



Article: Preserving Ernest Hemingway's Photograph Albums and Scrapbooks at the Finca Vigía (Abstract)

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Preserving Ernest Hemingway's Photograph Albums and Scrapbooks at the Finca Vigía

Mary Patrick (MP) Bogan and Monique C. Fischer

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For over ten years, the Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) has been working with conservators at the Finca Vigía, Ernest Hemingway's house in Cuba where he lived from 1939 – 1960, providing advice, training and aid in preserving its paper-based collection. The collection includes manuscripts, letters, over 3000 photographs, scrapbooks, photograph albums, art collections, maps and a library of 9000 volumes, containing rare first editions of his books and those of other famous writers. Even though the entire collection is important to the home's history, the focus of this paper is the conservation of four significant albums that document Hemingway's acceptance of the 1954 Nobel Prize in Literature for "Old Man in the Sea" and the subsequent making of the movie. These include the photograph albums *Homenaje Nacional* and *Recuerdo 1956*, and scrapbooks *Nobel Prize Telegrams* and *Drawings for Storyboard for the Movie "Old Man and the Sea"*.

Photograph albums and scrapbooks are multifaceted items that require the expertise of not only a book conservator but also paper or photograph conservators. The conservation of these objects is complicated even when working in a climate controlled lab with abundant and available supplies. Add the traditional challenge of conserving albums to working in a tropical climate without environmentally controlled facilities, lack of space, language difficulties, and lack of materials and supplies, and the challenges are magnified. This paper explores the importance of Hemingway's albums and scrapbooks to the collection, the difficulties overcome to develop and implement appropriate and successful conservation treatments, and the satisfying partnership with our Cuban colleagues at the Finca Vigía.

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