

Discovery Metadata for the Peripheral Medieval Manuscripts Project

April 15, 2025

The Peripheral Medieval Manuscripts (PMSS) project team records descriptive metadata in [OCHRE: An Online Cultural and Historical Research Environment](#), which provides a semi-structured, hierarchical XML-based data model that also incorporates a graph data model to allow for tracking “network-like” relationships between objects. OCHRE allows the project team to provide multiple levels of description for the container, the works within the container, their constituent parts, and how the works within containers may relate to other works. OCHRE serves as the authoritative source for metadata researched and compiled for PMSS.

The PMSS project is using Indiana University Libraries’ Digital Collections repository service for discovery and for sharing metadata via IIIF protocols. As a repository service that curates and makes discoverable hundreds of collections across Indiana University campuses, the metadata model is flatter and far more generic than OCHRE’s model. A significant amount of time was spent mapping from OCHRE to the Digital Collections metadata model, attempting to keep the rich and robust descriptive content created in OCHRE to maximize discovery of these materials. To facilitate ingestion of metadata and image files into Digital Collections, we had to collapse and combine OCHRE fields, flatten the hierarchy, and condense multi-directional linking into bi-directional linking of related works. Despite these compromises and concessions, the project team settled on a metadata model that will expose these collections without diminishing their potential for discovery.

Inspired by parallel projects, the Peripheral Medieval Manuscripts (PMSS) project team sought to lean on metadata approaches and descriptive practices documented by some of these projects, especially [BiblioPhilly](#). The PMSS metadata practices are documented on our shared GitHub repository: <https://github.com/midwest-manuscripts/peripheralpmss/>.

For detailed information about the “Brief Field Description,” consult our project’s [Metadata Guide](#). For more information about the suggested MARC mappings, consult [BiblioPhilly’s metadata guidelines](#), which informed our suggested mappings below.

OCHRE	Digital Collections	MARC	Brief Field Description	Notes
/Feature//Image range start /Feature//Image range end	file	N/A	Captures the first and last image for each work to facilitate batch ingestion of images per work.	List of every image file that corresponds to the work record to aid in ingesting into the Digital Collections repository service. Note that files may include either JP2 or PTIF file extensions (zoomable files). Partners received digital archival TIFF files.
/Feature//Tombstone title	title / Title (display label)	245	Title representing the manuscript volume as a whole.	
Description	abstract / Description (display label)	520	One-paragraph abstract summarizing the form and the content of the manuscript as a whole.	
Provenance details	provenance / Provenance (display label)	541, 561	Additional information beyond former owner names, including family ownership, former libraries or geographical locations, marks of provenance such as bookplates, and sale information.	

OCHRE	Digital Collections	MARC	Brief Field Description	Notes
Bibliography	bibliographic_citation / Bibliographic Citation (display label)	Possibly 773 subfield t, 856 subfield z	Relevant citations to other bibliographic resources, such as essays or articles about a manuscript.	
/Feature//Descriptive date	time_period / Time Period (display label)	500 notes	Part of a century, a century, or a range of years larger than a century, or single approximate year for a manuscript described as “Circa” with a single year; if the item has parts with disparate creation dates, multiple dates may be described narratively together here (e.g., “12th century and 15th century”).	
/Feature//Place of Origin	geographic_location / Place of Origin (display label)	260 subfield a, additional details in 500 notes	Place where a manuscript was copied or a suggestion, possibly very broad, of where it might have been copied.	
/Feature//Call number	call_number / Call Number (display label)	099, 852 subfield j	Used to locate the physical item that references the current call number or other item ID number provided by the holding institution.	

OCHRE	Digital Collections	MARC	Brief Field Description	Notes
/Feature//Alternate ID type + /Feature//Alternate ID	local_id / Alternate Identifier (display label)	(varies, institution-specific)	Internal control number supplied by holding institution, such as: accession number, former shelfmark; or other identifier, such as a Gwara handlist number for leaves of books broken by Otto Ege.	
Physical description or Complex physical description	physical_description Physical Description (display label)	500 notes	Contains information about the physical characteristics of a work including support materials, foliation/pagination, extent, collation and much more.	If a work has multiple parts, it usually will require a complex physical description that provides information for each part in one field.
/Feature//Author + /Feature//Author	creator / Author (display label)	100 or 110	Authors are represented in an "agent" record in OCHRE following VIAF, LCNAF or ULAN authorities when possible.	
/Feature/Keywords/Century	date_created / Date Created (display label)	500 notes	Reflects a normalized century for faceted browsing.	
Subjects	subject / Keywords (display label)	650	Keywords are organized into six groups: Book Type, Century, Culture, Descriptive term, Geography, and Subject.	This is a repeated field in Digital Collections. Unique values are separated by a pipe ().

OCHRE	Digital Collections	MARC	Brief Field Description	Notes
/Feature//Language	language / Language (display label)	Fixed field 008/35-37, 041, 546	Language or languages in which the manuscript is written.	This is a repeated field in Digital Collections. Unique values are separated by a pipe ().
Contents or Complex contents	table_of_contents / Contents (display label)	505	Codices are described as parent items with properties giving general comments about layout and decoration throughout the volume and a description field that provides a narrative list of contents.	If a work has multiple parts, it usually will require complex contents description that provides information for each part in one field.
Owning Institutions	owning_institution / Owning Institution (display label)	852 subfield a	Provides information about the holding institution including a city and state.	
DCS Associated items	related_url / Related Work (display label)	Possibly 773 subfield t, 856 subfield z, 856 subfield u	This field allows for the identification of related items across collections, for example, leaves from the same original manuscript, now dispersed.	
/Feature//Digitization ID	source_identifier / Source Identifier (display label)		Number assigned by project digitization team. Format consists of a three-letter institutional abbreviation, three-number item identifier, three-number sub-item identifier, eg.: smc_004_001.	You will use the digitization ID to match up with the TIFF files for your collection.

OCHRE	Digital Collections	MARC	Brief Field Description	Notes
[N/A]	caption / Contributors (display label)		Captures cataloging contributions including attribution. For this project, partners provided any existing metadata and the PIs incorporated, enhanced or created original descriptive contributions for each item.	Boilerplate: Records created or enhanced by the Peripheral Manuscript Project's Description team, led by Dr. Elizabeth K. Hebbard and Dr. Sarah L. Noonan.
[N/A]	purl	856	This is the persistent URL for the digital object hosted by Indiana University Libraries.	

Rights Statement metadata field points to a statement from rightsstatement.org and is attached to the metadata record via a field-select and does not batch import or export. All records for this project are using the following rights statement:

<http://rightsstatements.org/vocab/NoC-US/1.0/>