

The LLMC-Digital Newsletter

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What Others Are Saying

Perhaps as a contribution to National Preservation Week, the "mainstream press" has recently been paying attention to several preservation projects in which LLMC is engaged with partners.

- The first article in time was distributed nationally by the Associated Press. It covers a joint scanning project in progress over the past three years between LLMC and the Iowa Legislative Services Agency (ILSA), with support from the Iowa State Law Library. Several newspapers ran edited versions of the article, but the most complete version is probably the one that appeared in the Des Moines Register.¹ What the article describes is a swapping arrangement in which ILSA and LLMC have been sharing the costs of digitizing and preserving the bulk of the primary legal material for Iowa; with both parties using the images received from the other to fill out their online runs of Session Laws, Legislative Journals, Compiled Statutes & Codes, and Attorney General Reports.² To date LLMC has contri-

buted ca. 223,000 scanned images and ILSA ca. 236,000 to the common store.³ Although LLMC still has a small amount of ILSA-provided A.G. Reports to scan, the greatest part of the anticipated product from this partnership has already been produced. Going forward, ILSA will help LLMC keep current all of the "live" Iowa runs. And LLMC will aid Iowa in its preservation goals by storing the print versions of all of these materials in its salt-mine archives in perpetuity.

- The second article appeared, right on the heels of Preservation Week, in the May Issue of the *ABA Journal*.⁴ The main theme of this article is the general problem of preservation and how preservation efforts are being adversely affected by widespread budget cuts. Its scope is wide-ranging, as the author interviews librarians and other people on the preservation frontline in places as removed as Maine, Iowa, Washington, D.C., Illinois and Hawaii. LLMC features in the article because it has partnered with most of the people interviewed. We're happy that the *ABA Journal* chose to run with this topic, and we hope that the article helps to spread our core message that, if significant preservation is ever to occur, it will only be when we in the library world all learn to work together.

Donations of Foreign Titles by U. Wash.

The University of Washington Law Library has recently been realigning its foreign law holdings and shelf space to more narrowly support the contemporary research interests of its faculty and students, and to provide

vation by putting your print materials in our salt-mine archives.

³ These figures led to the one ambiguous statement in the article. In the first sentence the reporter refers to "450,000 documents," where he more accurately should have written "450,000 page images." But who expects non-librarians to know from documents?

⁴ <http://tinyurl.com/iowareg>

¹ <http://tinyurl.com/iowareg>

² For a list of the many Iowa titles that are now being offered in full on both *LLMC-Digital* and also on the Iowa State Online Service, see the current edition of the LLMC Titles-Offered List attached, Lines 747-805. You might also like to check out other jurisdictions and our Special-Focus collections and see if some could be enhanced by strategic gifts or loans from your library of gap materials needed for scanning. If you do contemplate cooperation, please remember that gifts of print materials help us to stretch your preservation dollars by doing less expensive hi-speed scanning. They also enable us to attend to long-term preser-

storage space for future acquisition in those high-priority areas. As one result it deaccessioned some 3,600 volumes of legal periodicals, which it has donated to LLMC and the LA Law Library.

The majority of the titles being gifted by U.W. are still in copyright, and therefore have been accepted by LA Law Library for safe-keeping until the copyrights expire and they can be scanned. However, some 14 titles comprising 628 volumes are out of copyright, and thus are eligible for near-term scanning.

All of us owe a nod of thanks to the U.W. Law Library for some significant periodical titles that will soon be added to our Belgium, Brazil, Italy, Germany and Netherlands offerings, as well as some major additions to our Canon Law, Legal Philosophy, and Roman Law collections.

University of North Texas Partnership

The University of North Texas (UNT) maintains the highly respected online site *Portal to Texas History*.⁵ The ambit of its collections is very broad, covering all areas of Texas life and history, and all media. It also has a legal component, which it would like to grow in cooperation with LLMC. The arrangement under negotiation is likely to develop, with allowances for local variants, somewhat along the lines of that described for Iowa on p1, col. 1, of this issue, and also along the lines of the fruitful partnership that LLMC maintains with *Canadiana.org*.⁶

At first blush it appears that what we can offer UNT is the bulk of the runs for some major titles such as the Texas session laws and the Texas legislative journals. What UNT can offer us is some early gap fillers for these runs, many of the early Texas compiled laws, and a rich trove of small, but highly desirable, early Texas constitutional tiles. While this relationship is still in its infancy, we have high hopes that, as it matures, it will lead to a

⁵ <http://texashistory.unt.edu/explore/collections/>

⁶ For the latest newsletter story on how that partnership is going, see Issue #55, p. 3, in the newsletter archive on www.llmc.com.

mutual enrichment of both of our collections of Texas law and law-related materials.⁷

L.C. Native American Scanning

Two years ago the Library of Congress and LLMC partnered to scan, catalog, and bring online some 285 titles containing Native American constitutions, charters and legislation.⁸ That collaboration provided the first big building block toward replicating online the substantial Native American Collection of ca. 1,660 titles that LLMC offered on film during its fiche era.

It was hoped from the beginning that in a second phase of LC/LLMC collaboration a large number of early and rare treatises related to American Indians could be scanned and added to both collections. Unfortunately, this time of sequester and other mindless cuts to the budgets of cultural institutions would not seem an auspicious moment to rekindle the collaborative flame. After all, as reported in the *New York Times* just this week, the Library of Congress' budget for digitization, which was \$1 million in fiscal 2012, has been cut to \$500,000 in the current fiscal year. In the words of Rep. Rodney Alexander, a Louisiana Republican who chairs the appropriations sub-committee that oversees L.C.'s budget: "Times are tough, and we every so

⁷ A look at our Texas collection on the attached LLMC Titles-Offered List, lines 1523-1538, shows that, while not insubstantial, it could use some beefing up. If any of our readers see some loose Texas law-and-law-related titles lying around their libraries, and are disposed to gift or loan them, both the UNT *Portal to Texas History* and we here at LLMC would be mighty grateful.

⁸ The last report on the Native American scanning project appeared in the Oct. 25, 2011, issue of this newsletter (Issue # 49, pp. 3-4). The substantial contribution that LC has made to our Native American offerings can be reviewed on the attached LLMC Titles-Offered List, lines 6823-7208 and 84-95. (Note that when the remodel of the LLMC-Digital interface is completed {see pp.3-4 this issue} we will acquire the ability to multi-list titles in more than one collection. In the new format, the U.S. Interior Department titles that are specifically related to Native Americans will also appear in the appropriate order within the Native American Collection.)

often have to make difficult choices between the nice-to-haves and the must-haves.”

Despite these dismal portents we are happy to report that L.C. has placed a high enough priority on the Native American project that it has scheduled at least 500 American Indian titles for scanning in this next fiscal year. The scanning has already begun, and we expect that in the next few months, as LLMC completes the cataloging, this rich lode of research material will begin to flow online. Kudos to our colleagues and friends at L.C. for continuing their good work, even under the most trying of circumstances.

A Review of Our Canada Holdings

From its beginnings, LLMC has always had a strong Canadian presence. Even in our film era, a big reason for our ability to slog on was the strong and consistent support of the Canadian academic law library community.

The support was not only monetary. Diana Priestley, one of the giants of Canadian law librarianship, and, during the period in question, Director at the University of Victoria Law Library, was an active bibliographic contributor. With her help LLMC built in microfiche the most complete collections ever assembled of Canada’s federal and provincial session laws, statutory revisions, and out-of-copyright case reports. Another contributor of bibliographic expertise for several projects, and a generous source of hardcopy for filming purposes, was Balfour Halevy, longtime Director at York University Law Library. Balfour’s interest was so high that he even served a term on the LLMC Board of Directors.

In our digital era, Canadian libraries and governmental units comprise the second biggest group of LLMC subscribers, comprising roughly 10% of our library members. And their patrons are no slouches. Several times a year LLMC compiles a report of usage among our library members. In every quarter since these records have been kept, Canadian libraries rank among the top ten users of *LLMC-Digital*. In one recent report they ranked five among ten.

Given the above, it would seem appropriate to report occasionally on what we have been able to do for our Canadian colleagues with regard to the digitization and preservation of their own legal materials.

Here are some summary statistics. In our fiche era we preserved over 16,000 volumes of Canadian materials on film. That took almost three decades. In our short digital era, nine years and counting, we already have migrated online some 422 Canadian titles on over 7,050 volumes in 4,230,632 page images. Of course, compared to our fiche totals, there’s still a way to go. But we keep chipping away and the trajectory is promising. As in our fiche career, our aspiration is global. We fully intend to build the most complete collection of primary Canadian legal material offered anywhere.

As always, we could use your help. The inventory of our current Canadian offerings is provided in the LLMC Titles-Offered List attached, lines 1648-2071. If your library has a Canadian title that is not yet offered, why not consider offering it for addition to the online collection? It will still be in your library, but in digital, searchable format, and we’ll take care of the paper preservation problem for you forever.

New 5-Year Contract with NBS

Those of our subscribers who have been with us for a while know that *LLMC-Digital* got its start under the tutelage of the University of Michigan’s Scholarly Publishing Office, that university’s digital publishing center. Michigan had good credentials as an incubator for fledgling library-oriented websites, having served in that role prior to our arrival most famously for JSTOR. As with JSTOR, the LLMC stint with Michigan was both necessary and rewarding. They helped us to get on our feet. However, by 2007, we were the biggest car in Michigan’s garage and had outgrown their infrastructure. It was becoming clear that, if the Michigan infrastructure was to be built up to needful levels, we would have to pay for it. So we began looking around for a technical partnership situation where we would be the caboose on the train, not the engine of growth.

Our search brought us to National Business Systems (NBS), a national firm headquartered at Egan, MN. NBS had no record as a host of digital libraries, but it was a national player in the business of serving banks and other big financial institutions. And it wanted to experiment with transferring its technical expertise into the digital library business. We were willing to serve as its prototype for several reasons. One, we hoped that NBS's strong motivation to succeed would redound to our benefit. And two, on the infrastructure front, we were betting that the banks and other financial institution customers would, both insist that NBS stay in front of the advancing technology curve, and be willing to pay for it; taking us along for the ride. It was a bit of a risk on both sides, but the auguries were good. In July of 2008 we bit the bullet and signed on for a 5-year partnership.⁹

Of course, NBS will have to speak for itself, but it is safe to say that LLMC has grown and prospered during the first quinquennial phase of this partnership. While our membership has expanded greatly, and our collections have exploded, NBS has been able to absorb and competently handle all of our growth. Technical breakdowns have been mercifully few, and the complexity of the web site has been fine tuned in a great number of ways, many of them of great utility, if not always visibility, to our users. Finally, "backroom" functions at both our headquarters in Hawaii, and in our cataloging center at Saint Louis Univ. Law Library, have become much more efficient with the help of NBS.

Nevertheless, in their exercise of due diligence, while reviewing the case for a 5-year contract renewal, which has just occurred, the LLMC Directors did ask for several significant enhancements. On the financial front, in recognition of improvements in technology and trends in the industry, we were able to negotiate some substantial unit-price reduc-

tions both for image storage and for the digitization from film functions performed for us by NBS. The result will be a significant shift of available resources into more scanning that may result in as much as a 15 to 20% increase in our annual image production. The other major request from the Board to NBS was that it launch the second quinquennial phase with a major enhancement of the interface of *LLMC-Digital*. That brings us to our final report.

New Interface Launch Looming

Over the past year, but with much greater intensity in the past six months, NBS's engineers having been working in concert with LLMC staff to effect a major redesign and upgrade of the *LLMC-Digital* interface. Their various efforts have coalesced in the past two months, and the interface is now going into beta testing. A beta version of the new interface was unveiled during the CALL Convention in Montreal this week to reported wide acclaim. Over the next eight weeks one of the LLMC Directors, Joe Hinger, of St. John's Univ. Law Library, will be working with Kathleen Richman, our Executive Director, to conduct beta testing with, and pull feedback from, a diverse subset of our colleagues.

Assuming that the beta testing goes well (with "going well" meaning that our colleagues in the testing group spot any little wrinkles that need ironing) the plan is to coordinate the launch of the new interface with the opening of the AALL convention in Seattle.

We hope that those of you attending AALL will come around to the LLMC booth to share your reactions to the new interface, and suggestions for even more improvements, with our staff. Wherever they are, all users are invited to start inspecting and becoming reacquainted with the site after July 12. We've always known that *LLMC-Digital*, despite some clunkiness, was nevertheless necessary. We're hoping that, with the new interface, it might even start being fun.

⁹ The story of LLMC's transition over to the partnership with NBS, our stated reasons for making the move, and our expectations, were detailed in the following issues of this newsletter: Interim report, Issue #28, Feb. 22, 2008, pp. 1-2; and Final report, Issue #32, Sept. 29, 2008, pp. 1-3.