

“Metadata and Digital Pedagogy: Surfacing Book Histories with Captions”

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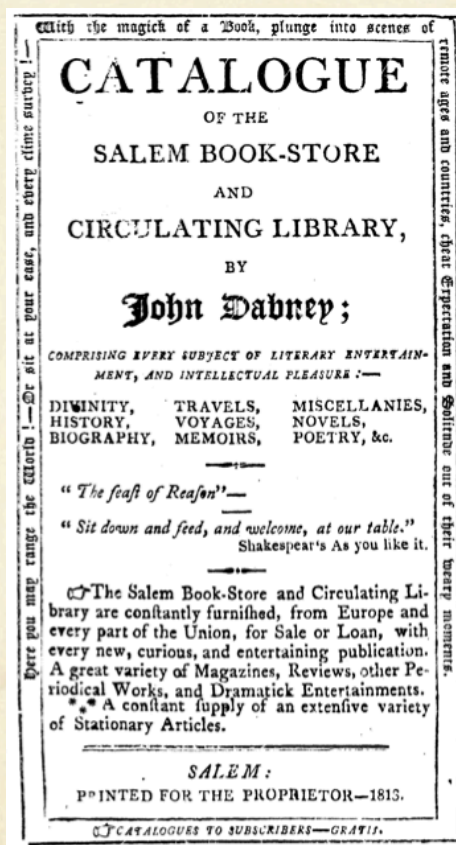
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Romantic-era Book Surplus

“The feast of reason”

“Book-Store and
Circulating Library . . .
constantly furnished”



“a great variety”

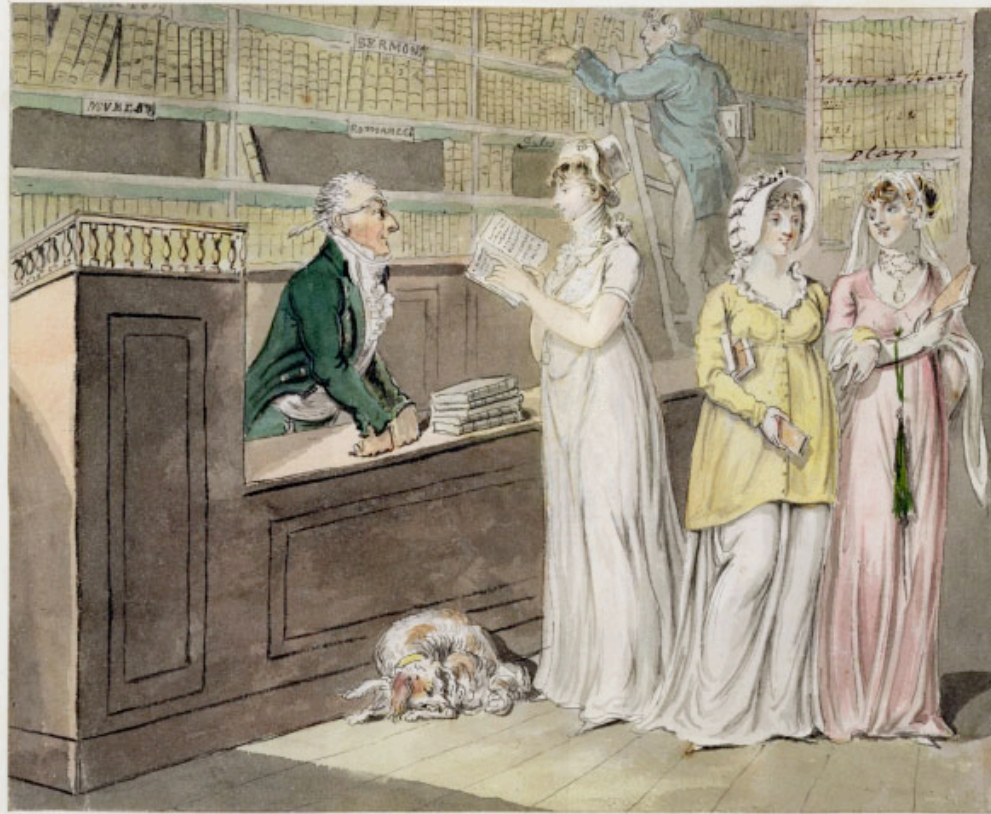
“a constant supply
of an extensive
variety”

A Romantic-era Circulating Library

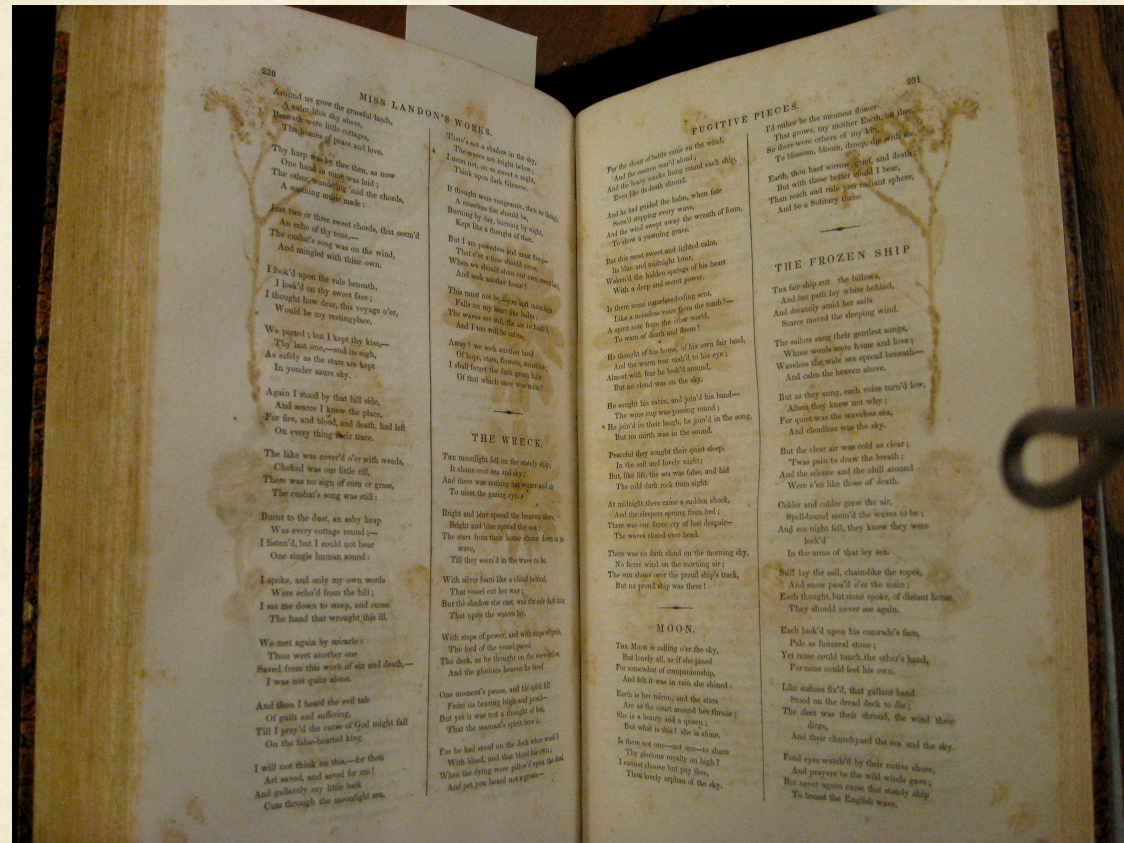


“The Circulating Library”

– a satirical painting by Isaac Cruikshank (1756-1810)



Lindsey suggests how to hack this into TEI.
I suggest that students visit the book and tell its story.



(A unique volume of L.E.L.'s poetry, in which a 19th-c. reader pressed flowers to embellish the page and certain stanzas of meaningful verse)

More Romantic-Era Book Surplus:
The James Cook table in the Special Collections Exhibit



Special Collections Exhibit Gone Live: Class Visit #1



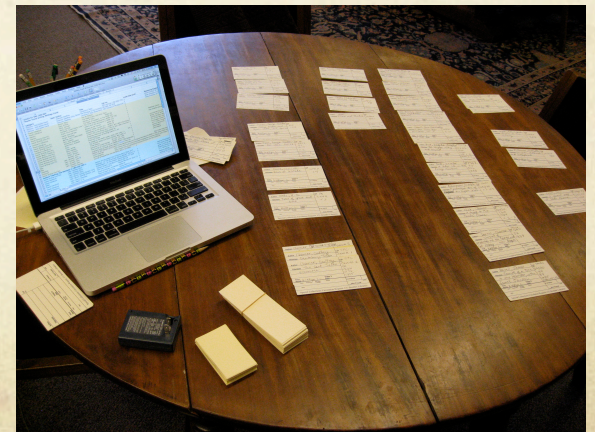
Taking notes in Special Collections on a worksheet,
that will be used to write a caption





Captions are narrative and pedagogical expressions of bibliographical metadata related to the genres of:

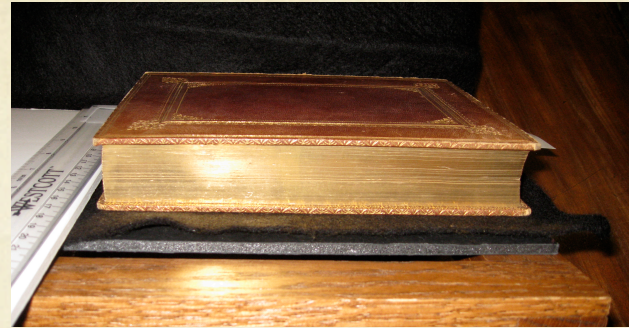
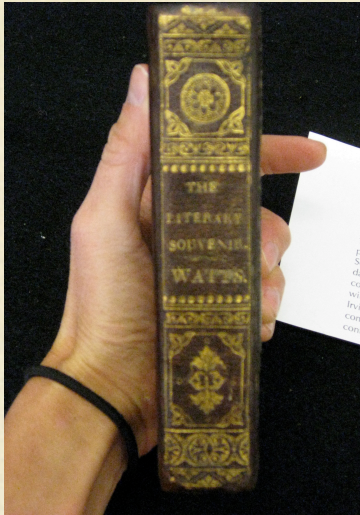
- the “abstract”
- descriptive bibliography
- “thought captions” in comics



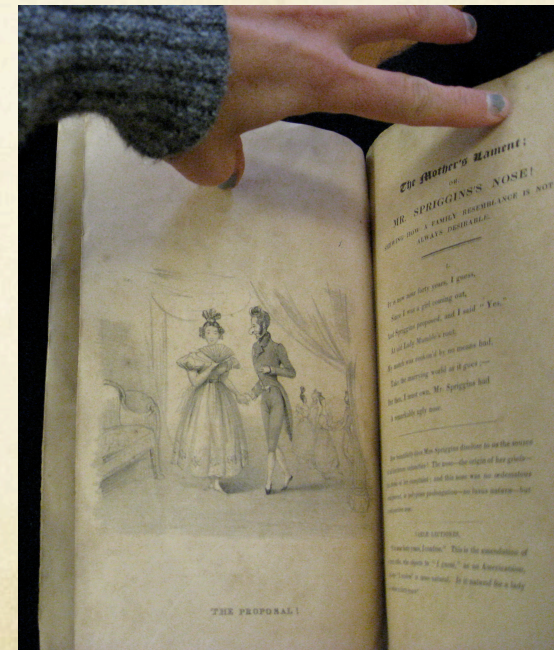
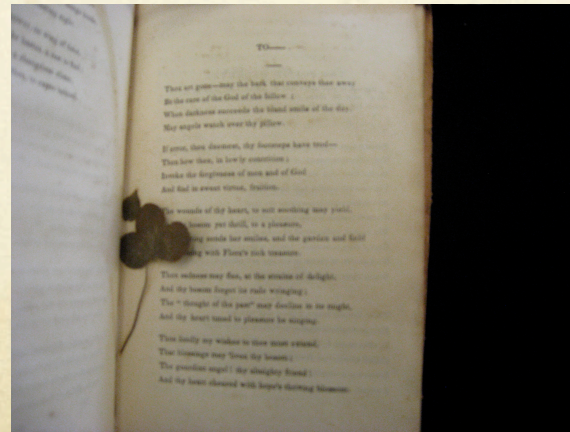
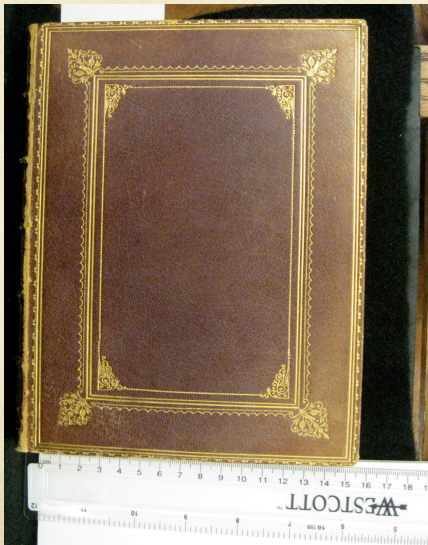
Caption example, text-only (approx 300 words)

Lady, A. *Flora and Thalia*. London: Printed for Henry Washbourne, Salisbury Square, 1835. **Print.** Washbourne's edition of *Flora and Thalia* is a collection of alphabetically arranged descriptions and sketches of flowers enhanced by poems and embellished with colorful plates. The embossed green leather cover is slightly worn at the corners; the small size of *Flora and Thalia* would make it easy for the 'author' to travel. More editor and collector than author, the anonymous "Lady" transforms botanical beauty into text. The description of the flowers comes from Woodville, Sir James Smith, Rousseau, the Hortus Cantabrigiensis, and other scientific works. One poem, the Christmas Rose, found on plate C, describes a beautiful garden and the changing seasons: "frost glitters on the leafless bough, / and branch and spray alike seem dead" (33). She arranges the poems artfully to correspond with her detailed illustrations. The untipped illustrations lead one to believe the paintings were added after the binding of the book. While the editor states in her preface that the work is "not a scientific work, but one of moral amusement which may lead the reader to the study of botany," she invites her reader to travel as she once did: in the field. Note the blank pages on the backside of the drawings, left for the reader's personal use that epitomize the idea of a journey in the reader's minds through the prose but also through the images that make up the catalogue. Interestingly, in *Flora and Thalia*, not every flower has an illustration, which not only displays prominence and personal favoritism, but further prods the reader to travel herself.

- Kathryn Sprague



descriptive bibliography:
close physical description of a book



This is a book:

4°: a4 A-C4 D4 E-H4; \$2 signed

“thought caption” example



From Scott McCloud's *Mimi's Last Coffee*
<http://scottmccloud.com/1-webcomics/mi/mi-26/mi-26.html>

Goals



- let students handle old, expensive books in their library's Special Collections
- think about literature as part of material culture, and vice versa
- communicate information about book history in new ways that privilege story telling and access over computer codes and library codes
- teach community members about their library's public Special Collections' holdings
- experience challenges of electronically representing real objects in a library archive

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