



# Law Library Lights

## Collection Spotlight

### Tracing the Origin of the Elbridge T. Gerry Collection at the Supreme Court of the United States Library

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*A Boston journal speaks of the law library of the late [Supreme Court] Justice Clifford as one of the finest in the country, and insured for \$20,000. This is hardly the case. Unquestionably the largest and most valuable private law library in the United States, if not in the world, is that of Mr. Elbridge T. Gerry, of this city. Its volumes are numbered by thousands, and it embraces the rarest treasures of legal literature. Its money value is four or five times greater than that of Judge Clifford's, and it embraces many works not to be found in any other collection in this country, and not now purchasable even at fabulous prices. (Harpers Weekly, Oct. 8, 1881. P.675)*

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# Collection Spotlight: Sleeman

As Washingtonians might expect, the Supreme Court of the United States Library (“the Library”) has the largest and most complete collections of Records and Briefs, oral argument transcripts, and Supreme Court Rules<sup>1</sup> and also is privileged to own many special and rare books devoted to the Court and its history. What readers might not know is that, thanks to the gift of the Gerry family, the Court also holds an extraordinarily rich collection of materials from American legal history, including early U.S. state materials, historical trials, execution sermons, dictionaries and many other unique pieces of Americana.

Elbridge T. Gerry, who built the collection, was the grandson of Vice-President Elbridge Gerry. He was born and raised in New York City and educated at Trinity Grammar School and at Columbia College, earning a Bachelor’s Degree in 1857 and later a Master’s Degree in German.<sup>2</sup> In 1860, Gerry apprenticed with lawyer William Curtis Noyes. During this apprenticeship, Elbridge Gerry began to experience ‘bibliomania,’ that “gentlest of infirmities,” and began to develop his collection of books.<sup>3</sup> He first purchased copies of the books used in the Noyes law office and then supplemented this collection with legal treatises, practice books and other non-legal, secondary books on subjects related to the cases that he handled. This habit continued throughout his life, and even after his marriage Gerry continued to house part of his book collection at his childhood home and at the Noyes office; that is, until he built his own mansion on Fifth Avenue in 1894. Designed by Richard Morris Hunt, the Gerry home included a picture room (Gerry also collected art) and an expansive two story library.<sup>4</sup>

As a lawyer, Gerry was active in many humanitarian issues of the day; first, in the

*Children’s Aid Society*, and later when he became a founder and legal counsel to Henry Bergh’s *Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals*. In 1874, after an abused young girl named Mary Ellen Wilson was brought to his attention, Gerry established the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. The *Gerry Society*, as the organization was known, investigated and prosecuted cases of child abuse and created a process for protecting young people who worked as theater performers. Along the way, Gerry acquired many books devoted to social reform issues. The Library holds many books, documents and case materials related to Gerry’s work in this area.<sup>5</sup>

From the perspective of a special collections librarian, one of the most interesting aspects of the collection is the rich body of materials that track many of Gerry’s purchases. His records are truly voluminous and provide an important insight into how he collected, allowing us to consider how his efforts compared to other prominent collectors of the era, such as J.P. Morgan, William Clements, and Henry Folger.<sup>6</sup>

The first stage of Gerry’s collecting process was to gather upcoming auction catalogs and mark those items he was interested in acquiring. If successful, it appears that his process was then to add the newly acquired titles and purchase information into a temporary catalog (Figure 1).

After a period of time, a book might be marked as having been moved to a more permanent location in his personal library or else to his office (Figure 2).

In the note below from the temporary catalog, Gerry states “All names of books in this book underscored with red ink...have been transferred





# Collection Spotlight: Sleeman



Figure 1: Elbridge T. Gerry. *Temporary catalog* – 1874. [New York: unpublished], 1874.

to the general catalogue.” Although the records often indicate what was moved where, we do not yet know a great deal about how that decision was made.

The general catalog is an interesting mix of handwritten indexing interspersed with typed entries and pasted-in sections of clippings from auction catalogs. By comparing these clippings in the general catalog with known auction catalogs in the collection, we can begin to identify the auctions that Gerry may have purchased from, and from there identify the history of how a particular book came into his collection. The handwritten and



Figure 2: Elbridge T. Gerry. *Temporary catalog* – 1874. [New York: unpublished], 1874. Note located on inside front cover.

typed entries include title, number of volumes and date, and occasionally, but rarely, the price paid. The cut and pasted entries are usually only the same content as published in the auction catalog and do not include price.

Aside from the various catalog entries, we do know the prices he paid for some material, as Gerry would sometimes add a note to the inside cover indicating what he paid for an item and where he purchased the volume, as he did in this example from *Bellewe's Reports* (Figure 3).

The notation in blue providing the price and date purchased is in Gerry's hand. The earlier notation in pencil below reads:

“Bought by me at a sale at Sotheby's & Co. among a lot of books which originally belonged to John Selden. R.H. Hag...”



# Collection Spotlight: Sleeman

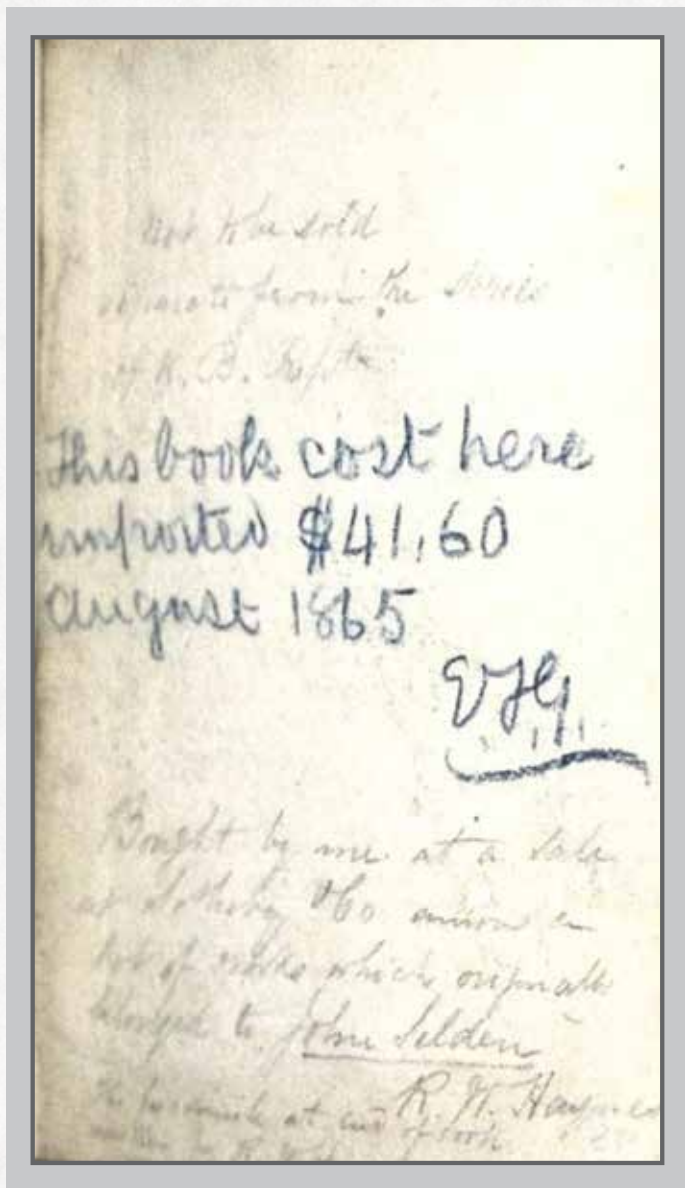


Figure 3: Richard Bellew. *Les ans dv Roy Richard le second, collect' ensembl' hors de les abridgments de Statham, Fitzherbert et Brooke*. London: Imprinted by R. Robinson, ca. 1585. Note located on inside front cover.

The archive of material related to his book collecting efforts also provides some insight to how Gerry *the collector* behaved when in the role of *library owner*. Gerry the library owner was often quite direct with his secretary and, as the note below (one of several that are in the collection)

suggests, his staff were expected to know what the proper places for materials were without being told (Figure 4).

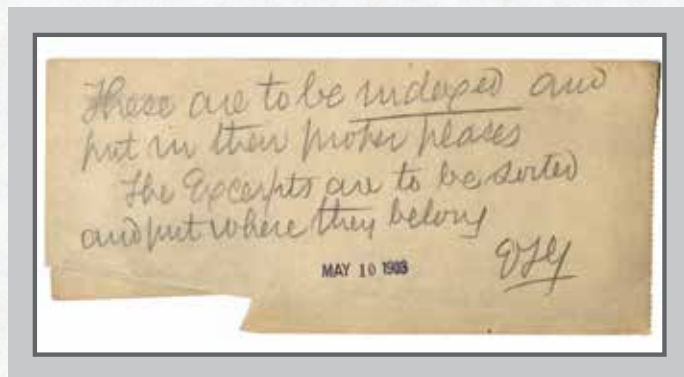


Figure 4: Elbridge T. Gerry. Pamphlets and archival material assembled by Elbridge Gerry, 1860-1910. Library and publishing related materials, Box 25.

Although his was not a lending library, Gerry was willing to loan material from his collection to both practitioners and, as the image here illustrates, to others in the publishing community in New York City. There are several examples of both agreements to lend as well as 'recall' notices in the files (Figure 5).

In 1928, as the new Supreme Court building was first being designed, Senator Peter Goelet Gerry, the son of Elbridge T. Gerry, began to consider how to dispose of his recently deceased (1927) father's book collection. The Gerry mansion in New York was slated to be demolished, so a new home for the collection was needed. Knowing that his great-grandfather (the fifth Vice President of the United States) once contemplated donating his personal library to the government, Senator Gerry thought it would be fitting for his father's collection to fulfill that goal. This objective, combined with the practical need for the Supreme Court to have access to an extensive legal and historical



# Collection Spotlight: Sleeman

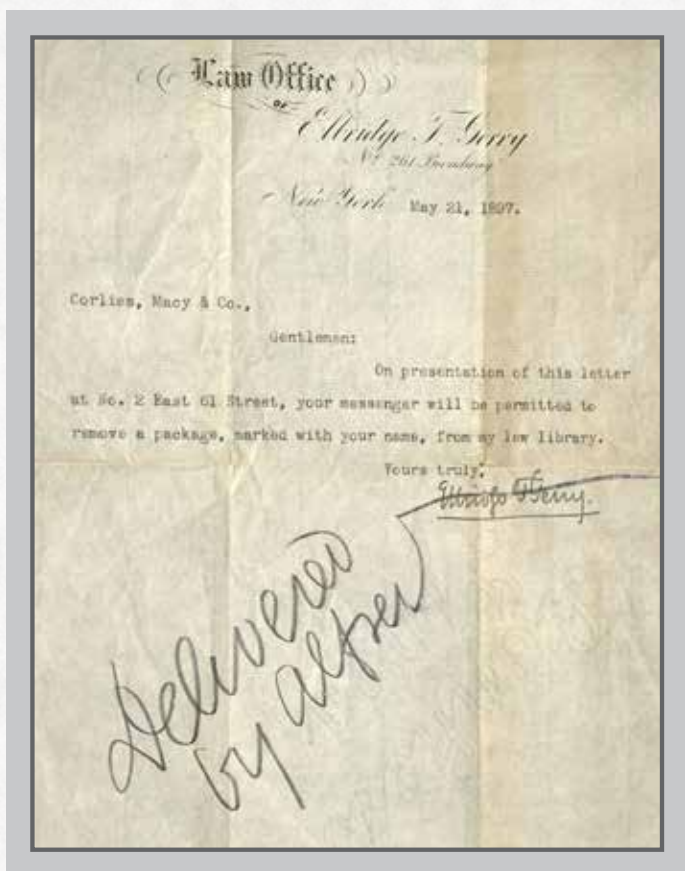


Figure 5: Elbridge T. Gerry. Pamphlets and archival material assembled by Elbridge Gerry, 1860-1910. Library and publishing related materials, Box 23.

collection of its own once established in their new building, led Senator Gerry to work with members of the Court to draft legislation that would allow the government to accept the *Gerry Gift*.<sup>7</sup>

Today the Gerry Collection is housed in several areas of the Library, both in the Rare Book areas and in the general collections. There are two collections of Gerry items: a Rare Book Collection, which contains Anglo-American legal materials up to 1830 (most – but not all- are Gerry items), and a collection of rare and unique Gerry materials from 1831–1930. This latter collection includes the archives and recordkeeping materials described

here. The Gerry Collection books, like all materials at the Library, are for the use of the Court only. The Library is not open to the general public, although special permission may be granted on rare occasion to scholars for short-term research access to unique material upon specific written request to the Librarian. ■

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Many of the oral arguments and court rules are now digitized and available on the Court's website.

<sup>2</sup>For a full examination of Gerry's life and activities see generally: Shelley L. Dowling. *Elbridge Thomas Gerry: an exceptional life in gilded Gotham*. Clark, New Jersey: Talbot Publishing, an Imprint of the Lawbook Exchange, Ltd., 2017.

<sup>3</sup>As described in the prologue of "A Gentle Madness" such an infirmity was how Benjamin Franklin Thomas described his father's passion for books. Nicholas A. Basbanes. *A Gentle Madness: bibliophiles, bibliomanes and the eternal passion for books*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1995. p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>"Personal and otherwise" [article describing the Gerry mansion]. *New York Times*, Feb. 5, 1905. p.X6 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers).

<sup>5</sup>Two examples of works in this category are: 1) Ernest Kent Coulter. *The children in the shadow; with an introduction by Jacob A. Riis*. New York: McBride, Nast & Company, 1913. 2) Elbridge T. Gerry. *Decisions relating to children since 1875, the year of the incorporation of the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children*. New York, [no publisher], 1880.

<sup>6</sup>1) Belle da Costa Greene. *The Pierpont Morgan library; a review of the growth, development and activities of the library during the period between its establishment as an educational institution in February 1924 and the close of the year 1929*. New York [Privately printed by the Plandome Press] 1930. 2) Margaret Maxwell. *Shaping a library: William L. Clements as collector*. Amsterdam: Nico Israel, 1973.3) Andrea E. Mays. *The millionaire and the bard: Henry Folger's obsessive hunt for Shakespeare's first folio*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015.

<sup>7</sup>"An Act Authorizing acceptance from Peter G. Gerry of the gift of the law library of the late Elbridge T. Gerry." S.3640, P.L. No. 314 (April 25, 1928).





# From the Editor

## Special Collections & Archives

**Anne M. Guha**

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The cherry blossoms are at peak bloom as I write this column. I am allergic to basically all things in the plant and animal kingdoms, but I still can't help but take a childlike pleasure in the beauty of the blossoming trees all over the city. It's a lovely reminder of the many little joys throughout the year that, for me, make the D.C. area such a satisfying place to live. There is so much here that makes us unique, from the myriad free museums and galleries, to the striking monuments, memorials, and historical buildings, to the fun, quirky side of our city (like the annual [Running of the Chihuahuas](#)).

Of course, many of the things that make D.C. unique are hidden away. One thing that makes D.C. special if you're of the librarian persuasion is the large number of libraries – law and otherwise – that include interesting archival materials or unique special collections. And so the theme for this issue is Special Collections & Archives.



### Submission Information

*If you would like to write for Law Library Lights, contact Anne M. Guha at [amg300@georgetown.edu](mailto:amg300@georgetown.edu). For information regarding submission deadlines and issue themes, visit the LLSDC website at [www.llsdc.org](http://www.llsdc.org).*

# From the Editor, Continued

The work of our members and colleagues in archives and special collections may be similar to that of those who work in more traditional library settings, but it is also distinct, often in ways that those on the outside may not be aware of. In this issue, we are both highlighting the work of those in archives and special collections and also allowing our members to show off some of the unique materials housed in their libraries or institutions.

We have some truly great features and columns for you in this issue. Special Collections Librarian Hannah Miller writes about the ways in which her day-to-day work is similar but different from that of her fellow librarians at the Georgetown Law Library. Archivist Carole Prietto discusses how she and her team process photographs collected as part of their mission to collect and preserve the permanent historical record of the Georgetown Law Center from its founding in 1870 to the present day.

We have also spotlighted three fascinating collections: Bill Sleeman writes on the origins of the Elbridge T. Gerry Collection at the Supreme Court of the United States Library; Kirstin Nelson gives us a tour of the special collections at the USDA National Agricultural Library; and Hannah returns to share some materials from the John G. Brannon Papers on the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal.

Finally, Savanna Nolan reviews the book *Archives in Libraries: What Librarians and Archivists Need to Know to Work Together*, Tech Talk columnist Jeff Gerhard discusses the tension between access and accountability in digital archives, and our Member Poll reveals what you voted for as your favorite D.C. spring outing.

All this talk of D.C. brings us nicely around to talk about our upcoming summer issue! The final issue in this volume of *Lights* will come out right before our city hosts the AALL Annual Meeting, so its theme will be "Focus on D.C.: AALL Annual Meeting 2019." We encourage contributors to this issue to submit content that might be of interest both to visitors to the area as well as to locals.

Hopefully, we will all learn something new and interesting about our city! Submissions on subjects related to the theme of the AALL Annual Meeting, "Capitalizing On Our Strengths," will also be welcome! ■





# President's Column

## A Busy & Exciting Start to 2019

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Keeping with my unintentional theme... it is once again raining as I sit down to write. I hope everyone has had a happy and healthy start to 2019, even if the DC weather hasn't decided which season we are in.

We are off to a strong educational start with FCIL, ALL and PLL SIS events that have already occurred or are planned for early in the year.

On the Executive Board level, we are in the early discussion phases for our annual Town Hall/business meeting and our Sandy Peterson lecture. As stipulated in our bylaws and procedures manual, we are required to have "at least three Regular Meetings each year," which includes our Town Hall, usually occurring in April or May.

Our biannual Sandy Peterson Memorial Lecture is a special event offered by LLSDC. This event honors Sandy, who served both locally and nationally as an adjunct professor at the University of Maryland Library School, president of LLSDC, and as a AALL board member.

In 1998, the LLSDC Board approved the creation of the Memorial Lecture, which should feature a speaker "of high stature in whatever discipline he/she represents and should have accomplishments that would attract attention, draw attendance and enrich those who attend. The topic or subject of the lecture would not be limited to librarianship or the law."





# President's Column, Continued

In addition, “[t]he goal of the lecture should be to offer all members of the Society an opportunity to expand their horizons personally or professionally in ways not usually provided by Society educational programs. The regular occurrence of such a lecture would serve as a very visible and continuing memorial to Sandy... [and] promote discussion and networking among members.” Please stay tuned for more information on this exciting lecture, which will occur in late spring/early summer.

Please don't quote me on it, but as of now at least one, if not both, events will focus on career growth - a topic near and dear to my heart. Some of us have clear professional goals, whereas others find a more indirect and meandering path.

Our (current) goal for the Town Hall is to bring together a panel of LLSDC members, covering a range of experiences and library types, for a conversation around career journeys. In addition to the usual “how did you end up in law librarianship,” we'll hear from our esteemed panelists about key events, lessons learned, and other takeaways they have had along the way.

If you have certain questions you'd like asked and answered, please send them to me! Don't worry -- we will also send out an official announcement and call for questions when the event is formally introduced.

I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming spring events! As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have program ideas or if there is something else LLSDC can do for you. ■





# Special Collections: A Library within a Library

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“We are not makers of history. We are made by history.”

— *Martin Luther King, Jr.*



*Courtesy of Georgetown Law Archives.*

Special collections and archives departments are important parts of a library. They often house and curate access to materials like rare books, institutional records, manuscripts and, in some cases, works of art. They are very much like a mini-library within a library. The special collections department has many of the same processes and functions that the larger library generally does and we frequently interface with our colleagues in other departments as part of our day-to-day activities. For the most part, these day-to-day activities touch on all of those normal library functions and then some. This article gives my perspective as a Special Collections Librarian in an academic law library.

Special collections and archives are of course driven by the mission of their parent library; however, they also have an additional mission of their own, one that might seem obvious but carries with it procedures that many may not be aware of. I term this additional mission “stewardship” of rare one-of-a-kind material important to the historical record. Indeed, libraries in general are stewards of books and knowledge, and in special



collections that also comes with the responsibilities of preservation, conservation, format migration, and processing.

Most people regard the special collections department as a place where reference questions are answered and access to archival materials is provided. Beyond that, we also engage in collection development for our materials, cataloging, appraisal, donor relations, archival processing, and work with technology (yes, even as stewards of old stuff; for example, there are obsolete media migration issues to grapple with). In an academic library setting, we also interact with students and faculty.

How does that look from day to day? When our staff are not assisting patrons or answering reference questions, they are often working with Access Services, Cataloging Department, and Library Administration, to name a few. For example, in my department, we work with Access Services to ensure that in our new library system our rare books don't show up as loanable. We work with the Cataloging department on placing item note information in the records for our rare books for the new consortia catalog environment. With Library Administration, we handle donor agreements and deeds of gift.

There are a few areas of special collections work that do not always interface with another specific department in our parent library but which are important to our mission. One area is migrating legacy media like Beta, VHS, and magnetic tape media into usable and accessible formats, such as mp4s and mp3s. We also do outreach to promote our materials and help illustrate their relevance to researchers. And finally, what I call the unicorn of special collections work -- partly because no one ever sees it happen except special collections and archival folks -- we do processing, which is magical because this most important process brings to life boxes of paper in ways that researchers dream about.

Processing is, in my opinion, our core function; it provides access to and context for the manuscript materials that we steward. There are both intellectual and clerical components to what we call "processing," each of which are very important. The more clerical processes include the foldering, boxing, and arranging of paper materials, as well as entering the collection into a bibliographic database like Archivist Toolkit or Archives Space. The more intellectual processes come in arranging the materials into a hierarchy -- for example, collection-series-file level description. A lot of thought has to go into the intellectual arrangement of a collection; we consider not just the materials themselves but also the needs of the researcher. Processing makes it easier for a researcher to locate materials relevant to their research, but it is impossible to highlight everything any researcher might ever be interested in. Much like cataloging, we also create subject headings for our collections. We use various notes such as historical, biographical, scope, and content to give our collections context and a place in history. All of this culminates in the creation of a finding aid or inventory that then becomes the guide to navigating the documents and their history.

There are so many facets of special collections that work each day is never the same. I have never worked in a place that is so vibrant and varied in its day-to-day work. That is why I love working in special collections; I get to be a part of all aspects of library work, interface with my colleagues in all areas of the library, and -- most importantly -- bring our materials to those who would use them. I leave you with this quote from C. Wright Mills, which sums up for me the importance of special collections and archival work and conveys my deep appreciation for the work that my fellow archivists do: "Neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both." ■





# Collection Spotlight

## National Agricultural Library Special Collections: More than Seed Catalogs

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*Figure 1: Abraham Lincoln Building of the United States National Agricultural Library, Wikimedia Commons, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=42625939>*

The National Agricultural Library (NAL)<sup>1</sup> serves as the library of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and is open to the public. NAL, one of five national libraries of the United States, houses one of the world's largest collections devoted to agriculture and its related sciences. Congress

established NAL on May 15, 1862, and the library served as a departmental library until 1962, when the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture officially designated it as the National Agricultural Library. The library has more than 8.5 million items and more than 100 staff, including contractors and university cooperators, under the leadership of NAL Director Paul Wester. Located in Beltsville, Maryland, 15 miles north of downtown Washington, D.C., NAL serves patrons by providing access to our physical collection, AGRICOLA, PubAg, Ag Data Commons, NAL Digital Collections and more. A separate USDA law library exists within the Office of the General Counsel, and while we collaborate on projects, it is a separate entity.

NAL also curates and houses an extensive Special Collections. The collection includes rare books, manuscript collections, nursery and seed trade catalogs, photographs, and posters from the 1500s to the present. Materials cover a variety of agricultural subjects such as horticulture, entomology, poultry sciences, and natural history, including some international publications. NAL Special Collections is charged with arranging, describing, preserving, and making available rare



# Collection Spotlight: Nelson

materials considered significant to the history of agriculture and the USDA. Individuals and organizations, including USDA scientists or related agencies, have donated collections of documents. The Special Collections Reading Room, open to the public by appointment, provides researchers with reference services and access to rare and unique materials. Rare materials are housed in a secure, temperature- and humidity-controlled environment. Typical users include USDA scientists and administrators, authors, publishers, historians, students, faculty, policy makers, extension specialists, entrepreneurs, farmers, librarians, and museum staff. In fiscal year 2018, the Special Collections website received 196,076 unique page views. The most popular collections and exhibits are “USDA’s Contributions to Veterinary Parasitology” (exhibit), the Rare Book Collection, the Manuscript Collections (search page), the Historic Poster Collection, the Smokey Bear Collection, and the Nursery and Seed Trade Catalog Collection. NAL Special Collections, the NAL Agricultural Law Program, and the USDA Office of General Counsel (OGC) currently are collaborating on a digitization and online access project for USDA OGC legislative histories. This project is currently in the digitization phase. As part of my work with the Ag Law Program, I am researching additional historical collections related to USDA policy and memos as potential future digitization projects.

NAL’s Special Collections, led by Susan Fugate, is a unit of the library’s Data Production Division. Susan has served at NAL for 36 years and has managed Special Collections for nearly 25. She was instrumental in improving the physical space for rare and aging items. She currently has a staff of seven, including librarians and support staff, and

has had numerous volunteers and library school interns over the years. The collection itself contains an array of items beyond print materials. It includes fiber and seed collections, as well as paintings, photographs, engravings and many artifacts collected by USDA scientists. In working with Susan, I’ve seen her passion for the breadth and reach of NAL’s Special Collections. During a recent conversation about her work, Susan emphasized: “Being located in the Washington, DC area provides us so much opportunity to collaborate with and learn from the many institutions of cultural importance in the area, including conservation centers, local university libraries, the Library of Congress, the National Library of Medicine, and the National Archives. Also, we learn from every researcher with whom we share collections.”

USDA built the NAL building in the late 1960s and included no specialized unit for Special Collections. By the 1990s it was increasingly difficult to control temperature, relative humidity, and air quality for unique and rare items. In 1999, the architectural firm SmithGroup designed and oversaw the construction of an enclosure of an entire floor of the building, creating optimal environmental control and the highest level of security. With 90,000 cubic feet of space, the unit is a highly specialized storage environment designed to preserve rare items. The floor has a separate air handling system and extensive filtration to remove unwanted gases and particulates. All materials used in construction meet the NARA standard for preservation spaces. In addition to the Special Collections areas of the library, NAL’s general collection is full of prized and first-issue publications. Our stacks hold entire runs of numerous serials, including National Geographic (1889), *Memoirs of the American Academy of*





# Collection Spotlight: Nelson

Arts and Sciences (1783) and the American Agriculturalist (1842).

## Manuscript Collection

The Manuscript Collection contains nearly 500 manuscript and archival collections, which span the 19th to 21st centuries. This collection includes papers of individuals who worked for or were associated with the USDA or who were involved in agricultural activities. The collections contain materials such as correspondence, field notes, journals, photographs, publications, and other items related to the creators' work. Many collections include finding aids that provide a history of the associated individual or organization and the content of the collection.

One popular manuscript collection is that of [Charles Valentine Riley](#). Riley (1843-1895) was a visual artist and entomologist in the mid-19th century. In 1878 Riley became the Chief Entomologist for the USDA, a position he held for over 17 years. He advocated for the establishment of the Branch of Economic Ornithology as part of the Entomology Division at the USDA that is now in the Department of Interior. During the 1880s, Riley also worked with the U.S. National Museum (now the Smithsonian Institution), to which he bestowed a collection of over 100,000 insect specimens after his death.

The Charles Valentine Riley Papers Collection consists of letters to Riley, unpublished lectures, notes, photographs, news clippings, reports, reprints, paintings, drawings, sketch books, books, and other artifacts. The Charles Valentine Riley Memorial Foundation Records include correspondence, agreements, minutes, financial records, briefing books, and publications and reports produced by the foundation. The Charles



Figure 2: Plate no. 48. Riley Sketchbook (1858)  
Unknown. 1858. "Plate no. 48 from Riley's Sketchbook." *Special Collections, USDA National Agricultural Library*. Accessed March 22, 2019, <https://www.nal.usda.gov/exhibits/speccoll/items/show/318>.

Valentine Riley Printing Blocks consist of 1,211 woodcuts, electrotypes (electroplated lead molds of original engravings), and metal casts used to illustrate Riley's publications.

## Rare Book Collection

NAL's rare book collection is strong in botany, natural history, zoology, and entomology. There are published writings of many great herbalists of the sixteenth century such as Brunfels, Bock, and Fuchs, as well as renowned works on flowers and fruits from both the 18th and 19th centuries.

Other unique items include primary source literature documenting agricultural observations, experiments, and practices in America, England, and Europe. In addition to important travel accounts by early naturalists, there is an extensive collection of early plant descriptions and original





# Collection Spotlight: Nelson

the original artwork or written text that you can browse or search at the above link.

## Image Galleries

The Special Collections Image Galleries are an excellent source of curated, digitalized content. Each gallery contains images of essential or rare items. For example, the Historic Poster Collection includes material that traces the development of the poultry industry, as well as posters on insect control, plant protection, and the role of agriculture in World War I. These historic posters present unique documentation on past efforts to disseminate agricultural information at national, state, and local levels. The Manuscript Images Collection covers 23 individual sub-collections, such as USDA History, George Washington Carver and Thomas Jefferson.



Figure 3: *Vitis, Vinifera* (The Vine) - Plate 153 (1771) Blackwell, Elizabeth. 1771. "Vitis, Vinifera (The Vine) - Plate 153." Special Collections, USDA National Agricultural Library. Accessed March 22, 2019, <https://www.nal.usda.gov/exhibits/speccoll/items/show/560>.

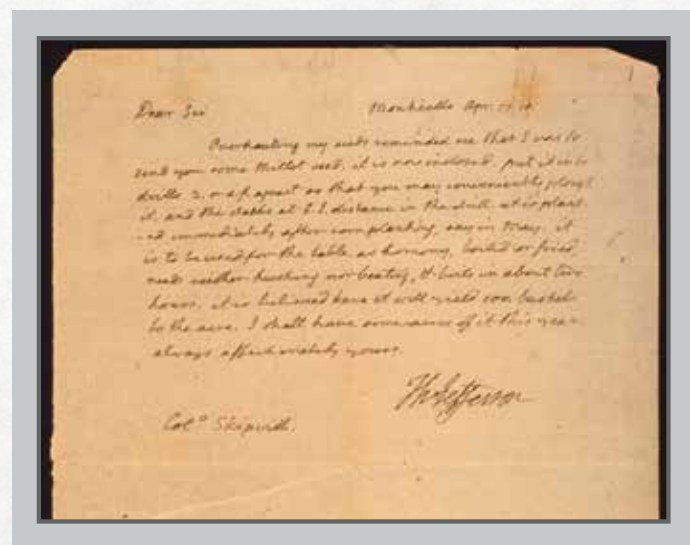


Figure 4: April 17, 1810. Monticello Thomas Jefferson to Col. Skipwith, concerning millet seed.

Jefferson, Thomas. 1810. "Letter from Jefferson, Thomas to Col. Skipwith, concerning millet seed.." Special Collections, USDA National Agricultural Library. Accessed March 25, 2019, <https://www.nal.usda.gov/exhibits/speccoll/items/show/509>.

works by the eminent botanist Carl Linnaeus. The Linnaeus rare book collection includes over 300 books and dissertations written by or about the "Father of Taxonomy."

Special Collections has digitized images and plates from many rare books. The [Rare Books Image Gallery](#) is strong in a number of agricultural sciences. Each image is a digital reproduction of





# Collection Spotlight: Nelson

The Thomas Jefferson collection is very popular and consists of 11 letters to, from, and about Thomas Jefferson (1786-1819). Agricultural topics include nursery stock purchased by Jefferson, requests for appointments to federal agricultural offices, letters from Jefferson transferring "millet seed" and "succory seed" to various acquaintances in the United States and Canada, and a letter

from "Lord Sheffield" of the Board of Agriculture in London, England, commenting on Jefferson's invention of a "mould board" plough attachment for use in farming.

Another popular collection of images is the USDA Pomological Watercolor Collection. This extensive collection documents fruit and nut varieties developed by growers or introduced by USDA plant explorers around the turn of the 20th century. The USDA commissioned approximately twenty-one artists to create technically accurate paintings that were then used to illustrate USDA bulletins, yearbooks, and other series distributed to growers and gardeners across America. USDA collected the watercolors from 1886 to 1942, with the majority created between 1894 and 1916, including 7,584 watercolor paintings, lithographs and line drawings, including 3,807 images of apples. All images in the Pomological Collection can be downloaded in high resolution, making them suitable for wall art, photography or inclusion in published works.

## Exhibits

Special Collections has created numerous exhibits over the years, both digital and physical. Eighteen categories of exhibits are compiled on the Exhibits page. Physical exhibits are on display in the library's reading room and are open to the public, while NAL loans others to organizations or creates temporary exhibits for meetings and conferences. Digital exhibits are made of rare materials that cannot be handled outside of the Special Collections unit. Notable exhibits that are available include the Illustrated Expedition of North American (1932 - 1834), the Frank N. Meyer exhibit (collector of the germplasm used to develop the Meyer lemon), and the Alvin L.

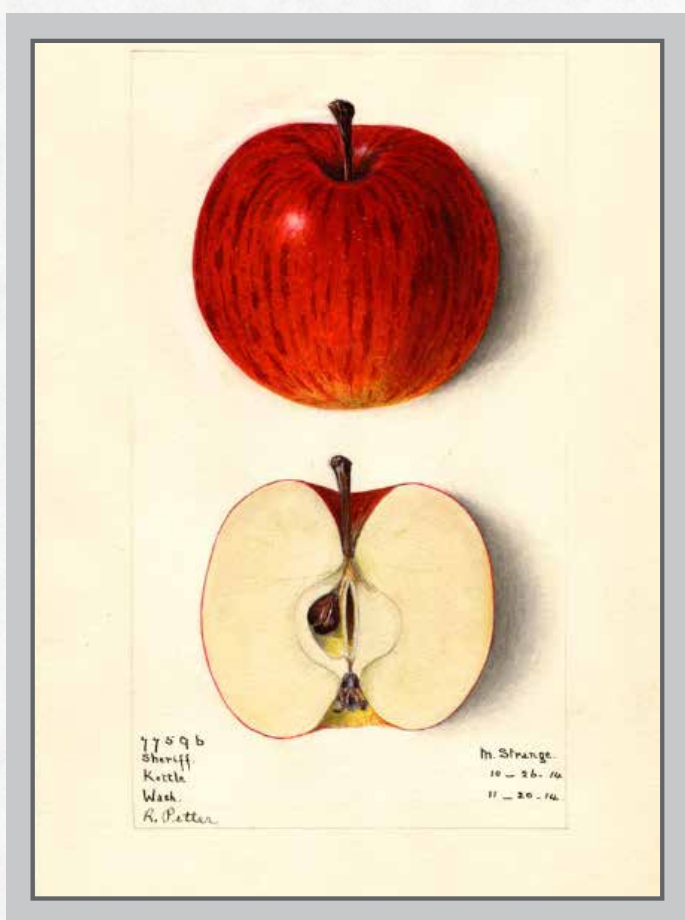


Figure 5: Scientific name: *Malus domestica* (Sherriff).

Artist: Strange, M. 17 x 25 cm. Year: 1914

Strange, M., "Malus domestica, Specimin number 77596." 1914. Accessed March 25, 2019, <https://usdawatercolors.nal.usda.gov/pom/catalog.xhtml?id=POM00003000&start=40&searchText=apple&searchField=&sortField=>



# Collection Spotlight: Nelson

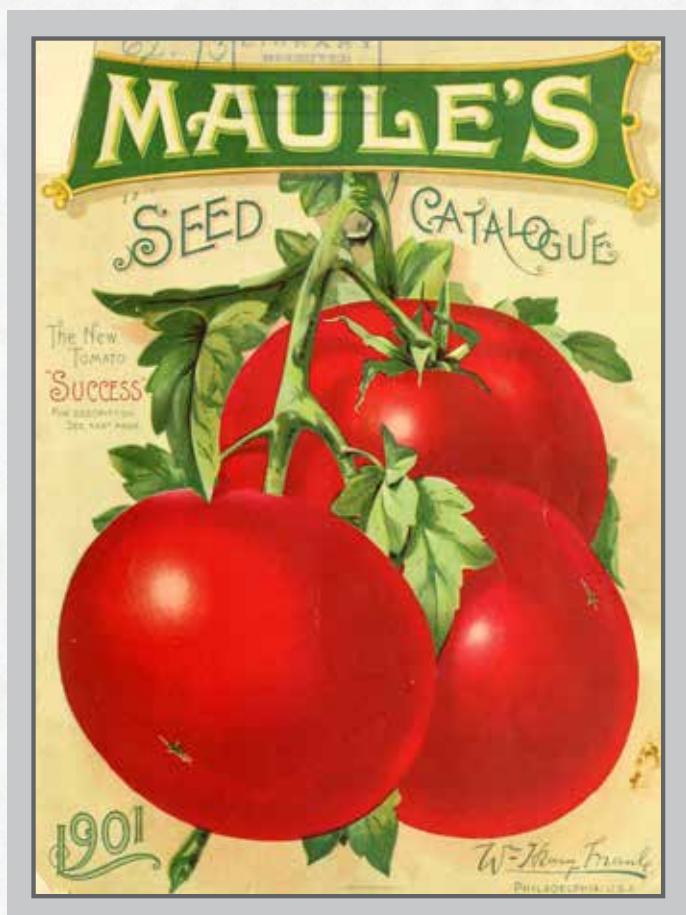


Figure 6: Maule's seed catalogue : 1901 by Wm. Henry Maule (Firm); Henry G. Gilbert Nursery and Seed Trade Catalog Collection

Unknown. 1901. "Maule's Seed Catalogue." Special Collections, USDA National Agricultural Library. Accessed April 2, 2019, <https://www.nal.usda.gov/exhibits/speccoll/items/show/893>.

Young Collection on Agent Orange. One popular image exhibit is the [Henry G. Gilbert Nursery and Seed Catalog Collection](#). The collection consists of over 200,000 American and foreign catalogs. The earliest catalogs date from the late 1700s, but

the collection is strongest from the 1890s to the present. Each image is a digital reproduction of the original artwork. The catalogs hold a wealth of information for researchers, who frequently use them to document the introduction of specific types of seeds into the U.S., list prices of plants during a particular period, or provide early methods of cleaning, preserving, and shipping seeds.

NAL's Special Collections continues to grow due to ongoing outreach to individuals and organizations. Special Collections staff cultivate relationships through association memberships, conference attendance, and by actively engaging with other special collections librarians. Organizations and individuals who wish to donate materials also approach NAL. Special Collections carefully reviews gifted content to ensure that it meets NAL's collection development policy and is within the scope of the collection. While the budget is limited, funds are sometimes available for NAL to transport collections or purchase print materials that enhance the collection; however, donors contribute most new holdings.

Want to visit NAL's Special Collections? We are open to the public by appointment. [Contact Special Collections](#) at least 24 hours in advance to ensure that staff and research materials will be available for you. ■

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>USDA National Agricultural Library.





# More Than Paper: Processing Photographs at the Georgetown Law Center Archives

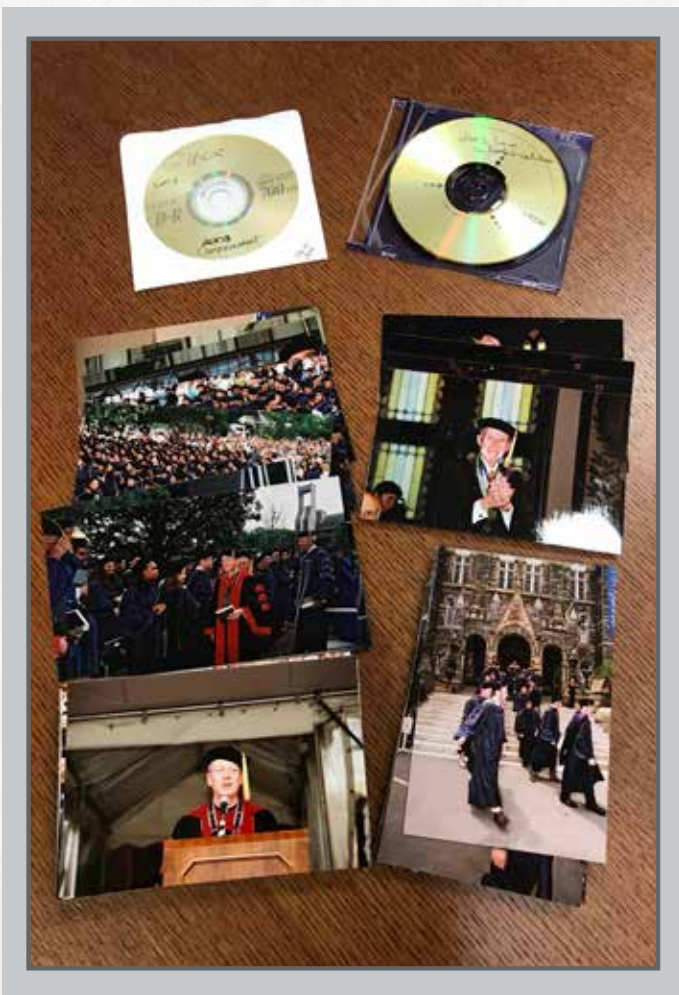
**Carole Prietto**

Archivist, Georgetown Law Center  
cap166@georgetown.edu

The Georgetown Law Center Archives (“Archives”) collects the permanent historical record of the Law Center from its founding in 1870 to the present day. The archives is not limited to paper records. The collections encompass all formats, including photographs, sound recordings, film, and video. An increasing number of born-digital records are coming to Archives as well.

In 2018, our Archives received 25 record storage boxes of photographs from the Communications Office, consisting of images of people, buildings, and events at the Law Center from the late 1990s to the present. This accession consists of prints, slides, and negatives, along with hundreds of CDs and DVDs with born-digital images. It afforded us an opportunity to bring the photo collection up to date, as well as to review the arrangement of our existing photograph collection and develop a workflow for the ingest of born-digital images.

Processing the analog portion of the collection (prints, slides, negatives, and contact sheets)





involves the traditional steps of paper processing. The analog images are arranged in broad series: people, buildings, class photos, groups, and events. New photos are added to existing folders, or new folders are created as needed. Individual photos are housed in archival sleeves; duplicates are weeded as necessary.

Processing the digital images involves some special steps. For the past several years, Archives has been creating 300 dpi TIFF masters of our entire print image collection. Newly-received analog images will also be scanned as time permits; however, for born-digital images a new workflow has been developed, based on best practices in the archival profession.

For each CD, the steps are:

- (1) copy images from the original CD to my local computer;
  - (2) use file renaming tools (A.F.5 Rename Your Files and Better File Rename) to normalize file names according to our in-house filename conventions;
  - (3) capture as much descriptive metadata as we can about the photographer and the event. This is a combination of recording information from the CD and using Adobe Bridge to examine the metadata embedded in the image. Any information we record is put onto a plain-text file which is housed in the same directory as the images themselves.
- Next, (4) a copy of the original images is transferred to Box, for use copies;
- (5) photo editing software (IrfanView) is used to create archival masters in 300 dpi TIFF;
  - (6) transfer archival masters are transferred to the off-site server; and
  - (7) Bag-It is used to capture checksums, file manifests, and other digital preservation data

about each digital file. The size of TIFF files combined with the sheer number of images means that archival master photographs take up a great deal of disk space – currently 2.1 terabytes and growing.

Digital files have an organizational scheme that mirrors the arrangement of the physical photos – people, buildings, class photos, events, and groups.

Having a large collection of well-organized, high-quality digital images facilitates our ability to provide timely service to Law Center offices. For example, a few months ago Archives received a rush request from the Law Center’s Communications office. The Dean was about to make a major announcement and needed a slide show depicting the development of the campus. Within 24 hours, Archives delivered (by way of Box, which we use for digital delivery) over 4,000 images related to Law Center buildings.

In 2020, the Law Center will celebrate its 150th anniversary; Archives is already working with the Communications Office on providing the images needed to support the anniversary. The demand for historical images will only grow as the anniversary draws nearer. Implementing digital preservation best practices will allow our digital images to serve the Law Center many years into the future. ■

**“Having a large collection of well-organized, high-quality digital images facilitates our ability to provide timely service to Law Center offices.”**





# Collection Spotlight

## Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal – Two Sides to the Trial: The Defense

**Hannah Miller-Kim**

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“...I gave my all for the preservation of international justice. Honestly, I think we have performed a service to the whole world in proving how ridiculous it is to attempt to convict a group of men on purely political charges,” wrote John G. Brannon on November 14, 1947 in a letter to his brother Bernard. John Brannon had arrived in Tokyo on May 17th, 1946, about five years after the attack on Pearl Harbor. He was an American attorney from Kansas City, Missouri, appointed by MacArthur to defend Class A Japanese war criminal Osami Nagano, Chief of the Imperial Japanese Navy General Staff, in his trial before the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal.

Georgetown University Law Library’s Special Collections has over 150 letters written by John Brannon to his brother over a period of 3 years (1946-1949), along with numerous photographs, manuscripts and two 16mm films (John G. Brannon Papers). It is a collection teeming with fervent American patriotism, Truman politics and personal reflections of a transitional time in world history. In his letters, Brannon discusses and describes:

Japanese culture, his defense strategies, the Tribunal, the Defense team, mounting U.S. tension with Russia, and the stigma attached to American attorneys defending the enemy after the war in the Pacific. His writing is a vibrant personal view of the inner workings of, and politics behind, an important historic and international trial. The Law Library has digitized the letters from the John G. Brannon Papers and they are available for viewing online.<sup>1</sup>

The Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal has often been viewed with controversy. Historians have argued whether this was one of the first tribunals to address war atrocities. Others claim that it was a sham and only a stage for “victor’s justice.” Historian Richard B. Finn notes, “World War II was the first major conflict in history in which the victors carried out trials and punishment of thousands of persons in the defeated nations for ‘crimes against peace’ and ‘crimes against humanity,’ two new and broadly defined categories of international crime.”<sup>2</sup> The post-World War II War Crimes Tribunals were the first to include violations





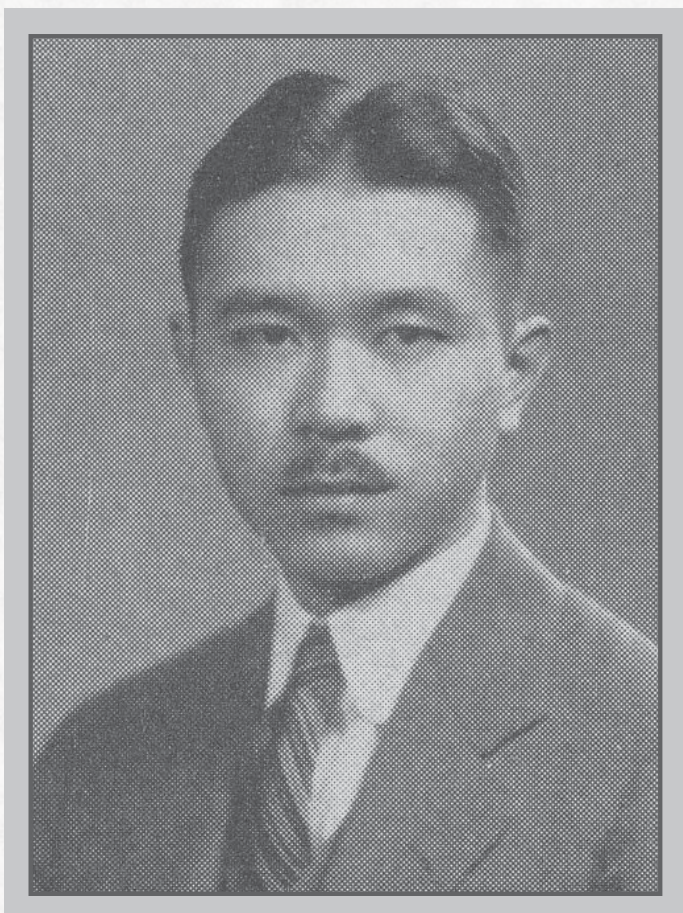
# Collection Spotlight: Miller-Kim



*Figure 1: John Brannon; Image courtesy of Georgetown Law Library Special Collections.*

of human rights as a criminal offense. Furthermore, the Tribunals at Tokyo and Nuremberg helped to set the groundwork for the development of "...a firmly established set of rules and principles for international cooperation in dealing with crimes under international law."<sup>3</sup>

The Brannon Papers paint a troubling picture of the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal. They detail some of the difficulties the defense team faced during the trial. Brannon had a personal sense of duty to



*Figure 2: George Yamaoka; Image courtesy of Georgetown Law Library Special Collections.*

defend those who stood accused of war crimes. He noted that "...the evidence for the accused was presented by none too skillful but persistent and courageous American Lawyers; the Tribunal was literally forced to mentally concede there was two sides to [the] story of Japan's guilt" (Brannon Papers, May 28, 1948).

The acquisition of the John G. Brannon Papers complements the Law Library's George Yamaoka Collection, which was donated by Georgetown



# Collection Spotlight: Miller-Kim



*Figure 3: Brannon and Yamaoka with other members of the Defense Team. Image courtesy of Georgetown Law Library Special Collections.*

Law alumnus George Yamaoka (L'1928). George Yamaoka was also one of the select group of American attorneys appointed by General MacArthur in 1945 to help in the defense of those Japanese who were accused of war crimes. His collection contains Tribunal proceeding transcripts and a multitude of defense documents and exhibits from both the Prosecution and the Defense, among other interesting items. Despite the circumstances, the Defense's zeal and passion toward "the preservation of international justice" is a testament to past, present and future lawyers (Brannon Papers, November 14, 1947). The John G. Brannon Papers and the George Yamaoka

Collection are well worth a look. They are both open for research.

For more information on these manuscript collections contact Hannah Miller-Kim at Georgetown University Law Library Special Collections at 202/661-6602 or email [htm@georgetown.edu](mailto:htm@georgetown.edu). ■

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>See <https://repository.library.georgetown.edu/handle/10822/555530>.

<sup>2</sup>PBS, American Experience: The Tokyo War Crimes Trials (1946-1948), <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/macarthur/peopleevents/pandeAMEX101.html>.

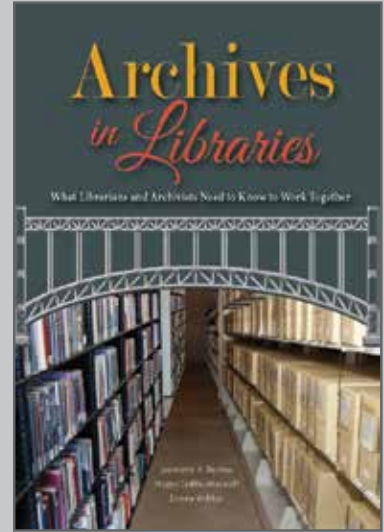
<sup>3</sup>Roger S. Clark, Nuremberg and Tokyo in Contemporary Perspective, p. 185.





# Book Review

**Jeannette A. Bastian, Megan Sniffin-Marinoff, & Donna Webber, *Archives in Libraries: What Librarians and Archivists Need to Know to Work Together* (Chicago, IL: Society of American Archivists, 2015)**



**Savanna Nolan**

Reference Librarian and Adjunct Professor, Georgetown University  
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Keeping with our “Special Collections and Archives” theme, for this issue I decided to review *Archives in Libraries: What Librarians and Archivists Need to Know to Work Together*, published by the Society of American Archivists. While the title indicates a two-way information transfer, the book focuses more on what libraries (and even more specifically, library administrators) should understand about archivists and the archival/special collections process, rather than the other way around.

When looking at things through a real world context, this approach makes sense; outside of D.C., with its somewhat blended institutions like the Library of Congress and libraries within various Smithsonian museums, archives are often a small operational unit within a library.

For example, the book begins with a horror story that seems highly probable: as an anonymous small university anticipates its centennial, the university president asks the library director to collect historical materials to use as part of the celebration. After collecting all of this material and successfully showcasing it for the centennial, the director realizes she has a two-room archive in the basement “for which neither she nor her staff were prepared,” especially in light of access issues, security needs, and preservation standards (p. 1-2). As I was reading, this example stuck with me and made me wonder if the authors’ goal was to create a short, quick book that would at least give library



# Book Review, Continued

directors enough background to avoid the catastrophe of an unplanned archive.

The way the authors describe it, the heart of miscommunications between librarians and archivists seems to be similar to the difference between British and American English. Both professions have missions that revolve around the organization of information, but librarians' core dogma stems from Ranganathan and focuses on access for the reader, while archivists focus more on protecting the collection itself. This "protection" can be either physical-- like incorporating proper preservation conditions— or more in line with archival organizational theories that may not occur to librarians, such as keeping the collection in the order in which it was received from the donor so as to preserve the historical context. Similarly, while we share common terms like "processing" or "series," the definitions are not the same. For example, while libraries use the word "series" to describe related but separately published

works, archives use the term to describe "an organizational unit within a collection" (p.32).

One of the most intriguing sections of the book discussed the divide between archival and librarian education systems. I had no idea that from 1934 until the 1990s, archival training generally took place in history departments and was seen as entirely different from library science. Furthermore, I was a bit surprised to learn that the Society of American Archivists has never been involved in accrediting archivist educational programs, as the American Library Association does with respect to librarian education (p. 42-45).

My one hesitation about this book has to do with the methodology and sample size used to compile data. The various vignettes, quotes, and generalizations in the text are based on the experience of the three authors and "e-mail, telephone, and face-to-face interviews with fifteen archivists and eight library directors" (p.7). This small sample size is a bit troubling to me, especially considering the significant impact that variations in library size and funding can have and the book's purportedly wide coverage of both academic and public libraries. I understand that the authors' general goal seems to have been to create a quick infusion of archival knowledge for library administrators, and I even appreciate the concerns for anonymity discussed in the methodology. Still, I wonder how much more information could have been gleaned from both additional case studies and references to specific institutions that the reader could use to gauge realistic trajectories for their own plans. ■

**"One of the most intriguing sections of the book discussed the divide between archival and librarian education systems. I had no idea that from 1934 until the 1990s, archival training generally took place in history departments and was seen as entirely different from library science."**





# Member Spotlight

*Have you recently changed positions? Received a promotion? Participated in any professional events, conferences, or symposiums? Retired? Published? Been elected to serve in a professional organization? Anything else? Let LLSDC know by submitting your news and announcements to our editorial team. Photos are always welcome!*

## Letty Limbach

Letty Limbach retired on January 3 after 37 years with the DC Court system. She was Librarian at DC Court of Appeals for 19 years and Librarian at Superior Court for 18 years. Congratulations, Letty!

## Erica Harbeson

Erica Harbeson recently left Arnold & Porter's DC office to join Kelly McGlynn at Skadden Arps. Good luck, Erica!



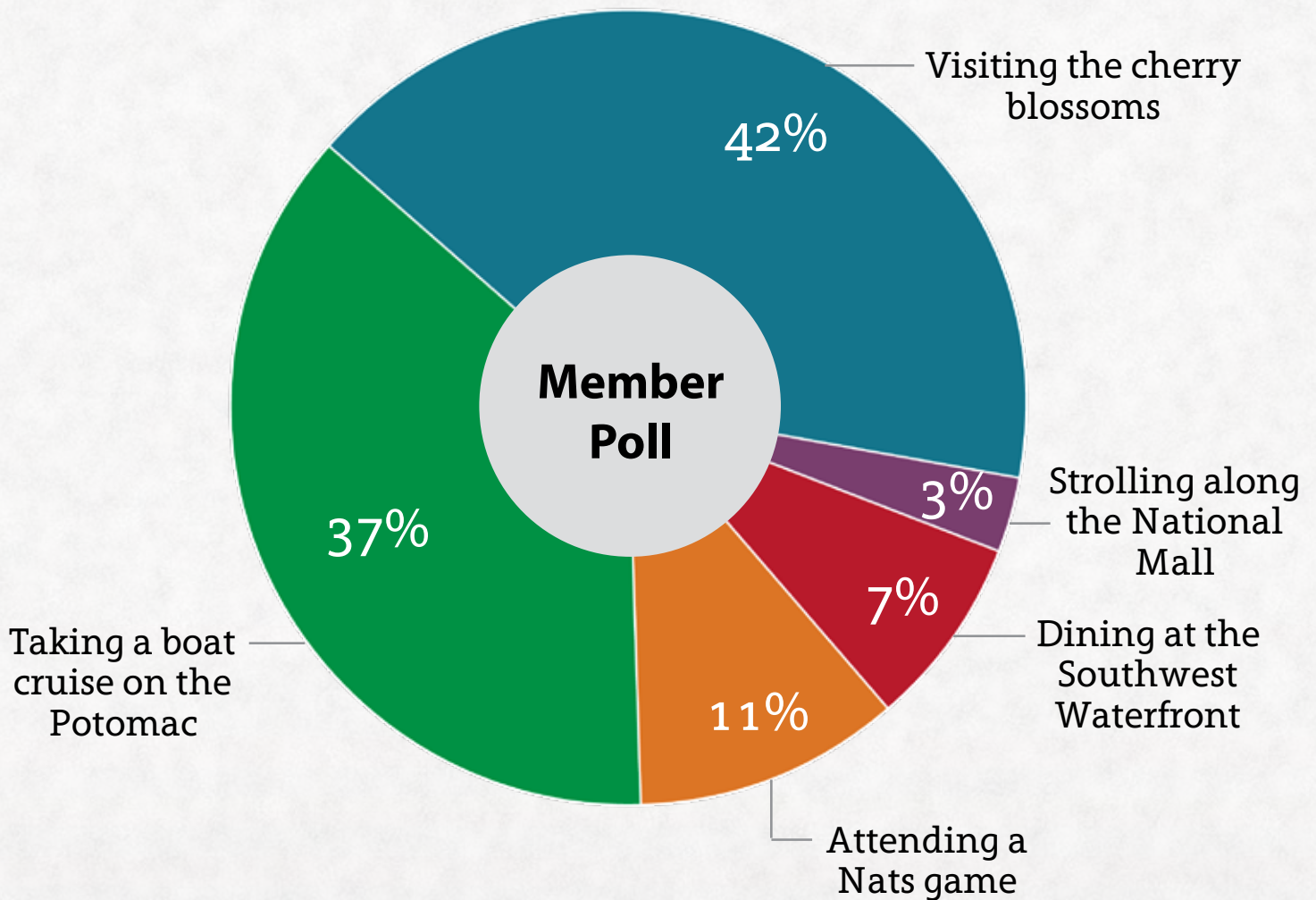
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LLSDC members are encouraged to keep an eye out for announcements about our scholarships and grants. You can find information about these opportunities – including application forms and guidelines — at: <https://www.llsdc.org/scholarships-grants>



# Member Spotlight, Continued

What's your favorite spring outing in D.C.?





## Balancing Act: The Tension Between Access and Accountability as the Real Work in Digital Archives

*Jeff Gerhard*

*Digital Initiatives Librarian, Georgetown Law Library  
gerhardj@georgetown.edu*



“Strange internet find,” read the subject line of a recent email from an old friend. He’d stumbled upon part of an article about our long-ago high school graduation, listing classmates who’d won awards like “Unsung Hero” and “Medal for Excellence in French.” This article, a relic from an era just before newspapers had websites, had made its way from newsprint to microfilm before eventually being digitized. It’s now available for purchase from a commercial database of digitized newspapers, in case I was really excited to read the complete list and rediscover who won the “Medal for Excellence in the Biological Sciences.”

The above is an innocuous example of a familiar phenomenon. As present-day technology seeps into the past, it re- and decontextualizes the words, images, documents, and artifacts of our personal and shared cultural histories. Since my work involves digitizing and providing access to a variety of materials, I’m attentive to the ways digitized content encounters contemporary culture.

Pieces of the past reemerge unexpectedly, inspiring wry social media feeds full of historical photos, providing material for celebrated documentary series, or launching serious political scandals. For digital archives, such re-use is typically embraced as a demonstration of relevancy and a means of engaging with an audience broader than the dedicated researchers who visit physical archives. We digitize materials in large part because we want them to be used.

In recent months, images from 1980s yearbooks made national headlines on two separate occasions. Neither of these cases originated with library or archives scans, but digitizing old yearbooks is a



# Tech Talk, Continued

common activity at academic libraries, including the law library where I work. In each of these scandals, powerful men from the states adjoining Washington, D.C. -- a Supreme Court nominee and a governor -- were confronted with troubling but inconclusive yearbook pages from the past.

I'm of two minds about these events. I believe that public figures should be held accountable for offensive behavior and statements from throughout their lives; this is particularly true for government officials whose positions are a privilege rather than a right. So these historical documents are socially useful. However, it's also obvious that the young people editing and contributing to the yearbooks could not have anticipated that their contents would be widely accessible, decades after publication, via digital surrogates. I'm concerned about the impact and appropriateness of permanently preserving the ephemeral and making it available to the general public.

Like the small-town newspaper that covered my high school graduation, yearbooks fall into a category of content that was once *public but obscure* but has radically different properties once digitized. Even under the strictest control regime, digital content is inherently subject to datafication: it can be parsed, topic-modelled, measured, compared, and correlated by rapidly-developing artificial intelligence. In fact, this algorithmic approach is necessary for handling digital content at scale, so its eventual use on digitized material is inevitable.

For content exposed on the web, take all of the above and add in searchability and discoverability, plus the potential for full-scale copying, re-purposing, and misinterpretation by humans who come across it. It's impossible to ignore the bad-faith actors on the internet, and as my utopian view of the web fades away, it's enough to make me wistful for closed stacks and unprocessed archival collections.

The issue I'm getting at is a tension that exists between competing professional values in digital archives. As librarians, we are dedicated to providing access to information, ensuring accuracy of that information, and preserving it for the long term. At the same time, we are champions of privacy and anonymous use of our materials, the dignity and consent of all people impacted by our organizations, and respect for the original context of historical materials.

When dealing with traditional law library collections, these values may rarely come into conflict. Archives are messier, full of personal content like correspondence that was never entirely secret, but was not created with webcrawling bots in mind.

Digitization strips away the possibility of *accessible-but-obscure* anonymity. With digital files, our options are limited to either keeping content off the web entirely, attempting to block indexing and full-text searching of web-based content (an iffy proposition dependent on search engines' good faith), restricting access





# Tech Talk, Continued

to authenticated users, or making material freely available for the internet's full scrutiny. None of these options are entirely satisfactory, and choosing among them requires careful consideration that is a major component of our work.

My department is currently digitizing a retired federal judge's extensive papers. I'm not an archivist, so this project has been a crash course in archival practices and values. In the future, when our library makes part of this collection public, we'll be able to use software to identify and redact critical data like social security numbers or financial transactions, but we can't control for all the revealing details

**“As librarians, we are dedicated to providing access to information, ensuring accuracy of that information, and preserving it for the long term. At the same time, we are champions of privacy and anonymous use of our materials, the dignity and consent of all people impacted by our organizations, and respect for the original context of historical materials.”**

that we don't already know to search for. Even though the judge has consented to releasing this information to the public, other individuals appear in his papers. Should we care about the emailed words of his peers, colleagues, and employees? How do we balance the value of his documents to researchers versus the privacy of a secretary's notes or a family member's response to an email?

Law librarians might turn to AALL's Ethical Principles for guidance, but they are just as conflicted as I am. The Ethical Principles call for "open access to information for all individuals" but also for "policies that respect confidentiality and privacy." When our values and principles fail to align, we are left with necessarily subjective professional judgment. This is an uncomfortable position. Librarians and archivists don't generally get into this field to be gatekeepers -- we want to facilitate encounters with the information we organize. But discretion is what distinguishes a memory institution from a random collection of artifacts. Making hard choices means inevitable errors of judgment, but as long as we are transparent about our decision-making processes, responsible stewardship of information can include withholding content from the web. It's hard for me to get used to the notion of digitizing material without intending to share it, and it certainly goes against the zeitgeist. But there are higher virtues than internet virality, serendipitous web discoveries, or even valuable insights into public figures. ■





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