

# Smith, Christine, Conservation files

Christine Smith Files Concerning Conservation of the Wills of George Washington and Martha Washington  
1945-2016

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## Title Statement

Smith, Christine, Conservation files Christine Smith Conservation files MSS 16289

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## Profile Description

**Creation:** This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2026-03-05 17:53:14 +0000.

**Language Usage:** English

**Descriptive Rules:** Describing Archives: A Content Standard

## Descriptive Summary

### Unit ID

MSS 16289

### Unit ID

[Archival Resource Key](#)

### Unit ID

/repositories/3/resources/922

### Unit Date

1945-2016

### Language

Materials are in English.

### Extent

2.69 Cubic Feet 6 document boxes, 1 flat box

### Repository

Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library

## Administrative Information

### Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research use.

### Provenance

Donated by Christine Smith, 20 February 2017.

## Preferred Citation

MSS 16289 Christine Smith Conservation files, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia Library.

## Historical Note

Christine Smith, a conservator working for Conservation of Art on Paper, Inc. (CAPI), wrote an article in the "Winterthur Portfolio A Journal of American Material Culture" (Volume 38, Number 4, Winter 2003) describing the history of George Washington's last will and testament and the various treatments that it has undergone. Smith not only describes her contemporary treatment of the documents but also the pioneering conservation treatment of the wills of both George and Martha Washington by William W. Berwick, restorer of manuscripts, Library of Congress.

## Scope and Contents Note

The Christine Smith Conservation files (1945-2016; 2.69 cubic feet) concern the conservation of the wills of George Washington and Martha Washington. The files contain slide photographs of each page of each will, usually with additional detail photos. Each set of before-treatment slides represents the wills as they appeared in 1998, approximately nine decades after manuscript restorer William Berwick preserved them; the after-treatment slides document the appearance of each will in 2003.

There are also photocopies of materials concerning each manuscript's preservation history, including damage during the Civil War, early restoration attempts, storage formats, and exhibition histories.

For George Washington's will, there bits of the will paper and ink (for future microscopy studies), nine microscope slides of the will's materials, specimens of the translucent paper that Mr. Berwick used to tack together the split sheets prior to silking them, the inlay/mounting paper that he used, and the double-sided mat housings that Christine Smith used. For Martha Washington's will, there are specimens of the inlay paper and silking crepeline.

Other materials included were specifications and papers concerning the new case built to house George Washington's will in 2002, written documentation on the restoration of both wills, papers about an exhibition of the wills held at Mt. Vernon, and audiovisual materials documenting or publicizing the restoration of the Washinton wills.

## Keywords

Historic preservation -- Virginia.

Wills -- United States

slides (photographs)

## Arrangement

These files are arranged in two series, Paper Files and Slides (Boxes 1-5) and Audiovisual Materials, Born-Digital Materials and Microscope Slides (Box 6).

## Description of Subordinate Components

### Paper Files and Slides

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180581

**Language** English

### Case built for George Washington's Will - Papers and Specifications

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180583

**Unit Date** 2002

**Manuscripts [X031747168]** 1 (box)

**Container** 1 (folder)

**Extent** 1 folder(s)

## **Conservation of Art on Paper, Inc. Notes on Project**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180584

**Unit Date** 1998-2003

**Manuscripts [X031747168]** 1 (box)

**Container** 2 (folder)

**Extent** 1 folder(s)

## **George Washington Miscellany**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180585

**Unit Date** circa 1945-2009

**Mixed Materials [X031747168]** 1 (box)

**Container** 3 (folder)

**Extent** 1 folder(s)

## **Last Will and Testament of George Washington - Written Documentation**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180586

**Unit Date** circa 1961-2016

**Mixed Materials [X031747168]** 1 (box)

**Container** 4-8 (folder)

**Language** English

**Extent** 5 folder(s)

## **Mats Purchase to Rehouse George Washington's Last Will and Testament**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180587

**Unit Date** 2000-2006

**Manuscripts [X031747168]** 1 (box)

**Container** 9 (folder)

**Extent** 1 folder(s)

## **Mt. Vernon Exhibition**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180588

**Unit Date** 1998-2002

**Manuscripts [X031747169]** 2 (box)

**Container** 1 (folder)

**Extent** 1 folder(s)

## **Printed Material**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180589

**Unit Date** 1998-2001

**Text [X031747169]** 2 (box)

**Container** 2 (folder)

**Extent** 1 folder(s)

## **Slides documenting the work on the wills, duplicates**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180590

**Unit Date** circa 1998-2002

**Slides [X031747169]** 2 (box)

**Container** 3-7 (folder)

**Extent** 5 folder(s)

## **Photo Documentation of the Conservation Work on the Last Will and Testament of George Washington , Part 1 of 2**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180591

**Unit Date** circa 1998-2002

**Slides [X031747170]** 3 (box)

**Extent** 1 VolumesThree ring photograph storage box.

## **Photo Documentation of the Conservation Work on the Last Will and Testament of George Washington, Part 2 of 2**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180592

**Unit Date** circa 1998-2002

**Slides [X031747171]** 4 (box)

**Extent** 1 Volumes

## **Photo Documentation and Written Documentation of the Conservation Work on the Last Will and Testament of Martha Washington**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180593

**Unit Date** circa 1998-2002

**Mixed Materials [X031747172]** 5 (box)

**Extent** 1 Volumes

## **Materials removed from the George Washington and Martha Washington Wills during the 1999 Treatment at Conservation of Art on Paper, Inc. (CAPI)**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180617

**Unit Date** 1999

**Mixed Materials** OS Box S-112 (Flat\_Box)

**Container** 1 [X031747175] (Oversize\_Folder(Within\_an\_OSBox))

**Extent** 1 folder(s)

## **Audiovisual Materials, Born-Digital Materials and Microscope Slides**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180582

**Language** English

## **Audiocassette National Public Radio Morning Edition**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180594

**Unit Date** 1999 August 16

**Audiocassettes [X031747173]** 6 (box)

**Extent** 1 Cassettes

**"The Last Wills and Testaments of George and Martha Washington"  
[Conservation] on 4 Compact Disk-R**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180595

**Unit Date** circa 1998-2002

**CDs\_(Compact\_discs) [X031747173]** 6 (box)

**Extent** 4 items

**"George Washington Remembers" - Washington reflects about his early days in the French and Indian War, narrated by Roger Mudd**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180597

**Unit Date** 2004

**DVDs [X031747173]** 6 (box)

**Extent** 1 items

**"George Washington's Will" on Discovery Channel**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180599

**Unit Date** 2001 February 22

**VHS\_(Videocassettes) [X031747173]** 6 (box)

**Extent** 1 Cassettes

**"George Washington's Will" on Hearst-Argyle Television, Washington, D.C.**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180600

**Unit Date** 2001 February

**VHS\_(Videocassettes) [X031747173]** 6 (box)

**Extent** 1 items

**"George Washington's Will" on Channel 8, Washington, D.C.**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180601

**Unit Date** 2001 February 21

**VHS\_(Videocassettes) [X031747173]** 6 (box)

**Extent** 1 items

**Microscope Slides on the Conservation of Washington's Wills**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180602

**Unit Date** circa 1998-2002

**Slides [X031747174]** 1 (Artifact)

**Extent** 9 items