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## Love at (Almost) First Sight (SCRC Behind the Scenes)

Nicole Dittrich

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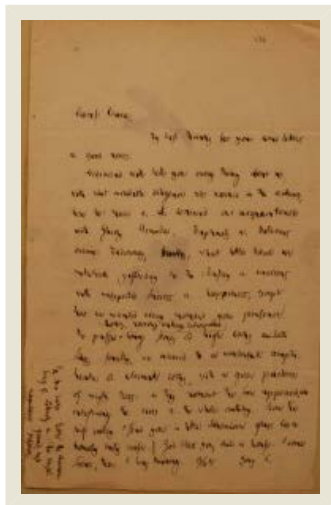
## SCRC Behind the Scenes

### Love at (Almost) First Sight

October 21st, 2011 by Nicole Dittrich

I remember the moment when I knew I wanted to work here forever.

It was shortly after I first started here in a part-time student position while I pursued my MS in Library & Information Science. I knew I wanted to work in a special collections department, but I hadn't yet decided that I wanted to work in *this* special collections department. I was going through our Leopold von Ranke Papers when I came across this letter:



Honestly, it looked a lot like the hundreds of other letters I had already seen in the collection from Leopold to his wife, Clara. But then I turned the page:

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6th floor Gallery, Bird Library

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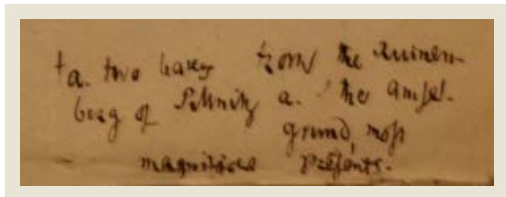
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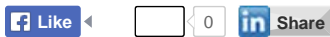


...a leaf? I wondered. I turned back to the text and took another look at that little note in the lower left corner:



He enclosed two leaves. Okay, so one didn't make it, but here I was, looking at a leaf well over a hundred years old. Someone had cared enough about that leaf to keep it long enough for it to find its way to Syracuse University Library in 1888 when von Ranke's personal library became the foundation of the University's library, and then it had happily thrived in our library and then in our department so I could find it in the 21st century! How cool is that?

Well. Some time later I was lucky enough to turn my part-time student job into a full-time staff position. I've seen many exciting things during my time here – including 14th-century books of hours, a papyrus fragment, cuneiform tablets, an Academy Award, and so much more — but sometimes I stop and think fondly of that little leaf that started it all, in the collection that started it all for this library.



Tags: [leopold von ranke](#)

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- Michele Combs** Says:  
[November 16th, 2011 at 10:12 am](#)

Funny how the little things can have the most impact...
- Amy McDonald** Says:  
[November 17th, 2011 at 6:42 am](#)

That's so sweet! I work at Duke, and a co-worker and I once found an edelweiss flower pressed into a 17th century volume on herbal remedies, so we know just how you feel!

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Dear Sir,

My best thanks for your kind letters

& good news.

Ferdinand will tell you every thing about us,  
 with that incredible diligence we worked in the arroyo,  
 how we made a. d. renewed our acquaintance  
 with Gladys Armas, Vapraely a. Holcombs  
 divine patronage, ~~monthly~~, what little travel we  
 undertook yesterday to the Chapoy a. environs  
 with unexpected success a. happiness, except  
 that we wanted every moment your presence.  
 We passed <sup>long, narrow valleys between</sup> long ~~long~~ <sup>of high rocky</sup> ~~valleys~~  
 hills; finally, we arrived to a wonderful amphithe-  
 atral of eternal rocks, with a green pasture  
 of mighty trees: in this moment the sun appeared, ~~etc~~  
 enlightening the river a. the whole country. How the  
 trip valley I send you a little American glass for a  
 homely only wife. I God bless you, Mrs a. wife. I come  
 soon, how I say ~~nothing~~. Yours  
 J. G. L.

In the long  
 long a. Schudy a. the night.  
 magnificence  
 progress.







