

ISAAC LEESER and
the AMERICAN GENIZAH

Isaac Leeser
1806-1868



Hebrew for "hiding place," a *genizah* is a store room for damaged sacred texts whose destruction is proscribed by Jewish tradition. SCETI is transforming the concept of the *genizah* in the digital age to encompass a veritable diaspora of Judaic documents. With help from a generous start-up gift from Overseer Erik Gershwind (W'93) and his wife Jackie, and Michael and Stacey Bennett (C'95), Penn Libraries are leading the American Genizah Project (AGP), a national initiative to



Michael & Stacey Bennett and Jackie & Erik Gershwind

locate, scan, transcribe, and provide unrestricted online access to significant documents of early American Jewish history. This project will use digital technologies and practices developed in the Penn-Cambridge Cairo Genizah project to discover how fragments of medieval manuscripts which are physically dispersed around the world may be related to each other. The "American Genizah" site will similarly deliver digital access to handwritten letters and selected printed works that are located in multiple public institutions and in private hands. The pilot project will address the legacy of Isaac Leeser (1806-1868), regarded as one of the most important antebellum American Jewish leaders.

It's difficult to overestimate the impact of Leeser's work on American Jewish communal life, religious education, and culture. Born in 1806 in Neuenkirchen, present-day Germany, and orphaned at the age of 14, Leeser emigrated to Virginia at the invitation of his maternal uncle. Here, in a traditional, conservative Southern Jewish community, Leeser grew into both his Jewish and American identities, learning the Sephardic rite, dominant in the U.S. at the time, from family friend, Isaac Seixas, *hazan* (prayer leader) of Beth Shalom Synagogue in Richmond. Leeser's first major work was a rebuttal to an attack on Jews which was published initially in the *London Quarterly Review* and then re-circulated in American newspapers. Leeser's piece appeared in 1828 in the *Richmond Whig*, and was re-printed in 1841 as a book entitled *The Claims of the Jews to an Equality of Rights*. This writing earned Leeser an invitation to become *Hazan* of the Congregation Mikveh Israel in Philadelphia.

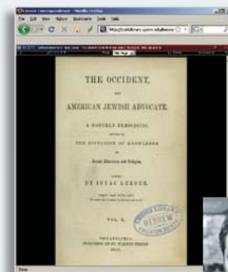
In the 1830s Leeser worked with Jewish educator and civil leader, Rebecca Gratz, to establish the Free Sunday School movement in Philadelphia, and created the first Hebrew primer for children to be published in the U.S. Leeser's contemporaneous publications established his place as an educator and champion of Jewish tradition in America. He gained renown for his translations of the Pentateuch and the Old Testament into English; his translations of texts from German, Spanish, French, and Hebrew ensured that American Jews could draw from these traditions. Chief among Leeser's many pioneering cultural ventures was the founding and editing of the first American Jewish monthly periodical, *The Occident and American Jewish Advocate*. With this publication, Leeser created a mouthpiece for his views, and a virtual meeting place for the exchange of ideas among American Jews who were divided both by geography and ideology.

According to Arthur Kiron, Schottenstein-Jesselson Curator of Judaica Collections and Director of the Library of the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, "Leeser's personal and public writings demonstrate the vibrancy and resilience of observant Jewish life in America, and confute past scholarly assumptions about religious

declension and assimilation." To be sure, these documents show in startling new ways how religious Americanization and cultural adjustment took place among different religious groups; they illustrate community-building, fracture, and ethnicization; they document the rapid and widespread circulation, on an unprecedented scale, of people, goods, news, and publications from Europe to North America, the Caribbean, and South America, and back across the Atlantic. At the same time, they provide new insight into American regionalism by illustrating the fraught conditions faced by an ethno-religious sub-group whose members lived across the sharp divides of Civil War-era America. Thus, the American Genizah Project is of value to those who are interested in the American and American Jewish experience, the history of immigration, race relations, Jewish/Christian relations, Orthodox/Reform relations, and the history of Jews in Philadelphia. Summing up the collection's potential impact and scholarly import, Arthur notes, "The Leeser collection will provide deep insight into what it means to be Jewish in America, and what it means to be American with different identities."

Penn has the largest share of Leeser's archival material, comprising sermons, personal and professional correspondence, and legal documents. Penn's Leeser collection comes from its acquisition of the library of Dropsie College in 1993. Other parts of the collection have been dispersed among a handful of libraries and private collectors. SCETI's American Genizah Project will unite the Leeser collection in a unique digital archive rich in content, including images of Leeser's life and works, biographies and bibliographies, notes on collections, and high resolution digital facsimiles of original documents. SCETI staff will construct a full range of search and browse options, embed digital links to secondary sources, and add XML-tagged scholarly transcriptions of handwritten correspondences to expedite discovery, retrieval, preservation, and exchange of information. A mobile magnifying glass will facilitate examination of the images, and SCETI's commitment to open access and interoperability standards ensures that the project will stand the test of rapid technological change.

The goal of the Leeser project is to link physically dispersed materials that are intellectually related, allowing people to discover connections which would have remained unseen and unmade in a purely analog environment. As Kiron says, "Making possible digital access to these primary sources will transform our understanding of the emergence of an Anglophone Jewish culture."



Left: SCETI scan of The Occident and American Jewish Advocate, Volume X.

Below: Arthur Kiron, Schottenstein-Jesselson Curator of Judaica Collections and Director of the Library of the Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies.



Fall 2008
Ivy Leaves

Published by
The Office of the Vice Provost and Director of Libraries
Inquiries invited at library@pobox.upenn.edu

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News and Notes from the Penn Libraries | Fall 2008



This fall the Libraries released the new version of the Fine Arts Library Image Collection to Penn students, faculty, and staff. The new interface provides faceted browsing and Google-style searching, as well as 3-D views of image thumbnails.

The HUMANITIES and the
DIGITAL WORD

Every advance in information technology, from the incised tablet to the World Wide Web, has accelerated and expanded the dissemination of ideas. In the near future, we will see entire libraries crisscross the globe at the speed of thought; access to knowledge—for centuries restricted to those privileged by status or location—will rapidly become available to all. This issue of Ivy Leaves examines how technologies old and new are coming together to transform study in the humanities.

BEGINNINGS

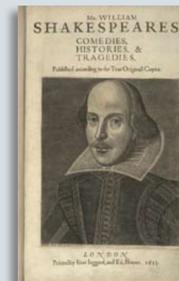
Larry Schoenberg (C'53, WG'56), a discerning and passionate collector of medieval and early modern manuscripts, is also the driving force behind the world's largest database indexing medieval texts. In 1996, with financial support from Larry and his wife Barbara Brizdle, the Penn Libraries launched SCETI, the Schoenberg Center for Electronic Text and Image. The project married Larry's two great enthusiasms, the codex and the computer. It also gave the University an early foothold in the new arena of the "digital humanities."



Barbara Brizdle & Larry Schoenberg

When Larry and Barbara, both members of the Libraries' Board of Overseers, stepped forward, scanning and database technologies were making great strides, and a novel tool called the web browser was poised to revolutionize use of the Internet. The Libraries had been hatching plans for a center to lead digitizing efforts at Penn even before there was a World Wide Web. Larry's vision, along with the convergence of these new technologies, made the center a reality. Within a few years, SCETI emerged, part digital workshop and part digital library. A busy and attractive stop on the Internet, it offered access to remarkable collections that only a few intrepid scholars had once enjoyed.

Today SCETI contains a wealth of digital editions, from Shakespeare's First Folio to an annotated version of Theodore Dreiser's Russian Diary. There are 13th-century Arabic manuscripts on anatomy, historical papers from the Civil War, sound clips of Marian Anderson, recordings of Yiddish folk singers, online tutorials, multimedia exhibits—some 79,000 graphical and sound files in all that document 1,500 years of human culture.



SCETI's audience is so far-reaching that the project has become one of Penn's most conspicuous ambassadors to the world. Each day, academic specialists and amateur scholars around the globe view more than 10,000 scanned pages using the SCETI web-source. A Google search for the English Renaissance, John Mauchly,

Abolitionism, *Sister Carrie*, the Cairo Genizah, Qasim Shah, or scores of other subjects, will turn up a SCETI scan, never far from other credible sources on the Web.

TEXTS and TEACHERS

"If you're teaching students about chemical structures, you'll need test tubes, spectrometers, and microscopes. You'll need a laboratory," David McKnight, SCETI's Curator, explains. "To learn about English literature in the time of Shakespeare, you'll also need a lab and laboratory tools—tools like this," he adds, gingerly opening a volume called *Holinshed's Chronicles*. Printed in 1587, the *Chronicles* provided material for *King Lear* and other Shakespearean dramas. "In the right hands, this book—its contents along with knowledge about the methods that produced it—can provide students a lens for viewing the 16th century."

The history of books and the history of ideas are vitally intertwined, explains McKnight, also Director of Penn's Rare Book and Manuscript Library. For scholars, primary sources embody these histories; they're witnesses to how, over generations, ideas have been assembled and transmitted, interpreted, combined and recombined.

As he talks, McKnight slips the *Chronicles* onto a foam rubber cradle, a reminder that this object is rare, fragile... and pretty valuable. This volume, like so many of the essential tools contained in the laboratory of the humanities, can tolerate only limited use. The Libraries created SCETI to address exactly this challenge, namely the transformation of special collections from sheltered archives into active learning laboratories. And it's why you'll find a project like ERIC in SCETI.

Known formally as the English Renaissance in Context, ERIC offers a guided tour through the age and its artifacts, with books commenting on one another and Penn's scholars providing context and the fruits of their research. It's a lesson in the ways in which the art of storytelling is shaped by such elements as influential secondary texts and changing conventions in theatrical production. One of the great Shakespearean tragedies provides a perfect example.



SCETI student employee Zack Noyce prepares an engraved image for scanning (foreground), while SCETI scanning operator Chris Lipka performs quality control on scanned images (background).

[Continued on the next page.]

Join The Orrery Society. Help Us Build Collections for Tomorrow's Scholars.



Dedicated to the memory of Martin Meyerson, former President of Penn and a consummate library supporter, The Orrery Society recognizes donors who help to build and preserve the Penn Libraries' collections through annual gifts of \$2,500 or more and through the creation of new endowments. Margy Elin Meyerson is Honorary Chair, and Richard S. Johnson (W'64) and Deborah Wharton Lippincott (C'76) are Founding Co-Chairs. For more information or to become a member, please contact the Office of Development, Van Pelt-Dietrich Library Center, 3420 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19104-6206, (215) 573-3610.

The HUMANITIES and the DIGITAL WORD

For the study of *King Lear*, ERIC juxtaposes Holinshed's history of Lear, Shakespeare's retelling of it, and Nahum Tate's 17th-century adaptation. As McKnight points out, ERIC draws Penn's collections, teaching expertise, and technical ability together in a creative fusion.



Excerpts from ERIC's tutorial on Shakespeare's King Lear. In this example, the different representations of Cordelia are depicted and discussed: in the woodcut illustrations of Holinshed's Chronicles, in Shakespeare's play, and in 18th- and 19th-century portrayals. The reader is asked to consider how a history text, which was conceived as written text, differs from a play, which was designed for performance, and how those differences may have informed Shakespeare's characterization of Cordelia.

Young minds inclined to think oxymoron when someone mentions "16th-century technology" experience an awakening with ERIC which, as McKnight puts it, "captures the experience of working with Holinshed and his contemporaries, minus the constraints of time and place." In the tradition of Penn's great early modern collections, it explores the influence of craft and technology on meaning. "It's an ancient story," the librarian adds. "A new method of conveying knowledge amplifies an old technology, and new patterns appear."

Working in the digital context, librarians are able to democratize access to rare and valuable artifacts. The special collections, as a result, are experiencing a boom. McKnight says, "Digital access raises their visibility, and that promotes interest plus an appreciation of their value to research." With a hint of satisfaction, he adds, "The collections are not only drawing the faculty, but the Penn undergraduate as well."

With heightened use, whether online or in a physical setting, comes fresh hypotheses, unexpected discoveries, and new knowledge. Each new question or discovery informs SCETI's collaboration with faculty and students. And that fuels new projects and growth.

KNOWLEDGE without BORDERS



David McKnight

SCETI represents a new and borderless scholarly space. It provides the world instantaneous access to Penn's rare and unique collections. It also creates opportunities for those holdings to merge, virtually, with related resources that are separated by time and institutional boundaries.

In 1896, Solomon Schechter, a rabbinic scholar based in England, retrieved 140,000 religious and liturgical documents from the Ben Ezra Synagogue in old Cairo. The cache, known as a *genizah*, contained texts dating from the 8th to the 15th centuries, and consisted of damaged books and Torah scrolls, including a large number that were long set aside, rather than destroyed, because they contained the name of God. Schechter sent the fragments he collected to Cambridge University, where they reside to this day. Another 80,000 pieces migrated eventually to Europe, Russia, the Middle East, and the United States, with a large segment ending up at Penn.

The tradition of putting aside sacred Hebrew texts is an ancient one, found in nearly every Jewish community. Yet very few *genizot* survive, because their contents are usually buried. To Schechter's amazement, the Ben Ezra collection escaped not only burial, but fire and vandalism for more than a millennium. He was quick to recognize the Genizah's value to the emerging field of Jewish Studies.

Today digital technology is ending the Cairo Genizah's long diaspora, thanks to a gift from Penn Libraries Overseer Jeffrey Keil (W'65), as well as the combined efforts of Penn and the Taylor-Schechter Genizah Research Unit of the Cambridge University Library. In 2002, librarians at Penn and Cambridge set to work identifying and cataloging matching fragments from the two collections, while SCETI provided the technology for the virtual reunion of those fragments.

Compared to other SCETI projects, the Genizah partnership with Cambridge is small scale. Still, as McKnight points out, "scale was less important than proving the feasibility of re-integration on the Web and working out the means to accomplish it." Among other things, the SCETI team developed codicological and palaeographical descriptions that make it possible for scholars

to search the virtual Genizah. The team also constructed an interface that allows a viewer to scale, rotate, compare, and download matching fragments. In the end, SCETI designed a blueprint for the digital reconstruction of dispersed collections, which McKnight and his colleagues

are deploying in other SCETI projects today, such as the Leeser initiative described elsewhere in this issue.

The NEW KEEPERS of KNOWLEDGE

Long before the launch of SCETI in 1996, the rise in computerized services and the developing Internet signaled a transformation in the way librarians would do business, and the skills they would need in the digital age. A mix of librarian, book scholar, and technologist, David McKnight epitomizes this change. And the timing is right. The humanities are quickly adopting electronic methods into the research process. It's a path familiar to the physical sciences, medicine, and business. In those fields, electronic information has revolutionized research and the structure of scholarly communication itself. No clinician in 2008 can practice medicine without access to the literature in the MEDLINE database; no engineer can achieve full competence without understanding INSPEC; and no Wharton graduate can master finance without a basic mastery of online tools like Lexis/Nexis.

The humanities have made the leap into the digital age. Scholars in literature, history, and the arts are learning to manipulate information in electronic form, particularly graphical formats, to locate digital sources and evaluate their authenticity, and to manage texts that have been retooled for publishing online.

As agents of change in this new environment, Libraries face a series of challenges. First, they must participate, with other campus agencies, in building the cyberinfrastructure that supports digital scholarship. That may sound utterly remote to the interests of a Renaissance scholar, until you consider the intersection of libraries and the humanities. Both communities have a common stake in collection building and management; both work with specialized vocabularies and methods of description; and both practice, in complementary ways, stewardship of intellectual property.

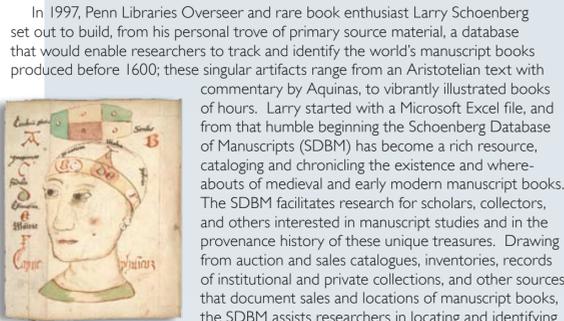
Despite its inscrutable sound, the cyberinfrastructure for the humanities is merely the foundation for these traditional activities, within a digital setting. It comprises mass storage repositories for collections, tools that permit scholars and librarians to describe and organize collections for discovery, software that helps librarians to manage copyrights and access privileges, relays that allow machines to share data, and architectural methods that unify the disparate pieces of infrastructure into a sustainable research support environment.

Libraries must also preserve the digital legacies they are creating for future generations and must ensure that these legacies are as accessible as possible. And they must work to attract and retain the expertise needed to grow the digital enterprise in pace with the evolving needs of the University.

This issue of Ivy Leaves highlights digital library programs that support humanities research and teaching. Each case is an expression of SCETI's higher mandate, which Larry Schoenberg describes as "the transformation of man's knowledge about the world around him from simple observation to recognition, to documenting and analysis, and then to the application and interpretation of that learning."[†]

[†] from the introduction to *Transformation of Knowledge: Early manuscripts from the collection of Lawrence J. Schoenberg*

TRACKING TEXTS: The Schoenberg Database



De Philosophia Naturalis
Mainz, Germany
S. XVEX

to match records so that, for each manuscript, a trail can be traced from the earliest recorded ownership to the present day.

From the project's inception, the vigorous efforts of Larry and his wife, Barbara Bridle, also a Library Overseer, have driven the SDBM's development. The duo has been assisted throughout by a number of researchers positioned in New York and several European cities, who are diligently adding records to the database. In 2007, the SDBM incorporated the data from the Jordanus Database of Scientific Manuscripts (begun by Menso Folkerts of Institut für Geschichte der Naturwissenschaften at the University of Munich) which raised the number of records to over 125,000.

The dramatic growth of the database has attracted new manuscript scholars and aficionados who, in turn, have added records based on copies supplied to them by Larry and Barbara. The database's burgeoning reputation as a research aid in manuscript studies necessitated a move to make it more easily accessible to a wider audience. As a dedicated Penn alumnus, Larry looked toward his alma mater. In 2005, the Schoenberg Center for Electronic Text and Image (SCETI) began

hosting the database, where it remains today, freely accessible to all. In June of 2007, the Schoenbergs and Penn Libraries began a partnership that enabled SCETI to hire new staff to manage, edit, and contribute new records to the database, and to coordinate the efforts of researchers on two continents. In addition to their financial support, Larry and Barbara continue to be involved in the operations, from oversight to data entry and research, and the Penn Libraries and SCETI provide professional expertise in the areas of information management, bibliographic standards, and web technologies.

The goals of the partnership are threefold. First, SCETI desires to transform the SDBM into a comprehensive, online electronic resource for the study, identification, ownership, and transmission of medieval and early Renaissance manuscripts. Second, SCETI aims to fulfill the database's estimated potential of 250,000 records. Third, with the continual support of the Schoenbergs, SCETI will expand the scope of the database so that, through international collaboration and partnerships, it will serve as a combined catalog of medieval and early modern manuscripts held around the world.

In its current state, the SDBM contains searchable entries of manuscripts written before 1600 that consist of five or more leaves. It includes bibliographic information culled from approximately 12,000 catalogs issued by 2,000 dealers, auction houses, private collections and institutions since the early nineteenth century. With thirty-six searchable fields, it provides broad access to manuscripts through a range of discrete descriptive (e.g., vendor, catalogue name or number; item number, price, current location, author, title, artist, scribe, etc.) and physical (e.g. leaves, size, illuminations, etc.) properties. Multiple references to the same item are cross-referenced to facilitate the tracking of individual manuscripts.

Manuscript of Astronomical Diagrams
England and Spain
ca. 1410

The Schoenberg Database proudly identifies itself as work in progress, with new material being added regularly from a variety of sources. Larry began this project with the intent that it would become a community resource and project, something of a Web 2.0 project for medieval and early modern resources, with scholars, collectors, curators, and members of the trade contributing new entries. SCETI is pleased to continue Larry's work and preserve his vision in creating this important resource.

The scans provided here are part of the Lawrence J. Schoenberg collection featured in SCETI.

THROUGH THE LENS of MARY BINNEY WHEELER

Mary Binney Wheeler didn't set out to chronicle life in South Asia in the mid-to-late 20th century. Born into a prominent Philadelphia family in 1908, Mary Binney Montgomery Wheeler demonstrated talents for music and dance at an early age. A true prodigy, she studied piano at Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music, and, at the age of 17, performed at Carnegie Hall as a soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra under the direction of Leopold Stokowski. The burden of chronic stage anxiety prompted her to lay aside plans for a career as a concert pianist, but her remarkable talent for dance and choreography allowed her to develop her musical prowess in another area. Wheeler formed the Montgomery Ballet Company in 1932, and maintained a dance studio on Walnut Street in Center City Philadelphia into her later years. After the death of her husband, John Pierce Wheeler, in 1964, Wheeler developed an abiding interest in South Asia, prompted largely by her close friendship with the Philadelphia Museum of Art's noted historian of South Asian art, Dr. Stella Kramrisch.

Over the course of fourteen trips, Wheeler took some 9,000 photographs of life in India and Sri Lanka. Her photos, bequeathed to Penn Libraries by Wheeler's family after her death in 1995, reveal intimate details of the landscape, architecture, culture, and lives of the people she encountered throughout her travels. As David Nelson, Penn Libraries' South Asia Bibliographer, puts it, Wheeler "had a natural aesthetic and an innate sense of mise en scène." And her work has been recognized by the National Geographic Society, the Indian government, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and Penn. Her lens captured the myriad activities of daily living, such as house cleaning, washing laundry, and collecting water; leisure activities, such as picnics and social gatherings; and the world of work, including salesmen on rivers, laborers in the lumber trade, and families of textile workers



L to R: Mary Binney Wheeler (Karnataka, India, 1975) and Wheeler's photographs of a woman performing prayers in the Ganges (Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India), a group of fishermen on the beach at dawn (Puri, Orissa, India), and detail of a painted wooden sculpture of a lion, probably a door guardian (Puri, Orissa, India).

PRESERVATION *and* RENEWAL: The Louis Shotridge Collection

What struck Emma McClafferty (C'11) most about her work with the Louis Shotridge Digital Archive Project was the power that digitization holds for collections at the Penn Museum. In summarizing her experience as a Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships (CURF) summer intern, Emma wrote, "As the world becomes more connected through technology, the reach and expectations of access to information become much greater. I have come to believe that it is the responsibility of an institution with such extensive resources to make [them] accessible to anyone in the most convenient way possible, from scholars to kids who might be curious..."



Louis Shotridge at the Penn Museum wearing the traditional attire of Tlingit chief, 1912. Photograph by William White. (neg. no. 14023) Courtesy of the Penn Museum Archives

Library and the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska.

Louis Shotridge (b. 1882) was a native Tlingit of Southeast Alaska who lived at the turn of the 20th century. This was an era of intense ethnographic collecting activity in the Pacific Northwest, driven by competition among young museums and the first generation of American academic anthropologists who gathered artifacts as evidence of cultures believed to be on the brink of extinction. It was a time of modernization that brought radical change for indigenous peoples of the region. Missionaries, acculturation, and a new wage economy all played roles in the changing cultural environment in which Louis Shotridge lived.

Shotridge, a member of an elite Tlingit family, received his education in a missionary school in Haines, Alaska, and was destined to assume a position of authority within his native Tlingit Kaagwaantaan clan. During a 1905 visit to the Lewis and Clark Exposition in Portland, Shotridge and his wife, Florence, a talented craftsperson in her own right, met George Byron Gordon, Curator of Penn's Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. Recognizing the Shotridges' many talents, Gordon purchased 49 Tlingit items for Penn Museum. By 1915, Shotridge was employed full-time by Penn, where he was trained in anthropological and linguistic methods. Over the next 17 years Shotridge conducted three collecting expeditions among his Tlingit Kaagwaantaan clan.

Shotridge's collections include approximately 475 artifacts dating from 1800 to 1930, including clan hats and ceremonial regalia, clothing, tools, weapons, and household items. The objects are mainly from the northern Tlingit divisions in the regions of Haines and Klukwan, Sitka, Hoonah, and Angoon, where Shotridge spent most of his time. He took 560 photographs of Tlingit people, communities, landscapes, and clan regalia between 1915 and 1932, and recorded hundreds of pages of written documents including a healthy correspondence with Dr. Gordon, impressively detailed notations on the provenance of items, maker names and genealogies, cultural and historical events, songs, legends, meticulous expense accounts, exhibit plans, and published academic articles. These col-



Louis Shotridge purchased this Tlingit war helmet in Sitka in 1929. Made of walrus hide, abalone shell, and human hair, it represents a shark, an emblem of the Kaagwaantaan clan. (UPM # 29-1-1)

lections are widely regarded as the best Tlingit collections in the world because of this exhaustive documentation.

Shotridge struggled personally with his dual positions as a member of traditional Tlingit society and an employee of a major east coast museum. His letters reveal the inner conflict between his desire to preserve the cultural icons of his native people, and his misgiving over removing items of such significance. In his essay in the Museum journal about the Kaagwaantaan shark helmet, he wrote, "The modernized part of me rejoiced over my success in obtaining this important ethnological specimen for the Museum, but, as one who had been trained to be a true Kaguanton, in my heart I cannot help but have the feeling of a traitor who has betrayed [a] confidence." This sentiment has been shared by some Tlingit people, who expressed criticism of Shotridge's collecting activities.

Today, Louis Shotridge's contribution and legacy are being reexamined by his Tlingit people. In the past decade Tlingit leaders, historians, linguists, artists and even playwrights from several Alaskan communities have visited Shotridge's collection at Penn Museum. Most of these visits are made under the aegis of tribal efforts related to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). Passed into law in 1990, NAGPRA requires federally recognized tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations to work with American museums to review their holdings, and establishes rules for tribes to submit repatriation claims for human remains, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony. According to Lucy Fowler Williams, the Museum's Jeremy A. Sabloff Keeper of American Collections, "The Penn Museum has worked assiduously to develop its relationship with Tlingit communities by sharing the important details of Tlingit history, language, and art within the Shotridge collection. The collaboration is essen-



This painted caribou hide robe was purchased by Louis Shotridge in 1924. It tells an important story of Lituya Bay, a place on the Tlingit landscape associated with the origins and history of the Takedantaan clan of Hoonah, Alaska. Photograph by Francine Sain and Jen Chiappardi (UPM #NA6829)

tial in understanding the collection's legacy and offers a supportive resource for Tlingit communities struggling to hold on to their language and culture and to strengthen Tlingit identity today." At the same time, the Penn Museum is actively working with University administration and legal counsel to evaluate and resolve Tlingit repatriation claims for objects in the collection.

"It is very exciting to consider the ways in which the data we are assembling can be used and manipulated for even more purposes in the future." Emma wrote, contemplating how much greater the impact of Louis Shotridge's collection will be when it can be examined in its entirety, not only by Tlingit people and members of the Penn community, but by students and scholars around the world. Thanks to IMLS and SCETI, Penn Museum has the opportunity to preserve the Shotridge collection in digital form and offer the beauty of Tlingit culture to anyone with access to the Internet. Digitizing the Shotridge collection will preserve and share Tlingit culture with the world in new ways, and enables Penn Museum to revisit its past and support its future, while recognizing the accomplishments and contributions of one of Penn's own.



Emma McClafferty (right) and Lucy Williams look over the Tlingit collection at Penn Museum.