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"Caring For Photographs: General Guidelines," National Park Service Conserve-O-Gram, 14/4, June 1997.

"Mold: Prevention Of Growth In Museum Collections," National Park Service Conserve-O-Gram, 3/4, August 2007.

"Removing Original Fasteners From Archival Documents," National Park Service Conserve-O-Gram, 19/5, July 1993.

"Storage Enclosures for Photographic Prints And Negatives," National Park Service Conserve-O-Gram, 14/2, July 1993.

The project at the ETRC was an experience in archiving practices. Whereas the project at the Stone Fort Museum focused on the curatorial aspects of museums, at the ETRC, the experience was more hands-on with the collections. Many of the theories that have been addressed in class were utilized in day-to-day activities at the ETRC and as were the difficulties experienced in an institution with limited funding and less control than desired.

Temperature and humidity monitoring were done with a series of digital hygrometers situated throughout the collections in the various back rooms in the ETRC including the employee work area. The positives to using a hygrometer verses a traditional thermometer or paper monitor for relative humidity are the ease of reading the instrument and the accuracy that a digital reading provides. As the collections are housed in an environment that Linda Reynolds is not able to control to any degree, they are subject to the fluctuations in temperature and humidity that occur in the library. Even from room to room, the temperature would differ by up to five degrees. The humidity differed by 10 to 20 percent with changes throughout the day upwards of 30 percent; one hygrometer showed a change from 29 percent relative humidity to 59 percent in the same area over a set amount of time. With such drastic changes in temperature and humidity constantly, Linda worries that eventually the collections will begin to mold since cellulose-based

materials are more subject to mold growth and that encompasses the collections at the ETRC¹; a worry that she has expressed to the maintenance crew on more than one occasion to no avail. In the end, the result will be damaged collections that require an expensive cleanup that could have been avoided with the option of a more controlled environment.

For the majority of the hands-on part of the project, I worked with the Pickering Lumber Company collection which I was warned would be terribly boring but I found quite interesting. The task was to rehouse the mostly already foldered files into new folders after removing the rusted staples, paper clips, and other metal clasps. Once a containing mechanism was removed, a piece of folded 8 ½ x 11" acid-free white paper secured the previously attached paperwork. This part of the processing could get a little tedious since in a stack of five papers there could be four staples and a paper clip and the paper was either delicate to begin with or brittle with age making it difficult to avoid small tears when removing the metal. Straight pins were also used as fasteners and while the warning in one of the readings concerned rust, the most common issue I found was white corrosion instead of red rust². Once the papers were processed, the previous folders were cut to retain only the portions with necessary information. The new folders were labeled with the words "box" and "folder" with spaces behind for the future addition of numbers, the in-house number given by the Pickering Lumber Company, the description of the documents (either provided by the company or attained by brief reading of the documents) and the notation of the Pickering Lumber Company Collection. The documents in the collection included land surveys, title abstracts, deeds, quit-deeds, legal documents such as court decisions, letters concerning the transfer of property to entire proceedings about particular tracts of land. In one

→ ¹"Mold: Prevention of Growth In Museum Collections," National Park Service Conserve-O-Gram, 3/4, August 2007.
²"Removing Original Fasteners From Archival Documents," National Park Service Conserve-O-Gram, 1975, 10, 1993.

such group of papers, the original title for lands given by Republic of Texas President Mirabeau Lamar was present unfortunately for my curiosity, without a signature. The rest of that section followed the transfers of title throughout generations as record for the Pickering Lumber Company's timber and mineral rights.

At the beginning of my time at the ETRC, I handled some pictures from the Robinson Photo Collection that had previously been unidentified. Some of the pictures had been housed in Mylar sleeves as mentioned in previous readings³ but the majority had not.⁴ The task for these photos included housing those photos which remained unprotected and putting each photo in an individually labeled folder with the name of the person or persons pictured, the words "box" and "folder" with spaces behind for future numbers, and the notation that it was a part of the Robinson Photo Collection. The procedure for the pictures that had been previously placed in Mylar sleeves did not require white, cotton gloves though any handling of unprotected photos did.

One of the points that was stressed in some of the readings was to maintain a clean workspace⁵ with enough room to handle different sized objects and all steps of processing. Since the ETRC was an afterthought addition to the library, the kitchen area is in the same room as the work space. While the area is kept relatively clean, the threat of contamination still remains. Another point made in ^(FL)Conserve-O-Gram on photograph care was to maintain the environment to within $\pm 2^{\circ}\text{F}$ and $\pm 3\% \text{ RH}$, a goal that is impossible for Linda as discussed above.

The ETRC implements many of the theoretical collections management activities while adapting to less than ideal conditions. The hands-on experience with small parts of unprocessed...

³ "Storage Enclosures For Photographic Prints And Negatives," National Park Service Conserve-O-Gram, 14/2, July 1993.

⁴ "Caring For Photographs: General Guidelines," National Park Service Conserve-O-Gram, 14/4, July 1997.

collections provided an excellent learning experience that further peaked my interest in the archival process.

Summary of Tasks

*Rehoused into Mylar sleeves and properly labeled folders some previously unidentified photographs from the Robinson Photo Collection

*Processed and rehoused paperwork from Pickering Lumber Company including title abstracts, deeds, quit deeds, legal documents such as court proceedings and decisions, and correspondence in reference to transfers of land. Also refolded with labels such as name of collection, company number for the particular group of paperwork, the county in which the lands were, and a place for box and folder numbers to be added once the collection is further processed.

