

## Hidden Collections become Digital Treasures

Howard Crosby Butler and excavation team in Syria in 1899

Today I am looking at Princeton's archaeological archives and how we are now making these materials visible which were unknown, or not available, or available only in limited ways.

While perhaps not, strictly speaking, an archaeological collection, I start with the James and



Lucy Lo Photograph Archive made visible in ARTstor.

Ms. Lucy Lo and her husband James (now deceased) were engaged in the 1940s with a large project to document photographically the paintings and sculptures of the Mogao caves in Dunhuang, China. Traveling partly on horseback, they arrived at Dunhuang in 1943 and began a photographic campaign that continued for eighteen months. Since no electricity was available, James Lo devised a system of mirrors and cloth screens that bounced light along the corridors

of the caves to illuminate the paintings and sculptures. The Los came to Princeton in 1968.



Visual Resources now houses one set of these photographic prints. We have no database for these photographs. There are 3 separate numbering systems for the caves based on different scholarly systems. The actual physical arrangement of the photographs in the drawers has



varied (once by cave, now chronological).

There are 2590 photographs in the James and Lucy Lo Photograph Archive. They are considered indispensable for serious research due to deterioration and other changes which occurred in the caves since the 1940s. They are available in our Visual Resources collection and now to scholars in digitized format in the Mellon International Dunhuang Archive project, available in [ARTstor](#). The digitization was done by arrangement directly between Mrs. Lo and ARTstor about six years ago.

After considering access to the digital version in ARTstor, a new publication project is underway to publish the Lo Archive photographs. Part of the impetus for this is the fact that ARTstor is not available to all scholars. The hard copy publication is expected to fill the need of scholars

without access to ARTstor. This work is in process and is an interesting variant to reformatting-a return to the book. We have just discussed whether additional web access should be considered.

Our exhibition program exists as a way to highlight the richness of our collections. Establishing “online” exhibits greatly enhanced visibility for collections in the Research Photographs



Collection.

It is interesting to look at some of our online exhibits to see how they have evolved. Our online exhibits program was started around 2005. I include views of our celebratory exhibit marking 125 years of The Department of Art and Archaeology which shows images from our current expeditions (Balis, Syria among others) and older expeditions such as at the Agora in Athens (T. Leslie Shear Senior and Junior at the right).



Other exhibitions covered materials from excavations at Morgantina and at Polis (in Cyprus).



I turn now to our **Antioch Expedition Archives**

Robert Schirmer the photographer and C.K. Agle the architect using a camera bridge to photograph the dining room (triclinium) floor mosaic in 1932

The Antioch Expedition Archive is our most heavily used archaeological collection.



Many of the mosaics are found displayed in the University Art Museum and other places on campus including Marquand Library of Art and Archaeology, viewed [here](#).

This fascinating archive includes the excavation records as well as documenting the participants and the processes.





In 1928, Charles Rufus Morey, chair of Princeton's Department of Art and Archaeology, proposed the exploration and excavation of the ancient and medieval site of Antioch, modern Antakya. Founded in 300 B.C., Antioch was one of the most important political and cultural centers of the Hellenistic East and one of the great cities of the Roman Empire.

Morey's involvement began as early as 1927, when the French Antiquities Service asked if Princeton would be interested in excavating at Antioch.

Morey replied, "We have had this project as a dream for some years." He thought that Princeton was the logical choice to direct the excavation of Antioch because the project would be a natural extension of Howard Crosby Butler's expeditions to Syria, and because the Index of Christian Art, which he had founded in 1917, was the institution best equipped to interpret the Early Christian and Byzantine materials that would certainly be found, though, as it turned out, the finds are most rich in the more than 300 late antique mosaics found. In 1935 alone, 126 mosaics were discovered in 126 days in Antioch and its suburb, Daphne. I show a few views from the image archive.



There were complaints about the difficulties caused by rain



Cruciform hall in the Villa at Yakto. Room 18 with a view of the mosaic ensemble, and bust in an octagon, now in Baltimore Museum of Art. 1933

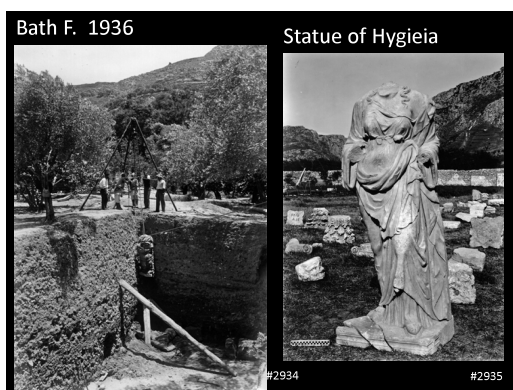


Aerial view in 1932 before excavation



Bath C. General View with workers. #200

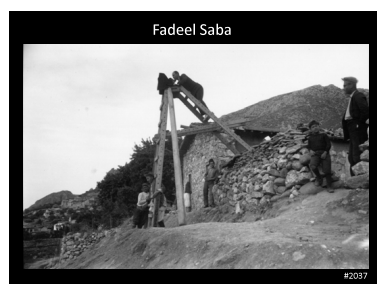
The excavation was carried out from 1932-1939.



lifting a life-size marble statue of the goddess Hygieia

from a trench in Bath F. 1936. Please note the depth of the fill.

The documentation includes many images that show the actual processes of excavation, photography, and treatments.



Photographer Fadeel Saba, a Palestinian from Nazareth, is on a camera scaffold photographing the Southeast Cemetery.

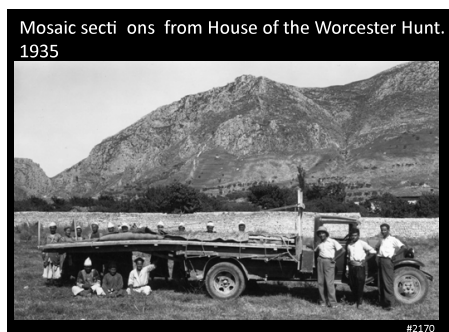


R. In 1935, we see Fadeel Saba and his assistants photographing the 4th-century A.D. mosaics in the Constantinian Villa at Daphne, depicting hunting scenes, with personifications of the four seasons at the corners and a central octagonal pool. All of these mosaics are now in the Louvre.



Shown here -treatment of the mosaics. Workmen are cleaning and scraping mosaic panels showing fish and a riverbank with lotus flowers. The other panels are covered with wet burlap sacks to soften the paper and cloth facing that was glued to them

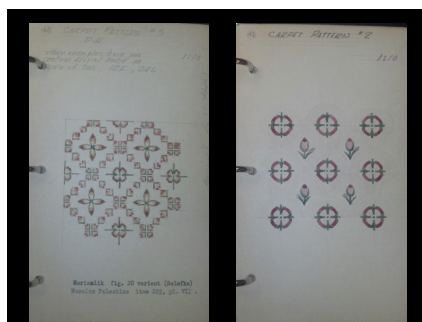
in the field so that they could be lifted. In 2664, the mosaic crew is at work removing cloth from the raised panel in 1936.



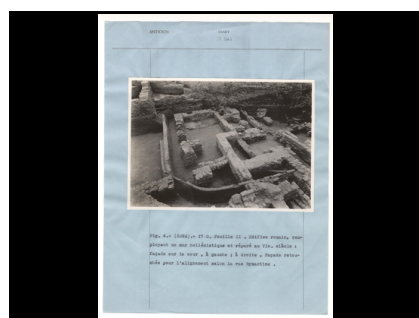
This photo shows two sections of the monumental mosaic found in the House of the Worcester Hunt at Daphne, wrapped in burlap and supported by a wooden platform, as they arrive in the courtyard of field headquarters on the back of a flatbed truck in 1935.

Many archaeological archives are described in collection level records. We have treated our Antioch materials differently. A simple database was created for the collection of more than 5,000 images documenting the expedition. The Antioch images were among the first to be scanned.

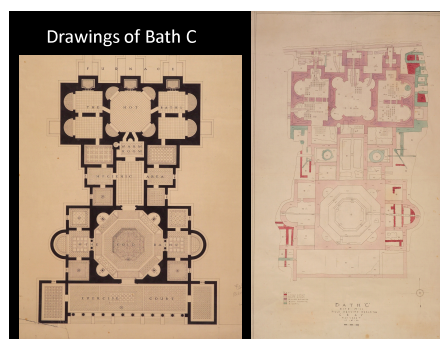
We hold photographs and negatives from the excavation of this late antique site and we create item level data records for these.



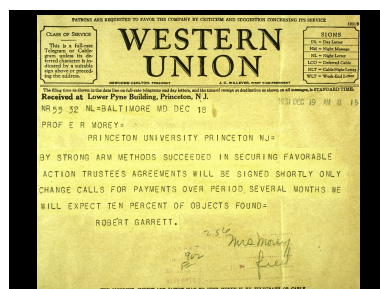
The archive, most noted for its extensive documentation of mosaics, also includes inventories, field notebooks, diaries, trench reports, drawings and other ancillary records such as a 1932 movie. Other records and objects are held by the Princeton University Art Museum and the Library.



Diary



Drawings



telegram sent when the agreement was signed by the Baltimore

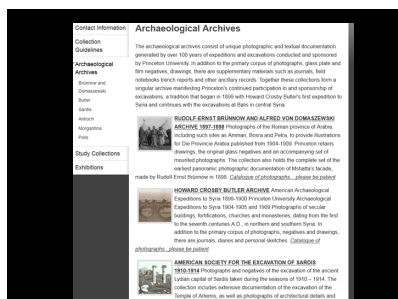
Museum



Guest Book

The Research Photographs web page greatly increased access to this material which will eventually, in addition to the images, include field notebooks, drawings, and other

documentation.

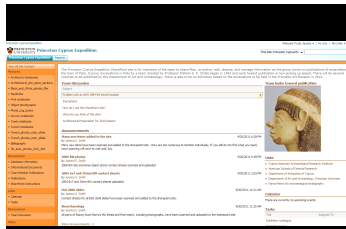


Last spring we added thumbnails to the web page listing of Antioch images, greatly improving

Seq. No.	Orig. Feature	Description	Series	Thumbnail
1	Tower Area	General view of Bath building, to north	11-1	
2	Tower Area	General view, to northwest	11-1	
3	Tower Area	General view of water conduit at west end	11-1	
4	Wall Topography & Regional Interest	General view	Unspecified Series	
5	Excavation (Stadium, Hippodrome, Hippodrome II)	General view of Hippodrome wall	11-2	
6	Bath A	View of vaulted opening into rear area	11-1	

access.

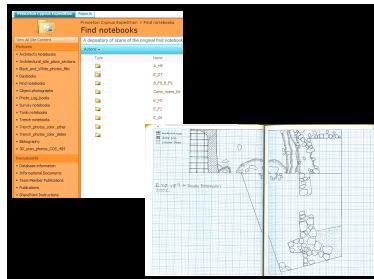
This means scholars often no longer need to come to Princeton to identify photographs needed and also saves staff time as there are fewer non-specific requests (for example, “I need an aerial view-I think it is the 1935 one ...”). Use of the web page increased dramatically, showing about a **950%** increase in visits.



What comes next?

The department is now using SharePoint for

Polis materials. This has allowed images, notebooks, and other files to be shared by excavation



participants.

We are planning on migrating the Antioch records to a web searchable database.

In addition, as highlighted in our session, we are now seeing the implementation of

ArchaeoCore, a new data standard developed for use in Shared Shelf and other applications.