

OHRAB Final Report

“Digitizing the Microfilm Archive of the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati”

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Institution: Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati Archives

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Summary of Project Activities and Accomplishments

This project has resulted in the creation of 114,000 grayscale images of an extensive portion of the most vital documents in the Sisters of Charity’s archival collection. Visual examples of some of the content digitized can be viewed in Ohio Memory through the tailored search link below:

[Search Results - \(ohiomemory.org\)](#)

A direct link to the necrology collection is available below:

[Search Results - \(ohiomemory.org\)](#)

A tailored link to correspondence and historical ephemera from the Sisters of Charity Mount St. Joseph Motherhouse construction is provided below:

[Search Results - \(ohiomemory.org\)](#)

After examining the project narrative outlined in the original application, nearly every benchmark outlined was met in the time period provided. The primary deviations stemmed from Covid restrictions both in Ohio and throughout the country. In March, the microfilm collection was delivered in person to the Crowley Company in Frederick Maryland, one week prior to the pandemic shutdown. This move was extremely providential as it prioritized our project for the Crowley team when employees were able to return in May, keeping us on the schedule we outlined in our project proposal. Also remaining on schedule was the scanning review process, which was completed in June. As outlined in the procedure section of our grant application, every image on the microfiche cards were scanned at 300 DPI in grayscale and saved in the master TIFF file format for preservation. OCR was performed during the scanning process and keyword searchable PDFs were made for each microfiche card, which will serve as the access copy for the project. Each PDF formed utilized the typed heading included on nearly every single microfiche card in the collection.

The major unanticipated time usurper of the project involved labeling and organizing the PDFs generated. Although each PDF was given the titles noted on the microfiche cards, most were vague, lacking dates or any specificity (i.e. “board minutes” instead of Executive Council Minutes or Corporation Board of Sponsored Ministries). For example, the organized executive council meeting minute set is comprised of 287 separate PDFs, all requiring the added executive council qualifier to the title as well as a date.

Once PDFs were more thoroughly organized, the final phase of the project centered on uploading as much content as possible to Ohio Memory. This was hampered by another work at home order in the fall for the Ohio Memory team, limiting their access to the servers needed to complete this aspect of the project for us. Despite this, we were still able to upload a total of 20 individual records from the microfilm collection totaling over 1100 pages. We also typically reserve the final phase for promotion, but the ACWR newsletter wasn’t published in 2020 and our internal Communications department had only limited access to their offices at the end of the year due to both the pandemic and a substantial move.

Despite these setbacks, given the expanded scope of the project and the rarity of the documents shared, it is not surprising to see a stronger showing of overall page views as well as unique users to the collection through Ohio Memory in the past six months. Between July 1st and December 31st, the Sisters of Charity collection received 5,021 page views in 730 sessions, over 65 percent were recorded as new visitors. The majority of new sessions stemmed from the Delhi area as well as major cities in Ohio (Cincinnati, Columbus, and Cleveland listed in order by percentage of visitors). Compared with our initial Ohio Memory OHRAB-funded project from 2019, we received nearly double the page views, a definite sign of increased interest in our new content. A marked increase in users outside of Ohio, accounting for over 20% of all sessions, also demonstrates the trend toward digital scholarship and research fostered during the pandemic. Although we weren’t able to promote this project as much as we have in the past, this project was invaluable to us throughout 2020, especially in the months where the physical archives was closed and requests both internal and external of course persisted. The increased number of visitors, especially from outside the state, underscore the importance of building and preserving digital collections. We are forever grateful that this grant opportunity was offered to us during this year and that we were able to accomplish all of the major goals outlined for the project despite unprecedented obstacles.

Appendix A

1)

The screenshot shows the 'Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati Digital Collection' website. At the top left is the logo and name. Below it is a navigation bar with links for 'Browse Collection', 'Collections', 'Newspapers', 'Ohio Memory Home', and 'Help'. A search bar is located at the top right. The main content area is divided into a left sidebar and a right main area. The sidebar has three sections: 'Collections' with a list of collection names and a 'Show All' button; 'Subject' with a list of subjects and a 'Show All' button; and 'Creator' with a list of creators and a 'Show All' button. The main area shows search results for 'genealogy an...'. The first result is 'Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati Motherhouse and Chapel Construction Correspondence, 1893-1897'. Below it are two more results: 'Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati Chapel Mural and Motherhouse Construction Correspondence, 1894-1901' and 'Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati Necrology, 1917-1922'.

2)

The screenshot shows a digitized letter from Adolphus Druiding. The letter is dated 1893-1897 and is titled 'DRUIDING LETTERS CHAPEL 1893-1897 1 1'. The letter text is handwritten and discusses architectural details and financial matters. The header of the letter reads: 'A. DRUIDING, ARCHITECT & SUPERINTENDENT, ROOM 27, METROPOLITAN BLOCK, CHURCHES AND SCHOOL HOUSES A SPECIALTY. Chicago, Ill. 1893'. The letter text begins with 'I have found out to be successful as you are the Chap...' and continues with various details about the chapel construction and financial matters.

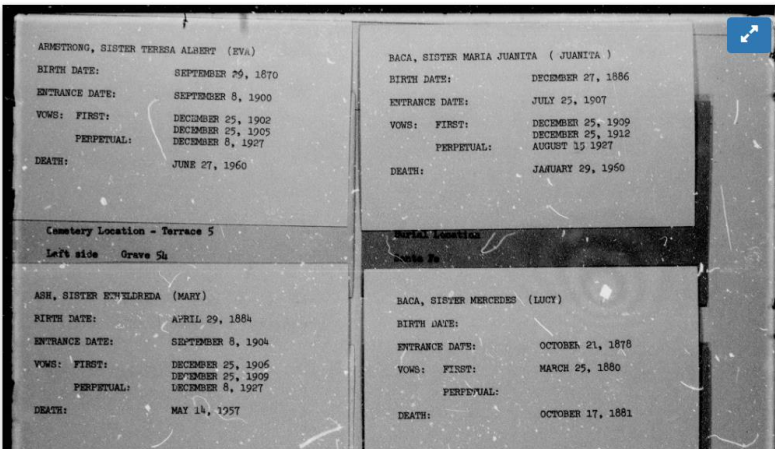
- 1) [Search results](#) for the collections formed out of the microfilm digitization
- 2) [Example](#) of a letter digitized from renowned architect Adolphus Druiding

3)

Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati Grave Index A-G, 1852-1989

Show Reference URL

View Transcript



☆ Save

Search this record

GRAVE LOCATIONS A TO G INDEX 1

GRAVE LOCATIONS A TO G INDEX 1 2

GRAVE LOCATIONS A TO G INDEX 1 3

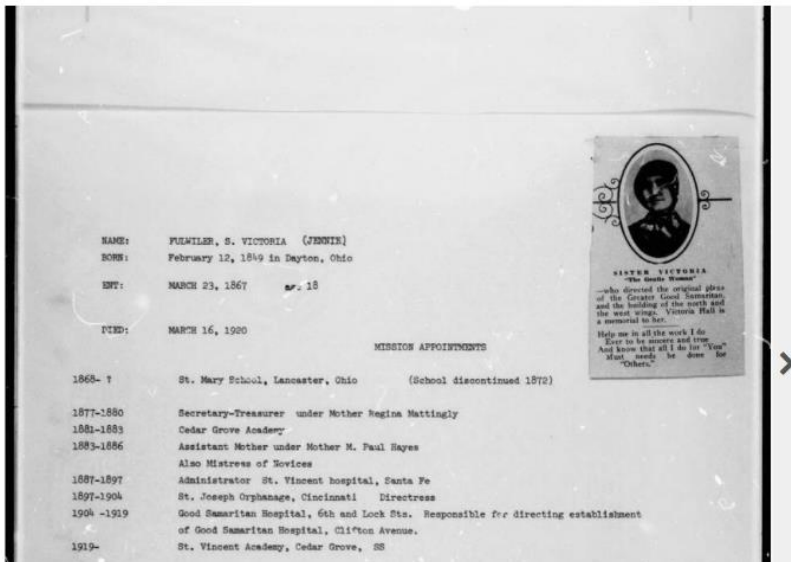
GRAVE LOCATIONS A TO G INDEX 1 4

4)

Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati Necrology, 1917-1922

Show Reference URL

View Transcript



☆ Save

Search this record

genealogy and local history

12 Results found in:

NECROLOGY 1917-1922 6_Page_41

NECROLOGY 1917-1922 6_Page_42

NECROLOGY 1917-1922 6_Page_43

NECROLOGY 1917-1922 6_Page_44

- 3) [Example](#) of a segment from the grave index collection
- 4) [Example](#) of an entry in the necrology collection

Project Cost

- Scanning 114,013 Images from the Crowley Company	\$3,195.50
Subtotal	\$ 3,195.50
• Purchased with matching funds:	
- Annual Subscription to Ohio Memory	\$250
- Remainder of Digitization Cost	\$3,655.09
Subtotal	\$3,905.09
Total	<u>\$ 6,850.59</u>
- Amount of staff time spent on the project (matching funds)	
15% of archivist's time	\$5244.48