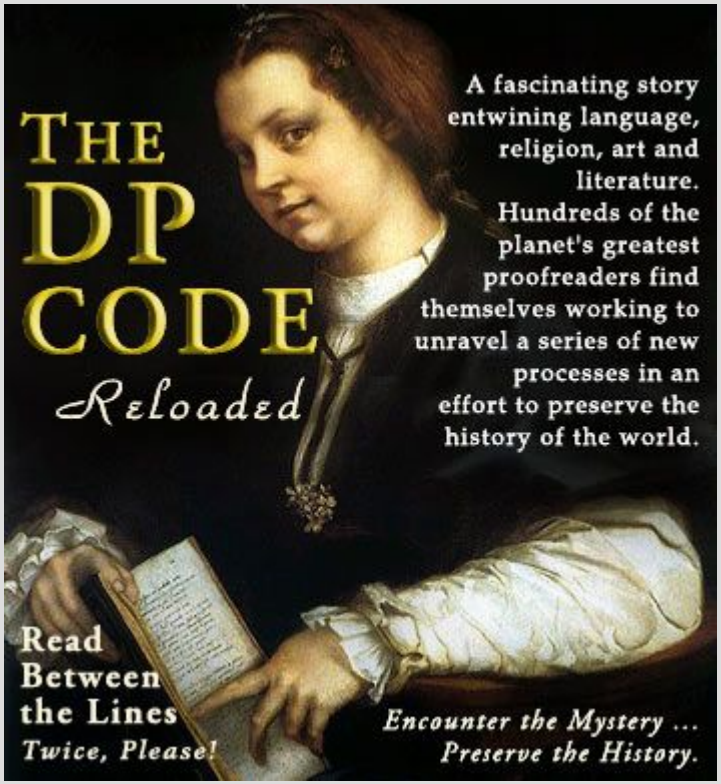
The Distributed Proofreaders Project



The Distributed Proofreaders Project

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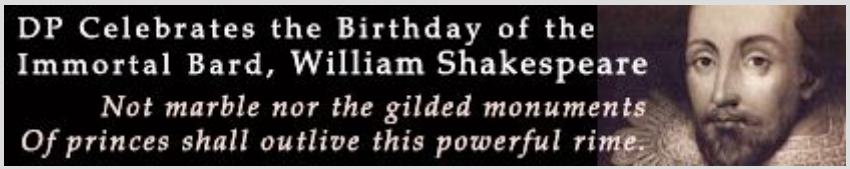
www.pgdp.net

What We Do

- Convert public domain content from printed formats into digital text editions.
- Distribute the work across many volunteers at both the page and project level



Distributed Proofreaders Is

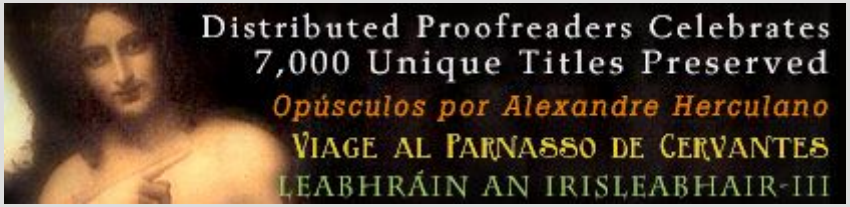
- Completely volunteer
  - Worldwide participation
- Independent of commercial, corporate or academic affiliation
- Cooperatively and ideologically allied with Project Gutenberg
- Unhindered by any editorial or censoring policy
- Unrestricted by the limits of a fixed location

Why?

- Accurate, versatile text editions are in great demand
  - Can copy and paste
  - Can be used by vision-impaired people
  - Down-sizes well for use on small viewers like PDAs
  - Allows for the potentially rich uses of structured text
- We preserve material for posterity and make it freely available in the present

The DP Community

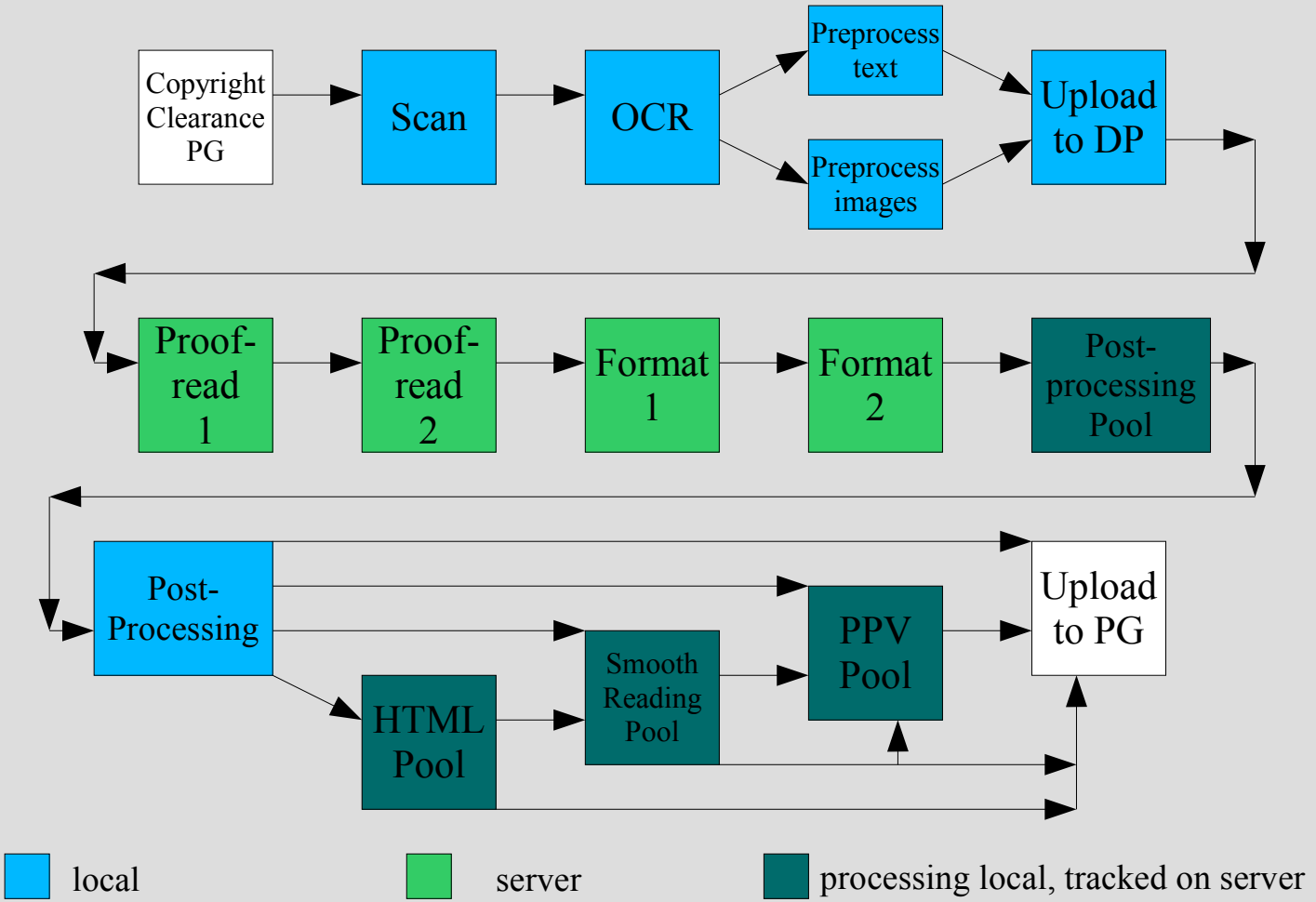
- Mostly from English speaking countries
- Graduate students to retirees
- 400-500 individuals login per 24 hours
- ~1000 individuals login per week
- Active forums and chat room
- As international as we can make it on a site that only uses English
- About 20% of our production is LOTE



Numbers

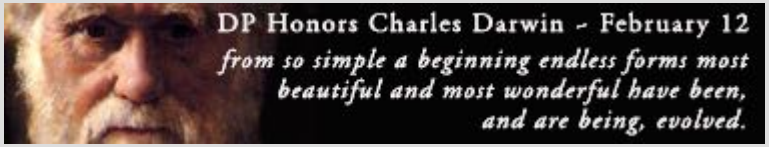
- Unique titles produced: 7100+
- Projects in process: 3600+
- Pages proofed 2/24/03 to 5/31/05: 5 million
- Pages proofed since 6/3/05: ~6K/day
- Accounts ever: ~33,500
- Languages in progress: ~15
- Languages ever: ~40
- Forum posts/day: ~135

Current DP Process



Scans

- Mostly provided by volunteers using flatbed, inexpensive scanners
- Some are sourced from various image archives including: MBP, LoC, Gallica, Canadiana, Toronto collection, MoA, and many others
- Some from 2 high-speed, sheet-fed scanners
  - Books scanned this way are destroyed in the process

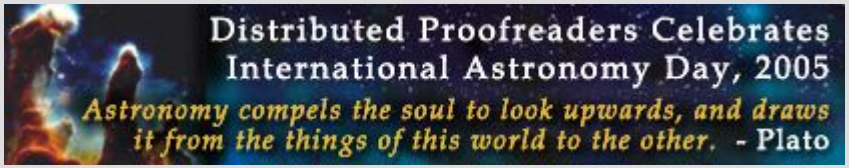


OCR

- Done locally, volunteers provide their own software
- Most use ABBYY Finereader Pro 5.0-7.0
- Some use other products
- OCR Pool for those without access to OCR software

Preprocessing Text

- Fix the most common OCR problems
  - Spaced punctuation
  - 1-l-i, O-0 confusion
  - Common scannos: tbe, '11
- Extract some formatting information
- Volunteer developed guiprep is our primary tool
- Some volunteers use other ad hoc scripts and programs



Preprocessing Images

- Downsize for proofing if necessary
  - B&W, 300 dpi, 1000 pixels wide
- We try to keep the scans to ~50K/page, and definitely under 100K
- This step is optional

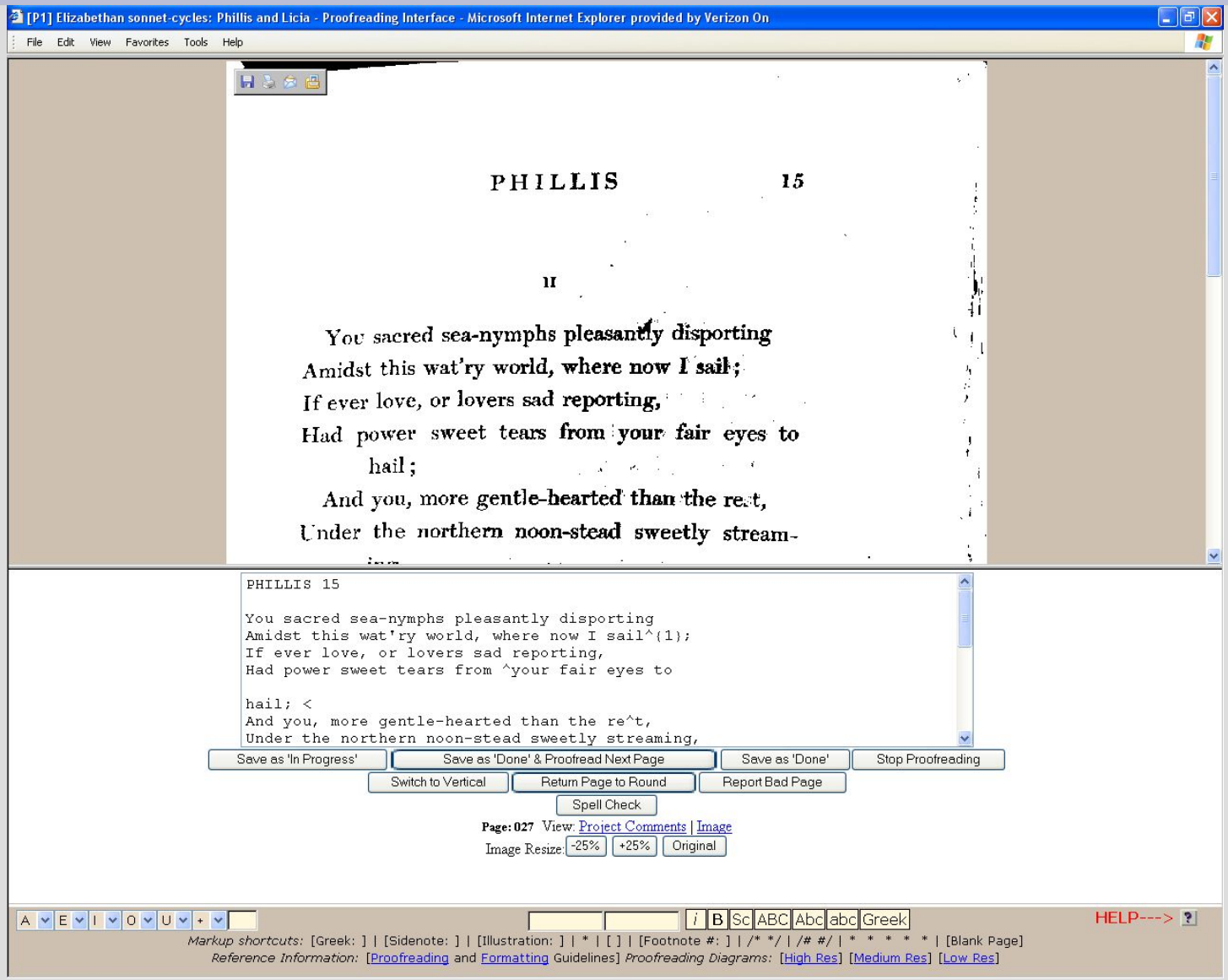
Proofing Rounds

- Make the text, at the character level, match the scanned image
- Find and correct
  - Scannos
  - Stealth scannos: arid/and, he/be
- Spell check
- DP Custom Mono font

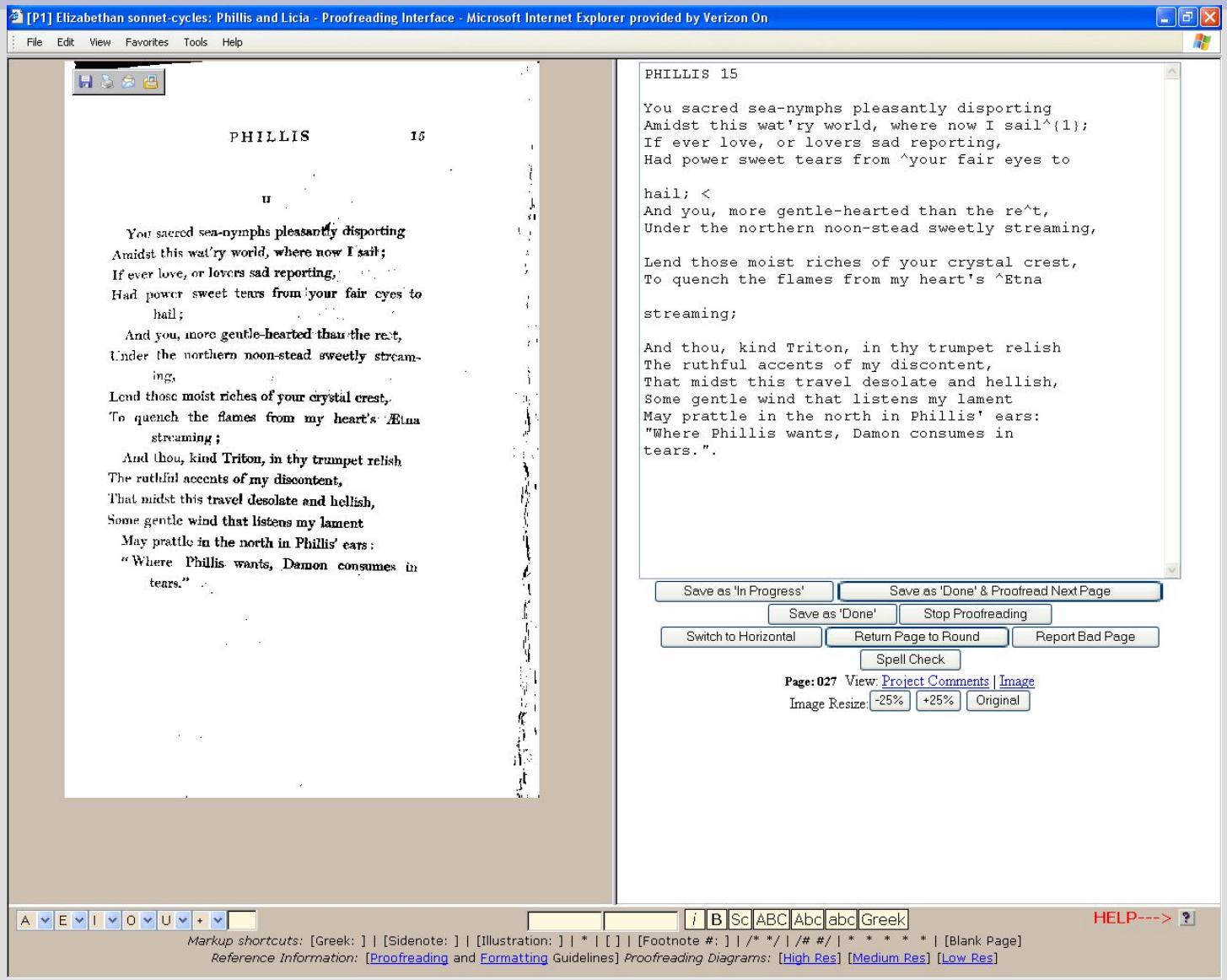
Formatting Rounds

- Add markup as necessary
  - Chapters, sections, etc
  - Italics, bold, small caps
  - Poetry, block quotes, tables
  - LaTeX for math
- Home grown markup “tags”
  - Italics:
  - Block quotes: /# #/
  - Footnotes: [Footnote 1: text.]

Horizontal User Interface

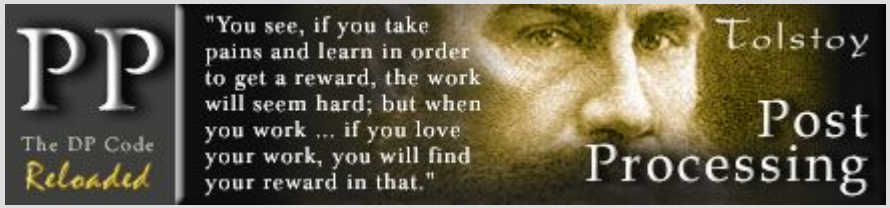


Vertical User Interface



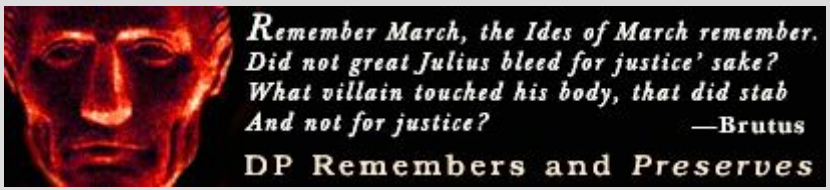
Post-processing

- Text files are concatenated and zipped
- Image files are zipped
- Project checked out by a volunteer
- Work done locally
- Final product either
  - To DP for further processing
  - Directly to PG



Post-Processing-cont.

- Global spell check
- Global scanno/stealth scanno check
- Consistent formatting
- Remove page separators
- Generate HTML, other formats if required: UTF-8, pdf, etc.



Post-processing Tools

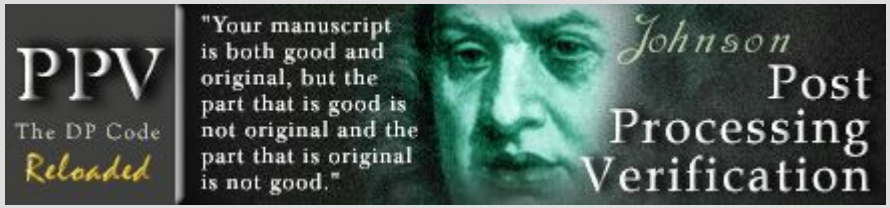
- Can be done with text editor, spell checker, and image viewer/processor, gutcheck
- Specialized tools make the job quicker
  - Guiguts (perl)
  - Gut-axe, Gut-hammer, etc (Basic)
  - pg2html

Smooth Reading

- Completed projects are made available in a pool for specified periods of time
- Volunteers read for pleasure, noting anything unusual or jarring
- Text or html version
- Anyone can download, DP account required to upload
- A final relaxed read through is effective at catching odd errors

Post-Processing Verification

- Mentoring process for new post-processors
- Quality check
- Direct posting allowed to PG
- Role granted based on consensus of existing PPVers.

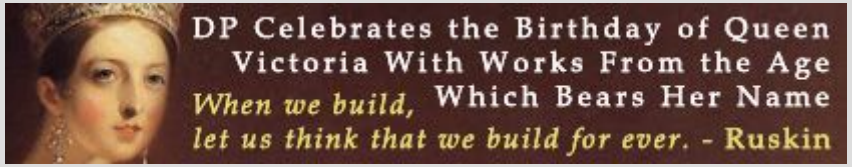


Server Software

- Linux
- Apache
- php
- MySQL
- phpMyAdmin
- phpBB
- CVS
- Sourceforge

Server Details

- Production Server
  - Hosted at The Planet in Houston
  - Dual CPU
  - Mirrored 80G disk
- Test Server
  - Provided and hosted by The Internet Archive



Distributed Proofreaders Europe

- Hosted by Project Rastko in Belgrade, Serbia
- Started in January, 2004
- UTF-8 based: works with Cyrillic and non-Western alphabets
- More localized due to translation of site interface into many languages
- Public domain rules are life+50 years
- About 1/10th the size of PGDP
- www.dp.rastko.net

Project Gutenberg

- PGDP's fiscal ally
- Provides copyright clearance services
- Provides archive and distribution of finished ebooks
- www.gutenberg.org

Other Archives

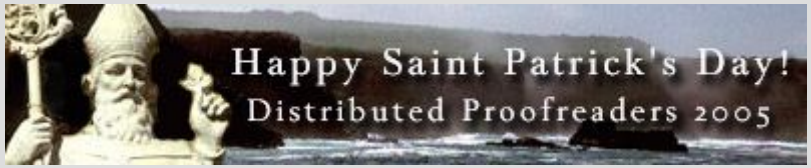
- Gradually building relationships with other archives
  - Library of Congress
  - Posner Memorial Collection
  - The Internet Archive
  - Inquires from many others

Some Large Projects

- Slave Narratives (30+ parts)
- History of the Philippines (22/50 vols so far)
- Copyright clearances
- Cornell Math Library
- Shakespeare in French
- Periodicals
  - Punch
  - Scientific American
  - As Farpas
  - De Aarde en haar volken

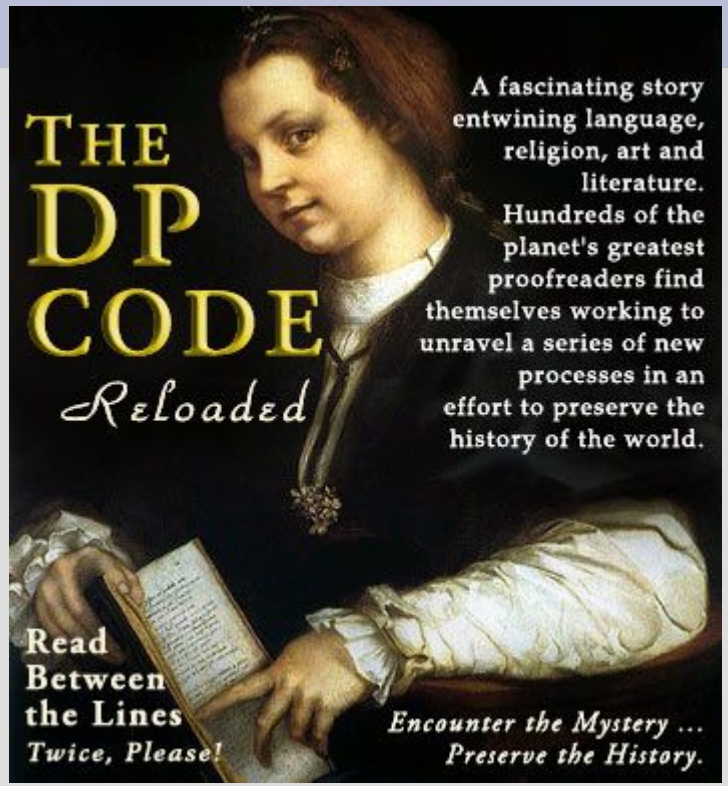
Budget

- What budget?
- Dollars from PG: $3-10K/year
  - Server, server hosting, high speed scanner setups and maintenance
- In kind donations: Internet Archive
- Volunteers: time, material, tools
  - Paid my own way here
- Could expand with a financial inflow but not hindered by a present hunger



Coase's Penguins

- *Coase's Penguins, or Linux and the Nature of the Firm*, by Yochai Benkler, 2002
  - Abstract at http://www.benkler.org/CoasesPenguin.html
- Commons based peer production
- Low barrier to entry, with room for growth
- Small & large chunks available
- Integration of chunks is key
- Issues with over-estimators



Banners by Thierry Alberto