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New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS) Partners with the Congregational Library & Archives to Digitize Early Church Records

January 7, 2016—Boston, Massachusetts—New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS) is pleased to announce its participation in *New England's Hidden Histories: Providing Public Access to the Manuscripts of New England's First Churches, Incubators of American Democracy*. NEHGS, the Congregational Library & Archives (CLA), the Phillips Library of the Peabody Essex Museum, and the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ have received a grant of \$210,000 from the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) in support of the *New England's Hidden Histories* program. The grant will enable the digitization of 28,000 pages of manuscript church records, personal papers of pastors and deacons, and ministerial conference records, dating from 1641 to the mid-1800s.

"As part of its ongoing effort to digitize the genealogical and historical treasures in its collections and make them available to a wide audience online, NEHGS is proud to be a co-recipient of the prestigious CLIR *Digitizing Hidden Collections* grant and to participate in this important project," said Jean Maguire, Director of the NEHGS Library. "This partnership will open up to researchers our rich holdings of early American church membership and vital records, correspondence, diaries, and family papers, including those of Michael Wigglesworth, the well-known Puritan minister and author of America's first best seller, *The Day of Doom*."

"These documents cast more light on early New England life and culture than any other discrete set of sources," said James Cooper, Director of New England's Hidden Histories. "We are pleased to make them available to scholars and the public, and we are delighted to establish a foundation for ongoing partnerships with the New England Historic Genealogical Society, the Phillips Library, and the Connecticut UCC Archive, with whom we share so many scholarly goals."

The grants were awarded to collections of "high scholarly value" at libraries and repositories with commitments to digitization and wide public accessibility. New England's Hidden Histories is one of just eighteen funded projects out of 165 applicants. Established in 2005, New England's Hidden Histories is an ongoing program of the Congregational Library and Archives that seeks to secure, archive, digitize, transcribe, and make available online New England's early manuscript church records. Documents contributed by NEHGS will also be made available through [AmericanAncestors.org](https://www.AmericanAncestors.org).

[Learn more about the project](#) and see the [CLIR announcement of awards](#).

About American Ancestors and New England Historic Genealogical Society

The founding genealogical society in America, New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS) was established in 1845. Today it has a national collecting scope and serves more than 150,000 constituents through an award-winning website, www.AmericanAncestors.org. Since 1845, NEHGS has been the country's leading comprehensive resource for genealogists and family historians of every skill level. Today NEHGS provides constituents with worldwide access to some of the most important and valuable research tools anywhere.

American Ancestors is the public brand and user experience of NEHGS representing the expertise and resources available for family historians of all levels when researching their origins across the country and around the world. NEHGS's resources, expertise, and service are unmatched in the field and their leading staff of on-site and online genealogists includes experts in early American, Irish, English, Scottish, Italian, Atlantic and French Canadian, African American, Native American, Chinese, and Jewish research. Expert assistance is available to members and nonmembers in a variety of ways. The NEHGS library and archive, located at 99 - 101 Newbury Street in downtown Boston, is home to more than 28 million items, including manuscript documents, genealogical records, books, photographs, and other items dating back hundreds of years."

Media Contact:

Henry Hornblower
henry.hornblower@nehgs.org
Direct: 617.226.1266

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New England Historic Genealogical Society
99 - 101 Newbury St. | Boston, MA | 02116, USA
888 - 296 - 3447
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