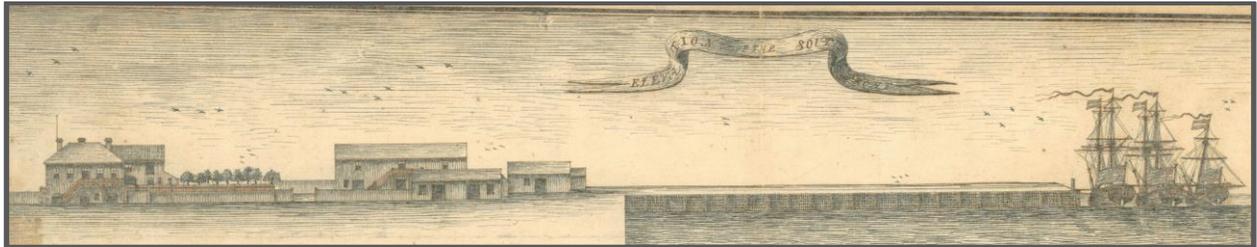


Register of Deeds

Historical Documents Preservation and Restoration Project

Michael K. Miller, ROD



Annual Report

Updates, Progress and Activity



Seal from early indenture

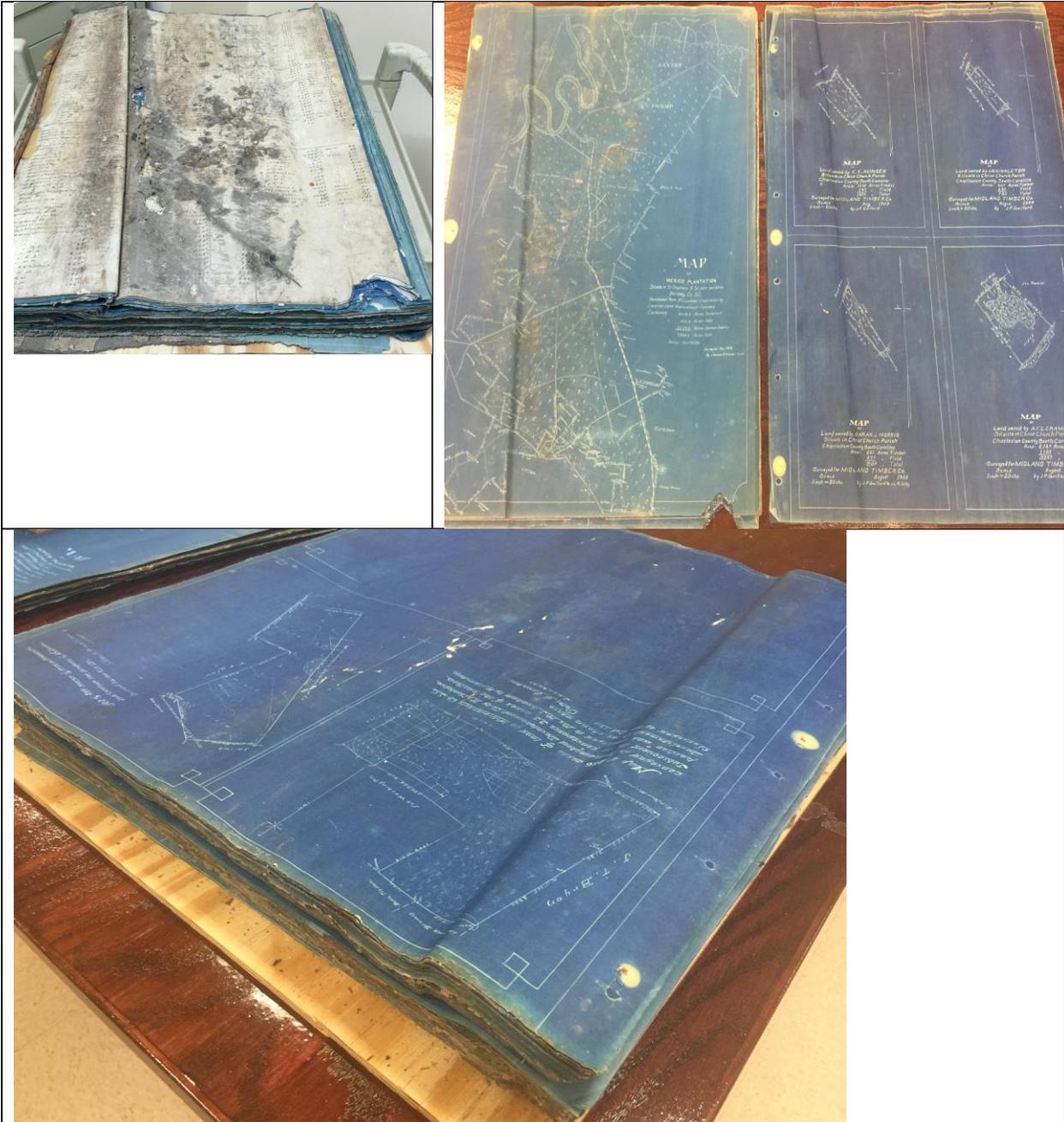
The Preservation and
Restoration Room of
the Charleston
County ROD Office

Newsletter and
Contact information:

Bob McIntyre
Senior Imaging
Specialist

Aug. 2015

A Charleston County resident, (I have not received permission to publish his name yet), brought us a Book of Plats collected by Gaillard as well as copies of timberland drawings from the early 1900's. They will be added as a part of The Gaillard Collection. The Book was discovered while cleaning out a garage. Thankfully, the family had the foresight to understand the plats' historical significance, and they are allowing the ROD to repair, scan, and document the collection. There are 315 pages, and many had multiple plats on a page. These digital images will be available to the public for future reference in land studies.



Sept 9, 2015

Post and Courier Article

From paper to pixels: Historic Plat Restoration Center saving old records at risk

Robert Behre

Sep 9 2015 12:01 am

Unlike most places in America, Charleston's property records date back more than 330 years. Like everywhere, though, old documents fade, fracture and decompose over time as natural light, humidity changes and oil from fingers take their toll.

That's why the preservation of Charleston's real estate history took a fateful turn six years ago when Charleston County RMC Charlie Lybrand was asked by his friend Burnet Mendelsohn if Lybrand had anything for him to do.

Their conversation led to an ambitious effort to scan some of the county's oldest records, from about 1718 to the 19th century — an effort that has since expanded back to 1683 as well as to an extensive collection of historic plats collected privately then donated to the county.

"I need something to do," joked Mendelsohn, a retired real estate broker. "And my wife needs me out of the house."

Lybrand has wanted to get his office's historic records scanned and online for years, but his employees are kept busy with their duties making sure that new deeds and plats are filed.

At stake are not only land records but also assorted other historical documents, such as an 1838 marriage license written in both Hebrew and English.

"I didn't have enough staff to take someone off their regular job to do such a project," he said.

"We're not in the business of restoration. We're in the recording business."

Still, Lybrand created a Charleston County Historic Plat Restoration Center largely through Mendelsohn's volunteer work and intermittent help from two ROD employees, Bob McIntyre and Bill Nieschalk, who work on center projects during lulls in their day-to-day duties.

The College of Charleston's master's program in historic preservation plans to provide two interns to work at the center this fall.

The Preservation Society of Charleston listed the office's plat collection on its 2013 "Seven to Save" list.

That designation and the efforts of County Councilman Joe Qualey helped persuade the county to buy a \$150,000 high-resolution scanner for the office — one advanced enough so its images can compensate for the bend in the page of an open, bound book.

Lybrand even was able to get copies from the S.C. Department of Archives and History of the area's oldest documents — those dating from 1683 to 1718 — and begin getting them scanned into the county's network.

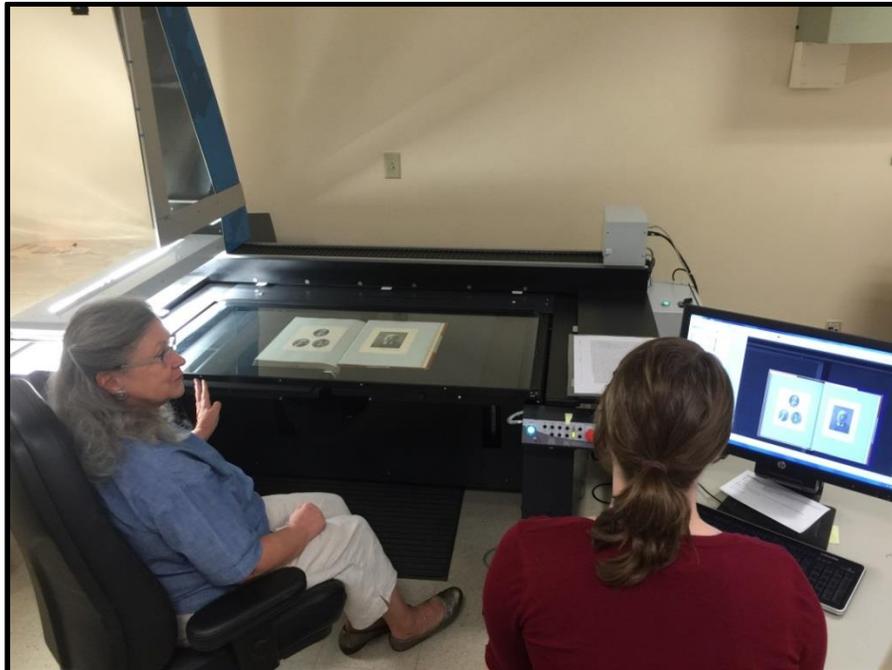
"When a Kings Grant or Plantation search was needed, the attorneys had to go to Columbia to complete that search," Lybrand said. "Not anymore."

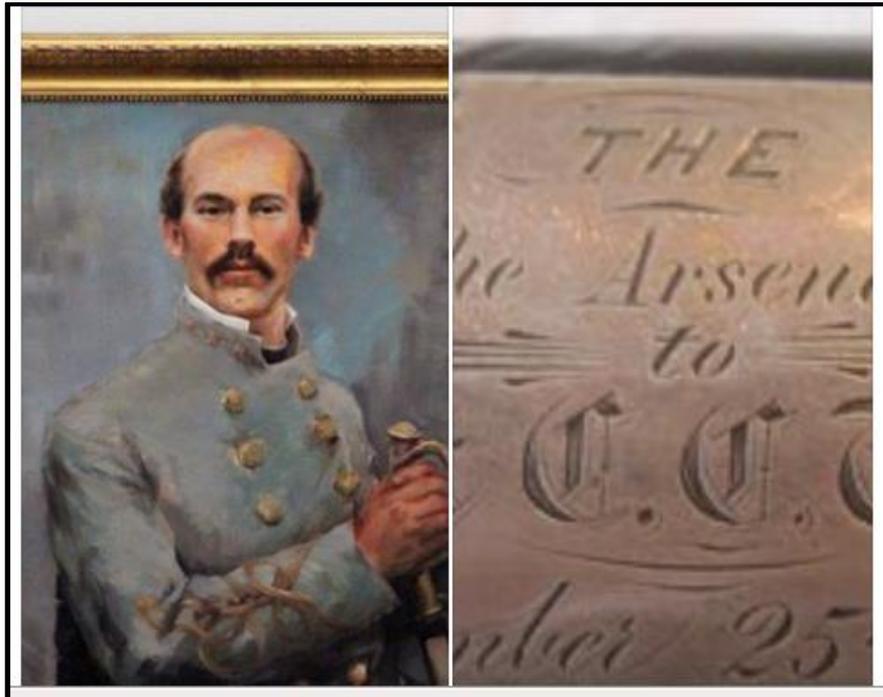
The center since has scanned in hundreds of books but still finds itself in a sort of race against time.

Sept. 11, 2015

Professional Community Cooperation

Assistant Professor Marie Rose, MLIS and Technical Services Librarian Judith Swartzel from the the Daniel Library at The Citadel recently scanned in a rare book about C.C. Tew.





Daniel Library - The Citadel added 2 new photos.

August 12 at 9:19am · Edited · 🌐

Lost for more than 150 years, a precious artifact returns to The Citadel. Charles Courtenay Tew was among the first 26 cadets to report to the Citadel Academy in 1843. He became the Academy's first honor graduate in 1846, the first president of the Academy's Alumni Association in 1852, and the first Citadel graduate to go missing in action in 1862.

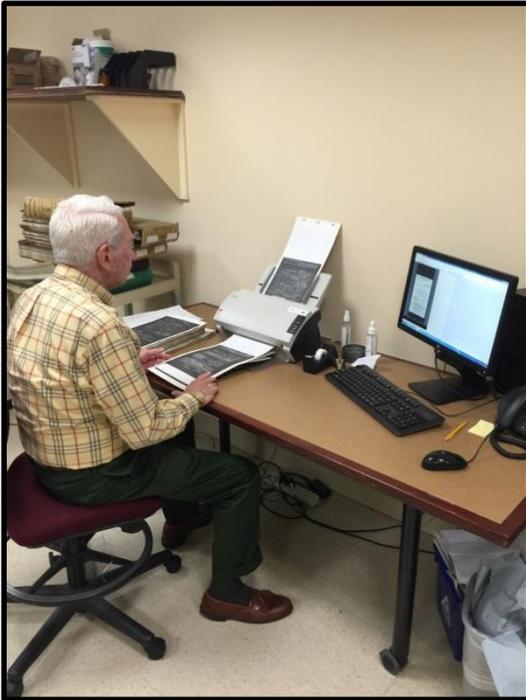
While serving as Superintendent of the Arsenal Academy in Columbia (made auxiliary to the Citadel in 1845), Tew was given a sword by the cadets. The scabbard of the sword bears a plate engraved "The Cadets of the Arsenal Academy /To Captain C.C. Tew/November 25th 1858." The collar of the scabbard bears a second inscription: "Captured at Antietam September 17, 1862." This is the date Colonel Tew was mortally wounded and the sword, taken from him by a Northern soldier, was lost to history.

On September 17, 2015, 153 years later, the sword will return to The Citadel, courtesy of the 33 Signal Regiment Foundation of Ottawa, Canada. Please plan to attend a special program on Thursday evening, September 17 in the Daniel Library to hear the story of the sword. The official transfer of the sword from the 33 Signal Regiment Foundation to The Citadel will occur on the parade ground on Friday, September 18, just moments before parade. More details on these events will be announced shortly.

On September 16, 2015, a special event will be held at Antietam National Battlefield Park in Maryland at 1:00 pm. For more information contact LTC David S. Goble, Director of Daniel Library at dgoble@citadel.edu/843-953-1267

Oct. 13 2015

Volunteer Work from Charleston County Citizens



Burnet Mendelsohn, downtown real estate businessman, volunteers weekly scanning in documents from the books in storage at the Charleston County Records Center. The ROD has approximately 1,000 books in storage that will need to be digitized.

We have digitized 504 books and made them available to the public.

Cathy Sadler, MSLS, also comes in weekly to help with the restoration process of the historical plat collection. This is time-consuming work which involves removing the old acidic tape from decades ago and trying to repair the damage caused by these previous practices.

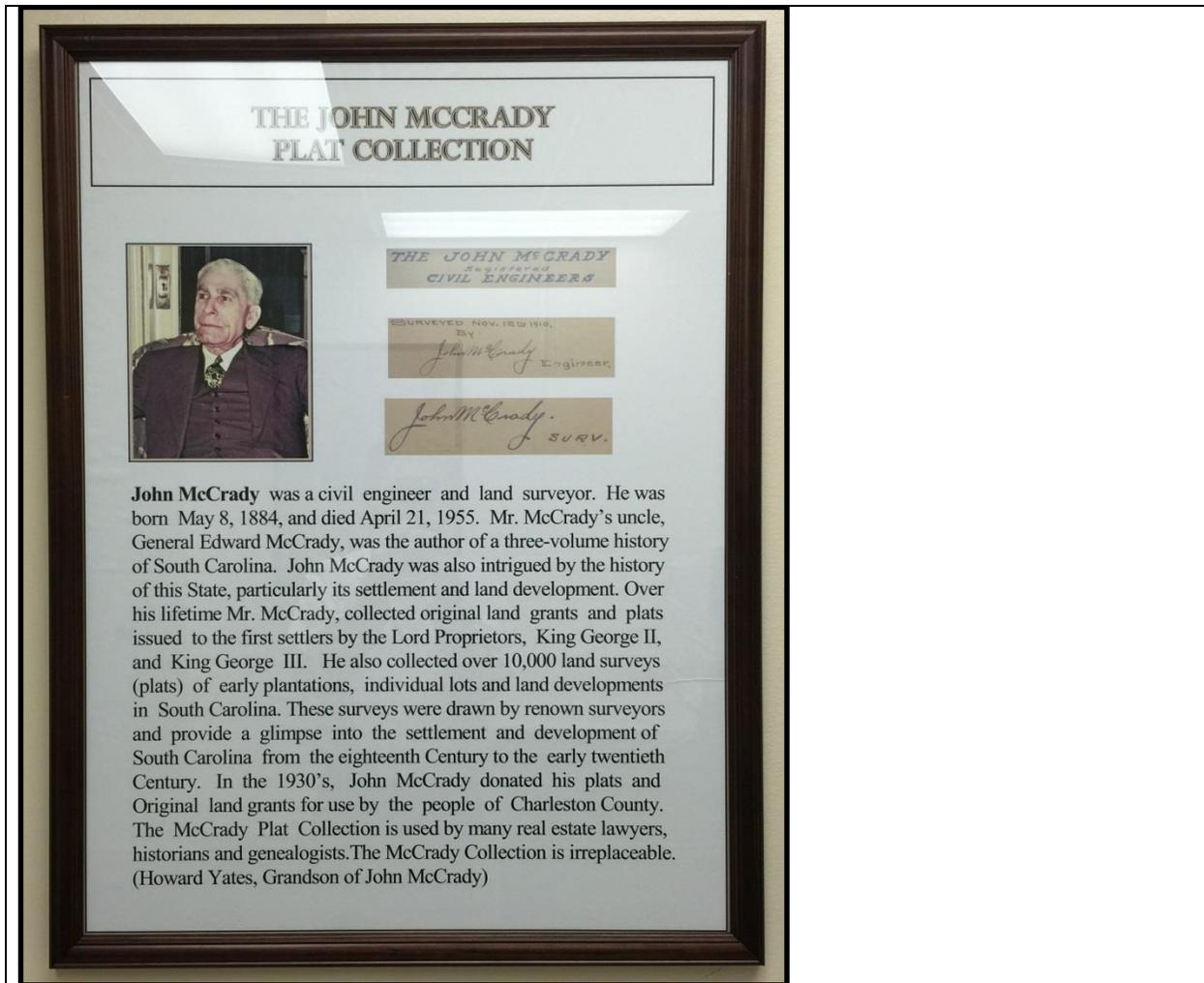
Cathy used to be a librarian for the Charleston Library Society for about thirty years. She has also previously done work at our Charleston County Records Center.



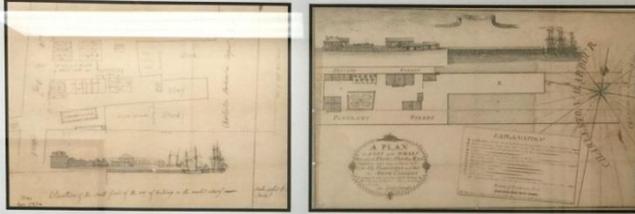
Oct. 19, 2015

Archival Room

Bob designed these additions to the Archival Room acknowledging the importance of the McCrady Plat Collection as noted by The Preservation Society in their **Seven to Save 2013** list.



THE JOHN MCCRADY PLAT COLLECTION



The John McCrady Plat Collection is a collection of more than 10,000 plats collected by local surveyor John McCrady. McCrady donated the plat collection to the Charleston Register of Mesne Conveyance (RMC) Office. Over his lifetime, McCrady collected thousands of original eighteenth and nineteenth century plats, mostly of Charleston, Berkeley, Dorchester, and Colleton counties of the South Carolina Lowcountry. Where he could not acquire originals from the landowners, he placed tracings into his collection. Among them are priceless plats by such surveyors as Joseph Purcell, John Diamond, and many others. There are also large numbers of plats from other coastal counties such as Beaufort, Georgetown, Jasper, Hampton and Horry where McCrady worked.

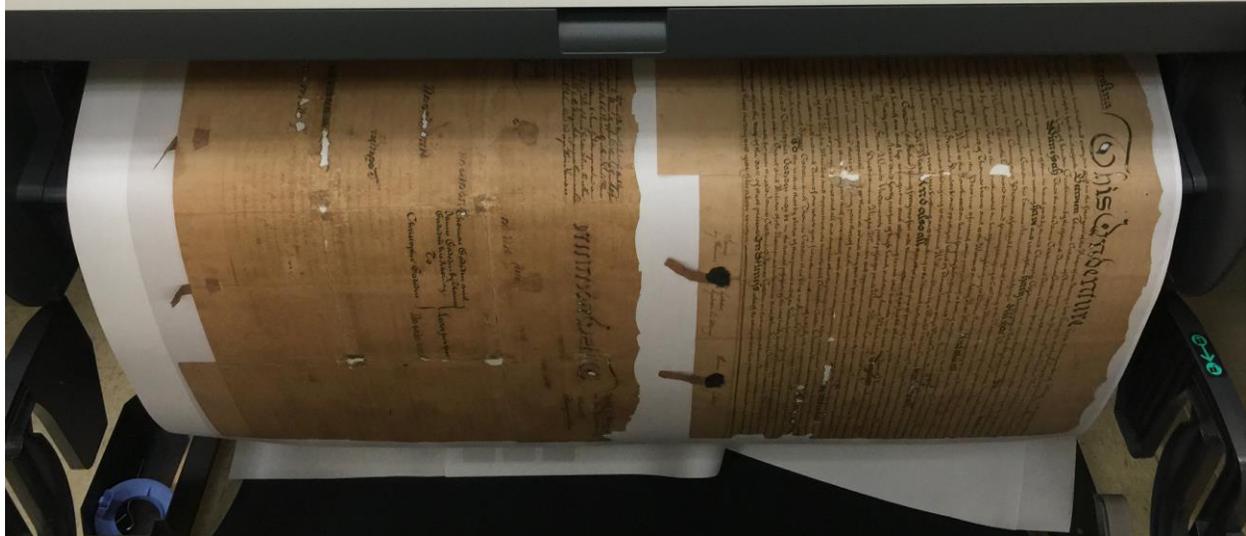
The plats provide a remarkable view of the eighteenth and nineteenth century rural Lowcountry filling in many fine details such as changing boundary lines, settlements, roads, clubhouses, hydrological and agricultural field design, wells, Native-American mounds, and hundreds of other cultural and natural features, often unavailable in plats found in the South Carolina Department of Archives and History. The plats also provide information on the City of Charleston and other surrounding towns such as North Charleston, Beaufort, Summerville, Georgetown, Orangeburg, and dozens of smaller villages and hamlets, some no longer existing. The plats are in constant use by historians, archaeologists, genealogists, land developers, and governing officials and represent one of the finest collections of land history in the state. Their loss would be a catastrophic blow to those interested in reconstructing the Colonial, Antebellum, and Post-bellum history of the South Carolina Lowcountry and the United States.

(Charles Phillips, Jr, Senior Historian at Brockington CRC)



In June of this year, we purchased a large format printer, a Canon 760, which allows us to reproduce documents and historical plats for the office and to the general public for purchase.

We are now able to reproduce copies of fragile plats and have those copies available to the public while protecting the originals.



The Preservation and Restoration Room of the Charleston County ROD Office.



Since installation of our scanner in 2013, we have accomplished some major digitizing projects. Considering the importance of our holdings, we decided in the fall of 2014 to create a dedicated space for these tasks, and in the Spring of 2015, a new room was allocated with the goal of increased conservation and preservation methods to be applied to the historical plats and document collections. Some accomplishments have been:

- 8,714 plats, the majority of them in The McCrady Collection, have been digitized
- 937 plats, of the unrecorded Gaillard Collection from the ROD
- 692 plats, of the unrecorded Gaillard Collection from The Historical Society holdings.
- 311 historical plats have been removed from the plastic sleeves in the Red Books, scanned, and encapsulated (which seals them from the oxidation-breakdown process.)

Department efforts by:

Scanning Plats:	Bob McIntyre, when available - Alice Areheart, Bill Nieschalk
Scanning Documents:	Bob McIntyre, Alice Areheart, Bill Nieschalk, Bernie Mendelsohn & Cathy Sadler (Citizen Volunteers), Bob McIntyre
Encapsulating:	Bob McIntyre
Digital Enhancement Documents:	Bob McIntyre, Alice Areheart, Bill Nieschalk, Nancy Robertson
Digital Enhancement Plats:	Bob McIntyre, Bill Nieschalk
Restoration Work:	Bob McIntyre, when available - Alice Areheart, Bill Nieschalk



Plats have been removed from vertical storage cabinets where they have gotten torn and folded incorrectly.



We have repaired the plats removing the acid tape from the past and restored them to one piece.



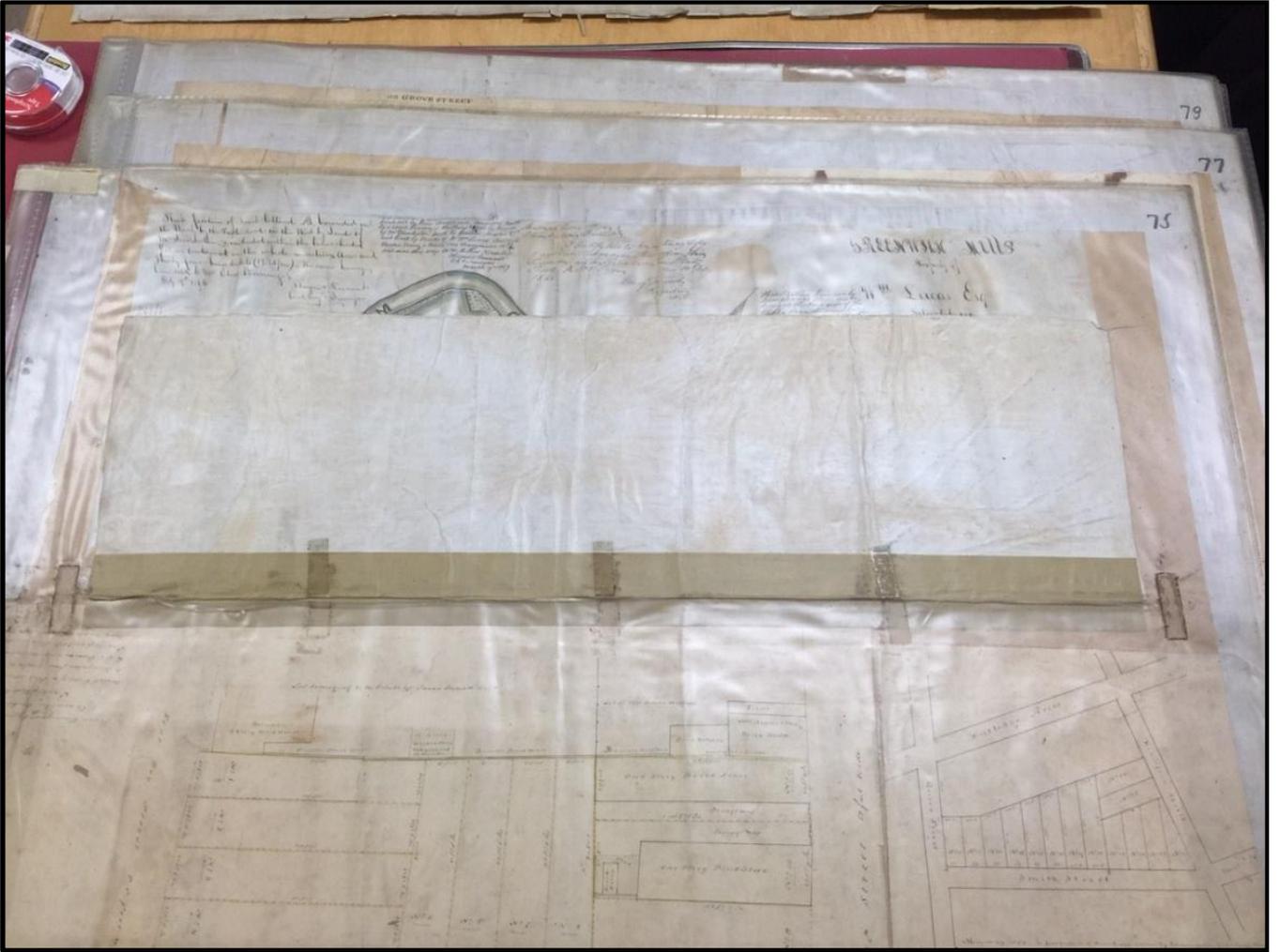
These plats have been encapsulated and protected from future damage.



Plats in the Red Books were put in heavy plastic sleeves during the 1970's.



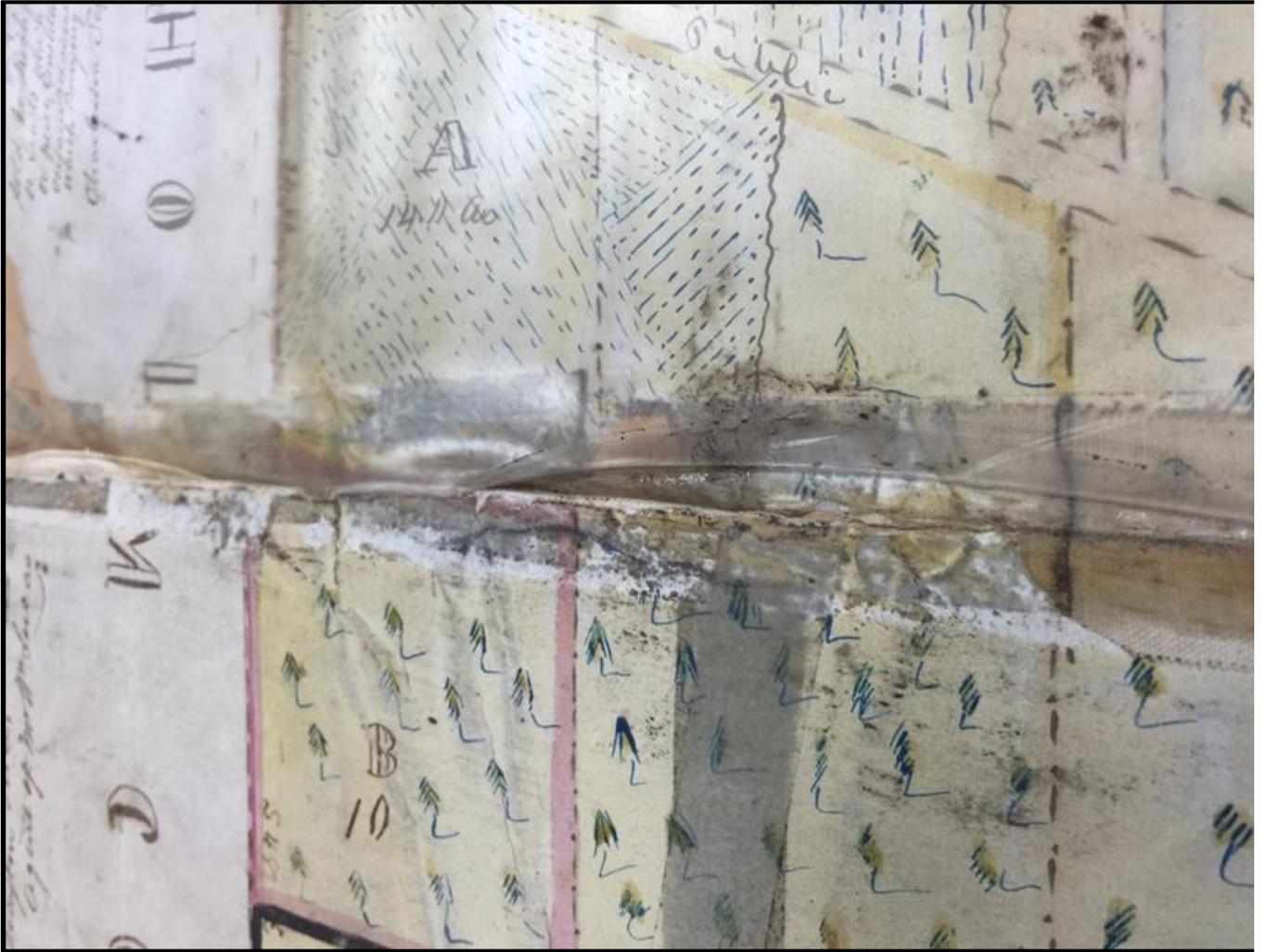
Compression by this method of storage has resulted in adhesion to the plastic.



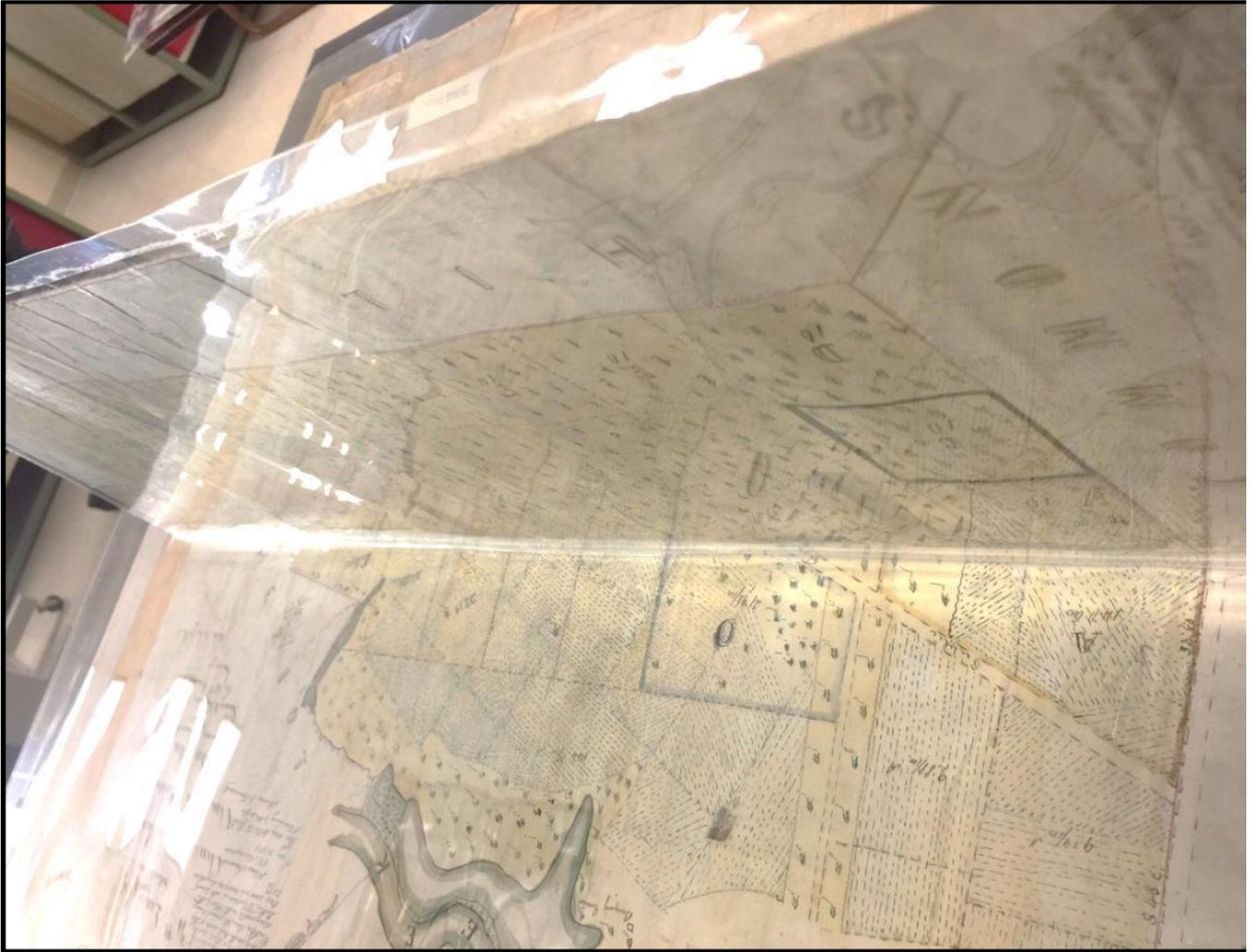
Previous generations had left some of the historic plats exposed only protecting parts of the plat.



The plastic sleeves were cut, and parts of the original plat were left hanging outside of the sleeve.



Over time and repeated usage, damage has occurred to the exposed portions.

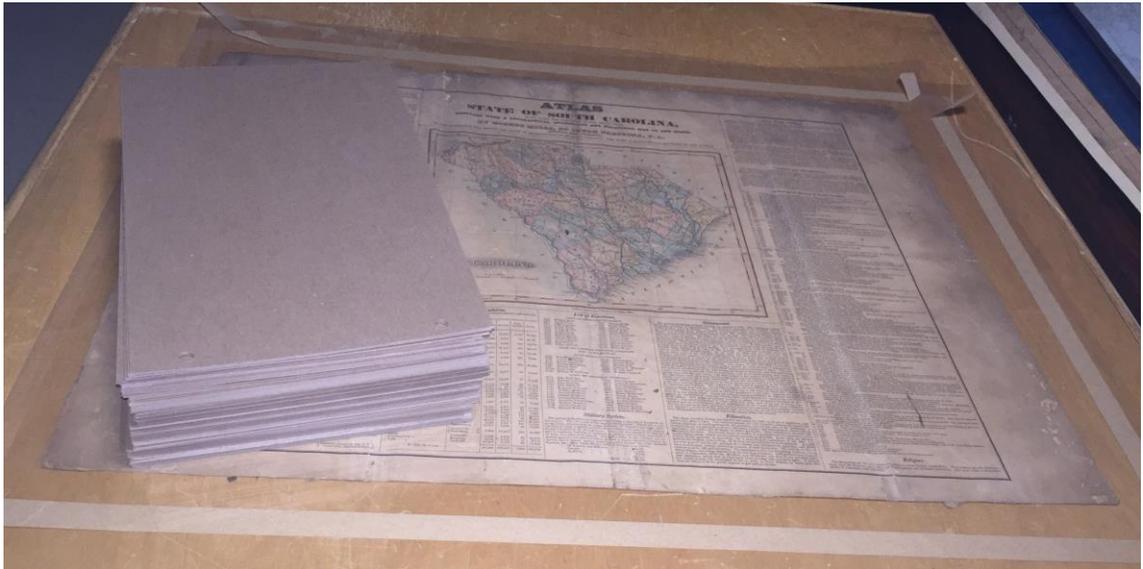


Corrected...We clean and remove all non-archival tapes and then encapsulate and protect all parts of the plat.

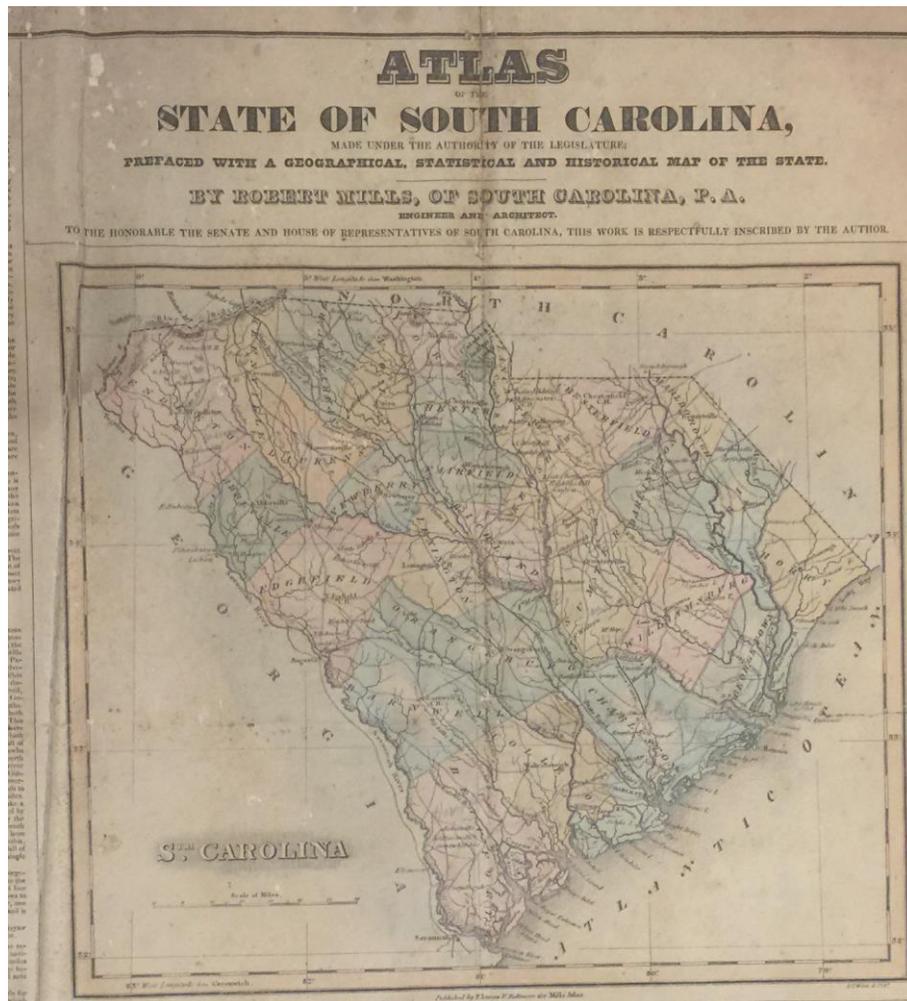


A donated Robert Mills Atlas (1820's)





Sandwiched between two sheets of asotate,
we help the creases in the page to relax before proceeding with the encapsulation process.





A damaged page from that Mills Atlas.

We massaged the page over a period of time to help it relax and proceeded to protect it.



After allowing the page to slowly straighten back out, it was encapsulated...

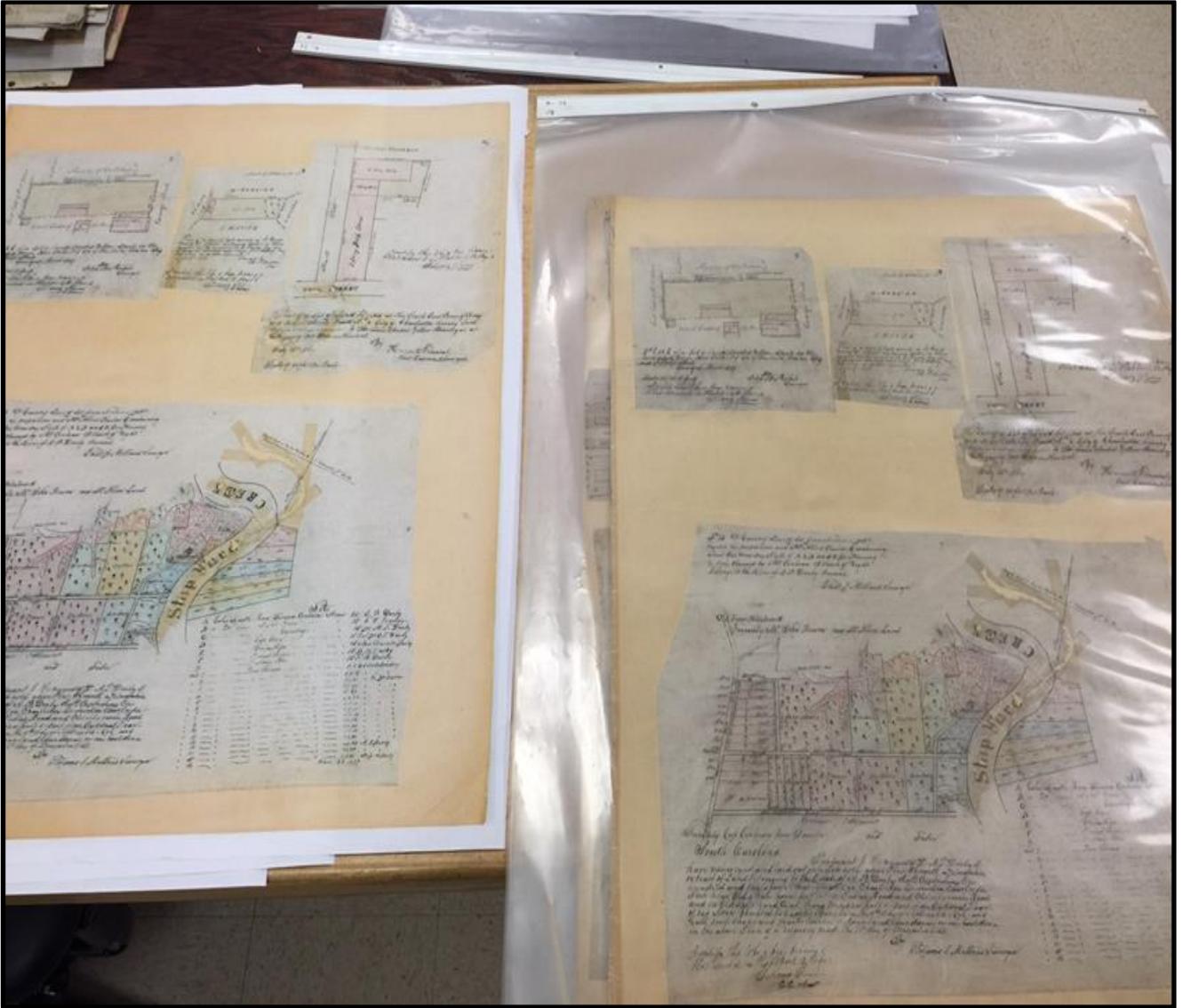


They are then stored in Flat File Cabinets.

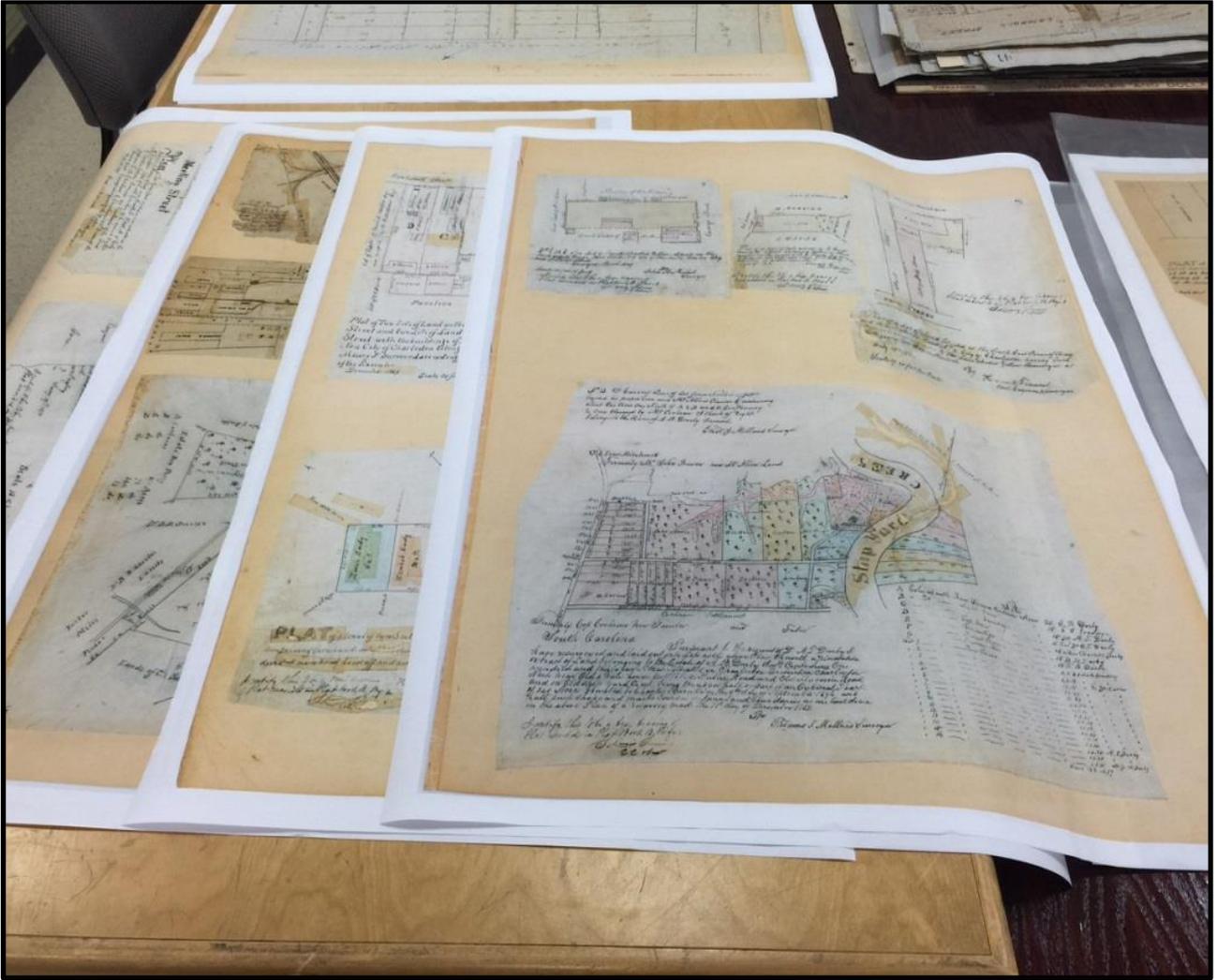
Acquisition of Cabinets through our Partnerships was a much needed resource.



Public access hanging plats.



Hanging Plats in the Public Access Area, have some original plats from 1857 – 1908 that are being removed, encapsulated, and stored in Flat File Cabinets.



Replacement copies are being used for the public access area. The newly purchased Canon ipf 760 produces high-resolution prints that provide all the detail of the original.

Progress continues daily on the McCrady and Gaillard Collections. The collections are vast, and several stages of conservation procedures are going to be required.

Future assistance will be provided through partnerships with:

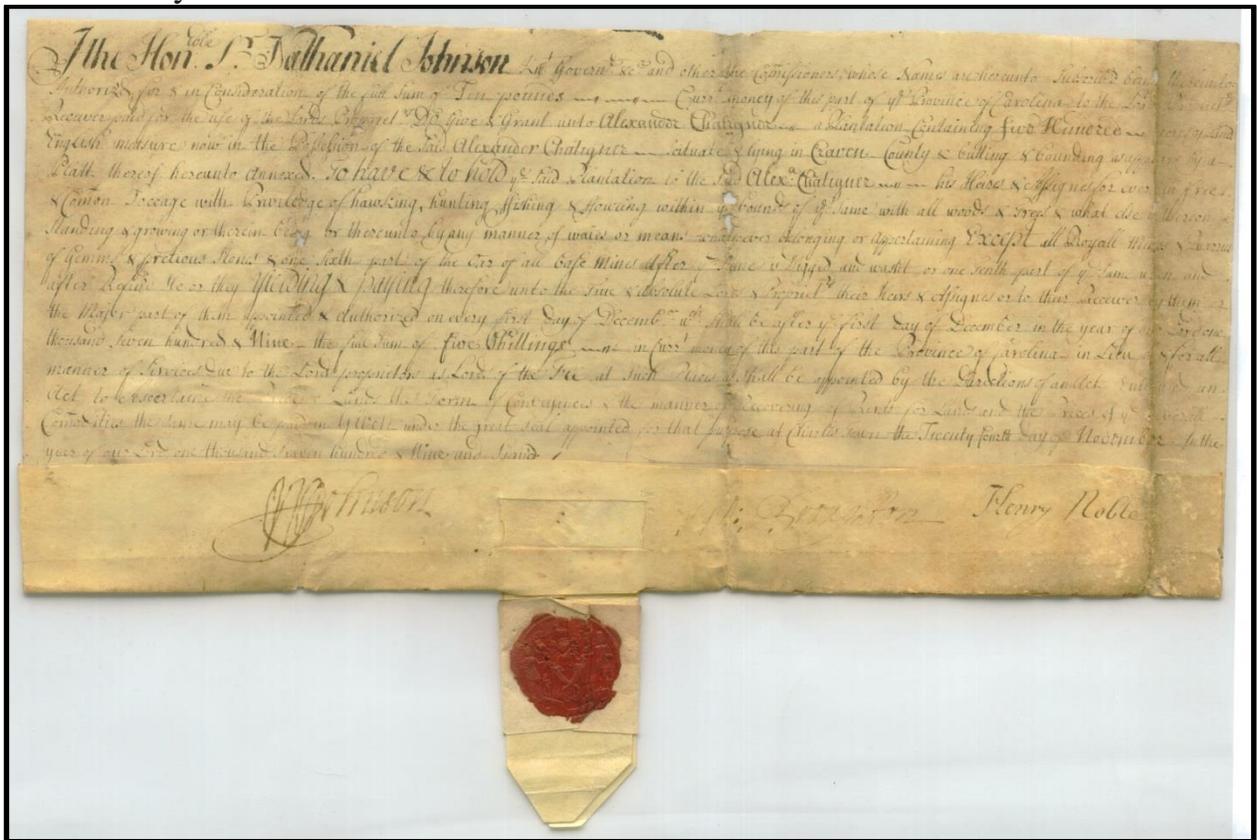
The Daniel Library at The Citadel
Clemson / College of Charleston internship program
Preservation Society of Charleston

In 2013, the Seven to Save recognition program focused on the McCrady Collection as one of the Preservation Society projects.



On the Cover Page

18th century Indenture in ROD Historic Document Collection



1709 Plat from The McCrady Collection

