

2021 Genealogy Series



Welcome!

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is pleased to present this educational series of lectures on how to do family research.

As one of the nation's premier genealogy institutions, it is our mission to inform the public about the National Archives' holdings that relate to family history and to make those holdings available.



About the Lecture Series



2021

E N E A L O G Y S

Lectures demonstrate how to use Federal records and other resources for genealogical research for beginning to experienced family historians.

Our presenters include experts from the National Archives nationwide representing our facilities in College Park, MD; Denver, CO; New York City, NY; St. Louis, MO; and Washington, DC.



May Schedule



G E N E A L O G

Date	Session Title	Presenter
Tuesday, May 4 1 p.m. ET	Preserving and Digitizing Personal Photo Albums and Scrapbooks	Sara Holmes Conservator in Preservation Programs National Archives at St. Louis, MO
		Noah Durham Supervisory Preservation Specialist National Archives at St. Louis, MO
Wednesday, May 12 1 p.m. ET	Finding Genealogy Resources and Tools on Archives.gov	Sarah Swanson Website Liaison National Archives at College Park, MD
Wednesday, May 19 1 p.m. ET	Tips and Tools for Engaging Family with Your Research Finds	Missy McNatt Education Specialist National Archives in Washington, DC
		Dorothy Dougherty Virtual Public Programs Director National Archives at New York City, NY



June Schedule



2021

GENEALOGY

Date	Session Title	Presenter
Tuesday, June 1 1 p.m. ET	From Here to There: Researching Office of Indian Affairs Employees	Cara Moore Lebonick Reference Archives Specialist National Archives at St. Louis, MO Cody White Archivist and Native American Related Records Subject Matter Expert National Archives at Denver, CO
Tuesday, June 8 1 p.m. ET	Civil War Union Noncombatant Personnel: Teamsters, Laundresses, Nurses, Sutlers, and more	Claire Kluskens Genealogy/Census Subject Matter Expert and Digital Projects Archivist National Archives in Washington, DC
Tuesday, June 15 1 p.m. ET	Merchant Marine Records at The National Archives at St. Louis	Theresa Fitzgerald Director National Archives at St. Louis, MO



Join the conversation!



2021 G

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Participate with the presenters and other family historians during the live event.

Live Chat on YouTube: log in and type your questions and comments

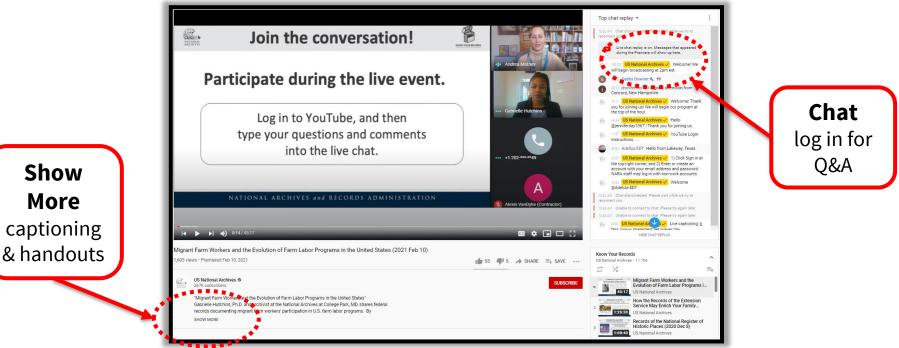


Join us at @USNatArchives on Twitter #GenieSeries2021





Where to find Chat, Captioning, & Handouts



After the broadcast, the video presentation and handouts will remain available.



Preserving and Digitizing Personal Photo Albums and Scrapbooks



2021 G

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Preserving photo albums and scrapbooks can be especially challenging, often because they are bound and contain a variety of problematic materials. This session addresses how to work with poor quality materials commonly found in personal scrapbooks and albums, how to maintain the integrity of the arrangement, and how to store them appropriately. Pro tips for home users provide ways to digitize albums, organize electronic files, and preserve them as electronic records. Examples come from both National Archives and personal collections.



Presenter Biography



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Y S E R

Holmes started work at the National Archives in Preservation Programs at St. Louis in 2007. She currently works at the conservation lab as a conservator for field projects coming from National Archives facilities nationwide. She previously served as a management and program analyst, and as a supervisory preservation specialist overseeing conservation of the records burned in the St. Louis fire. Before coming to the National Archives, she was a conservator at Texas Tech University and the Missouri State Archives. Sara has a Master of Library and Information Science with a Certificate of Advanced Study in Conservation of Library and Archival Materials from the University of Texas and an M.A. in history from the University of New Orleans. She is also a Certified Archivist and was selected as a member of the first cohort of the Archives Leadership Institute in 2008.



Presenter Biography



Noah Durham has been working within the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) since 2008. Currently, he is the supervisory preservation specialist at the St. Louis facility, where he leads digitization projects to preserve and expand access to fire-affected records. His projects include working on the National Archives Iraqi Jewish Archive project from 2012 to 2014. Noah's professional career in cultural heritage imaging began in the mid-1990s. At that time, he was hired to convert photographic operations from analog to digital at two worldwide auction houses (Christie's and Sotheby's). He holds an M.S. in graphic arts systems from the School of Printing Management and Science at the Rochester Institute of Technology.



Preserving and Digitizing Scrapbooks and Photo Albums



Preserving Albums: Possible Problems

- Structural problems of binding preventing access
- Adhesives
- Plastics
- Mix of media
- Oddball sizes for storage





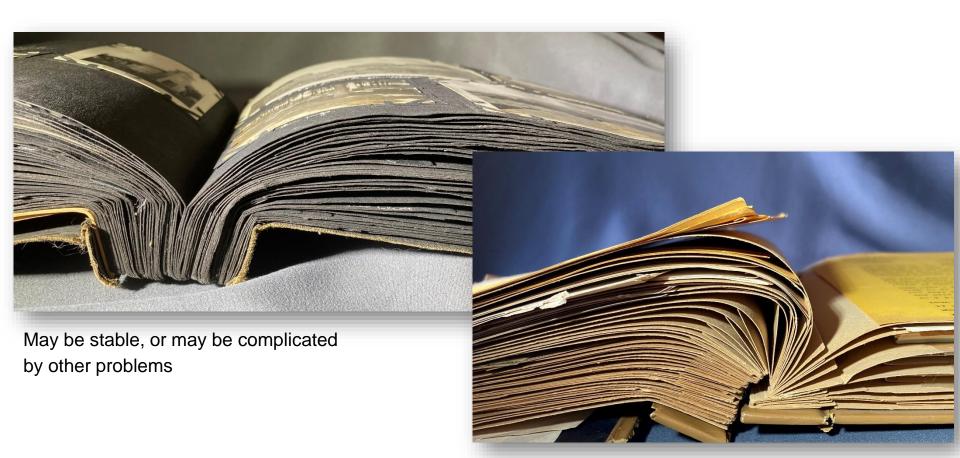
Binding Structure

The ideal

- Lies flat
- Accommodates thickness

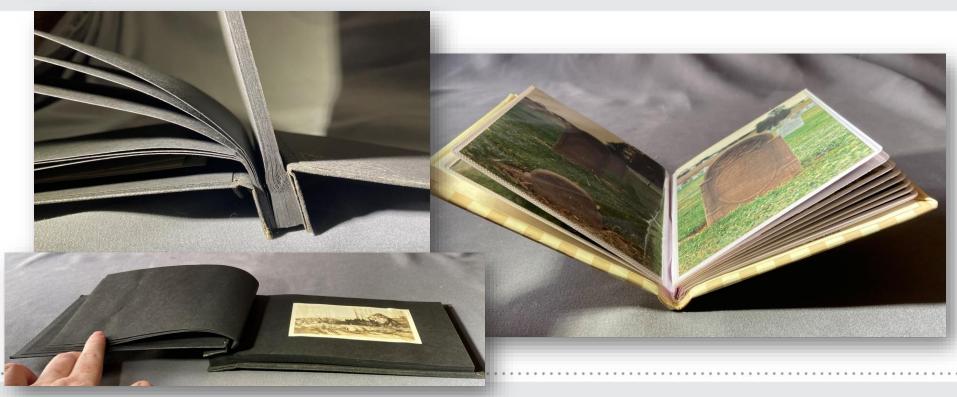


Bindings with Curving Openings





Bindings that do not stay open!





Bindings that just don't work well!





Attachment Methods

Photo corners

May be adhered to the photo and page

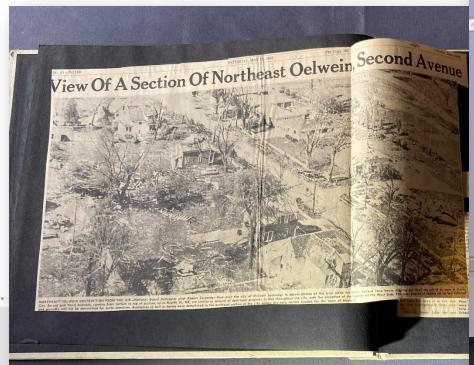






Attachment Methods

Glues and pastes



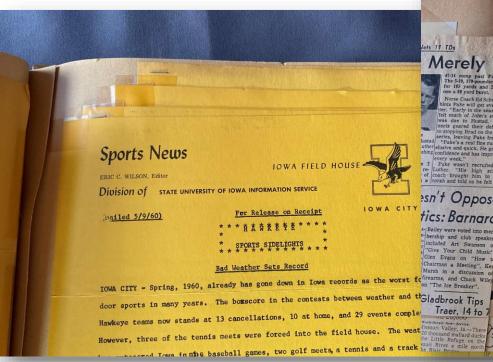




Research Services

Attachment Methods

Tape





Unrecruited

the knotty-muscled athletic

TOU never saw such gang of sound-mind-inie-healthy-body symbols as ere were sporting on the en at Grinnell College's Spring Day

The health radiance be cause most of the students wore shorts and T-shirts or skimpy blouses for the holiday

picnic and LUDWIG the frivolity

Testimony on the soundness of the eggheads frying in the sun was given by Merrit Ludwig, vigorous young vice-president of the

"The average student out there," he said, "ranks among the top 5 per cent of all American college students in college board examinations." This was an opening that

Mickey Holmes, the flamethatched sports publicity director, couldn't pass up. "Yes," he said, "and the athletes out there are above the scholastic average for all the men in the school."

DD Bowers, footbal coach and athletic di-rector, pointed out some of

of them was recruited," he said, "and not a one is here

Just for Fun Every schol arship is A T MOST colleges these days, the business manacademic." ager of athletics is in the counting house, counting up nas been no the advance sales, counting

drawback to teer Pioneer athletes, threefourths of whom plan to go on to graduate schools in medicine, law and other

Grinnell already has won the Midwest Conference football, basketball and indoor track championships this school year. male enrollment of 600 as whole, the average was 2.55

Ron Dorr of Marcus (cross-country and wrestling) had a perfect 4.0 mark. Twenty-two others were 3.0 or better. Dorr, Bill Parsons (basketball and tennis) and Roger Sternberg (tennis) have been elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

Snap courses? Hah! Students don't declare their majors until their junior year and this is how the letter men have chosen: Biology, 10; economics, 7

physics, 6; chemistry, 6; his tory, 6; political science, 5 psychology, 4: mathematics 4; American studies, 4; phi losophy, 1; physical educa-

of the team is poor. The Pioneers shared the Midwest Conference championship last year. Football is financed out of general funds in Grinnell'e

up the prob

football

tickets cost

ing up to \$5

Grin n e 11

doesn't have

a business

it did, he

could have an

all-day cof-

fee break.

At most colleges, football

has to pay not only its own

way, but also the way of

At Grinnell, football

doesn't even pay for foot-

"We've already sent out

4,000 complimentary tickets

for home games," said Edd

Bowers, athletic director

and football coach. "We

don't even charge for par-

ents' day and homecoming

It isn't because the caliber

ball.

all sports except basketball.

athletics.

apiece.

Coe, Cornell, Carleton, F Olaf, Ripon, Lawrence, Kne

Surprise!

"I DON'T know who's goman squad till they show up for practice," said Bowen "Sometimes I don't ever know all the prospects or

"Take last year. Two of my best players hadn't even been out for freshman foot-

Hubbell-hadn't been out a sophomore, either." The other was Pete Heinzelma

of Knoxville, who is back at a regular guard. Edd almost lost his quar-terback last fall. Dick Or chard of Cherokee receive a low grade in an early ter decided he'd better quit foot ball and concentrate on his

pre-med studies. But then," said Orchawho'll be at the throttle the opener against Kr

here Saturday, "I had a tal with the professor "He told me this was

particularly tough 'wakin up' test and that I did well as anybody."

Good-by

DOWERS has a thick fi D of letters from your men all over the countr who wanted to play footba "I write them one lette

and that usually ends th correspondence," said Ed-The letter contains this par-



Torn Pages

Can be a result of

- Bad binding
- Stiff material pasted down on pages which push against paper when turning pages
- Simple mishandling

Can be mended

 Need training in mending in bound books to do properly! Seek out a conservator or trained technician.





Adhesive Issues: Desiccation

The "nice" adhesive failure







Adhesive Issues: Creep and Goo!





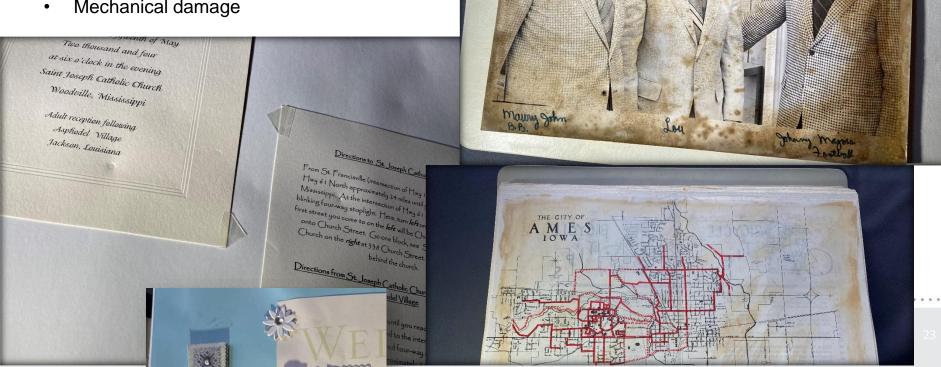
Problems with Plastic





Mixing Media

- Chemical degradation
- Mechanical damage





But I really want to take them out...

Can they slide out without damage?





But I really want to take them out...





Removing Glued-In Photos





Preservation Material Tips

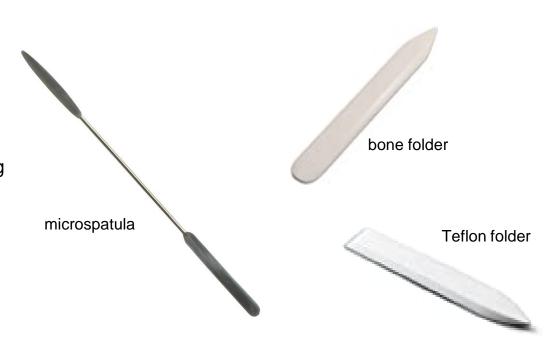
- "Archival" is not a standardized product!
- Do look for pH neutral "acid-free" products
 - -Understand that over time, all organic materials deteriorate and pH is not static
- Look for lignin-free description in paper-based products
- If interleaving
 - -Use buffered tissue (with an alkaline reserve) for black-and-white photos, negatives, most papers, and cotton-based textiles.
 - -Use unbuffered tissue (no alkaline reserve) for color photographs and negatives, blueprints, silk, wool, leather, and metals.
- For materials used with photos look for "Passed P.A.T. Test" (Photo Activity Test)
 - -Do be aware that not all products have been tested





Tool Tips

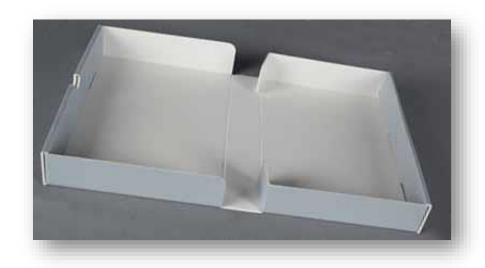
- MylarTM (or MelinexTM) Polyester—if there is room to slip in
- Microspatula—for turning pages, removing fasteners (staples, paper clips), and simple probing
- Bone or Teflon folders—for smoothing out creases and tears, creasing polyester, and possibly for turning pages
- Don't overdo it! Damage can occur quickly!





Storing Albums

- Good environment—no temperature or humidity extremes
- Boxes help provide safety and microclimates
- Custom-sized boxes will make a big difference for stabilizing intact albums
- Do consider machine-made customsized boxes as an inexpensive alternative to individual boxes made by a conservator or bookbinder





Need More?

There is an immense range of possibilities and problems to be found in albums.

Please do consult the handouts for more information and resources.

You may also reach out to preservation@nara.gov if you cannot find the answer to your question.

Photographing Scrapbooks and Photo Albums



- Provide information about equipment
- Show a few examples of photographic methods
- Share a few tips related to how the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) organizes, tracks, and archives images from digitization projects



Equipment Options

- 1. Combination of camera, copy stand, and supplemental lighting
- 2. Specialized book scanner
- 3. Flatbed scanner
- 4. iPad / iPhone DIY





vs. \$65,000

Copy stand with camera

PROS

- Excellent quality is possible with well-matched camera, lens, and lighting
- Systems can be configured for any budget
- Can be made efficient and ergonomic by "tethering" camera to a computer with remote shutter release and "live focus"
- As a modular system it's flexible; components like lenses, cameras, lights can be purchased separately and replaced as needed to optimize or upgrade
- Camera height is adjustable to increase or decrease the copy area

CONS

- Requires photography knowhow to skills to set up and operate
- Settings are important, small mistakes in setup can go unnoticed (i.e., wrong resolution) causing significant rework



Book Scanner

PROS

- Integrated lighting
- Integrated book cradle (high-end solutions)
- Very little photographic knowhow is required to operate
- A smaller book scanner system is affordable (Fuji ScanSnap) @ ~\$600.00

CONS

- Everything is fixed: the lens, resolution, focus, copy area and lighting. This means it's less adaptable for nonstandard items
- Software becomes obsolete sooner
- Higher-end systems require support from specialized vendor or reseller to update or repair (Zeutschel or Indus for example)





Flatbed scanner

PROS

- Excellent quality for loose photographs and documents in good condition
- Compact and can sit at a regular desk in an office environment with computers

CONS

- Not recommended for bound volumes
- If items won't lay fully flat on platten; glare and shadows will be apparent in image
- Requires a computer

iPad / phone camera with holder/stand (Do it Yourself [DIY] or eBay/Amazon products)

PROS

- High image quality is achievable at relatively low cost
- Phones are everywhere, they are easy to operate and understand without photography knowhow
- Big user base means lots of new apps and technical innovation

CONS

- Phone cameras are optimized for pictorial imaging (making great selfies), not flat reprographics (barrel distortion, focus flaws, and other problems may appear)
- Remote shutter release may not be possible





Unique characteristics of scrapbooks and photo albums make the task challenging. Here are some strategies to overcome photography problems without disassembling the item.

PROBLEM	WAYS TO SOLVE
Oversize items may exceed the size limits of a scanner or camera set	Switch lenses on camera. Take column off copy stand and mount on table edge. Shoot in smaller sections.
When open, pages tend to not lay flat and require some flattening or restraint	Weights and strapping (examples follow). Fix mild curvature in Book Scanner software or Photoshop
Cross light shadowing in the "valley" between open pages can obscure content	Vary directional lighting strength (example follows)
Scrapbooks and photo albums may contain contain folded papers, envelopes, notes, dried flowers, ribbons, pins, etc., that may overlap information or require opening to view	Shoot same page several times to reveal content in overlaps or folds
Glare can occur with plastic sleeves or glossy images in photo albums	Keep lighting at 45-degree angle; use more diffuse lighting source
The back page content of two-sided documents in a scrapbook may be impossible to lay flat and photograph without disassembling the book	Use an explanatory "slug" (example follows)
Contents may already be disassembled or placed loosely inside	Create access copy in multipage "spread view" shot type (example follows)

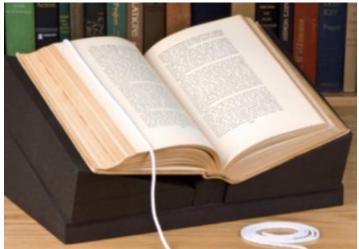
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strapping, weights and cradles



An example of polyethylene strapping with bean bag weights to gently restrain page.



A snake weight and a custom cradle.



A stack of mat board to build height. As photography progresses boards can be removed and added to opposite side.



An integrated book cradle that is adjustable to raise and lower sides independently. A gap is also adjustable for width of spine.

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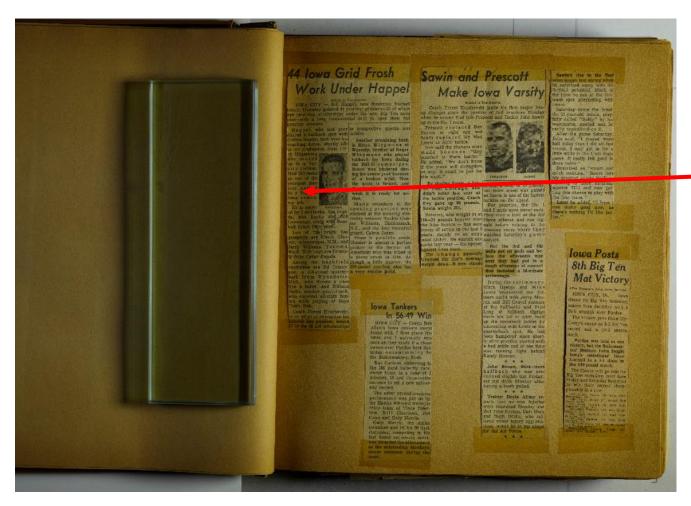
shadow from photographic lighting (before)





Problem area (close up)

shadow from photographic lighting (after)



Lighting is increased from the right side, improving the image.

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Images of the same spread (first shot)



Images of the same spread (second shot)



Images of the same spread (third shot)



Note: polyester sleeve is to assist in flattening foldout

Images of the same spread (fourth shot)



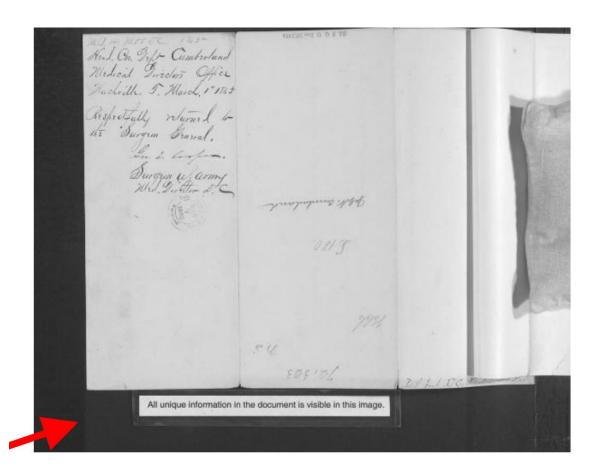
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Slugs; some examples from NARA



- "Foldouts"
- "Pages missing"
- "Pages cannot be separated"
- "Photo cannot be separated"
- "Rolled-back item not fully photographed"
- "Visible fragment from binding"
- "Following page(s) blank"
- "This page is not blank"
- "All unique information in the document is visible in the image"

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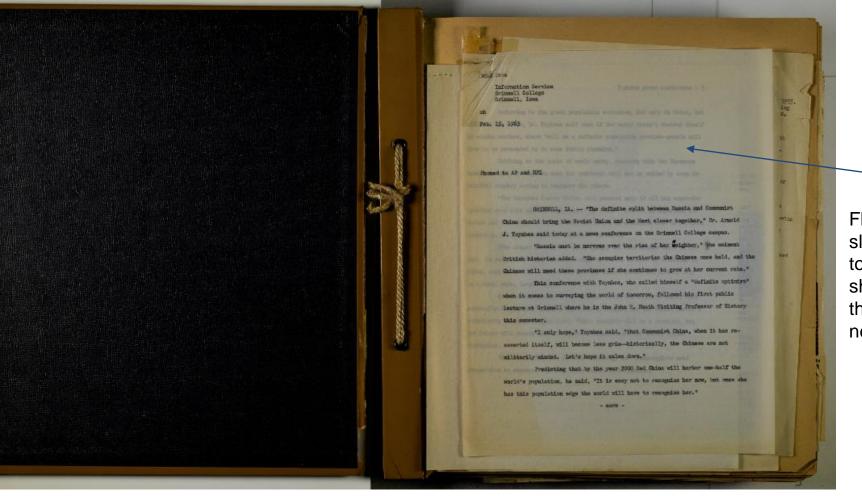
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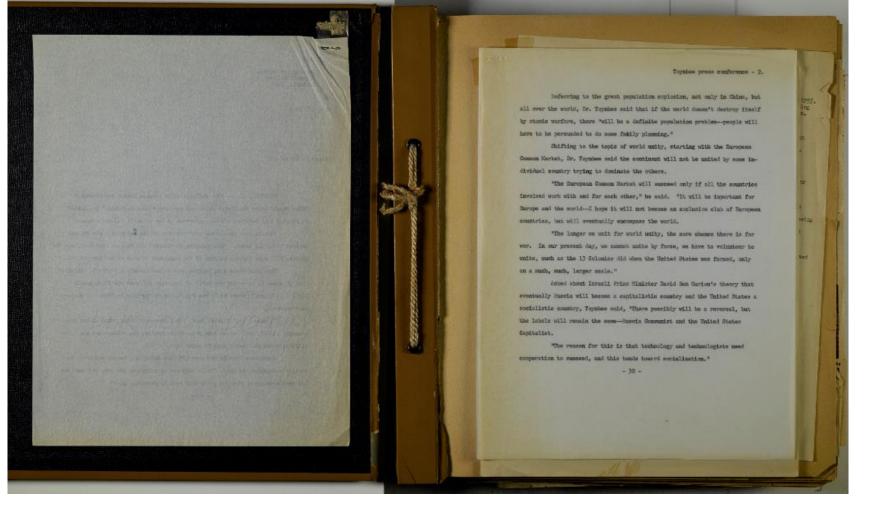
type (example follows)

Create access copy in multipage "spread view" shot

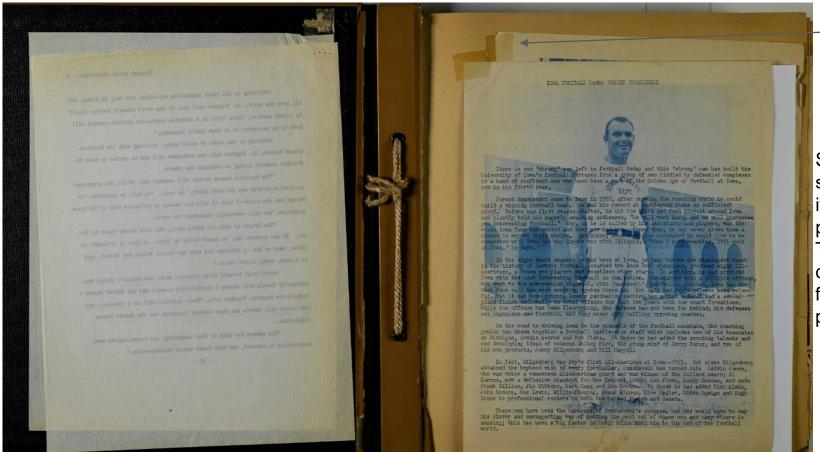


Flaw. Use slip sheet to reduce show through next time!

multipage format for "spread view" multi-page sequence (first image)



multipage format for "spread view" multi-page sequence (second image)

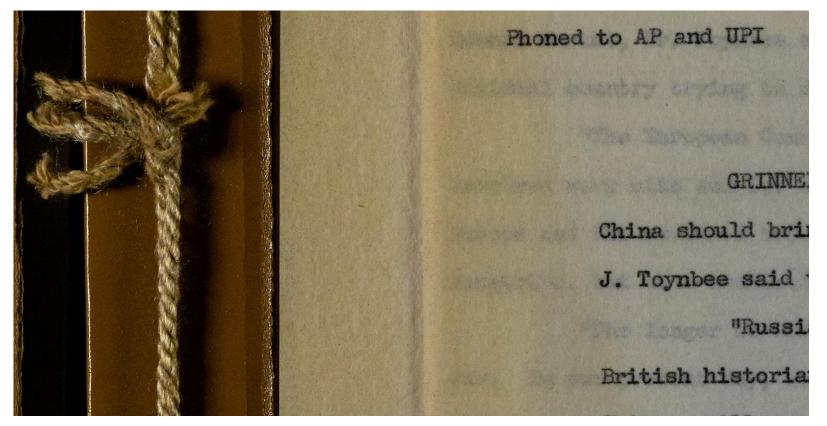


Tape

Slug here could say "Roll back item not fully photographed." The taped in item could not be folded back for photography

multipage format for "spread view" multi-page sequence (third image)

resolution requirement



A spread view is practical only when the imaging device can capture the full size of the open scrapbook or photo album. Make sure image files have sufficient resolution for legibility of smallest text.

Naming, Organizing and Tracking

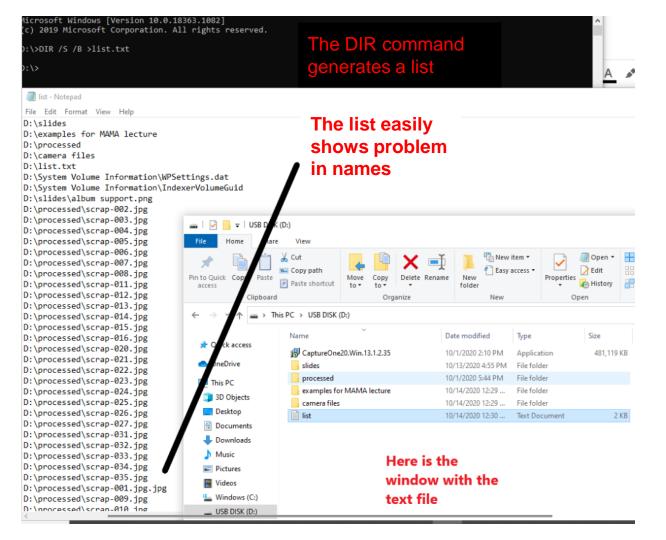
Your approach to organizing and naming your files will have a big impact on your ability to find those files later. Consistent and descriptive folder hierarchy is key to locating and understanding what image directories contain.

An example is NARA's folder structure on our cloud storage: Record Group folder > Series Identifier folder> File Unit [box / folder or other separator]

Imagename= {series identifier}-{file unit}-{image sequence} rg99/123456/123456-001-001.tiff

Tracking tips:

- While shooting, create a "read me" text file using notepad inside each folder of images to capture notes pertaining to the images and the particulars of the camera setup, lighting or device settings.
- Create a spreadsheet as a project tracker with workflow milestones and include hyperlinks to folders for quick access.
- Learn to create recursive directory lists using the DIR command (recursive = seeing into multiple folders top down) to make inventories of images. This will assist in creating finding aids and in quality control for file naming.



The directory command

File name accuracy is important. Here is one routine the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) uses to check file names. In a command prompt, a DIR command is used to create a text file. The text file is checked prior to uploading images into the NARA catalog.

Mistakes in naming can result in multipage documents being created out of order. In this example, image number 1 appears after image 35 by mistake.



The same set of images, three file formats used in our workflow

TIFF - Long-term archiving and as a source file (may not be cropped / can contain color bars for highly accurate representation of images). This format is best for master images or highest quality versions. File size is typically larger.

JPG - Smaller file size images of JPG make optimal versions for access, storage, and distribution of images. Also JPG is used for the creation of multipage versions in PDF.

PDF - As an end product, it's used for multipage versions, reducing complexity of viewing and accessing multiple single images.

Tip: Avoid *multipage TIFF* file format. They are not fully supported by viewing and editing programs on computers.



EXAMPLE WORKFLOW OF DIGITAL IMAGES

- 1. QC for completeness (checking screen to originals)
- Optimization of contrast, color, and cropping
- 3. Rework / reshooting / rescanning when needed
- 4. Final file naming and sequencing (batch renaming)
- 5. Creating access versions (multipage PDF for example)
- 6. Distribution (website, catalog, exhibit kiosk, etc...)
- 7. Archiving

Tip: Batch rename utility is needed for this type of work. This allows file names to be changed to match naming rules and for files to be correctly sequenced when renaming. Adobe Bridge and Photoshop have a batch renaming utility. Other utilities can be found online.



Storing Images

Ready access to digitized originals may depend on your organization / institution having network storage or cloud storage available.

Best Practices

- Have more than one copy.
- Keep images on imaging device or camera storage card until they have been processed fully. This will protect you from having to reshoot or rescan due to losing images while they are being processed.
- When image processing work is completed, "archive" images by storing them on a remote system, a separate hard drive system, or by maintaining an optical disc library (DVD, BluRay).



Feel free to contact me with any questions you might have on this topic.

Noah Durham Supervisory Preservation Specialist Preservation Programs Division National Archives Records Administration St. Louis, MO

noah.durham@nara.gov



After the broadcast . . .



Email questions to preservation@nara.gov

Video recordings of lectures and downloadable handouts will remain online at

www.archives.gov/calendar/genealogy-fair



Feedback



2021

) ENEALOGY

We value your opinion.

Please take a minute to complete a short evaluation. Your comments help us maintain the quality of our services and plan future programs.

Thank you!

Event Evaluation:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/KYREventEval









Educational resources on how to access and do research using U.S. Federal Government records held at the National Archives and Records Administration.

Know Your Records

www.archives.gov/calendar/know-your-records

Videos and handouts on You Tube



Questions & Answers in Chat



Please stay if you have questions.

Although this concludes the video portion of the broadcast, we will continue to take your questions in Chat for another 10 minutes.