



Salt Lake County
records management
& ARCHIVES

Salt Lake County (Utah). Clerk Marriage Applications and Licenses, 1887-1905

Series #CL-023

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Overview of Records

Creator:	Salt Lake County Clerk
Title:	Marriage Applications and Licenses
Dates:	1887-1905
Series Number:	CL-023
Quantity:	14 boxes (13 CF Arc, 1 Manu Letter, 3 Microfilm reels), 13.45 cubic ft.
Arrangement:	Numbered consecutively from number 1 beginning in 1887. Alphabetical index.
Abstract:	Applications and licenses for marriages first issued by the clerk of the probate court then by the county clerk after the probate court was dissolved.

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions:	None
Use Restrictions:	None
Preferred Citation:	Application or license number; Box number; Marriage Applications and Licenses, 1887-1905; Salt Lake County Clerk; Salt Lake County Records Management & Archives, West Valley City, Utah.
Provenance:	Transferred from the Utah State Archives in 2001.
Related Records:	Indexes by both grooms and brides names are available for 1896-1907, Books G-L and M to 4 Marriage Certificate Record Book, 1872-1889 (bulk 1887-1889), Series PC-012

History Note

The Salt Lake County Clerk was first created as Clerk of the County Court in 1850 by the provisional government of the State of Deseret. The clerk also acted as ex-officio clerk of the probate court. The Clerk's duties as probate court clerk ended when the granting of statehood in 1896 dissolved the probate court. Following statehood, the name was officially changed to County Clerk.

The County Clerk is the accountant and bookkeeper of the county and is required to keep an official record of every business transaction of the county and carefully file all papers, books, and records which pertain to public affairs. The clerk also has a number of responsibilities in the conduct of elections and the organization of political parties in Utah. (Source: Utah State Archives Agency History #956)

Scope and Content Note

Marriage records most often consist of applications and licenses. Applications are considered private and are available only to the subject for up to 100 years (UCA 63-2-202). Licenses, the civil record providing recognition of a marriage, are generally public. Beginning in 1888, an application was filed first. Then the marriage license was filed with the application. These records are the original applications and licenses with original signatures. Information on applications gives family history data: dates and places of birth, number of previous marriages, parents' names, etc. The license includes names, addresses, and ages of bride and groom; date and number of license; date of marriage; title and signature of person performing the ceremony; and signatures of bride, groom, witnesses, and county clerk. If permission was required for the marriage of minors, that too was recorded. Entries were numbered consecutively from number one beginning in 1887. In 1905, the clerk started over again with number one.

Indexes by bride and groom names are available for 1896-1907. The Western States Marriage Index, maintained online by BYU-Idaho Special Collections indexes marriages from all counties in Utah for various date spans, including most before 1900.

Locating civil marriage records in Utah prior to 1887 can be difficult as historically there wasn't a legal requirement to record them in any government register. Some early probate judges kept journals or records in which they might have written about the marriages they performed. These can be found at major Utah archives and libraries. One example is a journal of Elias Smith, a probate judge for Salt Lake County between 1852 and 1882. *Journal of Elias Smith of Salt Lake City, Utah*. Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1949. (FHL films 00424-25; computer number 386505)