure the climate-control equipment is operating properly and producing the desired conditions. Remember that changing one factor may alter others. The importance of continuous monitoring of environmental conditions cannot be stressed too much.

It is strongly recommended that a digital indoor thermometer and humidity monitor that will provide regular updates on the high and low humidity/temperature be purchased, allowing for the comparison of current readings to those of the past. One monitor should be placed in each room where archival records are stored. Should the measurements be consistently outside the recommended range, this information can be provided



to those responsible for the HVAC system, so that they can make the necessary adjustments.

Staff might complain about the temperature being too cold in the office, and there might be pushback about the financial cost to ensure consistent environmental conditions. Should assistance be needed, please feel free to contact your CCRP consulting archivist to help inform the staff, public and/or Board of Supervisors on the importance of proper environmental conditions. ■



THE CIRCUIT COURT RECORDS PRESERVATION PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT

GRANTS CONSULTING PROGRAM

During FY 2024, CCRP consulting staff members conducted 73 site visits. They examined 887 items and 12.65 cu. ft. of loose records, and created 385 condition reports for Item Conservation grant candidates. They also examined 1,224 items post-conservation at the vendor to verify that work was performed correctly.

The Circuit Court Records Preservation Grants Review Board met on February 13, 2024, to consider 124 applications submitted from 102 localities totaling \$3,470,913.62. The grant review board evaluated and discussed all the applications and awarded 122 grant projects for \$3,204,869.62 in the following categories: Item Conservation, Reformatting/Indexing and Equipment/Storage.

IN-HOUSE RECORDS PROGRAM

Work continues to reduce the backlog of unprocessed circuit court records collections housed at the Library with a concentration on records series having a high research value covering a wide geographic area. Staff members continue to flat-file, folder, index,

conserve and re-box materials, incorporating in-depth arrangement and description of court records of higher-research potential. The collections are made more accessible to the public with the creation of catalog records and electronic finding aids. The professional staff continue to process and index chancery records as well as processing other important loose papers having high research value. In addition, indexed chancery records data (names, cause of action, topics, etc.) is entered into the Chancery Indexing Processing System (CHIPS), the data entry system used by Library staff. CHIPS allows for uniform searching of records by the public and staff through the web-based Chancery Records Index.

The Local Records processing staff were also assigned digital chancery collections found on the Chancery Records Index to ensure indexing met current standards. There was particular emphasis placed on identifying and indexing names of enslaved people not currently found on the Chancery Records Index. The processing staff were also assigned with transcribing and approving transcriptions of circuit court records found on the Library's crowdsourcing platform, [From the Page](#). Once approved, the transcribed records will be added to the [Virginia Untold: the African American Narrative](#) website.

STATISTICS FOR JULY 1, 2023–JUNE 30, 2024

Cubic footage examined	152.44
Cubic footage processed	124.42
Chancery causes indexed and entered	3,164
Chancery causes edited	2,729
Enslaved names indexed	1,343
Items mended	6,824
EAD (Encoded Archival Description) records created	89
EAD (Encoded Archival Description) records edited	337
ALMA (LVA catalog) records created	91
ALMA (LVA catalog) records edited	355
Database edits (Infolinx, digital projects, etc.)	4,463
Database entries (Infolinx, digital projects, etc.)	12,223
Cubic footage accessioned	159.50
Items/volumes accessioned	172
Cubic footage deaccessioned	229.75
Items/volumes deaccessioned	4
Transcription pages approved – Circuit Court records	7,140
Transcription pages transcribed – Circuit Court records	1,293
Chancery Records Index total sessions	89,684

Chancery Records Index clicks	1,589,050
Chancery Records Index search total page views	614,504
Chancery Records Index new users	30,105
Total indexes available on the CRI	106
Digital chancery images scanned	368,197
Total images available on the Chancery Records Index	13,188,049

Digital images were added to Chancery Records Index for: Accomack Co., Albemarle Co., Alleghany Co., Amherst Co., Augusta Co., Brunswick Co., Clarke Co., Dickenson Co., Giles Co., Greenville Co., Henry Co., Lancaster Co., Nottoway Co., Powhatan Co., Prince William Co., Rappahannock Co., Roanoke Co., Rockingham Co., Scott Co., Smyth Co. and Wythe Co.

Most-viewed localities on Chancery Records Index:

1. Albemarle County – 9,905 views
2. Augusta County – 9,443 views
3. Halifax County – 9,307 views
4. Loudoun County – 7,525 views
5. Bedford County – 7,453 views

Most-viewed individual chancery causes:

1. Amelia County: 1832-019 John Martin, etc. vs. Admr of Joshua Rucker by – 610 views
2. Scott County: 1856-015 Charles W Bickley, Trst, etc. vs. William Richmond, etc. – 158 views
3. Montgomery County: 1803-010 James Payne vs. David McComas, etc. – 131 views
4. Nansemond County: 1878-001 Sylvester Wright &c by etc. vs. Sarah C. I. Q. Wright, infant, etc. – 119 views
5. Russell County: 1900-011 Henderson Compton, etc. vs. H M McGlothlin, etc. – 104 views

The following localities have been subjects of archival work this year:

- Bath County chancery causes – digital indexing
- Bedford County coroners' inquisitions – indexing
- Bristol (City) coroners' inquisitions – processing
- Brunswick County naturalization records – indexing, descriptive access
- Chesterfield County chancery causes – processing, indexing, mending
- Chesterfield County naturalization records – descriptive access
- Cumberland County military and pension records – descriptive access
- Cumberland County naturalization records – indexing
- Danville (City) Civil Rights case files – descriptive access
- Elizabeth City County naturalization records – indexing
- Fauquier County naturalization records – indexing
- Frederick County chancery causes – processing, indexing, mending
- Frederick County military and pension records – descriptive access
- Frederick County naturalization records – indexing
- Giles County chancery causes – processing, indexing, mending
- Giles County naturalization records – indexing
- Gloucester County naturalization records – indexing
- Greenville County military and pension records – descriptive access
- Henrico County chancery causes – processing, indexing, mending
- Henrico County naturalization records – indexing, descriptive access
- Isle of Wight County naturalization records – indexing
- Lancaster County naturalization records – indexing
- Lunenburg County naturalization records – indexing
- Lynchburg (City) deeds – processing, indexing, mending
- Lynchburg (City) naturalization records – scanning, indexing, descriptive access
- Madison County naturalization records – indexing
- New Kent County naturalization records – indexing
- Newport News (City) chancery causes – processing, indexing, and mending
- Norfolk County naturalization records – descriptive access
- Northumberland County military and pension records – indexing
- Orange County military and pension records – descriptive access
- Page County coroners' inquisitions – indexing
- Petersburg (City) naturalization records – indexing, descriptive access
- Pittsylvania County business records – descriptive access
- Pittsylvania County naturalization records – indexing
- Portsmouth (City) naturalization records – descriptive access
- Powhatan County business records – descriptive access
- Powhatan County naturalization records – indexing
- Prince Edward County business records – descriptive access
- Prince George County naturalization records – indexing
- Princess Anne County naturalization records – indexing
- Accomack County coroners' inquisitions – indexing
- Albemarle County coroners' inquisitions – indexing
- Albemarle County naturalization records – indexing
- Alexandria (City) coroners' inquisitions – processing, indexing
- Alleghany County chancery causes – processing, indexing, mending
- Amelia County apprenticeship indentures – processing, indexing, scanning
- Amelia County certificates of importation – processing, indexing, scanning
- Amelia County deeds – processing, indexing, mending, scanning
- Amelia County coroners' inquisitions – processing, indexing, descriptive access
- Amherst County court papers – minimal processing
- Amherst County coroners' inquisitions – processing
- Amherst County apprenticeship indentures – processing, indexing, scanning
- Amherst County certificates of importation – processing, indexing, scanning
- Amherst County deeds – processing, indexing, mending, scanning
- Arlington County coroners' inquisitions – indexing
- Arlington County naturalization records – indexing

- Radford (City) – processing, indexing, mending
- Richmond (City) Bureau of Permits and Inspections – descriptive access
- Richmond (City) chancery causes – processing, indexing, mending
- Richmond (City) naturalization records – descriptive access
- Richmond County chancery causes – digital indexing
- Roanoke County naturalization records – indexing
- Rockbridge County naturalization records – indexing
- Rockingham County coroners' inquisitions – processing, indexing
- Rockingham County naturalization records – descriptive access
- Southampton County naturalization records – indexing
- Tazewell County naturalization records – indexing
- Westmoreland County naturalization records – indexing
- Wythe County naturalization records – descriptive access

VIRGINIA UNTOLD PROJECT

[Virginia Untold: the African American Narrative](#) provides digital access to records that document some of the lived experiences of enslaved and free Black and multiracial people in the Library of Virginia's collections. Traditional description, indexing, transcription and digitization are major parts of this effort. However, and perhaps more importantly, this project seeks to encourage conversation and engagement around the records, providing opportunities for a more diverse narrative of the history of Virginia's communities. The site currently has 23,000 records from 25 record types. The vast majority of the records are local court records.

We continue to collaborate with circuit courts to scan "Free Negro Registers" stored in their records rooms. Currently, 77 "Free Negro Registers" from 42 Virginia localities are now available through Virginia Untold. Many of the registers available through Virginia Untold include fully searchable indexes thanks to the work of volunteers and Library of Virginia staff members who have contributed to their crowdsourced indexing on the [From the Page](#) site.

MEDIA INVENTORY

The Imaging Services Branch continues to provide limited services to Virginia's localities, such as providing photo prints of missing pages, inspecting microfilm and digital images, retrieving microforms upon request, and delivering microfilm to our vendor for duplication. Imaging Services continues to maintain media in security storage by inspecting it for content and deterioration, replacing deteriorating film and describing all media in our internal content management system, Infolinx.

Imaging Services processed 56 requests from 19 circuit court clerks' offices to replace a total of 163 pages of missing records in their offices using security film housed at the Library of Virginia's State Records Center. Two circuit court clerks made requests for film to be sent to vendors for scanning, totaling 58 reels.

Imaging Services received, inspected, entered and stored 164 new reels of security microfilm from circuit court clerks' offices. Imaging

Services continues to store and swap media tape backups from circuit court clerks' offices compiled by the Supreme Court of Virginia.

Imaging Services inspected 5,069 reels of older film for deterioration as well as content in an effort to improve metadata for nearly 375,000 pieces of media in security storage for the Infolinx database. Imaging Services sent 8,983 reels to Backstage Library Works for duplication as part of the replacement project for deteriorating microfilm. Backstage Library Works duplicated and returned 5,779 reels as part of the replacement project for deteriorating microfilm.

CONCLUSION

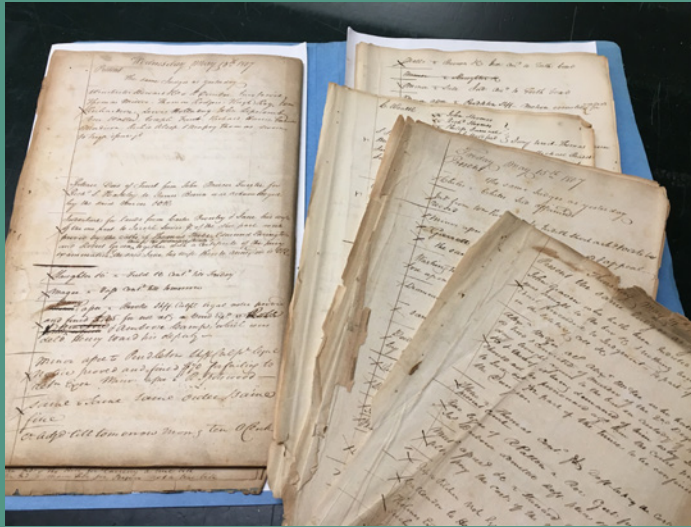
The CCRP program continues to work toward the preservation and access of historical circuit court records stored at the Library of Virginia and at circuit court clerks' offices around the Commonwealth. Previously unprocessed chancery causes are now accessible online to the circuit court clerks and the public. Circuit court clerks and the public have expressed their gratitude to the Library of Virginia through emails and social media for making this possible. Staff also identified, processed, cataloged and promoted through blogs and social media other record types of historical significance such as coroners' inquisitions and naturalization records. The circuit court records continue to be a rich resource for records added to the Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative Digital Collection. Thousands of circuit court records that contain the history and narratives of thousands of enslaved people and free people of color such as freedom suits, deeds of emancipation, and commonwealth causes have been added to Virginia Untold.

The digital chancery indexing project and transcription approval work performed by teleworking staff have made records stored in our collection far more accessible than before. Over 1,300 names of enslaved people have been added to the Chancery Records Index and the transcriptions of over 7,000 pages of circuit court records were approved by Local Records staff.

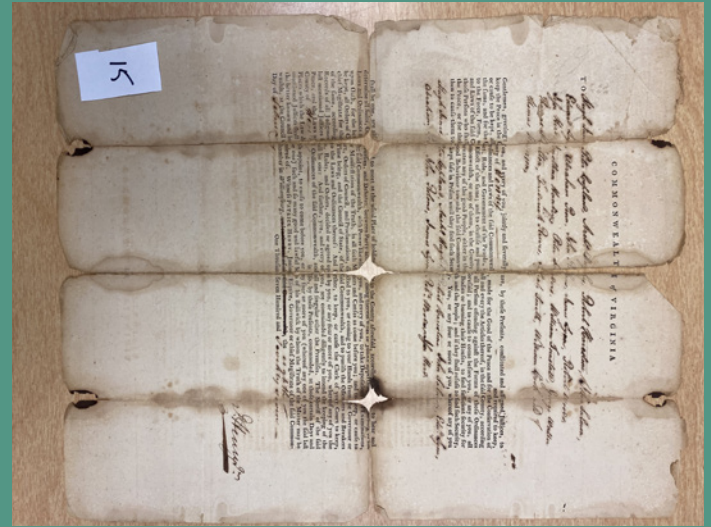
CCRP staff assisted circuit clerks around the Commonwealth with preservation needs in their offices — identifying records for item conservation grants, encouraging proper storage conditions in the records rooms, and ensuring that conservation work was done properly by vendors. Our work in the clerks' offices has encouraged increasing participation in the CCRP grants process. There were a record number of grant applications submitted in FY 2024.

Finally, recordings in circuit courts that fund the CCRP program have been in steep decline since FY 2020. Correspondingly, CCRP revenue has decreased by nearly \$3 million the past four years from \$6.8 million in FY 2020 down to \$3.5 million in FY 2024. The driving force for this decline is the weak housing market. Until there is improvement in the housing market, incoming CCRP revenue will continue to be flat or in decline. Nevertheless, the Library of Virginia will continue to try to balance the needs of the clerks and our patrons with the preservation needs of the records. ■

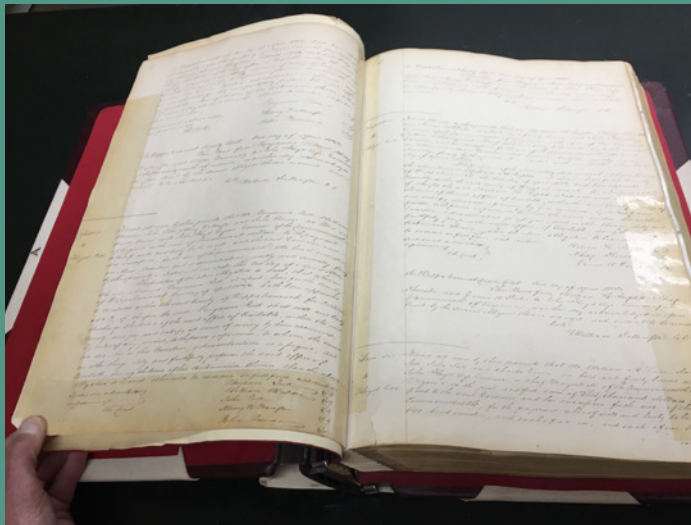
Items for which conservation grants were awarded include:



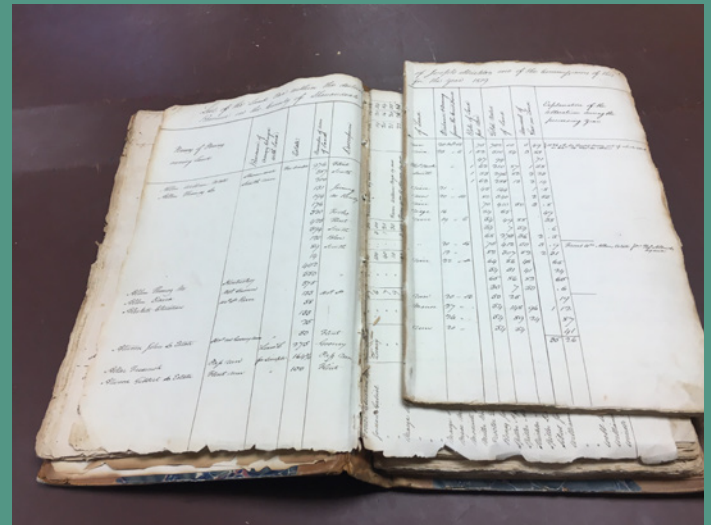
1 – City of Fredericksburg District Court Minute Book, 1806–1808



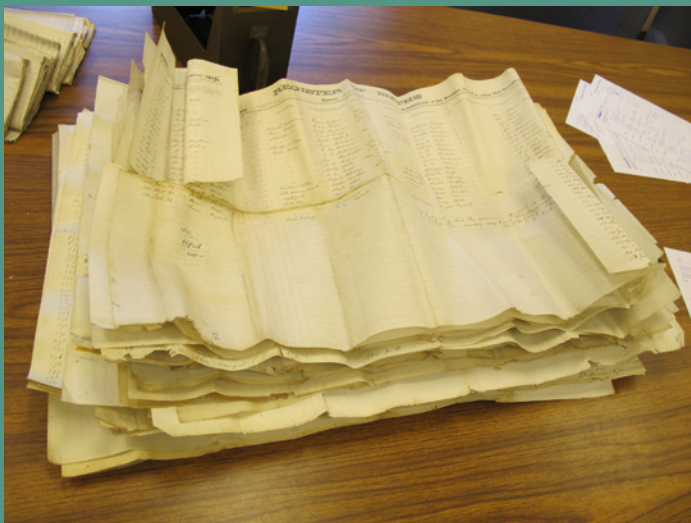
2 – Henry County Justice of the Peace Commission, 1777



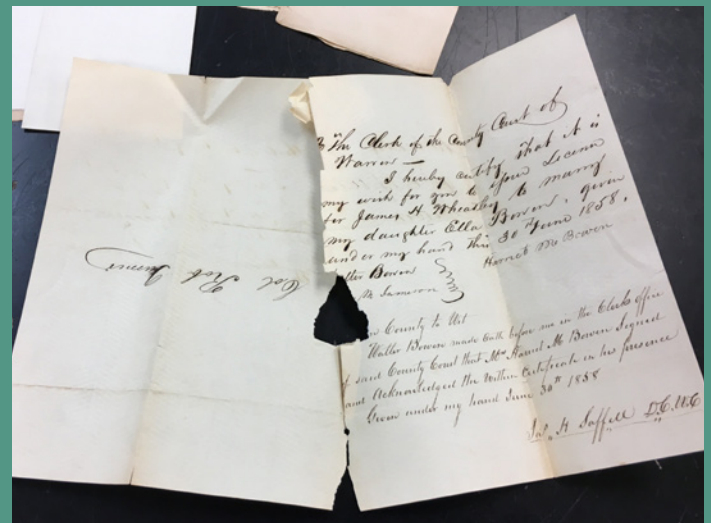
3 – Rappahannock County Deed Book A, 1833–1834



4 – Shenandoah County Land Books, 1818–1824



5 – Smyth County Register of Births, 1865–1883



6 – Warren County Marriage Certificate, 1858

Virginia Circuit Court Records Preservation Grant Program

FY2024 GRANT CYCLE AWARDS

2024FY-082	Accomack County	Item Conservation	\$21,541.00	2024FY-012	King George County	Item Conservation	\$42,912.00
2024FY-113	Accomack County	Reformatting/Indexing	\$29,896.00	2024FY-018	King William County	Reformatting/Indexing	\$8,390.00
2024FY-052	Albemarle County	Item Conservation	\$22,800.00	2024FY-019	King William County	Item Conservation	\$28,136.00
2024FY-029	City of Alexandria	Item Conservation	\$31,386.00	2024FY-040	Lancaster County	Item Conservation	\$32,718.00
2024FY-057	Alleghany County	Item Conservation	\$24,377.00	2024FY-073	Lee County	Item Conservation	\$17,010.00
2024FY-063	Amelia County	Item Conservation	\$21,638.00	2024FY-067	Loudoun County	Item Conservation	\$50,959.00
2024FY-064	Amelia County	Equipment/Storage	\$29,804.00	2024FY-007	Lunenburg County	Item Conservation	\$52,135.00
2024FY-024	Amherst County	Item Conservation	\$28,334.00	2024FY-051	City of Lynchburg	Item Conservation	\$27,326.00
2024FY-068	Appomattox County	Item Conservation	\$15,182.50	2024FY-081	Madison County	Item Conservation	\$27,259.50
2024FY-097	Arlington County	Item Conservation	\$16,680.00	2024FY-010	Mathews County	Reformatting/Indexing	\$29,568.00
2024FY-006	Augusta County	Equipment/Storage	\$434.03	2024FY-105	Mecklenburg County	Item Conservation	\$36,337.00
2024FY-062	Augusta County	Item Conservation	\$51,634.00	2024FY-111	Middlesex County	Item Conservation	\$18,533.50
2024FY-036	Bath County	Item Conservation	\$24,690.00	2024FY-110	Middlesex County	Reformatting/Indexing	\$29,886.00
2024FY-003	Bedford County	Item Conservation	\$28,945.00	2024FY-048	Montgomery County	Item Conservation	\$2,192.00
2024FY-055	Bland County	Item Conservation	\$12,862.00	2024FY-047	Montgomery County	Item Conservation	\$26,515.00
2024FY-066	Botetourt County	Item Conservation	\$42,310.50	2024FY-114	Nelson County	Item Conservation	\$4,718.00
2024FY-060	Brunswick County	Equipment/Storage	\$10,977.00	2024FY-115	Nelson County	Item Conservation	\$10,310.00
2024FY-104	Brunswick County	Item Conservation	\$32,978.00	2024FY-059	New Kent County	Equipment/Storage	\$12,313.00
2024FY-043	Buckingham County	Equipment/Storage	\$26,062.00	2024FY-028	City of Newport News	Item Conservation	\$17,100.00
2024FY-015	City of Buena Vista	Reformatting/Indexing	\$25,575.00	2024FY-020	Northampton County	Reformatting/Indexing	\$29,745.00
2024FY-098	Campbell County	Item Conservation	\$42,264.00	2024FY-008	Northumberland County	Item Conservation	\$28,154.50
2024FY-122	Caroline County	Item Conservation	\$55,182.00	2024FY-085	Nottoway County	Item Conservation	\$35,097.50
2024FY-123	Carroll County	Item Conservation	\$15,422.00	2024FY-046	Page County	Item Conservation	\$11,948.00
2024FY-014	Charles City County	Item Conservation	\$22,809.00	2024FY-033	Patrick County	Item Conservation	\$42,397.00
2024FY-080	Charlotte County	Item Conservation	\$30,522.00	2024FY-119	City of Petersburg	Item Conservation	\$49,048.00
2024FY-121	City of Charlottesville	Item Conservation	\$21,458.00	2024FY-031	Pittsylvania County	Item Conservation	\$32,467.00
2024FY-022	City of Chesapeake City	Item Conservation	\$29,490.50	2024FY-095	Powhatan County	Item Conservation	\$39,446.50
2024FY-056	Chesterfield County	Item Conservation	\$17,986.00	2024FY-038	Prince Edward County	Reformatting/Indexing	\$29,990.00
2024FY-050	Clarke County	Item Conservation	\$29,840.00	2024FY-002	Prince George County	Reformatting/Indexing	\$29,879.09
2024FY-001	Craig County	Item Conservation	\$19,407.50	2024FY-044	Prince William County	Item Conservation	\$22,535.00
2024FY-035	Culpeper County	Item Conservation	\$21,381.50	2024FY-045	Prince William County	Equipment/Storage	\$30,000.00
2024FY-032	Cumberland County	Item Conservation	\$52,352.00	2024FY-074	Pulaski County	Item Conservation	\$36,732.00
2024FY-109	City of Danville	Item Conservation	\$32,285.00	2024FY-089	Rappahannock County	Reformatting/Indexing	\$9,720.00
2024FY-009	Dinwiddie County	Item Conservation	\$44,136.00	2024FY-090	Rappahannock County	Item Conservation	\$12,276.00
2024FY-034	Essex County	Reformatting/Indexing	\$29,800.00	2024FY-103	City of Richmond	Item Conservation	\$41,013.00
2024FY-030	Fairfax County	Item Conservation	\$21,269.50	2024FY-099	Richmond County	Equipment/Storage	\$10,980.00
2024FY-017	Fauquier County	Item Conservation	\$28,240.00	2024FY-100	Richmond County	Item Conservation	\$27,616.00
2024FY-094	Floyd County	Equipment/Storage	\$5,591.00	2024FY-065	Roanoke County	Item Conservation	\$17,597.50
2024FY-093	Floyd County	Item Conservation	\$29,447.00	2024FY-016	Rockbridge County	Reformatting/Indexing	\$23,950.00
2024FY-117	Fluvanna County	Item Conservation	\$46,394.50	2024FY-084	Rockingham County	Item Conservation	\$21,446.00
2024FY-101	Franklin County	Item Conservation	\$32,010.00	2024FY-083	Rockingham County	Reformatting/Indexing	\$29,975.00
2024FY-037	City of Fredericksburg	Reformatting/Indexing	\$10,977.00	2024FY-096	Scott County	Item Conservation	\$27,956.00
2024FY-039	City of Fredericksburg	Item Conservation	\$16,730.00	2024FY-116	Shenandoah County	Item Conservation	\$26,823.00
2024FY-053	Giles County	Item Conservation	\$23,622.00	2024FY-091	Smyth County	Item Conservation	\$7,619.00
2024FY-021	Goochland County	Item Conservation	\$27,576.50	2024FY-088	Smyth County	Item Conservation	\$12,109.00
2024FY-049	Grayson County	Item Conservation	\$29,975.00	2024FY-092	Smyth County	Reformatting/Indexing	\$25,800.00
2024FY-071	Greene County	Item Conservation	\$26,188.50	2024FY-078	Southampton County	Item Conservation	\$33,877.50
2024FY-072	Greene County	Reformatting/Indexing	\$29,950.00	2024FY-087	Spotsylvania County	Item Conservation	\$49,987.00
2024FY-025	Greensville County	Item Conservation	\$21,565.00	2024FY-102	City of Staunton	Item Conservation	\$25,510.50
2024FY-106	Halifax County	Item Conservation	\$29,886.00	2024FY-086	City of Suffolk	Item Conservation	\$24,019.50
2024FY-108	Hanover County	Item Conservation	\$7,062.00	2024FY-118	Surry County	Item Conservation	\$47,304.00
2024FY-107	Hanover County	Item Conservation	\$11,453.00	2024FY-124	Sussex County	Item Conservation	\$25,118.00
2024FY-120	Henrico County	Item Conservation	\$32,796.00	2024FY-026	Tazewell County	Item Conservation	\$23,486.00
2024FY-076	Henry County	Item Conservation	\$5,264.00	2024FY-058	City of Virginia Beach	Item Conservation	\$47,715.00
2024FY-077	Henry County	Equipment/Storage	\$11,093.00	2024FY-054	Warren County	Item Conservation	\$35,156.00
2024FY-075	Henry County	Item Conservation	\$18,869.00	2024FY-041	Westmoreland County	Item Conservation	\$44,490.00
2024FY-069	Highland County	Reformatting/Indexing	\$9,420.00	2024FY-023	Williamsburg/James City County	Item Conservation	\$7,974.00
2024FY-070	City of Hopewell	Reformatting/Indexing	\$27,540.00	2024FY-027	City of Winchester	Reformatting/Indexing	\$28,200.00
2024FY-004	Isle of Wight County	Item Conservation	\$40,774.00	2024FY-079	Wise County	Item Conservation	\$22,536.00
2024FY-013	King and Queen County	Item Conservation	\$10,742.50	2024FY-005	Wythe County	Item Conservation	\$30,998.00
2024FY-011	King George County	Equipment/Storage	\$7,047.00	2024FY-061	York County/City of Poquoson	Item Conservation	\$47,441.00