
Subject: Alpha release of the new Livingstone Online, finally

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To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Date: Friday, April 24, 2015 1:09 PM

Hi Everyone,

The long wait is over and the alpha release of the new Livingstone Online is finally here! Please take a look:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

But before you do, please read this email first (and sorry it will be so long). For those of you to whom I haven't introduced this terminology, we are having two releases of the site. The alpha, now available, is a project-team-only release, so please don't share these access details with anyone. This is the initial site version for us to review, check for issues, etc. The beta, a public release, will go out at the end of June and coincide with a public lecture on the project and launch at the National Library of Scotland (details to follow).

Here are some notes to guide your initial encounter with the alpha site:

What this is

The alpha site includes the basic site framework: the home page, the six main section pages (About this Site, In His Own Words, etc), and the content pages (specific essays and other articles). In other words, as you'll see, the site conveys the overall concept plus most of the intellectual, critical content. It's not perfect as yet, but you'll certainly get the idea.

What is missing

For starters, three key element missing are images, images, and transcriptions

a) None of the illustrations that go with any of the essays or site sections or anywhere else are up yet. So the site is colorful, but as yet you have to imagine that it will also be fantastically illuminated with a wonderful array of images of original documents and illustrations related to Livingstone's life and times (and, believe me, we have lots and lots of these). These will be going up in the next few weeks. To demonstrate for you how images will appear (and, in the spirit of the idea that the best way to your hearts is via your egos), the one page where I have put images is the staff page: <http://digital.library.ucla.edu/livingstone/about-site/livingstone-online-staff> Otherwise, you have to imagine the site filled with pictures and anywhere you see a gray box, means an illustration is coming.

b) Images of original Livingstone manuscripts and our transcriptions are not yet up. This is what we're currently working on with the UCLA team. The "In His Own Words" section of the site (the least developed, so save it for last!) lets you see where we are with that. It will certainly be done in time for the beta release (we hope!).

c) The resources section, which will focus on our outreach program, is also not complete, as I don't have the relevant material for that yet. But it will be done soon.

d) You will also see that certain links don't work as they should, for instance, those that link to any parts of the Spectral Imaging Site. Again, in progress.

Known issues

As you'll discover, certain things don't work. Also, depending on your browser, the site will look better or worse (or, in some cases, not have something working at all!) because there are some browser compatibility issues still to be worked out. As far as I know, the site does not work exactly right in any given browser as yet, so your best bet is to test it out in different ones to get the full picture. In Firefox (especially on Mac), Safari, and Chrome it works fairly well. IE is as yet the least friendly. The site, also, has so far been optimized for desktop computers, so it's not perfect on tablets and mobiles.

What you can do

The goal of the alpha release is to show you the site and get your feedback! As far as I can imagine, your feedback will take one of two forms.

1) *Feedback on how the site works*. Please collect this kind of feedback, but don't send it to me yet. Mid May or so, I'll ask you for this. We've just blitzed to get to this point, so we need a bit of a break on this aspect of the site. I know of some of the issues, but certainly not all of them. For any such feedback, be sure to tell me what browser you're using.

2) *Feedback on the content*, i.e., anything the sites *says* in essays, section tiles, or anywhere else -- whether there are typos, mistakes or any other kinds of issues. This kind of feedback I would like now as it's easy for me to fix. You can save it up and send it in one go, but also feel free to send it to me as you encounter issues, and I can fix them one by one.

And that's it, I think. It's been a long, long road to get to this point, as you'll see if you read our shiny new LEAP history (<http://digital.library.ucla.edu/livingstone/behind-scenes/leap-2013-2016-project-history-part-i>), but I do hope you'll like what you find here and take pride in being part of such a fabulous project. Thanks again to all of you for all the ways you've contributed to this!

With best wishes,
Adrian