



# DIGITIZING THE CINCINNATI SUBWAY AND STREET IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS PHOTOGRAPHS

# DEVELOPING & PROMOTING DIGITAL ARCHIVES: A CASE STUDY

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# THE PROJECT

- 1-year photographic digitization project funded by a grant through the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), administered by the State Library of Ohio
- Collaborative effort between UC Libraries' Digital Projects and the Archives & Rare Books Library (ARB)



# **G**OALS

 Increase availability of collection to advance research and scholarship

- Digitally preserve and make freely accessible on the web a collection of historically significant photographs representing Cincinnati's urban development from 1920 to 1957
- Coordinate the removal and safe disposal of a deteriorating hazardous material – cellulose nitrate film – from the archive to ensure the safety of the repository as a whole





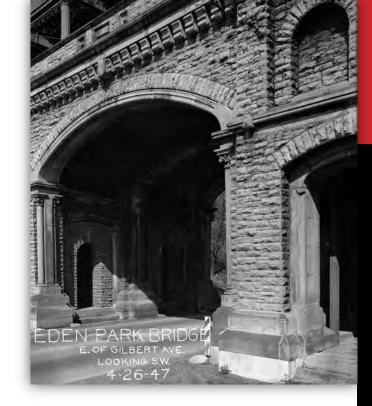
#### **COLLABORATION**

DIGITAL PROJECTS
AND

# **ARCHIVES & RARE BOOKS LIBRARY**

- Co-authorship of grant proposal
- Shared goal of capturing visual data



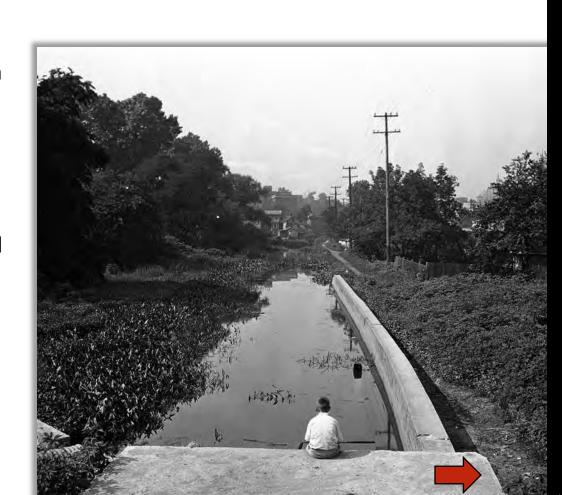


- Dual oversight of project
  - Photographic service selection
  - Project digital archivist selection
  - Budget and schedule tracking



# **SIGNIFICANCE**

- Visual record of the construction of a subway and resulting changes made to infrastructure
- Comprehensive record of Cincinnati's growth and urban development at a specific period in city's history
- Documents the development of the city's transportation system, from canal to street cars to interstate highway



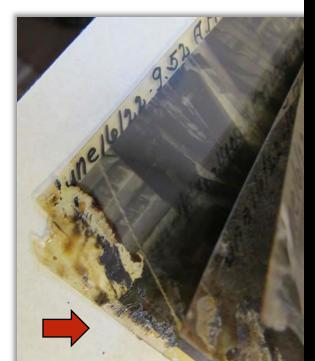
# **DIGITIZATION**

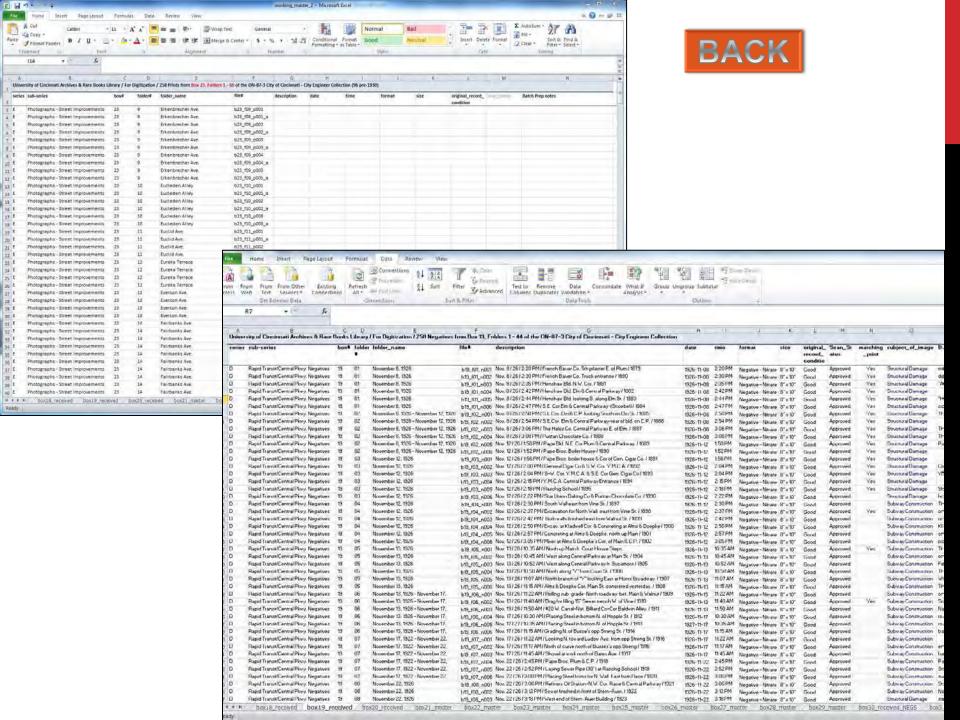
- Collection assessment
- Record identification and <u>tracking</u>
- Transfer to Robin Imaging
- Transcription of <u>photographer notes</u>



- Digital collection building for <u>Digital</u>
   <u>Resource Commons</u> and <u>LUNA</u>
- Identifying geo-coordinates for mapping
- Weekly blog posts in <u>LiBlog</u>
- Physical and online exhibits

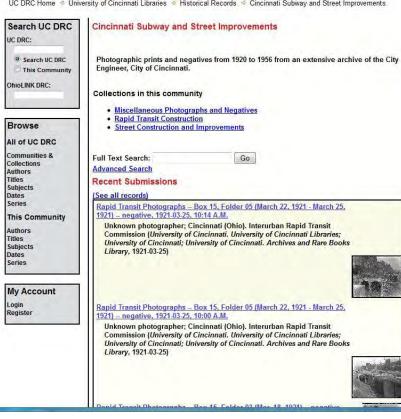






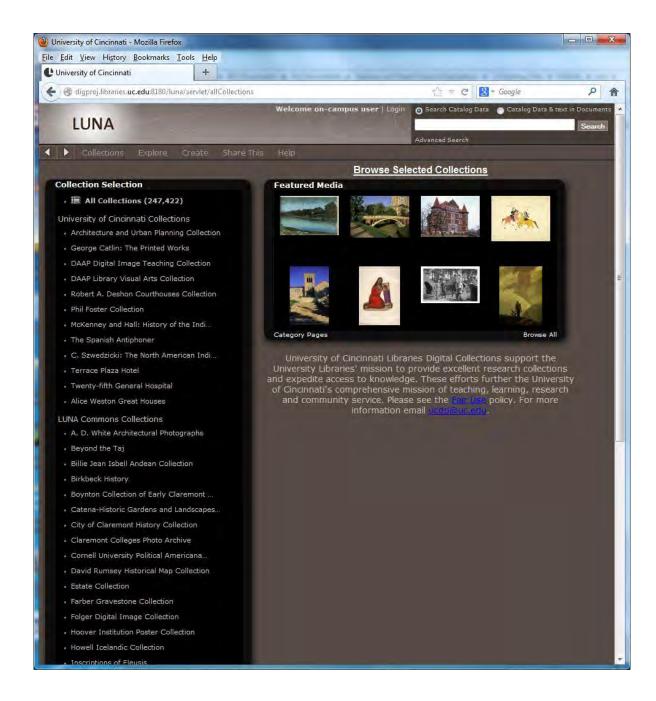








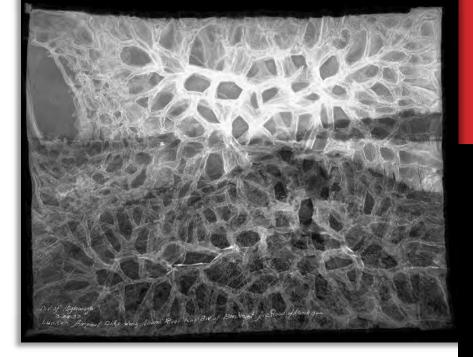




# **CHALLENGES**

- The good, the bad and vinegar syndrome!
  - Cellulose Nitrate
    - Safe handling
    - Transfer to cold storage
  - Acetate
    - Scanning warped negatives
    - Refoldering





- Contracting Vendor
  - Scanner "hiccups"
  - Transcription validation
- Survey of collection
  - Original order and missing folders
  - Naming inconsistencies









#### **S**UCCESSES

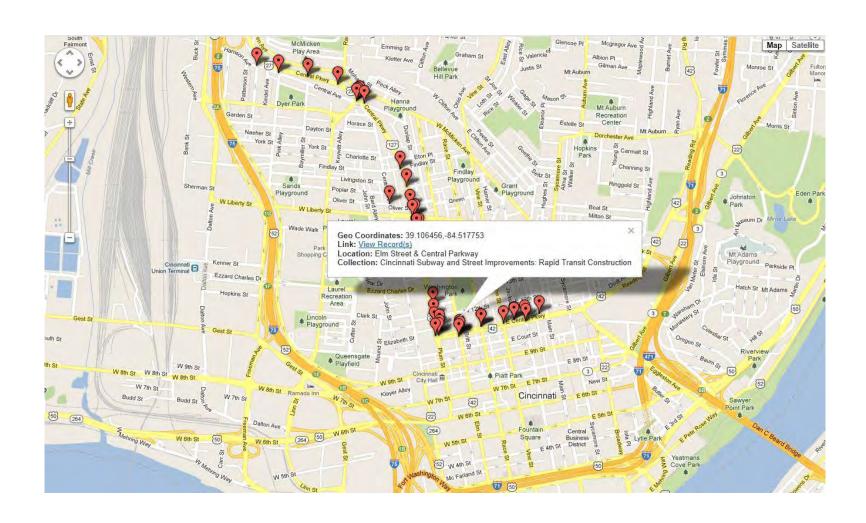
- All negatives scanned
  - Visual data saved
- Photographer's notes transcribed from negatives and prints
  - Used to create metadata
  - Photographers identified
- Location coordinates plotted in Google
  - View the <u>Subway Route via Google Maps</u>

- Identification of nitrate negatives for removal
  - Separation of nitrate from acetate
  - Transfer to cold storage after scanning









- Increased accessibility
- Greater awareness of collection
  - Cincinnati Magazine May edition
  - University Libraries Spring Newsletter
  - Weekly blogs on University Libraries' Facebook page



Physical exhibit installed in Archives & Rare Books Library



- Online collection building in Digital Resource Commons and LUNA
- Archives & Rare Books Library and Digital Collections web pages under construction







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