**Preserving and Opening the Building Files**

The Cambridge Historical Commission -Architectural Survey Files Collection is ten file cabinets full of information on nearly every building, demolished or extant, in the city of Cambridge. The collection includes systematic survey information collected for each building in the city, clippings, photographs, maps, ephemera, and more. The collection is actively managed with several new entries each week.

Each of the 40 file cabinet drawers is filled with folders, each named and ordered according to Street Address or address range. Some folders show additional information on their name-tab to designate a Named Place, such as specific Buildings, Streets and Squares, Canals, etc.

The CDASH (Cambridge Digital Architectural Survey and History) project has developed a set of tools and workflows for scanning each document in the building files. Through a semi-automated chain of procedures, the scanned files are transformed into a hierarchy of Documents, categorized by Document Type. Each document is related to a Place of a given Place Type. The product of this effort is a digital repository, catalog, and map-based discovery system.

The easiest way to explain or understand CDASH is to begin by panning and zooming around on the map. Gray markers represent an Address. Colored markers represent named locations. Hover over a marker to see the name of the place. Click a colored one. Notice the hierarchy of Places and related Documents. Each document references the name of its parent folder, which you can click to understand meaningful ways that documents are organized in the physical collection. Once you are comfortable navigating the site, you will see that a large proportion of the information that was put into the Building Files has been successfully preserved in the digital collection which can now be explored by anyone in their home or on the streets of Cambridge.

The CDASH web site is based on the popular open-source digital archiving platform Omeka-S. The customized Omeka-S Theme and Modules behind CDASH are documented and made available for re-use at the CDASH c-dash.github.io.

**Box 9 Challenge Review**

The current state of CDASH stands just before the production scale upload of scans into the system. The scope of the on-line collection is Box 9: one of 45 Boxes. Box 9 was chosen for challenge review because it contains many examples of special folders. To get a flavor of how our semi-automated cataloging procedures are designed, try entering "Bla" into the place search field at the top right corner of the screen. Try an Advanced Search for Documents whose titles include the word "Detail".

One of the main things we need to do before starting with the bulk uploading is to look over some of the specifics of the category and tag names that we are applying. These can be reviewed in the following pages from our CDASH Project Documentation:

CDASH Place Items Data Dictionary

CDASH Document Items Data Dictionary

These pages include all changes from our first review of the metadata scheme. Questions that remain after this first review are highlighted in red.