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Taking Flight: Expanding a Crowdsourcing Program in Support of New Research

Mark F Anderson
University of Iowa
Taking Flight: Expanding a Crowdsourcing Program in Support of New Research

Keystone DH
June 24, 2016
Pittsburgh, PA

Mark F. Anderson
Digital Collections Librarian
The University of Iowa
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>April 23rd</td>
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</table>
|           | This has been a day of some excitement. The surgeon in charge and another officer called early in the morning. Miss Hazen and I were not quite ready to go out, so Doctor had to talk with them. Doctor was very kind and almost said, "Don't be afraid." We should not know what we could do. It is a very strange and different place. But I have heard from a lady who lives here that she has seen many. Shall not forget the little girl who was sick in bed, which they took in the ambulance. The surgeon is there to give us an ambulance. The girls brought to town and saw them."

Transcription:

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Saturday April 23rd
This has been a day of some excitement. The surgeon in charge and another officer called early in the morning. Miss Hazen and I were not quite ready to go out, so Doctor had to talk with them. Doctor was very kind and almost said, "Don't be afraid." We should not know what we could do. It is a very strange and different place. But I have heard from a lady who lives here that she has seen many. Shall not forget the little girl who was sick in bed, which they took in the ambulance. The surgeon is there to give us an ambulance. The girls brought to town and saw them.
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Crowdsourcing the Civil War

June 7, 2011 / Permalink / Short URL

Have a little time to spare? Consider helping transcribe Civil War letters and diaries online.

In commemoration of the sesquicentennial of the Civil War, the libraries of the University of Iowa put together the exhibit “Now Do Not Let Your Courage Fail: Voices from the Civil War,” currently on display at the university, which incorporates letters and diaries from three manuscript collections. As a part of this exhibit documents were scanned and made available online here (Image below).
Anyone else getting a really slow connection to this site?

Reddit the giant
Wants to pet the small website
Squishes it instead
TIL how to participate in history while sitting on my ass by transcribing Civil War diaries online.

I collect this sort of thing—old journals/diaries/letters. This is wonderful. One page just translated talked about a soldier trying to shoot a deer, missing and shooting a bull in a pasture. They butchered it, gave the owner half and ate it and declared it the best meal since leaving home. Was an interesting break from "Rode 18 miles today, weather hot, road rough".

Edit to add: OH GOD REDDIT KILLED IT :/

I love how people deal.

Yeah... I feel bad. I wonder if people are still logging in closer to Iowa. I have no idea how the internet works.

my great-great-grandfather was Union and wrote a memoir on his death bed which I transcribed. One of the stories he told was "Foraging" on a Southern farm, and he and some other guys spotted a pig and started chasing it around a barn. He got smart and doubled back to catch it head on, and the pig ended up running through his legs and away, cartoon-style. He was at Gettysburg, was captured afterwards and spent 7 months in Andersonville, nearly died from starvation.

I grew up in the British school system. I don't know if this is typical for British schools, but here's the system when it came to handwriting:

We had to write in block letters, in pencil only, until 3rd grade. Then in 3rd grade, we started learning cursive. (Joined-up, we called it. It was so exciting!) Once we could write properly in cursive, we were allowed to get pens, like the other big kids.

We couldn't just go out and get any pen, however. It had to be a fountain pen.
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also received a letter from Mr. Van Scoyoc.

Jan 25 Weather clear and [belly?] as at spring. Nothing new in Camp.
Jan 26 Weather clear and warm cloudy this evening, looks like storm I have a very sore foot caused by a [gathering?] on my heel. Nothing new.
Jan 27. Snowed a little last night. Raining by spells all day. Had an Oyster Supper last night. Good news in the papers think the Rebels are getting sick of their Job. Wrote a letter to Sally
Civil War Diaries and Letters

9134 of 9154 pages have been transcribed!
Oological Collection of T. W. Dewing, New York

A. O. U. Number 616  
Species Chionis ateria (Linnaeus)

Set Mark 1/3  
Barn and Swallow

Place Collected in Cornell, New Hampshire

Name of Collector T. W. Dewing

Date June 10, 1895  
Number in Set 3  
Incubation Fresh

This set of 3 eggs collected by myself
About UIMNH Collections

Most collections at the University of Iowa Museum of Natural History originated in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and came from University expeditions, faculty collections, and private donors. Egg collecting was a popular hobby before 1918, when the Migratory Bird Treaty Act went into force to protect birds and made it illegal "to take, possess, import, export, sell, purchase, barter, or offer for sale, purchase, or barter, any migratory bird, or the parts, nests, or eggs of such a bird except under the terms of a valid permit...."

The Museum maintains current permits to have and use these collections. By transcribing data associated with our historic collections, you are helping the Museum to get information about these specimens into the hands of researchers all around the globe, so they can study this valuable scientific resource.

Key to Sample Egg Cards

SAMPLE COMPOUND CARD

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SAMPLE FREE FORM CARD

Note: Fill in fields contain similar data. Transcribe the one that is most samples.
Crowdsourcing is a great way to kick-start a business or an art project, but more and more archaeologists and archivists are also turning to the Internet for help. This includes cataloging, transcribing, translating, and even puzzle solving. As a volunteer, you get to act like Indiana Jones, but without the risk of having your still-beating heart ripped out of your chest.
80/20 rule in action!

588 transcriptions (starts + edits)
28 registered users
20 % = 6 users
Those top 6 had done 467/588
Or...

79.4%
dimidio dieum meorum in generatione et generationem annal tu. intilio tu domine terram fundasti et opera manuum tuarum sunt cell. ipsi pribunt tu autem permanes et omnes sicut vestamentum veterascent et sicut oporttorium mutabiles eos et mutabuntur tu autem idem ipse es et anni tu non deficient. Fili servorum tuorum habitabant et semem eorum in
In half of my days in a lifetime and during the generation of your year.
SELLO TERCERO. TREINTA Y CUATRO MARAVEDIS. AÑO DE MIL Y SEISCIENTOS Y NOVENTA.

Yo Sebastian Pasero Munoz servido del Rey nuestro Señor y del numero de esta Ciudad de Cuenca y su tierra certifico y doy fe como en el dia siete de Agosto del año pasado de mil seiscientos y ochenta y siete el senor Don Francisco Munoz Carrillo Cavallero que fue del orden de Calatrava Vezino y Rendir perpetuo de esta Ciudad de las Villas de Zarzaela y Villahola Depositario general del santo oficio de la Inquisicion de ella muno y paro de esta presente Vida, y quedaron por sus hijos y herederos las señoras D.a Ynes Maria Munoz Carrillo Marquesa de Villiel muger legitima del Señor Don Alonso Gonzalez de Andrade y Garces Marques de dicho Estado D.a Pretonlia Antonia Munoz Carrillo muger
Code in GitHub

Requirements

DIYHistoryTranscribe requires the following:

- Omeka version 2.x
- Omeka Dublin Core Extended plugin
- Daniel-KM/CsvImport, a fork of Omeka's CsvImport that allows bulk upload of item and file-level metadata
- ui-libraries/plugin-Scripto, a fork of CHNM's Scripto tool for crowdsourced transcription of documents. Scripto requires a MediaWiki installation.
- Scribe, a custom Omeka theme designed for use with ui-libraries/plugin-Scripto

Features

DIYHistoryTranscribe introduces the following features to plugin-Scripto:

- Track completion status of document pages (i.e., 'Not Started', 'Needs Review', 'Completed')
- Track completion progress of documents based on page statuses.
- Sort documents within their collection by most completed, floating least completed to the top.
- Initialize document page text entry box with pre-existing text, if available (helpful if using Scripto to correct OCR for typescript pages).
- On every page action, automatically import transcriptions from MediaWiki as file metadata.

The Scribe theme directs its focus on guiding users to easy transcription tasks rather than collection management features, offering a clean, thumbnail-oriented transcription view for any number of Omeka image collections.

By default, any member of the public is allowed to edit and save transcription data, but only users with an account can track their progress. Approved account holders can also be granted administrator (or deputy) status, allowing them to finalize documents as "complete".

Installation

Follow the documentation at each source code repository to install Omeka 2, ui-libraries/plugin-Csvimport, ui-libraries/plugin-Scripto • MediaWiki, and Scribe.

https://github.com/ui-libraries/DIYHistory-transcribe
Questions?

Student giving a speech in class, 1940s
The University of Iowa
http://digital.lib.uiowa.edu/cdm/ref/collection/ictcs/id/3202