



Digitizing the Grace McClurg Carson and Dora E. Giffen Papers

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1.

Background

The women; their collections

A white compass rose with eight points, centered within the white text box.



Dora E. Giffen (1897-1982)

- Mission work with United Presbyterian Church in Egypt, 1920-1926
- Returned to U.S. and taught in Ohio public schools, ret. 1964



Grace McClurg Carson (1884-1979)

- Mission work for Methodist Board of Missions in China (1912-1918, 1920-1926)
- Taught Lima public schools, ret. 1948



2.

The Project



Roadmap of major project deliverables

1 Digitize select content in both collections.

3 Create searchable transcripts for handwritten documents.

5 Upload content to our digital platform (Omeka).

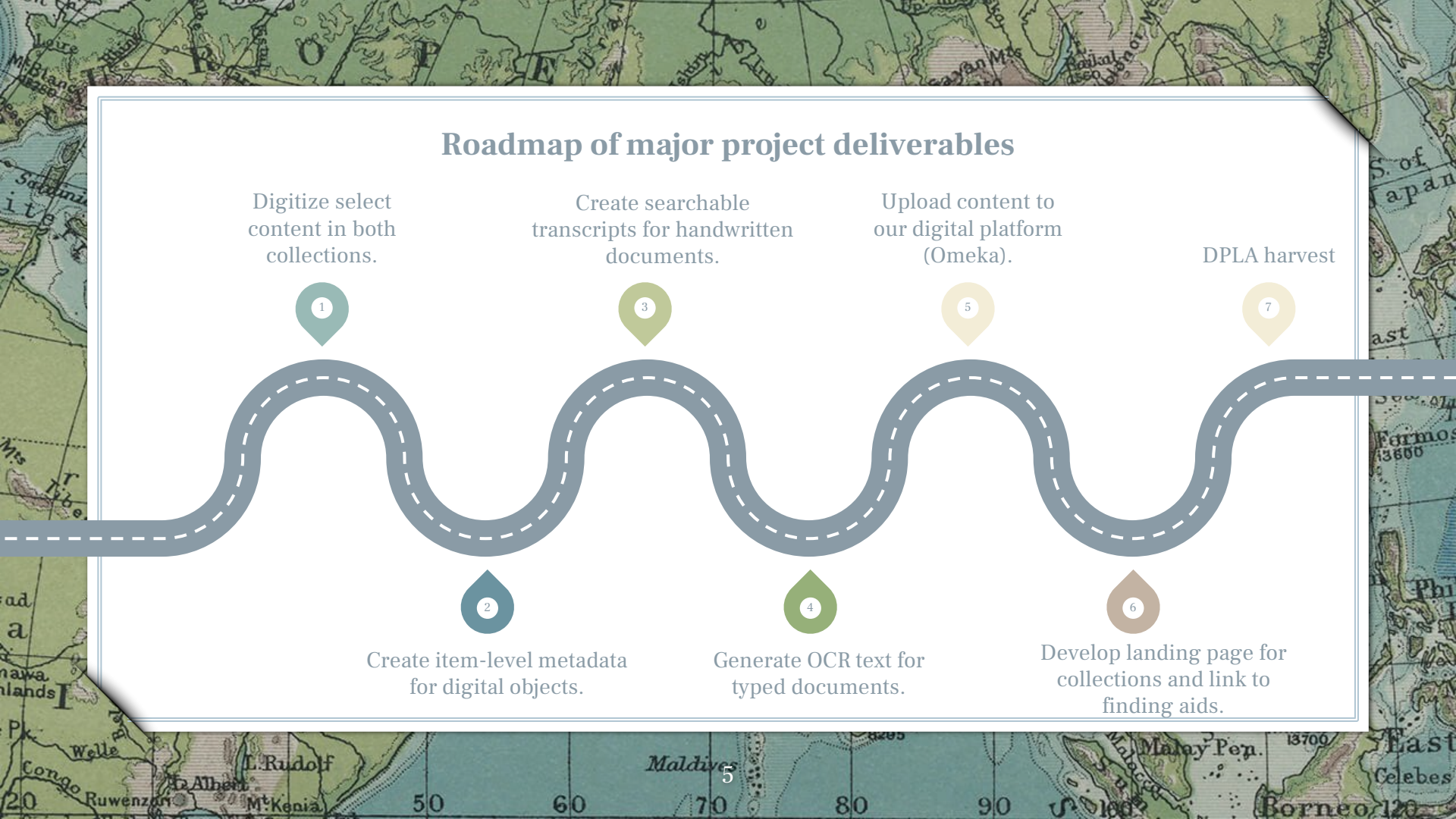
7 DPLA harvest



2 Create item-level metadata for digital objects.

4 Generate OCR text for typed documents.

6 Develop landing page for collections and link to finding aids.



Timeline



Hired graduate assistant Alannah Graves

December

Began scanning visual materials in Giffen papers; metadata creation.

Began scanning textual materials in Giffen papers; metadata creation.

January

Migrated both finding aids to ASpace.

Created PDF files for Giffen textual materials.

February

Scanned all materials in the Carson papers and item-level created metadata.

EVERYTHING ELSE!

March



861 items online

350 in Carson; 511 in Giffen

1489 individual image or page scans

2 collection pages launched

All material harvested into DPLA

Digital Gallery

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Advanced Search

Dora E. Giffen papers (MS-0309)

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This digital collection features select correspondence and visual materials from the [Dora E. Giffen papers](#) (MS-0309) and documents the experiences of Giffen - a young 23 year-old female Presbyterian missionary in British-held Egypt between 1920 and 1926. As such, they shed light on the role of women in a working situation as educators; the prejudices and biases of Christian Americans against the religion, culture, and educational practices of those amongst whom they are living; and the changing political landscape within Egypt, as viewed through the eyes of an outsider.

Significant portions of the collection remain undigitized. The items represented here as well as the remainder of the collection are available for access at the [Center for Archival Collections](#)

This project was supported in part by federal [Institute of Museum and Library Services](#) funds, granted through the [State Library of Ohio](#). The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of IMLS or the State Library of Ohio, and no official endorsement by either agency should be inferred.



Featured



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Letter from Dora Giffen to her family, January 20, 1921

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Title	Letter from Dora Giffen to her family, January 20, 1921
Subject	Giffen, Dora Eunice, 1897-1982 Women missionaries--Correspondence Missions--Egypt Protestant churches--Missions--Egypt Presbyterians--Egypt--Correspondence Egypt--Church history Christianity--Egypt Missions to Muslims--Egypt Egypt--Description and travel
Description	Letter from Dora Giffen to her family in Ohio about her missionary life in Egypt, the health and activities of her peers, and the acquisition of a new Steinway piano for their home.
Creator	Giffen, Dora Eunice, 1897-1982
Source	Dora E. Giffen papers, MS-0309, Center for Archival Collections, University Libraries, Bowling Green State University
Date	1921-01-20
Rights	
Format	Correspondence application/pdf
Language	eng
Identifier	ms00309_b001_f002_00002.pdf https://digitalgallery.bgsu.edu/collections/item/41458
Is Referenced By	https://lib.bgsu.edu/findingaids/repositories/4/resources/1425
Spatial Coverage	Shubrā (Cairo, Egypt)
Type	Text
Transcript	

MLA Citation

Giffen, Dora Eunice. 1897-1982. "Letter from Dora Giffen to her family, January 20, 1921." Digital Gallery, BGSU University Libraries. 31 Mar. 2023. digitalgallery.bgsu.edu/collections/item/41458. Accessed 22 Sep. 2023.

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Tags

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Search within collection

Collection organization

- ▼ [Envelope 14](#)
- ▼ [Envelope 15](#)
- ▼ [Envelope 16](#)
- ▼ [Envelope 17: Photographs from China](#)

- [Miss Westcott, Elizabeth V.](#)
- [Grace McClurg with...](#)
- [Planting rice, undated](#)
- [View of street, circa...](#)
- [Marble carvings, circ...](#)
- [Open courtyard in a...](#)
- [Chinese musicians, c...](#)
- [Theater district, circa...](#)
- [Children, circa 1920](#)

- ▼ [Envelope 18](#)
- ▼ [Envelope 19](#)
- ▼ [Envelope 20](#)
- ▼ [Envelope 21](#)
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- ▼ [Envelope 23](#)
- ▼ [Envelope 24](#)

Envelope 17: Photographs from China

📁 File – Box 5, Envelope: 17

Miss Westcott, Elizabeth V., "Bible Woman", 1902

📄 Item – Box 5, Envelope: 17, Item: 1



Miss Westcott, Elizabeth V. and a Bible Woman sitting outside; circa 1902

Grace McClurg with boy, circa 1917

📄 Item – Box 5, Envelope: 17, Item: 2



Grace McClurg with a small boy; circa 1917

Planting rice, undated

📄 Item – Box 5, Envelope: 17, Item: 3



Planting rice

View of street, circa 1917

📄 Item – Box 5, Envelope: 17, Item: 4



View of street

A historical map of North America and Europe. The map shows the continent of North America on the left and Europe on the right. Red lines connect various cities across the Atlantic Ocean, suggesting trade routes or communication paths. The map includes geographical features like the Hudson Bay, St. Lawrence River, and the Atlantic Ocean. The text '3. Challenges and Opportunities Utilizing tools creatively' is overlaid on the map in a white box.

3.

Challenges and Opportunities

Utilizing tools creatively

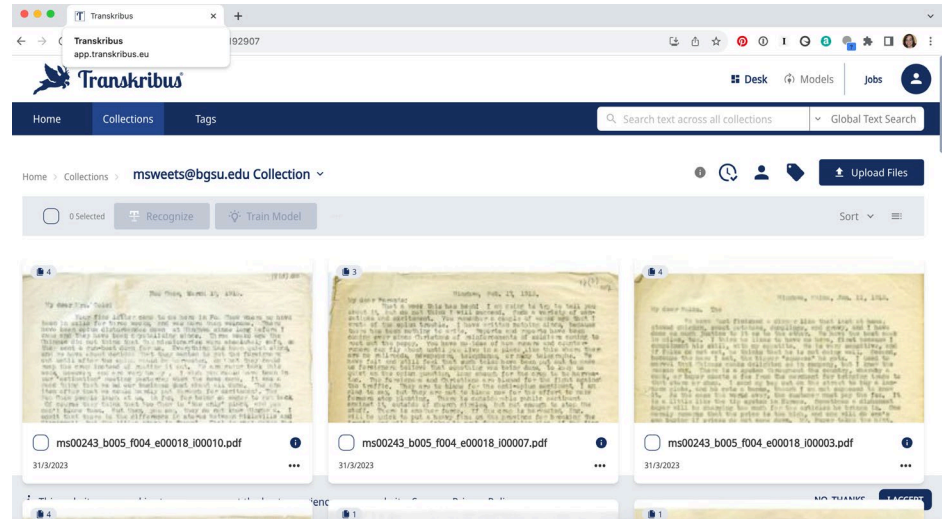


Generating Searchable Text for Handwritten Items



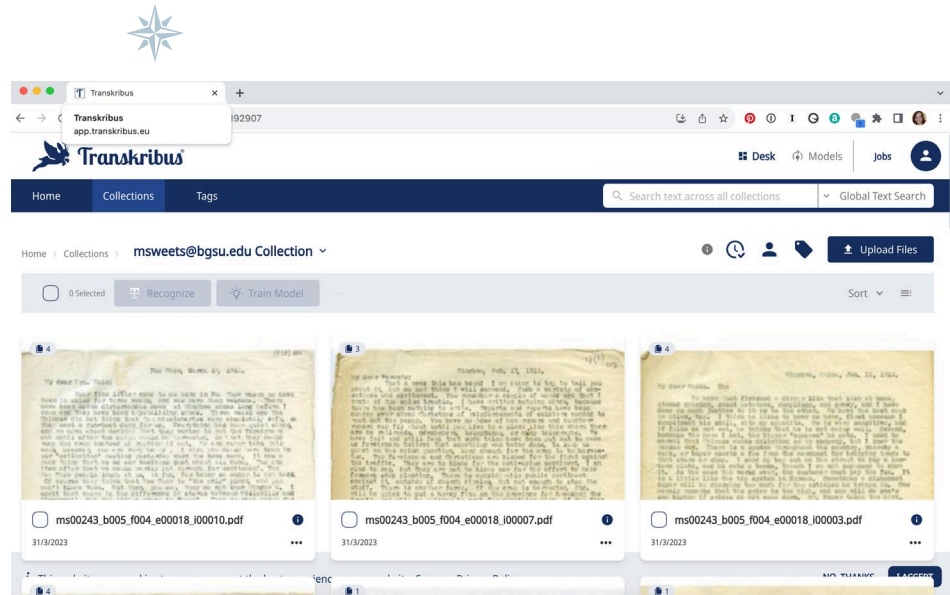
Had planned to use Transkribus

- Browser-based text recognition and transcription tool
- AI models that can run *handwritten* text recognition on scanned documents, for multiple languages
- Can train the model to recognize writing of a single person
- 500 free credits



Decided to abandon Transkribus

- To train the model, requires 25-75 pages of transcribed material
- Experience with another collection: did not necessarily save time



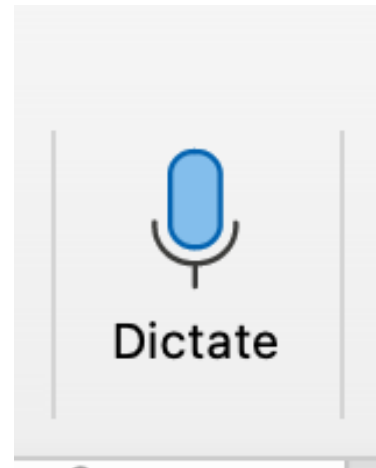
The screenshot displays the Transkribus web application interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Collections', and 'Tags' tabs. A search bar is present with the text 'Search text across all collections' and a 'Global Text Search' dropdown. Below the navigation bar, the current collection is identified as 'msweets@bgsu.edu Collection'. There are buttons for 'Upload Files' and 'Train Model'. The main content area shows a grid of document thumbnails, each with a file name and a date. The visible file names are 'ms00243_b005_f004_e00018_i00010.pdf', 'ms00243_b005_f004_e00018_i00007.pdf', and 'ms00243_b005_f004_e00018_i00003.pdf', all dated '31/3/2023'. The interface also includes a '0 Selected' indicator and a 'Recognize' button.

A historical map of Antarctica with a grid of latitude and longitude lines. The map shows various islands and landmasses, including Alexander I. L., King Edward VII. Land, and Victoria. A large white text overlay is centered on the map. The text reads "Enter Word's dictate feature!".

Enter Word's
dictate feature!

Microsoft Word's Dictate Feature

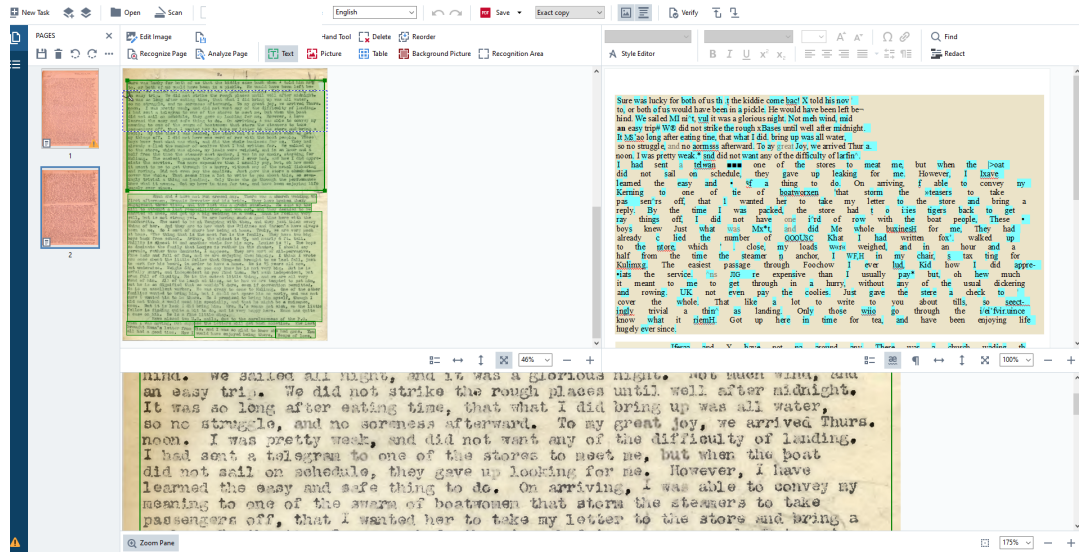
- Requires a different style of “reading”
- Dictate small bits of the text, leave feature turned on, and make corrections while punctuation and style are in working memory
- Sometimes easier to stop talking and simply type a name or phrase



Generating Searchable Text for Typewritten Items

Had planned to use
ABBYY FineReader

- Sample page at right with high error rate
- Some test pages were so bad that ABBYY questioned whether we selected the correct language



Generating Searchable Text for Typewritten Items – Take 2

Acrobat

- Equally poor results
- Even less ability to truly modify the OCR transcript

Sure was lucky for both of us that the kiddie came back when I told him not to, or both of us would have been in a pickle. He would have been left behind. We sailed all night, and it was a glorious night. Not much wind, and an easy trip. We did not strike the rough places until well after midnight. It was so long after eating time, that what I did bring up was all water, so no struggle, and no sickness afterward. To my great joy, we arrived Thurs. noon. I was pretty weak, and did not want any of the difficulty of landing. I had sent a telegram to one of the stores to meet me, but when the boat did not sail on schedule, they gave up looking for me. However, I have learned the easy and safe thing to do. On arriving, I was able to convey my meaning to one of the swarm of boatwomen that storm the steamers to take passengers off, that I wanted her to take my letter to the store and bring a reply. By the time I was packed, the store had to send messengers back to get my things off. I did not have one word of row with the boat people. These boys knew just what was what, and did the whole business for me. They had already called the number of opollet that I had written for. We walked up to the store, which was close, my loads were weighed, and in an hour and a half from the time the steamer cast anchor, I was in my chair, starting for sailing. The easiest passage through Foochow I ever had, and how I did appreciate the service. Was more expensive than I usually pay, but, oh how much it meant to me to get through in a hurry, without any of the usual dickering

Generating Searchable Text for Typewritten Items – Take 3

What do we do now?

- Might as well try Transkribus!

The screenshot displays the Transkribus web application interface. On the left, a scanned document is shown with a yellow highlight over a paragraph. On the right, the corresponding searchable text is displayed in a structured format, including a header for 'REGION 1' and a date 'Oct 23, 1921'. The text is numbered on the right side, corresponding to the lines in the document. The interface includes a navigation bar at the top with the URL 'app.transkribus.eu/collection/19290', a search bar, and various utility icons. The document text is as follows:

REGION 1
Oct 23, 1921

In regard to our conversation yesterday, and to H. going to S. there are a few things I want to make clear as I see them.

First, if H. can go to S. joyfully, feeling that there will her will be richest and fullest, and not that she go from a sense of duty, and her God-speed, and would be the last to stand in her way.

There are some other things that will make her going very hard to bear. You know how all the time I was on furlough, I kept begging for a primary specialist, and ALMOST refused to return until such a person was appointed. But that did not seem quite right or fair, so I came on, in faith that such a one could be sent soon. It was with a heavy heart that I started back without. My first news in Foomchow was that such a person was coming, and it seemed an immediate reward to faith.

Now, you are mistaken to say we knew she was meant for S., and I will tell you how the story has come to me. I had no intimation that she was for S. until the two letters from Mrs. T. & Miss ST. This summer, except her own saying once after she had been here for some time, that the ladies at home said she should go to S.

In F., on my return, as I said, the guests returning from our Conf. reported that there was this new worker to help me. Here I was told the same, I was not here during Conf. for that heated discussion about workers. I know of it only through you, Miss Brown, and Miss Westcott. Even Miss Wilson has never talked with me about it. What I learned was this: There were two workers coming to the Conf., one educ., one evang.; one for F., and one for Hade. As you had just heard from Mrs. T. that she had a very fine girl she thought she could send, you retired again to the educ. worker, which left the evang. for S. But as Miss T. did not want an evang. worker up there yet, that meant both would stay in F. As Miss Wilson was to go home soon, it seemed to be a good arrangement for her work.

I have been so grateful for H., and have treated so in soul for her help, those first few months when she was enduring Hade, that I have been like a sensitive plate to everything concerning her. I tell you truly, you did not read that part of Mrs. T.'s letter to me that she was meant for S., or I could not have forgotten it. You read me only the one sentence that I spoke to you about. Dr. B. knew about that making, and even the decisions made there, and would have known had there been any intention of sending H. to S. You know how taken she was with H., when she brought her down, and she used to say repeatedly to us how she envied us, wished she were



4.
Lessons Learned



- It's never ideal to work in a compressed schedule.
- Be flexible in employing tools.
- It may take time to see usage results.

Grace McClurg Carson papers (MS-0243)					
Click this row to expand or contract the subtable.					
ACTION URL	ACTIONS	UNIQUE ACTIONS	BOUNCE RATE	AVG. TIME ON DIMENSION	EXIT RATE
digitalgallery.bgsu.edu/collections/show/171	30	13	0%	00:00:11	8%
digitalgallery.bgsu.edu/collections/item/41883	6	4	0%	00:05:00	0%
digitalgallery.bgsu.edu/collections/item/41896	3	3	33%	00:00:10	33%
digitalgallery.bgsu.edu/items/browse?collection=171&sort_field=Dublin+Core,Date&sort_dir=a	4	3	0%	00:00:09	0%
lib.bgsu.edu/findingaids/repositories/4/resources/1545	3	3	0%	00:09:34	0%
digitalgallery.bgsu.edu/collections/item/41521	2	2	0%	00:00:15	0%
digitalgallery.bgsu.edu/collections/item/41617	2	2	0%	00:00:10	0%
digitalgallery.bgsu.edu/collections/item/41750	2	2	0%	00:00:42	0%
digitalgallery.bgsu.edu/collections/item/41780	2	2	0%	00:00:45	0%

THANK YOU



STATE LIBRARY OF OHIO



INSTITUTE of
Museum and Library
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URLs

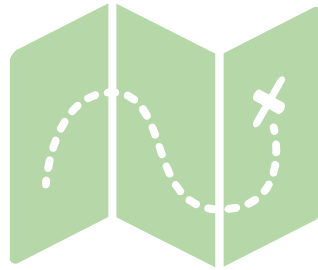
Grace McClurg Carson papers home page:

<https://digitalgallery.bgsu.edu/collections/show/171>

Dora E. Giffen papers home page:

<https://digitalgallery.bgsu.edu/collections/show/170>





QUESTIONS?

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Credits: presentation template by [SlidesCarnival](#); maps from [David Rumsey Map Collection](#)