

volume contained records only for that year. The convention in these cases is to use an en dash (not a hyphen and not an em dash) after the year to indicate that the cited year was not the final one.

10.27 Notarial Books & Files

In the French and Spanish colonies of America, as in many European countries even today, legal recordkeeping was a function of the notary public. Whenever someone needed a deed, a marriage contract, a will, an estate inventory, or other legal document, they visited or called the community notary, who would not only draft the document for them but maintain a copy in his notarial archive. At his retirement or death, that archive would pass to his successor. As recordkeeping became more formalized, provisions were sometimes made for centralizing these archives in a notarial office. In the rural areas of America that had been settled by the French and Spanish, notaries often kept their own archives after the regions were acquired by the United States, although copies or abstracts usually were filed at the local courthouse.

The examples below and on the following page demonstrate handling several situations encountered by modern researchers: notarial acts that have been centralized locally (New Orleans), volumes that appear randomly in a local courthouse (Kaskaskia, Illinois; and Natchitoches, Louisiana), and collections that have been microfilmed by the Family History Library. In the Natchitoches example, because the volume is not part of a series, it is identified by its exact title placed in quotation marks. For a situation in which original, loose, notarial acts have been acquired by a private archive and made available on preservation microfilm, see 3.19.

Source List Entry

- Illinois. Randolph County. Kaskaskia Notarial Records, ca. 1717–1765. County Clerk's Office, Chester.
- Louisiana. Natchitoches Parish. "Frederick Williams, Notarial, April 24, 1836 to July 25, 1837." Clerk of Court's Office, Natchitoches.
- Louisiana. Orleans Parish. Acts of Rafaël Perdoma, 1783–1790. Notarial Archives, New Orleans.

First Reference Note

1. Randolph County, Illinois, Kaskaskia Notarial Records, ca. 1717–1765, Act K-352, Henry Biron and Marie Maurice Medar, marriage contract, 24 April 1724; County Clerk's Office, Chester.
2. Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, "Frederick Williams, Notarial, April 24, 1836 to July 25, 1837," 47–48, Samuel Houston of Texas to

Evidence Explained: Citing History Sources from Artifacts to Cyberspace

John P. Dunn of Natchitoches, power of attorney, 26 June 1836; Clerk of Court's Office, Natchitoches.

3. Orleans Parish, Louisiana, Acts of Rafaël Perdoma, 7: 160–61, Noriega–LeSassier dowry receipt; Notarial Archives, New Orleans.

Subsequent Note

11. Randolph Co., Ill., Kaskaskia Notarial Records, Act K-352.
12. Natchitoches Par., La., “Frederick Williams, Notarial, April 24, 1836 to July 25, 1837,” 47–48.
13. Orleans Par., La., Acts of Rafaël Perdoma, 7: 160–61.

Microfilm (FHL-GSU)



Source List Entry

Québec. Île Montréal. Actes de notaire, Michel Gamelin-Gaucher, 1772–1779. Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. FHL microfilm 1,420,476, item 4. Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

First Reference Note

1. Île Montréal, Québec, Actes de notaire, Michel Gamelin-Gaucher, 1772–1779, no. 72, cession by Jⁿ B^{te} Giroux and wife to Jⁿ B^{te} Giroux, *fls*, 7 October 1773; FHL microfilm 1,420,476, item 2

Subsequent Note

11. Ile Montréal, Qué., Actes de notaire, Michel Gamelin-Gaucher, 1772–1779, no. 72.

MARRIAGE CONTRACT VS. MARRIAGE RECORD

When citing a marriage *contract* or marriage *settlement* filed amid notarial records, you should be careful not to call the document a marriage *record*. Contracts were executed prior to marriage, to establish a division of property and the terms that would apply to heirship after the death of one of the parties. Within a contract a couple merely promised to marry at a later date, and not all contracts resulted in an actual marriage.

10.28 Plat Books, County Level

See also QuickCheck Model *for* IMAGE COPIES: ONLINE

Plat books at the local level provide scaled renderings of surveys for towns, subdivisions, and other special tracts. Most, but not all, are paginated. They are typically cited as a register—meaning that you identify the jurisdiction that created them, the title of the register, and the specific page. Beyond that, your citation should also identify the subject of the plat and its date, as well as the record office and location.