The Digital Experience At Syracuse University Library

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Special Collections Research Center

Our Selection Criteria

- Discrete manageable collection
- Access:
  - Collections fully processed with inventories
  - Anticipated need and research value
  - Large number of queries
- Physical condition
  - Fragile, brittle, susceptible to damage
- Fundability
  - All projects externally funded

In-house or Out-source

- Infrastructure / tools to complete project in-house
  - Staff expertise
  - Tools / technology
  - Storage of master and derivative images
- Size of project
- Time
- Costs
  - Out-sourcing can be more cost effective
  - Greater consistency

Early Projects @ SUL

- Provided opportunity to explore options and "new" tools
  - EAD
    - Yes, inventories are digitization projects
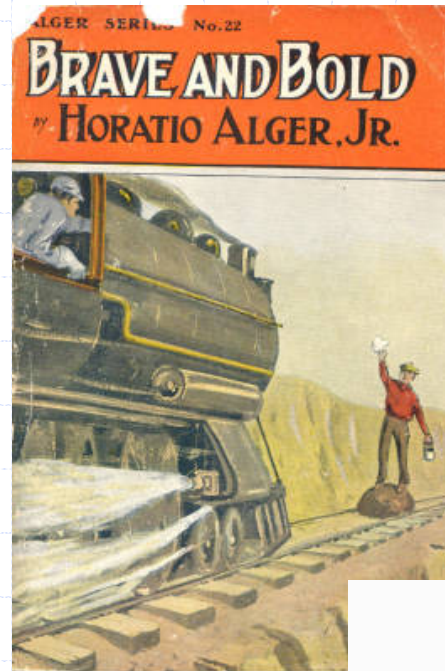 - Full-text:
    - Oneida Community
  - Images:
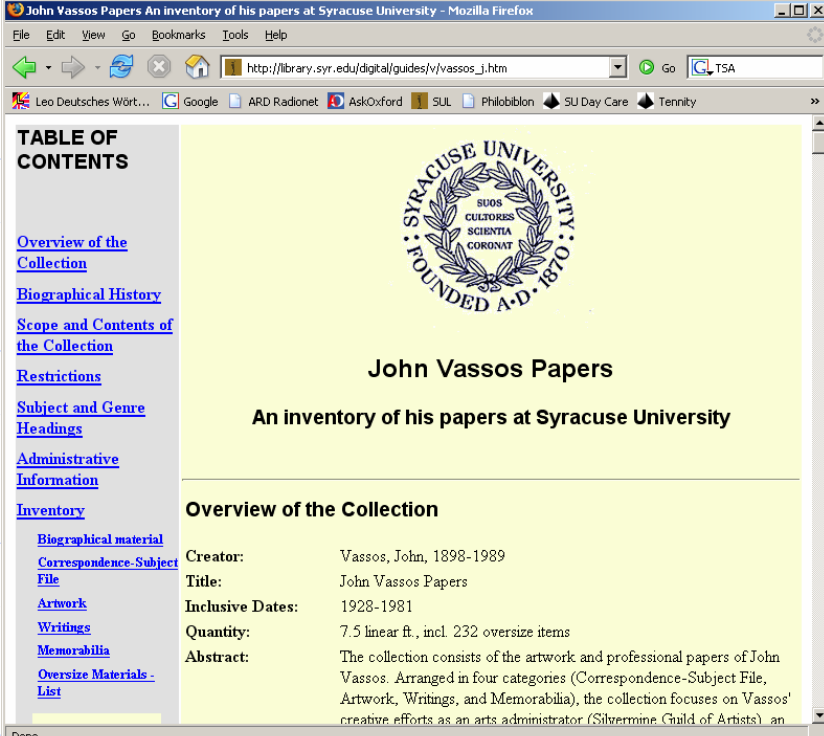   - Oneida Community
    - Street & Smith
    - Erie Railroad

The EAD Experience I

- Importance of online inventories
  - Indexed by Google and searchable
  - Provides researchers with immediate inventory information
- EAD: A standard for the encoding of archival collection inventories
  - Context sensitive searching across collections
  - Began using SGML, now XML based
- Early adopters in '96
  - SGML delivery issues
  - Infrastructure could not support delivery on institutional and user end.

The EAD Experience II

- New beginning in 2005
  - XML fluent student intern (now staff)
  - Streamlined encoding
  - Adapted tools for conversion from XML to HTML
  - Exploring delivery of EAD using CONTENTdm

What If We're Not Using EAD

- ◆ Word-processing files
  - ▪ Easier to control look and feel
- ◆ Spreadsheets(Excel™)
  - ▪ Easier to manipulate data
- ◆ Ensure that data can be migrated and repurposed.
  - ▪ E.g., spreadsheet into content management system.

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    - http://www.copyright.cornell.edu/training/Hirtle_Public_Domain.htm
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Full-text Projects

◆ Inspired by Documenting American South and other similar projects

- OCR allows for easy searching of entire text
- General formatting of original page retained to facilitate citation with minimal tagging to facilitate any future migration

◆ Pages images not created due to lack of infrastructure
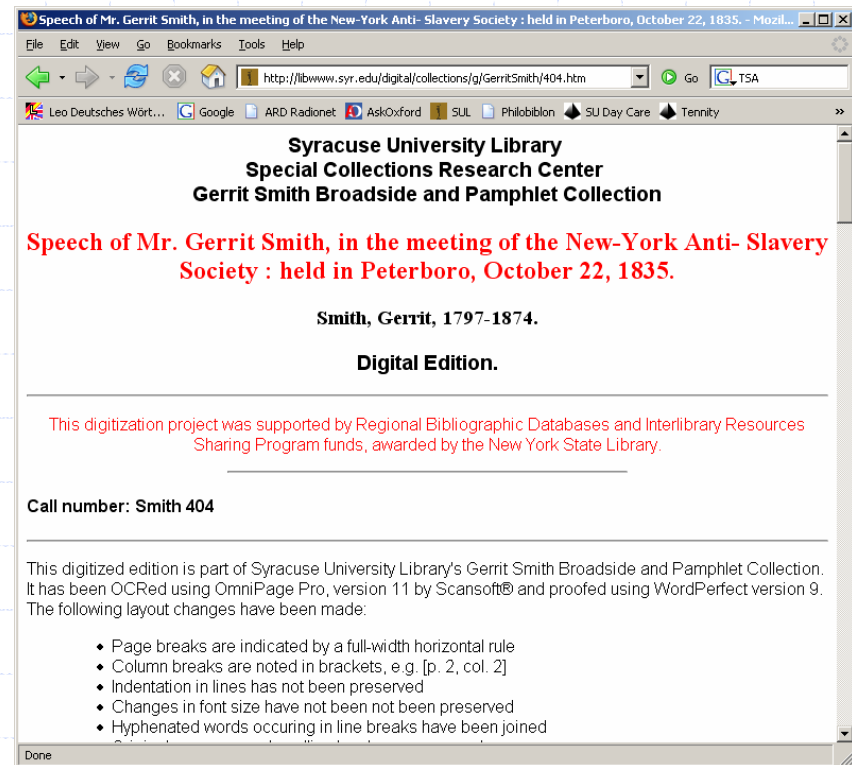
Imaging Projects

◆ Scanned to produce use-neutral master image

◆ Digital becomes primary access point

◆ Access originally through static HTML pages, now via CONTENTdm
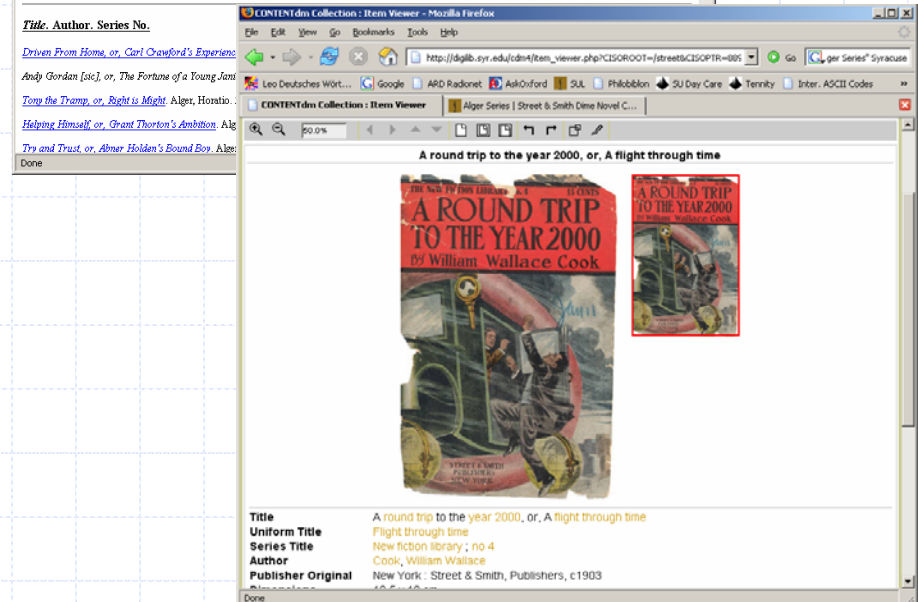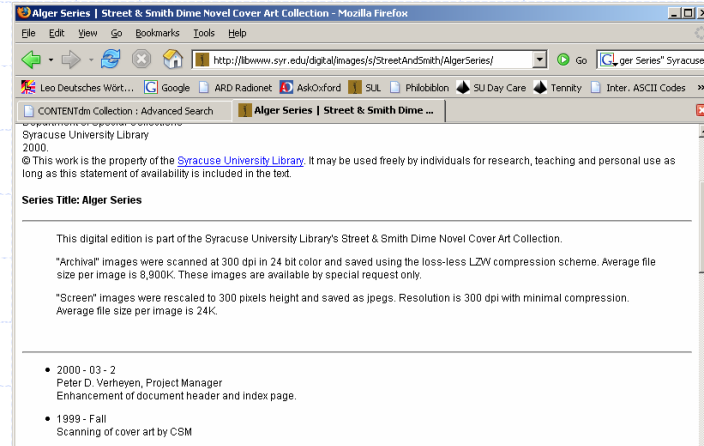
Metadata Creation

- ◆ Cross-walking of MARC records
- ◆ From inventories
  - ■ Databases
  - ■ Spreadsheets
- ◆ Excel is your friend
  - ■ "Easy" sorting of extracts from MARC record and other databases
  - ■ Concatenation of fields as appropriate
- ◆ Use of controlled vocabularies
  - ■ Facilitates searching across collections

Static HTML to CONTENTdm

- ◆ Acquisition of CONTENTdm in mid-2005
- ◆ Change from static HTML pages to database driven environment
- ◆ Formalization of metadata practices including subject headings
- ◆ Use of DC metadata for increased searchability within and across collections

CONTENTdm

- Retrospective conversion of all existing projects
- Creation of new projects
  - Eisenmann
  - Breuer
  - Boars Head Dramatic Society: compound objects, i.e. multi-page documents

CONTENTdm

- Access using CONTENTdm
  - Easy search form creation
  - Use of controlled vocabulary
  - Searchable within and across collections
  - Pan and zoom, scalable images
- Loss of "open web" searchability

I don't have CONTENTdm...

Add digital content to your website
- Static HTML pages with links to images
  - Knowledge of HTML required
- Make use of basic database programs
  - Basic programming skills required

◆ Don't have a website?
- Consider OCLC's hosted CONTENTdm
  - Role for CLRC?

◆ Create a stable environment, i.e. don't change URLs...

Impact on Public Services

- Be careful what you wish for!
- Increased digital and web presence = increased need of more staff to handle flood of questions/duplication orders
- Once your collections are online, they will be found by a global audience.
  - Indexing via Google
  - Have a plan for responding to requests for information and copies
    - Information on duplication costs
    - Information on managing your rights
      - Request to publish, fee structure, …

Impact on Public Services

- Increase of access to material makes for easier transaction?
- Yes and No.
  - YES
    - More direct ref questions (i.e. exact description and box #)
    - Increase in income for photo-duplication orders, other fees
  - NO
    - More questions = more staff time
    - More remote questions/orders = less visiting researchers
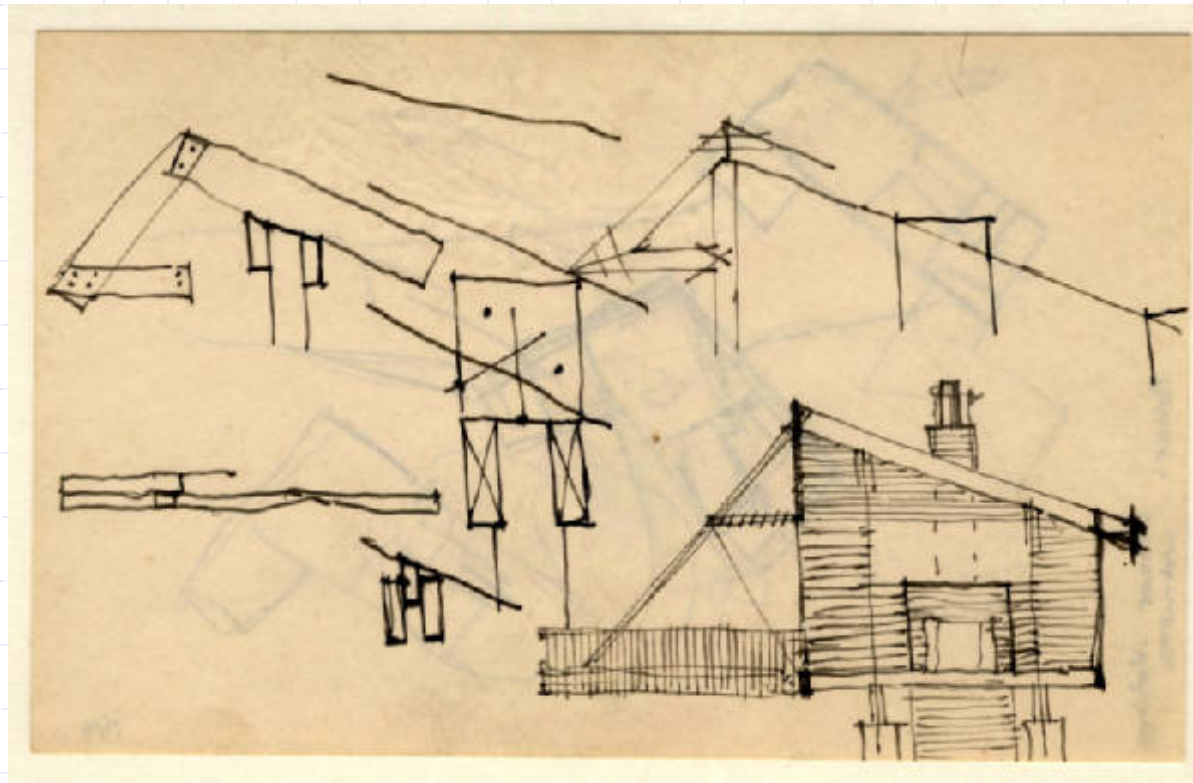
Success stories

◈ Saw increase in questions pertaining to/publication permissions for digital images.

◈ Some examples:

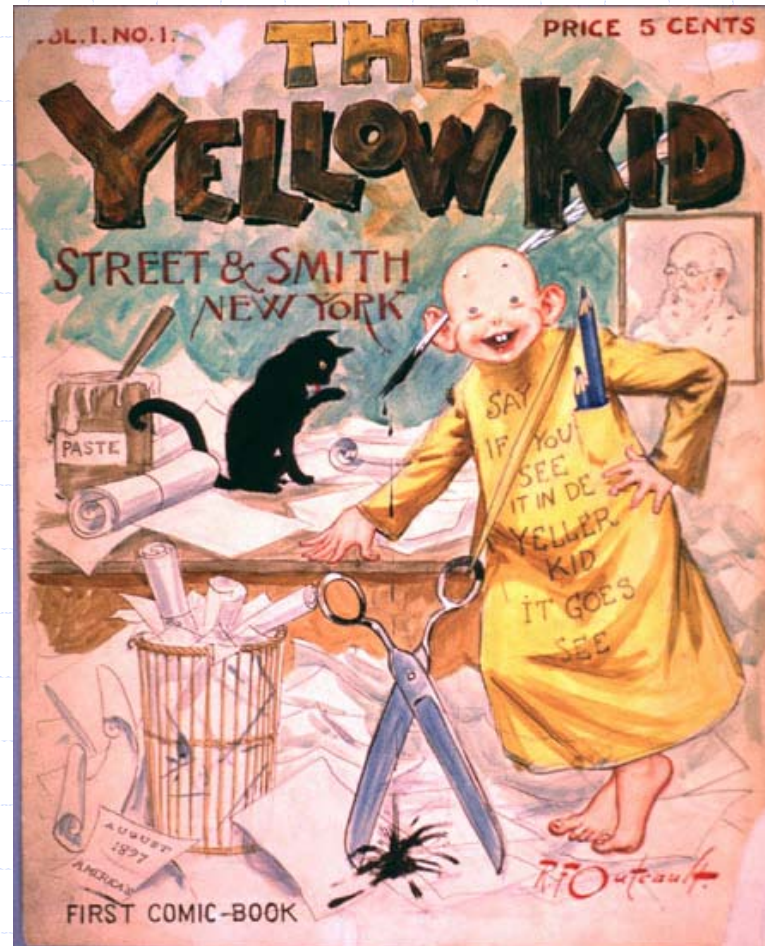■ Eisenmann - Discovery Health Channel's

Sideshow Stars: The True Story

Example – Exhibitions

- [Marcel Breuer](#)

Example – Print Publications

◆ Street and Smith

- ■ "Yellow Kid" – favorite for secondary school textbooks worldwide

Example – Research and Instruction

◆ [Oneida Community](#) – genealogy, graduate study

Syracuse University Library

- http://library.syr.edu/digital/
  - All projects
- http://digilib.syr.edu
  - CONTENTdm projects

- For more information:
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