

HYPERJAX:
INVESTIGATING THE USE OF HYPERMEDIA AS AN INTERPRETIVE TOOL FOR
THE PRESERVATION OF JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA'S SILENT FILM HERITAGE

By

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To my brother, Zach

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS

Envelope	A collection of nodes based on a common theme or plot, as in a film or personal narrative
Hypermedia	Media integrated into a computer-based tool that links data to other data—in multiple forms—to create a non-linear medium of information
KML	KML, or keyhole markup language, is based on the grammar and structure of XML, but geared toward geographic applications as presented in Google Maps and Google Earth
Metadata	Data that describes other data; i.e. bibliographic record accompanying a book
Node	A point on a platform, as a map, that contains a datum or data
Visuality	The characteristic of a system or object disposing itself to visual interpretation or consumption
XML	XML, or extensible markup language, is a mark-up language like HTML (hypertext markup language) that dictates the structure of a digital object and can contain unlimited descriptors

Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School
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This thesis analyzes the potentials of hypermedia, or interactive web-based tools like Google Maps and others, in the preservation and interpretation of historic sites or themes that are no longer extant, where reconstructions or other methods of interpretation are not feasible or desirable. In so doing, this thesis proposes Determinants of Success for potential hypermedia preservation projects. The Determinants are intended as developments in an adaptable methodology of key questions, procedures, and guidelines that future projects could incorporate. This methodology was devised through the careful study of several existing hypermedia-based digital initiatives, two of which are discussed in detail as case studies. Furthermore, the Determinants share much in spirit and intent with the foundational principles of interpretation devised by Freeman Tilden, a popular and widely influential writer and reporter who wrote extensively on America's National Parks, in his 1957 book *Interpreting Our Heritage*.

To illustrate the Determinants, the thesis presents a hypothetical project concerned with the preservation of sites, buildings, and the overall cityscape relevant to

itsilent-era film industry in Jacksonville, Florida during the first two decades of the 20th century. This lost industry and its infrastructure, which had a tremendous andobviously discernable influence on the history of the American film industry as a whole, is well-represented in archives across the United States by historic newspapers, photographs, and first-hand accounts,but not by buildings and actual films, most being lost to time.Some edifices relevant to the industry still exist, including the campus of Eagle Film Studio, which is currently being developed as a silent film museum; and many of the hotels, high-rises, and downtown scenery that make up Jacksonville's cityscape. However most of the built resources constructed explicitly for the purposes of film production no longer exist, evidence of them does, and is plentiful.

The history of Jacksonville's tenure as a film town, as well as its physical makeup and personages pertinent to the industry, are explored as potential hypermedia project. Given the rich depth and breadth of such an undertaking, a single, resource-rich facet of this history was chosen to be treated by the aforementioned methodology: film legend Oliver Hardy's early career in Jacksonville. Through this example, this approach to interpretation is illustrated and hopefully can serve to enrich similar preservation projects whose resources exist mostly on paper, but whose subjects are of great interest and importance.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

According to Richard Alan Nelson, one of the most prolific contributors to the scholarship of Florida's early film industry, in the decade preceding the United States' involvement in the First World War, the exhibition of motion pictures was fast becoming the primary means of entertainment for millions of Americans, rich or poor; white or black. Storefront theaters sprouted like weeds from every failed shoe store, phonograph parlor, and bookshop, and when they ceased making enough money for their proprietors, they were easily moved to another part of town, or, finances willing, into one of the thousands of purpose-built nickelodeons constructed during the decade. The country's need for new films—and better, more complex ones—was insatiable. The filmmakers of the day were situated in glass studios atop Manhattan skyscrapers or surrounded by stark farmland in Northern New Jersey. These earliest film manufacturers produced several reels of film per week, for the most part without editing them, and sent them off to distributors to be gobbled up by local nickelodeon owners, who would rarely show a new film for more than a week before returning it to its source. Business was, in a word, good. But the demand for new films far outweighed the supply of novel works, and the filmmakers of the day, their studios' stymied by the long, overcast Northern winters, could only realistically produce films six months out of each year. New, sunnier locations had to be sought.

In 1907 Jacksonville, Florida, a Southern manufacturing town of modest size and report situated along the St. Johns River and only a stone's throw from the Atlantic Ocean was tapped by a small film manufacturing concern to be that company's winter base of operations. Jacksonville was in the throes of a fast-paced recovery after a fire in

1901 devastated the city and had been attracting the attention of many new industries and fresh, idealistic souls, but it did not expect to suddenly be thrust into the position of 'Winter Film Capital of the World', a title bestowed it by newspapers and trade magazines of the day (Bean 49). After the first production company found success, others soon followed, most only using the city during the winter months, but many setting up permanent stock companies to take advantage of the year-round sunshine and sub-tropical climate. Soon the town that had, at the turn of the 19th century, been nearly destroyed by an unimaginable conflagration, was abuzz with the activities of film folk, the attention of increasingly more powerful production interests, and, what's more, a reputation as a truly cosmopolitan Southern metropolis worthy of its newfound fame. The attention and reputation would after a little over ten years fade away into the realm of memory and perhaps even nostalgia. The First World War would draw attention from the fledgling film industry in Jacksonville, and rising social pressure to reform coupled with an unsympathetic mayor would quickly drive the film folk from the humid shores of the St. Johns and westward, into the open arms of Southern California's low land prices and permissive local governments.

There is no single reason Jacksonville lost the title of Winter Film Capital of the World, and the many hypotheses that abound are infinitely debatable. The only certainty lies in the tangible and documented evidence that it was, for a time, Tinseltown. The evidence of Jacksonville's film heritage has always been cocktail trivia, something a person relates to briefly raise a few eyebrows. Not until very recently have any serious efforts been made to promote and preserve this heritage, mostly through the work of Jacksonville's own Norman Studios Silent Film Museum, a non-profit

stewardship organization responsible for the preservation of Norman Studios, née Eagle Film City, a group of buildings that may very well be the last intact silent era film studio of its kind.

Beyond the preservation and promotion of a single site there is a greater concern: that the record of sites and activities important to both the lost film industry and the city itself, and the interplay between the two, are presently unexplored, unnoticed, and at risk of fading away like so much decomposing microfilm. Within Jacksonville are dozens of sites, most of which are no longer intact as they were circa 1915; and stored in libraries and archives around Florida and the United States are reels of microfilm, ephemera, and, possibly even a few motion pictures, all of which combine to form a disjointed mass of historical data that needs to be molded into something that serves to preserve, promote, and educate.

In the case of Jacksonville, where most sites relevant to the period have either been demolished or built upon with new construction; or the building exists and has other, more present significance, the notion of preservation along traditional lines is not feasible. Given the lack of extant built resources, and abundance of archival resources, the feat of preserving Jacksonville's silent film industry history must necessarily be a digital one. Archival resources like historic newspaper articles, photographs, advertisements, and even films can all serve as preservatives for extant resources, and as points of interest in a cohesive presentation. These ephemeral items, when observed broadly, act as a composition of a period in time, a snapshot of a decade. Where buildings are felled, newspaper articles survive. That is not to say, however, that physicality be left out of the equation: many edifices built during Jacksonville's post-fire

recovery period exist today and, more than likely, served as the backdrop to hundreds of locally-made films.

In order to preserve the significance of these lost sites and highlight the significance of extant sites, the only truly effective solution is to create an accessible, web-based platform onto which a cohesive, educative, and accessible digital hypermedia effort can be staged. An example of hypermedia in common use, and on the broadest scale, is the Internet and the myriad sites therein. On a smaller, though still large, scale Wikipedia is a prime example. It uses a combination of text, images, audio-visual objects, and hyperlinks to perform the function of an encyclopedia. This combination of data types and their linkages within or without a common theme is the core of hypermedia.

This thesis will explore the best efforts in hypermedia preservation and presentation, whereby data is placed on an interactive, publically-accessible web-based platform like Google Maps or Historypin; analyze the relationship between Jacksonville and its lost film industry, and draft determinants of success for the fulfillment of a potential project preserving the lost silent film era resources of Jacksonville. Specific methodologies will not be dictated, rather, Determinants of Success based on past successes and a potential project's requirements will be offered, all in the interest of a set of goals in service of interpretive effectiveness. The result will be an application of these Determinants to a potential project focused on a small, but highly representative and resource-rich aspect of Jacksonville's silent film heritage: Oliver Hardy's career in Jacksonville.

Hardy's time spent in Jacksonville is, in many ways, a microcosmic representation of the city's silent film industry history, and, given Hardy's lasting fame and appeal, is the most likely aspect of said history to strike a chord with the average user. The reason for applying these Determinants to only one facet of such a potentially large project is one of effectiveness driven by the desire for success. While there are many historical envelopes, or containers of narration inherent in the film heritage of Jacksonville, Oliver Hardy's is the most well-documented and, perhaps, the most relatable. A quality-focused project with the flexibility to expand is preferred over a disorganized quantity-focused one. Within the potential project, consideration will be given to the acquisition of data through traditional and collaborative methods, and the presentation of those data via the most effective means with the best chance of successfully interpreting the subject matter.

Methodology

This thesis is concerned primarily with the use of hypermedia, or interactive web-based media organized into a usable tool, as a method for preserving and interpreting historic sites with little or no extant fabric, but with significant caches of archival data that explain and support that fabric. In order to illustrate how a focused hypermedia system would be implemented, it was necessary to focus on an actual subject with little remaining fabric that is data-rich. Jacksonville's film industry, as it was in the first two decades of the 20th century, was one of many subjects that could have been mined and analyzed, but, given the myriad related ephemeral data sources scattered around the many institutional libraries in Florida, and the lack of public knowledge concerning it, the city's film heritage seemed the most ripe.

Research for this thesis is rooted in study of the basic concepts of hypermedia and digitization, and the successful (and unsuccessful) exploits thereby; as well as the history of Jacksonville, Florida, both as a city and a town in which films were made. Investigations into the former subject were carried out primarily via the use and re-use of various web-based digital initiatives. Two of these digital initiatives, HyperCities and Historypin were chosen as case studies, which will be discussed further in Chapter 3. They were chosen for their innovative use of widely (and freely)-available tools, as well as their philosophical approaches to collaborative preservation, even if those philosophies are not necessarily official.

When researching the filmic heritage of Jacksonville, it was necessary to consult more traditional archives not yet bound to the web. The Florida State University Libraries Special Collections were referenced heavily, as it possess thousands of paper materials relevant to the early film industry in Jacksonville and the rest of Florida. Associations were also formed with the board of the Norman Studios Silent Film Museum, a non-profit organization that stewards the mostly intact site of Eagle Film City/Norman Studios, one of the last silent film studios of its kind still in existence. The latter was crucial in understanding how successful traditional preservation methods have been in the promotion of Jacksonville's filmic heritage, and as a touchstone to the preservation community as a whole.

When all the research for this thesis was conducted, it was determined that there was far too much data to be interpreted than could reasonably be done justice in what should be a focused study. As a result of this determination, the many aspects of Jacksonville's film heritage were pared down to two basic realms: the buildings

relevant to the industry; and the individuals that made it possible. Furthermore, these realms were divided into specific persons and buildings relevant to the industry. They were deemed so based on their contributions to the progression of the industry and the city, as well as the amount of relevant data that could be uncovered.

The aforementioned approaches are all in support of the Determinants of Success for interpretation laid out in Chapter 6. These suggestions are framed as characteristics, which, it is thought, should be exhibited by a hypermedia-based preservation project. The Determinants are as follows:

- **Ability to Succeed**, which suggests project managers choose a path within their subject that offers the best chance for success;
- **Relatability and Palatability**, which suggests projects be both relatable to the average user and palatable, or attractive and user-friendly, so as to reduce the technology's learning curve and facilitate absorption.
- **Flexibility**, which suggests a project be able to adapt to changes in technology without sacrificing its usability.
- **Cooperability**, which suggests projects be inclusive of both traditional and innovative modes of information submittal.

The Determinants of Success, which are the ultimate result of this thesis, are meant to be applicable to a number of subject matters across all fields. However, for the sake of illustration, they are directed at the film heritage of Jacksonville, and, more specifically, at one aspect of it: film legend Oliver Hardy. That path that led to the creation of these Determinants will be explained further in Chapter 6, but, in summary, can be revealed as having been inspired by the case studies in Chapter 3 and, after the fact, by the principles of interpretation laid down by writer and National Parks scholar Freeman Tilden. Tilden's principles, as related in his seminal work *Interpreting our Heritage* are as follows:

- **Principle I.** Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.
- **Principle II.** Information, as such, is not Interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.
- **Principle III.** Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.
- **Principle IV.** The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.
- **Principle V.** Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.
- **Principle VI.** Interpretation addressed to children (say, up to the age of twelve) should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 2 introduces to and acquaints the reader with the basic concepts behind digital preservation and hypermedia and how it differs from other kinds of digital initiatives. The underlying philosophical interplay between digital preservation and traditional methods of heritage conservation will also be addressed, and the case made for preferential use of the former in large-scale projects where little or no fabric exists. Furthermore, Chapter 2 will discuss the underlying concepts behind of historic site interpretation.

Chapter 3 will provide the reader two case studies of relevant digital preservation projects and the features present in each that ought to be considered as common practice in future projects, and others that ought to be avoided. HyperCities (www.hypercities.com), a project using historic maps to create layered perspectives of major world cities comprise this chapter's case studies; and

Historypin(www.historypin.com), a popular multimedia-sharing website with strong links to modern social media and emphasis collaboration will be addressed.

Chapter 4 serves as background for the rest of the history of Jacksonville's film industry. Some knowledge of general film history will be assumed while the localized history of the industry's presence in Jacksonville is discussed in more detail. Chapter 4 will also provide historic context to the reader explaining why Jacksonville was chosen as the Winter Film Capital of the World, what factors internal to the city contributed to its success, and what external factors propelled the search by filmmakers for a new home base.

Chapter 5 briefly analyzes Jacksonville both as a city that influenced and was influenced by the film industry. This analysis is bipartite and addresses Jacksonville's built environment focusing on studio buildings and the overall cityscape of downtown with enough properties indicative of the entire city and industry within; architect H.J. Klutho and former mayor J.E.T. Bowden, two of the most important persons relevant to both the city of Jacksonville and its film industry, are addressed as well.

Chapter 6 outlines and details the Determinants of Success and goals future virtual preservation projects should follow and fulfill. The Determinants are framed as a series of qualities a hypothetical project should possess: the ability to succeed, relatability, flexibility, and cooperability. Each Determinant will be defined and applied to a hypothetical hypermedia preservation project of Jacksonville's film industry heritage focused on this Jacksonville-based career of screen legend Oliver Hardy. Some of the ideas related in Chapters 2 and 3 (as well as some novel ones) will be introduced.

Chapter 7 concludes the thesis and summarizes the entire work, relates the acquired, or learned, lessons, and suggests further research. Chapter 7 details what was learned, what problems were encountered, and how, ultimately, the goals for the project changed throughout the course of the study. Avenues of further research are suggested, but not fully explored.

CHAPTER 2 HYPERMEDIA AS AN INTERPRETIVE TOOL FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATIONISTS

Hypermedia, which will be defined in the following section, is the technological and interpretive basis of this thesis. While the word may seem daunting to those unfamiliar with digital technologies, or simply odd-sounding as a word, it should be thought of merely as a device, like any other, to be kept in a preservationist's toolbox. Hypermedia and digital technologies are not necessarily more advantageous than other tools like static signage and reconstructions, but are complimentary, making the interpretation and study of certain subjects easier and more productive. In many cases, it is desirable to integrate signage and digital technology (touch-screen technology) and use digitization and hypermedia to facilitate more accurate reconstructions.

The test subject of this thesis is the film industry of Jacksonville, Florida, which has effectively been extinct since the 1920s, but was more productive and well-known than Southern California's for at least a decade. The built resources of this lost industry are few, most having more lauded or more obvious distinctions. Since the majority of built resources pertaining to this industry are lost, or unidentified, a hypermedia-based treatment is the best solution for its interpretation and study. Such an approach will allow the easy integration of archival materials like films, newspapers, photographs, and other data types relevant to the industry and its built resources into a digital platform with minimal cost and maximal accessibility.

Definition of Hypermedia

Hypermedia is not a new phenomenon. As early as the late 1980s, hypermedia were used as the basis of various consumer software to create applications with no ostensible purpose, limited only by the user's imagination and the software's

programming. The most widely-used, though painfully obvious, hypermedia tool is the World Wide Web. Essentially, hypermedia is any computer-based tool that links data to other data—in multiple forms—to create a non-linear medium of information (Jacobsen 5-6). To distill it further, one only need think of the “see also” notations in modern encyclopedias, the major difference being one of transportation, whereby the hypermedia solution pulls the user from one node to another rather than the user turning pages. Furthermore, the data in a hypermedia environment comes in many forms ranging from simple text to interactive three-dimensional models. Ultimately, hypermedia is an effective tool for combining disparate data in a logical, web-like structure that is presentable and efficient (Moos 266).

Interpretation

In order to present historical data or objects comprising data like buildings or artifacts, one must first interpret it, so as to mold it from raw material to something with structure and purpose. Raw data cannot easily be consumed by the end-user, the visitor to the museum exhibit or historic site. Interpretation is not unlike translation, except during translation for the purposes of interpreting historic data, the end result is made more efficient and user-friendly. A preservationist or historian can look at historic photographs, building plans, and thousands of loose newspaper articles and draw conclusions based on his or her training and experience; the end-user, the individual who reads the signage at a state park site or object card at a museum must be given a distilled product, one that can be easily digested and registered. Though in its incomprehensiveness, it must be concisely complete – like a small, but wholesome meal. A visitor to a National Historic Site must be able to read an interpretive sign summarizing the use of some historic object, and come away with the ability to relay to

others that use. Museologists and preservationists have been processing these distillations for years, following many different schools of thought or accepted practices.

This thesis is not deeply concerned with the long-term effects of interpretation on end-users, but with novel tools for delivery. It began primarily as an analysis of hypermedia tools as preservatives of lost buildings and sites, but later turned to concepts of traditional interpretation methods as guides. During the writing of this thesis, it was discovered that many of the suggestions for implementation and interpretation given in Chapter 6 tend to agree with the guidelines set down by Freeman Tilden in the late 1950s. To reiterate, Tilden's principles are as follows:

- **Principle I.** Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.
- **Principle II.** Information, as such, is not Interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.
- **Principle III.** Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.
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- **Principle VI.** Interpretation addressed to children (say, up to the age of twelve) should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.

Tilden's principles, in summary, espoused the values of relatability between the visitor and the subject; the difference between information and interpretation and how the former cannot easily be absorbed without latter; the artistic nature of interpretation; the aim of provoking a response from the user versus merely instructing him or her; the

holistic demands of interpretation; and the belief that interpretation for children should not simply be a diluted form of that which is presented to adults(Tilden 9).

Tilden's principles have been widely used by service members of the United States National Park Service, as well as many other state and local entities. Their wide use has, over the years since their publication, become something of a core operating system, something more than just a set of guidelines. Despite their age, and the contexts they could not necessarily foresee, Tilden's principles are still valid today. The overlap between Tilden's principles, and the suggestions for interpretation made in this thesis are sometimes precise, as his principles and the suggestions made in this thesis both strongly advocate relatability. Also, the overlap can be less precise and more spiritual, as both sets are generally concerned with effectiveness and how the end-user will benefit from how information is packaged and delivered. Ultimately, this thesis owes much to the spirit of Tilden.

Philosophy of Digital Preservation

The first goal of preservation, digital or otherwise, has always been to maintain the integrity of an object, building, or even something as intangible as an idea. Next, perhaps, it is desirable to make a preserved thing accessible to the general public so that they may scrutinize or just enjoy its existence (Baudoin 559). Many sites of historical importance are simply that: sites with no remnants of their former contents. Unless the area is a special one with unparalleled national importance (Jamestown, Williamsburg etc.) it would be unreasonable to either reconstruct or cordon off every parcel of land that once served as basis for a historic building or structure. Furthermore, it may be anti-urban to simply forbid the responsible improvement of a parcel of land to preserve the relatively unknown and wholly intangible spirit of a lost

building. With this in mind, and still wanting to make it—whatever ‘it’ may be-- accessible to as wide an audience as possible, there is, arguably, only one obvious solution: digitization. Digitization can be seen as either a form of mitigation, saving a site in spirit, as it were, when all attempts at physical preservation have failed; or as a way of making the untouchable touchable. This thesis will be primarily concerned with the former.

Digital libraries have been around for over nearly twodecades and only recently has technology caught up with the imaginations of archivists and librarians (Zisk 689). Regardless, the aims of these professionals have always been to make accessible that which was for the many decades strictly inaccessible. At best, the most well-protected book in a library is viewable only under supervision and often requires a short course in the handling of rare paper materials (“Guidelines for handling manuscript material”). In recent years many of these resources have been digitized through some manner of capture, archived, and put online in an institutional digital library. Such a practice is, at its core, a democratic one, a logical next step for the library and its materials. Ideally researchers would no longer have to travel great distances to study—under supervision—a tome of key importance to their research; a digital copy viewed on a computer screen or handheld device would suffice in many cases. Naturally not every important book or manuscript will be preserved digitally; whether because an entity is lacking in funds or impetus, many objects will remain undigitized and effectively inaccessible. Even greater than the inconvenience to researchers is the ultimately indefensible matter of the object itself: in spite of the archivist’s best efforts time and nature will always overcome the object. The only sure way to truly preserve anything is to digitize *and* disperse it, the

latter directive being crucial to building an effective infrastructure of preservation (Smith 7-9). Likewise, in the realm of historic preservation, where buildings and culturally significant sites are maintained either as gigantic museum pieces or functioning edifices, accessibility, funding, and the barrage of decomposing factors are just as important. Defending the integrities of buildings and archival resources is both a political and physical fight.

Effect on Traditional Preservation

Since the adoption of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (and well before) many tools, radical or otherwise, have been employed to save buildings and sites threatened with demolition or unsympathetic alteration. Depending on one's outlook, these tools have either been tremendously successful, or just effective enough to prevent *so much* destruction. Looking at the lost historical resources of the United States collectively, it is not difficult to succumb to an even grimmer perspective than the latter. However, when a building is lost or a site is disturbed it is no more lost than a 'lost' 35mm silent film that managed to be converted to VHS tape or DVD prior to disintegrating. Buildings, like films, or people even, generate thousands upon thousands of ephemeral and permanent documents, photographs, and artifacts – a paper trail. One of the most important efforts in content generation for historic buildings is the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) which was founded in the early days of the Great Depression as a way to both employ out of work architects and drafters, and record historic resources in situ. Most, if not all, of the drawings created by HABS volunteers from recent years, and those from original documentation, are available online in digital form("Built in America: HABS/HAER Intro"). From these trails it is possible to reconstruct not just the physicality of a building, but also the things that

happened within its walls and the things it caused to happen without. Whether they are aware of it or not, preservationists have been acting like archivists for decades, ‘cataloging’ buildings in historic districts at the municipal level, or singly at the national; they have been collecting and archiving photographs, building histories, and primary sources ostensibly to convince an authoritative entity of a site’s importance.

In the realm of library science and humanities archiving, these same trails exist but are often left to collect dust; an archivist’s first priority is to ensure the integrity and safety of an object and analyze it to an extent, not necessarily to digitize and advertise it. This is usually because the typical library’s collections far outweigh its funding for analysis of the collections; and when funding is supplied, only collections that generate enough interest amongst faculty are selected for further treatment. The level and interest a collection maintains, though, is not necessarily an indication of its importance and viability. This same conundrum can be expressed by historic preservationists. For example, given the sheer number of built resources encapsulated by the Mid-Century period of American History, it is unlikely that even a respectable portion of them will be preserved, either as functional edifices or museum pieces: collections outweigh the resources (Lambin 4).

In the late 1980s, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) began what is known as the Brittle Books Program, an initiative carried out at the behest of the United States Congress to preserve important and endangered books. Originally, the program utilized the latest microfilming techniques to photograph the books and, usually, destroy original volume, since its physical preservation would be either impossible or fiscally prohibitive (Field 59-61). Currently, the preferred method for

preservation is through document scanning and digitization. While the original object is almost always lost, a usable digital copy exists and will, hopefully, be maintained throughout the centuries. Such an initiative could be employed, and perhaps should be employed, for a portion of America's and the World's built resources that beg preservation, but for which there is too little money. This is the only feasible approach to preserving resources lost to time already, aside from costly reconstructions. One natural concern that arises is: if digital preservation is used as mitigation for resources lost, will it then be used more and more, simply as a less expensive approach to preserving *everything*?

The question itself treads downward on a steep slope, but is, to some extent, a fair one. In the world of filmmaking, it is much less expensive to replicate environments digitally than actually construct them; or film a movie set in New York City in Vancouver, Canada because the financial burden on producers is lighter(Brooker 427). Similarly in historic preservation there are instances wherein traditionally a lost resource would be reconstructed but does not necessarily need to be. At Colonial Williamsburg, for example, The Douglass Playhouse once stood near the capitol building, serving as the colonial town's main entertainment venue. Like most other edifices in Williamsburg it was lost. However, it was not part of the original reconstruction plan but has continuously been under consideration for reconstruction. In 2010, a team of modelers and programmers from the Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities at the University of Virginia collaborated with archaeologists and historians at Colonial Williamsburg to digitally recreate the Douglass Theater. The project is part of a greater scheme to digitally model and render several lost buildings in the core of Colonial

Williamsburg. The pilot effort to recreate the Douglass Theater was a success and included contributions from well-founded archaeological practice and understandable and well-informed artistic interpretation. As a result, the project will likely receive enough funding to proceed with further models and renderings that could comprise a “visitable” Virtual Williamsburg(see figures 2-1 and 2-2). However, in this case, the digitization of these lost resources will not necessarily prevent Colonial Williamsburg from eventually reconstructing them physically. The digitized resources will remain regardless of changes in construction costs or Colonial Williamsburg’s preservation policies. They can be studied, experienced, and accepted—more or less—as unique resources in and of themselves, divorced from that which they represent (“Virtual Williamsburg”).

Colonial Williamsburg is an example of an insular, almost immutable historic enclave, which, unlike Jacksonville, is not rapidly expanding with suburbs and in need of individually fungible constituents. The City of Jacksonville, even if it were particularly interested in the preservation of its own film industry heritage, would most likely be wont to invest in costly reconstructions that may or may not generate income. Colonial Williamsburg has the benefit of fame and the leisure of having been so well-regarded for so long, even to this day. In the case of Jacksonville, this regard is almost nonexistent, as the film industry heritage has yet to surpass the level of an interesting cocktail party story. This is not due to its lack of importance, but to the simple fact that it was more or less forgotten in the wake of those leaving town for Hollywood. The only tangible pure remnant of the city’s film heritage is the Norman Studios née Eagle Film City site, which may very well be the only extant intact silent era film studio in North America. Norman

Studios Silent Film Museum (NSSFM) has been stewarding this property for the better part of the last decade, and through the acquisition of various grants has been able to bring the site back to its former visual cleanness. As a result, the boutique history of Jacksonville's lost film industry would be best served by a variety of digital treatments in conjunction with the more traditional preservation methods being carried out by organizations like the NSSFM.

Summary

Digital preservation and hypermedia will never replace traditional, brick-and-mortar methods. As an alternative to costly reconstructions, digital preservation is highly viable, but it needn't be seen simply as a cheap way to preserve something that it cannot truly replicate. These technologies can always be supplements to the tradition, though, being conceived and implemented alongside the physical effort. Such tools can be immensely successful at reaching a wider audience and serving to promote a project. Furthermore, as mentioned previously, hypermedia and digital preservation tools are well-suited to be utilized in situations wherein little or no physical remains of a site or sites exist. Taking such an approach to large-scale potential preservation ventures makes sense not just fiscally, but also culturally, as society begins to consume greater percentages of its historical data and educational material via the Internet. This does not seem to be a slowing trend, and will probably become an even more complex issue as technologies evolve and combine, making the challenge of effectively packaging predominantly electronic, web-based preservation projects all the more difficult. However, with the difficulty in devising strategies for such projects comes the opportunity to experiment with technologies that have yet to be developed, capable of presenting and interpreting data in ways heretofore unimagined.



Figure 2-1. Exterior rendering of Douglass Theater. Courtesy of Colonial Williamsburg.



Figure 2-2. Interior rendering of Douglass Theater. Courtesy of Colonial Williamsburg.

CHAPTER 3 CASE STUDIES OF HYPERMEDIA PRESERVATION PROJECTS

In order to effectively suggest guidelines for a potential hypermedia preservation project, one must first look to projects already established. In so doing, the guidelines will have the backing of effective precedent and be less susceptible to the shortcomings of previous endeavors. Dozens of hypermedia-based projects are currently in development or have already achieved their stated goal. In observing and analyzing a cross-section of the most innovative, successful, and well-publicized of these projects, it is easier to establish more effective criteria for future projects, borrowing from these prime examples particularly useful tools or ideas; and learning from their mistakes. This chapter features two focused case studies on well-publicized and innovative projects on an array of subjects that share similarities with those found in Jacksonville and its silent film heritage. The first study looks at HyperCities (www.hypercities.com); the second at Historypin (www.historypin.com).

The following case studies were chosen based on a variety of factors. During the composition of this thesis, the number of case studies has fluctuated, as have the aforementioned factors. Ultimately, the factors that were decided as most important, such as cooperability, flexibility, and attractiveness were essentially those suggestions laid down in Chapter 6. Both Historypin and HyperCities exhibit supreme visual friendliness and, because of their reliance on the immensely popular Google Maps API, have a low learning curve. This was important in the assessment of the projects, as any project with a high learning curve that was based on unfamiliar software would not have been considered: interfaces must be powerful, but simple enough so as to not alienate the average user who has little or no experience with the basic concepts of hypermedia

navigation. Both projects are also rooted in geography, which allows for the integration of objects with place and permits the comparison of these objects over time. As is the case with all historical events or minutiae, place is a crucial factor and cannot be ignored.

The most important factor when choosing the following case studies was their inherent collaborative characteristic, which, for the purposes of this thesis, is referred to as 'cooperability.' So important is this characteristic, in fact, that many other well-known hypermedia preservation projects were left out of the study due to their lack of it. The ability of a system to allow contribution from all sources, academic or otherwise, is crucial in widening the available resources of the project, as well as endearing it to users who are accustomed to collaborative, but non-preservationist endeavors like Facebook or Flickr.

HyperCities

Overview

Founded in 2002 as a joint project between the University of Southern California, University of California-Los Angeles, and the City University of New York to create a Flash-based mapping textbook of Berlin, Germany, HyperCities has since grown into a multi-national, multi-institution project with hundreds of contributors (Presner, "HyperCities" 1). A HyperCity is a "real city overlaid with a rich array of geo-temporal information, ranging from historical cartographies and media representations to family genealogies and the stories of the people and diverse communities who live and lived there" (1). Simply put, a HyperCity, as defined by its creators, is a visually relatable aggregation of data in various forms applied to a location intended to tell a story or stories. As Todd Presner writes, "...history literally 'takes' and 'makes' place" (5). Much

of the significance of such “made” places being borne of their reaction to and influence on other histories. Naturally, the physical settings of historical events are as important as the events themselves. A location enriched with historical data, and the interplay between both, is easier to understand and appreciate than an abstract model without the benefit of relatable context.

The technologies behind HyperCities are both proprietary, designed by a collaborative of programmers, and borrowed from companies like Google, who has already made tremendous strides in hypermedia and global mapping access(1). What HyperCities does is combine these technologies to make an interdisciplinary, web-based, user-friendly environment that is extensible. Non-academic users, researchers, and institutions can employ HyperCities to create content either for personal or institutional purposes. In effect, HyperCities is “humanities social network”(4) linking together seemingly disparate histories in a geographic locale and providing them accessible mutual context. These histories, as mentioned earlier, could include anything from well-known historical events to obscure genealogies, and only when stored in the same place—linked by location and time—can they be truly understood as integral to the oeuvre of a city’s history, no matter the size(see figure 3-1).

Functionality

The interface of HyperCities is borrowed from Google, and as such, has a built-in familiarity for many millions of persons. A user entering HyperCities can access hundreds of maps in over a dozen cities from Los Angeles and New York, to Berlin and Tel Aviv. The maps are composed of the most recent composite satellite imagery assembled by Google (entry-level maps, the ones with the highest degree of familiarity) and hundreds of historical maps, which are georectified and viewable either as separate

entities, or as translucent overlays, a feature which allows the user to easily compare the contemporary space to the historic(see figure 3-2). The experience of comparative geolocation is further enhanced by the addition of nodes, or points wherein data is stored or relayed, each offering points of egress to other, related resources. These nodes, when placed in a specific geographic point, remain there as the user adds and removes layers from the entry-level map, a function which allows the user to see not just how a city or neighborhood has changed in terms of plan on a grand scale, but on a potentially personal level as well (Reiff 1-2).

A driver of HyperCities' person-level attention is its integration with collaborative collections. Each featured city has maps representing certain swaths of time, but some HyperCities also contain collections that focus on specific areas of each city and further narrow the scope. This narrowing does not diminish interest, but, as is often the case, helps to make the experience of preservation or even, simply, information, more accessible and relatable (Presner, "Digital Humanities" 7). For example, the HyperCity of Los Angeles features a collection called HiFi: Historic Filipinotown. HiFi focuses on the historically Filipino neighborhood near Echo Park northwest of Downtown Los Angeles. The technology behind HyperCities allows users to see, on a familiar Google Earth map, the area presently composing Historic Filipinotown, and, through the manipulation of layers, how that neighborhood has changed. Contributors to the HiFi project can submit videos, documents, and other media that help to illustrate and expand the study of the neighborhood. At present, videos have been submitted by residents of the neighborhood engaged in the area's preservation, many of which are specific to certain families that live or lived in the neighborhood (Blockstein). As

mentioned before, these personal stories, though seemingly insignificant in the greater scope of history, make that greater scope more user-friendly for the average individual. When the history of a neighborhood—or an even larger area—can be distilled into a discrete unit to which a person can more easily relate, the chance that said person will come away from that history with usable knowledge increases(see figure 3-3).

Analysis

HyperCities, as both project and mission, seems to be successful. It incorporates several tools with a highly extensible technology to, in effect, create a ready-made and easily accessible preservation platform. The basic functionalities (map rectification, media integration, and collection-creation) can be applied to innumerable projects with a minimum of effort. The concept of a “humanities social network” is an appropriate one, and, given society’s acceptance of other social media, familiar as well (“HyperCities” 1-2). However, the aforementioned concept is more susceptible to misinterpretation and abuse than other, more traditional methods of preservation. Without proper refereeing and oversight, some collections could succumb to triviality or patent inappropriateness. Granted, HyperCities has yet to achieve the wide use and recognition necessary for such misuse, but the more realistic threat to legitimacy is from well-intentioned, but misdirected, project managers. HyperCities allows registered users to create their own collections and share them with the community, but not alter the efforts of others. Furthermore, if an institution wishes to collaborate officially with HyperCities, they may do so after submitting a project proposal.

Where HyperCities differs the most from traditional preservation, forgetting for a moment that it is necessarily digital, is in its collaborative, relatively informal nature. While traditional preservation methods are almost always group efforts, they tend to

include only those individuals within or affiliated with the profession of preservation. HyperCities does not purport to be a tool only for preservation professionals or even information technologists, but rather a tool, like any other, that can be used in support of myriad pursuits. The approach of HyperCities and other tools like it is integrative with many professions and levels of knowledge. As evidence by the example of the aforementioned HiFi project, a local preservation organization with the help of hundreds of unaffiliated, but interested, individuals can collaborate to create a project that benefits both the object (a neighborhood, in this case), its users (the residents and researchers) and, hypothetically, thousands of persons not considered, persons who, through the technology of collaboration, can serve the project further.

Ultimately, HyperCities is a fitting foundation for any number of preservation-related projects, a platform on which larger digital efforts can be based, or even bricks-and-mortar projects can be planned. In terms of what it could do for the preservation of Jacksonville's silent film heritage, HyperCities could provide a solid foundation for greater research into the relationship between the locations of former sites and the city as a whole. Since HyperCities is based on the Google Maps API, it would be reasonably easy for geographically-disparate non-preservationists to contribute to the project. Any ephemera that, over time, fell into the hands of archivists, collectors, and researchers across the country—and around the globe—could easily be processed and integrated via the HyperCities platform.

Historypin

Overview

Historypin was founded in 2011 by an international non-profit group called We Are What We Do. The aim of We Are What We Do (WAWWD) is essentially to increase

web-based and real life collaboration between peoples, as well as enhancing said collaboration through novel tools and events. Among WAWWD's contributions to good deed-doing are projects like Internet Buttons, which allows a person to design a simple web-based interface for other persons who either have no experience using the Internet or suffer from a disability that limits their understanding and use of it("About Us"). In general, WAWWD is based on friendliness and goodwill, mostly via the Internet, which is arguably the most oft-used tool for more tasks than are calculable. Historypin handles many of these tasks extraordinarily well and with a saviness for accessibility not shared by the majority of web-based preservation projects.

Essentially, Historypin is a web-based tool for the sharing of photographs, audio and video files, and stories in a geographical context. Historypin is archival collaboration incarnate, a simple way for individuals to upload, geolocate, and discuss the hundreds of yellowing photographs they have stored in shoeboxes and dusty albums. Historypin is not necessarily concerned with the academic analysis of space and the histories that occurring within certain parts of it, but, rather, seems more interested in creating a collaboration-friendly environment where amateur historians and laypersons can keep ephemera that may or may not be of any historic significance beyond that which is held by the submitter(see figure 3-4).

Functionality

Historypin functions much like Google Maps and Earth, which are the software Historypin uses as its foundation. Beyond the visual familiarity of Google's maps and satellite imagery, Historypin's interface is all its own, and, given the ambition of the project, well-executed and easily navigable. To further endear its users, Historypin operates under the conceit that Google Maps is a massive wall-mounted map, and their

photographs and videos are 'pinned' to it, much in the way one would place a tack on a city or country they have visited. When viewing the entire Historypin map, one sees the familiar sight of Google Maps, but now covered in small groups of images seemingly 'pinned' to the points to which they are relevant. As one zooms in more groupings become visible, illustrating the project's attention to geographic specificity and accuracy. Clicking on any grouping will open a window showing all the photographs or videos within(see figure 3-6). The user can either view the images singly, out of context, or in context, at a more focused geographical precision, which, in turn, reveals more images("Frequently Asked Questions").

Perhaps the most enthralling feature of Historypin is the inclusion integration of Google's sometimes controversial Streetview software, which allows users to virtually travel any mapped and photographed streets in the world from the perspective of a land vehicle. Historypin allows those submitting images taken within view of the continuous photography of Google Streetview, to align and overlay those images atop the more recent imagery. Effectively, Historypin allows for amateur rephotography that is flawed only in the poor placement of the submitter, or the poor resolution of certain Google Streetview stretches. A good example of how this integration works—and works well—can be found in the many photographs pinned to buildings and sites at the University of Florida, in Gainesville, Florida. Buildings like the old Women's Gymnasium, now called Ustler Hall, were well-photographed by the vehicle-mounted cameras employed by Google, and, when overlaid by a historic photograph from the 1940s, can be seamlessly compared(see figures 3-7 and 3-8). Much like the opacity function used by HyperCities to reveal lower map layers but still show a ghost of the uppermost, Historypin allows

users to shift the opacity of the historic, overlaid photography, to reveal the recentered photography beneath.

Much of the content in Historypin is assembled into collections or groups with unifying themes, some even set up as guided tours. For example, one can view a guided slideshow tour of the Chinatowns of America(see figure 3-9). Because of Historypin's novel use of Google's APIs, the user is not simply scrolling through a reel of lifeless photographs, but navigating Google Streetview with dozens of overlaid historic photographs, each with its own narrative. Given the collaborative nature of Historypin, users are even allowed to contribute their own stories and photographs, films, or audio files to collections and tours already in progress.

Analysis

Historypin is a relatively new venture and it remains to be seen whether its success will last and the level of contributions will increase and deepen. As it stands, it is one of the more innovative collective memory and digital public history projects in operation at present. If there is any doubt as to its innovation relative to its dependence on Google's technologies, there can be no doubt as to Historypin's usefulness and approachability. Even for an individual unfamiliar with the processes of uploading and geolocating photographs to Google Earth or other similar platforms, the hurdles inherent in Historypin's interface must seem minimal.

Historypin's utilization of tools like Google Streetview, which grants users the ability to see historic photographs in context, are novel and, given the short amount of time in which the initiative has been active, very well-implemented. Streetview's usability in Historypin will only increase, as simple guided tours in one's web browser could easily evolve into interactive narratives delivered via mobile phone while the user

follows the route in question. Furthermore, Google Streetview is an ongoing project itself, constantly photographing more streets and avenues around the world, thus opening up the possibilities for a wider audience and user base whose artifacts may have heretofore gone unnoticed.

One drawback to Historypin's provision of content is that it is limited, at present, to audio-visual materials, that is, video, audio, and static photographs. There will come a time when users familiar or new to Historypin will want to upload and pin other classes of historic material. For instance, alongside many of the photographs that comprise the aforementioned Chinatowns of America guided tour one might want to attach scanned images of letters or diaries relevant to the inhabitants of a Chinatown. Also, academic institutions with greater resources will desire the capability to upload and pin objects photographed in the round, which permits virtual interaction with three-dimensional artifacts. These limitations, however, are more a matter of available time and labor than a lack of innovation; with need or desire and the appropriate means comes new functionality.

Historypin's focus, ultimately, is on collaboration and sharing. While HyperCities has a decidedly academic lean, Historypin has approached its interface and architecture with the seamlessness and panache of Facebook. That is not to say that HyperCities lacks either quality, but that Historypin has brought them to a level of simplistic interactivity heretofore untested. Historypin is a populist solution that is highly functional and has tremendous potential for expansion across disciplines and will likely see more and more use by academic institutions looking to integrate their own digital libraries and archives with more well-known initiatives.

Summary

The selection process for this thesis's case studies was not a particularly easy one. The candidates were originally very diverse, ranging from projects like CyArk, which scans entire buildings and sites like one would historical correspondence on a flatbed scanner; and somewhat static projects like DocSouth's Going to the Show project, which is an interpretive digital platform for the study of North Carolina's historic movie theaters. While those projects and many others like them are certainly worthy of study, ultimately they did not fit the mold this thesis attempted to etch. The key to the selection of Historypin and HyperCities was their emphasis on collaboration, the former being more populist and image-centered, and the latter having an academic lean with more cartographic possibilities.

Both projects yielded positive results that contributed directly to the creation of the suggestions offered in Chapter 6. Historypin, for example, has expertly integrated image-sharing with Google Streetview, a feat that is not just 'neat' but also helpful in establishing historical spatial references, which aids in interpreting changes in space and scale. This could be an important and useful feature of a potential project interpreting the history of Jacksonville's film industry, as there are many photographs of industry-specific structures that are no longer extant, but whose former locations are known. HyperCities, on the other hand, has a well-integrated map-overlay feature that allows for much broader historic comparisons over long time spans. While the time span of Jacksonville's film industry heritage is not very long, historic Sanborn Fire Insurance maps could easily be overlaid atop modern satellite imagery, giving users a sort of key to building typologies, which could help in determining why certain film industry-specific buildings were built where they were.

Despite having much to offer, both Historypin and HyperCities are by no means 'perfect'. As is the case with any project of their magnitude, things are overlooked, and technological barriers are not always broken. HyperCities, for example, is often bogged down by the speed of its interface, which, when loading data sets or map overlays, becomes painfully slow. In their defense, the amount of data HyperCities is trying to interpret and make accessible is a tremendous weight on many internet connections and can be worse or better depending on one's location. While purely technical, such a hurdle can detract from the overall experience of a user: if he or she cannot easily and efficiently manipulate the parameters of the project's interface, the time spent may not be worth the information earned. Barriers like this are usually broken over time, and are dependent upon many factors, including the hardware an entity uses to host its data, the virtual locations of its source files, and the processes by which it compresses those source files. These processes can all be streamlined given things like available time, labor, and money, all of which are necessary and often difficult to assemble in preservation projects of all kinds.

Historypin, while having the more intuitive and speedy of the two interfaces, does have other issues that could affect its usability. Because Historypin is based on pure collaboration and popular contribution, it can be subject to instances of wanton 'pinning' to use the parlance of the project. For example, while using Historypin, many instances of improperly placed photographs were discovered, many of which were not even close to where they should have been placed, and often with incorrect narrative information. This is usually caused by well-intentioned, but misinformed individuals who want to put their historical 'stuff' online for all to see. Persons may, in turn, think this misplaced

photograph or its narrative is accurate, and unknowingly perpetuate mistakes. Historypin does not actively seek out and correct these, rather they rely on the Historypin community to flag suspected errors which are then reviewed by Historypin administrators and corrected if necessary. For content hosts like Historypin, giving police duties to their contributors and community makes more sense than expending their own resources; as evidenced by YouTube, Facebook, and many other social networking projects, interested users are more than willing to take on these duties to ensure the reputation and usability of the project.

It should be noted that the mistakes made by contributors to collaborative ventures like Historypin do not detract from the usability or veracity of the project. Projects lead entirely by academic institutions with no support from the general public are just as capable of making mistakes as those maintained primarily by amateur historians and archivists. There is much to argue when discussing the need for the vetting of contributions to public projects, such as whether the odd mistake limits a projects trustworthiness, but those arguments will not be resolved in this thesis.

One limitation of Historypin is its conceit of photography, which governs the entire project. In the main interface of Historypin one can limit or expand the objects viewable on the map by moving a slider closer to or farther away from CE 1840, the year Historypin ascribes as the earliest point at which photographs were being taken. While there were photographs taken prior to 1840("Fox Talbot Museum"), it is doubtful many persons own such an old and potentially valuable item; it is also doubtful that most persons own photographs taken at the earliest extent of Historypin's slider. On the other hand, HyperCities, which is more concerned with geography and the events that

take place in and, sometimes, because of it, is not so limited. HyperCities has a similar slider, but it extends to BCE 2400. Since HyperCities is not primarily concerned with photography, it has the freedom to extend its chronological border to a much older time. There is a question, though, as to whether such a range is workable; the oldest map in HyperCities at present is a CE 1237 map of Berlin, Germany, but most other cities do not have maps much older than the mid-16th century. There are some modern maps of Rome's HyperCity that attempt to map out the ancient city, though, so there is potential for novel interpretation extending well beyond the beginning of Common Era.

Historypin and HyperCities are, more than anything else, holistic influences on the proposed potential project of this. There is no one technology either project uses that is perfect for the subject of Jacksonville's film heritage; the possibilities they evoke when combined with other technologies, novel or accepted, are far more important. Their failures should be avoided and their successes copied and improved upon. Suggestions for the latter directive will be addressed in Chapter 6 as suggestions are laid out for this potential project and others like it.

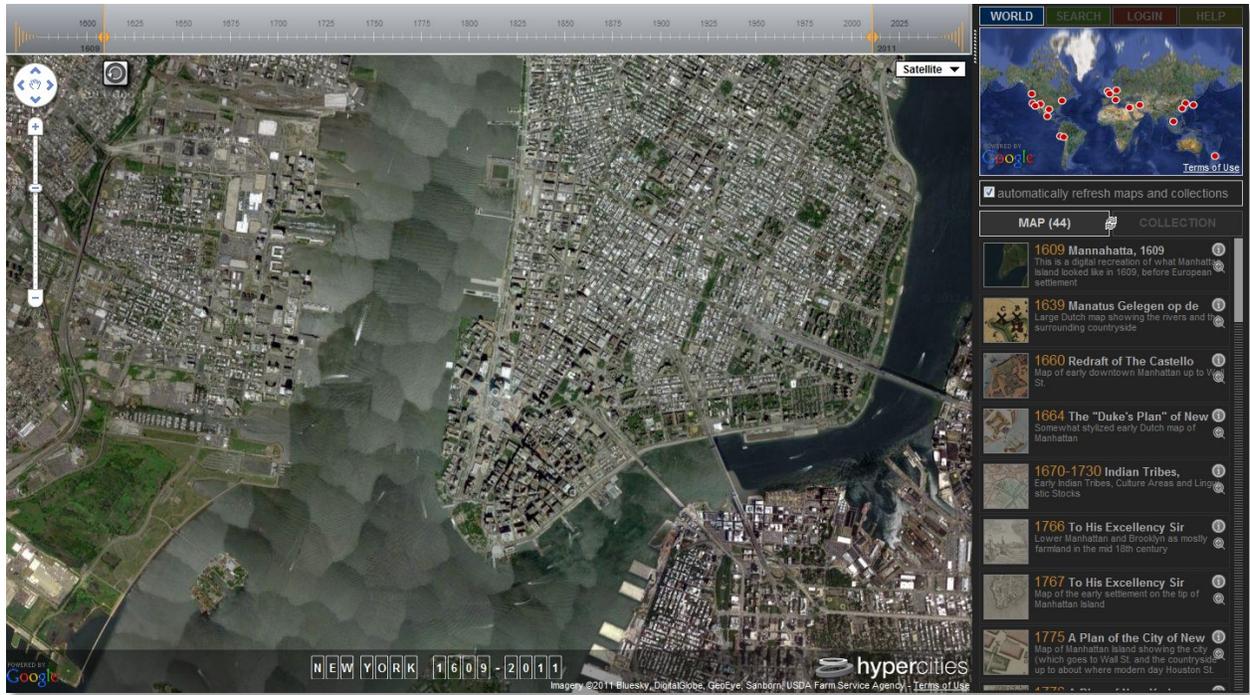


Figure 3-1. HyperCities interface, centered on Manhattan. Screenshot, HyperCities.

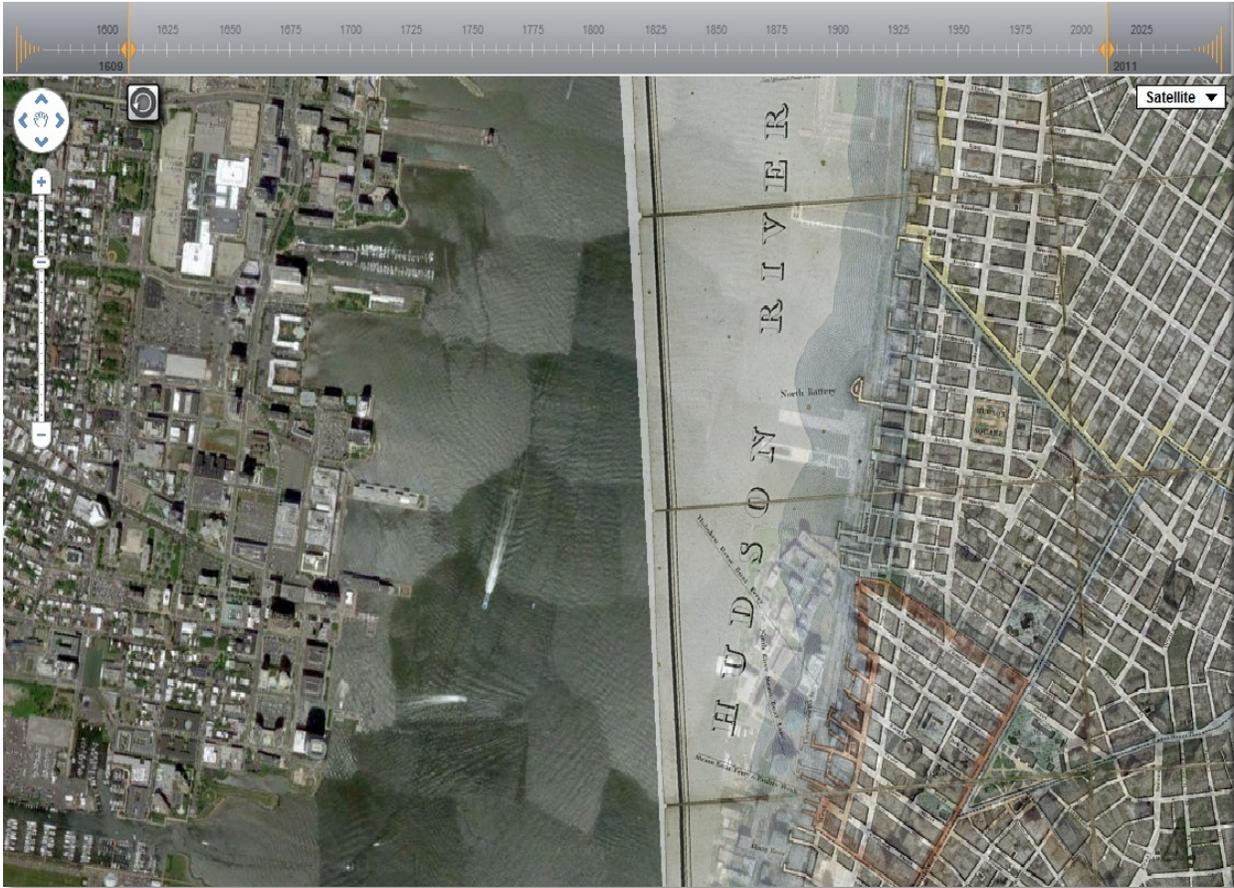


Figure 3-2. Historic Manhattan map overlay on recent satellite imagery from HyperCities. Screenshot, HyperCities.

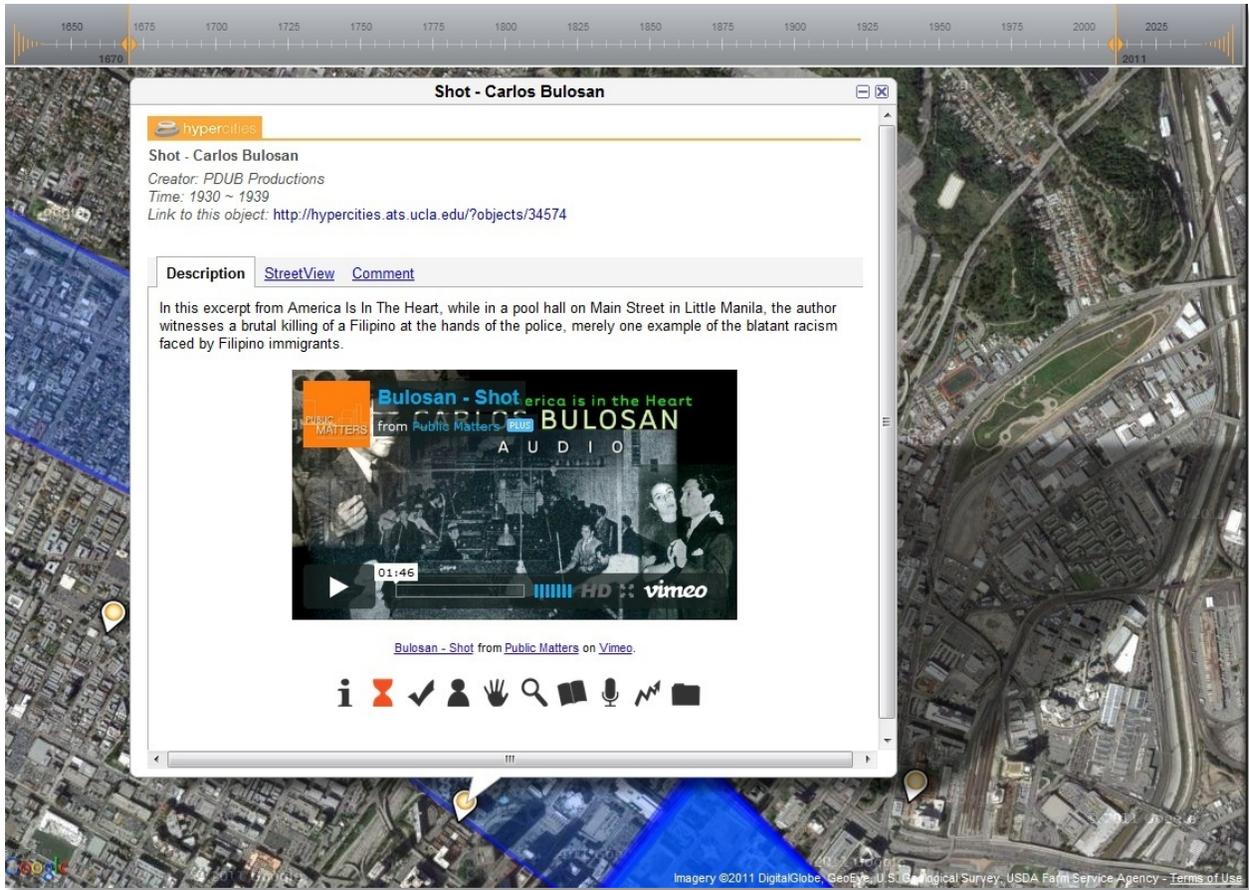


Figure 3-3. Expanded node from Historic Filipinotown collection in HyperCities. Screenshot, HyperCities.

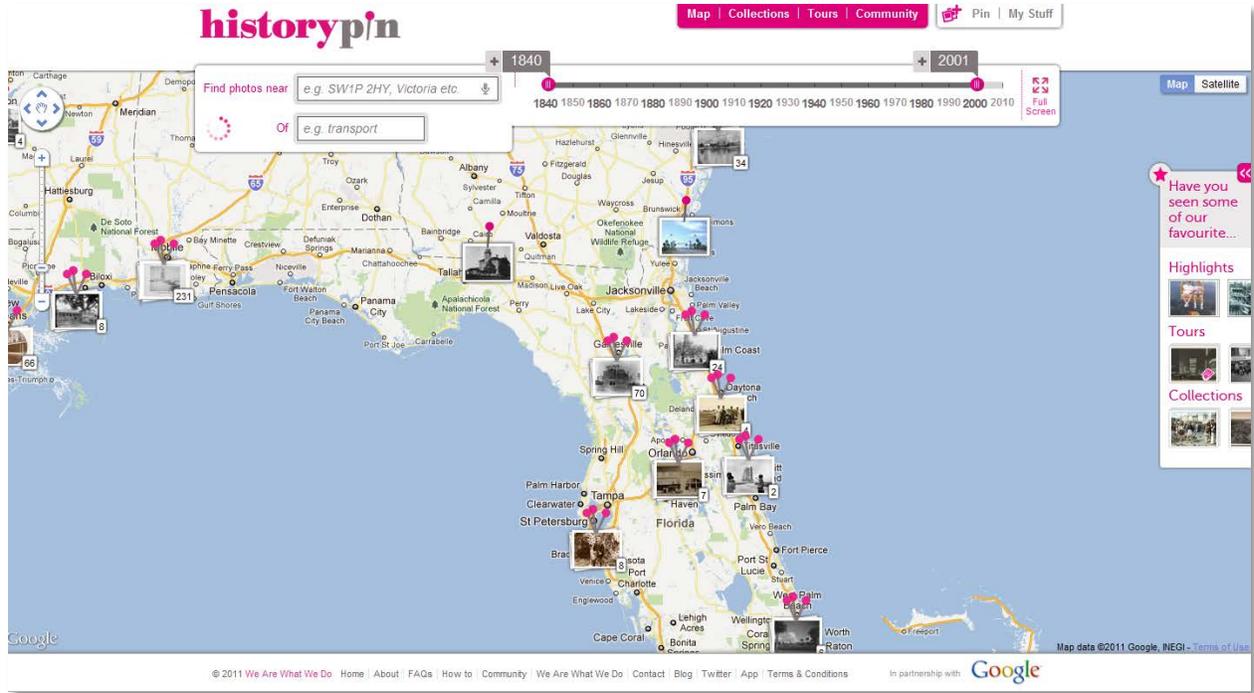


Figure 3-4. Historypin main interface, centered over Florida. Screenshot, Historypin.

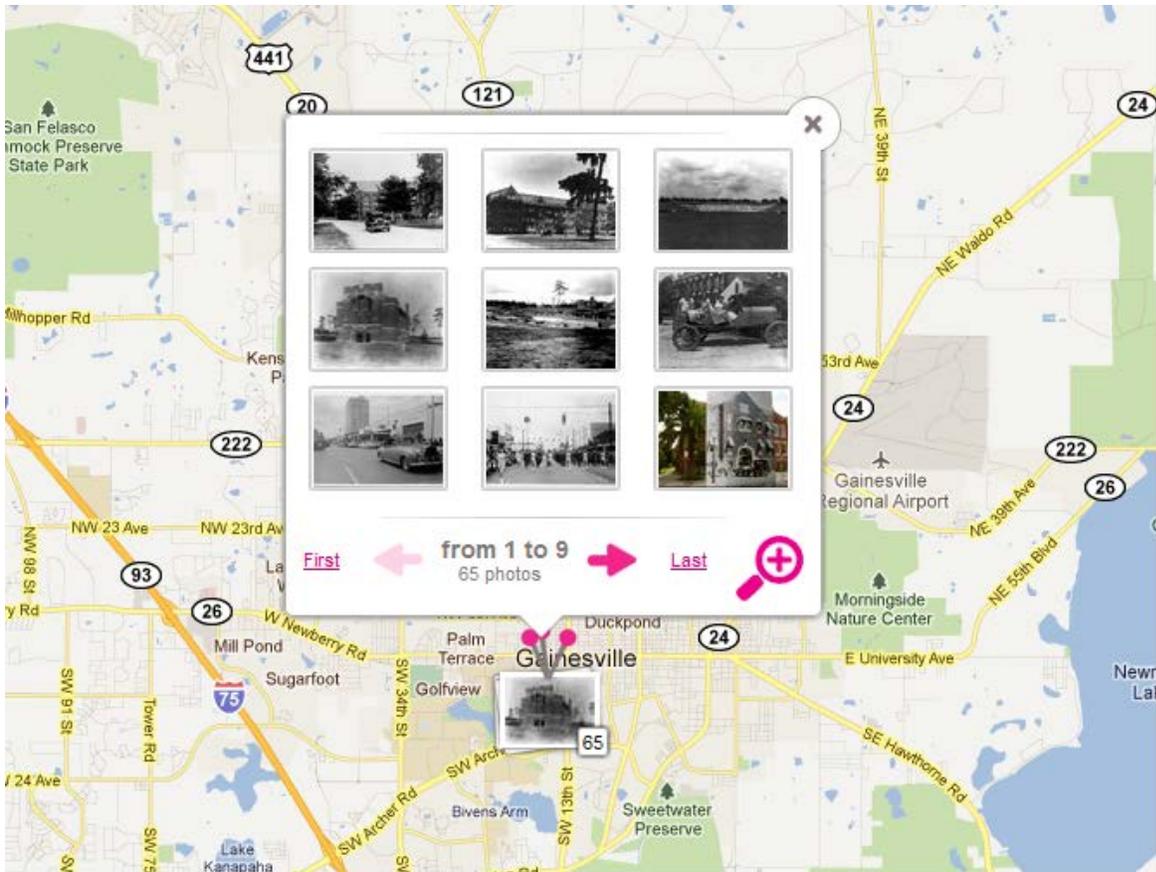


Figure 3-5. Expanded Historypin envelope composed of historic photographs of Gainesville, Florida. Screenshot, Historypin.

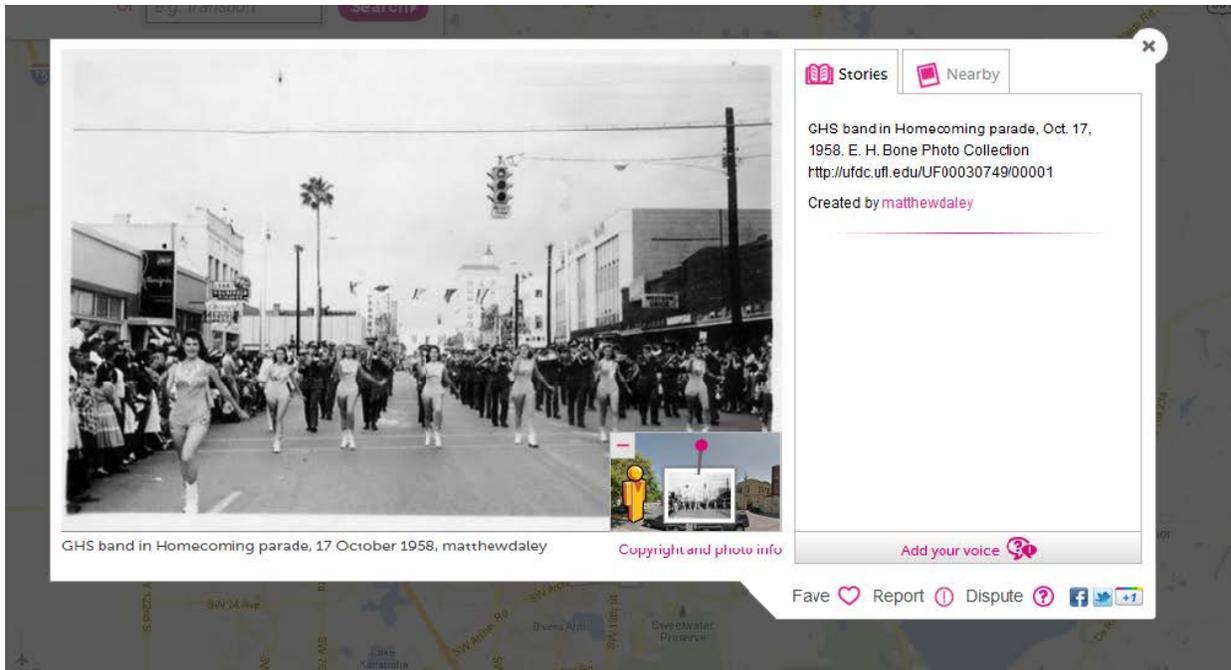


Figure 3-6. Historypin node showing an historic photograph as a single entity. Screenshot, Historypin.



Figure 3-7. Historypin overlay of historic photograph on Google Streetview imagery. Screenshot, Historypin.

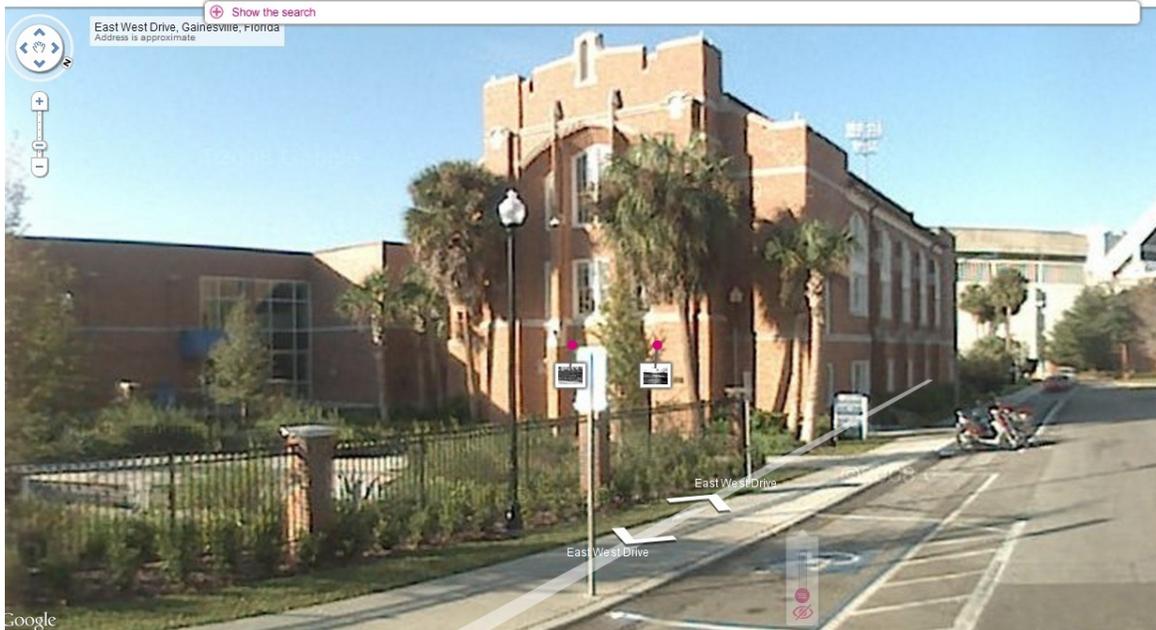


Figure 3-8. Google Streetview scene from Figure 3-7 with the overlay removed. Screenshot, Historypin.

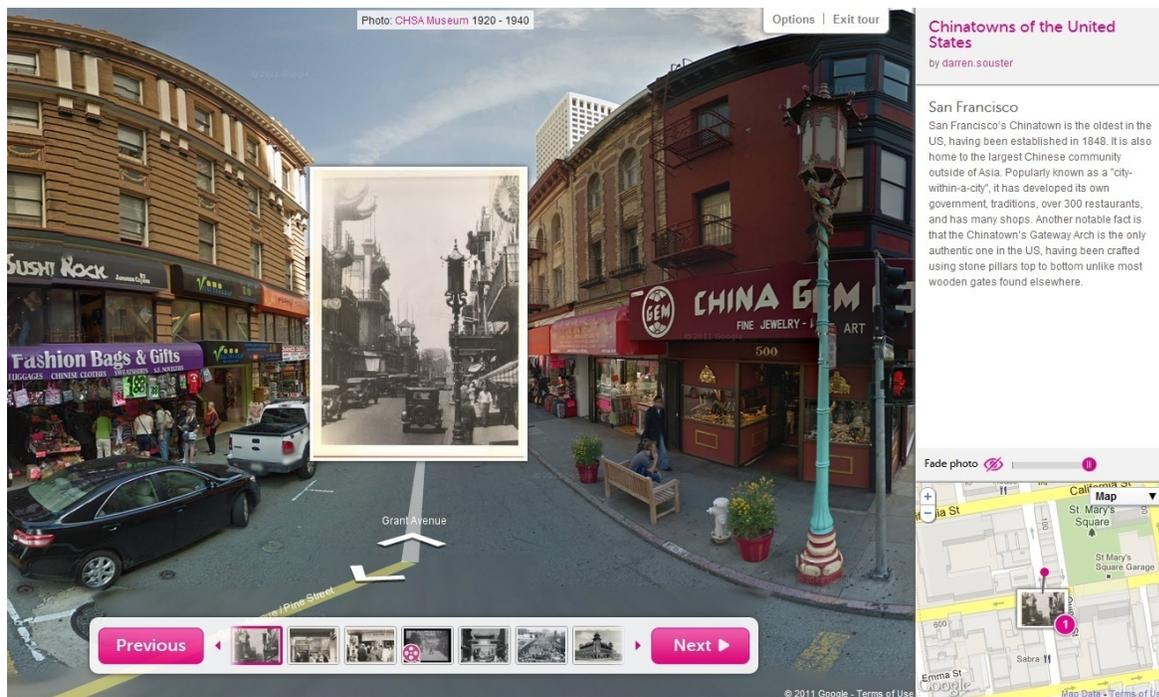


Figure 3-9. Historypin guided tour interface. Screenshot, Historypin.

CHAPTER 4 HISTORIC CONTEXT: JACKSONVILLE, 1901-1921

Great Fire of 1901

On May 3, 1901, Jacksonville, Florida all but disappeared after the largest urban fire in the history of the Southeastern United States set ablaze almost 2500 buildings across 466 acres, and made homeless over 10,000 persons (Bean 23-24). Having started in a mattress factory filled with Spanish moss and dead plant matter, this fire was underestimated and quickly spread from the poor neighborhood of LaVilla to the wealthy neighborhood of Springfield, effectively leveling the built stature of the two neighborhoods. Between these two ends, the majority of downtown succumbed to the flames. One of the more famous casualties of the fire was lumber magnate Wellington Cummer's Riverside mansion, a massive Greek Revival edifice that was seemingly eternal. Even the Windsor and St. James Hotels, beloved destinations for vacationing northerners, were reduced to smoldering ash (Crooks 16). Most of the city's cultural institutions had fallen, as well as its densest residential districts, poor and wealthy alike. At the time, what would become known as the Great Fire of 1901 would be spoken of in the same breath as the similarly destructive fires in Chicago and San Francisco. H. L. Mencken, the journalist and humorist who was sent to cover the aftermath by the Baltimore Morning Herald, famously said of the destruction, "...there seemed to be nothing left save a fringe of houses around the municipal periphery, like the hair on a friar's head" (Bean 25) (see figure 4-1).

Aid came from many places, much of it from state governments the nation across, as well as from Canada, the United Kingdom, and Cuba. On a lighter note, there was so much aid given that much of it was unnecessary and, quite frankly, poorly

considered. Perhaps unaware of Jacksonville's subtropical climate the City of St. Paul, Minnesota donated hundreds of fur coats; local Baltimore saloon owners contributed one hundred cases of rye. For the most part, though, the aid given by the many state and international agencies did Jacksonville good and helped to expedite the process of recovery(26).

By the end of the year Jacksonville was flush with over 1,000 building permits and the days and nights were teeming with busy workers, and ringing with the crashes of hammers(27). It was this progress post-conflagration that prompted a bevy of budding young architects to leave their firms in Chicago, New York, and St. Louis to seek fame and fortune in the soon-to-be Shining City of the South. The first, and arguably the most talented and prolific of these architects, to arrive was Henry Klutho of New York City(Wood, *Architectural Heritage* 11). Klutho was trained in New York and heavily inspired by the work of Louis Sullivan. His first commission in Jacksonville, along with noted Atlanta architect J. W. Golucke, was a building for the Dyal-Upchurch Company, a Georgia-based lumber and turpentine firm (41). With decidedly European architectural movements in mind, Klutho designed several more buildings throughout downtown Jacksonville, many of which are still extant. Klutho, perhaps struck by the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, quickly became a pupil of the Prairie School and adapted his style to suit. Both his Sullivan-esque St. James Building (now the Jacksonville City Hall) and Morocco Temple (Egyptian-inspired Prairie style) are currently in use and listed on the National Register of Historic Places(52 and 82).

Klutho was just one of many architects -- a generation of them -- that designed the New Jacksonville, the city that would soon become the Winter Film Capital of the

World. Architects like Ransom Buffalow, Earl Mark, and Roy Benjamin the noted theater designer, each brought their own paints to the ash-strewn canvas of Jacksonville, and soon the downtown was alive again -- this time made of brick and stone, bigger and taller than ever before. In his book about Jacksonville's film history, *The First Hollywood*, Shawn Bean says of this new, architecturally eclectic and increasingly cosmopolitan city, "The first studio back lot had been built"(Bean 30). Soon many studio owners and filmmakers would arrive in Jacksonville to take advantage of the clement weather and varied environs, and would discover myriad cityscapes in one city. Major cities like Boston, Atlanta, Charleston, St. Louis and more were present in the buildings designed by the architects who left those cities to set up shop in Jacksonville. The backdrop for any photoplay imaginable was built into the fresh fabric of the city(see figure 4-2).

The Studios Arrive

In November, 1908, Frank J. Marion, a principal in the New York-based film studio Kalem Company, set off for Florida to scout locations and test the water for a possible move, albeit a temporary one. Shooting in places like New York City and Hoboken, New Jersey, Kalem and the many other studios operating in the Northeastern United States had grown weary of the cold, sunless winters that all but stopped major studio productions for more than half the year. Although synthetic light sources were available, natural light was preferred by the discriminating director for its beauty and utility, and for its cheapness by the money-conscious studio owner. Seeking to find a place where filming operations could progress unabated (at least due to things like blizzards and month-long sunless days), Kalem arrived in Jacksonville. Marion and his

crew established themselves in the Roseland Hotel in Fairfield, a typically Floridian farmhouse with seasonal guests and plenty of perfect views (Nelson 136).

Aside from the year-round sunshine and comparatively sultry winters, labor was cheap, housing and rental space was inexpensive, access to trains (Henry Flagler's East Coast Railway) and a massive port was excellent, and the city, a popular stop for traveling thespians, was flush with actors easily enticed into doing a movie or two (or five) before their troupe's departure. Kalem had found a nearly perfect city in which to film year-round. Their output was successful too, affording them the opportunity to relocate their New York studio to a larger building. Among these films was the first one-reeler filmed in Florida, *A Florida Feud; Or, Love in the Everglades*(1909)(139). Despite upsetting the locals with its portrayal of poor whites, it was massively successful. Other controversial fare included films with titles like *The Cracker's Bride*, *The Seminole Half-Breeds*, *A Slave to Drink*, and *The Fish Pirates*, all produced in 1909. Generally successful in theaters, these films were almost entirely panned by Northern critics. To their credit, though, they were among the first films to feature honest location-shooting in an era when a canvas painted with palm trees was the level of scenery to which most audiences were accustomed (141).

Kalem was hardly the only game in town; at the height of Jacksonville's reign as the Winter Film Capital of the World, upwards of thirty studios were operating in and around the city. Among these were companies like Thanhouser, Motograph, Biograph (D. W. Griffiths' studio), Selig, Gaumont, Metro (later Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer), Lubin, and the Vim Comedy Company. The latter was the home studio to a native of Harlem, Georgia named Oliver "Babe" Hardy. It was in Jacksonville that Hardy began what

would be one of the most storied and influential careers in film history. Originally under contract at Lubin, Hardy signed with Vim after his former employer pulled up stakes and left town in 1915. In one year alone, Hardy co-starred in thirty-seven films with his then-partner Bill Rudge. The quasi-duo acted as Vim characters Plump and Runt, a fat guy and a skinny guy who found themselves in myriad comic disasters, perhaps portending Hardy's later work with Stan Laurel in Hollywood (Bean 71). Many other actors of note found themselves in Jacksonville, at the least to be shot in a single film making use of the local environment. Lionel and Ethel Barrymore, future Hollywood royalty, starred in a handful of films whilst in Jacksonville; Ethel Burton, a popular comedic actor of the period, acted in several films alongside Oliver Hardy, including the infamous King Bee comedies starring Chaplin imitator Billy West (71).

For many years Jacksonville reveled in this starry glory. Hotels were packed with casts, crews, and tourists hoping to catch a glimpse of a strolling studio ingénue. Furniture stores, an unlikely group to benefit from filmmaking, were flush with cash as studios constantly required new set pieces. Even local firemen were given roles in films, creating possibly the first glimmer of greatness in individuals without theater backgrounds (the undiscovered unknown). Plans were in place to build "the world's largest motion picture production center" on the site of Camp Johnston (Nelson 190). This was all in vain however, as things would soon change. Jacksonville lost its cinematic crown and its status as the Winter Film Capital of the World almost in an instant.

Studios Leave

Several things contributed to Jacksonville losing out to Hollywood, and it just so happens that all of these things happened nearly at once, crushing the town in one fell

swoop. First, World War I broke out. When the U.S. entered the war the trains that once carried actors and supplies to Jacksonville were leaving them at the station in favor of troops and munitions. Increased traffic in Jacksonville's port allowed a lot of people to get very rich, very quickly. This increase in disposable income raised the city's cost of living, driving up rents and making fuel, electricity, and essentials just expensive enough to stop growth in its tracks. New studios were dissuaded from setting up in Jacksonville, and those financially precarious anyway were prompted to uproot and find cheaper territory (Bean 93).

Second, despite its relative cosmopolitanism, Jacksonville was still a Southern city, one heavily steeped in traditions and Protestant mores. It wasn't uncommon for filmmakers to take advantage of empty streets during Sunday church services to stage bank robberies; fire alarms were pulled so directors could get free footage of fire engines; riots were incited; and dangerously real car chases were carried out in the daytime hustle of downtown. There are dozens of examples of some studios' blatant disregard for the locals' way of life. It got so bad toward the end of the second decade of the 20th century that the mayoral challenger to pro-film J.E.T. Bowden, John W. Martin, easily swept his opponent simply by driving home the social damage done to Jacksonville by a few rogue studios (94-95). Martin administered as the anti-film mayor, bullying studios out of their lots and pressuring banks to deny loans to studio executives. Operations like Selig, Metro, and Edison realized they were no longer welcome and packed their sets, props, and equipment and headed west to Hollywood (99). Finally, as if no other tragedies could befall both Jacksonville and its all but dead film industry, the flu epidemic of 1918 reached Jacksonville (99). In just under a two

decades, Jacksonville had gone from a smoldering heap of ash to the Winter Film Capital of the World to just Jacksonville.

Summary and Impact

It is difficult to accurately gauge the impact Jacksonville's tenure as a film town had on the progression of film history and on the industry as a whole. Speculation could be made as to whether there would even be a Hollywood as we know it had Jacksonville retained its status throughout the decades and become veritable machine of culture for the entire world. There are, perhaps, infinite timelines one could construct to determine such outcomes, but history has only the one with which to work. What is known about Jacksonville's impact is that it had one, but it cannot necessarily be easily felt. Jacksonville's part in film history includes notable firsts, like being home to the first groups of filmmakers looking for gentler climes and more authentic locations; it was home, or at least one home of many, to the largest, most powerful production companies of the era, many of which gave birth to companies still in operation today; and it helped launch the careers of film legends like Oliver Hardy and Gene Gauntier. Rather than looking at Jacksonville's film heritage as pieces left over of what could have been, one must approach it something that most certainly was, and had a part in a greater picture, one of an industry that would irreversibly change the way the entire world consumes art and information. Jacksonville as a film town was prototypical, possessing many of the same features and recurring events as Hollywood, like studio buildings, filming in public places, and an industry-accommodating socio-political infrastructure. Jacksonville had these things, but as seeds only, which would take a shift to southern California to germinate.

CHAPTER 5 JACKSONVILLE AS A SILENT FILM CITY: INTERACTIONS BETWEEN THE CITY, THE INDUSTRY, AND THE PEOPLE

In order to understand the importance of Jacksonville as a Silent Film City and how such an entity would be reassembled digitally, the key components of the era and how they interacted must be identified. This chapter will look at two sets of historical entities separated by type: buildings, both studios and cityscape; persons, both film folk and city folk; and finally, an analysis of how these units interacted to make a silent film city. The studios and buildings will be described as best they can, considering the scant source materials available, and will be contextualized by the stories of their tenants. The individuals integral to the formation and sustenance of the industry will be similarly treated.

Setting: Studios and Cityscape

Most of the film industry-specific buildings that contributed to Jacksonville's cityscape did not survive the decades of urban revitalization and suburban expansion since the era ended. With the exception of Norman Studios in the suburb of Arlington, no other remnants exist. Through careful research using historical city directories, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, and other archival materials, the locations of many of these lost structures have been ascertained. The cityscape itself, however, remains relatively intact, many of the era-specific high-rises and blocks looking today much as they did in 1915. This section will look more closely at the places where newly-arrived production companies made films and managed their projects (bases of operation); as well as the downtown city core(cityscape) of Jacksonville itself, and how it contributed to the success of the film industry.

Bases of Operation

Roseland Hotel

Not much is known about the origin of the Roseland Hotel or its jovial proprietor, 'Ma' Perkins. Listed in the Jacksonville City Directory as early as 1904, the Roseland Hotel was located in the unincorporated suburb of Fairfield along Talleyrand Avenue, just east of downtown(*Polk's Jacksonville* 645). Well outside Jacksonville proper, the Roseland Hotel stood out amongst a flat, grassy plain on the edge of the St. Johns River. The hotel itself was made up of several houses, all indicative of Florida vernacular farmhouses with a certain applied folk Victorian flair(see figure 5-1).The grounds of the establishment included three acres of lawn, a bowling alley, tennis courts, and croquet grounds(Beane 44). Roseland was less a hotel than a boarding house for itinerant performers and theatrical professionals of all echelons and varieties(Nelson 137). Gene Gauntier, one of stars among Kalem's crew, wrote, "If the Webers, a family of acrobats, were not practicing their act on the lawn before the veranda, the man with the trained goats was putting animals through their tricks, a juggler was practicing his stunts, or the trained dogs were practicing themselves"(Gauntier, "Blazing the Trail"). Many of these acts were local, like the performers with gigs at the nearby Ostrich Farm, or others from as far away as Chicago or New England. From New York City came what would end up being Roseland's most famous and impactful guests, a group of actors and producers from the Kalem Company.

Kalem was a film production company founded in 1907 by George Kleine, Samuel Long, and Frank Marion, three entrepreneurs from varied backgrounds. The company found much success in its short, eight year run before being acquired by a

much larger production company, Vitagraph, but their success originated in Jacksonville(see figure 5-2). Aside from being a founding member of the Edison-organized Motion Picture Patents Company, Kalem lead the way in location-shooting and setting up stock companies in various geographic areas to capture different environments for its films (Nelson 524-525). The first of these companies was lead by director Sidney Olcott and actor/writer Gene Gauntier, which arrived in Jacksonville, Florida in 1908. It is unclear as to why the Roseland was chosen versus other accommodations in the city, but it is possible that, given the novelty of Kalem's expedition, the quaint boarding house on the St. Johns river was simply too idyllic and appropriate to ignore. In all likelihood, however, it was probably cost-effective and well-advertised as accommodating to itinerant actors.

Gene Gauntier, in her memoir, recounts the loveliness of Roseland, and how wonderful it was to simply sit on the main house's wraparound porch, talking casually with Ma Perkins for hours on end (Gauntier, "Blazing the Trail").Kalem's dedication to the location was such that a \$400 open-air stage was built adjoining the hotel(Beane 44). However, despite the affection Kalem and its Florida stock company had for the quaint boarding house, business was booming and they could no longer work effectively in an ad hoc studio. Kalem would use Roseland as its seasonal base of operations for a few winters, but by 1912 invested in more permanent quarters dedicated to filmmaking, where motion pictures were made year-round. Once again, Kalem looked to accommodations at a boarding house in town, though one much larger than Roseland. Kalem ordered the construction of what was described as the "world's largest outdoor stage" and set upon it one of the three troupes living in Jacksonville year-round. By

1914, even the alleged “world’s largest outdoor stage” was proving inadequate for Kalem’s needs, so the company constructed a “glass-roofed studio with a \$20,000 lighting system and 54x40-foot interior stage.”(Nelson 154) (see figure 5-3). Richard Nelson proclaims that such an investment definitely put Jacksonville on the “movie map”(154).

The Roseland is important for several reasons. Though it was not, by today’s standards—or even those of major studios in the late silent era—a true studio, it was a Jacksonville’s first. The definition of a studio had yet to be cast, so, for the intents and purposes of the time and locale, the Roseland was a studio. With this in mind, the Roseland can be seen as the first building to be used as a studio by filmmakers outside of the then-traditional locations of Chicago, Philadelphia, New York, and New Jersey. Furthermore, it was the first location studio, uniquely positioned to take advantage of scenery unattainable in the aforementioned locations.

As a piece of scenery itself, the Roseland Hotel was something of a cliché. A two-story boarding house with cracker influences and touches of stripped-down gingerbread, nestled in a clump of scrub brush and palm trees by the exotic St. Johns must have been exactly what the filmmakers from New York City expected to see when detouring in Jacksonville, Florida. While that notion may, to some extent, be true, the relative cosmopolitanism of Jacksonville was one of the reasons Kalem were drawn to the city. The charming, southern quaintness of places like the Roseland Hotel and its palm trees were in contrast to the burgeoning urban entity down the road. Location-filming was a novel idea, and given its gumption relative to accepted practice, a potentially hazardous one. The warmth and familiarity of a densely populated area

were a requirement. According to Jacksonville city phone directories, the Roseland Hotel continued as a boarding house at least for two or three years after Kalem moved out. Their exact fate remains a mystery and the site on which it sat is now a field amongst other vacant lots and empty warehouses.

Dixieland Park and its theater

Though it is true that many studios were more than willing to create seasonal and semi-permanent presences in Jacksonville, most were not willing to construct their own permanent studio buildings and dedicate investments—at least right away. The practice of location-shooting and production outside the safe and familiar environments of the New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia was in its infancy, as was the industry itself, thus trepidation over getting in over one's head was palpable (Bean 52). As in the case of Kalem, existing buildings were used as bases of operations, but most studios that arrived after Kalem did not choose a secluded boarding house on the outskirts of town. In fact, even after companies like Kalem and Thanhouser had already invested in purpose-built studios, many equally-reputable companies insisted on using vacant buildings. The vacant site that played host to the most studios during Jacksonville's tenure as a film town was Dixieland Park (see figures 5-4 and 5-5).

Dixieland Park was an amusement park built in 1907 in South Jacksonville, directly across the St. Johns River from downtown. Often billed as "The Coney Island of the South" Dixieland Park was one of Jacksonville's main tourist attractions from 1907, when the park opened, until 1920, when it officially closed for good (Mann). As an amusement park, however, it probably did not operate at peak capacity and potential for more than a few years, as it was routinely damaged by fires and storms, closing for months at a time. While it was open, however, it was like any other early 20th century

amusement park, complete with animal shows, rides, oddities, and industrial exhibitions. It was home to one of Jacksonville's only roller coasters and was laden with an exotic jungle theme, which was strongly enforced by the fact that one could only get to the park via ferry. Despite being well-attended during its first few years of operation, the park was constantly being closed after windstorms and fires damaged or destroyed entire attractions(Mann).

The park covered over thirty acres of land on the shores of the St. Johns, across from downtown Jacksonville. Dixieland Park was effectively a trolley park, a type of amusement park popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries that was cleverly located at the end of many cities' trolley lines. Dixieland Park, though not directly linked to a Jacksonville's old trolley line, was accessible by a ferry that bounced back and forth between the park and the trolley line's final stop(Mann). It is unclear as to whether the location of Dixieland across from downtown Jacksonville was deliberate and tied to its exotic theme, or whether it was simply constructed where cheap land was available. In either case, visitors arrived at Dixieland after a short ride across a mighty river to an amusement park encompassing a variety of strange and exciting attractions. Patrons of the park could spend their day braving a 160-foot bamboo slide called the "Dixie Dewdrop" only to face a wooden roller coaster and perilous parachute drops; or they could meander the grounds visiting such attractions as The House of Trouble, Mysterious House and Dooms Day (both haunted houses and dark rides), or the Fish Scale House, which was allegedly made from 3,700,000 fish scales (see figure 5-6). Dixieland was particularly popular for its theater, which was equipped for stage and screen productions, and as a venue for the likes of John Philip Sousa and Babe Ruth.

The star attractions were most certainly the 400 wild animals and other assorted beasts held captive in the Bostock Arena, which served as one of Jacksonville's zoos(Nelson 210).

In spite of all the interesting attractions at Dixieland, its popularity began to wane in the latter half of 1908 when the owner of the Bostock Arena's animals found a more profitable venue and vacated the park. Furthermore, the Dixieland Theater could not compete against downtown theaters like the Duval and Orpheum and closed as a full-time picture- and playhouse in 1909. Hailstorms and high winds were frequently the cause of much damage to the park's buildings, in some cases being responsible for localized, but certainly destructive, fires. The park ceased regular operation around 1910 but found new life as a filmmaker's playground(210).

The Dixie Theater's appearance was not congruent with the other buildings at Dixieland Amusement Park. While most structures, including the decidedly tiki entrance gate and dance hall, drew heavily from Middle-Eastern, North African, and Southeast Asian design sensibilities(see figure 5-7),the theater was boxy and unadorned by exotic decorations(see figure 5-8). Functionally, the Dixie Theater was perfect for stage performances, film exhibition, and, most importantly, making moving pictures. Not much is known about how, precisely, the space was utilized as a studio, but it can be gleaned from its obvious uses as a vaudeville theater, that there was enough open space and plenty of sets, costumes, and apparatus to accommodate any number of filmic exploits.

The first tenant of Dixieland Park was the first independent production company to set up shop in Jacksonville. Motograph, like many independent film companies

struggling against the oppressive regulations of the Motion Picture Patents Company (MPPC), most likely fled the traditional film cities to find more hospitable (and farther-flung) locales. The MPPC was formed in 1907 by Thomas Edison as a sort of film company cartel that imposed regulations on exhibitors and distributors limiting the films they could show to those produced by Trust members. Several companies like Motograph would eventually make their homes in Jacksonville, where the reach of the MPPC could not easily extend. While Motograph was the first to arrive, it is not known whether they actually completed any films, and by the spring of 1910, were no longer an enterprise. Their reason for departing Dixieland Park and Jacksonville is not certain, but it is likely that pressure from the MPPC was too great for a small production outfit to bear, thus causing its dissolution (Nelson 146-147).

While Motograph struggled to produce just a single moving picture, Dixieland Park was crashed by William Selig, who along with his company, would prove to be the ailing amusement park's first productive tenant. The Selig-Polyscope Company, led by one of the industry's most brazen and creative showmen, settled down in Dixieland Park in the fall of 1910 and immediately began making films. Selig was known for producing animal pictures and jungle films, movies that showcased exotic beasts—and peoples—from distant locales, usually in exploitative circumstances not entirely unlike the mondo films Gualtiero Jacopetti would produce fifty years later. However, actually traveling to such remote destinations was not a consideration in the mind of the money-conscious filmmaker (148-149). Selig's most infamous exploit was filmed as 1908's *Hunting Big Game in Africa*, which was rushed through the filmmaking process to beat the release of an actual documentary being made about Theodore Roosevelt's hunting trip in Africa.

Selig's version was shot entirely in Illinois using performing lions and a Teddy Roosevelt lookalike; it was released long before the actual documentary and was a smashing success (Bean 66-67).

Selig continued filming similar films in Jacksonville, making use of the "exotic" scenery to produce animal pictures. Dixieland Park became a sort of zoo, serving as holding area for Selig's menagerie of 160 trained animals(Nelson 149). Alongside the bestiary assembled by Selig from his other ventures were delivered fifteen American Indians, who were used extensively in arguably filmdom's first cliffhanger series, *The Adventure of Kathlyn*(Bean 67). The arrival of these rather peculiar "equipments" was covered extensively in both the Florida Times-Union and Florida Metropolis newspapers, both papers hailing the arrival as something of a herald, or perhaps a declaration of Jacksonville's future as a film city. After completing a few dozen motion pictures in Jacksonville, Selig decided to consolidate his efforts into a single operation in southern California(Nelson 150).

The facilities at Dixieland were utilized by myriad production companies between Selig's departure in 1912 and the last large client's in 1916. Essanay, a company formed in Chicago by George Spoor and "Broncho" Billy Anderson, spent a season in Jacksonville, using the facilities at Dixieland to produce a handful of Broncho Billy westerns, a genre with which the company would quickly become associated. Vitagraph, perhaps the most prolific and powerful of the MPPC outfits, produced 1916's *The Ordeal of Elizabeth* using Dixieland Park as scenery rather than generic set. Even Edison's own company spent a season making films in Dixieland Park, perhaps due to

Edison's familiarity with the benefits of Florida's climate with respect to filmmaking (Edison's winter home still exists today in Ft. Meyers, Florida) (Bean 67).

The final occupant of Dixieland Park before it was eventually reclaimed piecemeal by the city, was actually a French firm named Gaumont. Though less successful than its chief competitor, Pathé, Gaumont was one of the first international production companies, maintaining studios and acting troops in both the United States and France. Between 1914 and 1918, film production in France was nearly ground to a halt, as celluloid was needed for the manufacture of armaments during the First World War. Gaumont, however, was able to continue producing films by focusing its efforts on its U.S. holdings, especially those in Jacksonville. During the 1915-1916 seasons, Gaumont sent two companies of actors and a crew to Dixieland Park in Jacksonville(Nelson167-168). While there, Gaumont players produced a number of films, four of which are known, under the direction of Richard Garrick. Most of the films produced by Gaumont were likely melodramas with many outdoor scenes so as to make use of one of the many stages constructed in Dixieland Park during its life as a de-facto studio. Gaumont's stay in Jacksonville was not long, but Richard Garrick left a very positive impression upon the city, one that helped mollify some of the industry's local detractors, and bolster support amongst average citizens. According to a fall 1915 issue of The Florida Times-Union, Garrick invited between five- and six-thousand of the general public to Gaumont's studio at Dixieland to observe the art and business of filmmaking in action. When local church leaders opposed the event's start-time of 10 a.m. on a Sunday, Garrick gladly rearranged his production so that the event would begin well after regular church services had completed(177, 228). As mentioned

previously, such regard for the traditions of locals was not widely upheld by most production outfits.

Norman Studios/Eagle Film City

Founded in 1915 by members of the Chicago-based Eagle Film Manufacturing and Producing Company, Eagle Film City was the closest Jacksonville came to having a Hollywood-style production campus. Eagle Film City was built at the same time as Universal's own campus, which ended up being much larger, and ultimately, more well-known. Universal's campus is still in use today, while Eagle Film City spent several decades bouncing between roles as a tire yard, call center, dance studio, and abandoned wreck. Currently, Eagle Film City, which goes by the name of its last producer-owner, is owned by the City of Jacksonville and stewarded by the Norman Studios Silent Film Museum (NSSFM). Surprisingly, given Jacksonville's knack for urban renewal, Norman Studios somehow managed to escape demolition over its 97 year history. While it may be the only intact and relatively undisturbed silent-era film studio in North America, its importance is not just physical: Norman Studios more or less encapsulates the entire film industry of Jacksonville, as well as its early social history, and remains a sort of embodiment of what was and what could have been for the Winter Film Capital of the World.

In 1915, Harry A. Kelly and William J. Dunn of Eagle Film Manufacturing and Producing Company traveled to Jacksonville, Florida like many other northern studios to set up a permanent presence in the burgeoning film town. Dunn and Kelly chose a lot across from downtown Jacksonville in the sparsely-populated suburb of Arlington. Locating the studio there was novel, as most other purpose-built studios were being, or would be, constructed close to downtown Jacksonville, and Eagle would enjoy seclusion

and all its inherent benefits(517). The project, composed of five buildings, included a film processing lab, wardrobe and prop warehouses, indoor and outdoor stages, and water tower (see figure 5-9). The campus was ambitious when compared to many of the other single-stage studios in Jacksonville, but paled in comparison to the massive, 230-acre Universal Film City in Los Angeles, on which it was most likely based (517).

Eagle was not the most prolific producer of films in Jacksonville's history, but did manage to snag former Vim Company mime Ferdinand Perez for a series of semi-popular "Tweedledum" shorts. This single claim to fame was not enough to maintain a proper following, however, and, after Eagle's sole distributor, Unity Sales Corporation, went bankrupt, the studio followed. By 1917 Eagle's assets had been acquired by Superb Film Corporation, which had been organized by former Eagle manager Harry Kelly. Superb failed almost as quickly as its predecessor at Eagle Film City and ceased production by 1918. It is not known whether any films were actually produced by Superb in Jacksonville, only that Harry Kelly relocated to Tampa, Florida, where he attempted similar ventures, all with similar results(516-518).

Eagle Film City sat abandoned for almost five years before it was inhabited by its final and most productive tenant, the Norman Film Manufacturing Company. Richard E. Norman came to Jacksonville seeking better opportunities in filmmaking freedom and more clement weather. Born in 1891 in Middleburg, Florida, a small town between Gainesville and Jacksonville, Norman was educated in Tampa and spent the first part of his career making movies in the Midwest(Beane 108-109). Norman, at first, produced a few plays and small-time theatre productions, but would eventually find a niche as one of the few makers of serious, anti-stereotypical all-black films. Like his contemporary,

black filmmaker Oscar Micheaux, Norman produced motion pictures that cast African-Americans in a generally respectful and uplifting light, avoiding the rigid stereotypes of the day. Norman's sensitivity was, according to his son, Richard Norman, Jr., genuine, but he was also a businessman, and was well aware of the theretofore untapped market of African-American moviegoers. In an interview with Richard Alan Nelson, Norman, Jr. stated:

My Dad, of course, was a businessman. But an underlined thought in his mind was the desire to do something constructive to better race relations. Through his films he was committed to helping the black players live up to their potential and show what they were capable of as performers and human beings (qtd. in Nelson 434).

After producing the highly successful and critically lauded silent features, *The Green-eyed Monster*(1920) and *The Bull Dogger*(1922), Norman decided to permanently settle in Jacksonville, Florida. He secured the site of the former Eagle Film City, putting to use its campus of five buildings. When Eagle vacated its facilities in 1918, it left behind staging, laboratory supplies, and working Kleig lights, which were expensive, powerful carbon-arc lamps used by filmmakers to simulate day-light conditions at night(438). Norman had a complete studio under his control, one that was in operation for most of the 1920s, well into Hollywood's reign as film capital of the world. His studio's longevity is almost certainly due to the popularity of his so-called "race films" which appealed not only to theretofore uncourted black audiences, but to persons of other ethnicities as well, since films like *The Flying Ace*(1926) and *Black Gold*(1928) were simply well-made dramas with broad appeal. By the end of the 1920s, Norman Studios' production slowed and, by the early 1930s, ground to a halt. Richard Norman continued to distribute and exhibit films in and around the Southeastern United

States, but made no more successful motion pictures outside of the occasional industrial film(Bean 122).

Today Norman Studios looks much like it did in the 1920s. Due to the restorations made by the Norman Studios Silent Film Museum, Eagle Film City is once again a noticeable compound of edifices on Arlington Road in Jacksonville, Florida(see figure 5-10). The job of NSSFM is not yet complete, though. As of this writing, NSSFM is in the process of shifting the ultimate responsibility of further preservation work from the City of Jacksonville to the National Park Service, whose resources are far greater. While the National Park Service will be better able to execute interior restorations of the site's buildings, and possibly open it up to the public, it is still uncertain, however, if the site will ever be absolutely complete. Since the acquisition of the site by the City of Jacksonville in 2002, the project leaders have had their eyes on a property adjacent to the present NSSFM site(Andino). The stage building, which likely served as an interior shooting space, possibly even with an operable wall section, is presently owned by Circle of Faith Ministries, a church organization that converted said building to a sanctuary. It is also believed that the church's paved parking lot sits atop a concrete pool once used by Norman and his crew to shoot elaborate water scenes(Bean 156). Given the nature of the building's ownership, it is unlikely that a deal will be reached: the structure now has religious significance and cannot simply be bought.

Cityscape

In 1908, when Kalem first arrived in Jacksonville, its staff and crew would have been hard-pressed to find obvious signs of the catastrophic fire that had all but wiped the city off the map just seven years earlier. According to a 1906 report issued by the Jacksonville Board of Trade titled *Jacksonville and Florida Facts* the city was

cosmopolitan, home to 48,000 persons, a business metropolis, and, perhaps most important, has “direct communication with every important city in the United States...”(qtd. in Bean 44). While certainly a far cry from places like New York and Chicago, Jacksonville was at least metropolitan enough to make the camera-carrying newcomers not feel like they were in the middle of nowhere. The size of Jacksonville is, perhaps, taken for granted today, especially after lawmakers consolidated Duval County into the City of Jacksonville, but it was, for the first quarter of the 20th century, much denser and centralized(Crooks 49). This was achieved, one could argue, because of the terrible fire that leveled much of the city in 1901, and that the city may not have developed as rapidly as it has since being effectively rebuilt. Also, it could be argued that Jacksonville, had it not been forced to start over, had its population not doubled in a decade, had it not been flooded with talented young architects, may not have been as attractive a home for northern filmmakers.

Prior to the 1901 fire, Jacksonville’s population was roughly 28,000, its skyline was minimal, but more imposing than any other in Florida, and its downtown roads were mostly dirt(15) (see figure 5-11). As Bean writes, “Jacksonville was a low-rise cityscape; church steeples and ship masts were the defining postcard features...” (Bean 6). Being a city predominated by its tourist industry and shipping, it must have had a certain sleepy southern charm, one that was, as Bean writes, “...civic possibility in a Petri dish...” (6).Most of downtown’s buildings were no higher than three or four stories, punctuated by parks and massive hotels like the St. James Hotel, which could accommodate 500 guests, and, unfortunately, succumbed to the 1901 fire(Crooks 16). This Petri dish was overflowing by 1914, when the majority of downtown was rebuilt,

this time composed mostly of stone, concrete, and steel framing, with many buildings reaching seven or eight stories. While many residents rebuilt their razed downtown homes, the rebuilding of Jacksonville's core prompted many individuals to relocate to the city's growing suburbs. This flight made more room for business-oriented structures and all through the 1920s downtown Jacksonville densified and grew taller, giving it a more northern, metropolitan appearance, like Baltimore or even Chicago.

This trend toward metropolitanism, which steadily grew during the first and second decades of the 20th century, is likely one of the reasons so many film companies stayed in Jacksonville, rather than just use it as a working summer camp. They had, at their disposal, a city—not a town—that resembled, from careful angles, just about any major North American city. As Bean writes, "The first studio back lot had been built" (Bean 30).

Klutho and Friends. Almost as soon as news spread of Jacksonville's devastation by fire, a young New York architect with hopes of being the next Louis Sullivan was on his way to Jacksonville to make his mark on a fresh, though charred, canvas. Henry John Klutho, who studied design at Schenk's Drawing Academy in St. Louis, moved his practice to Jacksonville in the summer of 1901 in response to a call for new architects to assist in the rebuilding of Jacksonville (Wood, *Architectural Heritage* 11). Klutho's first commission was to design a building for the Dyal-Upchurch Company, a Georgia lumber concern that immediately moved to Jacksonville after the fire. The Dyal-Upchurch Building, which still exists today, is six stories and was the first high-rise to be built after the fire. The structure looks as if it is built around a steel or concrete skeleton,

but it is actually a load-bearing brick building built atop wood pilings, with cast-iron columns and I-beams supporting its interior(41) (see figure 5-12).

The Dyal-Upchurch Building was just the first of many buildings Klutho would contribute to the skyline of Jacksonville. In 1908, Klutho designed the seven-story Y.M.C.A. Building on Laura Street, which has the distinction of being Florida's first large reinforced-concrete frame structure(72) (see figure 5-13). That same year, Klutho designed the Bisbee Building, a ten-story skyscraper that may have been the first reinforced-concrete frame high-rise in Florida. It was a textbook expression of early 20th century high-rise design systems and aesthetics, incorporating broad, plate-glass windows and seeming to bear little weight as it rises up above its neighbors(60) (see figure 5-14). In 1911 Klutho exercised his talents to design the Florida Life Building, an eleven-story skyscraper keenly adorned in complex terracotta ornament and Chicago-style windows, no doubt a nod to Louis Sullivan and the Chicago School (68) (see figure 5-15). Klutho designed many non-high-rise structures during his career, and to some is known more for his dedication to The Prairie School. He built his own residence on West Ninth Street in the Prairie Style (191) (see figure 5-16). He played with said style when he was afforded the opportunity, which was usually when he was in charge of all aspects of the project. Next door to his own residence he constructed Prairie Style apartment building, now known as Klutho Apartments(211) (see figure 5-17). Like many of his other Prairie experiments, Klutho's apartment building has a very generous eave, lead glass windows with geometric designs in a cross motif, and a certain, perhaps inexplicable abstract Egyptian quality. The aforementioned quality is no more apparent than in Klutho's Morocco Temple, which seems to evoke both the Prairie Style and

Egyptian Revivalism. Some aspects of the latter are explicit, as in the building's entrance, which is framed in a pylon supported by ancient Egyptian-style columns, and flanked by a pair of Sphinxes. The rest of the structure, however, has more in common with Frank Lloyd Wright's Unity Temple, which could easily have served as inspiration for Klutho(82) (see figure 5-18).

Klutho designed many homes and high-rises in Jacksonville, but also dabbled in the film industry, building, perhaps, the last purpose-built studio in Jacksonville. Klutho Studios was constructed between 1916 and 1917, when most other studios began relocating to Southern California. In 1905, Klutho purchased a corner lot on West Ninth Street in the Springfield neighborhood of Jacksonville, but did not develop it until his studio investment venture twelve years later (190). Presently there are several homes on the site, one of which possibly having been built around 1907 and serving as a dormitory for actors after Klutho's studio was completed (see figure 5-19). The studio building itself included a 60 by 60 foot indoor stage, and a 40 by 144 foot outdoor stage with a sunshield system that could be opened and closed via a system of pulleys (Nelson 527) (Figure 5-20). Klutho furnished his operation with equipment purchased from the then-defunct Kalem Company, which had been Jacksonville's first studio to enter the city's fold. Klutho Studios was the name of the campus, but Klutho's "Sunbeam Comedies" brand graced many of the motion pictures made there. Klutho's studio manager, Glen Lambert, wrote many of the photoplays for said brand, and also assisted Klutho in attracting several popular companies to rent the studios. Among others Paramount, comedian John Binney's Florida Funny Film Corporation, Briggs Pictures, Inc. all rented space at Klutho Studios. Though productive, Klutho Studios'

steady stream of occupants ended in 1922, forcing Klutho to abandon his investment. Klutho later recalled this disappointment stating “At the time I was pointed to as ‘a man of vision and ideas for the good of the town’ – later I was often told I was a fool.” (qtd. in Wood, *Architectural Heritage* 190).

Klutho could not have known the impact he would have not just on the city’s architecture, but also its attitude and, perhaps in some ways, its choices. Klutho and the dozens of other young architects that relocated to the wrecked city from the metropolises of the north more or less drove the shape and appearance of the city for almost thirty years. Klutho brought with him his Chicago and Prairie School sensibilities; Ransom Buffalow his affection for vernacular North Carolina bungalows; Henrietta C. Dozier brought her M.I.T. training and eclecticism; and Harold Saxelbye a British perspective and a penchant for commercial buildings(8-13).It is reasonable to suggest that many of denizens of downtown Jacksonville, and the city as a whole, felt like a brand new city, a bigger, fuller city, had just suddenly sprung up over night and turned their modest tourist town into a City of the World.

Bean’s comment about Jacksonville being the first studio backlot is a way of framing the city’s resemblance to places like New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia, the traditional centers of film production prior to the rise of Hollywood. Jacksonville in the early 20th century was not unlike the Vancouver, British Columbia of today, which has been serving the American film and television industry for many decades as an inexpensive alternative to filming in New York, Los Angeles, or Chicago. Vancouver has a very dense downtown core and a cityscape and social makeup like many North American cities with a diverse array of architectural styles and ethnicities.

However, it was not just the eclectic architecture of Jacksonville that made it a virtual backlot, but its access to a massive river lined with marshes that could easily pass as the Nile; its closeness to the Atlantic Ocean and wide, uncrowded beaches; and weather permitting year-round production. Jacksonville was nearly a complete package, able to accommodate the imaginations of most of the period's filmmakers. When the industry collapsed in Jacksonville, and its studios fled to California to join the other companies who had been doing so all along, filmmakers found the backwater town in Southern California they may have expected to find in Jacksonville, Florida. It was not a change in Jacksonville's physically desirable characteristics that caused the filmmakers to flee, but political and social forces amongst its denizens and communities outside of the city. Like many other American cities in the 1950s and 1960s, Jacksonville underwent a significant amount of urban renewal, drastically altering its skyline, density, and society. Today Jacksonville is considerably spread out, its effectively deserted downtown core no longer a dense mix of businesses, homes, and entertainment venues.

City Folk and Film Folk

City Folk: J.E.T. Bowden

Jacksonville's film industry could not have had the success it enjoyed had the city's leaders not supported it. To be sure, this political support waned significantly at the beginning of the 1920s, but for much of the industry's stay in Jacksonville, conditions were supreme. Much of the championing and support for the film industry can be attributed to one civic leader, mayor J.E.T. "Jet" Bowden. Bowden had been mayor of Jacksonville in 1901 during the Great Fire and was credited with being the spiritual force behind the quick recovery. As mayor, Bowden was highly visible in the

days and weeks following the fire, doing everything he could to assist the victims, both at an administrative level and a personal one. By the time the mayor's two-year term ended in June of 1901, he declined to seek reelection, citing exhaustion (Bean 87-88).

In 1915 Jacksonville was amid a local recession and had only the burgeoning local film industry to distract from it. Civic support for the film folk and their craft was by no means cold, but it was probably not as concerted as it could have been. At this point, J.E.T. Bowden swept in, defeating powerful incumbent Van C. Swearingen, promising to "restore business confidence and through a 'liberal' administration redirect city efforts towards attracting new industry." (Nelson 164). It is debatable as to which of Bowden's many platforms earned him the mayoral office, but some suggest it was his stance against Swearingen's anti-vice campaign, which called for the closing of Jacksonville's popular red light district and many of its saloons. Bowden had the support of progressive women, conservative men, and, with his pro-tolerance ideology, African-Americans, Jews, and Catholics (Crooks 64). Ultimately, it was his "liberal" administrative plan with respect to the film industry that would alienate him from much of Jacksonville's suburban population and cost him reelection in 1917.

Mayor Bowden's main thrust was in wooing more and more filmmakers to relocate to Jacksonville, and not just as seasonal visitors, but as permanent industrial entities. His approach was systematic, convincing the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce to produce an industrial report of the city placing as many laurels as possible upon its characteristics as a desirable film town (Nelson 165). Bowden even stirred up support among his constituents asking residents to submit recommendations for shooting locations. A campaign was begun by Jacksonville, with Bowden taking lead, planting

advertisements in national film trade journals describing Jacksonville as the “hub” of the country’s film industry (483). An upsurge in producer relocations occurred between 1916 and 1917 leading to a weekly influx of roughly \$30,000 into Jacksonville’s economy (483). At a more administrative level, Bowden spearheaded many efforts to increase the overall dependence of American filmmakers on Jacksonville. In 1916, Bowden established a studio location bureau to help incoming filmmakers find a proper site for their studio and assist them in acquiring loans from local banks.

Bowden’s most powerful attempt at luring filmmakers to Jacksonville came in early 1916 when the Florida Times-Union announced that civic conditions in Los Angeles were becoming unsympathetic to that city’s filmmakers. California producers felt they were the victims of price gouging and censoring at the hands of local businesses and civic leaders. As a result, many production companies threatened to pull their operations and move elsewhere (Nelson 171). Bowden immediately jumped at the opportunity to lure these companies to Jacksonville promising suitable atmospheric conditions, politically and meteorologically. Though tempting in light of the civic repulsion in Los Angeles, Bowden’s offer was never accepted, at least not by a critical mass of filmmakers. Despite this disappointment, Bowden continued to champion the industry and look for more ways to lure producers. In 1916, Richard Garrick, former head of Gaumont’s Jacksonville studio, came to Bowden with a plan to construct a five-acre rentable studio to rival Universal City in Los Angeles. This proposed plan was to provide space for up to twenty production companies to work simultaneously, a complete processing laboratory, set-building shops, garage space for dozens of automobiles, and

lavish restaurants and lounges. Bowden gave this plan his full support, but it never bore fruit (176).

As explained in Chapter 4, this push by Bowden to make Jacksonville the one and only film city in the United States was his final one: in 1917, in what was more of a film industry referendum than an election, Bowden was usurped by conservative John Martin, who was vehemently anti-vice and, in some ways, anti-film industry. Due to the alleged abuses by Bowden of Jacksonville's government to cater to film folk, and the myriad instances of dangerous car-chase scenes, false fire alarms to draw crowds, and other unseemly filmmaking practices, Bowden's campaign was almost unwinnable. Public sentiment had shifted away from the positive aspects of Bowden's tenure and the industry he helped to promote, and toward the social and political incompatibility of film folk with the more religious, anti-vice, prohibitionist sectors of Jacksonville's population. After Bowden's defeat, the film industry held on as best it could amid fresh anti-film sentiment, which was helped along in no small part by Bowden's replacement, John Martin. Slowly but steadily, filmmakers abandoned Jacksonville for Los Angeles and surrounding municipalities. Even Garrick, whose massive Bowden-backed studio was under construction, decided to uproot and abandon the project and the city (Bean 99).

Several attempts would be made by local entrepreneurs to revitalize the industry in Jacksonville, but without the support of a committed civic leader, especially a mayor, the film industry was doomed. Bowden was perhaps such a staunch supporter of the film industry because he believed it to be an industry that could rescue the city from its recession and bring stability to its economy over the long run. His plans were, for all intents and purposes, fruitful; he was able to increase the flow of money into the city,

attract new businesses, and promote the city as a center of not just filmmaking, but of a unique and powerful business typology that also happened to be, arguably, the defining art and entertainment form of the 20th century. Unfortunately for Bowden, and Jacksonville's status as the Winter Film Capital of the World, the "Movie Mayor" was faced with a great and nearly insurmountable social barrier erected by a city deeply rooted in Christian ethics that, at the time, were influenced by a nationwide anti-vice, anti-film, and moralistic movement.

Film Folk: Oliver Hardy

When Oliver Hardy arrived in Jacksonville in late 1913, he was more mindful of being a working singer and vaudevillian than a film actor. After spending some time—unofficially—at the Atlanta Conservatory honing his vocal talents, Hardy's mother, Emily, enrolled him in Georgia Military College in Milledgeville. Hardy was only fifteen years of age when he entered the academy, but was already a stout 200 pounds and immediately earned the name 'Fatty Hardy'. It did not take very long for Emily Hardy to take pity on her child and pull him from the rigorous, military-focused school and enroll him in a more progressive institution, the secluded Young Harris College in the mountains of northeast Georgia(Louvish 45-46). A memorial plaque in Harlem, Georgia, Hardy birthplace, claims he did not attend a secluded Methodist college in the Appalachian Mountains, but went straight from his musical training in Atlanta to the University of Georgia, where, it is claimed, he studied law (31). As Simon Louvish points out in his biography of both Hardy and his eventual partner, Stan Laurel, "The boy's sights were already set, not on established professions, but on the open terrain of show business." (47) Hardy never did attend the University of Georgia, but by 1910 a U.S. National Census reports him being occupied at an 'electric theater' in Milledgeville,

Georgia, where his very short academic career began(47).It was from his job as a projectionist in Milledgeville that Hardy learned the ins and outs of operating one of the many exhibition halls emblematic of America's newest entertainment fixation.

It is not particularly clear why Hardy left his job as a projectionist in Milledgeville, but it is safe to assume that he had at least heard tell of the burgeoning film colony just 200 miles away in Jacksonville, Florida.Hardy was not quite settled in Jacksonville during the remainder of 1913, but did manage to find a wife, Ms. Madelyn Soleshin, and earn a somewhat unflattering stage name as a frequent act at Jacksonville night clubs and singing halls: 'The Ton of Jollity' (64). It was not until 1914 that he got his break. In between his normal daily activities and nighttime performances, Hardy spent time skulking around Lubin Film Manufacturing's seasonal studio, which was set up in the old Florida Yacht Club in the Riverside area of Jacksonville (Nelson 157). At some point he earned the right to run errands for Arthur Hotaling, Lubin's local director and manager, which lead to him being cast in the screwball comedy *Outwitting Dad* (1914), which was, as luck would have it, short one 300 pound funny man (Louvish 68).

By the end of 1914, Hardy was quite popular with his cohort and Jacksonville's filmgoers. It was also around this time that Hardy acquired his most lasting nickname, 'Babe', given to him, allegedly, by an Italian barber whose shop was near Lubin's studio. Whereas his previous nicknames may have denigrated him, 'Babe' would only serve his stardom(Beane 70) (see figure 5-21).Hardy would end up making nearly 100 films in Jacksonville, most for Lubin and Vim Comedy Company, Hardy's last employer in Jacksonville. Vim leased the Florida Yacht Club in 1915 after Lubin's operation went bankrupt, so Hardy, who was promptly offered a position of prominence amongst Vim's

troupe, did not need even to change his familiar workplace. Hardy got his first taste of being part of a comedy duo when he was teamed with actor Billy Ruge as 'Plump' in the popular "Plump and Runt" series(71).Ruge and Hardy appeared in thirty-five films together, at least one of which, 1916's *One Too Many*, survives today as part of the Internet Archive's Moving Picture Archive. After the duo lost its luster, Hardy was teamed with comedic actor Kate Price, who had recently left Vitagraph. Hardy and Price made eleven films together before Vim closed its doors in 1917. According to Richard Alan Nelson, Hardy's part in comedic duos could have continued indefinitely had Vim's founders, Louis Burnstein and Mark Dintenfass, not dissolved the company after Hardy discovered they were skimming money from the troupe's paychecks. The Amber Star Film Company acquired Vim's abandoned assets and Hardy moved on to Hollywood, where he would soon meet his most famous partner, Stan Laurel(Nelson 539-540).



Figure 5-1. Roseland Hotel, Jacksonville, Florida. Circa 1909. Courtesy of the State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory Project, N032768.



Figure 5-2. Trade journal spread of main Kalem Company cast. Courtesy of the State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory Project, PR07323.

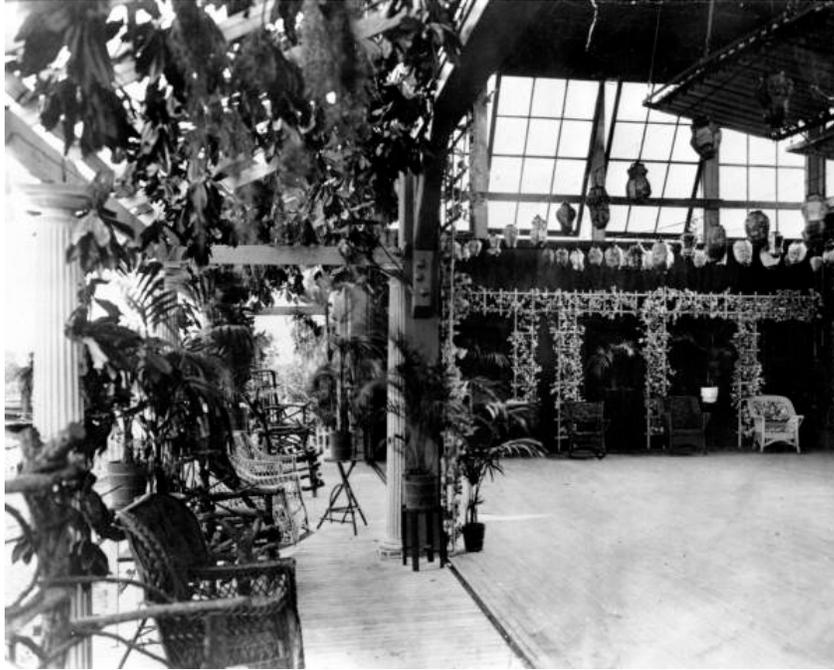


Figure 5-3. Interior of second Kalem studio, 1914. Courtesy of the State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory Project, PR07335



Figure 5-4. Entrance to Dixieland Park, Jacksonville, Florida. From *The Jacksonville Family Album*.



Figure 5-5. Birds-eye view postcard of Dixieland Park. Courtesy of the State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory Project, PC1392.

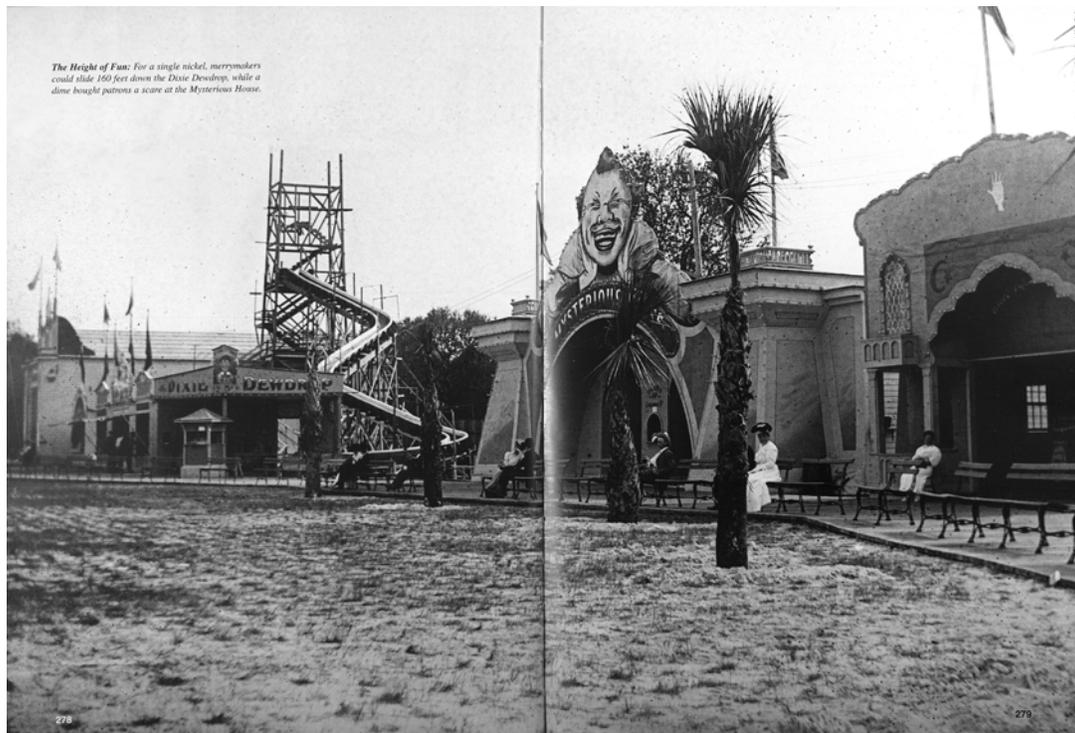


Figure 5-6. View of Dixieland Park attractions. From *The Jacksonville Family Album*.



Figure 5-7. Dixieland Park dance hall. From *The Jacksonville Family Album*.



Figure 5-8. Dixieland Theater. From *The Jacksonville Family Album*.

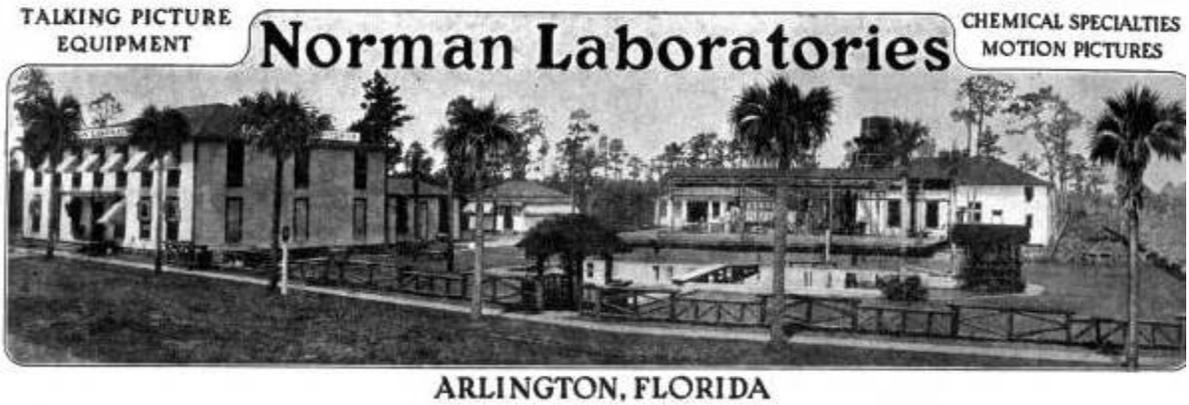


Figure 5-9. Advertisement for Norman Studios / Eagle Film City, 1922. Courtesy of the State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory Project, PR07319A.



Figure 5-10. Norman Studios main building, 2010. Photographed by Matthew Mariner.



Figure 5-11. Bird's-eye map of Jacksonville, Florida, 1893. Courtesy of the State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory Project, RC03489.



14052 - Dyal-Upchurch Building, Jacksonville, Fla.

8/6/08 Aunts returned last night.
Didn't receive my letter telling of
your invitation until morning

Figure 5-12. Dyal-Upchurch Building. Courtesy of the State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory Project, PC1449.



Figure 5-13. YMCA Building. Courtesy of the State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory Project, PC1506.

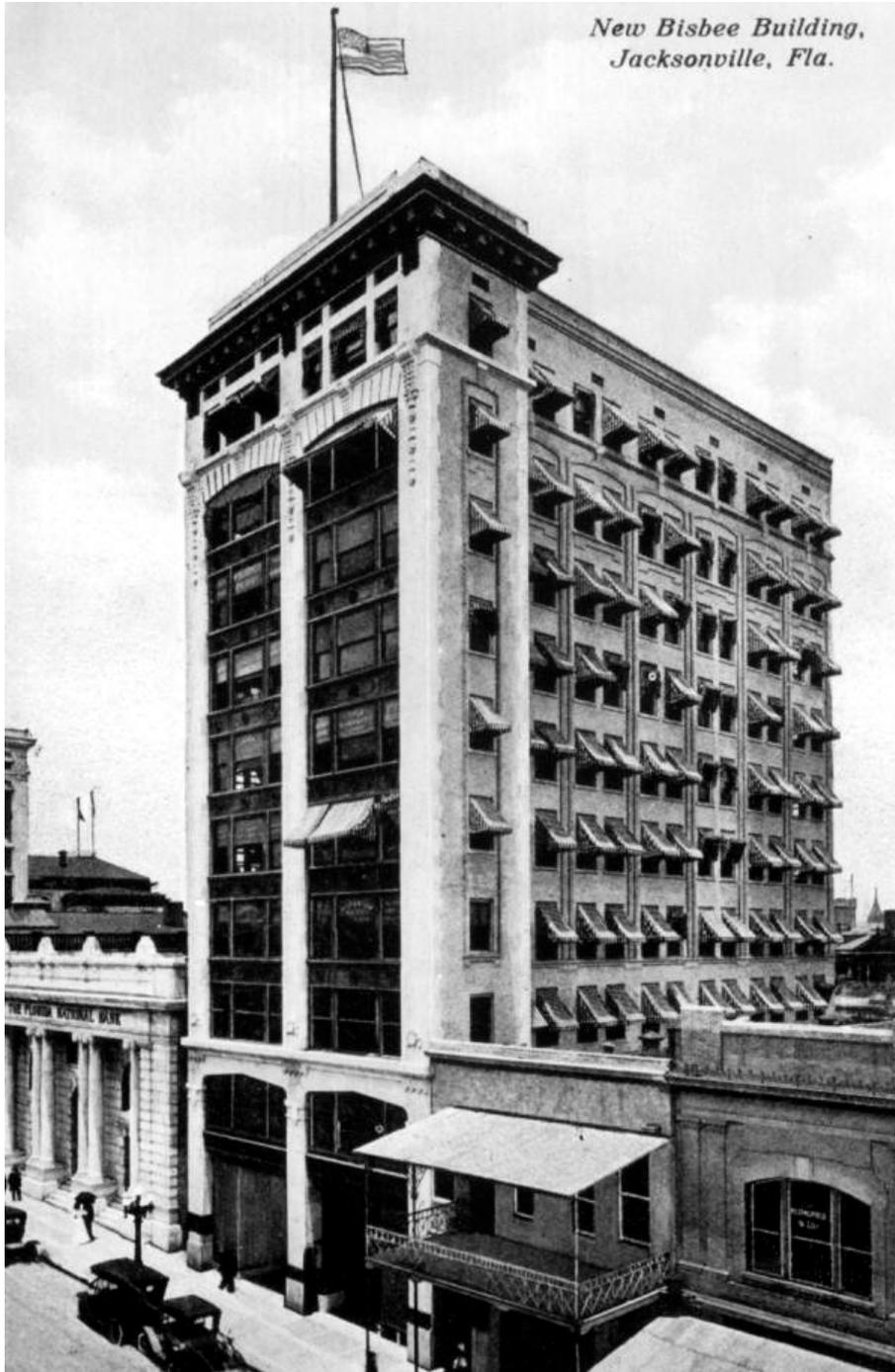


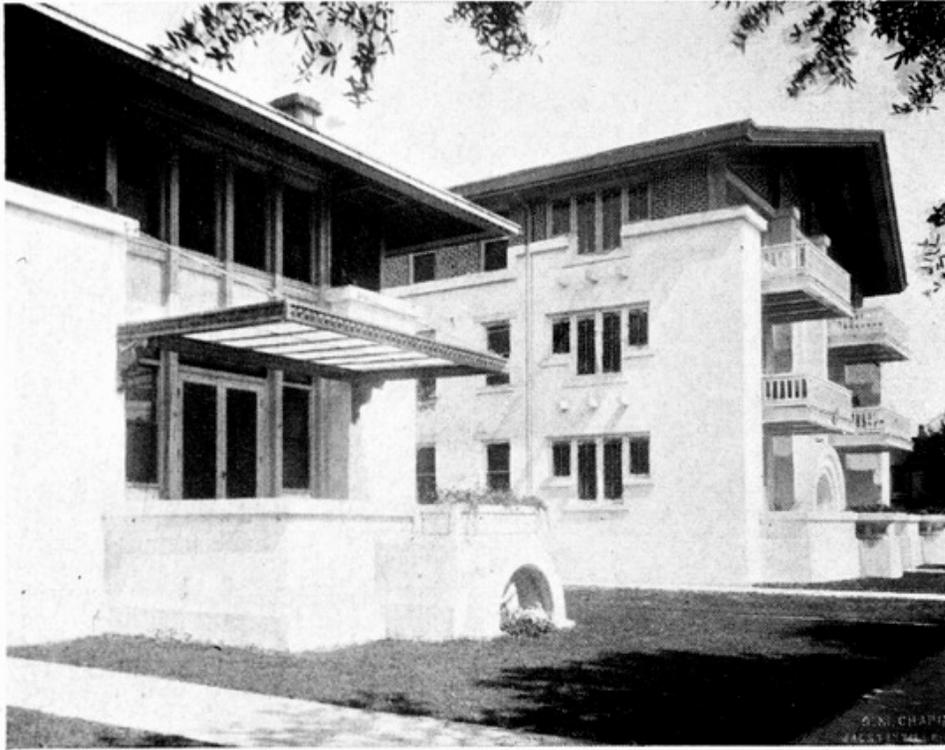
Figure 5-14. Bisbee Building. Courtesy of the State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory Project, N032591.



Figure 5-15. Florida Life Building. Courtesy of the State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory Project, RC17939.



Figure 5-16. Klutho Residence. Courtesy of Robert C. Broward and Wayne Wood.



A VIEW OF THE KLUTHO APARTMENTS AND RESIDENCE

Figure 5-17. Klutho Apartments (Residence in foreground). Courtesy of the State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory Project, N032979.

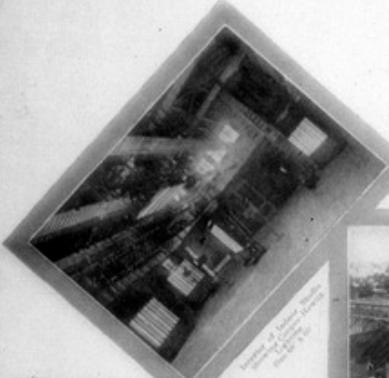
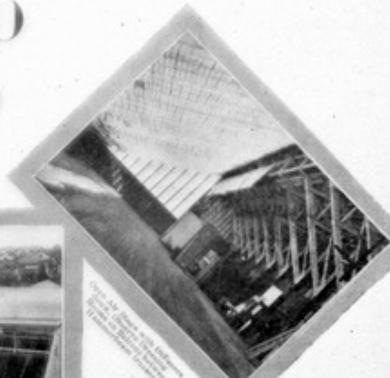


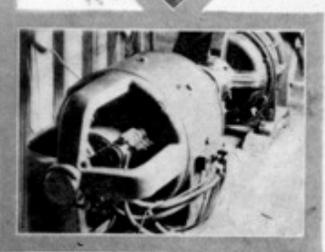
Figure 5-18. Morocco Temple. Courtesy of the State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory Project, SP00798.



Figure 5-19. Klutho Studios lot with dormitories and residences. Courtesy of the State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory Project, RC12289.

**KLUTHO
STUDIO**
JACKSONVILLE
FLORIDA

IN FLORIDA

Showing Heavy Ship's Canvas Roll for protection from rain. Sets can be left up for weeks at a time.

Bird's-eye view showing expansive width of Outdoor Stage.

A glimpse of the 400 K. W. Motor-Generator set supplying Direct-Current to Cooper-Hewitt and carbon lamps.

NO ICE—NO SNOW—FOLIAGE ALL THE YEAR

LARGEST FOR-RENT PLANT OUTSIDE NEW YORK AND WEST COAST. WILL ACCOMMODATE FOUR COMPANIES. COOPER-HEWITT'S AND PLENTY OF CARBON LIGHTS

A
**BIG MONEY
MAKER
IF KEPT BUSY
9 MONTHS
OUT OF 12**
A
**GOOD
MANAGER
CAN DO THIS**

This plant needs a Manager. One who understands the requirements of the producers and can bring them down.

Such a party can keep the place filled nine months out of twelve.

To such a party I want to sell a half interest in the plant reasonably low.

The plant cost \$70,000.00. The owner has his time taken up with other business and so cannot give same the attention it requires.

A
**SOUTHERN
STUDIO
IS
BADLY
NEEDED
BY THE
PRODUCERS
OPERATING
IN THE
NORTH**
HERE IS ONE
ALREADY BUILT

H. J. KLUTHO, Owner
ST. JAMES BLDG.
JACKSONVILLE FLORIDA

Figure 5-20. Advertisement for Klutho Studios. Courtesy of the State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory Project, N032786.



Figure 5-21. From left: Pearl Bailey, Bud Ross, Oliver Hardy, Ethel Burton. Courtesy of the State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory Project, RC13265.

CHAPTER 6
DETERMINANTS OF SUCCESS FOR AN INTERPRETIVE HYPERMEDIA
PRESERVATION PROJECT OF JACKSONVILLE'S SILENT FILM INDUSTRY
HERITAGE

So far, this thesis has discussed both the concepts behind hypermedia preservation projects and how they differ from those of traditional preservation methodologies, and the history and cityscape of early 20th century Jacksonville, Florida and its lost film industry heritage. This chapter will apply the tools of the former to the canvas of the latter. Doing so requires the statement of goals, or Determinants of Success, rather than concrete mandates, as this demonstration of application is meant more as a template than a singularity. While Jacksonville and its film industry heritage are used as a potential case study, the goals outlined should be applicable to any number of preservation initiatives whose resources are mostly ephemeral, and whose foci are no longer extant. In any case, if the Determinants in this thesis are not applicable—or practicable—in similar situations, the goals should remain the same. Therefore, in addition to establishing mutable, context-sensitive activities for realizing a hypermedia preservation project, this chapter will discuss the outcomes that should arise from such a project, whether it deals with film heritage, historic neighborhoods, or a single lost building.

The Determinants of Success were compiled by observing successful projects, such as Historypin, HyperCities, and Google Earth, and distilling their technological characteristics into a straightforward set of abilities that serve the ultimate goal of interpretive success. Furthermore, these Determinants were refined by the incorporation of ideas and sentiments inherent in Freeman Tilden's principles of interpretation (see page 25). In order to make the proposed activities more conceivable

they have been applied to a single facet of a potential project wherein Jacksonville's film heritage is mapped both as geographic points and narrative envelopes, or more relatable, scalable histories. The facet to be illustrated is Oliver Hardy's career in Jacksonville. Doing so will hopefully make what could easily just be an abstract template more imaginable and significant. Therefore, this chapter will tend to each Determinant and the activities therein individually as raw concepts and then apply them to Jacksonville's film heritage. These Determinants are practical, in the sense that they address hypermedia technologies and suggest they be utilized alongside the core principles of preservation; they will also be philosophical, in the sense that the aforementioned tools be utilized not just for their own sake, but in ways that effectively communicate the heritage project's goals.

Ability to Succeed. The project should afford its subject matter the attention and coverage it deserves, but focus itself on doing that which increases the chances for success. Success, as defined by this thesis, would be the fulfillment of the following goals. This might mean holding off on some aspects of a subject matter in favor of others that are more resource-rich and salable. This is the primary goal, of which the remaining goals are in pursuit.

Relatability and Palatability. The project and its tools should be as palatable, or attractive and user-friendly, to its intended audience as possible, eschewing the highest technology—should it prove difficult to translate to the subject, or too difficult to teach to the user—in favor of the most effective ones. Furthermore, the project should be generally relatable to the average user, for whom the project's tools are ideally tailored. The subject should be tightly packaged and delivered in a way that informs the user, but

is small enough to be consumed with a minimum of loss. Visuality and interactivity are necessities.

Flexibility. The project's technological foundation should be permissive of change to both its own makeup and to the organization of the subject matter. The project should utilize tools that are interoperable with those of other, similar projects, and have the flexibility to adapt to reasonable advances in related technologies.

Cooperability. The project's technological foundation should be permissive of contributions made by a variety of entities, including institutions and individuals classified as "citizen archivists". Rather than relying on a single source of archival input, the project should—philosophically—be open to submissions of materials related to the subject for inclusion in the publically-viewable project site. Considerations should be made for the vetting of such material for general appropriateness and in terms of scope and relevance.

As mentioned earlier, for this document only one narrative envelope—or face—will be addressed in great detail. As mentioned earlier, the Jacksonville-based career of Oliver Hardy will serve as the representative of the rest of the city's film-related historical events. To reiterate, the reasoning behind this decision is that Oliver Hardy's time in Jacksonville is well-documented, highly visual, more relatable or familiar to the average person than other aspects, and, because of the actor's popularity, lends itself better to cooperation with present-day archivists and enthusiasts. Were this project to be undertaken, it is hoped that such a focused approach would serve well, at least, as a prototype for a larger-scale initiative. Ultimately, given the primary goal—success—this is the clearest course.

Ability to Succeed

Overview

The ability of a project to succeed is dependent upon more than one factor. Factors like funding or even sufficient funding, can, if not satisfied, bury a project before it leaves a productive brainstorming session. If proper funding is achieved, it can be assumed that the underlying concepts and goals of the project were cogent and maybe even acceptably establishment-challenging, but certainly fathomable. Once lifted from paper and put into practice, these cogent concepts can betray their creators and inhibit attainment of whatever goal was set forth. Some project goals can be too lofty, some can have too little ambition, and others can simply fail due to an unanticipated lack of interest in the target audience. Risks are simply a part of project origination and cannot always be avoided, even with the most astute managers wielding well-crafted ideas.

One way to approach a project with a fairly grand scale, one like the mapping and interpretation of Jacksonville's film heritage, can be to segment it into stages. The first stage being a sort of prototype from which a larger entity could blossom, but upon which it would not be dependent. This first segment would be compartmentalized but expandable; it could be built upon seamlessly, or remain functional in and of itself in the event funding is cut or some other unforeseen failure. Ideally, the first segment would be something indicative of the greater project, encapsulating in a smaller package, on smaller scale, that which the greater effort would attempt to convey. Approaching a project, digital or otherwise, in such a way ensures that if the project cannot be extended, that some justice has been afforded to the subject matter, and that any losses sustained from failure would be minimal. Ultimately, one must choose a

constituent of the overall project that can stand in for the whole, and that constituent should be one that will give the overall project the best chance for success.

Application to Jacksonville

A project attempting to map and interpret the entirety of Jacksonville's film heritage from its humble beginnings to its alarmingly quick decline would be a large one, to say the least. Its level of success would be difficult to determine relative to the popularity of, and interest in, the subject of film history, among other factors. In order to help ensure (or simply attempt to ensure) one must find the facet or facets of his or her project that will be the most successful, either through the inherent interest in those facets, or their robustness. Doing so will help generate interest in possible later additions and demonstrate the technologies used.

In the case of Jacksonville and its film industry heritage, one untapped well of information likely to generate interest and support is the time spent in the city by comedic legend, Oliver "Babe" Hardy. While there are many interesting facets to the film industry heritage of Jacksonville (Norman Studios, politics, famous firsts etc.) the early career of Oliver Hardy is relatively unstudied. It seems likely, however, that were it given proper attention and investigated fully, it would prove a worthy subject for a digital preservation project. Furthermore, given the compactness of both Hardy's early career and the span of Jacksonville's reign as Winter Film Capital of the World, it is appropriate and convenient to use Hardy as an insight into the industry as a whole.

As related in previous sections, Oliver Hardy came to Jacksonville looking for work in the nascent film industry, as did many others. Few, however, were as successful as Hardy, who would go on to California just before Jacksonville's tenure as a film town came to a close and find lasting success as part of legendary duo "Laurel and Hardy".

Though for the purposes of this study Hardy should be considered a narrative stand-in, or perhaps a framed narrative, for and of Jacksonville's film industry, the city itself would not see the same success as its most famous professional progeny. However, it is his longevity and relative success while in Jacksonville that make his time there so crucial to understanding the city's importance as a film town.

Hardy's fame has surpassed that of many of his contemporaries, many of whom worked in Jacksonville, certainly to the point where persons unfamiliar with the breadth of early film history might still know of the comic and his exploits. It is hoped that were a project along these lines to be carried out, that its users would find some connection with Oliver Hardy, whether they knew of him prior or not. Even though there are myriad archival resources related to Hardy's time in Jacksonville, and enough data to serve as a solid foundation for an interactive digital preservation project, it is still the man himself who must be presented in such a way that the end-user can relate. Only then will the successes of both the archives and technologies utilized be successful.

Relatability and Palatability

Overview

Hypermedia are necessarily audio-visual, and can be thought of as interactive front-ends to seemingly disparate data. In order for a project to be usable by the general public, and easily accessible to researchers, it must be intuitive. HyperCities and Historypin, for example, are successful in part because of their usage of the Google Maps API, which most internet-savvy individuals use often, or of which they are at least familiar. Both projects take canny software and make it their own, using it as a basis for data that might not otherwise be related geographically, or even visually. In this sense, HyperCities and Historypin are instantly palatable; therefore they do not need to

convince users of their effectiveness. Other preservation projects should strive for such instant inclusivity.

Visuality, as it is to be understood in this thesis, should be tied to the term 'interactivity'. Interactivity is important to both the palatability, or attractiveness, of an exhibition as well as its salability. In the case of a hypermedia-based preservation project, an experience could amount to simply controlling the parameters of a layered map and manipulating it to fit the user's needs. Rather than simply viewing data and processing it as abstract concepts, or being forced to view it from one perspective, interactivity allows the user to take part in the presentation and tailor it. The onus is on the preservationist and project designers to craft an experience with a low learning curve that makes gentle suggestions about what a user should do to get the most out of his or her experience.

If the presentation is uninteresting and demanding, it is more likely its users will feel alienated and be unable to find the information they seek. Furthermore, if users abandon a project because of its poor execution, the subject matter will ultimately suffer: effective exposure is often the best way to ensure the long-term viability of an important piece of heritage, especially if it is not widely understood, and mostly inextant, with few landmark reminders. Interactivity can cultivate a productive experience for the user, enhancing his or her retention of the information presented, as well as reinforcing it. There are no immutable criteria for designing an attractive, easily-navigable, and intuitive interface. What works for one project will not necessarily work for another. It is up to the project's designers to determine the needs of their audience and determine which technologies are best for visualizing the data they wish to interpret.

The film industry heritage of Jacksonville lends itself well to visuality, or visual interactivity. The product of the industry--film--is an inherently visual medium, one which is instantly palatable, if not always interesting or unique. What's more, being silent films, the products were highly dependent upon various other media like music performed in accompaniment, or sound effects performed behind the screen during exhibition, thus making such a subject even richer a source of hypermedia potential. The most obvious implementation of visual media in such a project would be the films themselves, the ones made and produced in Jacksonville. This path, however, would yield few results. Few films, complete or otherwise, made in Jacksonville survive today. Perhaps the only feature-length example is 1926's *The Flying Ace*, produced by Richard Norman with an all-black cast (which is, in and of itself, worthy of dedicated study). Additionally, while there are copious records of the names and plots of the commoner, shorter, one- or two-reel films, few exist in a viewable state.

Application to Jacksonville

At least one film starring a young Oliver Hardy, [One Too Many \(1916\)](#), is publically available, digitized and online in the Internet Archive (www.archive.org). One other, [Bouncing Baby \(1916\)](#) allegedly stars Hardy, though there is some doubt as to the true identity of the film's rotund villain. During the research for this thesis, it was thought that *Bouncing Baby* did star Oliver Hardy, as he was credited as an actor in it by several sources, including the Internet Movie Database (www.imdb.com), the Florida Memory Project (www.floridamemory.com), and the Jacksonville Historical Society. However, later research revealed *One Too Many*, which undeniably stars Hardy. Comparison of the films side-by-side leads one to realize that the rotund villain in *Bouncing Baby* is not Oliver Hardy, but a similarly-sized comedic actor. Furthermore, the production company

tied to *Bouncing Baby*, Nickelodeon Films, was not one for whom Hardy is recorded to have worked. Despite the doubt as to Hardy's involvement in the later film, it is indicative of the simple yet entertaining farcical fare produced by the majority of companies in Jacksonville, but as a historical artifact, is effectively a moving visual record. Several scenes in *Bouncing Baby* were shot in Riverside Park and its surrounding residential neighborhood; Riverside Presbyterian's "Old Brown Church"; and includes a rather lengthy chase scene filmed along what appears to be Main Street heading toward the ferry station to South Jacksonville. Through some careful analysis of this film, it would be possible to accurately identify certain landmarks (extant or otherwise) and establish them as nodes within a visual interface (see figures 6-1, 6-2, and 6-3). In other words, such a visual record as *Bouncing Baby* is rich enough in data that it can serve as a narrative envelope in a visually interactive environment.

Compiling the history of a period of time into a manageable package, or envelope filled with data arranged in a narrative, will make the information more palatable to the user—and more relatable. A film is a convenient guide for such an envelope since it is a ready-made and widely understood medium that also happens to feature scenery a modern inhabitant of Jacksonville might recognize and that analysts can identify through careful study. Every identifiable structural datum can be extracted from the film (building, park, street etc.) and located on a map, both modern and historic. Furthermore, the clothes, vehicles, and other non-structural elements can be identified and addressed as props (to use an apropos term) indicative of the period. All these data can contribute to the narrative envelope, from which any particular datum could be extracted and viewed within the context of the project's theme or without.

In practice, this visual interactive environment would be on the familiar platform of a map. The map would consist of several layers, the first, or lowermost, being the most recent map of Jacksonville available. Above it would be various maps, georectified, or positioned to accurately integrate with the modern top layer of Jacksonville's layout from the final years of the industry's prominence back to its inception. The layers, however, would not be the focus of the interface; the maps should be the basis of the project. The focus will be the objects embedded in the map, organized as nodes which could either be viewed in toto as an explosion of objects, or bunched together in definable subjects or classes (envelopes). In either view mode, the objects of interest should be both apparent and unobtrusive. Ideally, selecting an envelope or node would open a window, similar to a dialog box in a conventional operating system, but anchored to the map. Within the confines of the box could be any number of hyperlinks, each capable of taking the user to information within the project site, or to any number of relevant sites throughout the Web. As evidenced by the work done by in HyperCities and Historypin, information nodes can contain various types of data, including, but not limited to, images of brochures, newspaper articles, or other ephemera; biographical metadata; and high-resolution historical architectural plans. The informational tidbits to which these links could serve as gateway are varied, especially in the case of Jacksonville's film heritage.

Furthermore, since available films do exist that show large chunks of the downtown core, still photography could serve as points of reference to a video of a film. For example, a route could be drawn on a map of Jacksonville showing the path taken by the villains in the aforementioned film, *Bouncing Baby*. Along the path could be

nodes, each one containing both data relevant to the film's geographical contents at that point in its running, as well as non-filmic, but contextually appropriate data. These data could be buildings, like Riverside Presbyterian Church, which was originally founded in 1911 in a refurbished cow shed and appears in *Bouncing Baby*. The "Old Brown Church" was razed in 1927 to allow for the construction of the building that now stands in its place. While irrelevant to the plot of *Bouncing Baby*, the entire life history, or narrative, of that building and site is crucial in understanding downtown Jacksonville, and helps to make the telling of it more palatable to persons of the present day. The history of the film industry and its constituents can be stuffed into dozens of similar envelopes that, when tied to objects, sites, and buildings people see every day, can be relatable (see figures 6-1, 6-2, and 6-3).

Essentially, what these nodes and envelopes boil down are narratives, especially in the case of Jacksonville's film industry heritage, which has a beginning, middle, and end; and, more specifically, in the case of Oliver Hardy's time in it. *One Too Many* is just one of the many films in which Hardy starred or acted, is the only intact, extant, and readily viewable film made in Jacksonville starring him. *One Too Many*, however, is shot almost entirely in either a private residence or a studio, the location of either scenario not being known. Therefore it would not be a fitting candidate for further visual analysis unless historical documentation concerning the film could be uncovered.

The life of Oliver Hardy, though far-removed from contemporary readers and users chronologically, is like any other rags-to-riches success story, a trope with which most people can be fairly sympathetic or at least respectful. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Hardy spent much time in Jacksonville, working for several studio outfits, living in the

city, and gaining many lasting relationships as a result. His life in the city began shortly after the industry developed, and ended (with his departure) shortly before the industry collapsed. Hardy's time in Jacksonville is closely parallel to the life of the city's film industry, and can easily serve as a convenient narrative substitute for the entire industry's history.

Flexibility

Overview

As noted earlier in this thesis, the ability of a project to change, adapt, and accept new and different objects into its fold are not widely shared. Many digital preservation projects have fallen victim to their own ambition, or were designed simply to complete a single, immutable goal. As such, these projects end up internet dead ends and, since they were untended and "finished" they cannot effectively serve any purpose, let alone the ones for which they were designed. Perhaps the best examples of flexible hypermedia projects are the ones detailed in Chapter 3, HyperCities and Historypin, which both utilize technology developed by Google, modified by their own developers and designers. The Google Maps API, which many projects use as a foundation, has embedded itself so deeply in the Internet and people's lives, that its continual existence is expected and, in some ways, taken for granted. Google Maps and Google Earth are constantly being updated, improved, and reengineered. Thus the extensibility of Google Maps' basic textual building block (XML via KML) translates to the long-term viability of the projects that use it. If, for whatever reason, the Google Maps technology were to become obsolete, and Google itself was not producing an updated API, projects like HyperCities and Historypin would certainly be impacted, but not necessarily to the detriment of the essential data. While the visual interface might

become corrupted, the mark-up language that contains the data (descriptions of images, films, documents etc.) would remain and, because of its flexibility, be able to reintegrate into future systems. Naturally, in such a hypothetical situation, the downfall of a major social tool would likely be sensed well before the actual collapse and operations adjusted accordingly.

It is impossible to anticipate every trend, or prepare for every contingency, but an organization can take steps to ensure the stability of system—if not its extensibility—by backing-up their digitized resources in as many trusted archives and repositories as it can; and by following the standards set by other organizations like the Library of Congress. If a system and its resources are secure, the task of reading older data types becomes less pressed, as time does not affect digital files the way it does physical objects.

Application to Jacksonville

Jacksonville's film industry heritage lends itself well to the guideline of extensibility, as it can easily be applied to the myriad web-based visual interfaces produced by the likes of Google and Microsoft. As noted earlier in this thesis, history is necessarily geographical; Jacksonville's lost film industry is no different. In some ways it might be super-dependent on geography, as it began due to Jacksonville's place amongst many geographical features nonexistent in the traditional film production centers. Furthermore, the city itself was a kind of architectural menagerie, filled with buildings that could be mistaken for the more familiar ones in places like Chicago, New York, and Philadelphia. These natural and still-extant built features are all easily viewed as they exist at present via Google Maps and Google Earth; the buildings and sites lost

to decay and demolition can easily be represented by the best available archival data and imagery, and integrated into a visual framework.

In somewhat the same way Google and its hundreds of technologies are ubiquitous and embedded, so is the life of Oliver Hardy. Granted, Hardy's life history is not something with which people interact on a daily basis, but if one were interested in learning more about the comic legend, thousands of resources, reputable or otherwise, are simply a Google search away. The later films of Oliver Hardy and his longtime partner Stan Laurel are still shown in cinemas today, often as preambles to longer films or in the form of retrospectives so contemporary persons are likely to at least accidentally see the actor. There is even a popular convention dedicated to the art of the slapstick film, which Hardy and Laurel helped popularize and refine, called Slapsticon, held annually in Arlington, Virginia("What the Heck is Slapsticon?").

The question remains, though: how does the extensibility of Google translate to the lasting appeal of an early film mega-star as represented and exhibited by a digital preservation project? There is no guarantee that the appeal will last, but the real concern is that, presently, there is appeal. If Oliver Hardy and his life story's chapter in Jacksonville does have inherent appeal, it will be relevant to some sector of society, and, hopefully, for a long enough period to allow significant changes to be effected on a larger-scale initiative of Jacksonville's film heritage preservation.

Cooperability

Overview

Put simply, cooperability is the ability of a system to allow contribution between its constituents and participants. The participants could be organizations, universities, governments, or even individuals. The contributions could be any number of approved,

or appropriate, data (images, videos, documents) that help to enrich the project. Such a practice serves at least two purposes: creating academic bonds, or channels, between institutions; and ensuring a project is well-stocked with a variety of perspectives.

The Digital Library of the Caribbean (dLOC), a cooperative effort between several State of Florida academic institutions and Caribbean academic communities, is a prime example of pure cooperation that serves the aforementioned cooperability purposes. The goal of dLOC is to maintain a continually evolving repository of digital objects accessible to all, regardless of location or position. What could have easily been an effort executed unilaterally by an institution like the University of Florida or the National Library of Jamaica, inclusive only of a single archive's resources, began as a uniquely cooperative project between nine founding members with the goal to include as many partner institutions from around the Caribbean as possible. Presently there are twenty-six member institutions from around the Caribbean basin that comprise dLOC, each contributing resources("About dLOC").

While dLOC is a grand example, in both size and reach, cooperability can easily be scaled down to the local level. A digital preservation project concerned with the life of a single, well-documented structure should be open to contributions not just by the usual sources (local historical societies, archives etc.) but also to individuals, who often have objects and resources unknown to academic entities. It is this contributor type, the 'citizen archivist', that often goes overlooked by many preservation ventures. Citizen archivists (and citizen scientists) have existed for hundreds of years as amateur adherents to disciplines of personal interest to themselves. It is only in the last few decades that these amateur ornithologists, astronomers, film historians, and librarians

could promote their efforts through the Internet and a generally welcome and facilitative online community(Cox 1-2). Historically, academic ventures, as well as those predominantly organized by academic libraries, are wary of the legitimacy of objects held by private citizens. Within the last few years, though, it has become more acceptable—and in some cases highly desirable—to open the doors of a project to allow contributions from the general public. Materials contributed simply need to be vetted, with the inappropriate submissions discarded.

Alternately, if object submissions are not desirable, the citizen archivist can be employed as a volunteer describer and cataloger. The buzzword for this particular type of project manager-worker arrangement is ‘crowdsourcing’, though it can be applied to a variety of ventures not exclusively archival in nature. Many digital preservation projects can be stymied by a lack of raw labor and computing power, lacks that can be outsourced to the general public. The United States Geological Survey employs volunteer archivists to help catalog and convert the hundreds of thousands of bird phenology data cards collected over the decades as part of the North American Bird Phenology program(“About BPP/USA-NPN”). Even NASA has collaborated with citizen scientist projects like Zooniverse and the Citizen Science Alliance to solicit help identify galaxies by shape and color, a task best left to thousands of pairs of discriminating human eyes (“The Story So Far”). Naturally projects like these are overseen in such a way that the end-product is not blatantly inappropriate and only acceptably flawed. Ultimately the benefits far outweigh the small messes made by troublemakers, and the spirit of collaboration and public contribution is reinforced, thus enabling a stronger overall project.

Furthermore, as evidenced by projects like Historypin, or projects not underwritten by academic or government entities, are built entirely upon a trust that there is inherent desire amongst the masses to contribute to a collaborative cause. Historypin, whose cause is most decidedly the furtherance of our knowledge of public history and historical-social narratives, is different from the aforementioned citizen archivist programs in that it does not have a critical mass of data that needs interpreting or cataloging; the creators of Historypin saw a need for the smallest histories, those of the average person, to be given a platform on which to be presented and shared.

Application to Jacksonville

Jacksonville, like many other cities, is brimming with individuals and organizations who own knowledge and objects related to various events and eras in their community. In terms of Jacksonville's film industry heritage, there is at least one organization in constant pursuit of the preservation and broader awareness of its charge. The Norman Studios Silent Film Museum (NSSFM) was founded by members from Old Arlington, Inc., a local community preservation group, as well as various and sundry interested parties. Their interest, the long-abandoned complex that originally house Eagle Film Company, and eventually Norman Studios, has been in their care for the better part of the last decade. While they do not own the property NSSFM acts as steward and advocate for the buildings and that which they represent: the long lost film industry of Jacksonville, Florida. NSSFM is dedicated to the physical preservation of the buildings as well as the history they encompass, and promotes itself and its holdings appropriately. While the members of NSSFM are apt promoters and have been very successful in restoring the site itself, they have not had as much success in acquiring much of the ephemeral materials that fill the shelves of archives and industrial

museums. This shortcoming has more to do with the limited availability of these materials than it does the quality of the organization.

Limited availability, however, does not denote nonexistence, but rather a blockage in traditional channels of acquisition. This blockage can occur as a result of several things, including the interests of an object's owner differing from those of the project managers; the association of an object with another project, the managers for which being unwilling to cooperate; and even something as simple as money, the lack of which can stymie the acquisition and digitization of an object. These issues extend into the realm of traditional preservation as well: building owners, not cognizant of what they own altering, selling, or disusing it in a way contrary to the desires of sympathetic preservationists, often refuse inclusion in a preservation project for a variety of reasons. The mitigation of these roadblocks, and sometimes the act of hurdling over them, is the responsibility of the preservationist, who must be a diplomat and an effective salesperson for their project.

The cooperability of a potential film heritage project could be the best selling point in convincing the traditional purveyors and stewards of archival resources to contribute their treasures. Projects like Historypin are essentially troves of historical photographs with accurate geographical metadata. They are made effective because they are open to contributions from the general public, who are usually eager to upload gigabytes of data either out of personal interest or simply for the fun of it. If a site like Historypin or HyperCities is more popular with the average citizen archivist, it is likely academic archives will become more accepting of the technology behind it, thus utilizing it. Flickr began as a simple photograph sharing site, but since its inception, has become widely

used by organizations for the exhibition and storage of collections. The Florida Memory Project is a good example of this, as it is a state government entity that saw the popularity of a service like Flickr, and how using it could help to advertise and popularize its physical collections.

An option for a potential project could be to prefer a novel cooperability interface in favor of a well-established one like Historypin. The organization behind Historypin is presently working on a version which is capable of being embedded, or integrated, with other sites and technologies (“Frequently Asked Questions”). This would allow a project to sustain a novel look, but use the established technologies of the Google Maps API and unique collaboration interface of History Pin. For example, within such an environment, employees of NSSFM would be able to upload scanned images of photographs, drawings, or even a three-dimensional object at their leisure. Furthermore, after a calculated advertising campaign to build support and interest, members of the NSSFM (citizen archivists) could easily contribute materials that could be posted after a necessary review process.

Summary

The aforementioned determinants are by no means comprehensive and, in many ways may be incomplete. They are meant as a catalyst for further discussion and, hopefully, inspiration. Like Freeman Tilden says of interpretation in his own guide, these Determinants are, ideally, provocative, not instructive. Were they to rely too heavily on instruction, they would become prohibitive of change and cease to be effective as catalysts. Their intent is to assist in the conveyance of a message, whatever the subject, and facilitate a system that encourages the recipient to seek more information. Furthermore, these Determinants were designed not as updates of

common practice in the field of heritage interpretation (though they may seem as such), but rather as adaptors to contemporary technologies.

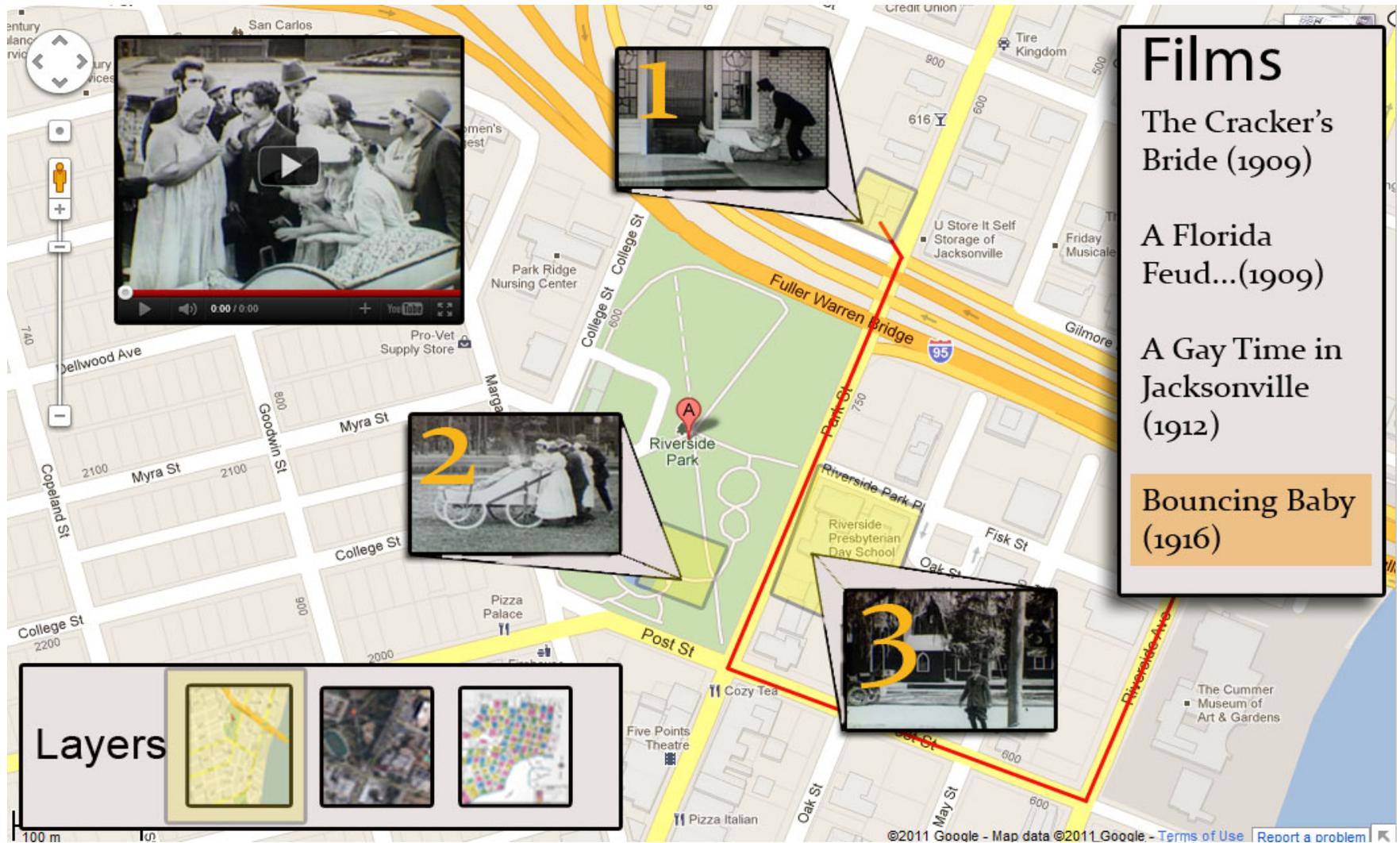


Figure 6-1. Prototype route map with data nodes corresponding to *Bouncing Baby*. Designed by Matthew Mariner using imagery from Google Maps, YouTube, and the Florida Memory Project.



Figure 6-2. Prototype of route with data nodes corresponding to building objects found in Bouncing Baby chase scene. Designed by Matthew Mariner using imagery from Google Earth, YouTube, and the Florida Memory Project.

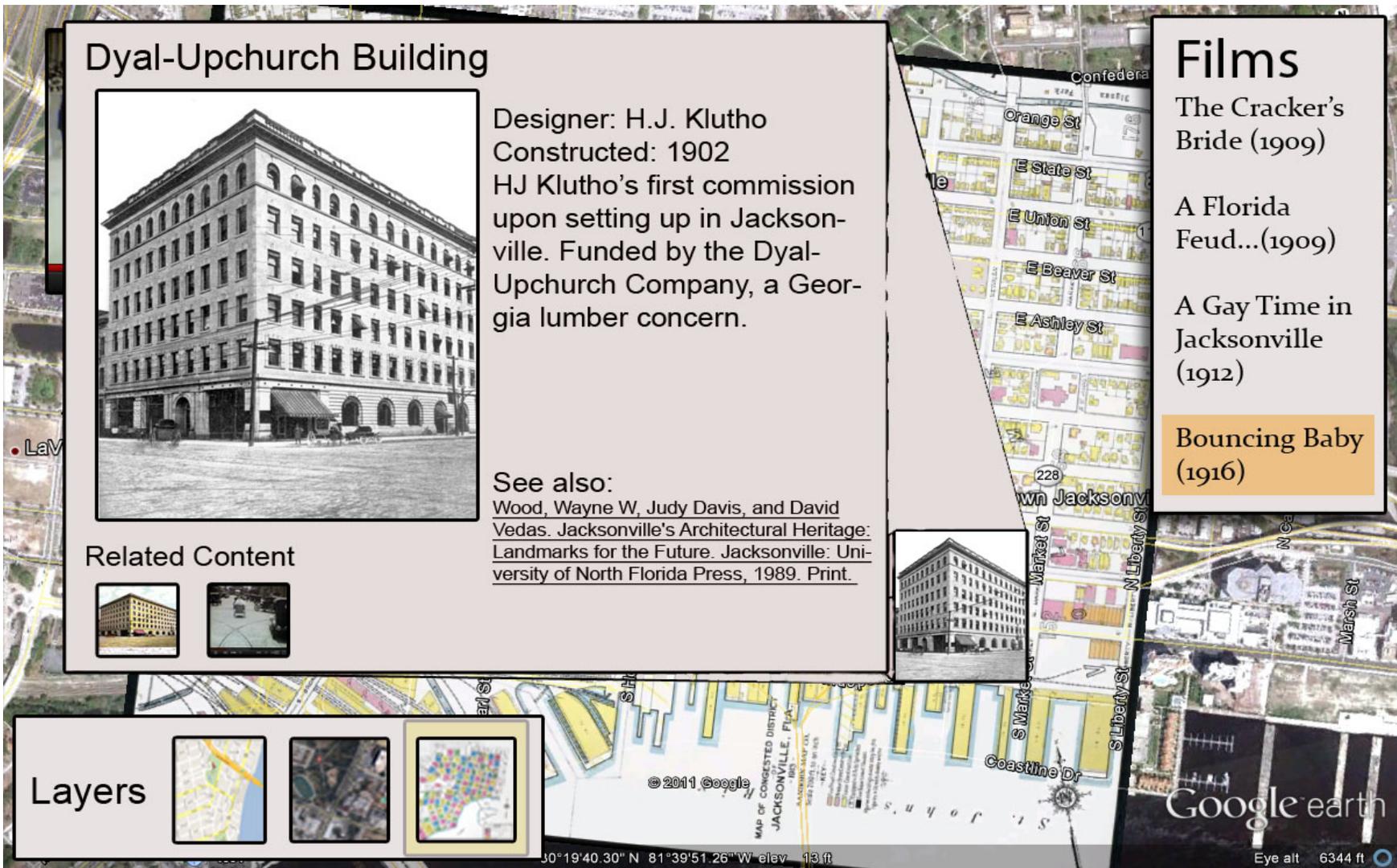


Figure 6-3. Prototype of route with one opened data node corresponding to a building found in *Bouncing Baby* chase scene. Designed by Matthew Mariner using imagery from Google Earth, YouTube, and the Florida Memory Project.

CHAPTER 7 OBSERVATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND FURTHER WORK

At the beginning of this thesis, it was decided to address the entirety of Jacksonville's film industry heritage, focusing not on a desirable facet, but touching on as many personal and urban narratives as would be possible. This proved to be overambitious, as it was soon realized that no single study, no single thesis, could ever do justice to the entirety of Jacksonville's film industry heritage and the thousands of nodes such a project, however hypothetical, would produce. Every aspect, whether it was a building, person, or event, led to more data; as one might imagine, there ended up being far too much information than could be easily digested by both the investigator and, ultimately, the end-consumer of a focused potential project. Furthermore, the result of the thesis was intended to be a set of guidelines intended as rules for founding a digital preservation project. These guidelines proved too restrictive and unrealistic. In a word, the entire exercise became counterproductive.

As the thesis was reexamined, it was discovered that rather than guidelines, a set of simple interpretive recommendations could be made to facilitate the generation of ideas, which could, in time, lead to more constructive and productive guidelines. These suggestions were eventually cast as Determinants of Success, since it was deemed simple characteristics should not exist if they were not in the service of effective production. This process was further simplified when it was decided to focus the application of these recommendations on a single aspect of Jacksonville's rich film heritage; rather than succumbing to the lure of quantity, the thesis instead adopted a qualitative, narrative-based approach. The result, it is hoped, is an efficient analysis of the basic components of Jacksonville's film heritage, and proposed Determinants of

Success that present an inclusive and indicative aspect of a greater project, one which will hopefully inspire the creation of further suggestions for fresh projects.

Further Work

This thesis has, over the course of its development and composition, raised almost as many questions as conclusions, many of which are not answerable, or, at least, not answerable within the confines of this project. As mentioned earlier in this document, the provocative nature of interpretation is very important in a person's absorption of that which is interpreted. In a similar way, this thesis should be considered provocative in that it attempts to open more doors than it intends to enter. After the Determinants of Success were written, it was discovered that a conflict exists between a project's need for data and the insistence that that data be trustworthy, especially if the project is dependent on contributions from unvetted sources like citizen archivists and the general public. In the case study of Historypin it was noted that the community at large as an interest in maintaining the project's reputation and is expected (hoped) to police itself for inaccuracies. There are many other methods for the assurance of quality and accuracy, but further work is required to determine which are best in certain cases, and, ultimately, if quality-assurance is completely necessary for the longevity of a hypermedia preservation project dependent on public and academic contribution. It might be desirable to amend the Determinants of Success to include a device for the vetting of contributed data that ensures the quality of the project but does not stymie its growth and flexibility.

Conclusions and Observations

As an interpretive tool, hypermedia is probably the best standalone solution for heritage that is no longer intact and mostly present in clouds of archival material. It

is cost-effective to produce a digital preservation project that uses popular tools like those furnished by Google and other developers, especially when scanning paper materials and creating virtual models of lost buildings instead of pursuing costly reconstructions. It is doubtful, though, that there really are many entities, public or private, that are constantly struggling with whether or not to reconstruct a lost building or site as part of a preservation project. What is more likely, however, is given the effectiveness of modern hypermedia and digital capture technologies, and their easiness of use, many projects once disregarded as “undoable”, either because of the lack of physical resources or effective modes of presentation, are now very “doable”. Also, projects that were both undoable and, at the time, simply not worth the effort, can now be pursued with a minimum of cost and relatively little effort. This is not to suggest that everything that ever happened in the history of the United States, or even the rest of the world, is worthy of a digital preservation treatment; one should always consider whether the project he or she is pursuing is both feasible and *desirable*.

As was mentioned in Chapter 2, the Determinants of Success were originally thought novel, but later discovered to be somewhat synchronized with those laid out by Freeman Tilden. Tilden’s much-lauded “Principles of Interpretation” were written long before things like hypermedia, the Internet, or even microcomputers entered the collective consciousness of humanity. That is not to say, however, that they still aren’t valid. Tilden’s principles are, in a way, chronologically independent. For example, the principle that an interpreter must be able to relate to his or her audience and not simply drown them in data is more of a truism than a notion, but is not always heeded by preservation projects, digital or otherwise. The need for palatability and relatability

is one of the driving forces of this thesis. It cannot be stressed enough that even the most data-rich and useful project can fail if it is not immediately relatable, if the material is presented in a cold, distant, and condescending way. As Tilden's fourth principle states, "The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation." (Tilden 9). That is, arguably, the ideal when interpreting historic sites, digitally or in situ. One must try to evoke a response from the visitor, an emotional reaction to the subject matter, and doing so almost certainly requires that the subject matter have the qualities of that which provokes, and that which is relatable.

Since the suggestions detailed in Chapter 6 are intended to be applicable to any number of digital preservation projects, it is hoped that this thesis will provide even just a modicum of inspiration and direction to a fledgling project. More specifically, given the attention afforded Jacksonville's silent film industry heritage, it is hoped that this thesis will help promote and inspire any projects associated with said subject, especially with respect to the efforts of NSSFM, which could benefit greatly from deeper integration with projects like Historypin and HyperCities, or even a project of their own design. From an archival perspective, there is still much work needed to identify, gather, and analyze the objects relevant to Jacksonville's film industry. The work Richard Alan Nelson did in support of his authoritative doctoral dissertation, *Florida and the American Motion Picture Industry 1898-1980*, cannot be understated and is, so far, the most complete survey of resources, built and ephemeral, of the period. That being said, the historical newspaper indices, maps, and first-hand accounts recorded and compiled in Nelson's work are static, and, in the several decades since their creation have not been expanded or modernized. The same can be said of many archival caches linked to

unpreserved and unpromoted heritage resources. Many such archives were expertly cataloged or surveyed and painted with minimally descriptive metadata upon their discovery and compilation, but have yet to be mined for patterns and plots, and interpreted in a way that sheds light not just on their own ephemeral existence, but on that of the heritage, built or intangible, that strains to exist in every city, town, and landscape on Earth.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Matthew Mariner was born and raised in St. Petersburg, Florida by his father, a graphic artist and elementary school art teacher; and his mother, an elementary school special education teacher. Matthew attended St. Petersburg College for two years beginning in 2002 and then transferred to the University of Florida, where he earned first a Bachelor of English degree in 2006, and then a Master of Historic Preservation degree in 2011. During his post-baccalaureate academic career, Matthew worked for the University of Florida Digital Library Center, first as coordinator of the Institutional Repository, then as coordinator of digital validation, archiving, and preservation. It is from his experiences in the field of digital librarianship that he became interested in the possible applications of digitization to historic preservation, a combination he feels is crucial and expanding the reach and effect of both fields. Matthew expects to parlay his knowledge of digitization, preservation, and film history into a career working with film and sound archives, preferably in a city with excellent public transportation that is frequented by bands he actually likes. Furthermore, Matthew hopes to one day own a small, single-screen movie theater over which he and his wife, Dina, can live, and in which he can show all manner of strange and curious films.