

Scraps of Memories, Shards of Time: Preserving the African American Scrapbook Collection of Emory University Libraries, a *Save America's Treasures* grant project

PRESERVING THE AFRICAN AMERICAN SCRAPBOOK COLLECTION

Scrapbooks are frequently included in archives and libraries' special collections because they are valuable historical resources, whether they are a snapshot of a time period, such as school years or a journey, or the account of an entire lifetime of experiences. Scrapbooks present these stories in photographs, clippings, artwork, greeting cards and letters, invitations and objects. They are deeply personal, sometimes illuminating, and sometimes head-scratching.

Though invaluable research material, their use by scholars is often limited or completely restricted in order to prevent further damage to these complicated structures filled with everything imaginable. Scrapbooks have often been boxed, shelved, and then frankly ignored, probably to postpone complex and difficult, usually expensive, preservation decisions.

The National Park Service, through their *Save America's Treasures* grant program, awarded a three-year matching grant to the Emory University Libraries that funded our initial efforts into finally preserving a small selection of the many scrapbooks held in our Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library (MARBL). Our African American collections are especially rich with scrapbooks created by or about celebrities and well-respected leaders, but we have an equal wealth that were assembled by average people, who had something they wanted to say or preserve. Collecting black print culture is large part of the mission of the MARBL. The scrapbooks held in our African American collections, with their unique assemblage of the ephemera of everyday life, are irreplaceable objects that capture the visual culture of the African American experience in the United States. If we do not preserve them, we risk losing a central part of our country's full history.

The *Save America's Treasures* (SAT) grant funding allowed us to purchase equipment, supplies, and most importantly, hire staff to perform the work—basic conservation and rehousing

as well as digitally capturing the scrapbooks—in order to improve access to the collection. The Emory Libraries has committed to the importance of the digitization aspect of preserving collections, a growing program in research libraries as noted by The Association of Research Libraries (ARL), which “endorses digitization as an accepted preservation reformatting option for a range of materials” (ARL 2004, 1). As a member library, we fully support the ARL guiding principle to “promote and advocate barrier-free access to research and educational information resources” (www.arl.org/about).

Our grant project assembled a team from three different departments: MARBL (the special collections), Conservation, and Digitization & Digital Curation. Recognizing the grant's limited timeframe and resources, we knew we had to select the scrapbooks that were of the greatest research value, and that would be best served by both conservation treatment and creation of digital surrogates. Together the team did the research to balance historic and intellectual importance, frequency of use (whether actual or anticipated), and how well digital surrogates could capture the layers of information, with the amount and severity of each scrapbook's current condition problems. We each scored the items based on our departmental perspectives; when tallied, the numbers allowed us to select and group the scrapbooks into a project priority list. We narrowed our focus to the highest scoring/ranking scrapbooks.

The collection posed typical scrapbook problems, including multiple formats and layered materials all with various types of damage, including mirrored photographs, detaching items, cross-page spreads, brittle paper that when unfolded was larger than the album page, pressed flowers, and single-use items such as ticket stubs, napkins, and telegrams, none of which was meant to last through time. The items were attached with a variety of adhesives such as tapes, pastes and rubber cement, many failing. Questions arose such as whether we should undertake washing or solvent treatments to remove mold, water, and adhesive stains. How do we effectively preserve thick stacks of papers adhered on a single page; do we separate layers to reveal information, if so, then how do

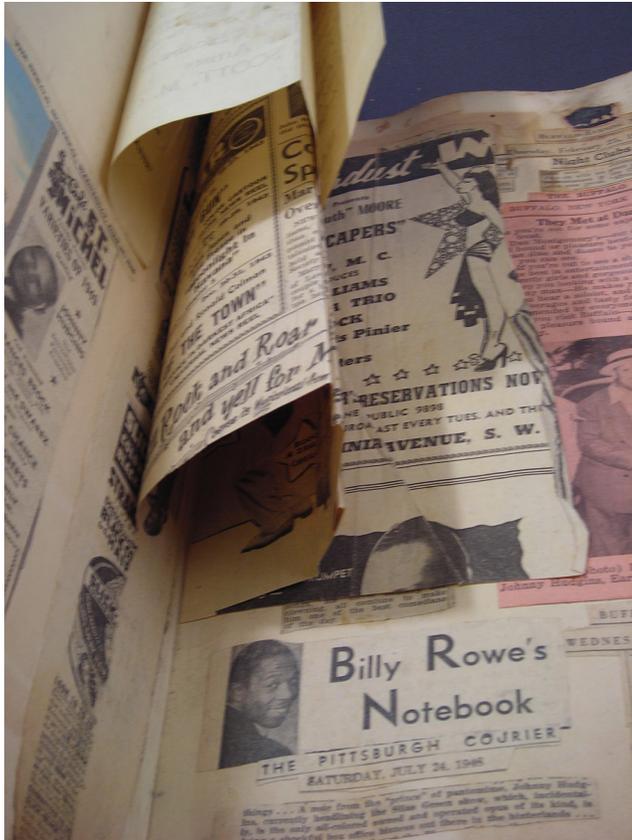


Fig. 1. Johnny Hudgins scrapbook—multiple layers of folded brittle newspaper.

we reassemble them within the scrapbook? We developed a Treatment Survey Form to tally the occurrences of different types of damage, as well as record the numbers of extra images that would have to be shot of each page in order to capture multiple sides of items, such as a letter in an envelope, a pamphlet, the backs of photographs, and each layer of overlapping newspaper articles that had hidden information (fig. 1).

CALCULATING COSTS AND TIME

Potential conservation work was ranked on treatment levels we established many years ago based on the ARL's Preservation Statistics. Treatment times are divided into three levels that each factor in complexity of the technique along with staff expertise and the amount of time involved in doing the treatment. Level One work includes simple techniques such as dry cleaning, mending, and hinging, most of which is accomplished in less than fifteen minutes per task. Level Two tasks require somewhere between fifteen minutes and two hours. The treatments also require more expertise to accomplish, such as removing mold, replacing spines, or re-associating loose materials into an album. Level Three work is the most complex; treatments include tape removal and encapsulating

pages to reformat a scrapbook into a post-bound polyester encapsulation album. Level Three tasks take more than two hours to accomplish and require the most training and skills.

By knowing the average time it takes to accomplish the majority of the treatments and tasks each scrapbook required, we assigned dollar amounts to tasks and built a spreadsheet that calculated approximately how much each scrapbook would need, resource-wise. Having these time and dollar figures helped us further narrow to thirty-four scrapbooks that we thought we could accomplish within the three years of the grant, by a half-time conservation technician.

Digitization calculations were based on time trials and previous experience to determine how long it took to set up, shoot, process multiple iterations of a digital image, and file management factors such as the cost of storage. We allocated a portion, 60%, of a Digital Imaging Technician, and proposed to hire a graduate student assistant for ten hours per week. The grant also provided for small percentages of administrators from the three departments, including the manuscripts curator.

Thirty-four scrapbooks were ultimately selected, with dates ranging from 1883 to 1975. They include the scrapbooks of author Alice Walker, Spelman College graduate Virginia Hannon, W.S. Scarborough, who though born a slave, became

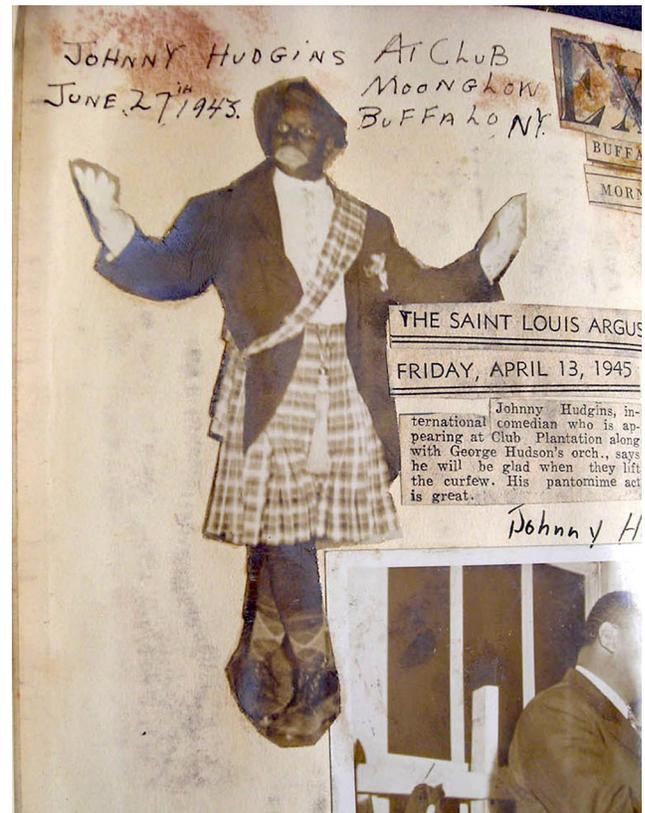


Fig. 2. Johnny Hudgins performs in black face; top right corner has mold stain.

an author, a professor of classics and eventually president at Wilberforce University, and vaudeville performers “Jolly” John Larkin, Johnny Hudgins, and Flourney Miller (fig. 2).

THE EVOLUTION OF THE PROJECT

Once the grant was awarded, we immediately posted a half-time Conservation Technician position, but had difficulty finding someone who met the requirements or was willing to work for the wage offered. In the end, this was a blessing, as it became clear early on in the grant that the conservation work was much more complicated and required more careful consideration and planning than had been originally planned. We were very fortunate to hire Kim Norman, who brought twenty years of experience and expertise to the project.

We also postponed hiring the intended graduate student assistant until our workflow was established, running smoothly, and the type of work and need for that position fully understood. In fact, we never hired a student because we thought that the digitizing was done more thoughtfully and consistently by professional staff. We shifted the student money to a staff line and increased the allocated percentage of time of the Digitizing Technician from 60% to 90%.

The project started with a group of six scrapbooks that were selected based on the current interest by and usage requests from researchers. The conservation treatment they needed was relatively uncomplicated and not time-consuming; also, the digitization imaging needs were fairly straightforward. This first group helped us develop initial workflow and transfers between the three departments. The policies established and conservation protocols devised during the work on the first group continued to inform our processes throughout the grant but as we worked through the later scrapbooks, it became increasingly clear that flexibility and changes were needed and to be expected.

The original treatment protocols had seemed reasonable, but we needed to balance treatment that was absolutely necessary against the overall conservation treatment of each scrapbook to stay within the limits of our grant schedule. Ever mindful of our defining intention to retain the original experience of interacting with the scrapbook, we had to make tough decisions. Did it mean not changing a scrapbook's format or structure? Should we remove all adhesives if the risk of damage was great or treatment too time-consuming? Should we remove items from acidic support pages or preserve as much of the original artifact as possible? For example we initially did not intend to photograph blank scrapbook pages. But when imagining the eventual end user experience of a virtual scrapbook, we decided it was necessary to digitally preserve the creator's original vision when organizing his or her scrapbook and that might include the blanks.

Throughout the grant project, we wrote a semi-regular blog which was hosted on the MARBL website

(<https://scholarblogs.emory.edu/marbl/tag/african-american-scrapbooks/>). After we posted an entry about Reverend Ollie Turner's scrapbook, an Emory senior read it and contacted us to say that Turner was her great-grandfather. Soon, we found ourselves hosting a Turner family reunion, held in MARBL, bringing together relatives from across the country to see the scrapbook, and who helped identify people and places in the photographs.

Our blog was featured in the library's print newsletter and online news feeds. The Emory campus institutional news also picked up our information, and their news release brought us local and national attention. Our project was included in a New York Times feature, and in the Atlanta Journal Constitution's Living section entitled “New Respect for Scrapbooks,” and in the Society for Georgia Archivists Newsletter. Kim also wrote an article for the Archival Products News publication.

CONSERVATION TREATMENT

Scrapbooks are complex amalgams of multiple types of deteriorating artifacts, assembled like a time capsule in book format. Scrapbooks in libraries and archives collections are like dirty little secrets tucked into vaults without any conservation treatment, awaiting curation and preservation decisions. Our project scrapbook themes ranged from chronological travel journals to stories of college experiences, military service, and family gatherings. Some were carefully arranged, while others seemed to be random assortments of ephemera (fig. 3).

During this grant project, we developed decision-making processes for treating different scrapbook formats. Historic importance, current condition, and frequency of use determined our conservation decisions. Whether turn-of-the-century constructions or 1970's *magnetic albums*, the

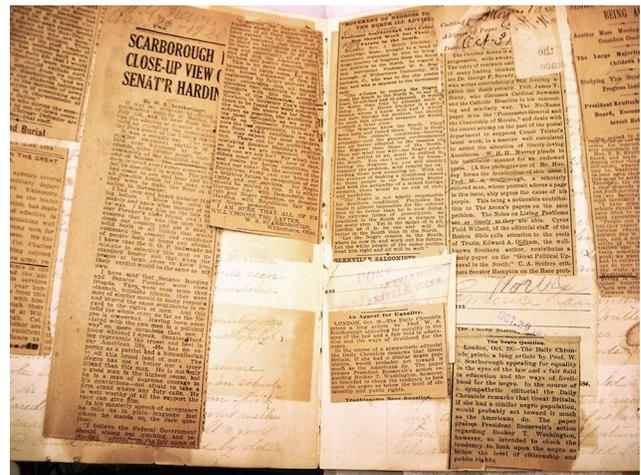


Fig. 3. Pages of deteriorating, acidic newspaper clippings in William S. Scarborough's scrapbook, originally a blank journal book structure.

collection of scrapbooks posed many conservation questions. Parameters of the grant such as time and budget constraints established boundaries around treatment phases, and these factors determined the proper course of action.

One of the most important things we learned was that each scrapbook would command its own treatment. A decision tree, originally developed to guide us, proved to be too complicated. No two items were alike, and though a decision tree can be a very useful tool, we abandoned it quickly.

The African American scrapbooks contained everything imaginable, from half-inch thick military patches to a dance card with the pencil still attached. Unlike traditionally flat book and paper items, the bulkiness of accumulated material within each scrapbook added challenges to the stressed original bindings. Sometimes we decided to separate pages in a scrapbook in order to prevent future damage, though often sections were already loose.

Our intention to retain as much of the original formats as possible did not arrest further deterioration, necessarily. Rather than going to extreme measures to separate acidic materials and remove all adhesives, we considered our approach as the first phase of treatment (fig. 4).

Papers, photographs, and objects were adhered to brittle pages with the entire spectrum of adhesives, all in different levels of failure. It was common to encounter multiple adhesives and layers of tape on one scrapbook page. Sometimes removing these materials was especially difficult or even impossible. For instance, notations written directly on the tape carrier layer were necessarily retained. Sometimes we chose not to remove an unreleased-tape or adhesive in order to avoid more damage.

Often, we were lucky enough to have an adhesive stain map to follow in order to reposition detached items. An example was the scrapbook made upon the retirement of Robert Churchwell, first black staff newspaper reporter in Nashville who reported specifically on education. The structure was made of heavy, hand-carved wooden covers and a rainbow of construction paper pages, bolted tightly at the spine. Over the years, all of the news articles and original collage pieces had released from every page. The stain map was crucial in reattaching everything, and though the treatment was straightforward and uncomplicated, it took 90 hours to complete, more time than any other scrapbook. Just as frequently, there was no apparent position for a loose item found between pages, and we had to study the context of the page to see whether or not the item belonged there. These were just a few of the conservation issues that we encountered.

Bound without regard to the thickness or weight of the contents, most of the book structures were strained beyond capacity, often wedge-shaped or completely broken. Disbinding proved to be necessary more often than not in order to protect the contents. As an added benefit, we were able to achieve better digital images from the flattened pages.

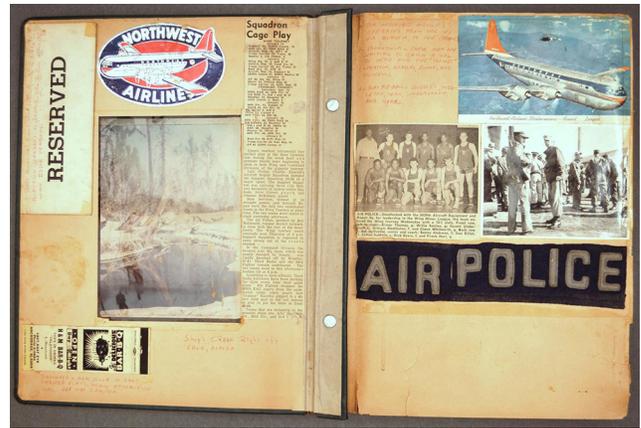


Fig. 4. Pages of artist Benny Andrew's scrapbook with handwritten annotations of photographs, felt patches, and ephemera.



Fig. 5. Support and interleaving pages of the Glaze and Rider Families scrapbook with handwritten annotations on adhered photographs.

Some of our scrapbooks began as blank journals, ledgers, or traditional photo albums; however, many started as repurposed textbooks, magazines, sketchbooks, and one was even stacks of file folders! A few were custom-made like artists' books. Some scrapbooks posed unique structural issues. This was the case with a shared album between two Georgia families, the Glaze and Rider families. In the 1960's, the Glaze family used the heavy support pages for their photos. The thin interleaving pages were used by the Rider family in the 1970's, for mostly saved newspaper articles. This structure was unique because of its original Bakelite plastic covers. Ultimately, the pages were removed from the fragile binding, encapsulated, and post-bound. We retained the original Bakelite covers and housed everything together in a custom-fitted box (fig. 5).

If we found no original binding structure intact or if the simple act of turning bound pages created more damage, we chose to reformat the scrapbook into an encapsulation book. Brittle support pages were weakened with the weight of heavy, attached items. Three-dimensional and problematic materials incorporated in the scrapbooks included photographs (ranging from albumen to contemporary color), artwork, metal and wooden objects, tassels, pamphlets, invitations, greeting

cards, and more. Occasionally, we found craft projects tucked into scrapbooks, making encapsulation tricky. Each of these materials had different preservation concerns.

If an item on a page required user-interaction, like unfolding large newspaper clippings, we had to decide the best conservation approach. One question we asked ourselves was whether or not to fully encapsulate, possibly leaving a page open at the top for access. A quarter-inch stack of telegrams received by vaudevillian Johnny Hudgins had caused severe distortion and damage. For this scrapbook, we decided the best solution was to separate and create new pages for the telegrams. Should we leave original and damaging fasteners such as staples? For example, author Alice Walker stapled her college photos to the support pages. We removed the staples and sewed through existing holes to secure the items.

Most of the volumes required stabilization repairs before being digitized. However, we did not anticipate the reality of providing immediate treatments identified during the digitization process. For example, a side-sewn pamphlet did not open enough to reveal all of the content for optimal digitization and needed its threads snipped (and later re-sewing.) While not frequent, we found ourselves providing on-the-spot treatments. If the conservation treatment dramatically changed the original structure, those specific scrapbooks were reimaged to capture the final bound product.

Developing clear lines of communication between our three library departments was most critical. Regularly updating a shared document allowed each team member to track where items were in the process. Ensuring that our team had proper *care and handling* instruction of such fragile materials proved beneficial for everyone involved. Re-associating loose items, separating glued stacks of paper, lifting photographs for hidden information, and reformatting some of the more fragile scrapbooks into post-bound albums were all group decisions.

Treating these scrapbooks allowed us to interact with them on an unexpected level, not just repairing but understanding the process that was used to create each one. For those items included in our grant project, every cover, page, foldout, attached object, and overlapping layer was stabilized, repaired, reattached, rebound, rehoused, and returned to its important place in MARBL at the Woodruff Library of Emory University. Ultimately, the goal is for researchers to access the digital images rather than handle the physical item. With this approach, we hope to prolong the life and experience of using each scrapbook.

THE DIGITIZATION PROCESS

As the objective of the grant was to retain the original experience of using each scrapbook, the goal of digitization was to meticulously photograph all facets of each scrapbook.

Before work began, we underwent an extensive planning process to calculate how much time needed to be dedicated to digitizing the collection. We estimated this by timing each phase, from camera adjustments to image capture and processing files. Due to the collaborative nature of this project, a custom workflow was designed to indicate the locations and handoffs of each scrapbook from MARBL to Conservation through digital preservation and image processing. A shared workflow spreadsheet was an invaluable tool in keeping track of each scrapbook at any stage in the process. Each department involved in the project regularly updated the spreadsheet and monthly team meetings were held in order to keep all parties apprised of the overall progress.

Upon receiving grant approval and funding, we had to procure equipment, software and materials in order to properly accommodate a project of this scope. We began several weeks of research and vendor negotiations. Our goal was to purchase imaging equipment that met our needs and standards, provided support and service from a reliable, preferably local, vendor, all at the best value possible.

We purchased a Phase One medium format camera with a Mamiya digital back, capable of capturing 80 megapixel images. The digital back contains a full-frame charged-coupled device (CCD) sensor, allowing for greater detail and a large capture frame. We also purchased two high quality lenses capable of providing exceptional detail. Specialized software (tethered to the camera) controls the camera operation, image adjustments, processing, and metadata creation. We chose the Atlanta-based vendor Capture Integration for their quality of service and competitive pricing, as well as their proximity to the Emory campus. Over the span of the project, our close working relationship with Capture Integration proved invaluable. Their knowledgeable technicians provided training; prompt service and trouble-shooting on equipment and software.

EQUIPMENT, SOFTWARE, AND MATERIALS

Workstation

- 2010 Mac Pro - 2.8gh Quad Core Intel Xeon Processor - 12GB Ram
- OS X 10.8.5 - 1TB of drive space
- 26" LCD Cinema Display

File Management

- Capture One Pro - image management software
- Photoshop CS6
- Golden Thread - image quality control software
- Mac Pro internal hard drive 1TB (*only used for storage while processing images*)
- 2TB External G-Technology Drive
- Networked Shared Drive (2TB expandable storage space) - onsite

- Extensis Portfolio Server (Digital Asset Management System) - onsite
- Offsite Storage - expandable and protected through University Information Technology Services. This system keeps multiple copies of all files and housing them both on campus and in downtown Atlanta.

Camera

- Phase One 645 DF Medium Format Camera Body
- Mamiya Leaf Aptus II-12 80MP Digital Back

Lenses

- Schneider Kreuznach LS 80mm
- Phase One Digital AF 45mm

Lighting

- 2 banks of TTI LED lighting, 2100 LED System

Reproduction Stand

- Tarsia TTI 3040 with 30" x 40" vacuum table base

Other Materials Needed

- UV coated Museum Glass - various sizes
- Framing grade Acrylite clear acrylic - various sizes
- Optium Acrylic - various sizes
- Anti-static brushes/cloths
- Anti-dust (canned air, cloths, duster)
- Rope weights - lead pellets covered with unbleached muslin
- Book cradle (used for supporting items with weak binding while shooting)
- Ethafoam and binders board for miscellaneous support of pages/binding
- DICE color chart
- Metal framing square - 16" x 24"

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

1. ASSESSMENT

Conservation assessed each scrapbook's condition to determine if stabilization was required prior to image capture. Also, many times in the process of image capture, an item needed additional work requiring immediate attention, e.g., loosened items, creased or folded paper, removing staples, etc. These situations required a close working relationship between team members for simple pass-offs and accurately documenting changes in scrapbook location. After the assessment was made and the item deemed stable, the digitization process began.

2. ITEM IDENTIFICATION

A log entry was created that detailed each item's information, along with technical data that included recording the

Job: William H Scott 12041
Collection: BV3
Date: 4/11/2014
Operator: BMM

Description: William Scott Scrapbook - Bound book with pasted in clippings
Camera: LEAF Aptus II
Scanner: N/A
Camera position: 0000
Vacuum Table: Off (media too thick to be suctioned to table)
Museum Glass: Yes (Acrylic) NON UV-COATED
Lights: LED units
Lighting Position: raised 13" - approx 43" from floor to base of LED Fixture
Ruler: Included in shot
Grey Card: DICE Target Included in Shot
White Balancing Prior to Shooting: Yes
Processing: 400dpi TIFF Archival and Production masters
Post-Shooting Quality Control:BMM

Notes:
** Scrapbook consists of clippings pasted on to existing bound book pages.*
***Due to the compact size of this scrapbook, the digitization will be conducted in "spread" format in order to expedite the process.*
****The spreads can be later cropped as separate pages as a post production process.*

Fig. 6. Example of a log entry.

camera's settings, position of lights, and processing information, as well as notes about specific aspects of the scrapbook being digitized (fig. 6).

3. PREPARATION AND SHOOTING

A scrapbook's dimensions determined the best camera position. Lighting should be even overall and minimize shadows created by neighboring items, pages, or gutter, which could potentially obscure information. In order to ensure the page is as perpendicular to the camera lens as possible, clear acrylic was used to gently flatten and minimize creases and buckling. For archival purposes, each image included a ruler and a DICE color chart to ensure correct color and white balance. Every page was photographed (including the scrapbook's covers), as well as every layer or side of every item, ex., letters in envelopes, double-sided items, and backs of photographs.

4. IMAGE NAMING SCHEMA

Each image was named according to its location in the scrapbook. We devised a custom-naming convention to handle the unique structure of each book. Each name is four parts separated with underscores: P0000_I0000_P0000_BP (or) LI, each section referring to a position:

- P0000_refers to the Primary image of each page of the scrapbook.
- Each page may contain several items; I0000_refers to individual Items attached on the page. Each image is a shot of every layer/side of each item.
- If an item has more than one side or page, the second P0000_refers to each shot of every side or page.

- `_BP` refers to a Bound Page (or) `_LI` refers to a Loose Item
- any item that is not attached to the primary page. An example is a loose letter page inside an envelope (fig. 7).

5. QUALITY CONTROL AND PROCESSING

After each page and item was digitally captured, the files underwent quality control (QC) and processing. The QC check involved comparing every digital image against each page and item in the scrapbook to ensure that everything was captured. Each image had to meet our quality standards for focus, color and white balance, as well as lighting consistency. After QC, the next phase was to convert the camera RAW (.MOS) files to 400dpi TIFFs. Each image was processed in two versions—the Archival version is the entire page, including the ruler and DICE color target. These were given the extension `_ARCH`; the Production version had the image

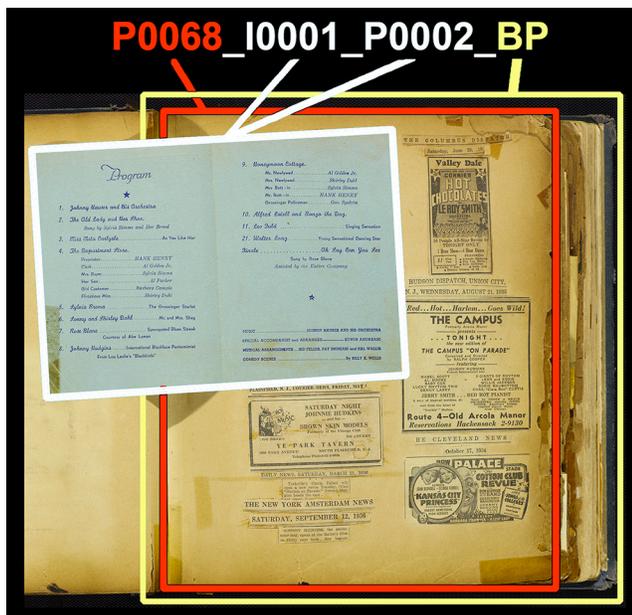


Fig. 7. Example of the naming structure in use.

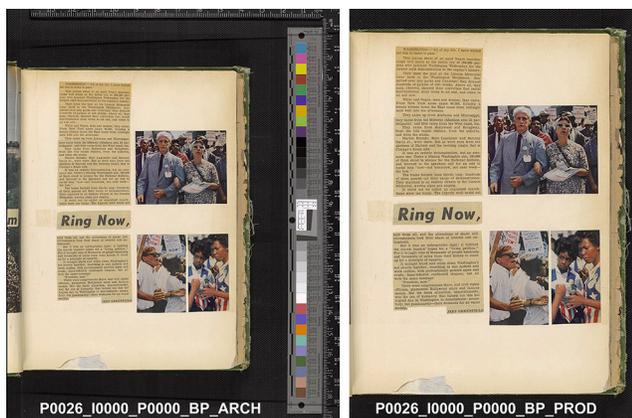


Fig. 8. Examples of Archival (left) and Production processed images.

cropped tightly around the primary page or item and were given the extension `_PROD` (fig. 8).

Each image was packaged for archiving using a standardized file-naming schema that detailed the scrapbooks' structure. All digital files were uploaded to an archival network storage server, issued Archival Resource Keys (ARKs), and Digital Masters database metadata records. Once each book was completed, a second QC was performed, using the DICE color targets via Golden Thread software to examine each image for color accuracy, sharpness, and overall image quality.

6. FILE BACKUP AND MANAGEMENT

The image files were backed-up on an external hard drive, a networked drive, and on a monitored and secured off-site server. Saving and securing multiple copies of each image provides for a more reliable file backup system. The images were also uploaded into a Digital Asset Management System (DAMS) for onsite viewing and access.

DIGITIZATION CHALLENGES

Each scrapbook in the collection had unique challenges. Due to the personal nature of each item, no two books were alike, nor could be handled the same way. A challenge of digitizing of this collection was making sure that during capture, the integrity of the objects was not compromised. Considering that most of these scrapbooks were assembled by people who did not have archival methods in mind, along with the variety of age, wear, and format, all made the digitization process challenging.

Each scrapbook had to have its own method of support and preparation in order to ensure the highest quality images were captured. Affixed items often obscured information beneath them. We learned that the use of magnets cast a shadow and so we had to devise other ways to remedy this—combinations of foam, board, and rope weights worked well to lift layers, a sheet of glass or acrylic flattened creased items which helped to minimize shadows. From strategically supporting pages and bindings, to the utilization of glass and positioning of individual items, the various techniques we devised aided in making sure we digitally preserved each scrapbook accurately.

In addition to preserving these historic books, our goal was to create an accessible digital library that researchers will be able to use for years to come. In order to capture the original experience and intent of the creator, some scrapbooks required digitization both before and after conservation treatment. The conservation work that revealed hidden information and the reformatting of several of the scrapbooks into polyester encapsulation books required a second digital capture, making our process more time consuming. In the case of Johnny Hudgins' scrapbook, thick stacks of Western Union telegrams were glued together, obscuring valuable dates and times. Digitization was necessary both prior to

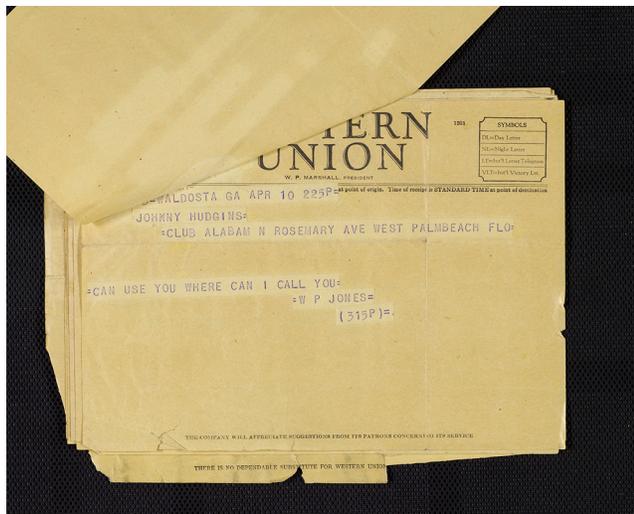


Fig. 9. Example of a partially obscured item.

separation of the layers and again after the telegrams were encapsulated (fig. 9).

Because amateur, personal historians handcrafted these books, we saw various stages of completion, for example, many blank pages with loose items tucked into a gutter. We decided not to capture large sections of blank pages, though we did include a blank page if it helped preserve the order of the creator. Loose or orphaned items included clippings, ticket stubs, hand-written scraps, photos, cards, and other personal documents. These items were captured and the images placed at the end of that scrapbook's image family. Though certainty of location was unclear, we wanted to document that the creator had included those items.

CONCLUSION

The conservation and digitization of the African American scrapbooks chosen for this grant project was a complicated, informative, and very successful process. Developing efficient handoffs and documenting workflow between the three departments was crucial to the success of the project. Cross training between our Digitization and Conservation teams on proper care and handling of fragile materials and learning proper metadata schema proved beneficial. We were successful, because we formed a cohesive and responsive team that was supportive in meeting the standards of each department.

The three and a half years spent working on this grant project gave us a wealth of experience and knowledge, most of which we are continuing to use in our daily workflow. This project allowed us to be creative in devising solutions to the challenges we encountered. From tasks as simple as developing a project workflow or naming convention, to those as complex as reconstructing an entire scrapbook, we learned that the early protocols we developed could be changed and

adapted for the needs of each item treated. As the project continued, we became more familiar with the types of challenges these books presented. The methods we employed became "standard practice" over the course of the grant, and this made the processes much more efficient. Our original decisions influenced our final outcomes, providing us with a solid foundation for working on future scrapbooks in our collections.

The Digitization and Digital Curation department wanted to capture images that could be later used in a virtual repository. It was imperative that each image was captured and named in such a way that these scrapbooks could later be "recreated" in a virtual environment. Though our grant funding covered only the physical and digital preservation of the collection, the importance of making this collection available in an easily accessible front-end online environment remains as a top priority as it will be a valuable tool to researchers. Currently, Digitization and Digital Curation, MARBL and Emory University Libraries are in the early planning stages of creating an online repository for this collection. This ongoing project continues beyond the grant in the hopes of sharing this valuable collection with researchers, students and historians across the globe.

Having had the privilege of interacting closely with these personal collections of a rich African American heritage only reinforced this need. The wealth of personal and historical information relating to African American heritage contained in these scrapbooks is staggering. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of working on this project was seeing how people record their memories. Each hand-written note, every carefully placed photograph or artifact, cards, clippings, and drawings were all chosen for a reason by the creator of the scrapbook. Something seemingly unimportant to some, such as a ticket stub or receipt, was a cherished memory to others. These scrapbooks are a physical representation of their creator's emotions and memories.

With each passing year, time takes its toll. Inks fade, papers continue to age, and memories are lost. These scrapbooks won't be around forever, and is why preserving them was so vital. Through our efforts, they can live on digitally. Having the opportunity to "read" the memories these amazing creators over the course of this project was a unique and fulfilling experience. One, which we hope, can be shared with others for generations to come.

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