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When Archives and Libraries Collaborate: One Institution Benefiting Another

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Abstract

This article explores the transferal of a historic library of books known as the Salzburger Collection, and the collaboration which resulted from this transferal between a library and archives.

Keywords

Salzburger Collection, Crumley Archives, Lineberger Library

Cover Page Footnote

Special thanks to Lineberger Library for its support.



FEATURED ARTICLE

When Archives and Libraries Collaborate: One Institution Benefiting Another; The Salzburger Collection

By Shannon Smith and Scott Reeves

In 1731 Archbishop Firmian of Salzburg, Austria issued the Edict of Expulsion of Salzburger Lutherans. King George II of England, himself a Protestant sympathizer, offered land for settlement near Savannah, GA to the exiles. Though the Salzburgers experienced great difficulty establishing their settlement and surviving an otherwise uncultivated environment, they persevered, and their legacy, which remains intact today in Ebenezer, GA, is being preserved in the James R. Crumley Jr. Archives, a small archives housed at the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (LTSS) in Columbia, SC.



LTSS was founded in 1830 under the leadership of the Rev. John Bachman, a formative Lutheran pastor and naturalist. Bachman was close friends with Rev. Christopher Bergman, the son of a significant Salzburger pastor, and a member of the community himself. At the time of Bergman's death, the newly formed LTSS and its library received into its possession Bergman's own theological library, which consisted of more than 150 books that belonged to members of the Salzburger Community, some of which were brought to Georgia with the first immigrants in 1732. This collection formed the core library of LTSS for several decades.

The Salzburger Collection consists mainly of Christian devotional texts, major theological

and doctrinal works, Bibles and biblical commentary, liturgical and educational material, books of worship, and histories.



Mutual Support and Benefit

In May of 2016, Lineberger Library at LTSS made the decision to transfer the Salzburger Collection to the James R. Crumley Jr. Archives for care and preservation.

The Crumley Archives is the Southeastern regional archives for Lutheran history, and maintains the synodical, congregational, and individual records of NC, VA, SC, GA, TN, MS, AL, FL, the Bahamas, and Caribbean. Prior to the transfer, the collection had been contained in a closet within the library, protected from the public. The staff of Lineberger Library felt that the Crumley Archives was in a better position to house, maintain, and share this historic collection with patrons. Lineberger Library and the Crumley Archives saw this exchange as an opportunity for collaboration, not simply to preserve historic and rare books, but also to cooperate in such a way that would result in the mutual support and benefit of each institution. By making this transfer, Lineberger Library was able to bequeath a highly respected and valued collection to an institution known for its considerable care of Lutheran and religious history.

Methodology: The Process of Transfer

There were many important factors that both institutions took into consideration prior to the transfer. Determining if the Crumley Archives was capable of preserving the collection was of chief concern. The Crumley Archives offered a climate controlled facility, as well as special cases for the books, not to mention preservationists who were interested and skilled in maintaining the collection. Another consideration was if the Salzburger Collection fit the Crumley Archives's scope and content. The Crumley Archives primarily houses documents and records, and while historic books are not foreign to its scope and content, certainly, the acquisition of approximately 150 books was an unprecedented accession. Still, both institutions felt that the subject matter of this collection greatly complemented the content of the archives.

Consultation with previous librarians and professors to establish collection history and provenance was paramount. Clearly, work had been done with this collection in past decades, and the Crumley Archives found itself following a trail of bread crumbs in the form of archived LTSS library records to determine how these books were acquired, their role in the early days of the seminary, and what books, if any, might be considered rare.

We also had to determine who the stakeholders were in this transfer, and who would be legally accountable for the collection's safe-keeping. Creating a legal contract that would protect the rights of both parties involved was the most responsible route to take. This contract, in its

finalized form, declared that "the Crumley Archives reserves the right to determine whether items would be added to the collection, and how they will be preserved, arranged, cataloged, and made available for research" and that "material which does not fit within the scope and content of the Crumley Archives can be offered to other archives, libraries, museums, or charitable organization, sold, or discarded."

Conclusions

Collaboration between two institutions that have both similar and disparate missions and attitudes toward research and preservation can bring new attention to resources that may be forgotten or even unknown to scholars and the general public. By Lineberger Library's transfer of the

Salzburger Collection to the Crumley Archives, the collection not only received the physical care it needed, but it also attracted more and fresh attention from a different type of constituency and group of scholars. This collaboration benefitted Lineberger Library and the Crumley Archives in three major ways: it freed Lineberger Library of the responsibility to care for a collection otherwise outside of their overall collection's scope, content, and purview; the transfer brought new and renewed attention and support to the Crumley Archives; and most effectively, this collaboration built a stronger relationship between Lineberger Library and the Crumley Archives, creating a model for other institutions.

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From earliest book in Salzburger Collection: *The Church Order...* by Helmstadt, 1615