

Interactive comment on “Historic photographs of glaciers and glacial landforms from the R. S. Tarr collection at Cornell University” by Julie Elliott and Matthew E. Pritchard

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Elliott and Pritchard have brought forward valuable knowledge on a unique archive of historical glacier images. There is no doubt that this paper is very useful and will raise the awareness and use of the images. In terms of scientific data, the images are raw and will need to be further processed to be useful in scientific studies. It is great that the authors have put this manuscript together, and their work serves as an example that I hope many more archives will follow.

I have a few comments to the manuscript:

1) It is not clear to me why the images need to be in two different online archives – each with different level of metadata and (apparently also) different file sizes. I will recommend that you only link to the archive with the most metadata and the largest file sizes/original scans.

2) I was not able to find the original scan sizes in ARTSTOR, here the images were also c. 1.5 mb as in the Cornell Library. For a 4x5 inch glass plate scanned at high resolution this is very downsized. It would be great with a link or DOI for the high resolution images.

3) From you figures it shows that many of your images have already been geolocated – this information is not transferred to the metadata. I recommend that this location data is added to the metadata, or alternatively a supplementary file with image coordinates is attached to the manuscript.

4) In your manuscript you call it the R.S. Tarr Collection – in the online archives it is called “Historic Glacial Images of Alaska and Greenland”. I find this title misleading as there are images from other locations and other subjects than glaciers too.

5) The historical images in your figures do not appear to do the material justice. I would like to see a better processing of the photos with more contrast, also the cropping and set-up of the photos can be improved.

6) Lastly, I am looking more for information on the completeness of the Tarr collection. Are there other images/material from the expeditions in other archives?

With all this said, I am very happy with the manuscript, and hope to see it published and the images used for science again!

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Discussion paper

