

Town of Red Hook

INDEX OF CONDITONAL SALE CONTRACTS

The Index of Conditional Sale Contracts is a record of the filing of Conditional Sale Contracts with the Town Clerk, as required under Chapter 642 of the Laws of 1922 of New York State. The Law provided that such contracts should be filed with the Town Clerk of the Town in which the purchaser resided. The Town Clerk was required to enter in the Index the names of the buyer and seller, the date of contract, the day and hour of filing, a brief description of the goods, the price named in the contract and the date of its cancellation, and also to index the book under the names of both seller and buyer. The practice was discontinued in 1965, though cancellations were noted though 1966.

The Index of Conditional Sale Contracts is a permanent record as required by the State Archives and Records Administration (SARA) Schedule MU-1, Section 11. [330] a. It is not restricted.

A Conditional Sale Contract, also known as a Retail Installment Contract, was a legal document by which a buyer agreed to specified time payments for the purchase of goods. The buyer would take possession of the goods, but the seller would retain title to the goods until the contract was satisfied. These contracts were commonly used for purchase of vehicles, machinery, business equipment, household goods or appliances. They were valid for a period of three years, but could be extended for additional periods of one year by refileing of the contract. The individual contracts are filed separately from the Index, though the series may not be complete.

This record series consists of 5 bound volumes recorded in chronological sequence:

- Volume I, 1922 - July 1937
- Volume II, August 1937 - 1951
- Volume III, 1952 - 1956
- Volume IV, 1957 - 1960
- Volume V, 1961 - 1965

Within each volume, filings are entered under alphabetical headings by first initial of the surname of the buyer, in chronological order of filing. Each volume has a separate section for Mc filings, but no section for X filings.

The volumes are all handwritten, with variations in ink and some degree of fading in the first two volumes. Volume I is in poor condition, with browning of pages and many stains, smudges, corrections and erasures. Volume II is in fair condition, with yellowing of pages and frequent stains, smudges corrections and erasures. Volumes III - V are in good condition, though smudges, stains, corrections and erasures are common.

The information in the Index of Conditional Sale Contracts is organized as follows: number of filing / surname of buyer / given name of buyer / name of seller / description of goods / price named in contract / date of contract / date of filing / time of filing / date of cancellation / date of renewal. In volume I, the given name of the buyer precedes the surname, though sometimes they were interchanged. The date of cancellation and date of renewal sections were rarely used. Other information, such as transfers, changes of address, leases and promissory notes is noted.

The index included with each volume was not used as such; the index at the end of volumes II - V was only used to record extra filings when alphabetical headings were full.

Volumes III - V of the Index of Conditional Sales Contracts also contain filings of U. S. Treasury tax liens. They are filed with the person against whom the lien was filed listed as buyer, and the U. S. Treasury Department listed as seller.

Where filings are not in chronological order, notation has been made with the page. Where alphabetical misfilings have been found, notation has been made with the title page of the volume. Where filings exceeded the space for an alphabetical section, they were continued elsewhere. Such continuations have been noted as they occur.

When two parties were the buyer in a contract, filing may occur under each name, or only under one name. In instances where a third party (bank or other institution) was assigned to hold the note for the purchase, the filing is entered as two separate transactions. The first was filed under the name of the buyer, with the name of the seller including a notation of assignment to the third party. The second filing occurs under the name of the seller (in the column for buyer) with the name of the third party under the heading for seller, with a notation that it was acting for the buyer of the goods. There may be instances where such three party transactions were not filed under all names.

Where business names begin with initials, they may be filed under the surname (ex. J. H. Byrne Chevrolet is filed under B for Byrne, or they may be filed under the initial (ex. C. Rich Fruit Juices is filed under C.).

This record series provides valuable historical and genealogical information about the people living in the Town, and the cost and types of goods that they purchased.