

Archon Cheat Sheet

Determine the accession number

Accession number:

Check to see if there is an accession number. If so, update as necessary the accession book and file.

If there is no accession number, check the accession books to see if you can find the accession described. If you can find it, determine the next available number for the year the gift was made by checking the accession file. Update the book and create a new file.

If no determination can be made, create a new accession record in latest accession book and a file.

Create the Archon Collection Manager record

General:

Title: Create a title using DACS 2.3. Be specific about what the item is according to DACS rules. If it's a bunch of stuff: Anything created by a person or family is called papers. Anything created by an organization is called records. If it's a variety of different gifts brought together by a person or Litchfield Historical Society staff, it's called a collection.

Sort title: If the collection is named after a person, such as Erastus Lyman papers, you need to retype the name with last name first so it will sort properly, e.g., Lyman, Erastus papers.

Extent is in linear feet. Use the Yale calculator to figure the number.
<http://www.library.yale.edu/beinecke/manuscript/process/lconv.htm>

Creator:

Basically, who was responsible for creating the item(s). Could be a person, a family, a government, etc. If it was a person, check to see if that person is already listed. If you need to add a person, check the LC Authorities to see if that person is already listed. If so, use that form if the name.

LC Authorities: <http://authorities.loc.gov/>

Collection description:

Scope: Give a brief overview of the collection and then summarize what types of papers it is comprised of and what topical areas the collection covers. Always start with the name of the collection followed by the accession number and extent in parentheses.

You want to give enough information so that researchers can figure out if the collection will be useful to their topics. Point out anything of particular interest, research strengths, something unusual the researcher wouldn't expect to find, etc. Sometimes just listing the things will do.

See the processing manual for notes about the form the scope note should take.

Alt extent: Enter the number of boxes

Biographical/Historical Note: Enter contextual information about the creator of the papers. Generally this will be a biography of the person or family who created the papers or a history of the organization which created the records. Sometimes, you'll end up writing a biographical note in the scope note because of the nature of the collection (see Erastus Lyman papers) so a Biog/Hist Note is not always necessary.

Location:

Leave blank unless the item is a just a folder or two that will be filed with Small Acquisitions. If you encounter this, ask Linda how to handle Small Acquisitions.

Subjects:

Enter subject headings that indicate

- what topics the collection covers
- the geographical locations represented
- what forms the collection of

Usually, will have all three, but not always.

What the collection is about:

Always use LC Subject headings found at LC Authorities <http://authorities.loc.gov/>. There are all sorts of rules about creating and adding subjects, but generally, common sense prevails. The easiest way to determine subject headings is to find something else similar to what you have that has already been cataloged. You can check Archon, but that will be of limited use. I like to use the CONSULS catalog <http://www.consuls.org/>. Any subject heading can be customized to Litchfield by adding –Connecticut—Litchfield to the subject. In almost all cases, I can find the subject headings I need by poking around in CONSULS. When more than one might do, you can use both or pick one.

If the collection informs you about the life of the creator, then the creator should be a subject. But if you can't learn anything about a creator from the collection, then the creator wouldn't be a subject.

Adding subjects is a judgment call. You need enough to adequately provide access to the collection, but if you do too many, you end up indexing the collection. Keep in mind that the scope note is searchable in Google, so you can provide access there instead of creating a subject heading.

What geographical location:

Usually, one of these will do. Most everything will simply have Litchfield (Conn.).

What forms the collection is comprised of:

List the physical types of things found in the collection. Almost all of these have already been entered in the subject database. The more commonly used forms are correspondence, business records, legal documents, government records, ephemera, financial records, photographs, and deeds.

Restrictions:

Almost without exception:

The collection is open for research.

Use/rights: see boilerplate at the end of this document

Rest of fields are blank.

Acquisitions:

Use the date found in the accession record or book. If you're creating a new record in Archon, use today's date.

Donors name is entered first name last name.

Related material:

Use this field if you know of other Archon collections that relate to the one you're working on. If you add a collection, you'll need to update the Archon record for that collection to cross-reference the other. Also, if in the course of your research you come across collections at other institutions that researchers should know about, you can add them here.

Finding aid information:

Rules used is always DACS; publication date is the date you finish the Archon record.

Create the Archon Accessions Manager record

General:

Enable Web output: No

Accession date: Date found in accession book or file or if new record, today's date

Title: copied from Collection Manager (CM) record

Identifier: Accession number

Inclusive dates: copied from CM record

Received extent: same as extent in CM record

Unprocessed extent: even if processed, should be the same as received extent

Processing priority: Your call. How important is it to get these papers physically processed and better described in Archon?

Expected date: blank

Donor information:

Donor: name of donor, last name, first or Donor unknown

Donor contact info: blank or Found in collection

Donor notes: Gift, purchase, or blank if found in collection

Accession description:

All field blank except comments, where you need to briefly summarize the condition of the materials. Could be something like “Items are stable in acid-free folders, although they are too full” or “Needs foldering and arrangement”

Add the finished collection to the NHPRC list

Use the Excel spreadsheet

Make a label

Use the Word label template and Julie’s printer.

Other stuff

Some typical sample records:

Dorothy Bull collection

Spring Hill School collection

Erastus Lyman papers

George B. Sanford manuscript

Grand Army of the Republic, Seth F. Plumb Post No. 80 records

Crane family papers

Malcolm and Carole Bramley collection of Litchfield Historic District papers

Litchfield County judicial records (you probably won’t get into this much detail, but it may help you get a sense of any town or court records you may encounter)

Boilerplate:

Use/rights: Pick one or none if copyright status is unknown

Copyright has been transferred to the Litchfield Historical Society for materials authored or otherwise produced by the creator(s) of this collection. Copyright status for other collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

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Preferred cit.: [name of papers] (accession number) followed by:

Litchfield Historical Society, Helga J. Ingraham Memorial Library, P.O. Box 385, 7 South Street, Litchfield, Connecticut, 06759

Other note:

This collection was processed with support from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC).