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Call for Core Training Co-ordinators

The ARA training group is looking for a number of new members to contribute to the Core Training offer for ARA members. We believe that the provision of quality, inexpensive, accessible training is one of the key roles for ARA. As a group we oversee training across the Association, designing and delivering regional and specialist training events. In the last two years we have developed the new Core Training events.

Can you help us to further develop our training provision? Are you looking to spread your wings and broaden your horizons from your current job? Do you have something to offer?

We are particularly looking for people to take on the roles of Core Training Co-ordinators. These are people who look after specific Core Training courses and take responsibility for their structure and administration. This is an excellent opportunity to develop your skills and show a commitment to your continuing professional development.

We are looking for enthusiastic people who can make a minimum two-year commitment to the role. We meet three times a year with discussions in between by teleconference and email. Travelling, telephone and other expenses are met by ARA. For an informal discussion or to express an interest contact the chair of the training group.

Lizzy Baker, ARA Training Group Chair

Email: lizzy.aratraining@outlook.com

The ARA's Core Training programme is supported by Link 51.



**Archives & Records
Association**
UK & Ireland

Welcome to **ARC Magazine** March 2016

It is the turn of the Section for Specialist Repositories, and this time they are taking ephemera as their focus. Often mass produced, and originally created to be used only for a short time, ephemera has traditionally been seen as the poorer relation to archive material. But just because something was not *meant* to have lasting value, doesn't necessarily mean it is useless, as these articles explore. Ephemera has huge visual potential for exhibitions, publicity and outreach. It can fill in the gaps in our knowledge, and can document processes, ideas or products that have become obsolete.

Adrian Glew urges archivists and librarians to work more closely to save ephemeral items that might otherwise fall through the gaps. But sometimes archives have the opposite problem, becoming the default repositories for everything, including objects. As Alex Hutchinson points out, this leads to problems in handling, storage and documentation, so perhaps we need to be working more closely with museums as well? Many thanks again to the amazing Susan Scott for sourcing and co-ordinating a great set of articles.



Elsewhere in the issue, we have articles on the conclusion of a very long cataloguing project at Liverpool Record Office, and the creation of archives inspired artwork in York.

Enjoy!

Ceri Forster
Editor

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Front cover shows: Ephemera in the Tennyson Research Centre

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www.archives.org.uk

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opening lines



I've been thinking about the concept of value recently. Is material held in archives of less value because it is mass produced? Is material of less value if it is to be found in more than one archive? Can the same item have a different meaning or a different value if it is found in a different collection, alongside different material?

At The Theatres Trust, we collect material relating to theatre buildings. This is because The Theatres Trust, as the national advisory body for theatres, exists to protect these buildings so that we can all enjoy live theatre. A lot of our collections could be considered ephemeral – postcards, press cuttings, theatre programmes. We also hold copies of architectural plans, planning applications and conservation reports. We know these items are also available elsewhere. Yet we still feel a need to keep them. Why?

Partly it's convenience, as we need to be able to refer to them in our day-to-day work. As a charity based in London but working throughout the UK, we need to keep theatres' building histories and pictorial records to hand, so we can easily access them when we need them. As an advisory body, we also need to be able to draw on past case studies to make the case for retaining a theatre building, or making particular alterations to its fabric.

But I would argue that this material has value in other ways. Take, for example, our scrapbooks. One of my favourites is from the 1960s, and charts one 16 year old's campaign to ensure that the Century Theatre, a post-war travelling theatre, would return to her home town of Burnley. This girl has curated her own story, and this gives the press cuttings and theatre programmes contained in the scrapbook extra value. This scrapbook can show the passion and enthusiasm that people have for their local theatres in a way that the official records of the local council, or the newspaper articles alone never could.

In other cases, ephemera is all we have left. In the 1950s and 1960s, theatres were being demolished at an alarming rate. The Theatres Trust was established as a response to this. These theatres often haven't left their 'official' records behind, and with the bricks and mortar no longer standing, it's down to the programmes, playbills and postcards to tell their story.

Another thing I've noticed is the power of ephemera to reach out to people. On Twitter, it's our tweets which include images of theatre postcards which always receive the most likes and retweets. The postcards are also one of our most used collections, whether it's a journalist after an interesting historical image for an article, or a building conservation specialist writing a report.

Perhaps it's the everyday-ness that makes ephemera so popular. We might be impressed by historical records associated with great politicians or monarchs, but it's much easier to relate to a photograph of a suburban variety theatre your grandma might have visited. These ephemeral items are nothing special in isolation. But as part of a personal collection or the last surviving memory of a lost public treasure, they're often beautiful, and they remind us of ordinary people going about their ordinary lives as much as any detailed document or record ever could.

Stephanie Rolt

Theatres Trust

www.theatrestrust.org.uk

Registration Scheme **news**

By the time you read this, the first 'Blitz-It' workshop of 2016 will have taken place in Bristol. Hopefully some of you will have had the opportunity to attend - we hope you found it useful!

Blitz-It workshops are intended for candidates who are in the final stages of completing their portfolios. Our aim is to provide a little extra support and motivation, enabling candidates to have their portfolios ready for submission in the next 6-12 months.

There are now only 19 months to go before submissions under the existing Registration Scheme close for good. That means we are getting to the stage where many of you might benefit from attendance at a Blitz-It. If you think that applies to you, please let us know. We can't guarantee we will meet the demand but we will do our best.

Mentors are also welcome to attend Blitz-It workshops. This recognises the crucial role they play in the successful completion of a portfolio. But don't wait for a workshop - contact your mentor, ask them for advice, perhaps even ask them to set you some deadlines. The final deadline of 1 October 2017 is not so far away now. Will you be ready to submit your portfolio?

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Registration Scheme Admin and Bursaries:

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Registration Scheme Mentor Queries and Advice:

regscheme Mentors@archives.org.uk

Richard Wragg

Communications Officer, Registration Scheme
Sub-committee

“ *Don't forget: Existing candidates have 19 months to submit their portfolio under the existing Registration Scheme.* **”**

Collecting **matters**

Why do you collect what you collect? What are the external factors which determine your collections development decisions? Do you feel empowered to shape your collections to the benefit of your users?

These are just some of the questions to be explored by a research study jointly-funded by The National Archives (TNA) and Research Libraries UK (RLUK).

The study will run from March to October 2016, mapping the current collections landscape across the Higher Education sector. It will use published collections and collections development policies; existing information sources including TNA's *Accessions to Repositories Survey*; and previous research into HE collecting behaviours.

The objective is to demonstrate how the development, use and management of collections are influenced by new and emerging trends in research and teaching, and wider HE sector policy initiatives including the Research and Teaching Excellence Frameworks (REF and TEF).

We want to find evidence of national collecting strengths; to surface 'at risk' collections; to identify gaps especially across science, engineering and medical subject areas - and to understand why.

We will gather and publish case studies to inform recommendations on how to work collaboratively to avoid duplicated collecting activity; to re-home 'orphaned' collections; and to encourage continuing investment in archive services.

The research aims are ambitious but achievable; and as part of TNA's continuing commitment to support strategic collection development across the wider archive sector, crucial to its future sustainability.

So why do you collect what you collect? Be prepared - we're coming to find out!

Cathy Williams

The National Archives



Edward Stanley, 19th Earl of Derby with Councillor Jeremy Wolfson and the Lord Mayor of Liverpool Anthony Conception at the launch event in the Hornby Library.

Derby Papers launch

On 7 January 2016, a joint launch event was held in the Hornby Library at Liverpool Central Library to mark the completion of cataloguing the papers of the 13th, 14th and 15th Earls of Derby within Liverpool Record Office, and the publication of *Art, Animals and Politics. Knowsley and the Earls of Derby* edited by Dr Stephen Lloyd. Lord and Lady Derby attended the event along with the Lord Mayor of Liverpool, a representative of The National Archives, many local academics, and staff from archive services, museums and art galleries across Merseyside.

The Lord Mayor spoke of the welcome addition of the Derby papers to the extensive and unique archive collections available in Liverpool Record Office which date back to the 13th century. Central Library & Archive Manager, David Stoker, thanked Team Leader Helena Smart for her long term work in managing the grant and ensuring the safekeeping of the records.

The National Cataloguing Grants Programme for Archives fund administered by The National Archives facilitated two years of intensive and meticulous cataloguing of the collections of the 13th, 14th and 15th Earls of Derby. The extensive amount of material had been deposited in Liverpool Library in 1968 by the 18th Earl of Derby. Archivist Jenny Mason started the complex project, which was completed by Jan Grace.

The 13th Earl of Derby, Edward Smith Stanley, was born in 1775 and served as MP for Preston and then for the county seat of Lancashire. He became interested in

buying birds for his aviary and collecting bird skins, drawings, eggs and other specimens; he was later elected President of the Zoological Society of London and retained the position until his death.

Much of the correspondence within this collection relates to dealers organising specimens to be obtained on expeditions to Africa, America, Australia and New Zealand. Species never previously seen in Britain were obtained and housed in the Aviary at Knowsley. Lord Stanley met Edward Lear at Regent's Park who went on to work at Knowsley, becoming a firm friend of the family. Lear's famous *A Book of Nonsense* was made from the sketches and verses he had made at Knowsley for the young Stanleys. Following Lord Stanley's death in 1851, his non-living natural history items formed the core collection of Liverpool Museum.

The 14th Earl Edward Geoffrey Stanley was born in March 1799 and inherited the title Earl of Derby in 1851. He served as Prime Minister three times within the reign of Queen Victoria (1852, 1858-9, 1866-8), and the collection holds many letters from the Queen, as well as Prince Albert and the Duke of Wellington.

He worked towards reforming the practice of slavery, and the Abolition of Slavery Bill was passed through Parliament in 1834. The main achievement of Lord Derby's final ministry as Prime Minister was the 1867 Reform Act, which allowed working men to vote for the first time.

“The history of the Earls of Derby is inextricably intertwined with Liverpool”

The 15th Earl of Derby, Edward Henry Stanley, was born in 1826. Like his father he was a prominent politician, serving under his father's ministry as Prime Minister, and in the cabinets of both William Gladstone and Benjamin Disraeli. Included in the collection is correspondence with Queen Victoria, Benjamin Disraeli, Florence Nightingale and Charles Darwin.

Edward Henry Stanley also left 33 annual volumes of hand written diaries which give great insight into his personal and public life with detailed accounts of national and international politics. As a local magnate and landowner he donated land for hospitals and parks. He contributed significantly to funding the beginnings of the University of Liverpool and University of Manchester. Lord Derby was Chairman of the Lancashire magistrates for nearly 30 years and Chairman of the Liverpool bench for several decades, serving as a magistrate in Kirkdale and St. George's Hall, which he documents within the diaries.

The history of the Earls of Derby is inextricably intertwined with Liverpool; the newly catalogued papers make a significant amount of original source material available for the first time for all types of research. Access is now possible to the catalogue online via the Liverpool City Council website and access to the originals can be made by appointment in the Record Office Search room.

The joint launch event also celebrated the publication of *Art, Animals and Politics. Knowsley and the Earls of Derby*, edited by Dr Stephen Lloyd, Curator of the Derby Collection. It includes essays by historian David Starkey, writing about the first Countess of Derby, and Sir David Attenborough on Edward Lear's zoological drawings, many of which were made at Knowsley. It covers key facets of the family's diverse achievements.

Jan Grace

Liverpool Record Office

Text recognition in Marburg

Gillian Sheldrick reports on the recent conference *Technology Meets Scholarship, or how Handwritten Text Recognition will Revolutionize Access to Archival Collections*, held in Marburg, Germany in January 2016.

The aim of the conference was to bring together IT experts working on the EU project READ (Recognition and Enrichment of Archival Documents)¹ and archivists, including partners in the EU project COOP (The Creative Archives and Users Network)².

The archivists demonstrated and described a range of records which might lend themselves to text recognition projects: the computer scientists are seeking large quantities of material either in fairly standard formats, or in a single hand. Examples included the East German STASI index cards, concentration camp registration cards, landholding and military services records from the 16th century on, and ecclesiastical and civil registration records, as well as the writings of Jeremy Bentham, which are being made available as a crowd sourcing project in the UK³. To the archivist, the types of material and the approaches to mass digitisation or crowd sourcing projects presented no particular surprises, though it was extremely interesting to see the parallels between (for example) German and British Birth, Marriage and Death Registers.

The IT experts presented examples of the current states of their work as part of the earlier EU

Transkribus Project.⁴ A downloadable tool with some very impressive results is already available, and they also described the areas they hope to take forward as part of the READ Project. They also explained in outline some of the techniques lying behind text recognition and described some of the difficult areas from their perspective which were not necessarily what we as archivists might have predicted. Some of the key features of the approach are:

- The focus of research is NOT (at least currently) on producing complete machine readable editions (whether scholarly or as surrogates for the more general user), but on searching the handwritten text directly. The aim is therefore to provide a direct route into the original. For example, we were shown an impressive demonstration of searching for single words in a scanned extract of the Jeremy Bentham writings.
- The techniques have potential for integrating with other IT developments: for example, we saw an impressive demonstration of a 4D (3D plus time) model of the Rialto area of Venice integrated with personal name data for residents (to the level of parts of buildings) at different times, referencing documentary evidence.
- Although a reasonable level of digitisation is required the resolution does not have to be particularly high - 400 dpi is normally easily sufficient. But more advanced techniques are also available (for example, we saw a prototype example of scanning a closed volume using x-ray, similar to techniques used in hospital).

Inside the Hesse Archives in Marburg (purpose built in 1938). Gillian Sheldrick, 2016



Manual finding aids still in use at the State Archives of Hesse. Gillian Sheldrick, 2016



The impressive entrance hall of the Hesse Archives in Marburg (purpose built in 1938) with their exhibition on the reformation in Europe. Gillian Sheldrick, 2016

Welcome notice for the Conference at the State Archives of Hesse. Gillian Sheldrick, 2016



The areas where the scientists aim to improve the technique include:

- Improving automated recognition of just what is text and what is not (for example, identifying as ‘not text’ bleed through, paper discolouration or ink blots).
- Before trying to read the text, separate blocks of text on a single page may need to be extracted: for example, marginalia written at a different angle from the main text, or text in columns. Rulings and crossings out need to be extracted.
- Handwriting - even of the same person - may be slanted at different angles, and the lines of text may not be straight, so the machine may need to start by standardising such aspects.
- Particularly if a variety of hands are being searched, the chances of success are greater if a target vocabulary can be provided: for example, lists of place names. Much of the software is based on probabilities, for example, there is a 95% probability that a particular handwritten word matches the target word ‘London’.
- Some impressive work is already available through the Transkribus tool.
- One ongoing area of research focuses on the best algorithm used to characterise each letter (or other unit) for example, what is analysis might be the characteristics of the pixels outlining each unit, or the changing angles of its outline.

The conference took place in the Hesse archives, so a tour behind the scenes and the opportunity to meet archivists from a variety of European countries were a welcome extras. I am also grateful to the ARA for awarding me an International Engagement bursary to assist with the costs of attending.

Gillian Sheldrick

¹<http://transcriptorium.eu/follow-up-project-for-transcriptorium/>

²<http://coop-project.eu/> and <http://icar-us.eu/en/cooperation/projects>

³<http://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/transcribe-bentham/>

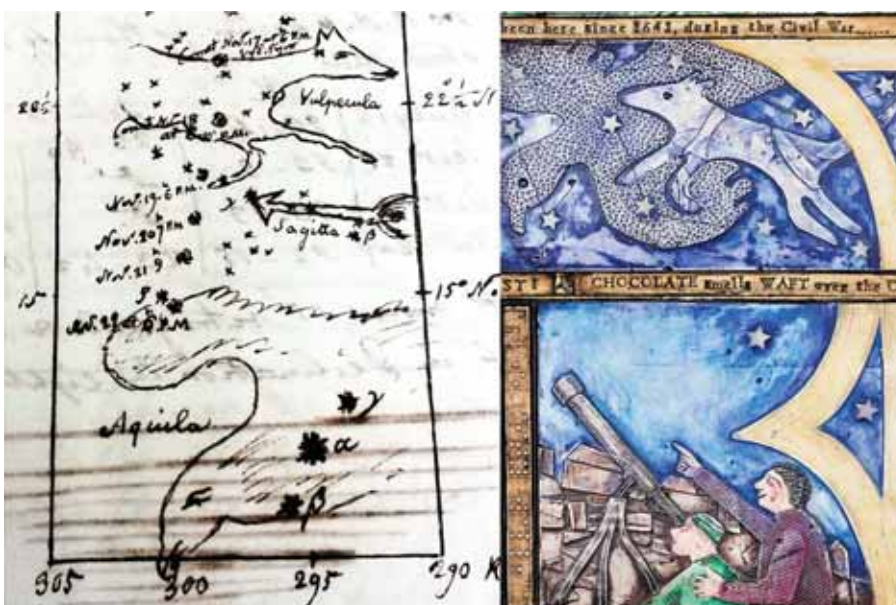
⁴<https://transkribus.eu/Transkribus/>

Creating a gateway to history

The past few years have been an innovative and exciting time for York’s City Archives, now part of Explore York Libraries and Archives Mutual Ltd. Our Heritage Lottery Funded *York: Gateway to History* project has created a new archive service for the City of York and challenged traditional approaches to community engagement through crowd-sourcing, responsive collaboration and creative working with a local artist.

To get local people feeling part of the new archive service, we hosted the first Archives Roadshow during 2015, touring the 17 Explore Libraries which are all thriving community spaces. We asked people to write, draw or talk about their responses to our question “What Should York Remember?” We spoke to people

Sketches in the Goodricke and Piggott Collection translated into public art. Permission of Explore York Libraries and Archives Mutual Ltd.



Braille adds to the tactile design of the final piece. Permission of Explore York Libraries and Archives Mutual Ltd.





The finished York Panorama at York Explore Library and Archive. Permission of Explore York Libraries and Archives Mutual Ltd.

aged 3-90 and gathered a total of 600 responses, and their memories ranged from personal experiences to some of the city's more iconic features such as York Minster.

To transform these responses from a series of drawings and words into a visual legacy of the Gateway project, we commissioned a local community artist, Emily Harvey, who had previously worked on other local art projects including those based around the Le Tour De France celebrations.

The final piece of public art is entitled *York Panorama: What York Means to Us*. It has been designed as a tactile panorama of York made of resin plaster, divided into bricks to reflect the City Walls. Each section represents a different story as told by York's residents, with their words and phrases flowing around the bricks bringing everything together into a collaborative representation of how the people of York view their city's past, present and future.

Emily had never worked with archives before and it was important to us that the piece reflected our collections as well as the thoughts of local people. The border was inspired by the ornate features of some of our earliest city charters and the night sky panels represent our Goodricke and Piggott astronomy collection. Even the colour scheme of the art was archive inspired:

"The colour scheme is based on the natural colours in the bricks and stones and by the colours in the old manuscripts and maps in the archives."

Emily Harvey, Community Artist

"Each section represents a different story as told by York's residents, with their words and phrases flowing around the bricks bringing everything together"

It was important that the final art piece was accessible to everyone so we partnered with a local blind and partially sighted charity, The Wilberforce Trust, to create some Braille of the responses gathered.

We also commissioned a local film maker, John Phillips, to create a vox pop of public responses, filmed in different locations across York. The film is now available on the Explore York Libraries & Archives website and adds an audio element to the visual and tactile elements of the artwork.

The final art piece has been installed on the first floor landing at York Explore Library and Archive, opposite the entrance to the new Archive & Local History Service. Its interactivity means that visitors to the Library, no matter what their previous level of experience with archives, can engage with living history. It's a permanent legacy of the *York: Gateway to History* project and demonstrates what you can do with community support and some creative thinking!

Sarah Tester

Explore York Libraries and Archives Mutual Ltd.

Welcome to the Section for Specialist Repositories issue of ARC

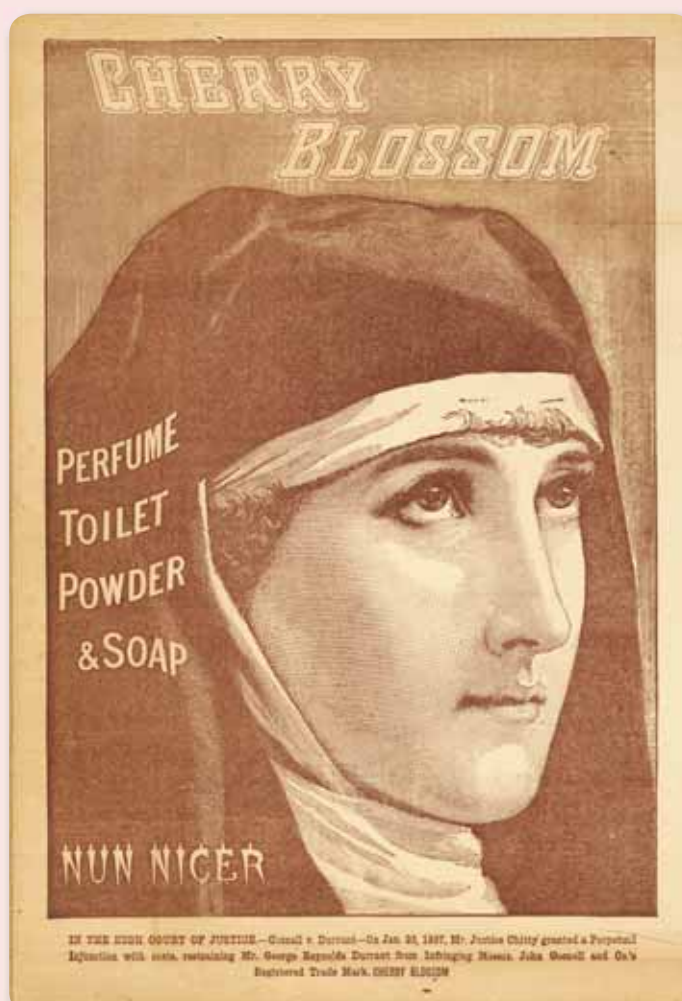
We hope we can offer something for everyone this year: Whisky! Chocolate! Poetry! Nuns! Only the one nun this year, of whom more in a moment.

Our theme in this issue is ephemera, and more specifically, its place in archive collections. Does ephemera have a valid place alongside more ‘traditional’ archival material? Is it equally important, or something of a poor relation? Aside from its obvious role as an attractive enhancement to files of informative if visually unappealing archive material, can it genuinely tell a story, or fill in otherwise blank gaps in the narrative of a collection? Judge for yourself in the articles that follow. They range through the archives of companies, institutions, and individuals, including unlikely Victorian pin-up, Alfred, Lord Tennyson, who seems to have generated as much official and unofficial ‘merch’ as any modern-day boyband. Tom Fattorini, of the 188-year-old company Thomas Fattorini Ltd, was inspired by odd pieces of ephemera to begin actively collecting material to illustrate the development of the family business over nearly two centuries, and to create an on-line timeline as part of the company website. His was a comparatively modern project, while over at the V&A, they have been sampling ephemera for nearly 30 years, through the annual ‘High street trawl’. Meanwhile, the campaign to allow women to become bishops is illuminated as much by its paper archive as by its umbrellas, tea-towels, and pin-badges. In one intriguing case an archive is not technically of its subject, but collected by him. Here then is a blurring between a traditional and an artificial collection, between unique manuscript, and printed multiples. And finally, our Chair, Adrian Glew, who worked on that particular collection, has, in lieu of a Chair’s Report, written a think piece about this blurring between books, ephemera, artefacts and archives which have traditionally been seen (and processed, and often kept) separately, and wonders if perhaps they are more coherent when kept together, and viewed as a whole. Is this the future for archives, libraries and museums? It’s a thought worth voicing,

and a debate worth having. The Chair’s Report is still available, however, on the SSR section of the ARA website.

And now for the nun. A few years ago I came across this wonderful Victorian advertisement. A creative 19th century chemist thought that nothing would speak more clearly to Victorian ladies of the purity of his products, or their promise of a youthful and perfect complexion, than the purity and youthful perfection of a young and pretty nun. An appeal to vanity, utilising an idealised image of a woman without vanity, and featuring a truly terrible pun as the tag line. Small wonder the Cherry Blossom brand seems to have disappeared without trace. Ephemeral indeed.

Susan Scott



Advertisement for Cherry Blossom toiletries, late 19th century

Essential ephemera

Jacqui Seargeant reflects on the importance of ephemera at John Dewar & Sons Ltd.

I've always loved ephemera, which is perhaps why I ended up working in a whisky archive that is heavily used by an enthusiastic marketing department perpetually looking for visually stimulating and inspiring materials. They want stories for sure, they want key dates, facts and figures about our past. But there's little more immediately accessible than a colourful piece of ephemera which has survived 100 years of take-overs, office moves and cupboard clear outs to end up as a much appreciated piece of history.

The word ephemera implies something that is transitory and unworthy of preservation, and yet items can have a lot to tell us about a time and a place in history. Here in the Dewar's whisky archive these quirky pieces come in all shapes and sizes, from postcards, playing cards, leaflets, printed advertising and price lists to event invitations, press cuttings and whisky labels. In fact, why stop there? As a company that produces bottles of whisky, we are

the guardians of bottles full of liquid with paper labels, and a vast array of branded gift items including cork screws, diaries, water jugs, ash trays, decanters, trays, glasses, golfing tees - the list goes on. Most of these items challenge the traditional view of the archive as a repository for only original paper items, but don't these items augment the traditional archive? Don't they help to tell the story of the company in quite a special, visual way? As items produced by the company during its business, for the purpose of furthering its business, they are an essential element of business activity in so many ways. Such items often also have commercial value, and make attractive exhibitions, as well as reproductions for sale as postcards and other gifts.

I think the best way to explain why I love these pieces is to share some of my favourite items of our whisky ephemera, as a way of illustrating the immense variety, and what they bring to our collection.

Dewar's bottles label timeline: note constancy of style, and subtle changes such as reduction in the size of the Royal Warrant and introduction of proof information.
© John Dewar & Sons Ltd





Above: A quirky 'archive' collection. © John Dewar & Sons Ltd

Below: Advertising card for Glassup and Swett, sole agents for John Dewar & Sons New York c1890s. © John Dewar & Sons Ltd

First is a small advertising card which was produced in the USA to advertise our new offices in New York during the 1890s. We have very few records from those early days of exports, so its survival is a delight and an asset to our history. It tells us who was running our business at that time and that they were setting up new offices at a specific location. The wording and typeface also add to the piece; though simple, it is truly a fascinating snapshot of our history. This item augments the dry notes in head office minute books about developing the New York office, photographs of our staff and related newspaper cuttings. The card ends with the very Scottish direction of 'kindly call and accept a wee drappie' and it does indeed excite our US visitors!

Secondly, we have many labels dating from the late 19th century to the present day. They were of course mass produced, and many duplicates do sometimes survive in the archive, which is often an asset as they can be used for exhibition in many different locations. These small pieces of paper also tell us a lot about the development of our products, the branding and colours used, about changes in industry such as bottle sizes and alcoholic content, and about the changing world. We can also see how in the early 1900s, when there were plenty of fairly rough whiskies on the market, our Royal Warrant



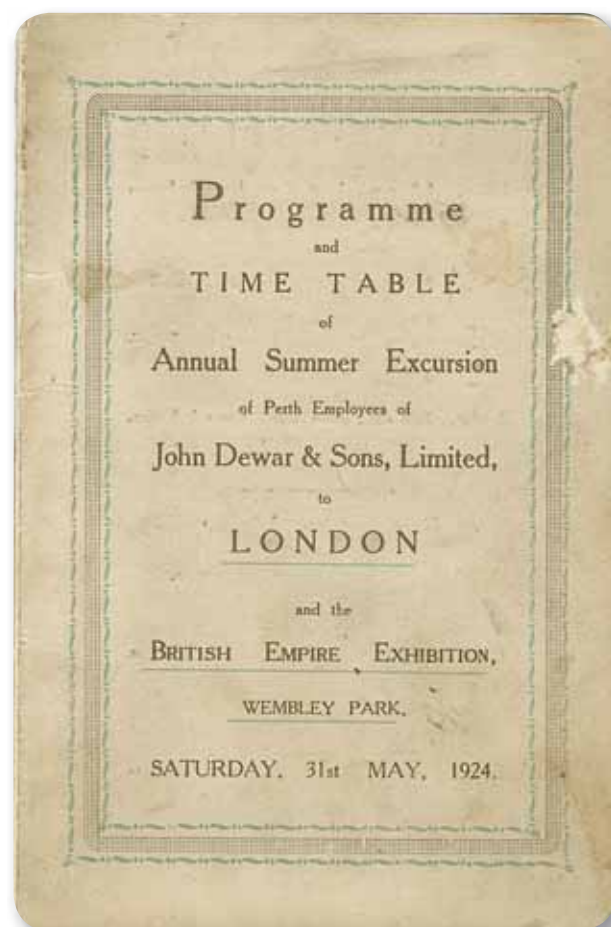
symbol and illustrations of awards take over nearly half the label to emphasise the quality of the product. Move forward 50 years and the warrant illustration has shrunk as our product becomes more globally famous and as the general quality of whisky improves – and yet there remains a definite constancy of style, which tells us something about the business and the industry as a whole.

The third piece I would like to share is our staff excursion booklets. Our company used to organise an annual outing for all workers at head office in Perth. The tiny booklets were given to staff as a simple reminder of the plans for the day, including the timetable of events, lunch details, what games would be played, and when they would travel home again. My favourite is the ambitious staff outing to the British Empire exhibition at Wembley Park in London in 1924, which involved two consecutive nights sleeping on a train. The booklet's details bring to life what is otherwise only represented in the archive by photographs and press cuttings.

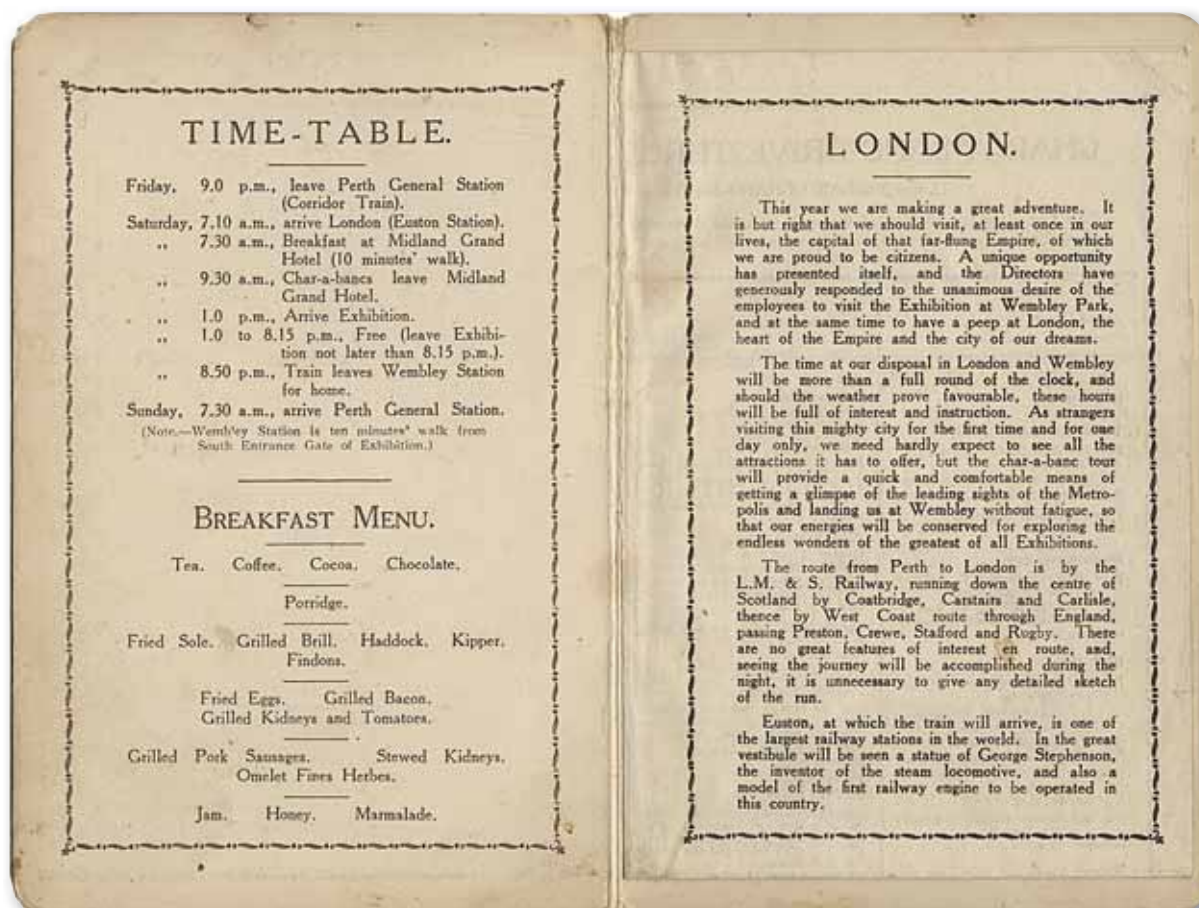
So I shall continue to shamelessly cosset my delightful ephemera, sharing it with enthusiastic visitors to the archive and marketing teams around the world. In addition to the informational content it brings to our history, it generates a broader interest in the archive collection and serves me well as a way of drawing people into the bigger stories.

Jacqui Seargeant

John Dewar & Sons Ltd



Staff excursion booklet cover 1924 © John Dewar & Sons Ltd



Staff excursion booklet 1924 © John Dewar & Sons Ltd

Thomas Fattorini Ltd: a family company integrates its history into its commercial website

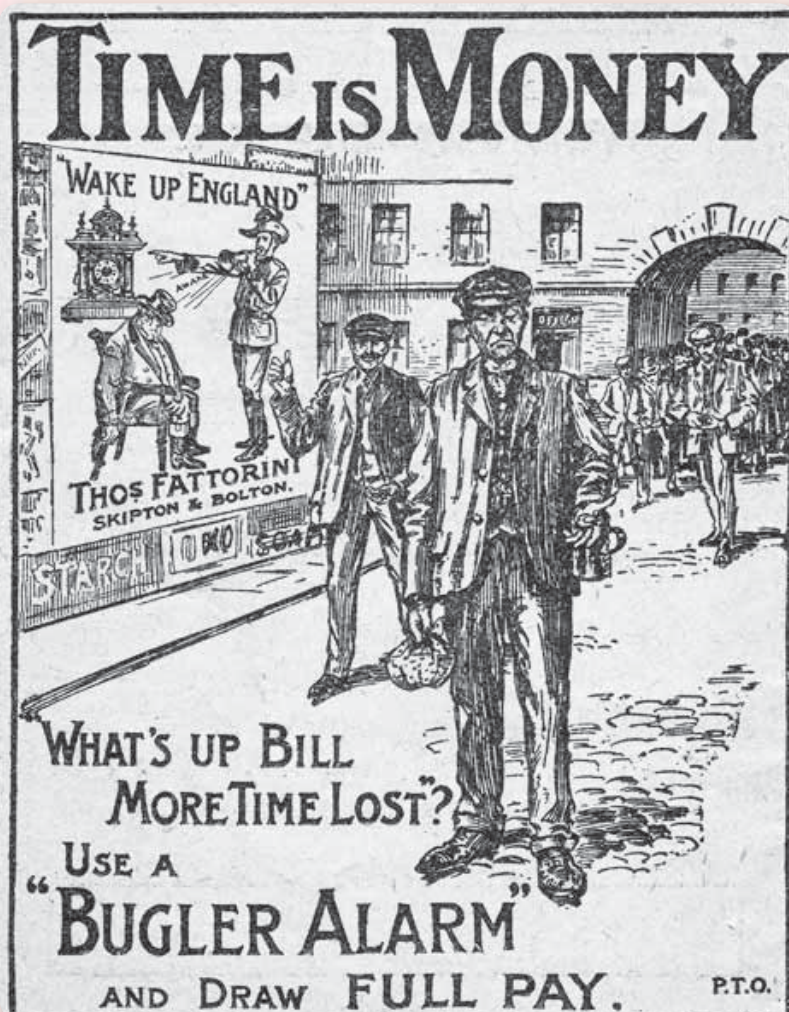
As members of the Fattorini family who work for Thomas Fattorini Ltd (all shareholders are descendants of Wilfred Fattorini) we are conscious that we are only as good as the present, and we do not live in the past. Commercially it is about looking towards the future.

The idea of the timeline was born with the beginning of the Thomas Fattorini Ltd website but was not implemented until approximately eight years ago, for a number of reasons. These included not having enough stories to string along the timeline; that the upload of stories onto the website was not conducive to ease of use; and we did not want the main focus of the timeline to be on the company and its products. Basically we were struggling with how best to present the idea of the timeline in a meaningful way.

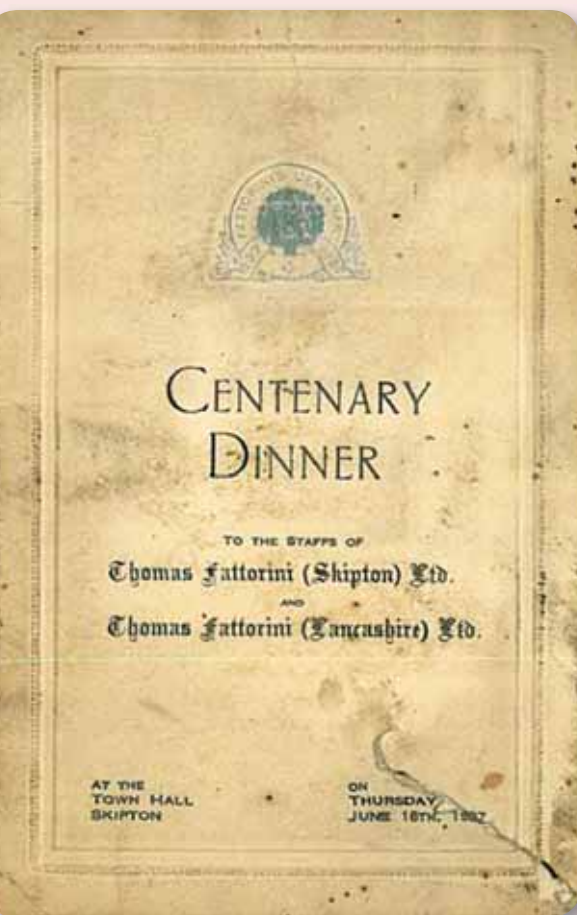
What we wanted for the timeline was material that was relevant to a point in time. Every piece of material and story needed to be different from every other, to generate as much interest as possible. Each piece needed to explain to the reader instantly what was being shown – a newspaper cutting, or a picture – something visual with meaningful and honest content that evoked the spirit



Fattorini's invoice from the Skipton shop 1871 © Thomas Fattorini Ltd



The Bugler Alarm Clock, 1912 © Thomas Fattorini Ltd



Centenary Menu cover 1927 © Thomas Fattorini Ltd

Centenary Menu presentation of watches 1927
© Thomas Fattorini Ltd

of the decade. My brother, Greg Fattorini, likened this to a box of exotic chocolates: each different, unique, but all chocolate. All these disparate pieces of ephemera are joined together through points of time. The material needed not to be about us – we did not want a monologue but a dialogue and insight into history – all the incidentals that ran alongside the commercial activities we were running.

Initially we did not have enough suitable material to hand that matched the criteria we were looking for. Our archive was very sparse – just diaries kept by my grandfather and an odd file in my father's office in Manchester. This meant that when I joined the family business in 1985, in Birmingham, I was totally oblivious to what the family as a whole had achieved over the previous 160-plus years. This included being in the vanguard of the mail-order business, patenting, alarm clocks etc, and many other fascinating stories. I also learnt that many things had been skipped to make way for office space.

It was always in the back of my mind to publish a booklet to commemorate our 200 years in business, in 2027. With that little ball rolling in the background I started to collect information, wherever it came from, and started following leads when people approached us. Over time we came across material that had been stored in different offices. Items were also sent to us in the post when people retired or passed away. I, myself, became the repository for all sorts of unusual information when collectors contacted us for valuations etc. About eight years ago my brother

found it now possible to manage the process of the timeline relatively easily by updating and refreshing and this was the opportunity to make it live, as it had always been in the background waiting for the best software to manage it.

The timeline and our history have only recently been on our radar. We have always believed that the past should not dictate the future. Each generation has to build on the achievements of the one before. Each generation has its challenges and that is where the focus is fixed. When I asked my grandfather before he died about the past, he once told me quite firmly, "Don't look back laddie". I disagreed with him, and told him a farmer always looks back at the furrow ploughed so that he keeps his lines straight. But he had already moved on to the next matter at hand! Many years later I discovered he had had many difficulties to overcome in his personal and commercial life and his advice then made sense to me.

I am still looking for interesting stories to populate the timeline. It has almost become a way of auto-archiving. Every story has to be meaningful and honest and if others find them interesting, then we have done what my brother Greg set out to do!

The timeline can be viewed at www.fattorini.co.uk/About_Us.aspx

Tom Fattorini

Thomas Fattorini Ltd

A chocolate archive

There is a robot in my archive with giant glass eyes that move. He is as tall as I am, with a papier-mâché face a foot wide, and an outfit of spats and tails which disguises springs, pumps, Bakelite electrics and an old gramophone motor beneath. Based on an illustration by Alfred Leet, *Plain Mr York of York Yorks., The Plain Speaking Man Who Likes Plain Chocolate* was made in 1928 to advertise Rowntree's York Chocolate at trade fairs. He travelled the country and was retired in the 1930s. He is now the very creepy mascot of a chocolate archive that is as vast, it sometimes seems to me, as oceans.

There is a lot of paperwork; there are a lot of photographs; the cans of films might stretch to the moon and back; and the microfiche and microfilm have overflowed to another building. And then, of course, there is the ephemera. I'm told that some archivists scorn it, but it's difficult for me to understand why. When my colleagues in the kitchen downstairs (where we invent new sweets) want to try out a different shaped mould we just run through the chocolate mould archive and pull out an artefact; sometimes a Victorian fleur-de-lis, sometimes an inter-war novelty, but always an exquisitely-crafted gem. It's not a part of the collection that's in daily use, but you never know when someone is going to ask you for a chocolate mould in the shape of a shoe.

Then, of course, there are the chocolates themselves: our oldest is a bar that survived the Boer war, leaving our Yorkshire factory in 1899, only to find its way back again uneaten. It smells very sweet, slightly musty and has a leopard-skin patina of damp where a cocoa-rich gloss used to be. We have younger samples of chocolate, like the 1990s Drifter that was flavoured with apple and custard, but they don't tend to interest visitors quite like the century-old stuff. Occasionally our scientists will request a microscopic sample to test, and no-doubt our old chocolates enlighten them in some way, but most of the time they sleep in the cold controlled air of the archive.

The most oft-consulted shelf stacks are for packaging. Row upon row of Easter eggs, and tasselled chocolate boxes rub tissue-papered shoulders with files of Montego wrappers and those squat, brown Smarties mugs from the 80s. My colleagues are reformulating a recipe for an overseas product and have sought inspiration in the back-of-wrapper ingredients lists of 1970s biscuit bars; archive boxes lie strewn across the desks like cases in Olivander's wand shop. The archive is always in chaos because it is always in use.

The fact is that the bread and butter of our chocolate archive is its ephemera. The archive's survival during a global economic slowdown



Mr York the advertising robot © Nestlé Archives



Hand-piping some Easter eggs in the 1930s © Nestlé Archives

A charming toffee tin from Halifax © Nestlé Archives



“The archive’s survival during a global economic slowdown has been due, in part, to the publicity that the archive has generated for the company”

has been due, in part, to the publicity that the archive has generated for the company; and it’s the ephemera that has attracted media attention. Mr York the robot caught the eye of Antiques Roadshow producers and it was just one of a string of items that the BBC have chosen to profile over the years. Even the absence of ephemera can glean media coverage when we launch an appeal for a missing timepiece or painting.

However, ephemera is also our biggest problem. We’ve been lucky and have been able to work with both the Borthwick Institute for Archives at York University, and the Yorkshire Film Archive. Between the two institutions we have a home for our films, paperwork, photographs and artwork. Researchers can access the material without having to visit the factory, and we have the peace of mind that our collections are in the hands of dedicated professionals. Unfortunately there is no such institution to care for our 116-year-old bars of chocolate, or the 1851 bottle of pickled vegetables that have been carved into the shape of birds and flowers.

Our ephemera is our most valuable and our most used asset, but it also creates the biggest storage headache. We have enough silver in the trophy cabinets to satisfy a bank robber, and the Rowntree’s chocolate boxes would probably fetch as much again on eBay if they fell into the wrong hands. We have to work constantly to keep these things safe. The collection is fragile and valuable and in constant use, but its very survival hinges on its accessibility and perhaps that is why some archivists scorn ephemera: because it always turns out to be such a pain.

Alex Hutchinson

Nestlé Archives



1920s Press Ad © Nestlé Archives



Inter-war examples from the mould collection © Nestlé Archives



Edwardian Penny Novelties © Nestlé Archives

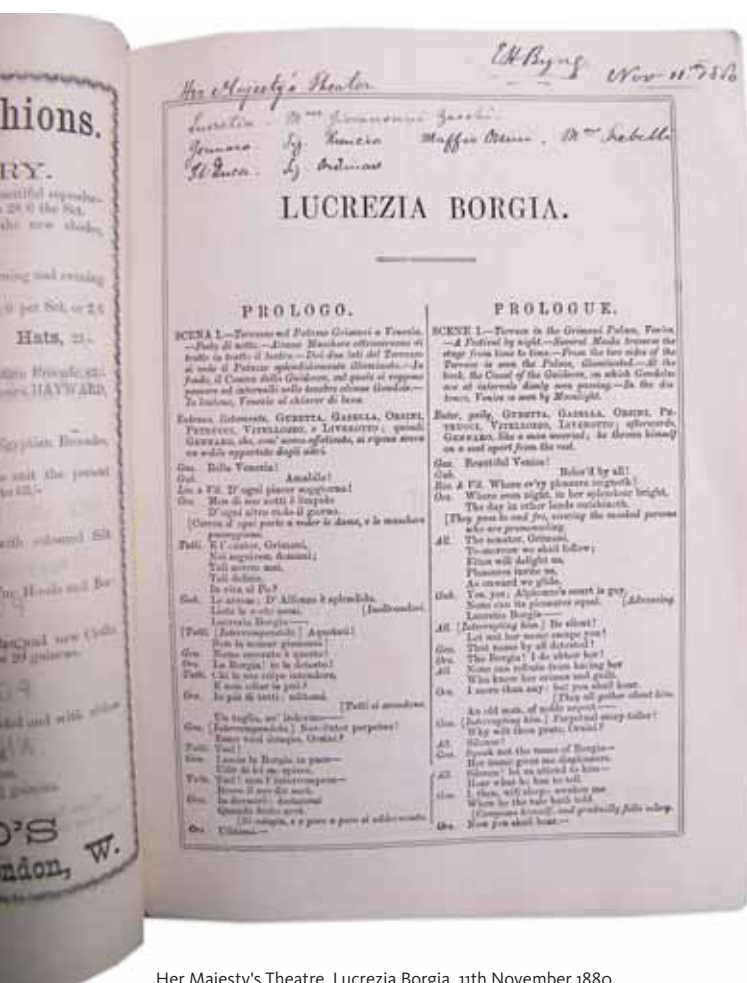
Ephemera: the missing link

Charles Dace explains how the ephemera within the Archive of the Byng family, at Wrotham Park, is essential to providing missing links in the collection's narrative.

Although Wrotham Park has existed since the mid 1750s, the documents within are rather sparse until 1886. This is due in part firstly to “the tidy nature” of Harriet Byng, who allegedly threw out the political papers of her husband George Byng M.P. (1764-1847). And secondly to a disastrous fire that completely gutted the house in 1883. As a result, the collection mainly covers the life and work of Edmund Henry Byng (1862-1899) - later Viscount Enfield (1899-1918) and finally 6th Earl of Strafford (1918-1951) - and his daughter Lady Elizabeth (1897-1987). In the 1990s, a third disaster befell the collection, when it was stored in a dilapidated estate farm outbuilding. It was moved to the main house in 2000, but by then sections of the collection had been lost to rodent and rain damage.

Edmund, Earl of Strafford, a man of many roles and skills, kept meticulous records of his education; Civil Engineer and Stock Brokering careers; his charitable work and his political career in the House of Lords, and with Middlesex and Hertfordshire County Councils. All are recorded through conventional archive documents. However, his interests, travels and hobbies are only known due to the extensive collection of ephemera. One strand of ephemera, that focuses the many aspects of Edmund Byng's life, is the theatre programme collection.

The first reference to Edmund's interest in the performing arts occurs in a letter dated December 1875, when he requested a copy of the play *Box & Cox*. Edmund rewrote the play, which originally had three



Her Majesty's Theatre, Lucrezia Borgia, 11th November 1880. Wrotham Park Collection



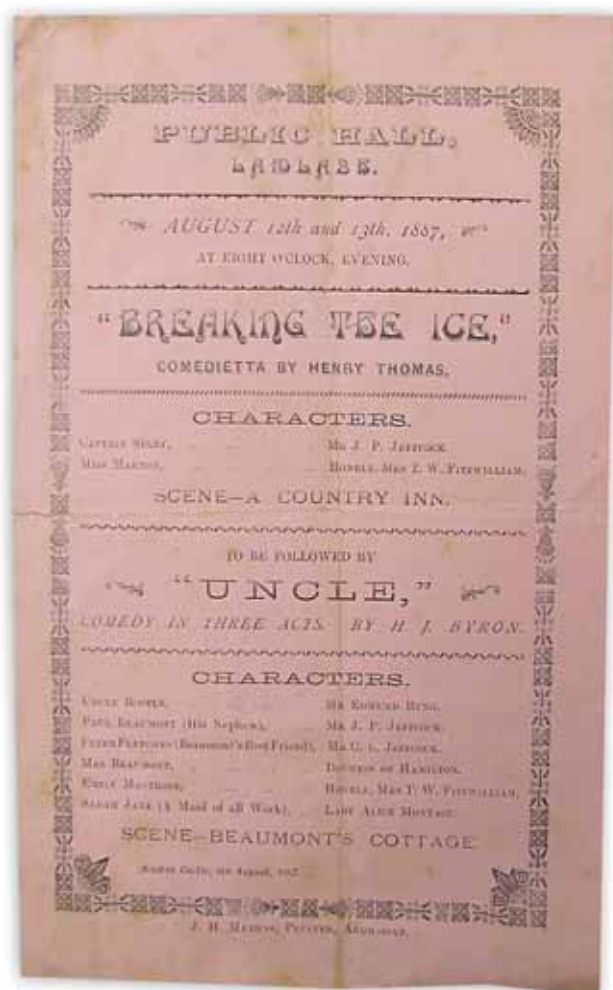
1066 and all that. Strand Theatre, 27th August 1935. Wrotham Park Collection

parts, to one which contained enough parts for all his cousins. The play was performed by members of the Miles family, at Leigh Court, Bristol, in 1876. There followed a period of turmoil during which Edmund was removed from Eton College, and sent to Crystal Palace Company's School of Art, Science and Literature to study civil engineering. Correspondence is devoid of any reference to the theatre during this period, with school books and travel receipts providing the narrative instead. Edmund gained a qualification in civil engineering in 1878, studied French at the Sillig Institute, Switzerland in 1879 and then moved to the Schule des Lyceum II zu Hannover, to learn German in 1880. Edmund obviously returned to England that year, as a theatre programme is signed by him in November 1880.

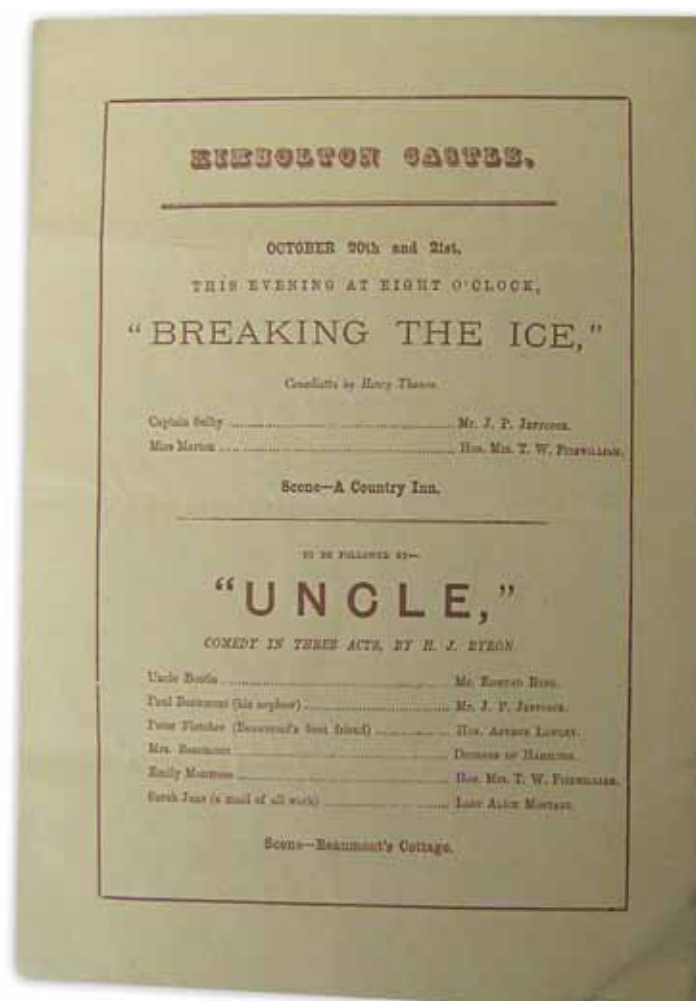
A period of indecision ensued as Edmund Byng determined his career path. The evidence for this does not come from letters alone, but from printed material relating to job descriptions for the Civil Service and consolidated regulations of the several Societies of Inns of Court calling students to the Bar. Eventually Edmund

gained employment working as an Engineer on the New Tay Viaduct (1882-1884), followed by further engineering posts in Scotland: the New Methil Docks, Fife, The Buchan Railway also in Fife, and as Arbitration Engineer on the Ardrossan Harbour Extension (1884-1889).

It was during this period that Edmund returned to performing. It is unclear how he found time to carry out his engineering tasks in Scotland and perform in so many events around the country. While much of the correspondence during the 1880s relates to Edmund's work as a Civil Engineer, personal letters from society members of the period, such as the Duchess of Hamilton, The Duchess of Beaufort and members of the Lascelles and Fitzwilliam families, all press Edmund to perform in their plays. What letters lack are details of the plays and in many cases the good causes in whose name the plays were performed. One such play is *Uncle*, by H.J. Byron, performed in August 1887 at the Public Hall, Lamlash on the Isle of Arran, in aid of The Nurses Institute, Glasgow, and again at Kimbolton Castle, Cambridgeshire, home of his co-performers, the Montagu family.



Lamlash Public Hall 12th & 13th August 1887. Wrotham Park Collection



Kimbolton Castle, home of the Montagu family. Before 1889 as Lady Alice became Countess of Derby on 5th January 1889. Wrotham Park Collection

“*...his interests, travels and hobbies are only known due to the extensive collection of ephemera.***”**

The Wrotham Park collection of theatre programmes also helps to plot the many journeys undertaken by Edmund Byng. He appears to have made a concerted effort to attend theatrical performances wherever he visited. Examples cover travels in Germany, Russia, Italy, Canada and France. However, it is not always clear as to when Edmund returned to England so dated theatre programmes in England are just as important.

The theatre programmes outline the life of Edmund Henry Byng, demonstrating his love of the theatre either by performing or by attending performances; his use of theatricals as a vehicle for raising money for good causes; and as an indicator of his many travels. The theatre ephemera, when employed in conjunction with other archival materials within the Wrotham collection, helps create a more complete picture of the life of this very interesting peer of the realm.

Charles Dace

Wrotham Park

¹As described by their nephew, George Stevens Byng after her death in 1854.

The political scrap books of Jane Cobden

Liberal MP Richard Cobden was perhaps one of Britain's most famous politicians, best known for helping to secure the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846. His papers have been held at West Sussex Record Office for some 60 years. As well as Richard's own papers, the Cobden Papers (as the collection is known), also include the papers of his less well known but no less liberal, daughter Emma Jane Catherine Cobden.

Born in 1851, Jane followed in her father's footsteps, becoming a highly politicised woman, active in radical politics and the Liberal Party. Chief amongst the many causes she espoused was women's suffrage, and she was one of two women elected to the new London County Council in 1889, as Councillor for Bromley and Bow. In 1892, Jane became Mrs Cobden Unwin, after her marriage to the publisher Thomas Fisher Unwin.

Jane's surviving papers include a series of personal scrap books. The majority of these present Jane as the 'traditional' Victorian



Page from scrapbooks of Jane Cobden: Exhibition of Womens' Work and Industries, Hastings © West Sussex Record Office

lady, full of photographs, cards and social ‘snippets’. Three, however, are political in nature, reflecting Jane’s political activism, career and the liberal/radical causes she supported. Alongside political newspapers and gazettes, news clippings, minutes and reports of meetings and texts of speeches, the scrap books contain a fascinating array of political ephemera, comprising leaflets and fliers for a variety of rallies and debates, invitations to fundraising events, souvenirs and a number of large posters advertising various events, including those led by Jane herself.

The collection and survival of so many pieces of political ephemera provide a fascinating glimpse into a turbulent, highly politicised society – one on the cusp of great change – as well as the life and career of a Victorian politician. The ephemera in particular provides insight into the astonishing array of political leagues and societies which existed during the late 19th century and the causes they supported, as well as evidence of their activities. Given their ephemeral nature, it is likely that these fliers, leaflets, tickets and posters are the only surviving records of some of the groups represented in the collection. Furthermore, the scrap books paint a picture of the life of an unusual Victorian lady: that of an active, ambitious and highly capable politician, a role not usually associated with Victorian women.

Although the gazettes and newspapers provide evidence of the political groups’ activities, it is the more ephemeral

“The collection and survival of so many pieces of political ephemera provide a fascinating glimpse into a turbulent, highly politicised society”

pieces which really bring the scrap books to life and show us how vibrant, active and diverse the political landscapes of the Victorian and Edwardian eras were – whatever your political colours.

Despite her fervour for the cause, Jane never became a suffragette, preferring less provocative methods to advocate change; this is perhaps why she is less well remembered than her father and fellow activists. Fans of the BBC’s *Ripper Street* may well recognise her name, however, as she has featured as a recurrent character since the programme’s second series, and this will have introduced her to a whole new audience. We are fortunate that her personal papers – and, in particular, her political scrap books – have survived, since they provide insight into the life of this remarkable woman and the society in which she lived and which she helped to shape.

Nichola Court

West Sussex Record Office



Page from scrapbooks of Jane Cobden: Rochdale Women's Liberal Association Public Meeting © West Sussex Record Office



Page from scrapbooks of Jane Cobden: Excursion to Chingford © West Sussex Record Office



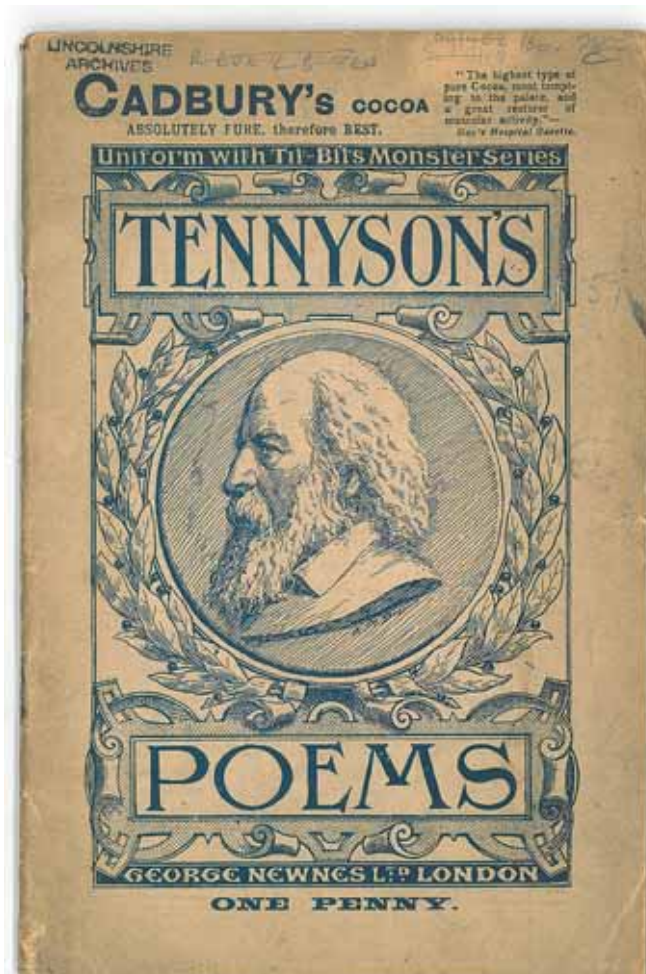
Page from scrapbooks of Jane Cobden: Tonight! Tonight!! Tonight!!! © West Sussex Record Office

Ephemera in the Tennyson Research Centre

The libraries of 19th century Poet Laureate Alfred Tennyson, and his family members, are shelved around the domed room in Lincoln Central Library. Correspondence, photographs, proofs and manuscripts are in boxes on those same shelves. Quite consciously curated by Tennyson's widow, Emily, his son Hallam, and his and daughter-in-law, Audrey, the Tennyson Research Centre (TRC) contains the life and papers, smells and 'stuff' of one of the most famous men of the Victorian era: it provides his reading and writing history.

Tennyson's family means us to be in no doubt of the glamour adhering to a humble object because of association with the great man; indeed, some of the ephemera they kept almost acquires the status of 'relic'. His desk, chair, quills, cloak and hat are about; so are his thermometer, paint box and tobacco. All are, more often than not, labelled as belonging to 'Him'. Tennyson himself seems to have been breezily unaware of the hoarding, labelling and organising increasingly going on around him.

His family also made sure that we still have the scrap that proves Alfred Tennyson's powerful cultural presence: news-cuttings from all over the world fill three boxes and eight albums. Half of the albums contain cuttings related to Tennyson's death and souvenir sections clearly intended for preservation. His death was Big News and had a ghostly presence at the breakfast table of the empire.



Tennyson's Poems in the Tit-Bits Monster Series c1904 © Tennyson Research Centre, Lincolnshire County Council



Cotton reel holder © Tennyson Research Centre, Lincolnshire County Council



Moss Rimmington mustard tin decorated with Tennyson's image © Tennyson Research Centre, Lincolnshire County Council



Programme for Tableaux Vivants Osborne House January 1891 © Tennyson Research Centre, Lincolnshire County Council

The programme for royal larks at Osborne House *Tableaux Vivants* in the New Year of 1891 includes Princess Louise as the dying Elaine, with her family dressing up as members of King Arthur's Court. Tennyson's work as an integral part of royal entertainment; what satisfaction that must have given to his family.

At the other end of the social spectrum, Tennyson's poetry joining the early 20th century publications list of Tit-Bits Monster Books published by Newnes for one penny each proves the extent of his reach into popular taste and self-improvement over ten years after his death.

Later additions to the collection contribute to the sense of Tennyson's cultural ubiquity: the commemorative poster of Tennyson given 'with compliments' by his Isle of Wight grocer; the cotton reel holder, the mustard tin and the calendar decorated with Tennyson's image. In terms of persuading a contemporary audience of teenagers and undergraduates of the importance of Tennyson to his times, there's little to beat being able to liken his celebrity stature to that of modern day songsters because of the celebrity merchandise



Tennyson's pruning knife © Tennyson Research Centre, Lincolnshire County Council

associated with him. Something associated with Tennyson could have been on your book shelf, mantelpiece, wall, in the pantry and the sewing box – not quite the cachet of Ed Sheeran, but near enough. The most immediate and obvious purpose of having assembled the variety of material in the TRC is to assert, confirm, expand on and illuminate the infiltration of Alfred Tennyson's word and image into every imaginable aspect of popular and material culture in the late 19th century.

“Something associated with Tennyson could have been on your book shelf, mantelpiece, wall, in the pantry and the sewing box”

Later ephemera belonging to Tennyson's son, Hallam, has the rather poignant effect of defining his efforts to emerge from his role as acolyte, biographer and business manager of his father. The envelope forwarded to him by William Gladstone, printed with the vivid image against vaccination probably belongs in this category.

Amongst his childhood diaries, school exercise books and the biographical notes on his father, is the work surrounding his participation in the Shoreditch Town Hall lecture series of 'Science Literature and History' by 'Members of the University of Cambridge'. He contributed two lectures on Shakespeare and his Humour and provided a costed reading list. How many of his audience, who had paid a penny with “A Few Front Seats, 3d”, could have bought Dowden's *Shakespeare – His Mind and Art* at 12 shillings is anybody's guess.

Ephemera is usually more familiar and frequently more arresting than a manuscript or a galley proof. As such, it can provide a more visually educated audience with a more immediate introduction to a collection. To those not familiar to the archive environment, it can be a gateway. But it is more than that: it makes the subject of the archive a real person surrounded by the trappings of a material world. Our ephemera furnishes the archive environment, both literally and metaphorically. It inspires a sense of context. In 1866, Edward Lear grabbed one of his flyers advertising viewings of his exotic drawings, turned it upside down to write a 'Noat' to Emily Tennyson about his illustrations to Tennyson, hoping he was not being 'too vain and bumptious', and thus provided us with a piece of ephemera with multiple possibilities for interpretation and story-telling.

Grace Timmins

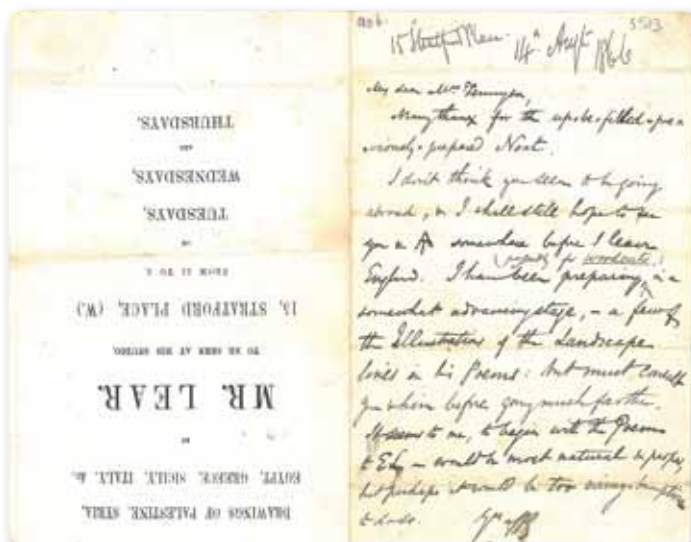
Tennyson Research Centre



Alfred Tennyson's address written in his own hand in his copy of Virgil © Tennyson Research Centre, Lincolnshire County Council



Envelope. Postmark unclear. © Tennyson Research Centre, Lincolnshire County Council



Letter from Edward Lear to Emily Tennyson Aug 14 1866 © Tennyson Research Centre, Lincolnshire County Council



Material from the Nimai Chatterji collection. The Nimai Chatterji Collection, Tate Archive

Ephemeral effusions

Adrian Glew on the Nimai Chatterji collection of avant-garde documentation housed in Tate Archive.

This month sees the completion of a two-year project, funded by Tate Members, to catalogue the Nimai Chatterji collection of avant-garde documentation, acquired by the gallery in 2006. Formerly in 1,000 transit boxes, it is the largest collection ever to enter Tate Archive. Unusually for an archive collection, it contains a large amount of publications and printed ephemera tightly bound to extensive series of personal documents, writings and correspondence relating to Chatterji's aim to compile a critical bibliography of the avant-garde through the prism of the transformation between art and literature.

Nimai Chatterji (1933-2010) was born in Kolkata. He graduated with a first class honours degree in Bengali literature from Presidency College, the alma mater of Indira Gandhi. However, it was Rabindranath Tagore's university in Santiniketan that had the most lasting impact on Nimai's future direction and subsequent collecting mania.

Here, students studied the arts and sciences amongst a rural community that was integral to the school's ethos that learning in a natural environment would be more enjoyable and fruitful. It was at Santiniketan that Chatterji befriended the future Economics Nobel-laureate, Amartya Sen; where he met his wife-to-be, Joya Mukherjee; and where he wrote to Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot to discern the impact of Tagore's poetry on their work. They, in turn, wrote to him to enquire about Sanskrit matters.

Chatterji then seemed set on enrolling at a British university to study the influence of India on English literature – yet when he arrived in London in the mid-1950s he switched to study typography at the London College of Printing. This was an auspicious time to study the subject as there was an experimental ferment among artists and writers that would see a plethora of new tendencies and art groupings rise to the surface, from concrete poetry, graphic notations, and artists' books, to

Lettrisme, the Situationist International, and Fluxus. This new cultural avant-garde by-passed the museum system, preferring personal networks in order to exchange ideas and send ephemeral offerings.

Chatterji soon entered this network and was corresponding with key artists and writers enquiring about their work and was receiving items such as CVs, flyers, private view cards, press-cuttings, photographs, and self-publications. For some, Chatterji's letter was the first time anyone had contacted them about their work. The Dadaist, Raoul Hausmann, for instance, wrote almost 100 letters (sometimes with small artworks as gifts) outlining his pivotal role in Dada; Ed Ruscha sent first editions of his self-published series; Joseph Beuys hand-wrote details on the back of photographs of his work; and the svengali of the Fluxus Collective, George Maciunas, promptly placed Nimai Chatterji's name on the roll-call of supporters and fellow travellers – indeed Chatterji's name often appears as a contributor to Fluxus art manifestations.

It seemed only natural that Chatterji would be inspired to also write to key galleries and gallerists for information about their activities. So, within his archives, we see evidence of early contact with the Dwan and Pace galleries in the USA, Iris Clert and Ileana Sonnabend in Paris, and Studio Marconi in Milan. They would forward quirky newsletters, artist-designed posters, wonderfully inventive private view cards, and specially printed catalogues, so Chatterji quickly got an impression of the avant-garde scene across the globe. He continued this *modus operandi* throughout his life, obtaining similar material when Pop Art and avant-garde activity in Eastern Europe exploded in the 1960s. To ensure that his proposed bibliography was up to date, Chatterji was constantly jotting down artists' names to contact, publications to obtain and areas of art and literature to research. Every item – even the ephemeral of the ephemeral – was as important as every other, and as a whole formed part of the jigsaw that documented the post-war avant-garde scene.

This was one of the reasons why we felt it was so important to keep everything together: primary, secondary and even tertiary material forming a corpus of material that would now be impossible to assemble. Tate Archive had had some previous experience of dealing with ephemeral art archives, having acquired



Claude Gilli Private View invitation. The Nimai Chatterji Collection, Tate Archive



Studio Marconi Private View invitation. The Nimai Chatterji Collection, Tate Archive

“Every item – even the ephemeral of the ephemeral – was as important as every other, and as a whole formed part of the jigsaw that documented the post-war avant-garde scene.”

the records of the Fluxshoe touring exhibition of 1972-73; the papers of the correspondence artist, Pauline Smith (the most ephemeral manifestation of art that exists); and the Barbara Reise papers documenting her relationship with minimalists and conceptual artists based in the UK and US.

When cataloguing such papers, we are fortunate in being able to discuss the status and nature of printed items with our colleagues in the Tate Library. Although discussions - in the past - have been lively, there is now a recognition that to remove the printed from the autograph can lead to a lop-sided view of the creator of the archives in question, even more so when examining art archives relating to the avant-garde, which by their very nature are characterised by the ephemeral. That's not to say that the ephemeral does not have a place in library collections: our press-cutting collection arranged alphabetically by artists' name and subject being a prime example, but collections of ephemera in libraries are normally institutionally or artificially assembled whereas ephemera in archives naturally coalesces around the creator's interests to provide contextual information relating to their lives and work.

Archives are important repositories of the ephemeral and can reach parts where the art collection dare not tread. The ephemeral in art archives can also be crucial in determining the genesis of an artist's direction, the source for an art writer's musings, and the raw material for art history and a bibliography of the avant-garde as in the case of Nimai Chatterji's extensive and endlessly fascinating collection.

Adrian Glew

Tate

Movement for the Ordination of Women cataloguing project

The archives of the Movement for the Ordination of Women (MOW) are being catalogued at the London School of Economics Library. MOW operated between 1979 and 1994, campaigning to allow women to become priests in the Church of England. They were successful, and the first women priests were ordained in March 1994. Publicity materials were core elements to the organisation's activities and they produced a large number.

The papers of MOW date from the 1940s to the mid-1990s and cover the everyday running of the organisation, offering a close insight into the path taken by women to priesthood in the Church. The collection contains documentary materials, administrative and financial papers, correspondence, photographs, news cuttings, publicity, and publications amongst the ephemera material. It covers themes such as gender inequality, women in the church, campaign strategies and lobbying, amongst other topics. We believe it will be of interest to the LSE community and further afield, particularly as the first women bishops entered the House of Lords in October 2015.

LSE Archives and Special Collections recognizes that groupings of ephemera can form an integral part of certain archives. This is true of any campaigning organisation; in the case of MOW because it produced

a large amount of ephemeral material to gain as much support as it could. MOW's campaign strategy aimed to reach a varied audience including churchgoers and the general public; local parishes and international bodies; men and women; and lay people to law makers. In order to achieve this, MOW produced a plethora of material, from paper items to large format campaigning banners.

MOW operated from a central office in London and diocese branches throughout England. Most of the material produced was created centrally by two subcommittees, namely publicity and literature groups; while other campaign materials were created in the grassroots of parishes and dioceses. The movement produced newsletters, mailings, invitation cards, flyers, posters, factual cards, umbrellas, tea towels, commemorative ceramics, badges and news-cutting albums. A number of these campaigning materials were illustrated with comic cartoons and eye-catching caricatures. They played a large role in getting the campaigners' message across both to the churchgoers and to a wider audience.

Any serious campaigning organisation should produce customized umbrellas – a must-have for outdoor demonstrations in the UK! MOW

MOW T-shirt and badges. Movement for the Ordination of Women collection, LSE Library



A campaigner for the Ordination of Women, undated. Movement for the Ordination of Women collection, LSE Library



was no exception; they commissioned a number of these in different colours. The tea towel with the words ‘A woman’s place is in the House of Bishops’ was a popular item for a MOW supporter’s household. The badge designs started very modestly, but with time they became larger and more colourful.

Whether commissioned by the central office or created as a pastime by committed MOW enthusiasts, there are several news-cuttings albums in the collection. They cover accounts, chronologically arranged, from the start to the end. They also contain invitations, flyers, postcards and other snippets of information. News-cuttings, as we well know, are not unique material, but in these albums they offer an episodic narrative of events. They also indicate the broad context for the time in which they were written, give an idea of the public reception, and provide an insight into what it was like to be part of the Movement. In addition, cuttings from different sources offer different points of view, both for and against, and show journalistic interest. The majority of cuttings are from the Church Times, but there are also cuttings from national broadsheets including The Guardian, The Independent and The Daily Telegraph. Some articles are factual, whereas others present arguments. The ones I like most are the open letters. These were usually issued by a key public figure and they tended to trigger a number of reactions from MOW or the oppositions.

I am of the opinion that ephemera holdings enhance archival collections. They illustrate how an organisation communicated with its audiences; they also offer a window to the style, techniques and resources available at the time. I also think that institutions holding ephemera may benefit immensely from their visual characteristics. They have a great potential to be used in publications, social media and exhibitions (copyright permitting). At a time where heritage institutions are encouraged to use social media platforms to engage and reach audiences, imagery is vital to succeed with this task. Items of ephemera offer a quick path to viewers, drawing their attention to other papers that, while no less important or relevant, can sometimes be considered rather dry and unengaging.

With the financial support of Higher Education Funding Council for England the cataloguing project is expected to finish in September 2016. Once fully catalogued, it will be available at the Women’s Library @ LSE Archive Catalogue and the archives will be accessible in the Women’s Library Reading Room at LSE Library.

Fabiana Barticioti

Movement for the Ordination of Women Project, LSE Library

The high street trawl at the Archive of Art and Design

On 16 June 1988, the Archive of Art and Design at the V&A began its first annual High Street Trawl. The intention was to create a collection of ephemera which would capture a moment in graphics and design, document the feel of the High Street, and reflect cultural and political concerns. The collection is made by V&A staff wherever they happen to be on that date. As such, it tends to be primarily a record of design in London, as most staff will be in or around the city, though there are no geographical constraints and we have collected in other regions of the UK and even in other countries. After each trawl, material is sent to the Archive of Art and Design where each member of staff’s haul is filed separately, and anonymously.

Ephemera is often included in the papers of individual designers or companies held by the Archive of Art and Design, but collecting ephemera in this way enables us to capture areas of design history which would not usually be well-represented in our collections. It acts as a snapshot of a particular day, recording information that may not normally be found in one place, such as what Tube services were running, what exhibitions were on, what houses were for sale and for how much, what interest rates and services were being offered by banks, and the benefits and help available on that date. The breadth of the collection is wide, as we have never been prescriptive



Looking through a file of ephemera collected as part of the 1998 High Street Trawl. © A. Kirk

about what constitutes ephemera in this context. It includes leaflets, brochures, flyers, tickets, posters, packaging (including a box of beer cans collected in the mid-1990s, perhaps reflecting the height of ‘lad’ culture!), mass-circulation newspapers, paint charts, and even a sheet of kitchen roll printed with football kits, produced during the 1990 football World Cup.

What is noticeable, however, when looking through the collection, is that it seems to become slightly less varied as the years progress. So while leaflets relating to banks and transport companies appear frequently throughout, in more recent years there are fewer of the cheap, often hand-drawn and photocopied, flyers produced by individuals, small companies and community groups, which in some ways provided a more intimate connection between researcher and creator. This poses several questions. Could this be because recently even material from the lower end of the market looks slicker and more professionally-produced thanks to the accessibility of digital design tools? Is it a result of the fact that more and more advertising is done online so there is less ephemera on the high street? Has the rise in social media allowed smaller, less commercial,

groups to promote themselves, their events or their products without the need to produce paper literature? Or is this purely a result of a collecting bias by staff members, whether inadvertent or intentional?

In fact, one of the things that strikes me about the High Street Trawl is that, as a researcher, one can’t help thinking about the person who collected the material and why they did so. The collection is obviously shaped by those creating it, both in terms of its size (as the number of staff contributing varies from year to year), and its content. Did the material have meaning to the collector? Or was it just what they happened to find? For example, one file of material collected as part of the 1998 trawl includes a political magazine, a copy of the Big Issue, some Arsenal football club stickers and an Oddbins brochure. These items give us a small, yet tantalizing, insight into the life and interests of the person who selected them, but we have no way of knowing who it was, nor of finding out more about them.

The High Street Trawl allows us to collect a diverse range of material that demonstrates how

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trends change over time, and not just trends and changes in design but also in what's considered desirable and aspirational, in how we live, in society, advertising, technology, the economy, and in political culture. For example, in the late 1980s we find flyers advertising campaigns against the poll tax, leaflets raising awareness of AIDS, and promotional material produced by Greenpeace, reflecting the eco-movement which was gathering pace at this time. In the 1990s there are brochures advertising digital television, and copies of the free newspapers that were beginning to be distributed to commuters, and in the more recent trawls we find digital download cards. Just as the collection shows the introduction of new trends and concerns to daily life, it also preserves a record of objects and processes that have become obsolete without us really noticing: phone cards, 35mm film processing envelopes, even cigarette advertising. The intention of the High Street Trawl was always to create a resource that would be useful for future generations, rather than those of today. One wonders what they will make of the empty antibiotics packaging, or the countless throwaway carrier bags in the collection?

Alexia Kirk

Archive of Art and Design, V&A



Heal's paper bag, collected during the 1988 trawl. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London/ Heal's.

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Thoughts from the Chair

When deciding to focus this issue of ARC on the subject of ephemera, it was in recognition that these quotidian printed documents, though numerous in archives, are often overlooked or neglected by archivists. This situation contrasts to how these items have been considered, managed and debated by librarians over many years.

For archivists working in specialist repositories, however, ephemera forms the weft and weave of an individual's passage through time or an institution's mark on the world. Whereas librarians might collect ephemera for artificially-created information files, archivists in specialist repositories manage and take intellectual control of such material on a daily basis as part and parcel of dealing with incoming archive collections.

They may provide vital evidence of an individual's association with some person, event, or subject and through surviving scrapbooks help to illustrate the social norms and mores of the person being catalogued. In an arts context they can form part of the artist's practice and can help establish specific interests – captured in moments of time – and highlight their social circle, whilst collections of ephemera within an institutional archive can be enormously helpful in establishing dates of events such as openings, works shown and the duration of exhibitions.

Since the 1970s, there have been numerous articles in the specialist literature on librarianship about how to handle and preserve ephemera, but very little in the corresponding archives-related literature. This has placed archivists at a disadvantage, in the wider information world, when highlighting our role as the potential saviour and celebrants of this neglected part of the corpus of an archive.

With other areas of our work, such as digital capture and preservation, advocacy, and budgeting taking precedence, there is a danger that without a strong archival perspective, colleagues in related professions might assume that we never encounter such materials

and therefore don't have the skills to handle them. Archivists can then be placed on the back foot when discussions of what to do with an incoming collection of ephemera or indeed publications arise. Rather than be seen as the natural result of the collecting habits of a person or evidence of a business function, the default position of librarians can view ephemera as naturally residing in a library underplaying the context within which it is found.

Not wishing to be pessimistic, nor overly dramatic, but if archivists don't defend the purpose and value of ephemera within an archival context, there is a danger that there will be more concerted attempts to devalue our role in looking after such material. One has only to witness the Twitter storm that arose when a librarian posited an artist's residency entitled "Kill the archivist" to see how we must remain vigilant. Rather than seeing each other as rivals, archivists and librarians need to work together in order to save these fleeting records of daily life (how fascinating it would be to see more in the way of posters and flyers from Shakespeare's time or printed items from the early expeditions to the far corners of the globe). Ephemera is present in both archives and libraries, for different reasons, but as reproducible artefacts there should be plenty to go around.

Adrian Glew
Chair of SSR

Rob's Top Tips



by Rob Dakin of Link 51

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