



# HIDDEN TREASURES IN THE LIBRARY

## Bridging the Gap with Digitized Resources

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**Introduction:** While much of our work is focused on digitization projects, Digital Services has become agile in meeting the immediate needs of our users. The three digital projects presented here highlight the variety of ways opportunities arise to create access to and preserve resources for researchers and the general public. Each has given Digital Services an opportunity to bridge a gap with digital resources.

### Paisa Akhbar Project

In 2015, a researcher from an Ivy League school expressed interest in coming to Ellis Library at the University of Missouri to view a unique, fragile Urdu newspaper from the 1890s, Paisa Akhbar, held at the Library's offsite storage facility. At the time of the request, the only other library holding of this newspaper was in Germany. When circumstances prevented the researcher from making the trip to Missouri, and it was determined that the volumes were not a good candidate for ILL, the Digital Services Department saw an opportunity to provide access to and digitally preserve these fragile, historical documents.

#### Challenges

- Some of the volumes had pages that were very fragile and parts of some pages were missing.
- Some volumes had very tight binding.



#### Solutions

- Scanning required a great deal of patience and care.
- Pages that had entire parts missing allowing text to show through from the following page had to be scanned with a piece of acid free paper behind them.

#### Outcomes

- Although some text was lost due to the volumes' fragile nature or tight bindings, the researcher was very pleased with the outcome of the project and shared MU's digital copy with her colleagues.



### Book of Hours Project

In January of 2017, after the Special Collections Department tweeted a photo of a miniature 15th century Book of Hours held in their collection, a follower inquired about making a digital copy available. After consulting with Digital Services, it was decided that despite the challenges in digitizing a valuable book of this size, an attempt would be made.



#### Challenges

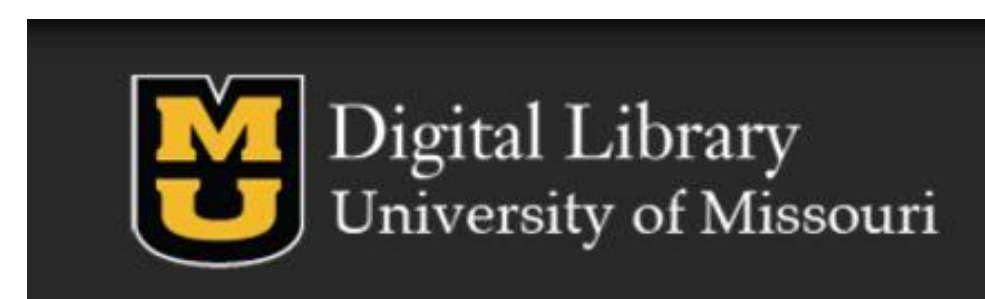
- The book's small size. The book measures 3.5" x 2.6".
- The rare nature of the book. The book was published between 1470 and 1490.
- Special Collections was concerned about the pressure on the binding from the scanner's glass plate.

#### Solutions

- The book was scanned without the glass plate.
- To protect the binding, the book was never forced flat on the scanner.

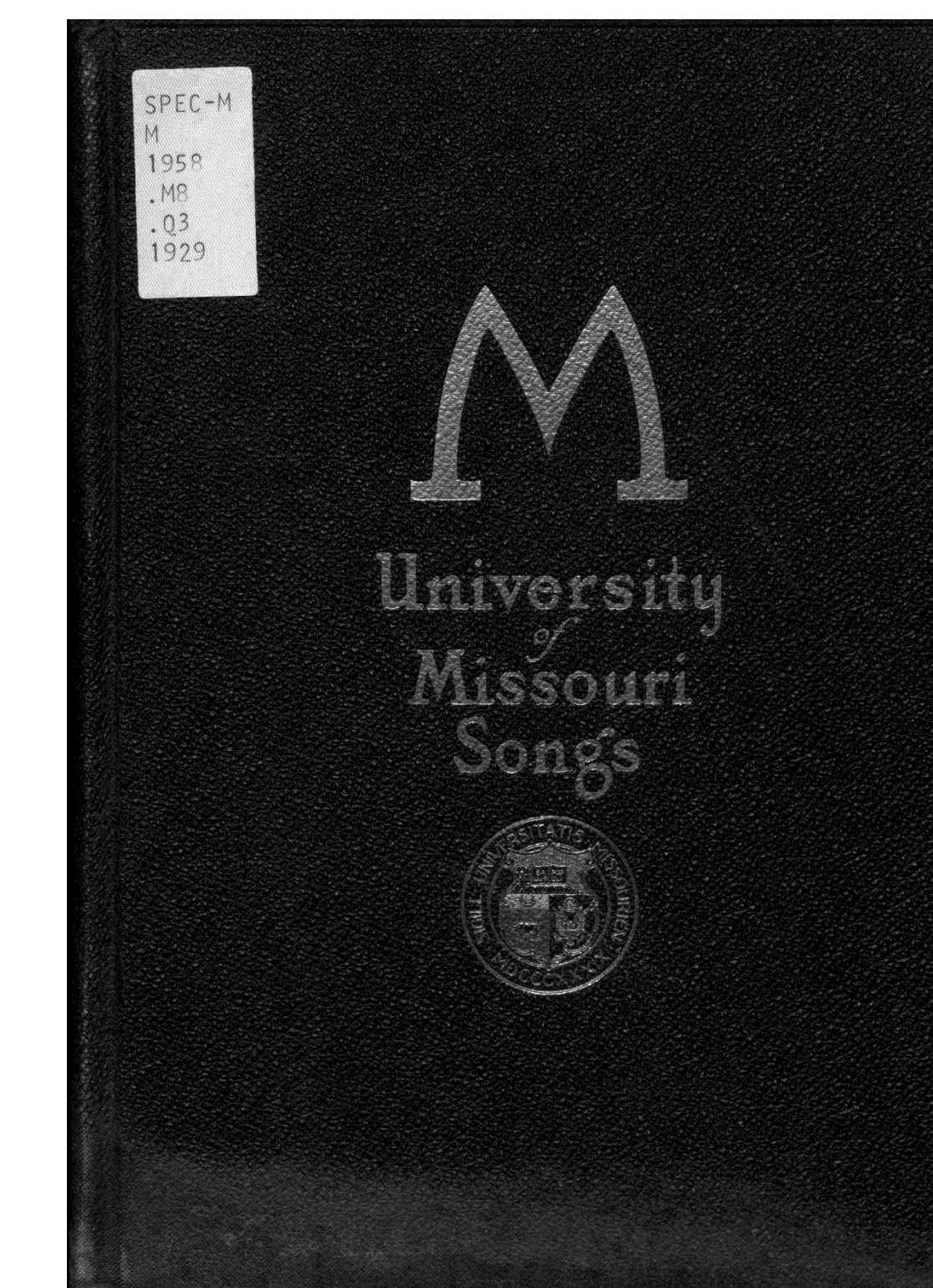
#### Outcomes

- Some pages in the digital copy are distorted due to the scanning process.
- Overall, the end product turned out well and this rare book is now available to users worldwide.



### University of Missouri Songs Project

In July of 2017, ILL received a request for a book that was checked out to a patron through October. A second copy in Special Collection was non-circulating. The Special Collections librarian saw this resource as a prime candidate for digitization. Digital Services agreed and began digitizing immediately. Because this resource presented no digitization challenges, such as a tight binding or fragile pages and required no special scanning procedures, this project took only 2 days to complete. Because this item was a University of Missouri publication, it was added to the MOspace Institutional Repository.

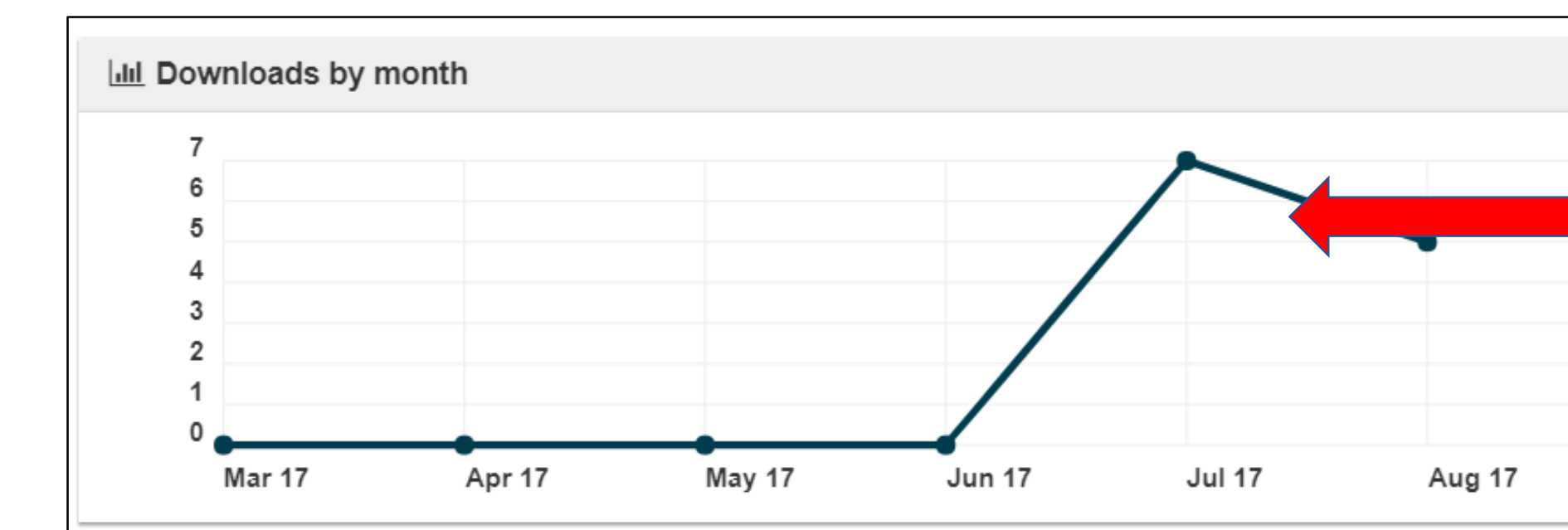


#### Challenges

- **None!** A duplicate copy in the collection enabled us to quickly complete this project.

#### Outcomes

- This project was truly a collaboration between ILL, Special Collections, and Digital Services. Its success can be summed up in the email from ILL: "I just want to thank you and your staff for making a high priority digitizing the 'University of Missouri songs' so promptly ... I am just glad to see this kind of collaboration between different departments ..."
- In the six weeks after it was added to MOspace, it had already been downloaded 15 times.



Date added to MOspace

### Lessons Learned

- There really is not a bad candidate for digitization. As seen with the Paisa Akhbar, even resources with some missing text can be valuable to a researcher. The Book of Hours project allowed us to contribute a digital resource researchers indicated was needed. The University of Missouri Songs project reminded us just how quickly some resources can be taken from print to digital with a small amount of effort while yielding a large impact on the digital resource world.
- It pays to build in time for spur-of-the-moment and special requests. In doing so, we've built positive relationships with our stakeholders and colleagues, built a reputation for being responsive to user needs, and are providing access to unique materials.

