

**Annual Report
to the Joint Standing Committee on Government
Administration on the Preservation Activities of the
Connecticut State Library**



HISTORIC DOCUMENTS PRESERVATION PROGRAM

2011 ANNUAL REPORT



Connecticut State Library
Hartford, Connecticut
September 1, 2011

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Front Cover

Two volumes of Simsbury Probate Court records and the index; Compact shelving holding newly accessioned Probate Court records; Vols. A-C of the New London Probate District, 1675-1724. (Staff photographs: Connecticut State Library, 2011)

**Annual Report to the
Joint Standing Committee on Government Administration
on the Preservation Activities of the
Connecticut State Library
with its Portion of the Historical Documents Preservation Fund**

I. Preservation and Management of CSL Historic Documents

Summary Statement:

Fiscal Year 2011 saw a slight decrease in the revenue received by the State Library from real estate filings for the Historic Documents Preservation Program (CGS § 11-8i through § 11-8n). Program staff had hoped that the slight increase in revenue at the end of the previous fiscal year signaled the end of the decline in the housing market. Unfortunately, the number of filings for FY 2011 fell by almost 4% compared to the previous year. As a result, most preservation projects remain suspended except for accessioning local government records, preliminary editing work for the publication of the next volume of the *Public Records of the State of Connecticut* and digitizing of historical titles from the Connecticut State Publications collection. In addition, the State Library continues to minimize its grant program administrative expenses wherever possible.

A. Preservation Projects

1. Local Records Projects:

Accessions: As a result of the Historic Documents Preservation Program, a number of towns have transferred records to the State Archives Unit within the Library to ensure their preservation. The State Archives received the following items this year: Town of East Haddam Tax abstracts, 1937-1987, 51 volumes (RG 062:041); Town of Hebron Tax abstracts, 1900-1961, 62 volumes (RG 062:067); Town of Madison Tax abstracts, 1968, 5 volumes, and old age assistance records, 1936-1940, 1 cubic foot (RG 062:076); Town of Pomfret Old age assistance tax enrollment cards, 1935-1955, .5 cubic feet.

The State Archives acquired 1,739 record books and 622 cubic feet of files from 55 probate courts in FY2011:

Barkhamsted Probate Court, Record books, 1843-1977, 21 volumes and index cards (RG 004:005)

Bethany Probate Court, Record books, 1854-1958, 12 volumes, and files, 1884-1975, bulk 1926-1975, 10 cubic feet (RG 004:008)

Bozrah Probate Court, Files, 1898, 1919-1976, 4 cubic feet (RG 004:013)

Bridgeport Probate Court, Record books, 1840-1955, 227 volumes, and files, 1916-1963, 42 cubic feet (RG 004:015)

Bristol Probate Court, Record books, 1830-1921, 48 volumes, and files, 1920-1976, 80 cubic feet (RG 004:017)

Canaan Probate Court, Record books, 1838-1941, 16 volumes (RG 004:021)

Canton Probate Court, Record books, 1841-1940, 26 volumes, and files, 1922-1976, 16 cubic feet (RG 004:023)

Cheshire Probate Court, Record books, 1829-1925, 23 volumes (RG 004:025)

Clinton Probate Court, Record books, 1862-1967, 13 volumes, and files, 1922-1970, 26 cubic feet (RG 004:027)

Colchester Probate Court, Record books, 1941-1976, 40 volumes (RG 004:028)

Cornwall Probate Court, Record books, 1847-1972, 12 volumes (RG 004:031)

East Granby Probate Court, Record books, 1865-1972, 13 volumes, and files, 1826-1976, 10 cubic feet (RG 004:040)

East Haddam Probate Court, Record books, 1832-1945, 14 volumes (RG 004:041)

East Hampton Probate Court, Record books, 1824-1934, 29 volumes (RG 004:042)

East Windsor Probate Court, Record books, 1784-1925, 25 volumes, and files, 1900-1976, 62 cubic feet (RG 004:047)

Enfield Probate Court, Record books, 1831-1922, 25 volumes (RG 004:049)

Granby Probate Court, Record books, 1807-1924, 16 volumes, and files, 1955-1975, 5 cubic feet (RG 004:056)

Groton Probate Court, Record books, 1839-1934, 57 volumes, and files, 1868-1976, 47 cubic feet (RG 004:059)

Hartland Probate Court, Record books, 1836-1967, 10 volumes and 4 indices (RG 004:065)

Harwinton Probate Court, Record books, 1835-1948, 10 volumes, and files, 1925-1976, 9 cubic feet (RG 004:066)

Hebron Probate Court, Record books, 1851-1976, 17 volumes and 2 indices (RG 004:067)

Killingworth Probate Court, Record books, 1834-1937, 10 volumes, and files, 1920-1972, 5 cubic feet (RG 004:070)

Ledyard Probate Court, Record books, 1837-1957, 12 volumes and 11 indices, and files, 1900-1975, 13 cubic feet (RG 004:072)

Lyme Probate Court, Record books, 1869-1976, 20 volumes, and files, 1900-1976, 13 cubic feet (RG 004:075)

Madison Probate Court, Files, 1834-1975, 38 cubic feet (RG 004:076)

Marlborough Probate Court, Record books, 1846-1945, 6 volumes (RG 004:079)

Montville Probate Court, Files, 1907-1976, bulk 1951-1976, 2 cubic feet (RG 004:086)

New Hartford Probate Court, Record books, 1827-1973, 19 volumes, and files, to 1976, 2 cubic feet (RG 004:092)

New London Probate Court, Record books, 1675-1930, 118 volumes (RG 004:095)

Norfolk Probate Court, Record books, 1778-1978, 19 volumes (RG 004:098)

North Stonington Probate Court, Record books, 1835-1970, 14 volumes, and files, 1835-1976, 1 cubic foot (RG 004:102)

Norwich Probate Court, Record books, 1748-1930, 154 volumes (RG 004:104)

Old Saybrook Probate Court, Record books, 1859-1951, 15 volumes, and files, 1859-1951, 5 cubic feet (RG 004:106)

Plymouth Probate Court, Files, 1903-1974, 34 cubic feet (RG 004:111)

Portland Probate Court, Record books, 1914-1933, 2 volumes (RG 004:113)

Ridgefield Probate Court, Record books, 1841-1941, 28 volumes, and files, 1841-1975, 87 cubic feet (RG 004:118)

Roxbury Probate Court, Record books, 1842-1952, 13 volumes, and files, 1927-1976, 2 cubic feet (RG 004:120)

Salisbury Probate Court, Record books, 1847-1962, 39 volumes (RG 004:122)

Sharon Probate Court, Record books, 1757-1924, 43 volumes (RG 004:125)

Simsbury Probate Court, Record books, 1769-1942, 52 volumes, and files, 1907-1928, .5 cubic feet (RG 004:128)

Somers Probate Court, Record books, 1834-1947, 16 volumes (RG 004:129)

Southington Probate Court, Record books, 1836-1942, 34 volumes (RG 004:131)

Stafford Probate Court, Record books, 1759-1935, 40 volumes (RG 004:134)

Stonington Probate Court, Record books, 1767-1944, 49 volumes and 22 indices, and files, 1866-1976, 8 cubic feet (RG 004:137)

Stratford Probate Court, Record books, 1782-1840, 15 volumes (RG 004:138)

Suffield Probate Court, Record books, 1821-1924, 22 volumes, and files, 1897-1976, 16 cubic feet (RG 004:139)

Torrington Probate Court, Record books, 1847-1935, 39 volumes, and files, 1881-1976, 84 cubic feet (RG 004:143)

Voluntown Probate Court, Record books, 1830-1889, 5 volumes (RG 004:147)

Washington Probate Court, Files, 1832-1954, 35 cubic feet (RG 004:150)

Watertown Probate Court, Record books, 1834-1930, 28 volumes (RG 004:153)

Weston Probate Court, Record books, 1832-1878, 4 volumes (RG 004:157)

Winchester Probate Court, Record books, 1838-1924, 37 volumes (RG 004:162)

Windham Probate Court, Record books, 1719-1958, 82 volumes (RG 004:163)

Windsor Probate Court, Files, 1855-1973, 54 cubic feet (RG 004:164)

Woodbury Probate Court, Record books, 1719-1924, 61 volumes (RG 004:168)

2. *Access to Historical Records:*

Finding aids to historical records are published on the State Library website, making the records accessible through online search engines such as Google.

3. *Digitization of State Historical Document:*

The Historic Documents Preservation Fund provided funding to digitize historical titles from the Connecticut State Publications collection. The project used favorable pricing made possible by a grant from the Sloan Foundation to Lyrasis, the nation's largest non-profit library consortium. State Library staff scanned the titles which were put online in the State Library's collection at the *Internet Archive* at <http://www.archive.org/details/connecticutstatelibrary>.

Among the 81 titles (25,359 pages) is the *Register and Manual of the State of Connecticut* (14 volumes, 1888-1904), *Report of the State Librarian to the Governor* (5 vol., 1902/1903-1910-1912), and *List of registered motor vehicles* (17 vol., 1903-1920). One of the advantages offered by the *Internet Archive* is its promise to transform the digital files into new formats as technology changes. Currently, the State Library's volumes are available in the *Internet Archive's* own "Read Online" reader-friendly format; as a PDF file; in a Kindle readable format; and in Daisy talking book format for persons with print disabilities. Recent additions can be viewed at <http://www.archive.org/details/connecticutstatelibrary>.

B. *Grant Administration*

The Office of the Public Records Administrator awarded targeted grants totaling \$535,000 to 149 municipalities. It was necessary to drastically reduce the targeted grant funding levels and not offer competitive grants for FY2011 as a result of Senate Bill No. 1167, *An Act Concerning a State Deficit Mitigation Plan for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2009*, which transferred \$900,000 from the historic documents preservation account to the General Fund at the end of the previous fiscal year. The loss of the funds plus the reduced revenue stream has cut the amount of grants awarded by 66% since the program's best year (FY 2009) when it awarded a total of \$1,595,327 in both targeted and competitive grants.

C. *Professional Development*

1. *Workshops:*

Due to travel restrictions and reduced funding, the State Library staff was unable to attend as many professional meetings as in past years. The grant staff attended some monthly meetings of the Connecticut Chapter of the Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA). Public Records Archivist Lizette Pelletier gave a presentation on the Intergovernmental Preparedness for Essential Records project to the Chapter on January 27th.

2. *Conferences:*

- a. During August 2010, Public Records Archivist Lizette Pelletier represented Connecticut at a joint meeting of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) and the Council of State Archivists (CoSA) in Washington DC. The conference session topics included the current issues facing government archivists and records managers; records management risks and opportunities of Cloud computing; management of born-digital records; replevin; and networking among State Historical Records Advisory Boards.
- b. Public Records Administrator LeAnn Power, Public Records Archivist Lizette Pelletier and Field Archivist Kathy Makover attended the Town Clerks Fall Conference on September 16 and 17, 2010 in Westbrook. They spoke with town clerks and grant vendors about the Historic Documents Preservation Program and other issues related to town clerk

records. Lizette Pelletier distributed information on the Intergovernmental Preparedness for Essential Reports (IPER) project.

- c. Public Records staff attended the Connecticut Town Clerks Association spring conference on April 14 and 15, 2010 in Hartford, meeting with town clerks and vendors. On April 14th, Public Records staff gave a presentation on best records management practices for town clerks.

D. Town Clerk Training:

The Historic Documents Preservation Program presented the eleventh in a series of workshops for town clerks, "Disaster Recovery: The Damp, the Wet and the Ugly!" on June 14th. The half-day course focused on the steps to be taken following a disaster and included a demonstration of salvaging wet records. Instructor Donia Conn, Northeast Document Conservation Center, presented the course at the Middletown Library Service Center. The workshop received positive evaluations from the town clerks.

II. Administrative Expenses for the Historic Documents Preservation Grant Program

<i>Personnel Costs</i>	\$	238,813
<i>Program Administrative Costs</i>		
Educational Services and Contractual Support	\$	22,930
IT Data Services (Scanning)	\$	2,600
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$	4,726
Supplies	\$	572
Van Block Facility Security	\$	33,519
Van Block Facility Maintenance	\$	537
<i>Program Administrative Total</i>	\$	40,349
FY 2011 Administrative Total	\$	304,127
<i>Grants Awarded</i>		
149 Targeted Grants	\$	573,000
Unexpended Grant Funds Returned	\$	- 204
FY2011 Grants Total	\$	572,796