

ARCHIVAL CATALOG & COMPARATIVE EVIDENCE SHEET

A Study of Early Delaware Valley Probate Records and Clerical Transcription Integrity

Genealogical Proof Standard (GPS) Background: This formal catalog sheet documents and compares the two primary physical instruments of Daniel Skinner Sr.'s 1813 estate: the original Wayne County Courthouse (WCCH) probate file and a contemporaneous Register-certified copy acquired from a private collection. Both documents serve as vital evidentiary links in resolving the pioneer's 1813 death year (correcting secondary 1812 accounts) and establishing the direct lineage of his daughter, Lilly (Skinner) Land, whose post-Revolutionary marriage smoothed over frontier borders.

I. ARCHIVAL MANUSCRIPT PROFILES

	SC-1813-001 (Original WCCH File)	SC-1813-002 (Certified Copy File)
Official Custody	Wayne County Register of Wills, Honesdale, PA (Original Court File)	Private Historical Collection, Narrowsburg, NY (Acquired via eBay)
Proximity / Proving Date	Primary Source. Executed Feb 22, 1813. Sworn March 1, 1813.	Contemporaneous Copy. Executed and Sealed March 1, 1813.
Paper Stock & Structure	Handmade, unbleached cotton & linen rag paper. Heavy laid wire mold structure.	Premium wove rag paper. Smoother surface, no grid lines. Folded into a 4-page folio sheet.
Dimensions (Sheet)	approx. 8.1 in. x 12.8 in. (206 mm x 325 mm) per leaf. 3 loose leaves, written front & back.	approx. 8.2 in. x 13.1 in. (208 mm x 333 mm). Single folded sheet yielding 4 pages.
Ink & Penmanship	Oxidized dark-brown iron gall ink. Shaky, compact signature of Daniel Skinner Sr.	Uniform rust-brown iron gall ink. Highly fluid, elegant clerical hand of Register Eliphalet Kellogg.
Security Features	Physical presence in courthouse file; original signatures and marks of executors/witnesses.	Raised, three-dimensional embossed paper-seal of the Wayne County Register's Office on Page 4.
Physical Condition	Stable; mild marginal fraying on right edge of leaf 1; natural oxidative browning.	Very Good; prominent horizontal crease folds; light staining at foot of folio; red-wax residue intact.

II. HISTORICAL CRITIQUE & COMPARATIVE TEXTUAL DISCREPANCIES

Under the rules of the **Genealogical Proof Standard (GPS)**, when establishing a conclusive historical pedigree or title chain, researchers must reconcile any textual conflicts. A rigorous comparative examination of Document A and Document B demonstrates that while they are legally equivalent, **Document A (Court File) is the superior authority**. The following table maps the subtle clerical normalizations and transcription errors committed by Register Eliphalet Kellogg when creating the certified transcript on March 1, 1813:

Will Section	Original Text (Doc A)	Certified Copy Text (Doc B)	Historical & GPS Significance
Subject Name	'...publish this my last Will and Testament, in manner and form following...'	'...do make and publish this my last Will and Testament in manner and form following. Viz. '	Kellogg inserted standard legal shorthand 'Viz.' (videlicet) to summarize the following clauses, normalizing the transition.
Bequeathing Daughters	'...bequeath unto my Daughters Lilly Land and Sarah Conklin...'	'...bequeath unto my Daughter Lilly Land and Sarah Conklin...'	Singular Clerical Slip: Kellogg accidentally omitted the plural 's,' grammatically grouping both daughters into a singular term.
Synonymous Legal terms	'...the residue or remainder of the Lot of which...'	'...the remainder or residue of the lot given in part...'	Word-Order Transposition: A typical clerical shift showing that even official copies suffer from memory-based transpositions during handwriting.
Mansion Geography	'...mansion house and buildings where I now live...'	'...mansion house and buildings when I now live...'	Critical Error: Kellogg wrote 'when' instead of 'where.' Legally, 'where' sets the physical homestead site; 'when' is a nonsensical temporal slip.
Testator's Signature	' Dan Skinner '	' Daniel Skinner '	Name Normalization: Daniel signed with his customary compact abbreviation 'Dan.' The clerk expanded and normalized it to 'Daniel' in the copy.
Executor Oath Omission	Includes separate Executors' Oath sheet sworn by Rosabella and Nathan Skinner .	Omitted. Transcribes only the Will and the Witness Proof block.	Original docket sheets show separate procedural papers; the certified copy flattens the file, hiding the mark (+) made by Rosabella.

III. INSTRUCTIONS FOR ARCHIVAL HOUSING

Preservation Standards for cotton-rag documents: 1. Never enclose these documents in common vinyl or PVC plastic sleeves. Use exclusively stable, archival-grade polyester (such as Mylar D) or acid-free polyethylene sleeves. 2. To neutralize migrating environmental acids, store the sleeved pages flat within a rigid, buffered archival box containing calcium carbonate. 3. Maintain relative humidity strictly between 35% and 50% to prevent the growth of mold or iron gall ink ink-rot. 4. Keep the originals in complete darkness; direct sunlight or standard fluorescent bulbs will rapidly fade the oxidized brown iron gall script.