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The GAMMA Project: A Cooperative Cataloging Venture

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The GAMMA Project:
A Cooperative Cataloging Venture

Beth Bensman and Susan Potts McDonald

Archival and historical organizations have traditionally suffered from a lack of funding and personnel. One way to combat this classic problem is through the development of collaborative grant-funded projects. By bonding like institutions together and creating a cooperative venture with a common goal, institutions can share funds, personnel, and knowledge in an undertaking that provides assistance to all without placing undue stress upon individual organizations.

The GAMMA (Georgia Archives and Manuscripts AutoMated Access) Project is a perfect example. It united participants from Georgia’s historical organizations, archival repositories, and libraries interested in increasing access to their historical collections. Using grant funds, the project group hired and trained two archivists to create and enter catalog records into a national bibliographic database for historical collections located at participating institutions. These archivists acted as “roving” catalogers working from institution to institution throughout the course of the project. Participating institutions contributed what staff resources they could, and project staff completed the majority of work. Thus with minimal input, participating institutions substantially increased access to their collections.

PROVENANCE, vol. XV, 1997
Background

Founded in 1938, the University Center in Georgia (now the Atlanta Regional Consortium for Higher Education) initially consisted of institutions of higher learning in the Atlanta-Athens area. Primarily created to strengthen member institutions' academic and library programs through cooperative ventures, the center developed projects focused on the areas of collection, access, policy development, and document delivery systems. Recently the University Center expanded to include not only academic institutions but also affiliate historical and archival organizations such as the Atlanta-Fulton County Public Library, the Georgia Department of Archives and History, the Institute of Paper Science and Technology, and the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

The Special Collections Group of the University Center in Georgia was formed in 1990, primarily as a forum to share information on specialized topics pertinent to archives and special collections. Composed of representatives from the special collections departments of each of the University Center libraries, the group focused on developing project ideas to help promote access to Georgia's manuscript resources. By 1993 the group had organized a proposal for a collaborative, retrospective cataloging project. The GAMMA Project grew out of the group's desire not only to increase the availability of information about Georgia's primary resources but also to strengthen cooperation between institutions and as a basis upon which to build future collaborative projects. In addition, the group hoped the cataloging project would increase the use and understanding of the MARC (machine-readable cataloging) format in Georgia and help identify related collections held by different repositories throughout Georgia.
Project Outline and Development

The GAMMA Project proposed to create 2,500 collection and series level bibliographic MARC records for archival collections held by University Center and other Georgia repositories. Records would be entered into a national bibliographic database and eventually downloaded into local online public access computer systems (OPACS). Two archivists, hired with project funds, would perform the majority of the cataloging with assistance from staff at participating institutions. While project archivists would be located at one central place, they would travel to each participating institution for initial orientation meetings and thereafter as necessary. The Special Collections Group hoped that using roving archivists instead of each institution hiring individual catalogers would provide greater consistency in cataloging and decrease the impact (in terms of finances and staff time) upon participating institutions.

Since both Emory University and the Georgia Department of Archives and History (GDAH) had planned and implemented earlier retrospective cataloging projects, the group selected the two project co-chairs from these institutions: Virginia J.H. Cain (Emory) and Steven Engerrand (GDAH). Emory was selected as the location for project staff due to space availability and capacity to coordinate grant funds. Staff would enter project records directly into the Research Libraries Group RLIN (Research Libraries Information Network) database, then transfer them into the OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) database. The group selected RLIN over OCLC as the initial bibliographic database for several reasons. The two earlier Georgia retrospective conversion projects entered records directly into RLIN, and thus the co-chairs were already familiar with RLIN’s procedures and practices. This also meant that records produced as part of the GAMMA Project would reside in the same database as the earlier records from Emory and the GDAH cataloging projects. Also, Emory (and
GDAH) both possessed direct RLIN lines. Finally RLIN, the largest database of archival and manuscript materials, is international in scope and offered the broadest access to Georgia's archival and manuscript holdings.

Application to the Gladys Kreible Delmas Foundation resulted in an award of $70,000 for a two-year period beginning in 1993. Using these moneys as matching funds, the Special Collections Group of the University Center of Georgia (under the auspices of Emory University) applied to the National Endowment for Humanities for $173,966 (outright) and $55,000 (matching funds). With funds secured in 1994 for a grant period to run from September 1994 to August 1996, the search committee began the process of reviewing applications for the two staff positions. In addition, during November the project arranged for two workshops offered by the Society of American Archivists to be taught in Atlanta. Focusing on the MARC format and archival cataloging standards, the workshops were open to staff committed to participating in the project.

By January 1995, two archivists, Susan Potts McDonald (Project Archivist) and Beth Bensman (Assistant Project Archivist), began work on the GAMMA Project. While the two archivists’ responsibilities included the coordination of activities between project staff and the designated representative(s) from each participating institution, the majority of their work focused on the planning and implementation of the cataloging and data entry processes.

**Cataloging Procedures**

All cataloging adhered to the conventional descriptive standards: *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules* (2nd Edition) as well as *Archives, Personal Papers, and Manuscripts: A*

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1 During the planning stages and at the initial onset of the project, RLIN had not yet converted to their present method of access via the Internet.
The GAMMA Project

Cataloging Manual for Archival Repositories. Subject headings were selected and formed from the Library of Congress Subject Headings and the Library of Congress Name Authority, when possible. Staff made limited use of local headings only when necessary.

The RLIN system gave the staff some flexibility when creating a MARC record. Although fields must follow in numerical order (that is, all 1XX fields, followed by 2XX fields, 3XX fields, and so forth) within each numerical block, a cataloger may decide the arrangement of the selected fields. Project staff surveyed other institutions involved in retrospective cataloging projects (Emory, GDAH, Kentucky Department for Library and Archives, and the Alabama Department of Archives & History) and viewed records in RLIN to determine fields appropriate for the GAMMA Project. (See figure 1, page 68, for a list of fields used and the record order.)

Since descriptive practices varied from institution to institution, staff designated certain fields as “required” for a minimal MARC record. Several of the required fields were necessary for data entry into the RLIN database while others were deemed important for the project. These required fields: 040 (cataloging source), 1XX (main entry, if applicable), 245 (title statement), 300 (physical description), 351 (organization and arrangement note of materials), 545 (biographical or historical note), 520 (summary, etc. note), 524 (preferred citation of described materials note), 852 (location), the 6XX (subject access fields), and 7XX (added

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2 In addition to “public” fields viewed in the database, each RLIN record contained an ARC (Archives Record Control) segment which included information on provenance, accession, and processing. Basically, the ARC segment served as a management tool for RLIN members and could only be viewed by the institution that input the record. While not viable for non-RLIN members of the GAMMA Project, RLIN required its completion for each catalog record entered into the database.
GAMMA Project MARC Fields

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>010</td>
<td>Library of Congress Control Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>035</td>
<td>System Control Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>040</td>
<td>Cataloging Sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1XX</td>
<td>Main Entry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>245</td>
<td>Title Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300</td>
<td>Physical Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>340</td>
<td>Physical Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>351</td>
<td>Organization and Arrangement Note of Materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>545</td>
<td>Biographical or Historical Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>520</td>
<td>Summary, etc. Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>580</td>
<td>Linking Entry complexity Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>506</td>
<td>Restriction on Access Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>540</td>
<td>Terms Governing Use and Reproduction Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>555</td>
<td>Finding Aid Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>530</td>
<td>Additional Physical Form Available Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>533</td>
<td>Reproduction Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>535</td>
<td>Location of Originals/Duplicates Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>561</td>
<td>Provenance Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>546</td>
<td>Language Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>551</td>
<td>Publications About Described Materials Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>524</td>
<td>Preferred Citation of Described Materials Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td>General Note (Related Collection in Repository)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>544</td>
<td>Location of Associated Archival Materials Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td>General Note (Project Note)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6XX</td>
<td>Subject Access Fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7XX</td>
<td>Added Entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>773</td>
<td>Host Item Entry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>797</td>
<td>Located Added Entry - Corporate Name (GAGP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>852</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1
entries) together formed a basic record with enough information to identify both the collection and the holding institution.

The use of the 040 (cataloging source) field was particularly pertinent to the project. As a collaborative effort eventually involving over thirty different institutions, the 040 (cataloging source) field identified both the transcribing agency (the project) and the holding institution. RLIN created a library identification symbol specifically for the project—GAUCG—to indicate that the records were created as part of the project. The use of this field, as well as the citation and the location fields, guaranteed that each record would be identified with its holding institution as well as part of the project.

When possible, staff attempted to broaden this basic record with fields considered “required if applicable.” This included 340 (physical medium), 506 (restrictions on access note), 540 (terms governing use and reproduction note), 530 (additional physical form available note), 533 (reproduction note), 535 (location of originals/duplicates note), and 546 (language note). Finally, staff included “optional” fields to provide an even fuller bibliographic record such as the 555 (finding aids note), 500 (general note used to describe related collections within the repository), 544 (location of associated archival materials note), 561 (provenance note), and 581 (publications about described materials note). Staff used the 544 (location of associate archival materials note) whenever possible to highlight the intellectual linking of related collections at different repositories. Often, as staff cataloged additional collections, they updated earlier records to reflect the location of related materials.

Since a number of institutions involved in the project had previously reported collections to the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC), the use of the 010 (Library of Congress control number) field helped link the
online record with the printed version.\(^3\) Several repositories utilized a local collection number to identify collections, and those numbers were entered into the 035 (system control number) field.

Although project staff had discouraged the use of local fields unless absolutely necessary, the project placed one local searchable field, 797 (local added entry - corporate name), in each record. By inserting the text “gagp” in this field, the RLIN database could search on this term and create a result that encompassed all project records. RLIN also allowed refinement of search results. So by further searching on the 852 (location) field, project staff could isolate the records of a single institution. Project staff found this particularly helpful during record updates or for printing records for an entire institution.

**Development of Cataloging Tools**

To simplify the coding and input process, GAMMA staff developed a description form (see figure 2, page 71). The description form included all designated fields along with the appropriate indicators and subfield codes. In some instances, such as the 1XX, 6XX, or 7XX fields where indicators would differ depending on the type of entry, blanks were left in order to fill in the correct code. When dealing with institutions that would contribute numerous records, project staff created forms containing all repeatable information, such as the cataloging source, citation, and location fields, already printed on the form. In order to track the status of the catalog record, the top of each description form contained a “control segment.” Boxes within this section provided space

\(^3\) For those collections previously reported to NUCMC and subsequently entered into RLIN, a new record was not created unless substantial changes or additions occurred to the collection.
### The GAMMA Project

GAMMA Project  
University Center in Georgia

#### Description Form

**CONTROL SEGMENT:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Review1</th>
<th>Input</th>
<th>Review2</th>
<th>Revise1</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Initials**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Review1</th>
<th>Input</th>
<th>Review2</th>
<th>Revise1</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIXED FIELDS:**

- **ID:** GAGP96-A
- **RTYP:** d
- **ST:** p
- **MS:** n
- **EL:** 7
- **CC:** 9554
- **BLT:** pc
- **DCF:** a
- **CSC:** d
- **MOD:** b
- **PROC:** __
- **CP:** gau
- **L:** eng
- **PC:** i
- **PD:** __/______
- **REP:** __
- **MMD:** __
- **OR:** ?
- **POL:** __
- **DM:** __
- **RR:** ?
- **COL:** b
- **EML:** __
- **GEN:** __
- **BSE:** __

**VARIABLE FIELDS:**

- 010 bb (NUCMC) (bMS________)
- 035 bb (Control #) (a(GU)MS________)
- 040 bb (Cat source) (aGU(cGAUCG(esppm

| 1 | _bb (Main entry) | Source: |
|   | (a | ( |
| 245 00 (Title statement) | (a | ( |

---

Figure 2
for project staff and staff at participating institutions to date and initial each step of the process.

To provide assistance when completing the description form, project staff created a manual that defined each field; listed the appropriate indicators, subfields, and punctuation; indicated additional sources of information; and included examples of each field’s appropriate use (see figure 3, page 73). To keep cataloging consistent for similar materials such as political, literary, civil war, church, or labor union collections, GAMMA staff constructed “templates.” These templates listed suggestions for added entries such as corporate name, subject terms, geographic, and form genre. The templates also indicated when to subdivide geographically, when to use free-floating subdivisions, as well as suggestions for the use of general or specific terms.

To collect information from participating institutions, GAMMA staff created an abbreviated version of the description form. This collection worksheet (see figure 4, page 74) basically eliminated numerical field tags, indicators, and subfield codes and replaced them with text definitions for each field. Thus staff at the participating institutions did not need to be familiar with MARC tagging in order to assist with the project.

**Project Workflow**

The project’s intent had always been that GAMMA staff would undertake the majority of the work. So the workflow plan (see figure 5, page 76) put the onus of cataloging, MARC tagging, and data entry on the project staff. However, with staff members at the participating institutions more knowledgeable about the scope and content of their collections, the responsibility for selecting collections for the project and forwarding the proper information fell to the institutions.

After selecting a collection, institutional staff completed each field on the collection worksheet pulling information
( Organization and arrangement note (351)

( Indicator Codes: bb

This field has two distinct subfields; subfield [a] refers to the organization of the collection; subfield [b] refers to the pattern of arrangement. If the collection is comprised of a single item, it is not necessary to complete this field. <Choose either subfield [a] or [b], you cannot use both.>

( Subfield Codes:
   [a] Organization
   [b] Arrangement

Subfield [a] : Organization

Describes the manner in which a collection has been subdivided into smaller units such as a collection divided into series.

(a) Organized into three series: (1) Correspondence, (2) Diaries, and (3) Association files.

Subfield [b] : Arrangement

Describes the pattern of arrangement within the collection being described (i.e. alphabetical, by record type, unarranged).

(b) Arranged in chronological order.
(b) Arranged in numerical order by case number.
(b) Arranged alphabetically by military unit, and then chronologically.

& APPM, Chapter 1.7B7

( This field ends with a period.

Figure 3
Collection Description Form

Processing Level: (completely) (partially) (unprocessed) (unknown)

Main Entry:

Title:

Date Span:

Physical Description:

Arrangement:

Biographical/Historical Note:

Summary Scope Note:

Figure 4
either from existing finding aids or from personal knowledge of the collection. For added entries, institution staff simply listed names, subjects, places, or events they felt merited attention. Next, using the description form, GAMMA staff took the information, summarized it, determined the appropriate access points in accordance with Library of Congress Subject Headings and Library of Congress Name Authority File, added the necessary indicators and subfield codes to form a complete MARC record, and entered the record into RLIN. For a final check, GAMMA staff required participating staff to review all their institution’s records after data entry to ensure that the catalog record accurately reflected the collection’s content.

Data Entry Process

GAMMA staff developed several procedures and tools to facilitate data entry. When possible, they entered all records for an institution into RLIN at the same time. Thus GAMMA staff could create “hot keys” to streamline inputting and eliminate errors. These hot keys or macros contained repeatable information found in the 040 (cataloging source), 524 (preferred citation of described materials note), and 852 (location) fields. Project staff also developed a data entry log sheet for each participating institution that included the date, RLIN record number, and a running total of records entered. While the log sheets provided a summary of records input for each institution, it also helped catch discrepancies. As a quality control measure, GAMMA staff routinely inspected each other’s work. When one staff member cataloged a record, the other would review it. Also, when one staff member entered a record into the RLIN database, the other would review it. While later use of student assistants limited the amount of data entry done by the project archivists, they still reviewed all data entry.
Repository Workflow

RECORD SELECTION
1. Select the records that you wish to include in the project.

2. Determine if there are any logical collection groups (i.e. large collections with multiple series, collections related by topic or form) and submit these together. This will facilitate cataloging because they will likely have many common elements.

3. Please carefully review the attached GAMMA Record Selection Criteria, which outlines the types of collections that are not appropriate for the project.

COMPLETING THE DESCRIPTION FORM
1. Complete a Collection Description Form for each collection using the existing finding aids or by reviewing the materials themselves.

2. Create a letter-size folder for each collection that you have selected to be cataloged. In each collection folder enclose the description form and copies of any related finding aids including container listings, accession records, NUCMC entries, biographical/historical information. These tools will assist the project archivists in cataloging and subject indexing.

3. Send the collection folders via University Center truck mail or regular mail to the project staff. Project staff may also come to pick up the collection folders and discuss project progress with staff from time to time.

CATALOG REVIEW
1. After the project staff receives the collection folders, they may call to ask specific questions to clarify information regarding a particular collection. Information can be conveyed by several means including FAX, e-mail, regular mail, or the University Center mail truck.

2. Once the record is entered into RLIN, a copy of the record will be printed and sent for your review. This review should concentrate on content. Make sure the record is a true reflection of the contents of the collection. In addition, review the subject headings for accuracy and completeness.

3. After you have reviewed the record, mark any corrections to the record in red. Initial and date the record in the upper right hand corner. Return the record via University Center truck mail or regular mail to the project staff.

FINAL RECORD PRODUCTS
1. At the completion of the cataloging of your institution's records, a complete set of your fully tagged records will be forwarded to you.

2. You will be notified when your records are loaded into OCLC.

Figure 5
Problems Encountered

Meetings between GAMMA staff and institutional participants began in May 1995. The workflow, as described in figure 5, and the use of the collection description forms worked quite well for initial project participants—usually larger institutions with several staff members and at least some written descriptions of their holdings. However, as the GAMMA Project branched out to include smaller repositories, frequently with either a lone archivist or an individual with only part-time archival duties, the level of participation by institutional staff decreased. Often, only sketchy descriptions existed for collections, or in some cases no description at all existed. In some cases with only a single person staffing the archives, the workday included no time to complete the description forms. In these cases, GAMMA staff truly became roving catalogers and traveled throughout Georgia visiting repositories and cataloging directly from the archival materials. Institutions still selected collections for inclusion into the project, and GAMMA staff returned records after data entry for review. This new process simply bypassed the use of collection description forms by institutional staff and decreased the amount of participation by institutional staff.

Additional problems surfaced as work progressed. Since participating institutions determined collection selection, GAMMA staff began to find that often not the most historically rich holdings were selected but rather those with either existing descriptions or single items quick and easy to describe. Project staff wanted to include collections that would aid researchers not only in Georgia but also outside the state and that truly deserved a MARC record in a major bibliographic database. In discussion with the project co-chairs, GAMMA staff compiled a list of record criteria for inclusion in the project to aid institutions in the selection process (see figure 6, page 78).
GAMMA Project [ ]
University Center in Georgia

Phone: (404) 727-5034

GAMMA Record Selection Criteria

To help you in selecting records for inclusion in the GAMMA project, we have put together a list of record types or subjects that are not appropriate for the project. There may be exceptions to these criteria, when in doubt, please contact either Susan or Beth.

- collections comprised of the archival records of your own institution
- collections consisting entirely of copies (photocopies, transcripts, etc.) of original materials, however you may submit microfilm collections when the originals are still in private hands
- collections that require extensive processing in order to describe (it may still be possible to catalog such a collection at a minimal level which could be updated at a later time)
- collections that have restrictions that deny access for an extended period of time, however it is acceptable to submit collections that have restrictions on use (use microfilm copy rather than originals, etc.)
- state or local government public records (this also includes single court case materials)
- collections consisting of typescript manuscript(s), unless part of a larger collection of related materials
- collections that are illegible due to fading, damage, or poor penmanship
- collections that contain information that is not understandable in regards to who created it, what it is about, or its geographic location
- collections that consist primarily of ephemera rather than correspondence, etc.
- collections consisting solely of land deeds/grants unless part of a larger collection of family papers
- single letters that contain no information of historical value
- faculty collections or student correspondence unless it documents more than their academic career or extends into family papers
- collections consisting of family bibles

Figure 6
A second difficulty stemmed from an institution's desire to include all information about a collection in a MARC record. GAMMA staff stressed that the MARC record would act as a "pointer" to the institution holding the materials. In other words, the project created a record that contained enough information to identify the collection and its creator without rewriting the finding aid. Researchers could then contact the repository for further information or to obtain a copy of the finding aid. To this end, project staff attempted to keep MARC project records brief and succinct. Biographical notes included only enough information to "place" the person (information such as birth and death dates, professions, marriages, and so forth) and did not include an extensive life history. In the same manner, the scope and content note included information on either major collection strengths or areas where little known information existed.

Another situation arose as the project expanded and included more and more organizations—authority control. Staff had begun to keep a list of any names found in the Library of Congress Name Authority File and to photocopy printed biographical references used to establish a name. However, due to the close relationship between the collecting areas of many Georgia institutions, names not found in either the Library of Congress Name Authority File or reference materials began to surface. Without an authority for these names, inconsistencies developed. Eventually project staff compiled name (personal and corporate), subject, and genre term authorities for all access points used during the project. The subject authority became particularly helpful as a means to provide consistency in cataloging. As seen in figure 7 (page 80), the list included references to related terms, narrow terms, and duplicate if applicable terms. Staff used the latter reference as a reminder to utilize certain subjects in conjunction with others.
GAMMA AUTHORITY FILE:

TOPICAL SEARCH TERMS

DUP: Duplicate if applicable  [May]: Subdivide geographically
SN: Scope note  [Chron]: subdivide chronologically
RT: Related term  [Year]: add year
NT: Narrow term

4-H clubs--[May].

Abolitionists--[May].
   RT  Slavery--[May]--Anti-slavery movements.

Abortion--Law and legislation--[May].

Abscam Bribery Scandal, 1980.
   Political corruption--[May].

Actors--[May].
   SN  Stage actors
   NT  Motion picture actors and actresses.
   NT  Television actors and actresses.

Acting teachers--[May].

Actresses--[May].
   SN  Stage actresses
   NT  Motion picture actors and actresses.
   NT  Television actors and actresses.

Adult education--[May].
   Continuing education--[May].

Adult education of women--[May].

Advertising--Tobacco industry--[May].

Advertising campaigns.

Aerodynamics.

Figure 7
RLIN and OCLC Differences

By August 1996, the GAMMA Project had entered over two thousand records into the RLIN database, and staff began negotiations between RLIN and OCLC for the transfer of records from one database to the other. RLIN created a tape load with a test batch of one hundred records that project staff submitted to OCLC. Project staff soon learned that moving catalog records from one MARC database to another created several problems due either to differences between RLIN MARC and OCLC MARC cataloging practices or to problems inherent with a collaborative project.

When OCLC mapped the RLIN MARC record to an OCLC MARC record, the process moved information from the RLIN ARC (Archives Records Control) segment to the equivalent MARC fields in the main body of the record—local fields such as 950, 998, 090, and the 541 (immediate source of acquisition) and the 583 (action note). Eventually staff stripped these fields from the record since this information was never intended for public use or as part of the main record. They mapped the 852 field containing the location of the holding institution to the 851 field and the 035 (system control number) field with the institution’s manuscript collection number to an additional 524 (preferred citation of described materials) field with a display constant of “collection number.” For the 040 (cataloging source) field, the symbol for the holding institution (subfield a) remained the same. However, OCLC created a new dummy symbol (A7M) for the transcribing agency (subfield c).

After resolving these problems, GAMMA staff proceeded with the project’s first tape load and sent 2,549 records to OCLC in March 1997. However, another problem arose due to OCLC’s limitations on overall size and number of fields per bibliographic record. OCLC only allowed a maximum of fifty fields per bibliographic record; characters within a single field could not top 1,879; and an overall on-line record could not exceed 4,096 characters. Even though RLIN employed none
of these restrictions, GAMMA staff knew project records would eventually reside in the OCLC database and always had been careful not to exceed the fifty-field limit. Yet, short of counting each character, there was no way to estimate either the overall record size or characters per field. As a result, several of the GAMMA records were over OCLC’s limits. OCLC provided GAMMA staff with a list of records that required downsizing, and they edited them to conform to standards. This problem seemed to settle the last difference between the two systems.

However, when OCLC loaded the records into the database, an unexpected problem arose with OCLC’s WorldCat interface. WorldCat does not display all fields included in an OCLC MARC bibliographic record but only a limited set determined by OCLC. For example, the 524 (citation) and 851 (location) which identify the record’s holding institution do not display in WorldCat. Since OCLC set the GAMMA holdings under the dummy OCLC symbol (A7M), the holdings’ profile displayed “Emory University, GAMMA Project.” As a result researchers erroneously contacted Emory for information on any project record. This problem was particularly vexing, since project staff had been assured that these two fields would display in WorldCat. To eliminate this problem, OCLC set holdings for all project members who were current OCLC members. For all project participants who were non-OCLC members, OCLC created symbols for the institution and set the appropriate holdings.

In comparing the two systems, it is fairly obvious that RLIN is much more responsive to archival cataloging and collaborative projects than OCLC. RLIN’s public interface allows display of the majority of fields entered for any bibliographic record (including the citation and location fields); the system places no limitations on either number of fields per record, field size, or overall record size; and RLIN
also provides free Internet access to the AMC portion of its database via a Z39.50 gateway.4

Additional Project Funding and Activities

During the process of loading the records from RLIN to OCLC and while completing the initial grant, the Georgia Historical Records Advisory Board (GHRAB) provided additional funds to continue the GAMMA Project through April 1998. Eventually the project created and entered 3,076 records into RLIN. (See figure 8, page 84, for a final list of project participants.) These grant funds also permitted the creation of a tape containing all GAMMA Project records, which is housed with the Southeastern Library Information Network (SOLINET)—the OCLC provider for the Southeast. SOLINET allowed institutions to share in the creation of local data creation tapes for use in OPACs, which decreased institutional costs.

In addition, GHRAB funds enabled the GAMMA Project to expand its initial mission and explore the use of Standard Generalized Mark-up Language (SGML). Using the Encoded Archival Description/Document Type Definition (EAD/DTD), the GAMMA staff marked up thirty-five finding aids from seventeen of the thirty-two GAMMA participants. To demonstrate the potential for collaboration between the MARC record and the finding aid, staff linked each encoded finding aid to its MARC record using the 856 (electronic location and access) field. Currently, Emory University houses the EAD finding aids on the GAMMA web page.5 However, plans are underway to move the encoded finding aids to the Georgia Library Learning Online (GALILEO) website.

4 To search the RLIN Gateway, go to NUCMC's homepage at <http://lcweb.loc.gov/coll/nucmc/nucmctxt.html> and select "NUCMC Z39.50 Gateway to the RLIN AMC file."
5 <http://sage.library.emory.edu/Sage/gamma>.
GAMMA Project Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Number of Records</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agnes Scott College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arthur J. Moore Methodist Museum</td>
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<td>Atlanta Catholic Archdiocese</td>
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<td>Atlanta University Center</td>
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<td>Augusta State University</td>
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<td>Berry College</td>
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<td>Coastal Georgia Historical Society</td>
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<td>Columbus State University</td>
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<td>Emory University</td>
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<td>Fort Pulaski National Monument</td>
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<td>Georgia College &amp; State University</td>
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<td>Georgia Department of Archives and History</td>
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<td>Georgia Historical Society</td>
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<td>Georgia State University</td>
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<td>Ida Pearle &amp; Joseph Cuba Community Archives</td>
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<td>Jimmy Carter Presidential Library</td>
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<td>Martin Luther King, Jr. Library and Archives</td>
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<td>Medical College of Georgia</td>
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<td>Mercer University</td>
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<td>Middle Georgia Historical Society</td>
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<td>Shorter College (Northeast Documentation Project)</td>
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<td>State University of West Georgia</td>
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<td>Troup County Archives</td>
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<td>University of Georgia/Russell Library</td>
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<td>Wesleyan College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Westminister Schools</td>
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</table>

Total: 3076

Figure 8
The GAMMA Project

database. Eventually, copies of all the GAMMA Project OCLC MARC records will also reside on GALILEO with links between the MARC record and the appropriate encoded finding aid.

With the completion of the GAMMA Project in August 1998, the project group planned to designate record custodians to update the RLIN and OCLC records in order to keep them viable. While Emory volunteered to update RLIN records, negotiations are still underway for an institution to take responsibility for updating the OCLC records.

Impact of the GAMMA Project

The GAMMA Project achieved the main goals desired by the Special Collections Group: to achieve increased access to Georgia's historical collections and to identify related collections held by separate repositories. Over a three-year period, project staff entered more than three thousand collection and series level records into RLIN and OCLC. This dramatically increased access to collections in Georgia and consequently helped institutions provide better service to their patrons. By itself, this is a remarkable achievement and a boon to any researcher undertaking a study of historical materials located in Georgia. In addition, the project identified countless examples of related collections held by different repositories across the state. For instance, in one city an institution held a nurse's scrapbook, which contained photographs, postcards, and clippings documenting her service overseas during World War I. Across town in another repository, project staff located a collection of letters to the same nurse from soldiers she had nursed overseas during the war. Neither institution was aware that the other held similar collections. This is just one of several connections uncovered during the GAMMA Project.

As a cooperative cataloging venture, the GAMMA Project
worked very successfully. While the amount of staff time contributed by participating institutions varied according to what the institution could spare, project staff completed the majority of the work. This allowed institutions that could not afford to hire additional personnel or contribute much staff time to the project to participate. By centralizing all cataloging work, project staff were able to maintain consistency and to develop authority files useful for any additional cataloging or descriptive projects. This centralization of work also allowed several institutions to share in skills (MARC and EAD) that may not have been easily acquired by their own staff members. Plus, as a result of the project's activities and the workshops presented by project staff, the use and understanding of the MARC format increased in Georgia. Finally, the project brought the historical community in Georgia together to focus on a shared endeavor upon which future projects can build. The success of the GAMMA Project should serve as a model for other cooperative projects in the archival community and lead to similar endeavors in Georgia and the United States.

Beth Bensman, formerly Assistant Project Archivist with the GAMMA Project, is currently the University Archivist/Special Collections Librarian for Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, PA. After leaving the GAMMA Project, she was the Technical Archivist for the Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies at the University of Georgia.

Susan Potts McDonald, formerly Project Archivist with the GAMMA Project, is Senior Archivist at the Special Collections Department, Emory University.

6 One reason that the project functioned so well is that a consortium—the University Center in Georgia—was already in place and functioning. Thus, the major participants were attuned to working together on cooperative ventures.

7 During April and May 1998, project staff presented three workshops detailing the MARC format, its use in automated and paper-based environments, and the selection and formation of subject headings.