

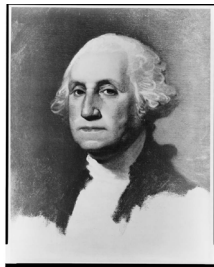
CASE STUDY:

BOUND BOOK AND MICROFILM SCANNING FOR PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARIES

Among numerous prestigious organizations, Crowley Digitization Services has had the privilege to digitize collections from several Presidential libraries. Two legacy projects encompassed the digitization of papers from the estates of Presidents Washington and Franklin Delano Roosevelt. In both cases, the goal was to afford public access to information for research, education and general enjoyment. The 159-year variance in materials, however, presented several challenges.

PRESIDENT GEORGE WASHINGTON

Opened in 2013, the Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington is located in Mount Vernon, Virginia, on President Washington's family estate, Mount Vernon. The first President of the United States had long thought to preserve his work in a similar manner, stating in a 1797 letter to James McHenry, "I have not houses to build, except one, which I must erect for the accommodation and security of my military, civil and private papers, which are voluminous and may be interesting."



Crowley was selected to scan 15 volumes from Mount Vernon's Special Collections. The volumes, dating from 1774, included music books, diaries, ledgers and account books.

Fred W. Smith National Library special collections librarian Michele Lee noted that "The materials in this collection are often requested by researchers because they document the daily routine of life at Mount Vernon or life for the Washington family. Due to their fragile nature, they have been subject to very limited access over the years. This digitization effort allows researchers to obtain the content needed to explore the Washington family and Mount



Excerpt from the manuscript music book of Eleanor Parke Custis, circa February 1797.

Photo credit: Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington

Vernon while preserving the originals for generations to come."

The Mount Vernon estates and library are owned and maintained by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union which approved the digitization of:

- Two music books belonging to Eleanor Parke Custis (Martha Washington's granddaughter)
- The diary of John Augustine Washington (George's brother) dating from March 1852 to January 1856
- John Augustine Washington's "Ledger C," 1774-89
- John Augustine Washington's farm book, 1842

Due to the materials' antiquity and unique nature, experienced book scanning technicians digitized the volumes under the supervision and advisement of Mount Vernon staff, who commuted 63 miles to Crowley's service bureau in Frederick, Maryland. Lee recalls, "This particular project was interesting because we worked side-by-side with the Crowley team throughout. We oversaw the handling of the materials and, in many cases, handled these rare and fragile materials ourselves while the Crowley team provided the expertise and technology

necessary to achieve archival-quality scans. It was a true team effort.”

The book scanning was performed on a Zeutschel planetary scanner, which has an overhead camera and cool LED lighting ideal for fragile or light-sensitive material. The images were scanned in color at 600 dpi and saved as uncompressed TIFF files with metadata to an external hard drive.

The Fred W. Smith National Library has since made these and other pieces of the collection available online. “To preserve and protect the pieces,” states Lee, “some will not go on display again for several years and so the digital version will allow people to still see and use the materials for their research.”

2023 UPDATE: In 2022, the library is working with the Crowley team on a new project to capture over 400 oversized and bound materials including art prints and other illustrations. Due to the rare and fragile nature of the media, the collection is brought to Crowley’s Maryland facility in segments and scanned by Crowley operators under the supervision of Mount Vernon staff.

The project is still underway and set to complete in December 2023.

PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

The 32nd President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected to an unprecedented four terms between 1932 and 1944. He brought the nation through the Great Depression, led the country toward victory in World War II and created many programs, organizations and laws that continue to shape the United States today. His forward-thinking extended to the preservation of historic records, calling for ‘the duplication of records by modern processes.’



FRANKLIN is a virtual research room and digital repository that provides free and open access to the digitized collections of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum in Hyde Park, New York. It is a partnership of the FDR Library, National Archives and Records Administration, Marist College, IBM and the Roosevelt Institute.

Crowley digitized 364 rolls of 35 mm microfilm from seven different collections. These rolls held more than 350,000

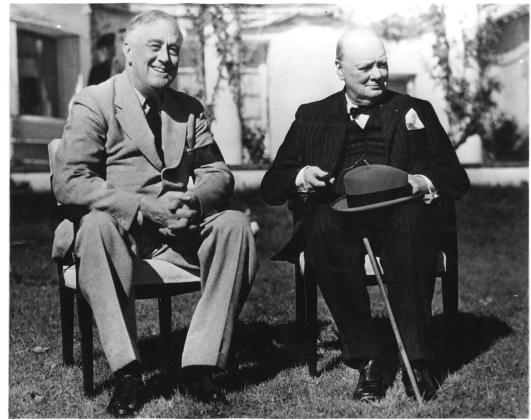


Photo credit: Grace Tully Collection, FDR Library

This 1943 photo shows Franklin D. Roosevelt with Winston Churchill in Casablanca, Morocco.

pages of archival documents, all of which were delivered as 300 dpi grayscale uncompressed TIFF images. Scanned on Mekel Technology MACH5* microfilm scanners using Mekel’s proprietary Quantum software suite, the project also used Certifi Pedigree® software for in-depth archival image analysis and post-processing.

FRANKLIN allows for keyword search of archival documents and photographs and the searching, browsing and viewing of whole files, just as if one was in the Library’s research room. The digitized documents are considered to be some of the most important of the twentieth century and are primary source documentation of Franklin and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt’s experiences.

Crowley Digitization Services capture efforts include:

- FDR’s Map Room Papers
- FDR’s President’s Secretary’s File (PSF)
- Executive Orders and Presidential Proclamations
- Presidential Press Conferences
- Eleanor Roosevelt Selected Correspondence: 1933-45
- Eleanor Roosevelt Selected Correspondence: 1945-47
- Selected Documents on the Holocaust and Refugees

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The Crowley Company is a full-solution imaging partner. From micrographics equipment, production and patron scanners to conversion services, The Crowley Company has aided records managers, archivists, librarians, researchers, students and others throughout the world with archival preservation, records management and digitization solutions for over forty years.



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*The Mekel MACH5 microfilm scanner has been discontinued

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