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## Exhibit on 'Golden Age of Legal Publishing' Opens in Library

**2011** NEWS ARCHIVE**09/16/11**

Newton, MA--A new exhibit called "The Golden Age of Legal Publishing in Massachusetts" has opened at the BC Law Library in the Daniel R. Coquillette Rare Book Room. Massachusetts was an extremely important legal publishing center in the 19th century, when American law book publishing was taking off. Prior to and right after the American Revolution, virtually the only law books being published in the colonies were statutory compilations and reprints of English and continental legal texts. However, by the beginning of the 1800s, a "home-grown" canon of American legal literature began to emerge.

"As with so many things, Massachusetts was really at the forefront in this area," says Laurel Davis, BC Law Library's Curator of Rare Books. "Within several decades after the Revolution, the States went from having very little legal literature to having a tremendously rich library of legal materials. And if you look at the title pages of these great books--by Joseph Story, Simon Greenleaf, Theophilus Parsons, the list goes on--a tremendous number of them came from Massachusetts publishers and printers."

"The Golden Age of Legal Publishing in Massachusetts" traces this progression in Massachusetts legal publishing, beginning with a 1648 statutory compilation and ending with Christopher Columbus Langdell's famous *A Selection of Cases on the Law of Contracts*, which revolutionized teaching at American law schools.

The exhibit was loosely designed to go along with McMullen's Making History exhibit, featuring objects from the London Society of Antiquaries, and the Massachusetts Historical Society's exhibit on its own founding. Indeed, one of the authors featured in the Rare Book Room

exhibit, James Sullivan, was one of the founders of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Educational Technology Specialist Chester Kozikowski helped integrate QR codes into the exhibit. This addition blends old and new and allows those touring the exhibit with a smart phone to easily access additional content about the exhibit--audio clips, links to related websites, and a link to the digital edition of the exhibit, which is also available from the exhibit's [webpage](#).

You are invited and encouraged to view the exhibit anytime the room is open: generally weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The exhibit will remain on view into Spring 2012. To arrange a tour for a class, please contact [Laurel Davis](#).

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