



Narrative Section of a Successful Application

The attached document contains the grant narrative and selected portions of a previously funded grant application. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants should consult the Preservation and Access Programs application guidelines at <http://www.neh.gov/grants/preservation/national-digital-newspaper-program> for instructions. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Preservation and Access Programs staff well before a grant deadline.

Note: The attachment only contains the grant narrative and selected portions, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

Project Title: Mississippi Digital Newspaper Project

Institution: Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Project Director: Julia Marks Young

Grant Program: National Digital Newspaper Program

National Digital Newspaper Program Proposal (2013 - 2015 NDNP Cycle)

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Description

The Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) proposes to digitize 100,000 pages of its state's historic newspapers, 1836-1922, as part of the National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP). MDAH holds microfilm copies of all known extant Mississippi newspapers from this time period; implementing the NDNP in Mississippi is a natural complement to the NEH Newspaper Preservation Program, which MDAH led during the 1980s, and to its continued, current microfilming of 100 titles. Mississippi will collaborate with its neighbor institution, the Louisiana State University Libraries, for technical aspects of the project; since LSU has successfully completed two NDNP cycles, this partnership will afford Mississippi an efficient, standards-based process. We are excited about the new level of access that the NDNP will provide for this extraordinarily valuable component of Mississippi's documentary heritage.

Founded in 1902, the Mississippi Department of Archives and History is a comprehensive historical agency. The MDAH Archives and Records Services Division oversees the state archives and records management program, local government records program, reformatting unit, library and public reading rooms, and an active collecting and acquisitions program of all formats documenting all aspects of Mississippi's history and culture. Its non-circulating collection is the largest publicly accessible collection of print, manuscript, audiovisual, and digital material relating to Mississippi.

MDAH holds approximately 2700 rolls of microfilmed newspapers spanning the 1836-1922 project dates, containing 782 newspaper titles. Included are twenty-five antebellum newspapers from eleven counties, including ones from the older counties in southwest such as Adams, Amite, and Wilkinson, and the newer counties being settled in the north, such as Panola, Tippah, and Yalobusha. Civil War newspapers, from southwest, River, central and northern counties, are included.

MDAH has actively collected, preserved, and provided access to newspapers for more than one hundred years and launched its microfilming program in 1953. In 1985 leadership of the Mississippi Newspaper Project, as part of the NEH U. S. Newspaper Program, compelled MDAH to adopt current standards for both cataloging and microfilming of newspapers and American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards were implemented for microfilm processing. Additionally, data for each title and relevant holdings was entered into the CONSER database.

MDAH maintains an active newspaper acquisition and preservation program and is the only institution in Mississippi that microfilms newspapers; college and university libraries, public libraries, county officials, and local historical societies throughout the state rely upon MDAH as the source of copies for their users and communities. As the state's preeminent archival and historical institution, MDAH is committed to continuing to ensure preservation of and access to Mississippi's newspapers.

Mississippi Digital Newspaper Project

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Description of the Project

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National Digital Newspaper Program Proposal (2013-2015 NDNP Cycle)

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Narrative

The Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) proposes to select, digitize, and make available to the Library of Congress 100,000 pages of its state's historic newspapers, published between 1836 and 1922, as part of the National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP). MDAH holds microfilm copies of all known extant Mississippi newspapers from this time period. The NDNP builds on the success of the NEH Newspaper Preservation Program, which MDAH led during the 1980s, and its continued, current microfilming of 100 titles. Mississippi will partner with its neighbor institution, the Louisiana State University Libraries Special Collections, for technical aspects of the project; since LSU has successfully completed two NDNP cycles, this collaboration will afford Mississippi an efficient, standards-based digitization process. We are excited about the new level of access that the NDNP and *Chronicling America* will provide for this extraordinarily valuable component of Mississippi's documentary heritage.

History and Scope of the Project

Mississippi, 1836-1922: A Brief History and its Newspapers

Since the printing in Natchez, Mississippi Territory in 1800 of the short-lived *Mississippi Gazette*, more than 2,000 newspapers have been published in Mississippi. As elsewhere, newspapers have played a vital role in the state's economic, social, cultural and political development; and they afford unparalleled documentation of the life and times of Mississippians. By 1830 at least nineteen newspapers had been issued, in river settlements such as Natchez, Port Gibson, and Vicksburg, as well as in inland towns such as Woodville and the capital city Jackson. The Woodville *Republican*, established in 1823, is still in publication; it is the oldest newspaper and the state's oldest business in continuous operation.

After becoming a state in 1817, Mississippi was booming in the early 1830s: settlers were pouring in to settle cheap lands recently made available by cessions from the Choctaws and Chickasaws; roads and river transportation were being improved in order to take cotton and other crops to market, and monetary resources seemed reliable. The state's 1832 Constitution personified Jacksonian Democracy; throughout the antebellum period there was a thriving two-party system, with Democrats and Whigs actively competing for offices at every level all over the state. As elsewhere in the South, a bevy of short-lived, politically oriented newspapers reflecting these rivalries appeared: one source has estimated that 64 newspapers were published during the 1830s; another said that they seemed to magically appear. The papers included pro-Whig publications in the older, more affluent, conservative towns in the southwest such as Natchez (*Natchez Courier*, *Mississippi Free Trader*, *Courier and Journal*), Liberty (*Liberty Advocate*), and Woodville (*Woodville Republican*), as well pro-Democratic papers in the newer, central and northern hill settlements such as Kosciusko (*Spirit of Kosciusko* and *Central Register*) and Ripley (*Ripley Transcript*), and in the towns in the east, such as Paulding (*Eastern Clarion*).

Mississippi's editors often paid more attention to national news—such as the South Carolina nullification controversy and the Texas Revolution—than to local events. One historian noted that Jackson's papers frequently failed to report the results of local elections and even ignored the arrival of the city's first train in 1840! Although the Panic of 1837 quickly upended the financial stability, the regional political rivalries, appearance and then demise of partisan newspapers, and interest in national events continued into the 1840s; more than 80 newspapers were published in Mississippi during that decade. For example, in addition to the Natchez and Woodville papers noted above, other conservative ones included Yazoo County's *Yazoo Banner* and the *Yazoo City Whig & Political Register*. New titles continued springing up in the burgeoning Democratic hill settlements of Kosciusko (*Attala Register*, *Central Journal*, and *Kosciusko Chronicle*), Carrollton (*Mississippi Democrat*), Ripley (*Ripley Advertiser*), and Yalobusha City (*Southern Reporter*). One of the more interesting newspapermen was E. Percy Howe, who edited and/or published papers in at least six different towns from 1834 to 1852, including the *Yalobusha Pioneer* (Plummersville), *Marshall County Republican and Free Trade Advocate* (Holly Springs), *Dollar Democrat* (Oxford, Grenada, and Coffeeville), and *Family Organ* (Middleton).

By the mid-1840s Mississippi's newspapers reflected two primary concerns: the ongoing banking and credit crisis, and politics dominated by the national debate over slavery. With a growing majority of African American slaves—concentrated primarily on larger farms along the Mississippi River and in the northwest prairie lands—sectional political rivalries in the state intensified. Having long supported the annexation of pro-slavery Texas, Mississippians and their newspapers heartily supported the U.S. war with Mexico (1846-1848). Similarly, many opposed California statehood, fearing that it would tip the balance in Congress toward non-slaveholding states. By the time of the Compromise of 1850 some Mississippi newspapers were increasingly endorsing secession (though the word was rarely used) as a way to preserve states' rights and protect the property rights of slaveholders. States' rights Democrats and pro-Unionists (Whigs and Union Democrats) closely contended for statewide offices, and by 1855 the influence of the Whigs had begun to disintegrate. Throughout the contentious 1850s, while national politics dominated state elections, like their readers, Mississippi newspapers—such as the *Natchez Weekly Courier*, *Liberty Advocate*, *Kosciusko Chronicle*, *Eastern Clarion* (Paulding), *Weekly Panola Star* (Sardis), *Ripley Advertiser*, *Mississippian* (Jackson), *Woodville Republican*, and *Yazoo City Weekly Whig*—advocated for state funding for public schools, cultural and religious causes, and the expansion of railroads and other transportation improvements. As one ebullient 1891 history of Mississippi gushed, “No other people on the continent, perhaps, were ever so prosperous as were the people of Mississippi from 1845 to 1860, and it was a substantial and solid prosperity; and the press was in its glory.”¹ Largely rural—Natchez with 6,612 citizens was the largest city in 1860—newspapers were Mississippians' primary source of information and connection with the larger world.

Mississippi's decision in January 1861 to secede from the Union was no surprise, for planters, although less than 1% of the total population and less than 20% of all slaveholders, dominated the state's economic, political and social life. But as throughout the 1850s, there was a lively debate in the state's press about the best ways to protect the political and economic interests of the South. In 1860 all of the state's newspapers linked themselves to a political platform or party. Several, such as the *Natchez Courier*, and especially the *Vicksburg Citizen* and *Vicksburg Whig*, were Unionist; although essentially pro-slavery, they had endorsed Stephen A. Douglas and

¹ *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Mississippi...* (Chicago, IL: Goodspeed Publishing, 1891), p. 246.

suggested actions other than secession as a response to Lincoln's election. Ethelbert Barksdale, editor of Jackson's weekly/semi-weekly *Mississippian*, stood in stark contrast and was the state's most outspoken newspaperman; a delegate to the 1860 Democratic National Convention and ardent secessionist, Barksdale filled his paper with vitriolic rhetoric. In contrast, the Jackson *Daily News*, just begun in January 1860, offered a more balanced approach, claiming to be the city's "official journal." Awarded the contract to publish the 1861 secession convention proceedings, *Daily News* editor J.L. Power was one of two journalists who attended the convention. Primarily men of modest means who rarely owned slaves, other editors—in Natchez, Vicksburg, Paulding, Canton, Brandon, Gallatin, Lexington, Macon, Oxford, Aberdeen—reflected similar diverse positions.

The Civil War caused Mississippians to rely even more heavily on their local newspapers for information about developments outside their borders, the battles and events far away. The war, however, brought shortages of ink and paper, editors and staff left to fight or to be field correspondents, and many papers had to suspend publication; invading Union troops destroyed and shut down presses, publishers quickly shut up shop and moved to avoid destruction. By the end of 1863 only nine of Mississippi's seventy-odd pre-war newspapers were operating; these included the *Natchez Weekly Courier*, *Liberty Advocate*, *Kosciusko Chronicle*, *Weekly Panola Star* (Sardis), *Vicksburg Daily Citizen*, and *Woodville Republican*. As many know, it was the *Daily Citizen's* distinction to announce Vicksburg's surrender on wallpaper.

Following the Civil War Mississippi had to re-establish its government and rebuild its economy, businesses, railroads and bridges, farms, schools and churches, and towns; 26,000 adult white males had been killed and one-third of those who returned home were amputees; thousands of former slaves were without viable financial support or livelihood. The re-opening of presses and publication of newspapers were critical to rebuilding communities; editors and publishers resumed their newspaper ventures and others, including newcomers from the North, joined them. Competition for state printing contracts prompted Mississippi publishers to form the Mississippi Press Association (MPA) in 1866. One of the first such organizations in the South, original MPA members included publishers from the state's leading papers: *Brandon Republican*, *Meridian Tropic*, *Vicksburg Herald*, *Vicksburg Journal*, *Handsboro Democrat*, *Lexington Advertiser*, *Brookhaven Journal*, *Canton Mail*, *Panola Star*, *Natchez Democrat*, *Mississippi Conservative*, and Jackson's *Clarion*, *Standard*, and *Mississippian*. By 1873 85 newspapers were being published across Mississippi.

In 1865 Mississippi's newspapers carried lengthy articles about the state's Constitutional Convention and postwar elections, reflecting many of the prewar sectional and political alliances; and informed citizens about the so-called "Black Code" enacted by the Mississippi Legislature. When Congressional Reconstruction began in 1867, the newspapers brought news about the Military Reconstruction Acts, the re-registration of all voters, and the 1869 election, in which African American Republicans were elected delegates to the constitutional convention. Gradually Mississippi's economy began to improve in the 1870s and its newspapers again supported the state's efforts to improve public education. Following riots in Vicksburg in 1874, increasingly the white press called for the return of Democrats to statewide offices in the 1875 elections.

Steadily, from 1876 onward when Reconstruction ended, white Democratic Mississippians expanded their control of state and local politics, and their newspapers responded accordingly. Although staunchly Democratic, seldom were editors neutral in gubernatorial or local elections, for by backing the winning candidate they were more assured of becoming the county's printer or receiving state patronage. The Mississippi press celebrated Democrat Grover Cleveland's presidential victory in 1884 and Oxford native L.Q.C. Lamar's appointment as secretary of the

interior in 1885 and then U.S. Supreme Court justice two years later. Mississippi newspapers also supported the state's efforts to get federal assistance with rebuilding Mississippi levees, to lower taxes, and promote industrial and railroad development. As Mississippi's economy, infrastructure, and transportation systems expanded, so too did the number of daily and weekly newspapers. In 1881 Ayer's *American Newspaper Annual* listed 105 titles: four dailies, four tri-weeklies, 93 weeklies, and four monthlies. One year later Alden's *American Newspaper Catalogue* listed 124 titles, categorizing them as six independents; three Greenbacks; one *Patron of Husbandry*; three agricultural; five Baptist; one humor, one neutral; one Methodist; one temperance; two conservative; one national; and 102 Democratic. There was at least a weekly newspaper in every county, and several cities boasted two dailies. Significant titles included *Natchez Daily Democrat*, *Corinth Herald*, *Crystal Springs Meteor*, *Grenada Sentinel*, *Jackson Daily Clarion*, *Pascagoula Democrat-Star*, *Oxford Eagle*, *Columbus Index*, *Holly Springs Reporter*, *Magnolia Gazette*, and *Greenville Times*. As in the past, Mississippi editors and journalists were influential civic and political leaders. For example, Ethelbert Barksdale, antebellum editor of Jackson's *Mississippian*, was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives (1883-1887) and delegate to the Democratic National Conventions (1868, 1872, and 1880). J.L. Power, editor of the Jackson *Daily News*, served as Mississippi's official printer for many years and later Secretary of State (1893-1897).

But not all Mississippians supported the pro-business, conservative Democrats. Throughout the 1880s and into the 1890s there was increased interest in the expanding Farmers' Alliance, Greenback party, and Populist cause. Editors of the *Corinth Sub-soiler and Democrat*, *Columbus Patron of Husbandry* and *Winona New Farmer* called for the regulation of railroads and banks, and election of candidates favorable to their cause. Leaders of the agrarian movement also called for a new state constitution, to reduce the power of more affluent Democrats, but the Bourbon Democrats retained a majority at the 1890 Constitutional Convention. In 1892 Barksdale ran unsuccessfully for governor as a candidate of the Farmers' Alliance. Throughout these contentious times, numerous Mississippi newspapers, especially in the northern hill country, promoted the agrarian platform.

The first African American newspapers also were published in Mississippi in the years following the Civil War. After the *Colored Citizen* appeared in Vicksburg in 1867, more than 70 black newspapers appeared by 1899. It has been estimated that from 1886 to 1923 at least one African American paper was founded every year in Mississippi. Often highly religious and moralistic in tone, the black press advocated for the advancement of African Americans; education, the right of suffrage, and economic independence were primary themes. With a small readership and weak advertising base, they usually were quite short-lived, but their editors were highly influential. Six of the state's most outstanding black political leaders in the postwar 19th century were journalists, including I.D. Shadd, member and speaker of the Mississippi House of Representatives, who edited the *Greenville Herald*; and state legislators James J. Spelman and Henry Mason, who co-founded and edited Jackson's *Colored Citizen*. James D. Lynch, one of the state's primary religious leaders, had partnered with Mason to found the Jackson *Colored Citizen* and served as Mississippi's Secretary of State (1869-1872). Hiram S. Revels, the first person of color to serve in the U.S. Senate and in the U.S. Congress overall, edited the *Southwestern Advocate* in New Orleans before representing Mississippi in the Senate from 1870 to 1871. U.S. Senator Blanche K. Bruce, the first African American to serve a full term, edited the *Floreyville Star* in Bolivar County, before his election in 1874. Although, the 1890 constitutional convention effectively disenfranchised Mississippi blacks and the Jim Crow laws enacted during the 1890s restricted them further, new African American newspapers continued to appear well into the 20th century.

Because the Democrats contained most of the state's newspapers and were able to manipulate their image as the "redeemers" of Mississippi from the Republicans' Reconstruction regime, the Populists were never able to wrest control of state politics. The Democrats, and their supporting newspapers, increased their power and voice throughout the 1890s. When the United States went to war with Spain in 1898, the Mississippi press strongly supported the actions for Cuba's independence, describing terrible living conditions on the island and mistreatment by the Spanish.

As the new century began, the pro-business Democrats were gradually losing ground to emerging progressive leaders, who favored stronger regulation of railroads, anti-trust laws, and improved education; Mississippi's newspaper editors likewise began to support these measures. The state's tradition of journalists-becoming-politicians continued, with the election in 1903 of James K. Vardaman as governor. An arch conservative, Vardaman began his career as a newspaper editor in the Mississippi Delta (*Delta Flag*, 1890-1900; *Greenwood Enterprise*, 1889-) and continued publishing a newspaper (*Greenwood Daily Commonwealth*) to spread his viewpoints throughout his controversial term as governor and then as a U.S. Senator from 1913 to 1919. Mississippi newspapers carried hundreds of special stories about Vardaman and followed his every move. Likewise, arch-segregationist Theodore G. Bilbo, who served as governor from 1916 to 1920, owned a newspaper. Sometimes called progressive 'Rednecks,' these leaders and the press that supported them gradually brought change to Mississippi, establishing the first state Highway Commission, increasing support for public schools, instituting judicial elections, and providing assistance to farmers. Mississippi was pleased to be hosting a national exposition on the Gulf Coast in celebration of its centennial in 1917. Unfortunately this was cancelled by the outbreak of war with Germany, which the state's press valiantly supported.

Even into the 1920s Mississippi remained largely a rural state, even into the 1920s, comprised of small communities and crossroads. The newspapers, usually weeklies, were vital forces in their rural counties. As Tom D. Clark noted in *The Rural Press and the New South*, small town editors and publishers, such as Will C. Hight of the Winston County Journal, B.C. Knapp of the Fayette *Chronicle* , and S.A. Jonas of the Aberdeen *Examiner*, carried great social and political influence. Largely subscription-based, these rural Mississippi weeklies were locally oriented, welcomed letters from all readers and featured stories about all aspects of their (white) communities. These local weeklies were the hub of their communities and their editors, according to Clark, were "contemporary historians."²

Collection and Preservation of Newspapers at MDAH

Founded in 1902, the Mississippi Department of Archives and History is the nation's second-oldest publicly-supported state archives. A comprehensive historical agency, MDAH collects, preserves, and provides access to the archival resources of the state, administers museums and historic sites, and oversees statewide programs for historic preservation, government records management, and publications. The department comprises five divisions—Administration, Archives and Records Services, Historic Preservation, Historic Properties, and Museum—and is overseen by an independent Board of Trustees.

The MDAH Archives and Records Services Division, headquartered in the William F. Winter Archives and History Building, which opened in 2003, oversees the state archives and records

² Thomas D. Clark, *The Rural Press and the New South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1948), p. 15

management program, local government records program, reformatting unit, library and public reading rooms, and an active collecting and acquisitions program of all formats documenting all aspects of Mississippi's history and culture. Its non-circulating collection is the largest publicly accessible collection of print, manuscript, and digital material relating to Mississippi. Holdings include more than 106,000 monographs and periodicals, 112,504 reels of microfilm, 8,500 maps, 73,000 cubic feet of state records and manuscript collections, 300,000 images, and 54.4 terabytes of electronic records. Significant manuscript collections include the papers of historian J.F.H. Claiborne documenting the colonial, territorial, and early state periods; the papers of early American feminist writer Judith Sargent Murray; the Eudora Welty Collection, containing manuscripts, correspondence, and photographs of this major 20th century American writer; and extensive collections documenting the civil rights movement, including the papers of leaders Medgar and Myrlie Evers. In addition MDAH holds several significant news film collections, 1954-1975; extensive audio and oral history collections, 1950s-1980s; and original maps and territorial records dating back to the late 1500s and early 1700s, respectively.

The online catalog provides access to descriptions of approximately 80% of holdings. The library and reading rooms are open Monday-Saturday; access to holdings is provided free of charge. More than 7,500 onsite researchers used MDAH holdings during the past year, including scholars from sixty out-of-state universities; 66,151 items were circulated, including 29,131 microfilm reels. Approximately 75% of MDAH researchers are genealogists who make extensive use of microfilmed newspapers and state and federal census records. During the past year staff also answered approximately 10,500 telephone and email inquiries. MDAH provides an increasing amount of material via its website, including governor's records, maps, photographs, state agency records, and selected manuscript collections; and many items are linked directly from their catalog record. MDAH has an active volunteer program, offers educational and outreach programs to students in grades K-12, hosts a weekly lecture series, and is recognized as one of the preeminent state archives in the nation. (For more information on MDAH, go to [http://archives3.mdah.state.ms.us/.](http://archives3.mdah.state.ms.us/))

MDAH has actively collected, preserved, and provided access to newspapers for more than one hundred years; its newspaper holdings date from 1801. Because of their legal and historical value, newspapers were among the first materials MDAH assembled. Soon after it opened in March 1902, Director Dunbar Rowland sent the following to all newspaper publishers in the state:

You are editing and publishing a valuable paper and every issue is recording the current history of your county and State. It is desired that bound files of the best papers in each county should be preserved in this Department for the use of historical students and the public. Let me ask that you honor the State with a complimentary copy of your paper. I shall be pleased to have any old files which you may desire to lend or donate this Department.

MDAH received a very gratifying response: the Department's first annual report listed sixty-six weeklies and seven dailies.³ The Archives also purchased private collections, such as in 1910 when it acquired a large collection of early Natchez papers, 1813-1830 (10 titles, including *Statesman* and *Gazette*, 1827-1829, and *Southern Galaxy*, 1828-1830). To protect the papers and ease access, the Archives bound loose issues. For example, 1907 annual report listed holdings of

³ Dunbar Rowland, *First Annual Report of the Director of the Department of Archives and History of the State of Mississippi, from March 14, 1902 to October 1st 1902* (Jackson, MS, 1902), pp. 87-88.

453 volumes of 200 “old” titles (1805-1875) “printed on good rag paper,” and 13 current dailies and 64 current weeklies, mostly dating since 1902.⁴ Binding eventually was discontinued in the mid-1930s because of lack of funds, but MDAH continued seeking and receiving newspapers from throughout the state.

By 1953 MDAH was inundated with newspapers: it received almost all currently published papers and copies had been piling up for seventeen-plus years! As a solution, MDAH launched a microfilming program. During the first year it produced 314 rolls of filmed papers, primarily weeklies, 1936-1954, and also 26 older titles, 1836-1922, from Jackson and eleven small towns. Thus, MDAH has been actively filming current and older state newspapers for sixty years. For example, from 1961-1963, MDAH subscribed to and filmed 20 dailies and 16 weeklies, and also filmed random issues of 162 other papers, 1806-1915. During the 1970s the MDAH Technical Services unit produced approximately 300 reels of newspaper microfilm each year. Unfortunately, much of the microfilm produced from 1953-1984 was not produced according to accepted standards. Papers were not properly prepped, multiple titles were filmed on the same roll, and the original newspapers were sometimes destroyed after filming. Gradually during the 1980s the deficiencies in the microfilming program were corrected: filming and processing procedures were improved and quality controls were implemented so that the microfilm processed in-house became an increasingly better product.

Recognizing the opportunity to further improve preservation of and access to the state’s newspapers, MDAH initiated the Mississippi Newspaper Project in 1985, joining the NEH U. S. Newspaper Program in its nationwide effort to preserve America’s newspapers. The Mississippi Library Commission, all major public and private universities and colleges, the Mississippi Press Association, Mississippi Chancery Clerks Association, and related professional organizations joined MDAH in this project. Staff identified, surveyed, and cataloged approximately 2,100 Mississippi titles found in libraries, archives, and courthouses. The resulting 1990 union list showed that MDAH, with 1,000 titles, had the largest and most comprehensive holdings. In the final phase, staff microfilmed all newly identified issues and, whenever possible, issues that had been ineffectively filmed previously. As the project leader, MDAH holds copies of all project master negatives and provides public access to all papers filmed during the project.

This project compelled MDAH to adopt current standards for both cataloging and microfilming of newspapers and American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards were implemented for microfilm processing. Additionally, data for each title and relevant holdings was entered into the CONSER database.

MDAH continues to maintain an active newspaper acquisition and preservation program. It regularly receives 99 weekly and daily newspapers—at least one from each of the 82 counties—all of which have been filmed at least through 2006 and many through 2010. Currently producing approximately 150 rolls each year, we plan to increase newspaper microfilming during the next two years in order to complete filming of all of these titles up through 2010. MDAH also films issues that had not been included in previous compilations, such as volume 1 of the Bay St. Louis *Sea Coast Echo*, which miraculously survived Hurricane Katrina in the publisher’s office. Microfilm is prepped, processed, and inspected in accordance with current ANSI standards and master negatives are stored at Underground Vaults and Storage of MDAH.

⁴ Dunbar Rowland, *Sixth Annual Report of the Director of the Department of Archives and History of the State of Mississippi, from October 1, 1906 to October 1, 1907* (Nashville, TN, 1908), pp. 32-37.

In addition, MDAH subscribes to three titles on microfilm and receives approximately 45 other newspapers that it does not microfilm. MDAH is the only institution in Mississippi that microfilms newspapers; college and university libraries, public libraries, county officials, and local historical societies throughout the state rely upon MDAH as the source of copies for their users and communities. As the state's preeminent archival and historical institution, MDAH is committed to continuing to ensure preservation of and access to Mississippi's newspapers. Although we may begin to directly acquire some born-digital newspapers within the state it has no plans curtail the microfilming program.

MDAH holds approximately 782 microfilmed newspaper titles from the target period (see Appendix 1: Comprehensive List of Newspaper Titles on Microfilm, 1836-1922). Included are 25 antebellum newspapers from 11 counties, including ones from the older counties in southwest such as Adams, Amite, and Wilkinson, and the newer counties being settled in the north, such as Panola, Tippah, and Yalobusha. There are Civil War newspapers, from southwest, River, central and northern counties. The tally of post-Civil War weeklies and dailies is impressive; there is a plethora of dailies and weeklies. Eleven newspapers, from towns throughout the state (Natchez, Liberty, Jackson, Raymond, Lexington, Macon, Sardis, Vicksburg, and Woodville, appear to be complete from 1866 to 1922. MDAH also holds scattered issues of African American publications (*Jackson Messenger*, 1894; *Vicksburg Light*, 1900; *Vicksburg Golden Rule*, 1900; and *Brandon Free State*, 1900) as well as runs of the agrarian press (*Corinth Sub-soiler and Democrat*, 1882-1892; *Kosciusko Mississippi Farmer* (1896-1900), and *Columbus Patron of Husbandry*, 1875-1882). Thus, with newspaper holdings from 1801 to the present, comprising more than 13,000 rolls of microfilm, the microfilmed newspapers are some of the most frequently used holdings at MDAH. Genealogists, local officials, journalists, documentary producers, attorneys, high school and college students, and historical researchers rely on Mississippi's newspapers for information on local and national events; birth, death, and marriage notices; and city and county information. These newspapers are some of the most important and widely used informational resources. They are an indispensable element in contemporary American society, serving to inform, entertain, and provide a public record of legal actions.

Methodology and Standards

Master Negative Microfilm

Only negative microfilm will be utilized in this project, in order to ensure the highest digital image capture; no original paper copies will be used. As noted above, MDAH has conducted the largest newspaper microfilming program in the state since 1953 and led the Mississippi Newspaper Project (1985-1991). Since the mid-1980s MDAH newspaper microfilm has been produced according to USNP microfilm guidelines and ANSI standards. MDAH holds the master negatives produced by these initiatives and owns all the microfilm that will be involved in this project. MDAH master negatives are stored at MDAH and Underground Vaults and Storage in Hutchison, Kansas.

Newspaper Selection: Advisory Committee and Criteria

All microfilmed titles in the target period will be assessed both for their intellectual content and the physical quality of the film, so that the project digitizes those newspapers with the highest intellectual content and the best quality film.

MDAH has enlisted ten historians, scholars, librarians, and archivists from throughout the state to evaluate the intellectual content of the newspapers (see attached list of advisory committee members and their letters of endorsement in Appendix 5). Committee members represent diverse historical specialties especially pertinent to Mississippi during the specified time period—including the Civil War, religious history, African Americans, and agricultural history—and are from leading academic and/or minority institutions.

The committee will meet to affirm and elaborate upon the intellectual criteria recommended by the Library of Congress: geographical distribution, research value, and temporal coverage. Based upon their expertise and knowledge, Committee members may also suggest specific titles to consider. Staff will then provide the committee a list of titles, amplified by brief descriptive information, to rank. This list will include all antebellum and Civil War, and minority publications; and those titles, 1866-1922, that are the most complete, are longest running, contain a county or city's legal notices, are orphan titles, and/or have particular historical, political, or social significance. Titles that have already been digitized will not be considered. Using a web-based survey tool developed by Louisiana State University Libraries (LSU), committee members will rank and prioritize each newspaper according to the agreed-upon criteria.

To assist the Advisory Committee's work, a secure wiki or collaborative web site will be used. Supporting documents and other materials will be available, such as a map of Mississippi including counties and county seats; timeline of major events in state history, 1836-1922; bibliography of sources relating to Mississippi newspapers; links to NDNP and NEH web sites; Library of Congress and NEH Content Selection Guidelines; preliminary list of titles suitable for digitization; ranking formula and forms for title prioritization.

Project staff will weigh the committee's title selections against physical reel assessments, using the positive copies at MDAH; staff will skim through the film looking for damage that might affect the optical character recognition and digitization process. After this physical assessment, which will be particularly critical for titles filmed before 1985, project staff will make the final title selections. Approximately 282 reels of microfilmed titles during the target period were produced after the mid-1980s, when MDAH improved its production and processing; it is expected that the majority of titles for this project will be from this group.

Collaboration with Louisiana State University Libraries Special Collections

MDAH will collaborate with the Louisiana State University Libraries Special Collections as a technical partner for all aspects of the digitization process. Sharing a similar regional history, agricultural and industrial connections, and newspapers that serve communities in both states, MDAH and LSU have collaborated on previous projects, including most particularly sponsorship of the Historic Natchez Conference since the 1990s. Additionally, the LSU Libraries Special Collections has extensive holdings related to Mississippi history and culture. Further details of partner responsibilities are explained below and in the work plan and staffing sections. A letter of commitment from the LSU Libraries as a collaborative partner for the Mississippi Digital Newspaper Project is in Appendix 5.

Mississippi Department of Archives and History: MDAH as applicant for the Mississippi Digital Newspaper Project will administer the grant and determine benchmarks for meeting the NDNP goals. MDAH will create a plan for newspaper selection and work with its Advisory Committee to select significant Mississippi newspaper titles. As explained above, MDAH is the central repository of Mississippi's newspapers; it holds the earliest newspapers of the state, from 1801 to the present. MDAH will identify newspaper titles on microfilm that fit within the title selection

plan and will deliver to LSU Libraries Special Collections copies of the master negatives for duplication, metadata creation and digitization processes. In consultation with LSU and following the required procurement and bid procedures of Mississippi, MDAH will contract with duplication and digitization vendors for the production of the second-generation duplicate silver negative microfilm and the digital files, per the NDNP Technical Guidelines. MDAH also will research, write, and submit the title essays describing the selected newspapers following NDNP guidelines, and create or enhance CONSER records for all titles.

Louisiana State University Libraries Special Collections: The LSU Libraries Special Collections (LSU) will collaborate on the Mississippi Digital Newspaper Project as a technical sub-contractor. LSU will be responsible for all aspects of the digitization process, including technical review of the microfilm, metadata creation, production of digital files from microfilm by digitization vendor per NDNP Technical Guidelines, quality control of batches of digital files, batch submission to the Library of Congress, and delivery of duplicate microfilm to the Library of Congress.

LSU's Digital Infrastructure and Project Experience: The LSU Libraries has extensive experience with digital content and technology projects as an established NDNP recipient with its Digitizing Louisiana Newspapers Project in two cycles (2009-2011 and 2011-2013). In the 2009-2011 cycle LSU contributed over 100,000 pages of 56 Louisiana titles representing 23 parishes. In its current second cycle LSU has expanded digitization to include nine French titles and one Spanish title, thus capitalizing on the non-English newspaper capabilities recently introduced to Chronicling America. LSU Libraries continues to add diversity to the collections by including 20 unique titles from 14 regions on the state. LSU Libraries has been working with the same digitization vendor since 2009 and has an excellent track record of delivering accurate and timely batches to the Library of Congress. As of December 1, 2012, the Digitizing Louisiana Newspaper Project has submitted 130,390 digitized pages to Chronicling America. In the course of its two award cycles, the Digitizing Louisiana Newspapers Project has brought together a team of staff members with the skills to deliver a high quality newspaper digitization project.

Work Plan

The project has nine primary tasks:

1. **Select Titles:** MDAH will select the titles. Project staff will physically assess microfilm, prepare title selection lists, and develop criteria that meet the NDNP guidelines. MDAH will meet with the Advisory Committee and facilitate its online ranking of newspaper titles.
2. **Evaluate Microfilm:** MDAH will conduct page counts and make an initial physical assessment of its microfilm, looking for damage that might affect the optical character recognition (e.g., tearing, creasing, redox, bleedthrough, fragmented or mutilated pages, marginalia, guttering, and illegibility). LSU will further evaluate the technical qualities of the second generation negatives, furnished by MDAH, as part of the duplication process. Following the NDNP Technical Guidelines, LSU will closely monitor each roll for density, resolution, reduction ratio and other issues to identify titles and reels that meet USNP and ANSI standards, in order to produce acceptable digital images and automated text conversion output.
3. **Duplicate Microfilm:** MDAH will contract with a microfilm duplication vendor to produce second-generation duplicate silver negative microfilm from the master negatives that are stored at Underground Vaults and Storage and MDAH.

4. Digitize Microfilm: MDAH, in consultation with the LSU Libraries, will contract with a microfilm digitization vendor to convert the microfilm to the digitized image formats: TIFF, JP2, PDF, ALTO xml (OCR). The images will be accompanied by the batch, reel, and issue xml files as specified in the NDNP Technical Guidelines.
5. Create derivatives and OCR: The digitization vendor will be responsible for the OCR text conversion into the ALTO xml schema per the NDNP Technical Guidelines. LSU will sample the OCR files as part of its quality review process to assess quality and accuracy.
6. Create Metadata: LSU will review the microfilm copies provided by MDAH and collect the metadata elements specified in the NDNP Technical Guidelines, supplying the metadata to the digitization vendor via an Excel spreadsheet similar to the one used in the Digitizing Louisiana Newspapers Project. This spreadsheet captures data such as volume number, issue number, date as printed, actual date of printing, number of pages per issue, and additional information such as supplements, sections, or special issues of note that need to be captured in each issue's metadata. In addition, MDAH will create or enhance CONSER records for all select titles and deliver it to the Library of Congress (LC).
7. Quality Control: LSU will use a detailed quality review process to check the images and metadata as delivered by the vendor in the batch structure. A batch/hard drive delivered from the vendor will first be backed-up to an LSU Libraries server by LSU staff. After the back-up, LSU staff will compare data from their original microfilm review and metadata collection to the digitized files in the batch using the Viewer function of the DVV. LSU staff will use guidelines developed by the Library of Congress to assess the quality and content of the batch. LSU staff will review the metadata and digital objects of all issues with anomalies, the first and last issue of every reel, and at least an additional 10% of the remaining issues. Only after LSU staff is satisfied with the accuracy and correctness of all digital objects and assets will the batch be verified using the Digital Viewer and Validator.
8. Deliver Data: LSU will use 1 terabyte reformat-able Western Digital Elements SE portable hard drives to transfer data between the digitization vendor, the Library of Congress, LSU Libraries, and MDAH. When shipping a batch/hard drive to the Library of Congress, LSU will use trackable FedEx shipping. It will follow the NDNP designated shipping instructions for labels and manifests, sending emails notifying LC staff when a hard drive is sent.
9. Prepare Scope Notes: Following the Library of Congress guidelines, MDAH will research and write an essay that describes the scope, content, and significance of each selected newspaper title. Each note shall contain the following information: place of publication, dates and schedule of publication, geographic area and circulation, political and/or religious affiliation, physical attributes, and changes in name, format or ownership. Additional information about editors or reporters of note, significant events covered by the paper, and special features may also be included. MDAH will send the scope notes to LC.

Project milestones and deliverables are as follows:

July – August 2013

Awards announced end of July 2013

September – December 2013

- MDAH: Attend annual NDNP conference at NEH and LC

- MDAH and LSU:
 - Finalize partnership agreements
 - Work with Library of Congress and NEH
 - LSU staff come to Jackson
- MDAH: Project start-up activities
 - Hire Project Assistant (PA)
 - Purchase equipment
 - Select duplication and digitization vendors
- MDAH: Begin title selection
 - Research and prepare information for Advisory Committee (AC)
 - AC meets in Jackson to confirm criteria and preliminary list of titles
 - AC selects prioritized list of titles via online survey
 - Evaluates quality/completeness and conducts page counts of top priority titles
- MDAH: Transfer sample 2N to LSU
 - Retrieve MDAH master negative and ship to duplication vendor
 - Vendor produces 2N
 - Vendor ships sample 2N to LSU and returns master negatives
- LSU: Review and preparation
 - Communicate batch information to digitization vendor
 - Begin MF review and data collection
 - Send MF sample to vendor for digitization

January – March 2013

- MDAH: Complete title selection
 - Complete evaluation of quality/completeness and page counts of positive microfilm
 - Send Title Selection List to NEH
- LSU: Process sample batch
 - Review microfilm and collect metadata
 - Perform content and metadata quality control
 - Sample batch (1 reel) due to LC
- LSU and MDAH: Confirm production schedule and send to LC
- MDAH: Submit Interim report to NEH, LC

April – June 2014

- LSU: Establish quality control procedures for review of images and metadata
- Process according to production schedule
 - Pull master negatives and ship to vendor for duplication
 - Produce 2Ns and ship to LSU; return master negatives for re-shelving
 - LSU: Review microfilm and collect metadata
 - Ship 2Ns to digitization vendor
 - Perform content and metadata quality control on batches
 - LSU: Send first batch to LC; transfer batches on monthly basis to LC
- MDAH: Research title essays; submit to NEH as completed
- LSU: June 30, 2014: 25% of content (25,000 pages) due to LC

July – September 2014

- Process according to production schedule above
- MDAH: Research title essays; submit to NEH as completed
- MDAH and LSU: Send interim report to NEH, LC
- MDAH: Update CONSER newspaper records as needed

- MDAH: Attend Annual NDNP conference at NEH and LC

October – December 2014

- MDAH: Update Advisory Committee about project status
- Process according to production schedule above
- MDAH: Research title essays; submit to NEH as completed

January – March 2015

- Process according to production schedule above
- MDAH: Research title essays; submit to NEH as completed
- MDAH and LSU: Send Interim Report to NEH, LC

April – June 2015

- LSU: Perform content and metadata quality control on batches
- LSU: Transfer batches on monthly basis to LC
- MDAH: Research title essays; submit to NEH as completed
- MDAH: Send updates to CONSER newspaper records as needed

July – August 2015

- LSU: August 2015: 100% of content (100,000 pages) due to LC
- MDAH: Submit final title essays to NEH
- LSU: Submit duplicate microfilm to LC
- MDAH: Submit Final Report to NEH, LC

Staff

Julia Marks Young, Project Director: Young will spend 10% of her time on the Mississippi Digital Newspaper Project during the two-year grant period. She will oversee the hiring of the Project Assistant, the purchasing of computer equipment and supplies, the selection of vendors, the implementation of their contracts, and the work of the cataloger. Young will be the primary point of contact with the Advisory Committee and will oversee the selection of titles. She will coordinate the MS-LA collaboration, maintaining frequent communication with LSU staff. She will monitor the budget, facilitate project publicity, set deadlines for deliverables, and prepare interim and final reports as required for the project. As Director of the Archives and Records Services Division, Young manages a budget of approximately \$4,099,988 and oversees all division programs, including the Reformatting unit (5 FTE), Electronic Records section (3 FTE), Published Information section (4 FTE), and five other sections (38 FTE). During her tenure as Division director, MDAH digital holdings have grown from approximately 100 gigabytes to nearly 55 terabytes. Young has managed grant projects for more than twenty years, including eleven federally-funded projects at MDAH since 2005 (see attachments); in fy12 the Division's grants totaled more than \$177,000. She has a long-time understanding of Mississippi newspapers, authoring the state's original grant proposal for the Mississippi Newspaper Project in 1984. As President of the Council of State Archivists, 2011-2012, she launched the State Electronic Records Initiative, to improve efforts to manage, preserve, and provide access to state government electronic records in all states and territories. With a lengthy record of involvement in collaborative projects, one of Young's most successful recent partnerships was the Archival Training Collaboration, a project funded by the Institute for Museum and Library Services to provide basic archival training in Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

Indira Bhowal, Cataloger: Bhowal will spend 10% of her time on the Mississippi Digital Newspaper Project during the two-year period. She will hire, train, and supervise the project assistant, and oversee day-to-day project operations. Bhowal will advise the project assistant on project workflow and help set deadlines for deliverables. She will contribute to the selection of newspaper titles and work with the Advisory Committee. She will oversee the physical assessment of the positive microfilm at MDAH, all research of newspaper titles, and preparation of the title notes. Bhowal will maintain project records, compile statistics, and assist with the preparation of project reports. Bhowal will prepare and submit the CONSER bibliographic records. As head of the Published Information section (4 FTE) in the Archives and Records Services Division, Bhowal oversees the cataloging of monographs, serials, maps, newspapers and state publications, including coordinating authority control and catalog consistency. She manages day-to-day operations of the section, including expenditures, personnel, policies, and establishing standards for the unit. While at the Mississippi Library Commission Bhowal was in charge of creating the digital collection using CONTENTdm database.

MDNP Project Assistant: A full-time position throughout the two-year period, the Project Assistant will contribute to the preparation of all materials for the Advisory Committee, assist with the Website/wiki, and conduct initial research about Mississippi newspapers, 1836-1922, in order to rank and prioritize the newspaper titles. The assistant will perform the physical assessment of the positive microfilm, checking for damage that might affect the OCR (e.g., creasing, redox, bleedthrough, page fragments, guttering) and to help determine if the title is worthy for inclusion in the project. The assistant will coordinate all project transactions with Underground Vaults and Storage, including the return of the master negatives from the duplication vendor; and will be the day-to-day contact with LSU and track the LSU production. The assistant will compile and enter detailed bibliographical data about each title and assist with the preparation of OCLC records per CONSER guidelines. The assistant will perform in-depth research about each title and write the title notes to be submitted to the Library of Congress. The assistant will assist with the creation and maintenance of project records, compilation of statistics and preparation of project reports. Qualifications and competencies for the Project Assistant include a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited four-year college or university in history, library science, or a related field; demonstrated research and writing skills; knowledge of Mississippi history, microfilm management issues, and Word and Excel; attention to detail; and demonstrated organizational and time management skills.

Louisiana Staff: Laura Charney, Project Manager: Charney will devote 50% of her time to managing the daily operations and workflow of the Mississippi Digital Newspaper Project during the two-year grant period. She will communicate with MDAH project staff to facilitate LSU's role as the technical partner in MDNP. As in the NDNP projects in Louisiana, she will oversee the microfilm evaluation and metadata collection, supervise the shipment and tracking of microfilm and digital assets, hire and train the project graduate assistant, maintain regular contact with contracted vendors, supervise the technical inspection of microfilm per ISO specifications, supervise quality control checks on all digital assets created by vendors, maintain project records, compile statistics, prepare reports, monitor the budget, assist with creation and maintenance of the project website, and facilitate project publicity. Laura Charney was the 2011-2013 Project Manager and possesses an ALA accredited master's degree in library or information science, supervisory experience, knowledge of technical standards and best practices in microfilm production and digitization, knowledge of library operations, and an understanding of bibliographic control. She will report to Project Director Costello.