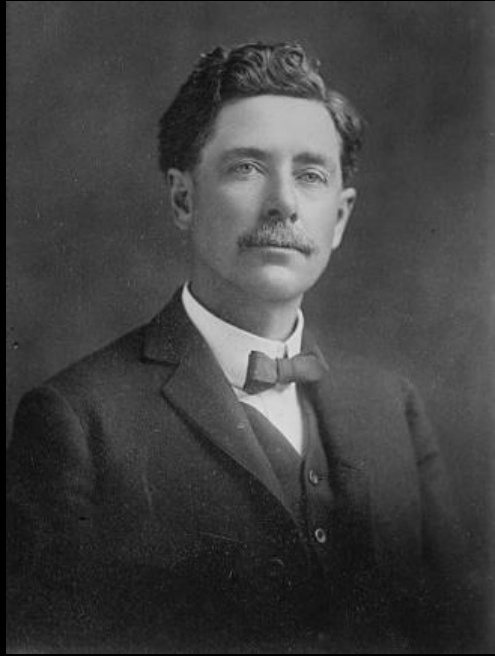


Nature on Display: **A Digital Exploration of Lewis Lindsay Dyche's Panorama**



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Andrea Waldren, Web Developer, Virginia Tech



L.L. Dyche, 1909



The Panorama at the World's Fair, 1893



LEWIS LINDSAY DYCHE'S GREAT PANORAMA

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LEWIS LINDSAY DYCHE'S GREAT PANORAMA

...it is my ambition to leave in some institution the best collection of North American mammals in the world." -Lewis Lindsay Dyche

Looking Again

A historic first and a celebrated highlight of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, the massive Panorama created by KU professor Lewis Lindsay Dyche, originally depicted groups of North American mammals in their native surroundings. Now exhibited in the KU Natural History Museum, the Panorama shows a 360-degree-view of species situated among various landscapes, such as the Rocky Mountains and the Midwestern plains.

Dyche's objectives in creating the Panorama mirror that of contemporary natural history exhibits, to encourage audiences to look carefully at nature from new and original perspectives. In turn, to consider the human impact

SEARCH

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The Homepage



Top: part of The Panorama present day

Top left: Old Snow Hall display prior to the 1893 World's Fair
Bottom left: construction of the mountain sheep habitat, 1893



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THE WORLD'S FAIR

"The exhibit which he has brought to the World's Fair is the result of ten years' work in the field collecting and fourteen months' work in the taxidermy shop with five assistants. The professor, who is curator of birds and mammals of the State University of Kansas, has devoted himself to making such an exhibit that the whole world will be compelled to acknowledge the superiority of the State of Kansas in this line."

---"Kansas Grand Show, Animals Brought from the Great Sunflower State, Professor L.L. Dyche of the State University, and the Work of His Genius," *Chicago Evening Post*, December 18, 1892.

In anticipation of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, the University of Kansas proposed to display Dyche's mounted collection of mammals. By October of 1892, the Kansas Building was dedicated and the first erected on the grounds of Columbian Exposition. The Kansas Building included a sixty-by eighty foot chamber designed specifically for Dyche's display of mammals, comprising the north wing. Shortly after Dyche loaded eight railroad cars to transport his collection of large mammals to Chicago. Arriving at the fair and fearing thieves who plagued the fairgrounds, Dyche remained with his display at all times. Dyche's living quarters while at the fair were in fact within the artificial mountain crafted for the display of his groups of mountain goats and sheep. Dyche with the help of his assistants used papier-maché to create the groundwork for the exhibit and integrated real plants and rocks when possible. The setting was a panoramic view with a painted backdrop and represented the different geographical regions of the mammals on display. It was one of the largest natural history panoramas ever attempted in the world. The display was lit with natural light through skylights and the mammals were protected by a pole fence from fair visitors. However, Dyche had constructed a path through the groundwork of his display through which he could lead guided tours. In presenting the large mammals in their natural habitat, free of explanatory text, the animals of the panorama invited urban visitors to see nature.



Kansas Building at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago, IL

Also, included as part of the Kansas Building exhibits was the mounted horse Comanche, the only survivor of the U.S. Calvary force at the Battle of the Little Bighorn in 1876. After Comanche's death in 1891, Dyche was asked to preserve the horse, which he agreed to if the horse could be displayed at the World's Fair.

The Columbian Exposition ran from May 1 through October 31, 1893, and would see some 716,881 visitors a day. The fairgrounds included two hundred and twenty buildings with over sixty-five thousand exhibits. The Kansas Building was the third largest of the state buildings and about a third of the space was dedicated to Dyche's display of mammals. One hundred and twenty-one mammals were included in the display, arranged in groups, and of various ages and genders. Mammals included in Dyche's exhibition were all mounted specifically by himself and included: mountain lions, moose, black-tailed prairie dogs, gray wolves, foxes, bison, jack rabbits, wolverines, grizzly bear, lynx, coyotes, elk (wapiti), pronghorn, mountain goats, mountain sheep, deer, and caribou.



L. L. Dyche's mounts of large North American mammals from the 1893 World's Fair exhibit.

For a closer look at the Panorama as it appeared in the World's Fair, click on the link below to explore an interactive image that highlights individual animals and views of the space.



INTERACTIVE IMAGE OF THE WORLD'S FAIR PANORAMA

Sources:

Shankel, Carol and Barbara Watkins. *Dyche Hall: University of Kansas Natural History Museum 1903-2003*. Lawrence, KS: Historic Mount Oread Fund, 2003.

Sharp, Bill and Peggy Sullivan. *The Dashing Kansas, Lewis Lindsay Dyche: The Amazing Adventures of a Nineteenth-Century Naturalist and Explorer*. Kansas City, MO: Harrow Books, 1990.

Example of World's Fair exhibit page



Physical to Digital



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Archival Collections Overview

COLLECTION SUMMARY

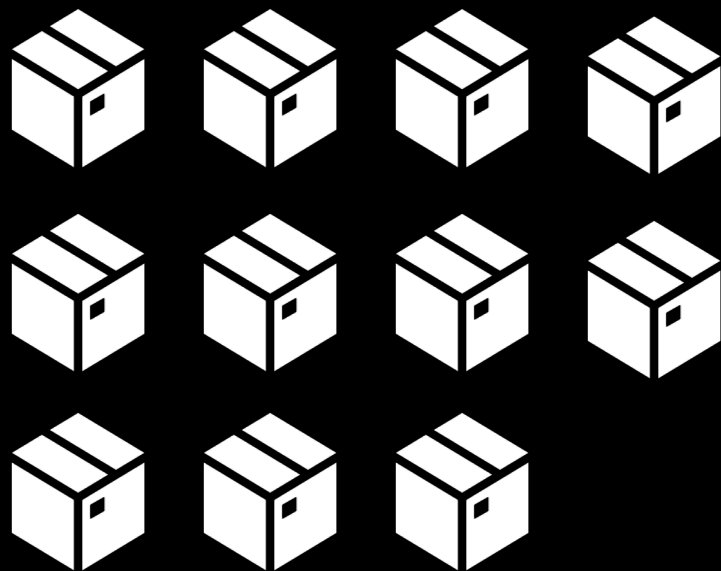
Title: University of Kansas Museum of Natural History records

Dates: 1878

Quantity: 159.5 linear feet (189 boxes + 44 volumes, 3 microfilm boxes, 8 large computer tape reels)

Call Number: RG 33 ([Finding Aid](#))

Film negatives, photo prints, news clippings, oversized plates, scrapbooks



COLLECTION SUMMARY

Creator: Dyche, Lewis Lindsay, 1857-1915

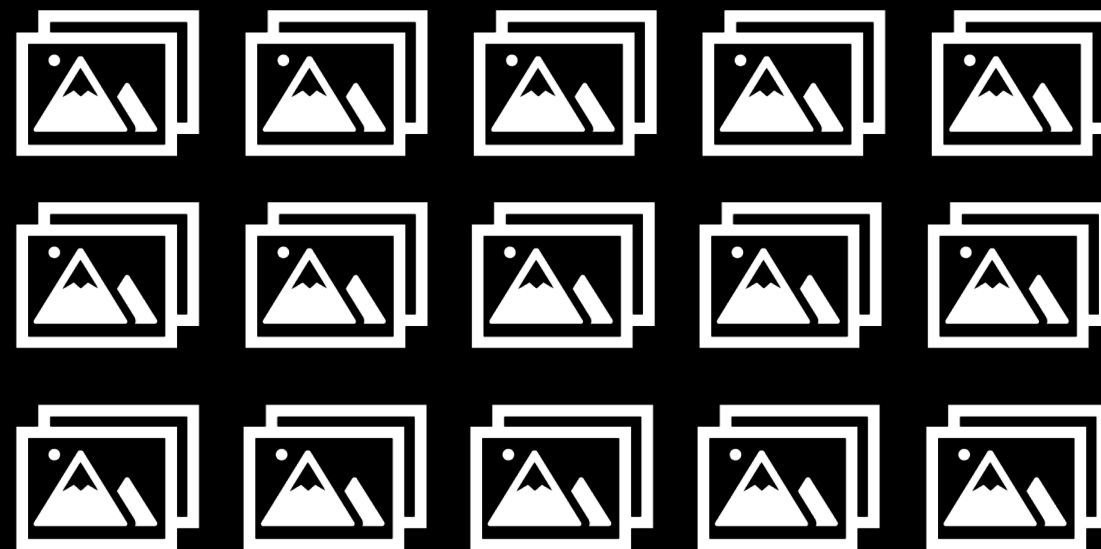
Title: Personal Papers of Lewis L. Dyche

Dates: 1880-1981

Quantity: 10.5 linear feet (13 boxes + 1 oversize box, 6 oversize folders, 1 galley box)

Call Number: PP 66 ([Finding Aid](#))

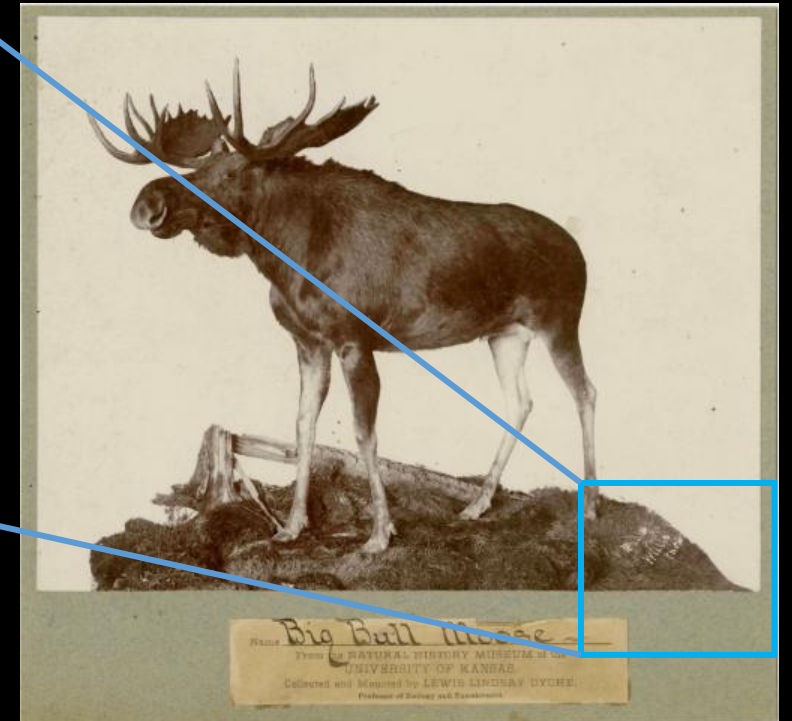
Glass lantern slides (organized by slideshow)

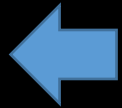




World's fair venue architecture

Photographer inscription





Selecting Technology

Questions to ask	Project requirements	Omeka
What functionality is available without customization/add-ons (out of the box)?	Manage a digital collection and generate web pages (visually engaging, easily blend textual content and images).	Content management system (CMS) specifically designed for creating digital collections and exhibits.
Is the technology extensible by plugins, customizations, etc.?	Flexibility to change with the project through custom code or plugins (allow for custom pages, create or embed visualizations).	A variety of plugins are available and custom code can be added.
How much time to complete the project?	As quickly as possible	Quick set up. Minimal custom development needed for project requirements.
What are the long-term costs?	As minimal as possible	Software is free, but it must be hosted on a server which could incur a cost.
What is the activity and size of the community that supports and updates the technology?	Support available for new users; stability for longer term use.	Large community of users, many online forums, and software is updated regularly.

Neatline – An Interactive Image through Mapping

World's Fair Panorama



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The Digital Archive



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Sort

PANORAMA

A composite of two digital photographs which show the Panorama at the World's Fair.

Tags: [1893](#), [World's fair](#)



Metadata

Title

Elk

Description

Elk, wooden frame.

Source

Lewis L. Dyche papers, PP 66, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas

Publisher

University of Kansas

Date

ca. 1893

Format

Still image

Identifier

pp 66 box 1 1348.jpg

Files



Tags

1893, Elk, Lantern slide, Taxidermy process

1887 1890s 1892 **1893** 1895 1896 1897
1900 1900s 1901 1904 1906 1908 **1910s** 1913
1915 1919 1925 1939 1940 **1941** 1948 1950s
1951 1953 1954 1956 1957 1958 1959
1960s 1965 1969 1970 1971 1972 1974 1975
1984 1985 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1997
1999 2000 Badger Bear Beaver **Bison** Black
bear Bobcat Buffalo **California sea lion** Canada lynx
Caribou Collared peccary Comanche Construction
Cottontail rabbit Coyote Cross fox Desert E. D.
Eames Elk Fisher Fox squirrel **Gallery**
label Gallery label series
Gray fox Gray seal Gray squirrel Gray wolf
Greenland caribou Grizzly bear Harbor seal Harp
seal Jackrabbit Jones, James Knox Jungle Kit fox
KU Photo Bureau
Lantern slide Lewis Lindsay
Dyche Mink **Moose** Mountain goat
Mountain lion Mountain sheep Mule deer
Muskox Muskrat Ocelot **Old Snow Hall**
Opossum Otter Polar bear Porcupine Prairie dog
Pronghorn Raccoon Red fox Restoration Sea lion
Silver fox Skunk Snowshoe rabbit Spotted skunk
Striped skunk **Taxidermy**
process Tiger Walrus White sheep
White-tailed deer Willis Photo Wolverine
Woodchuck Woodland caribou **World's fair**

Lessons Learned

- Collaboration and support
- Digital and humanities partnership
- Time (scalable)
- Marketing
- Long term considerations
- Technical opportunities



Moose mount at the 1893 World's Fair

Thank you

<http://www.lewisdyche.dept.ku.edu/>

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Credits

Images courtesy of University Archives, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas
Logo designed by Brittany Lee, bachelor's in Graphic Design, University of Kansas