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Penn Libraries Announce the Release of the Fairman Rogers Digitization Project

PHILADELPHIA, PA - The Penn Libraries announce release of the digitized Fairman Rogers Collection, a library of rare and unique books devoted to horses and horsemanship. The release marks the first milestone in an ongoing project to reformat and conserve this exceptional collection, thanks to the support of the Laurie Landau Foundation.

Fairman Rogers (1833-1900) was a Penn alumnus (A.B. 1853, A.M. 1856), co-founder of the School of Veterinary Medicine, Professor of Civil Engineering (1855-1871), and internationally recognized horseman. Primarily published in the 19th century with some imprints dating to the 16th century, the collection of 1,054 rare volumes serves as a foundation for scholarly study of the role of the horse in the technical, scientific, and social evolution of 19th-century European and North American history, and includes medical guides, stud books, books on shoeing, harnessing, training, riding, driving, racing, keeping a proper stable, and breeds and breeding.

"Some of the old books often have a tenor of partnership with the horse that most modern books lack. It is as if they used to truly believe that we needed the horse as much as they need us," remarked Dr. Dean W. Richardson, the Charles W. Raker Professor of Equine Surgery and Chief of Large Animal Surgery at Penn Veterinary Medicine, about the Fairman Rogers Collection. "I think if you don't value old books about your own specialty, you probably don't have much respect for history at all."

The Penn Libraries received a \$300,000 gift in 2010 from the Laurie Landeau Foundation, LLC, to support the digitization of the Fairman Rogers Collection. The Foundation's president, Laurie Landeau (V'84, WG'84), is a University Trustee, former Chair and Member of the Board of Overseers of the School of Veterinary Medicine, and a generous and loyal supporter of Penn.

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This project marks the first time an entire printed collection has been digitized by the Libraries. One of the latest in a growing set of digital library resources produced by Penn, the Fairman Rogers Collection is available to scholars worldwide on the Libraries' website at Print at Penn (<http://hdl.library.upenn.edu/1017/103704>). Over 250 titles are currently available with new titles uploaded to Print at Penn every week.

Using the digital architecture developed by the Penn Libraries, the project offers faceted searching, high-resolution image viewing, and page-turning, features that simulate but also augment the experience of using the physical volume. Biographical information about Rogers and context for the materials in the collection is provided alongside full-text digital editions of the books.

Dr. Ann N. Greene, Associate Director for Undergraduate Studies and Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of History and Sociology of Science, commented about the significance of the digitization project. "I think that selected items might be possible to find elsewhere, but the Fairman Rogers Collection is one of the largest collections focused on nineteenth-century horses, yet covering a broad range of topics. It's not just about breeding, or one breed, or riding, or racing, but offers access to many topics under one 'roof.'" Dr. Greene is the author of *Horses at Work: Harnessing Power in Industrial America* (Harvard, 2008).

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