



Digitizing Rare St. Louis Atlases

Emily Jaycox and Levi Cullifer
Missouri Historical Society

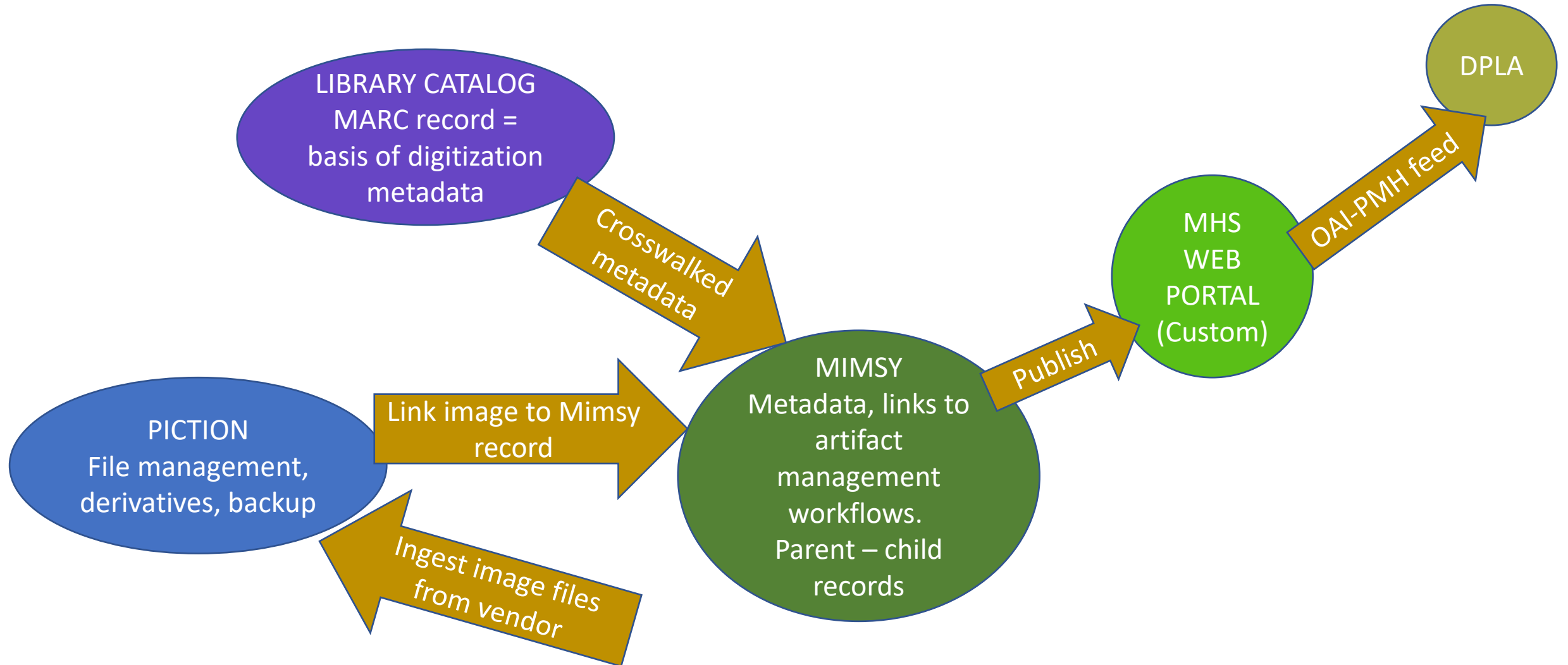
St. Louis Regional Library Network Tech Expo 2023

Atlas selection criteria

- Based on demand for house history research
- StL City / County
- Not digitized previously

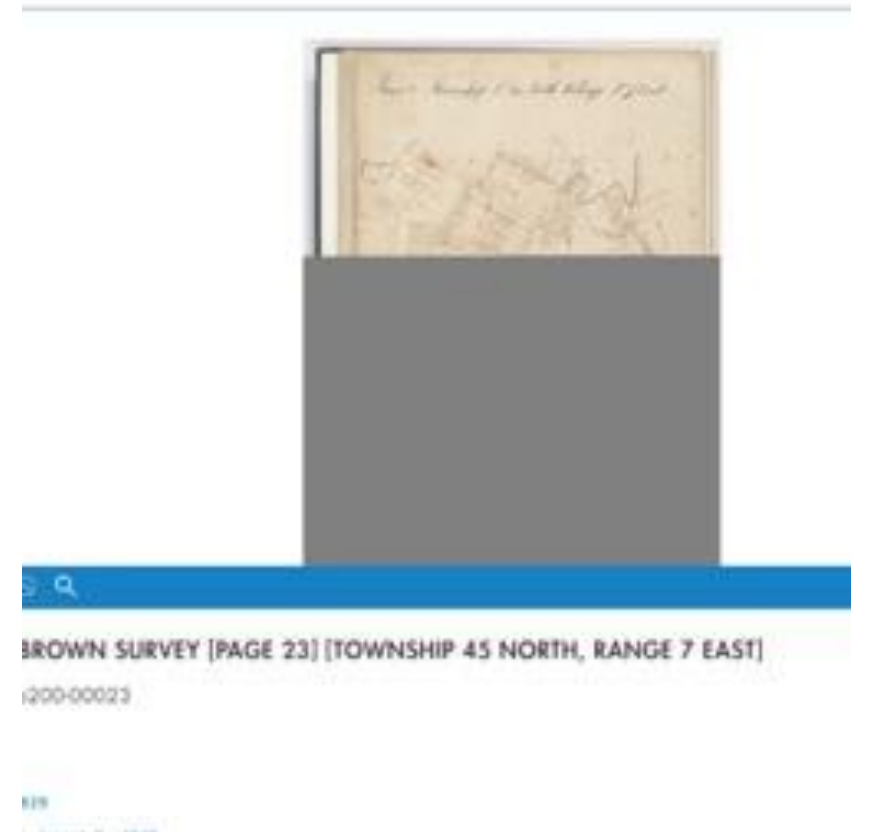


Our department has not done a digitization project of this magnitude since we implemented our current DAM.



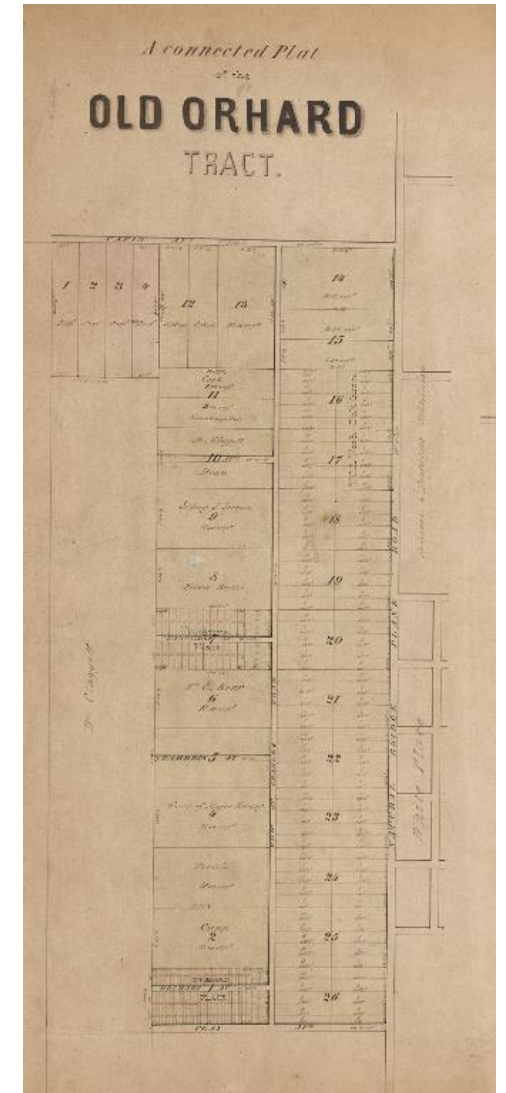
Tech challenges

- MARC records were crosswalked manually to Mimsy
- **Surprise:** Parent records and individual child pages both needed to be created
- Bulk metadata management – creating child records; troubleshooting file naming syntax
- Pipeline issues (scheduling ingests to limit batch size)
- Image loading failures on website – gray boxes



Promotion

- Missouri State Library grants require a plan to promote the funded resource. To promote this project, we used a variety of approaches beyond publishing them to our web portal.
- Workshops for staff and patrons
- Giving presentations
 - At conferences
 - To the public
- Online promotion
 - LibGuide
 - Blog posts (digital storytelling)



LibGuide

<https://mohistory.libguides.com/c.php?g=1287461>

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Home - Digitized Plat Books

City and County Atlases and Plat Books: Home - Digitized Plat Books

Search this G

atlases, and plat books depicting St. Louis City and County, Missouri

Plat Books

What Is a Plat Map?

Land Claims in Missouri

Telling Stories with Plat Maps

What's a Block Book?

Digitized Plat Maps of St. Louis City and County, Missouri

DATE	RESOURCE	COVERAGE	NOTES
*1829	Joseph C. Brown Survey	St. Louis City and County	Manuscript survey of S
1838	Dupre's Atlas of the City and County of St. Louis	St. Louis City and County	
*1845–1858	Keemle's Plats Recorded Between 1845 and 1858	Selected parcels in St. Louis City and County	Manuscript
1847	Hutawa's Atlas of the County of St. Louis, Missouri	St. Louis City and County	
*1852	Schultse's Map of the City of St. Louis Mo. & Vicinity	St. Louis City, from the riverfront to Kingshighway	
*1862	Hutawa's Atlas of the County of St. Louis, Missouri	St. Louis City and County	
*1870	Hutawa's Atlas of St. Louis County	St. Louis City and County	
*1876	Guzman's Plat Book of the County of St. Louis	Selected subdivisions in St. Louis County	6 volumes
*1876	Guzman's Block Book of the City of St. Louis	St. Louis City block numbers 1–3200	10 volume
1878	Pitzman's New Atlas of the City and County of Saint Louis, Missouri	St. Louis City and County	SHS
1883	Hopkins' Atlas of the City of St. Louis, Missouri	St. Louis City	SHS

Historical Society
digitize the atlases on this
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Services under the
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i, visit www.ims.gov.

ner names, plats can
marks. This detail of
t Publishing's 1909 [Plat](#)
[County, Missouri](#) shows a
ad line, quarries, and a



Unplanned benefits

Synergy with other MHS programs

- Map-heavy articles in Gateway were illustrated without my intervention
- Thursday Night at the Museum (April 6): Mapping Black Towns

SCHEDULE

5:00–8:00pm | Explore the **Museum's exhibits** and view the *#1 in Civil Rights: The African American Freedom Struggle in St. Louis* banner display in the Grand Hall.

5:00–7:00pm | Enjoy food and drinks available for purchase from **Salt & Smoke**.

5:00–6:15pm | *Disappearing Black Communities* book signing with Dr. John Wright Sr. (books available for purchase in the **Museum Shop**).

5:30–6:30pm | Stop by the Historians' Corner to see images of maps from the MHS collections and learn about local historic Black towns. Share your family's origin and migration stories on a map of your own.

6:30–8:00pm | Head to the Lee Auditorium for the presentation by Dr. Atyia Martin and Cymone Davis.

Local blogger started adding these maps to his posts

- <https://stlouispatina.com/>



© Chris Naffziger, St. Louis Patina

Looking below, you can see the Christy Estate in 1884, with the few roads and parcels of property that made up their land holdings. North is to the right. You can see the long driveway over to Morgan Fo



Detail of Hiram W. LeFrogue's Map of the City of St. Louis and Vicinity, Panel 8, November 1, 1884, Missouri History Museum, Lb2058-00008

Here are historic photos of the family business.



MHS blog posts thus far

- <https://mohistory.org/blog/patchwork>
- <https://mohistory.org/blog/underground>
- Several more in the pipeline...

The Lost History of Underground St. Louis

by [Levi Cullifer](#) | UMSL Graduate Assistant

Beneath St. Louisans' feet lies a network of tunnels and caves that have been intertwined with this city's history for hundreds of years. Once coveted sources of attraction, they're now nearly forgotten and abandoned. These intricate subterranean caverns and tunnels were used by many, including Indigenous tribes, early brewers, Prohibition-era smugglers, and even homeless children. With the use of recently digitized maps from the Missouri Historical Society Collections, we can now look even closer into the past of underground St. Louis.

One of the most popular uses of local caves was for beer storage, and the McHose and English Brewery, run by Isaac McHose and Ezra English, was one of the earliest to benefit from this process. Around 1835, McHose and English found that the temperatures in the caves, which averaged around 55 degrees, were perfect for brewing. The process became known as lagering, which is the German word for storing. English eventually bricked up a portion of the cave opening and set up a space inside to serve as a Biergarten. Hundreds flocked there during the summer to drink cold beer.



Portion of Edward Schultze's *Map of the City of St. Louis Mo. & Vicinity* showing McHose and English Cave and Lemp Cave, 1852. Missouri Historical Society Collections.

The McHose and English Brewery was one of the first to use the cave systems.



Struggle for Education St. Louis

Segregation of Knowledge in Early STL

Levi Cullifer

August 7, 2022

First research project based on the maps

- StoryMap (UMSL project): <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/fa9a385e86344d01bfac43d52336f5ba>
- MHS blog post: <https://mohistory.org/blog/segregated-schooling>

Next steps

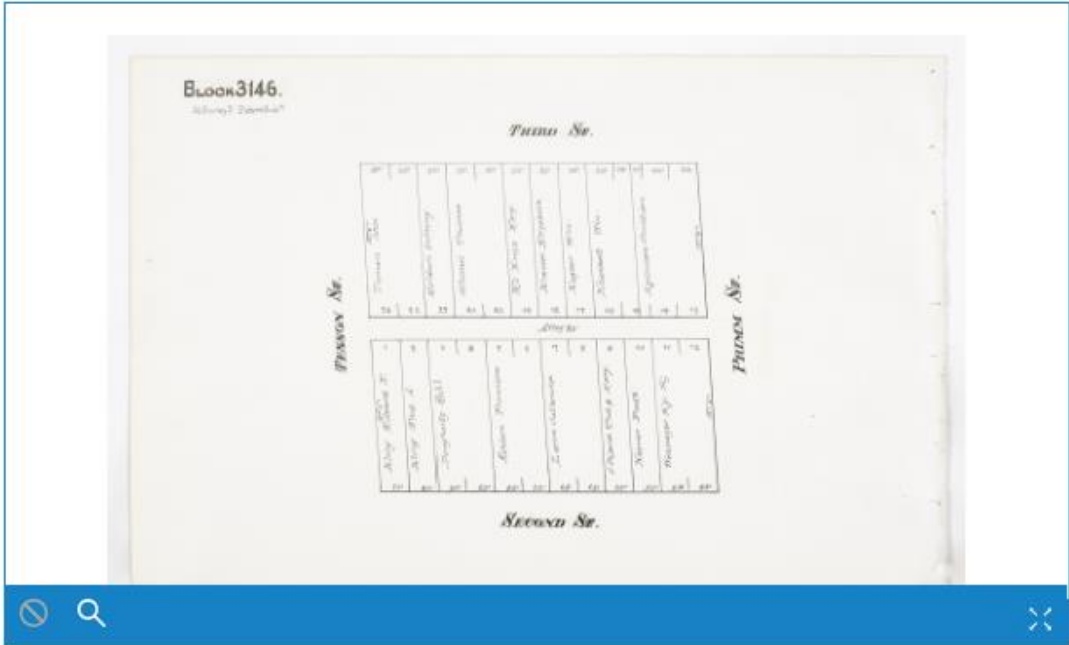
- Recruit and train e-volunteers to enhance page level metadata
 - Transcribe landowner names
 - Georeferencing map corners
- Exhibit planning
 - Map show
 - Segregation
- Follow up digitization grant - just awarded
 - More St. Louis atlases
 - Outstate Missouri plat books, not yet digitized

MENU

SOCIETY
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LIBRARY
MEMORIAL

MISSOURI HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JOIN



BLOCK BOOK OF THE CITY OF ST. LOUIS [BOOK 8] BLOCK 3146

IDENTIFIER: lib211-00008-337

DATE: 1876

DECADE: 1870-1879

CREATOR: Guzman, Ignatz P.

TYPES: Map, Page

SUBJECTS: Real property, Maps, Saint Louis (Mo.), Maps

PLACES: United States, Missouri, St. Louis City, St. Louis

RIGHTS: NO COPYRIGHT - UNITED STATES

PERMALINK: <http://collections.mohistory.org/resource/1109880>



Takeaways

- Allow time for troubleshooting uploads
- Identify and befriend your tech gurus
- If you've looked closely at the source originals in a digitization project, you could be (at least) a minor expert on that topic.
- One form of promotion can daisy-chain on another
- Look at your organization's event calendar, content streams, etc.
 - **Is there a hungry content beast?**
- No time for research / writing? Can you partner with an intern or volunteer?

Get in touch!

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Emily Jaycox emily@mohistory.org
Levi Cullifer lcullifer@mohistory.org

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