Evolving a Library's Transcription Project into Digital Humanities Opportunities for Students and Staff

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William & Mary at a Glance

- Second oldest institution of higher learning in America (Harvard is first)
- A "Public Ivy"
- Arts & Sciences programs and four graduate/professional schools: Business, Education, Law and Marine Science.
- Enrollment: 6,285 undergraduates and 2,455 graduate students.
- W&M Libraries: Swem Library with 3 branch libraries, Law School Law, and 3 professional schools libraries.
### Faculty /Academics

- No formal DH program or lab on campus
- Digital Humanities|Digital Scholarship happening in pockets.
  - Williamsburg’s Documentary Project: [http://wdp.blogs.wm.edu/](http://wdp.blogs.wm.edu/)
  - Russian Movie Theater [http://mtp.blogs.wm.edu/](http://mtp.blogs.wm.edu/)
- Undergraduate focused
- New hire: Elizabeth Losh --began Equality Lab, informal DH academics graduate students.

### W&M Libraries

- Special Collections & Media Center involved with faculty.
- Library asked A LOT for help
- Digital Services unit created
  - Part of Tech Services - Traditional Tech Services!
  - Responsible for web presence and digital collections in all forms.
  - Support Libraries’ initiatives, not a campus ‘Digital Lab’
W&M Landscape Pre-GPP

- Associate Dean, Collections and Content Services
- Head of Digital Services
- Web Developer
- Programmer
- Digital Scholarship Librarian (IR)
- Digital Specialist
The Georgian Papers Programme:

The Georgian Papers Programme (GPP) is a ten-year interdisciplinary project to digitise, conserve, catalogue, transcribe, interpret and disseminate 425,000 pages or 65,000 items in the Royal Archives and Royal Library relating to the Georgian period, 1714-1837. The ultimate goal of the GPP is to provide a unique digital resource that is both readily accessible to members of the public and capable of sophisticated manipulation by researchers in any discipline, and to offer academic and public programming representing fresh research and interpretation.

The GPP is a partnership between Royal Collection Trust and King’s College London and is joined by primary United States partners the Omohundro Institute of Early American History & Culture and William & Mary.
Georgian Papers Programme Ecosystem - Activities and Platforms (Sept 2017 Snapshot)
Transcription Project = Opportunities | Students

Two methods for Transcription:

Omeka: Crowd-Sourced Website

Transkribus: Handwritten Text Recognition

http://transcribegeorgianpapers.wm.edu/

https://transkribus.eu/Transkribus/
DH Opportunities Students

Transcription Team:

Undergrad students hired on for paid transcriber positions.

Commit to min 8 hours per week

Work onsite or remotely

Transcription work of team focus:

- Core time sensitive materials,
- Difficult materials,
- Beta testing of guidelines, and workflows for both crowd-source and Transkribus methods.
DH Opportunities | Students

Transcription Team:

Graduate students

Made use of established library intern program with History | American Studies graduate program.

Created project assistant position:

- Assists Head of Digital Services on project.
- Project management work
- Writing instructions, blogs, & web content
- Omeka & Transkribus management
- TEI and guidelines research
DH Opportunities | Students

In the Name of the holy & blessed Trinity,

We George II, by the Grace of God, King of

Great Britain, France & Ireland, Defender of the Faith

Duke of Brunswick-Luneburg, Arch Treasurier of the

holy Roman Empire & Elector &c. declare:

Whereas Our Ancestors have settled the hereditary

Succession in Our Electorate, & the Rest of Our German

Dominions, by establishing & introducing the

Jus primogenituriæ; & whereas nothing certain

has been settled & agreed upon as an Appannagum

& suitable maintenance for the young Son.
Letter from Queen Charlotte to George, Prince of Wales

Transcription

My dearest Son. After Our parting I considered the pleasure of Your long wished for present, but upon mature consideration I find it more prudent for myself to decline accepting it, as the expense attending the dear little intelligent creatures will not suit My Finances. I flatter myself I am in time to prevent Your putting yourself to any further inconvenience about them. As I should grieve that Your pretty attention to me should be attended with any trouble for You. I desire You will be persuaded that this mark of Your Affection is very Sensibly felt by your very Affectionate Mother
& Friend.
Charlotte
DH Opportunities Students

Transcription Students -- Who are they?

3 Main Groups

1. History/American Studies/Gender & Women Studies majors with DH interest.

2. Students interested in library/archives.

3. Students in Modern Languages, Classics, Global Studies, Political Science, English, and Literature. No interest in DH or libraries. These students enjoy using their language skills or subject knowledge.
DH Opportunities Library Staff

Cultural Shift for Library:

- Places Library’s Tech Services at forefront, and turned outwards.
- Project work pushes us to take risks, and seek collaborative partners in new areas.
  - NEH DH grant proposal with Computer Science faculty.
- Library involved with Digital Humanities discourse on campus.
Surprises on the Project (so far)

- Students get it! They are the best advocate for the project work!
- Remote work is possible for students.
- Costs: We are accomplishing it with a small increase to the library student worker budget.
- A library our size is capable of large scale DH/digital projects
Q&A

GPP Crowd-source transcription
http://transcribegeorgianpapers.wm.edu/

Transkribus
https://transkribus.eu/Transkribus

Georgian Papers Programme
https://gpp.rct.uk/

GPP Academic site
https://georgianpapersprogramme.com/

George III: The Genius of the Mad King
Documentary on GPP -- Netflix and YouTube.