



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Preserving the Past:

Cleveland County Marriage Records Preservation Project Safeguards History

Cleveland County, NC — The Cleveland County Record Preservation Project is underway, aimed at preserving original marriage records dating back to the 1850s. These invaluable historical documents, previously at risk of deterioration due to acidic paper and storage, are being restored to ensure their longevity for future generations.

The primary goal of the project is to deacidify and encapsulate these records, slowing the embrittlement process and protecting them from further damage. "Each time a record was accessed, the fragile paper would deteriorate further, especially those from the 1800s and early 1900s," Susan Ledford, Asst. Register of Deeds explained. By carefully deacidifying the documents and placing them in protective sleeves and binders, the project is ensuring that these records remain accessible for genealogists, historians, and the public for years to come.

Notable records being preserved include the 1907 marriage license of O. Max Gardner and Fay Webb, prominent figures in North Carolina's history. Gardner served as Governor of North Carolina and held esteemed positions such as Undersecretary of the Treasury and Ambassador to Great Britain. Many other historically significant figures are also documented in these preserved records.

The preservation services are being expertly performed by **Kofile**, a Dallas-based company with preservation operations in Greensboro, North Carolina. Kofile is the largest and oldest preservation company in the United States, with a track record of preserving millions of records across the country. Their extensive experience and expertise ensure that Cleveland County's precious historical documents will be protected for generations to come.

Though digitization has already occurred, this project emphasizes the importance of safeguarding the original documents. "For those researching their family history, having access to these original records adds depth and authenticity to their findings. This initiative will benefit countless generations to come", Hon. Betsy S. Harnage, Register of Deeds, explains.

Funded in part by a state grant, the project is actively seeking additional support to continue preserving marriage records through the 1990s. The preservation work will remain ongoing until all historical records are fully protected.

For more information or to inquire about supporting the project, please contact Hon. Betsy S. Harnage at Rod.Vitals@clevelandcountync.gov or 704-484-4834.



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