

Working with unpublished primary sources

Go to the College Archives & Special Collections during the hours on the handout from Matt or at another time, in consultation with him (francimr@potdham.edu). Choose one of the documents from the Bertrand Snell folder provided to complete the assignment below.

From Peter Burkholder, "Getting Medieval on American History Research: A Method to Help Students Think Historically," *History Teacher* 43 (2010): 545-62.

"[D]iplomatics is a powerful method for determining not only the who, what, when, where, and why of sources, but also for systematically organizing their content, cross-referencing them with others, and placing them into context."

One goal of the assignment is to emphasize the importance of reading primary sources in their entirety and carefully. You may be looking for particular information in a source, but you also want to see what is actually there and what you didn't expect. Historical writing follows its sources. I hope your close reading of individual documents will allow other in the class to see connections when we put your notes together.

Source of document:

Nature of document:

Time identifiers (dates or general statements introducing the document or in the text of the document):

Places listed by name or generally:

People listed by name or generally:

Institutions or organizations listed by name or generally:

Legislation, administrative programs, governmental bodies:

Events referenced specifically or generally:

Document summary:

Possible leads for research: