

St. Charles County Circuit Court Documents



BEFORE TREATMENT

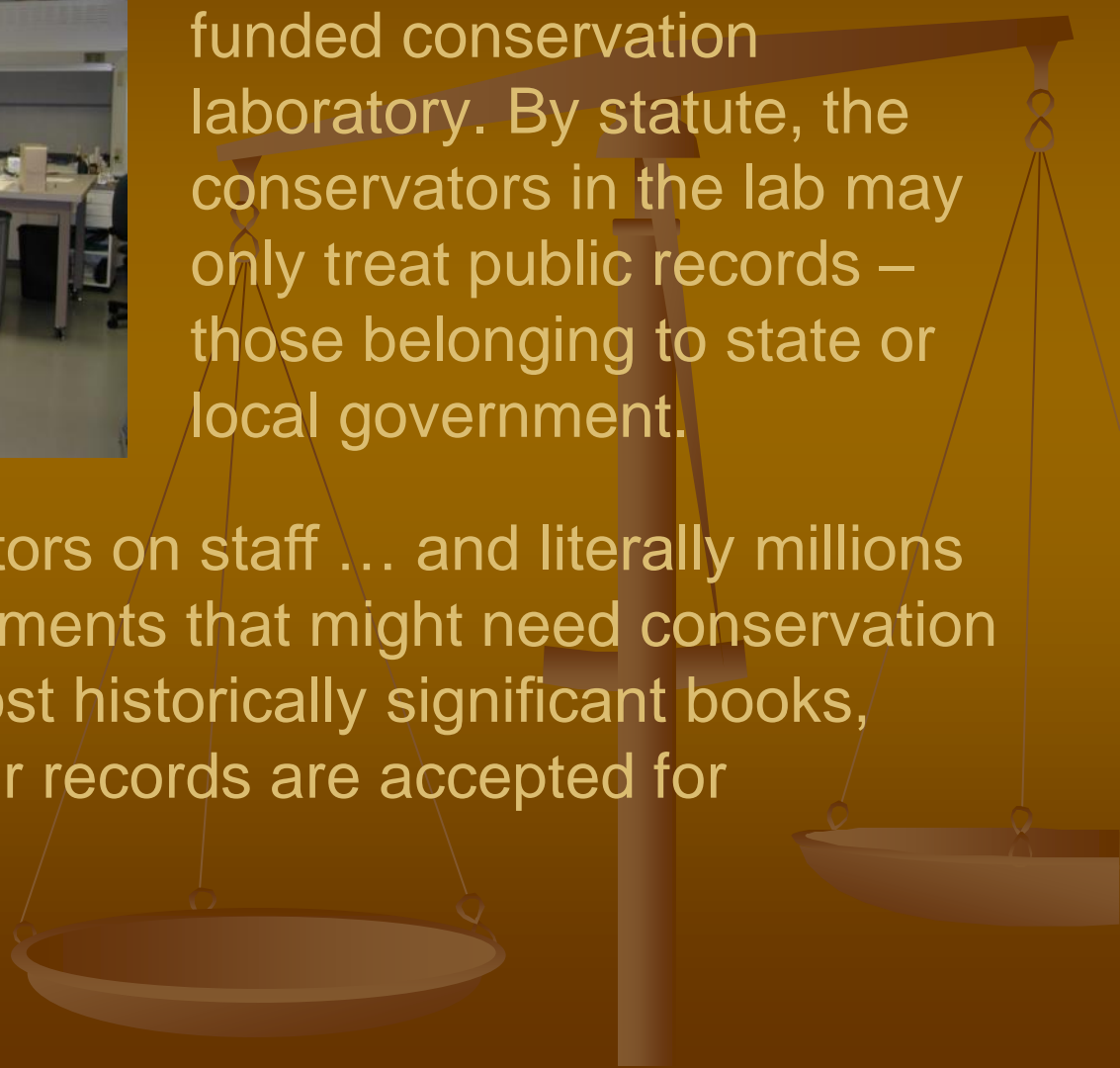
AFTER TREATMENT

Conservation Treatment by the
Missouri State Archives



The Missouri State Archives has the state's only publicly funded conservation laboratory. By statute, the conservators in the lab may only treat public records – those belonging to state or local government.

With only two conservators on staff ... and literally millions of historical public documents that might need conservation attention ... only the most historically significant books, papers, maps, and other records are accepted for treatment in the lab.

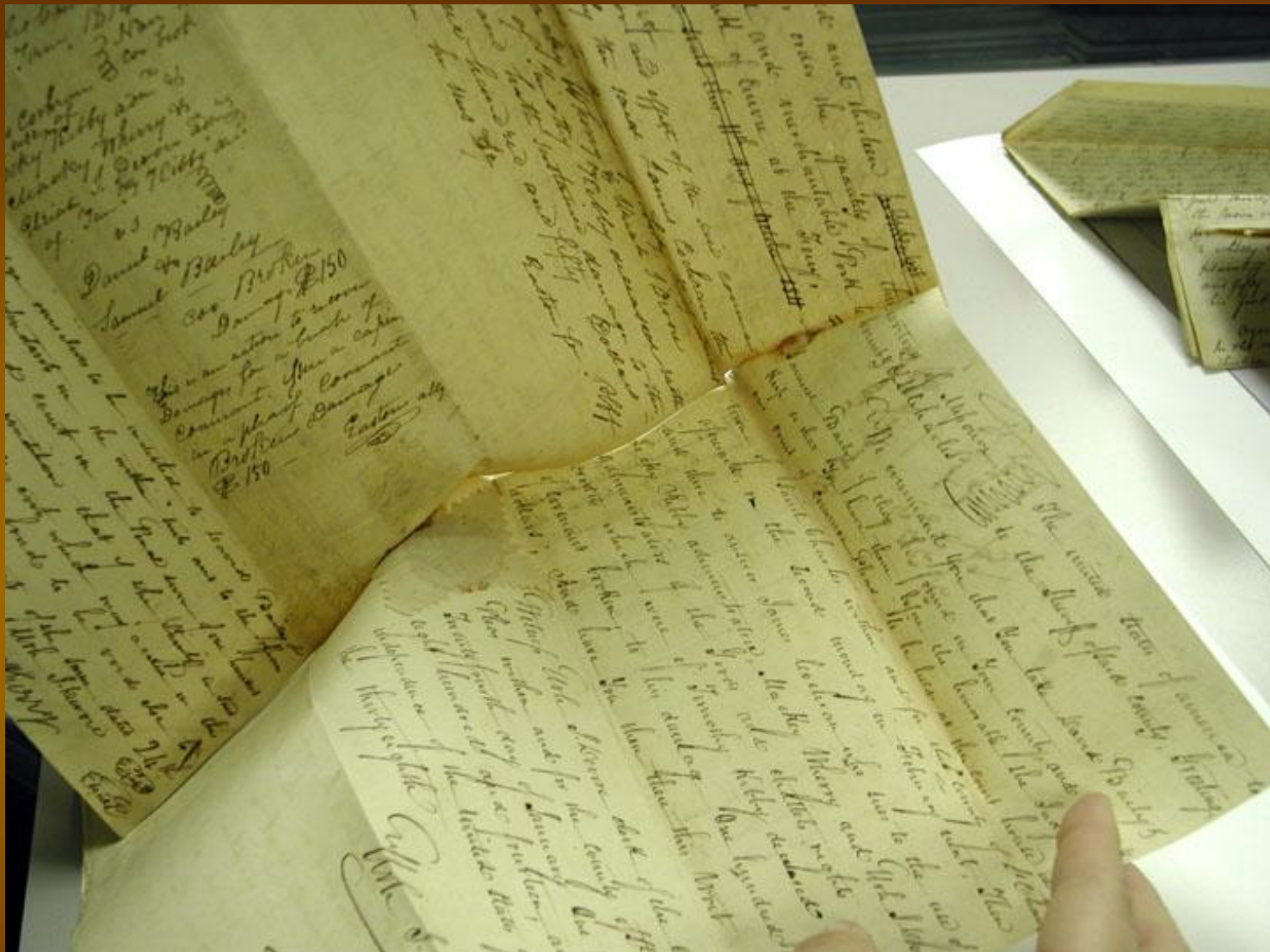


Field Archivists from the Missouri State Archives' Local Records Preservation Program (LRPP) help local government agencies evaluate and preserve documents in their collections. LRPP Archivists—often in conjunction with local volunteers—inventory and organize the collections in preparation for microfilming. In some cases, conservation treatment is required before filming. This program illustrates the lab work court case files in a cooperative project of the St. Charles Circuit Court and St. Charles County Historical Society.





The documents had been tightly folded inside paper wrappers.



Many of the documents were attached with starch wafers, which would make filming much more difficult. Some of the wafers were obscuring text or causing the paper to tear.



The first step was to clean the documents with a rubber dry-cleaning sponge.



Next we immersed the documents in a bath of deionized water and calcium hydroxide.



After the starch wafers had softened (about 15 minutes), we removed the documents from the bath and separated the wafers with a thin palette knife.



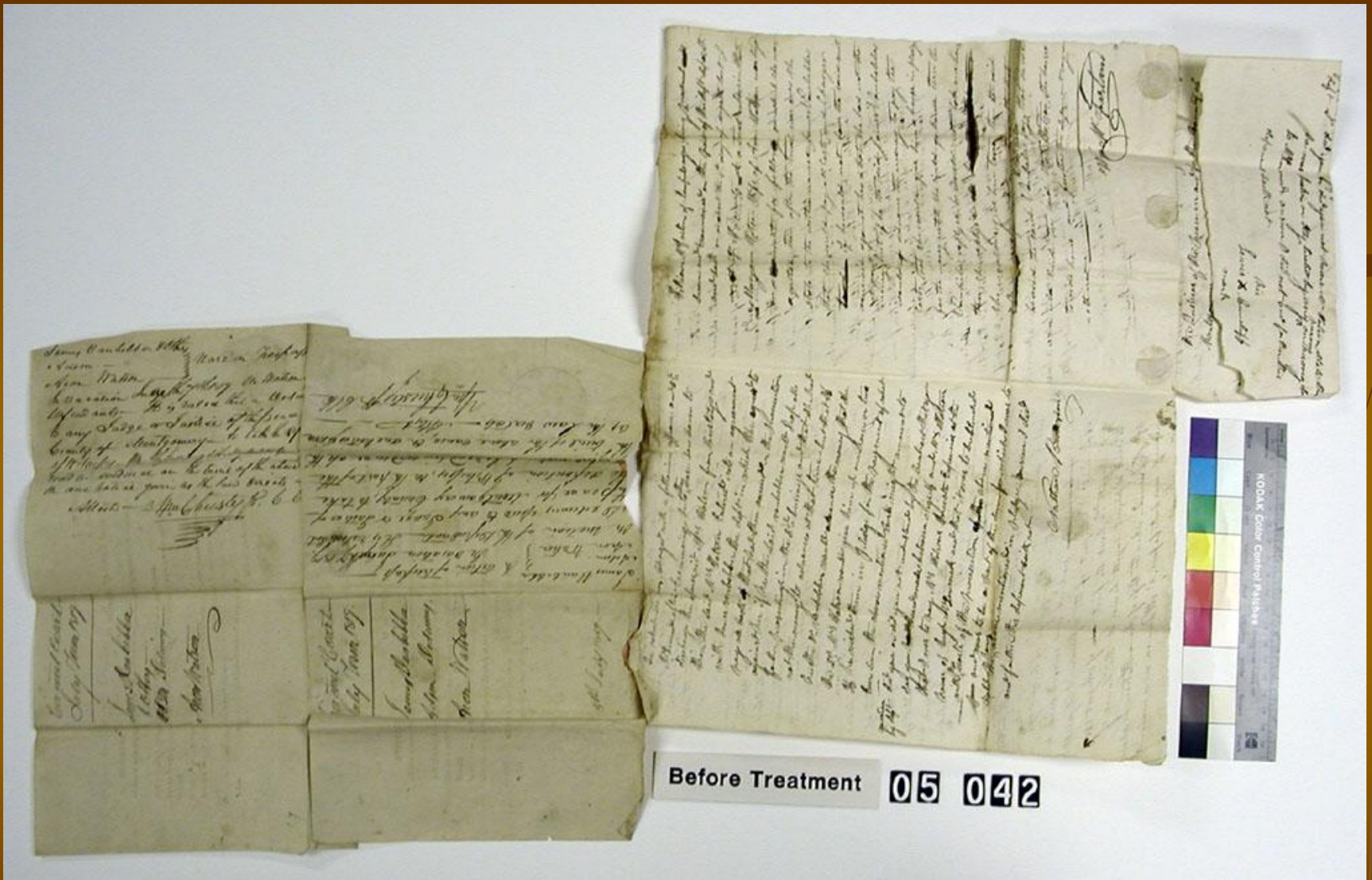
We removed the softened wafer fragments using a palette knife and cotton balls.



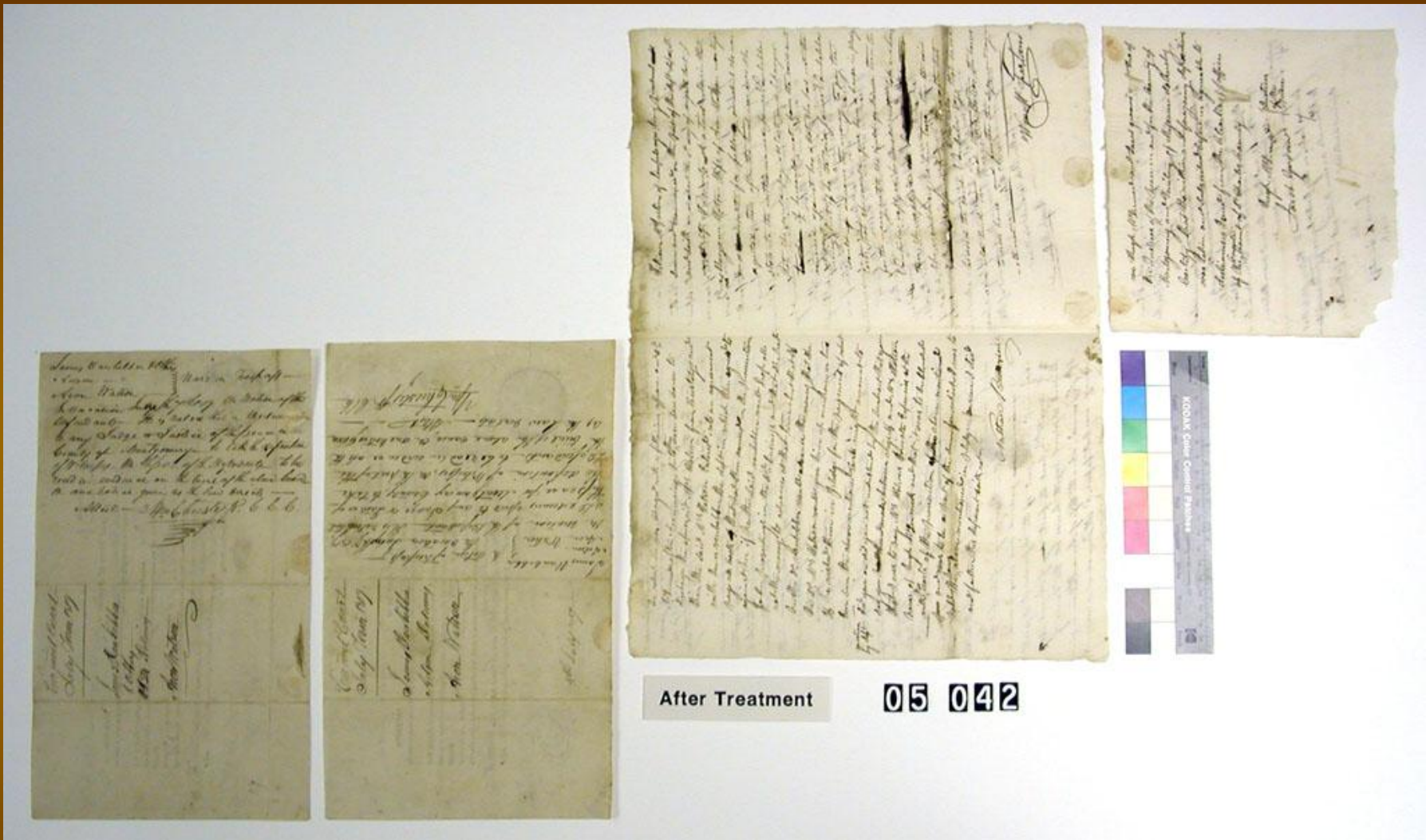
After the wafers were removed, we returned the documents to a fresh water bath to wash the soluble acid degradation products from the paper. Here the yellowed water shows some of the impurities removed from the paper.



We then placed the documents between wool felts to dry overnight.



Before treatment: Four documents are attached together with starch wafers, making them difficult to read or store properly.



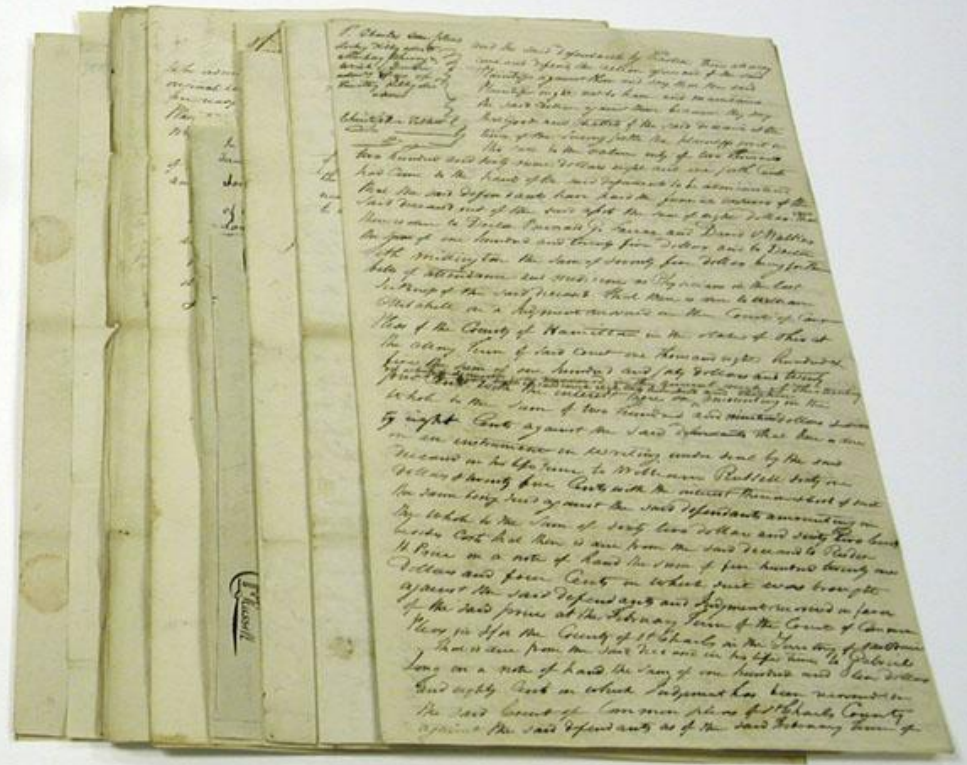
After Treatment

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After treatment: The documents are separated, and can be handled, microfilmed, and stored properly.



BEFORE TREATMENT



AFTER TREATMENT

Another example of before and after treatment.

Local Records Preservation Program

<http://sos.mo.gov/archives/localrecs/>

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