Describing Photographs

…Can we talk?

Digital Commonwealth, April 2018
Presentation by Martha Mahard
Cataloging – a public service!

- Not an end in itself – consider who you are doing it for

- What you want to find might be the same as what the user wants to find – or not

- IT’S ALL ABOUT ACCESS
Boucicault
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Dion Bouicault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>General: Sarony, New York; photographer Provenance: From the bequest of Evert Jansen Wendell 1918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form / Genre</td>
<td>cabinet photographs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related Work</td>
<td>part of the HTC/TCS Photograph Series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repository</td>
<td>Harvard Theatre Collection TCS 1.3276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOLLIS Number</td>
<td>olvwork616178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permalink</td>
<td><a href="http://id.lib.harvard.edu/images/olvwork616178/catalog">http://id.lib.harvard.edu/images/olvwork616178/catalog</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>HVD - Images</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dion Boucicault as the Frustrated Researcher

Details

Title: Dion Boucicault
Notes: General: J. Notman, Boston; photographer
Subject: In Daddy O’Doud
Subject: actors
Form / Genre: cabinet photographs
Related Work: part of the HTC/TCS Photograph Series
Repository: Harvard Theatre Collection TCS 1.3285
HOLLIS Number: olvwork616187
Permalink: http://id.lib.harvard.edu/images/olvwork616187/catalog
Source: HVD - Images
Researchers need to

- Identify
- Select
- Obtain

Our records should facilitate this process
Managers need to

- Preserve
- Interpret
- Manage access
- Make best use of resources
Important considerations

What are we cataloging?
Faneuil Hall, 1742
Important considerations

What are we cataloging?

What level of cataloging can we afford?
Les [?]yth Ponts
PARIS. — Vue des Sept-Ponts, prise de Saint-Gervais.
PARIS. — L'Eglise Saint-Gervais.
Les [?]yth Ponts
Photograph by Charles Marville, State of the Hôtel de Ville, Paris, following the fire suffered during the revolts of the Communards in 1871
St. Gervais

Hôtel de Ville
Hall of Fame / or Infamy...
**Work**

- **Title:** Image not visible
- **Work Type:** photographs
- **Creator:** Whipple, John Adams (1822-1891), United States
- **Date:** March 11, 1851
- **Description:** Daguerreotype plate is badly tarnished. Image not visible.
- **Dimensions:** sixth plate
- **Materials/Techniques:** daguerreotype
- **Note:** Inscription: On verso of plate "March 11, 1851."
- **Use Restrictions:** Harvard College Observatory Library: This image may not be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, without permission in writing from the Harvard College Observatory.
- **Repository:** Harvard College Observatory Library

**Record Identifier:** olvwork100130
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Title</strong></th>
<th>Photograph</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td><em>Materials/Techniques: 35mm Copy-Positive Reel Film</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Notes</strong></td>
<td>Original Owner: Carnegie Institute of Washington</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Subject**     | *Place: Central America*  >  
|                 |   > Mexico  >  
|                 |   > Yucatan  >  
|                 |   > Coba  >  
|                 |   > Coba, Stone steps to Court N.  >  
|                 |   > Architecture  >  
|                 |   > Stairway  >  
|                 |   > Expedition  >  
|                 |   > Staff  >  
|                 |   > Laborers  >  
| **Culture**     | Maya  |
| **Style / Period** | Classic  |
| **Form / Genre** | photographs  |
| **Identifier**  | Peabody Number, 58-34-20/30963  
|                 | Carnegie Institute of Washington, C-26104  |
| **Use Restrictions** | This copy furnished for study purposes only. Written authorization must be obtained for all other uses. Peabody Museum, Harvard University.  |
| **Rights**      | © President and Fellows of Harvard College.  |
| **Creation Date** | between 1929 and 1957  |
| **Repository**  | Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Photographic Archives  |
| **HOLLIS Number** | pea431314  |
| **Permalink**   | [http://id.lib.harvard.edu/images/pa431314/catalog](http://id.lib.harvard.edu/images/pa431314/catalog)  |
| **Source**      | HVD - Images  |
Rule Numbers 1 and 2

Call it what it is!

*Daguerreotype of...*
*Stereoview of...*
*Carte de visite portrait of...*

Include enough information in the title to distinguish it from other similar items

Share what you know –
Constantinople is Istanbul.
*Don’t make me sing the song!*
A sad example of how Harvard does less with more...
Charles Laughton last stage appearances, 1959 at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre (as it was then), as Bottom in MND and as Lear in King Lear.

- Charles Laughton: ...as Bottom
- Michael Blakemore: ...as Snout
- Julian Glover: ...as Snug
- Roy Dotrice: ...as Egeus
- Albert Finney: ...as Lysander
- Vanessa Redgrave: ...as Helena
- Robert Hardy: ...as Oberon
- Ian Holm: ...as Puck
- Diana Rigg: ...unnamed part
- Mary Ure: ...as Titania
Seriously? That’s the best Harvard can do?
Now over to you...
Contact information

Martha Mahard
mmahard@bpl.org
1911-1912

Item Information

Title: 1911-1912
Photographer: Jones, Leslie, 1886-1967
Date: 1911-1912
Format: Photographs
Genre: Film negatives
Location: Boston Public Library
Collection (local): Leslie Jones Collection
Series: Leslie Jones Related
Extent: 1 negative: film, black & white; image 7 x 9 cm.
Permalink: http://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/3r076g58x
Terms of Use: Copyright (c) Leslie Jones.
Item Information

Title: 2 men
Photographer: Jones, Leslie, 1886-1967
Date: [ca. 1934-1956]
Format: Photographs
Genre: Film negatives
Genre: Portrait photographs
Location: Boston Public Library
Location: Print Department
Collection (local): Leslie Jones Collection
Series: People: Miscellaneous & Unidentified
Subjects: Men
Subjects: Automobile service stations
Extent: 1 negative : film, black & white ; 3 1/8 x 4 1/4 in.
Permalink: http://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/3197zf02r
Terms of Use: Copyright (c) Leslie Jones. All rights reserved.

show more...
New Hampshire, 1956
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Creator</th>
<th>Eve Arnold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Great Britain. G.B. ENGLAND. London. Margaret Thatcher before her election as Prime Minister. 1977.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artstor Collection</td>
<td>Magnum Photos</td>
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<tr>
<td>ID Number</td>
<td>LON19797.jpg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Image and original data provided by Magnum Photos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>Charles Arnold / Magnum Photos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Contact information

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mmahard@bpl.org