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DISCOVER

The University of Nottingham's Manuscripts and Special Collections

ISSUE 14: JANUARY 2021

Managing collections during the global pandemic

Archives: A year
in lockdown

Healthcare, a history

Online exhibition:
Florence Nightingale
comes home

Letter from the Keeper

Welcome to the latest edition of *Discover*. When I wrote my last welcome piece, little did I realise that it would be the only Newsletter that we published during 2020. As a result of the pandemic we closed services down on 21 March 2020 and staff began working from home. You can find out more about the variety of work staff were undertaking elsewhere in this magazine.

During the first lockdown, we continued to visit Kings' Meadow Campus to undertake weekly building inspections. We then had a phased approach to re-opening services, which required a huge staff effort. I would like to thank staff for their resilience and readers for their patience, and hope that during 2021 we can return to normality.

In spite of Covid-19, lots happened throughout 2020. On 1 January, management of the University's Museum of Archaeology moved from Lakeside Arts to Manuscripts and Special Collections. This followed a *Review of the Museum* by Dame Janet Vitmayer and Vivienne Bennett OBE, supported by an Arts Council England (ACE) Project Grant. The resulting report advised that the management move would provide a variety of benefits including collaborative working on collections, exhibitions and programming. The Museum will stay in its current location on University Park and I would like to welcome Clare Pickersgill, the Museum Keeper, and Michelle Johnson, the Museum Administrator, to the staff.

The Museum received two ACE grants during 2020. The Emergency Fund has provided £13,500 for a Collections Manager, and for the development of a remote learning programme based on the Romans, whilst £61,160 from the Culture Recovery Fund will fund additional hours for the Collections Manager; digital equipment and development; a business review; and learning development.

We were also extremely pleased to be awarded an £89,500 grant from the ACE, Designation Development Fund for a project entitled: 'Unlocking the DH Lawrence Collection: cataloguing and digitisation for research and display'. This is the first time that the Designation fund has been opened up beyond museums. Although delayed by the lockdown the project will run for two years. Two Lawrence collections will be catalogued; all the Lawrence literary manuscripts, letters, typescripts, proofs and works of art will be digitised

and new digital galleries created and an exhibition on the theme of editing DH Lawrence will be held in the Weston Gallery. Amy Bowler has been seconded as the Archive Cataloguer (and Rachael Orchard has returned to cover her substantive role) and we welcome back Jonny Davies as the Digitisation Assistant.

During the year we have made two additions to the Lawrence collection. The autograph manuscript of Lawrence's essay, *Pictures on the Wall* was acquired from the USA with support from the ACE/V&A Purchase grant fund. The location of the manuscript was previously unknown and reveals many revisions and corrections in Lawrence's hand. The acquisition of the typescript of Maurice Magnus, *Dregs: A Foreign Legion Experience by an American, c.1918-1922*, corrected by DH Lawrence, was supported by the ACE/V&A Purchase grant fund, the Friends of the National Libraries and a private donation. This can now be studied alongside the manuscript of Lawrence's long introduction, the *Memoir of Maurice Magnus*, which he wrote to accompany Magnus' book after the author's tragic suicide.

In March, we heard that we had passed the first Archives Accreditation review and that the Accreditation Panel "... was pleased to see this strong review from a high performing service, which had been able to address a range of actions in the three years since the award. They particularly commended the progress on preservation of born-digital records, and the proactive collection development."

This edition includes an interview with Linda Shaw. Linda has worked in Manuscripts and Special Collections for over 41 years, most recently as Senior Archivist (Collections). During my seven years I owe her an immense debt of gratitude for her advice, guidance and hard work. Above all, her knowledge of the collections will be impossible to replace. We would all like to pass on our thanks and best wishes for a well-earned retirement.



Mark Dorrington
Keeper of Manuscripts and Special Collections



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Editor's letter

I have been editing *Discover* since the first issue in 2015. When we launched it we wanted to communicate with our researchers, supporters and exhibition visitors about the work we do, our amazing collections and new developments.

Discover is normally published three times a year, but Covid-19 forced us to cancel the last two issues of 2020. To make up for it we've got a bumper issue this time, focusing on some of the work achieved during the past year, including the implementation of our digital preservation system and the launch of our DH Lawrence project. We also take a look back at our lockdown diary, which regular readers of our blog will recognise.

Whilst there's a certain pleasure to be found in working your way through a to-do list of behind-the-scenes jobs we were glad to return to King's Meadow Campus in August. Re-uniting with the collections and welcoming researchers back to the reading room felt like the first steps on a long road back to normality. We will continue to operate under revised opening hours for the foreseeable future. These are subject to change so please check our website, and contact us before visiting. We hope to welcome you soon, and in the meantime I hope you enjoy reading this issue of *Discover*.

Hayley Cotterill,
Senior Archivist (Academic and Public
Engagement)



Cover image: Cataloguer Amy Bowler at work appraising and repackaging the Cambridge University Press editorial papers.

Pictured: Cataloguer Amy Bowler working on the Cambridge University Press papers

Unlocking the DH Lawrence Collection

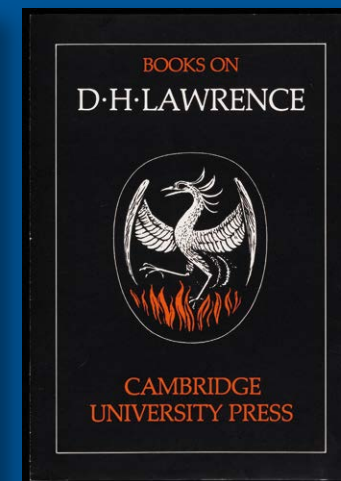
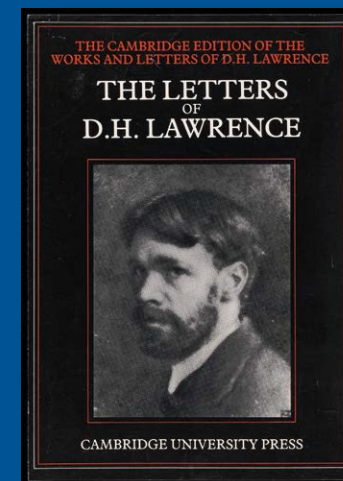
It is exactly a hundred years since DH Lawrence's novel *Women in Love* was first published, yet a century later the appeal of the controversial modernist writer remains unabated. Manuscripts and Special Collections holds one of the world's largest collections of Lawrence's literary manuscripts, as well as the correspondence of Lawrence and his contemporaries, original artworks and first editions. We also hold a wealth of supplementary material including photographs, newspaper cuttings, editorial papers, research papers and ephemera relating to the commemoration and study of one of England's greatest writers.

Literary manuscripts provide a truly invaluable window into the mind and creative process of the author. This is especially true of a writer like DH Lawrence, who revisited and revised many of his works over many months or even years. These revisions are evident at every stage in the life of his works from handwritten first draft to finished publication. Our DH Lawrence Collection contains numerous examples of page and galley proofs sent to Lawrence for checking, but returned to the publisher full of his handwritten scribbles and amendments. In the case of his short story, *Odour of Chrysanthemums* (an emotional tale following a family over a single event-

ful evening after the death of a miner in a colliery accident) Lawrence's revisions at the editorial stage included entirely rewriting the ending of the story.

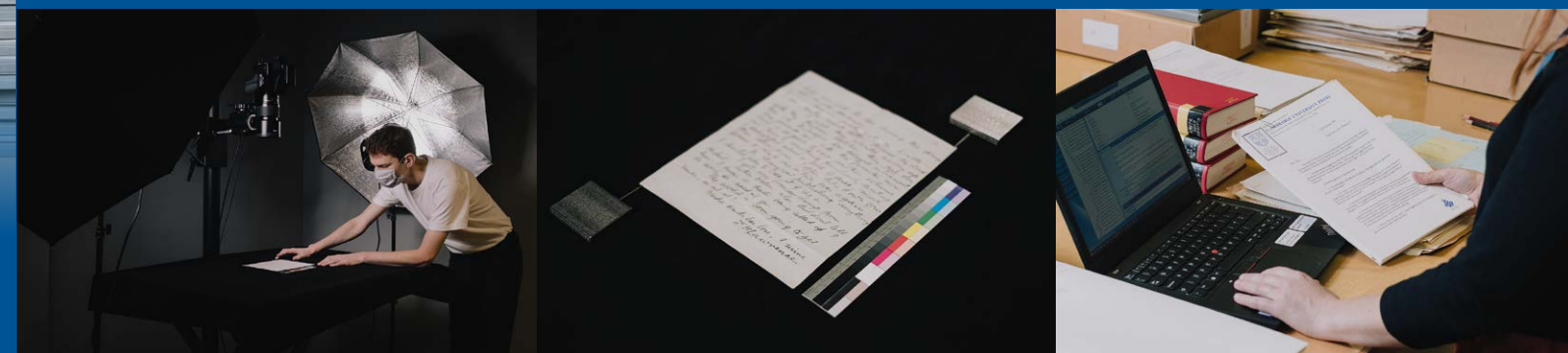
In 2008, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council designated our DH Lawrence Collection as being of outstanding national and international importance, and earlier this year we received a grant from the Arts Council England Designation Development Fund. This grant enables us to undertake a two-year project aimed at making our Lawrence collections accessible to a wider audience. The project will incorporate a number of different elements, including the digitisation of Lawrence's correspondence and literary manuscripts, the creation of brand new catalogues for previously unlisted sections of the collection, and an events programme centred around an exhibition at Lakeside Arts curated by world-renowned expert on DH Lawrence, Dr Andrew Harrison.

The digitisation strand of the project will see the creation of over 10,000 high quality digital images of our unique Lawrence literary manuscripts, letters and artworks. Sixteen percent of the images will be from *The White Peacock*, the only example of a manuscript novel by Lawrence remaining in the United Kingdom today.



Pictured, top left to right: Advertisements for Cambridge University Press Lawrence edition books, DH Lawrence Collection, From *La E* 1/2/6/1/2/3. Pictured below, left to right: The editorial board at the DH Lawrence Letters Conference, 13-14 September 1973. Keith Sagar is sat at the head of the table with Michael Black and David Farmer on one side,

and Gerald Lacy and Harry T. Moore on the other. DH Lawrence Collection, *La E* 1/2/6/1/2/3. Pictured below, left to right: Digitisation Assistant Jonny Davies capturing high quality images of our DH Lawrence literary manuscripts. Cataloguer Amy Bowler recording data.



Anyone familiar with early twentieth century archival collections knows just how vulnerable they can be. Our Lawrence manuscripts are no exception, many being written in soft pencil on thin, acidic paper, or bound using poor quality materials and workmanship, which has led to important marginalia being obscured. The preservation work carried out will mean that in a few cases the manuscripts and artworks will be seen in their original state for the first time in decades, whilst digitisation will reduce the need to handle the fragile originals.

The cataloguing strand of the project will provide access to previously uncatalogued sections of our Lawrence Collection. These are papers relating to the Cambridge University Press edition of the *Letters and Works of DH Lawrence*, and related research papers of the late James T. Boulton (1924-2013), a former University of Nottingham academic and one of the foremost Cambridge editors. Work on the Cam-

“The digitisation strand of the project will see the creation of over 10,000 high quality digital images of our unique Lawrence literary manuscripts, letters and artworks.”

bridge edition started in the late 1960s with the aim of publishing every single extant letter written by Lawrence, and soon evolved into an ambitious project to publish a scholarly edition of Lawrence's complete works, a three-volume biography, and a comprehensive bibliography of everything written by the author. The papers at Manuscripts and Special Collections document over 40 years of editorial work and painstaking academic research by the Cambridge team.

The aim of the Cambridge edition was primarily to get back to Lawrence's final version of each title before cuts and revisions imposed by censors and editors. The controversial and boundary pushing nature of Lawrence's writing, born into an England only just shaking off the shackles of Victorian social and sexual propriety, meant that so much of the author's chosen text was altered by publishers, keen to appeal to a popular audience and avoid any brushes with the law by violating the Obscene Publications Act. Perhaps the most famous (or infamous!) example of this editorial expurgation is Lawrence's final novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, which the author was forced to self-publish overseas in Florence and smuggle back into England, so that his audience could read the definitive version of his masterpiece in print.

After a delayed start due to the Covid-19 pandemic, project work is now underway at King's Meadow Campus. The project runs until March 2022.

Archives in lockdown

Like many people, staff in Manuscripts and Special Collections spent the first national lockdown working from home. Instead of having constant access to our archival and special collections we were suddenly faced with trying to do our jobs remotely. So how do you run an archive service whilst socially distanced from the collections? It turns out there is more than can be done than you might think.

This is a taster of just some of the tasks that have occupied our time.

Cataloguing

Cataloguing archives is normally dependent on having access to the items that you are working on. We weren't able to take the collections home with us, so how do you describe something that you can't see? Our answer was to focus our cataloguing efforts on enhancing existing descriptions and upgrading our online catalogue.

Our archival collections are catalogued using CALM – the most commonly used archive management software. One important job that we achieved in lockdown was testing and installing the latest upgrade to CALM. Moving to the new version enabled us to update the look and feel of our Manuscripts Online Catalogue and make it more responsive when viewed on different devices. The new version of the catalogue went live in June: <https://mss-cat.nottingham.ac.uk/Calmview/>.

We enhanced the descriptions of a number of collections during lockdown, one of which is the archive of the historic Archdeaconry of Nottingham (AN), one of the most extensive manuscript collections that we hold. The Archdeaconry court, an ecclesiastical court, had jurisdiction over almost the whole county of Nottingham. People were brought before the court for a wide variety of offences, including religious dissent, non-payment of church dues and superstitious practices. By the mid-eighteenth century, the court's attention was focused on the problem of illegitimate births. A common penalty imposed was the performance of a penance, or act of contrition, and offenders could be excommunicated for non-compliance.

The majority of the Archdeaconry collection is already catalogued in great detail but we have a longstanding project to catalogue the penances. When we realised that lockdown was coming we copied hundreds of penances so that cataloguing work could continue at home.

Conservation

Conservation really is one of those tasks that it is impossible to do remotely. With no access to the original documents or books, all repair and repackaging work came to a halt, but this gave our two conservation staff time to do one of their favourite things – catch up on their paperwork.

As part of our upgrade to CALM we decided to make better use of the Conservation database within it, and use it as a place to store information about cleaning, conservation and preservation work carried out on documents and books over the past twenty years.

Work has been ongoing to transfer this historic conservation data from handwritten paper documentation sheets into a spreadsheet.

“It is important that we document conservation treatments on our collections, and this should be accessible forever so that in future we (or other conservators) can see what treatments have been carried out. This kind of information helps if further treatments are required, as we can then establish what chemicals and treatments are suitable to use. It is also useful to help assess how well a treatment has acted over time.

Once all the data is in a digital format on the spreadsheet it will be transferred onto CALM and will be beneficial in creating a better understanding about the collections and what has been done to them”.

– Emma Bonson, Preservation Assistant

Metadata

We digitise hundreds of items a year from our collections – sometimes a single page from a document or a book, at other times an entire multi-page document – and these images are stored in our digital asset management software, Portfolio. In order for

LOCKDOWN BIG FIGURES

22,000 ▶ historic, hard-copy, conservation records entered into a spreadsheet

2,144 ▶ images had their metadata upgraded

1,547 ▶ pages digitised so far as part of the 'Unlocking the DH Lawrence Collection' project

204 ▶ Archdeaconry penances indexed online

staff to easily retrieve an image from amongst the thousands that we have, we then need to add descriptive metadata.

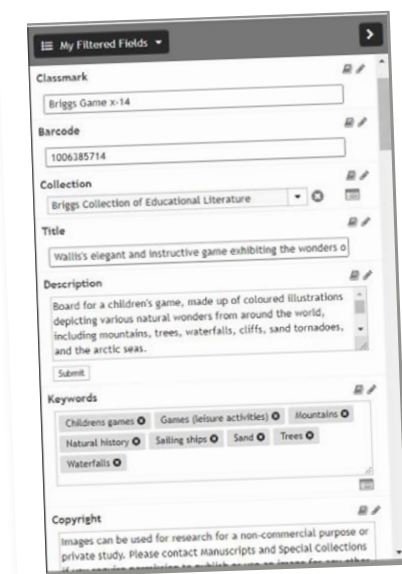
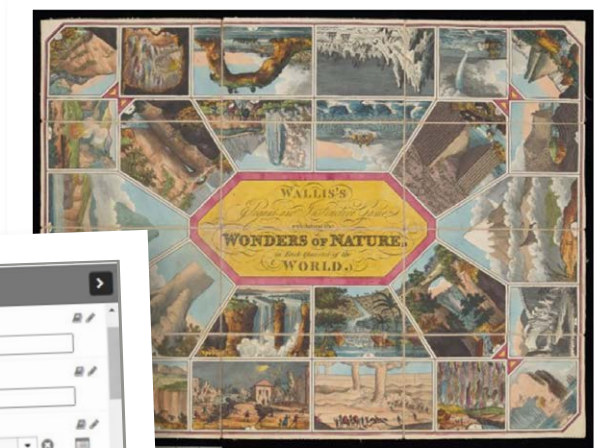
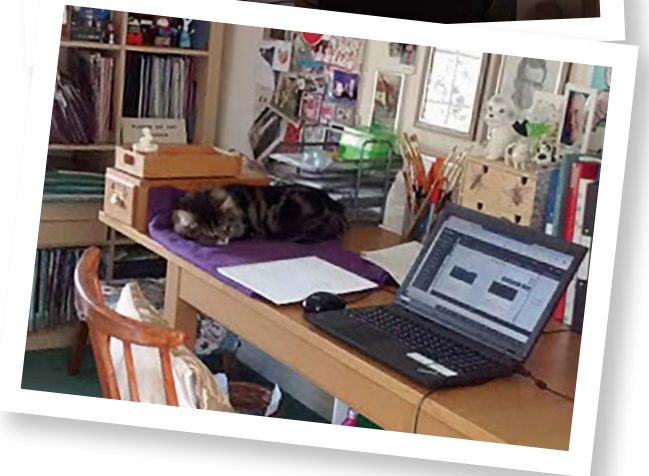
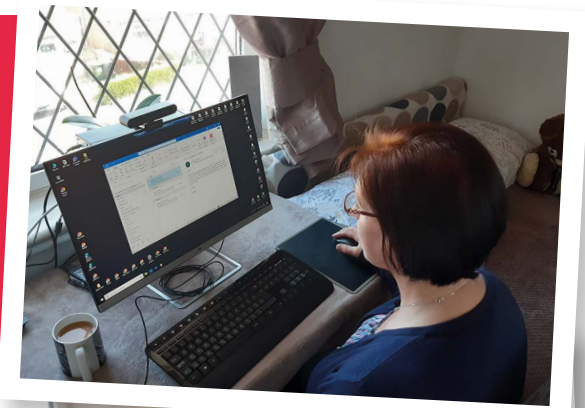
Put simply, metadata is data about data. Descriptive metadata relates to a piece of information such as a photograph, and gives information about it such as a title. We have a substantial backlog of digitised images that need metadata adding. Fortunately, this is a job that can be done from home without needing access to the physical item.

Enhancing the metadata includes recording the reference of the item an image is from, as well as noting the type of document it is (e.g., letter, poem, map, etc.), and a description of the content. Perhaps the image shows a particular person, place, or building. Maybe there are animals in the image, or people wearing specific clothing. If we do this in enough detail, then for future projects we can search based on a keyword and find all of our digitised images that fit that keyword.

As well as being useful for staff this also benefits our customers. When images are added to our publicly accessible digital galleries, the descriptive metadata is there and ready for users to search.

This is a selection of just some of the jobs that staff are able to do from home. You can find out more by reading the 'lockdown diary' posts on the [Manuscripts and Special Collections blog](#).

Descriptive metadata relates to a piece of information such as a photograph, and gives information about it such as a title.



Pictured, from top: Our staff's home offices, occasionally complete with a feline assistant. Above: Example of an image in Portfolio with (left) descriptive metadata.

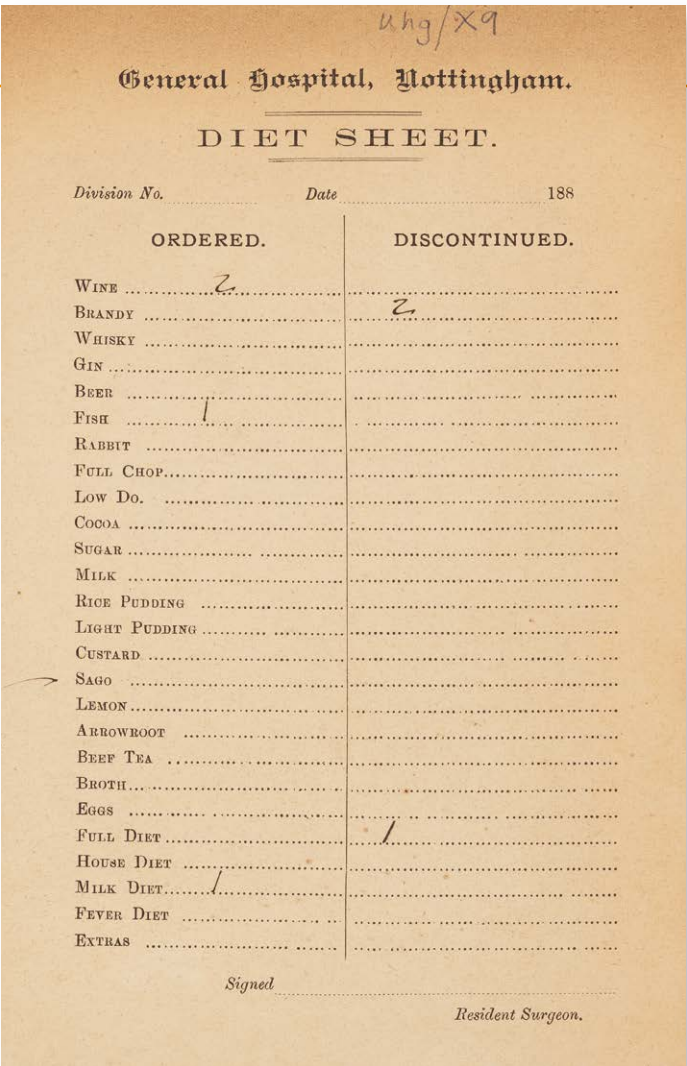
Healthcare, a history

Whether clapping on doorsteps or painting rainbows for home-school art lessons, many people have expressed gratitude for the National Health Service during this coronavirus pandemic. As a University with a Medical School (based at QMC in Nottingham) and a registered NHS place of deposit, we have shelves full of hospital archives, patient records, and medical books covering every speciality in great and gruesome detail.

For most of us, it's hard to imagine what life – or death – would be like without the NHS. Before its creation in 1948, pain and discomfort from chronic conditions were accepted as part of everyday life, and illness was, for the most part, something to be dealt with at home.

We know about this informal, domestic healthcare because diaries and letters are full of details about the health of the writer, their friends, and family. Disease was commonplace and every fever brought the fear that it would develop into something serious. Recipes for tonics and cure-alls were swapped as often as recipes for cakes, and traditionally the distinction between the medicinal and culinary was blurred. Published guides on household management that every respectable middle-class woman aspired to own, included remedies for complaints ranging from mild colds and headaches to jaundice and tuberculosis. It goes without saying that roses, honey and maiden-hair leaves did not cure these conditions, no matter how much wine diligent housewives

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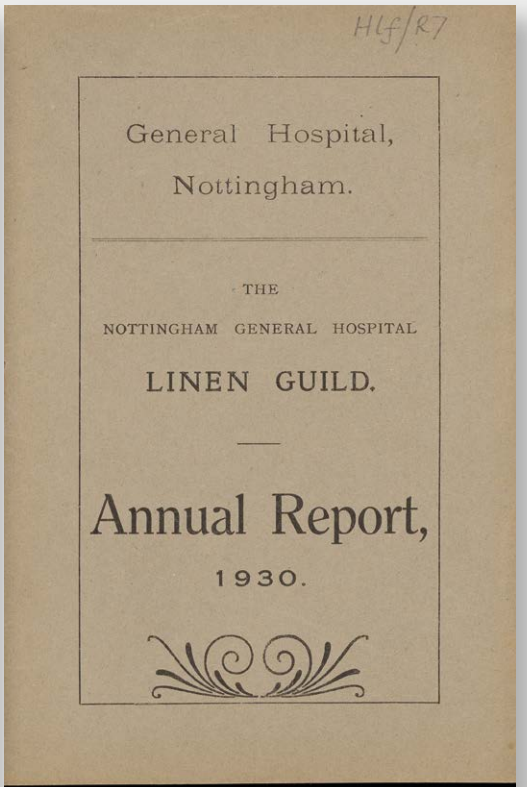
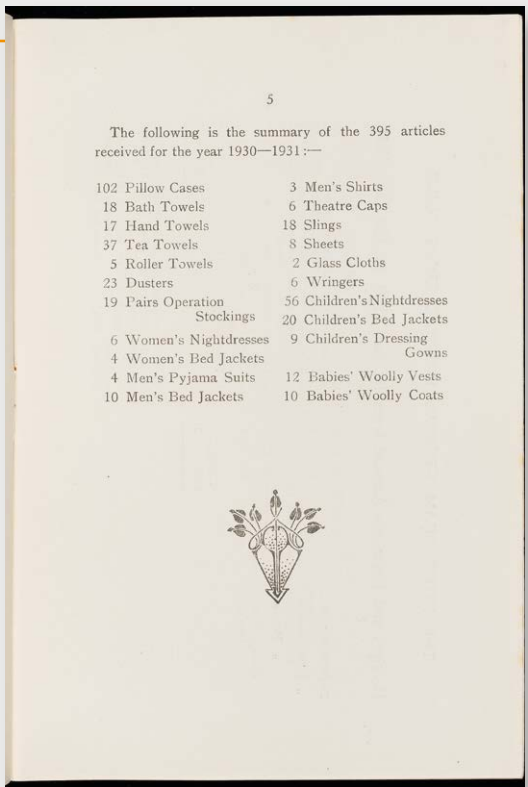
steeped them in first. It is also true that in the eighteenth century, whatever concoctions the doctor prescribed wouldn't cure them, either.

Pregnancy and birth were considered normal aspects of women's lives and not ones automatically requiring medical intervention. Local midwives relied on years of experience rather than any formal training to assist mothers-to-be with labour, and passed down skills through informal apprenticeships. Midwives were licensed, but through the church, and our earliest record dates from 1612. One likely explanation is that lay people can perform baptisms in an emergency, and with infant mortality rates so high, this responsibility might fall to the midwife. If a birth was complicated, the local doctor might be sent for, but he would have little, if any, specialist training in maternity cases (which wouldn't be compulsory until 1886), and certainly less experience delivering babies than a popular midwife.

Childbirth was routinely a domestic affair until well into the twentieth century, but general hospitals offering in-patient care for the sick have existed in varying forms since at least the medieval period. The eighteenth century saw a boom in the number of voluntary hospitals for the poor. They were entirely dependent on private philanthropy to cover the running costs, and often on doctors and surgeons volunteering to cover shifts. Nottingham General Hospital opened in September 1782, four years after Nottingham banker John Key left a lega-

Pictured, opposite page: The nineteenth century had some odd ideas about nutrition. Patients on a gin diet may have been vitamin deficient but probably didn't care. General Hospital Nottingham Diet Sheet; n.d. [1800-1889]. Records of Nottingham General Hospital, *Uhg X/9*.

Pictured, right: A list of items provided to the hospital, all of which were hand-made by volunteers from a list supplied by the Matron. Nottingham General Hospital Linen Guild Annual Report, 1930. Records of the General Hospital Nottingham Linen Guild and League of Hospital Friends, *Hlf R/7*.



cy of £500 towards building a County Hospital, on the condition another £1,000 was raised within five years.

Contributions came from the Duke of Newcastle and the Nottingham Corporation, who each gave land for the hospital site, industrialist Richard Arkwright, Peter Nightingale (the great-uncle of Florence who herself revolutionised healthcare almost a century later), and congregations in local churches.

The opening report praised the subscribers both for their compassion in relieving the suffering of the poor, and, as poor people were “a very necessary and useful part of the Community”, congratulated them in ensuring the poor remained economically viable. After all, “the sweat of their brow, and the labour of their hands, it is owing, that the Rich enjoy the accommodations of ease and pleasure”.

The rich not only enjoyed ease and pleasure, but had the privilege of nominating patients to be treated. Nottingham General Hospital admitted non-emergency patients, provided they had a letter of recommendation, only on Tuesdays between 11am and noon. This was generously extended to 1pm in extenuating circumstances (“being ill” was not such a circumstance). Patients were often required to provide a surety or a named guarantor to cover burial costs in case of their death,

“The rich not only enjoyed ease and pleasure, but had the privilege of nominating patients to be treated.”

which must have been incredibly reassuring.

The hospital also specified what clothing patients needed to provide on admission. The Hospital Linen Guild was established at Nottingham General Hospital to provide patients and staff with necessary garments like pyjamas, surgical gowns and masks, and provide the Matron with funds to buy blankets. Sewing groups gave help in kind, and raised cash through donations collected by members. Such acts of charity were deliberately very public, and the annual reports listed the names of subscribers and their annual contribution, just as they were in the General Hospital reports.

To modern sensibilities these local hospitals had odd admission criteria. Rules governed how long in-patients could stay before they had to reapply (two months). As late as 1924 domestic servants and soldiers could only be admitted if their employers agreed to pay for their treatment; patients with

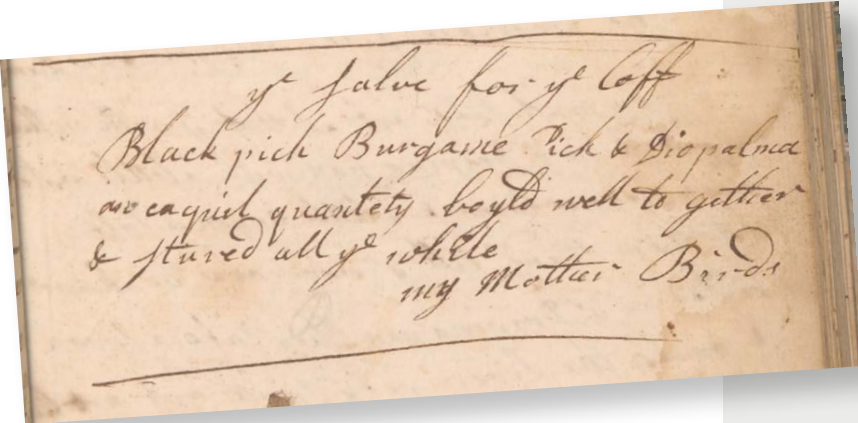
“As late as 1924 domestic servants and soldiers could only be admitted if their employers agreed to pay for their treatment; patients with common contagious diseases such as smallpox, measles or diphtheria were turned away; and the hospital did not admit pregnant women or children at all.”

common contagious diseases such as smallpox, measles or diphtheria were turned away; and the hospital did not admit pregnant women or children at all. Isolation (or fever) hospitals and workhouse infirmaries went some way to provide treatment for people who could otherwise fall through the cracks, but healthcare wasn't always available for people who needed it.

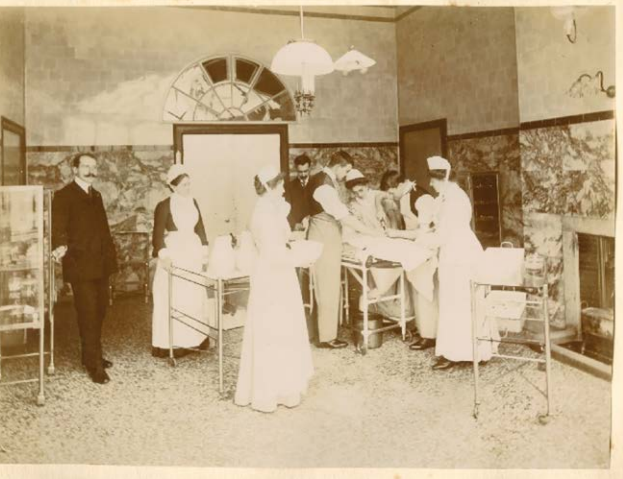
By the twentieth century, contributory funds for workers provided basic healthcare cover, and for an additional fee many schemes extended a more restricted cover to the worker's family. In some respects, this just called more attention to the vulnerability of large swathes of the population. Patients whose illnesses turned out to be more severe or who suffered complications could suddenly find their claims denied. Minutes from one hospital committee meeting show a cancer patient's insurance declined to pay for their emergency admission to hospital, stating it was due to the existing illness (which was not covered), rather than a proper emergency (which was covered). The committee's discussion wasn't around the clinical merits of the argument: it was to decide how soon after the patient's death the hospital could send the family the bill.

Campaigners used the disparity of access as proof the NHS, with a principal of universal coverage, was necessary but it wasn't until WWII that there was the political impetus to act. The Emergency Hospital Service was created in 1939 to treat civilian casualties of war, and demonstrated to doubters how a centralised, state-run health service would run. Less than a decade later, the NHS was born.

“Campaigners used the disparity of access as proof the NHS, with a principal of universal coverage, was necessary but it wasn't until WWII that there was the political impetus to act.”



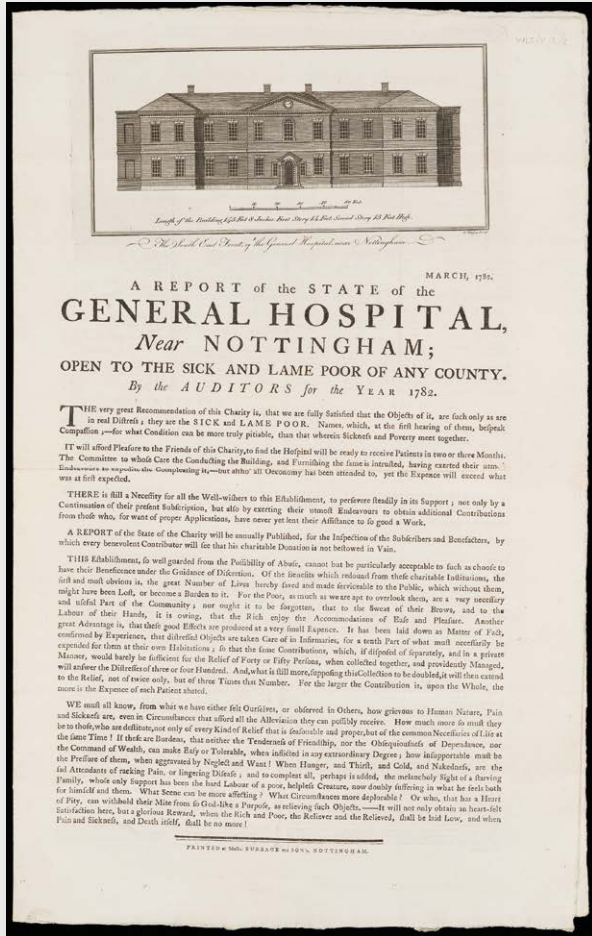
Pictured left: The Salve for the Coff, a family recipe from Margaret Willoughby's handwritten recipe book, 1737-1776. Household books of Margaret Willoughby and the Willoughby family, MS 87/4.



Pictured above: Printed broadsheet of the first annual report for Nottingham General Hospital, March 1782. Ephemeral papers from the library at Wollaton Hall, WLC/X/2/2.

Gone are the days when you could stroll into an operating theatre wearing a natty waistcoat, put some coal on the fire, roll up your sleeves and get stuck in to someone's innards without so much as surgical mask or pair of gloves. Photograph of an operation in progress at Nottingham General Hospital, c.1905. Uhg Ph 2/2/11.

Pictured left: The Salve for the Coff, a family recipe from Margaret Willoughby's handwritten recipe book, 1737-1776. Household books of Margaret Willoughby and the Willoughby family, MS 87/4.



EXHIBITION NEWS



Florence Nightingale Comes Home

In April 2020 we were due to open our exhibition, *Florence Nightingale Comes Home*, to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Nightingale's birth. Sadly, due to the ongoing impact of Covid-19 it has not been possible to re-open our exhibition gallery. We still hope that we might be able to welcome visitors to the Nightingale exhibition at some point in 2021 but in the meantime, there is an online version for visitors to enjoy: nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/exhibitions/online/florence-nightingale

Visitors can take a sneak-peek at three of the exhibition boards, enjoy a guided tour of the exhibition gallery, turn the pages of our virtual Crimean War scrapbook and explore a digital gallery of Crimean War photographs.

Florence Nightingale Comes Home is curated by Manuscripts and Special Collections and the Nightingale Comes Home project team, and is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

“Turn the pages of our virtual Crimean War scrapbook and explore a digital gallery of Crimean War photographs.”



Pictured, above: Camp of the 97th Regiment before the Siege of Sevastopol, during the Crimean War; c. Sep. 1855. Newcastle (Clumber) Collection, Ne C 10884/2/13.

Left: Statue of Florence Nightingale by Arthur George Walker; c.1910. From a private collection.



View our exhibition online:
nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/exhibitions/online/florence-nightingale

Five minutes with... Linda Shaw



What is your job title?

I've had a number of roles over many years, I've been Senior Archivist (Collections) since 2015.

How long have you worked for Manuscripts and Special Collections?

I started work in Manuscripts as an Archives Assistant in 1979 so it's now over 41 years. From 1992-2015 I worked with my job-share partner Caroline Kelly.

What does your role involve?

I lead the Collections Team in Manuscripts and Special Collections and together we acquire new material, and manage and preserve our collections, both our archives and Special Collections, and we catalogue our archive collections too. The team includes archivists, an archives assistant, a Special Collections Librarian, library assistants, a conservator and a preservation assistant. We also manage our volunteer and student placements programme.

Can you remember your first day at work?

Oh yes! Mrs Welch, the Keeper of Manuscripts, asked me to go into the store and have a look at some of the documents, by way of introducing me to the collections. When I eventually decided which box to open I was too scared to handle the documents inside, in case I damaged them! So I carefully put the box back and went in search of more modern material. When Mrs Welch discovered that I had chosen to look at mid-twentieth century documents - instead of documents that were centuries old - she was very puzzled!

How has the job changed?

Things were very different when I first started. There were only five other members of staff in Manuscripts besides me and Mrs Welch (who had been appointed the first University Archivist in 1947). She was always known by us as Mrs Welch - none of us would ever have called her by her first name. I spent my time cataloguing, retrieving documents from the store for visitors, answering enquiries, and later on, creating displays in our modest exhibition area. Of

course, there were no computers in the Manuscripts Department at this time. To catalogue our collections we wrote notes on slips of paper which were then passed to the secretary who typed them up onto index cards (and we are still transferring some of the information from these cards into our present day online catalogue!) or typescript catalogues. The first computer software we used for cataloguing was called Status, which wasn't very easy to use or very reliable. This would have been in the late 1980s. I catalogued about ten maps using this system and afterwards the data had to be delivered by hand to the university's computing centre to be printed out. The next cataloguing system, MODES, was much better and we started using this in the early 1990s.

Why did you want to become an archivist?

As I was approaching the end of my degree in Medieval and Modern History at the University of Nottingham, I decided that I no longer wanted to teach history at secondary level, as I'd intended at the start of my degree. In the days of pre-modular degrees, I studied Medieval Latin and Palaeography as a subsidiary subject. Mrs Welch taught the Palaeography part of the course so I got to know her and she told me about the vacancy in the Manuscripts Department. I applied for the job and got it and thought it would tide me over until I worked out what I wanted to do with my life! 41 years later I am still deciding.....! No, within a few days, I knew that archives was my future. I was one of the first students to enrol part time on what was then called a correspondence course (now distance learning) which was run by the professional society for archivists, and I acquired my postgraduate archives qualification in 1983. I was somewhat fortunate in that the palaeography part of the course was taught by my colleague who was the Assistant Keeper of Manuscripts. He had had copies made of certain documents in the collections, which were sent out to students on the course to transcribe. However I was able to look at the original documents, which were much easier to read than the copies my fellow students were obliged to work with.

You've worked on so many projects but which ones stand out?

I've mainly been involved in archive cataloguing projects - including many of our family and estate collections, DH Lawrence, our water collections and the University's own records. The project that probably stands out the most was the conversion of our old typescript catalogues into electronic format, resulting in much of the data you can now see on our online catalogue. The reason it stands out for me is because it took a number of years to complete as we had to do it in various stages and it was really several projects in one. It also involved collaborating with other archives regionally and nationally. Nowadays we all take our online catalogues for granted and we have systems which enable anything we catalogue one day to appear on the online catalogue the next, but standardising catalogues created in the 1940s and 1950s to fit into a computer system which they were never intended for, sometimes had its challenges.

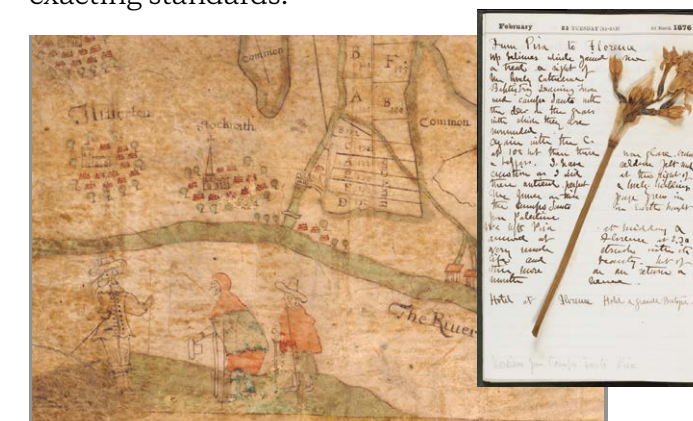
What do you most enjoy about the work that you do?

I enjoy most aspects of my job and there's a lot of variety as we have such a range of different collections. But I think what I enjoy the most is going out to look at potential acquisitions and talking with people about their papers. I've met lots of really interesting people who, in transferring their records to us, have enabled us to develop our resources in the way that we have. It's also a great honour to be trusted with collections which could represent someone's life's work, or have a deep sentimental significance to them. I've also visited a lot of different places over the years, offices of course but also private homes. On one occasion I remember having to wrestle my bag from the jaws of the family's dog! I've also 'rescued' collections from factories, almost derelict warehouses, water towers and pumping stations. It's always really thrilling to open boxes or filing cabinets etc. and not know what you're going to find!

What is your favourite collection, or item from a collection, held here in Manuscripts and Special Collections?

That's a hard question as we have so many wonderful collections and items. I really love the accounts in our estate collections such as Manvers, Middleton and Newcastle - they are so full of social history and I think they are a really underused resource. I can still remember the absolute thrill I felt in my first week in Manuscripts when I came across the accounts for the building of Wollaton Hall in the 1580s in the Middleton Collection (Mi A 60), a building I knew well having walked and jogged round the park many times as a student. I also love the maps and plans in the estate collections, although my favourite plan is probably the 1639 plan of Hatfield Chase in our water related collections (HCC/9044). It has

so much detail - houses, churches, and in one corner a group of smartly-dressed people, who appear to be having a conversation. And I can't leave out diaries. Early on in my career I was lucky enough to work on the papers of Edward Mason Wrench, a doctor in Baslow, Derbyshire who kept diaries from 1856 to 1912. I had to read all 58 diaries in order to catalogue them and for months I was totally obsessed with his medical work and his patients, his considerable contributions to his local community, and his issues in bringing up his children to his very exacting standards.



You're retiring shortly - what will you miss most, and what won't you miss?

I definitely won't miss trying to manage a very full email inbox, a problem I certainly didn't have way back at the beginning of my career. But there's lots of things I'll miss so much. I'll definitely miss being part of a wonderful team and I will miss my talented and dedicated colleagues. I'll also miss the contact I've really enjoyed with our donors and depositors, with our volunteers and student placements and with our readers - it's been great helping people with their research and to sometimes witness their own personal 'Middleton account' moments! I'll also really miss all the collections work and the thrill of being able to handle original manuscripts, each with their own personal history. But it's been a huge privilege to have been involved for so long in caring for the wonderful collections at Nottingham and playing a part in ensuring they are accessible now and in the future. I've been so lucky to have had such an interesting and rewarding job - and all because I chose that Medieval Latin and Palaeography course over 40 years ago!





Pictured: A selection of photographs by Edward Alfred Stewardson, Ms 1025.

New accessions and cataloguing

Despite the many challenges posed by 2020 we were still able to take in new additions to the collections and continue with cataloguing work. Below is a taster of just some of the things that we have been working on. Our work during lockdown on the archive of the University itself will be covered in the next issue of *Discover*.

Magnetic Resonance Imaging

Following the successful completion of our MRI project, as reported on in previous editions of *Discover*, we remain keen to acquire further collections relating to Magnetic Resonance Imaging. We were therefore delighted to receive a collection of papers from the British and Irish Chapter of the International Society for Magnetic Resonance in Medicine (MS 1023). The ISMRM is a non-profit scientific association, which promotes communication and research on magnetic resonance in medicine and biology. Many of Nottingham's MRI scientists past and present have been members of the ISMRM, and the current Chair of the British and Irish Chapter is Professor Penny Gowland from the Sir Peter Mansfield Imaging Centre. The collection includes committee meeting papers, and papers relating to annual meetings and symposiums, from the 1990s and 2000s.

Papers of University of Nottingham staff

Professor Martin Binks, Professor of Entrepreneurial Development in the Haydn Green Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship here at the University, has donated papers relating to his work for the Wilson Committee in the late 1970s and 1980s (MS 1027). The purpose of this Committee, chaired by Sir Harold Wilson, was to review the role and functioning of financial institutions in the United Kingdom, and their value to the economy. Professor Binks provided information on small businesses, particularly relating to their financial status and investments. The papers provide detailed information about small firms from a range of industries including engineering and textiles, chiefly in the Nottingham area. They include completed questionnaires from individual firms surveyed, transcripts of recorded interviews and background information about the companies. The Committee's report was published in 1980.

Records from individuals

We recently acquired the collection of Matt Marks (MMM), musician, composer and performer who sadly died in 2019. Matt Marks studied Creative Arts at Nottingham Trent University, Composition at the University of Nottingham (1996) and Mu-

sical Theatre Writing at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University, where he received the Frederic Loewe ASCAP award for Musical Theatre. He collaborated with numerous theatre groups, and worked with New Perspectives, Roundabout, and playwright and director Stephen Lowe, whose archives are also held by Manuscripts and Special Collections. The collection contains files, music manuscripts, artwork, audio-visual material and photographs. Marks' friends and collaborators have offered to help with cataloguing the collection, which documents the achievements of a large section of the local arts/theatre/music scene.

A retired University academic has donated a fascinating collection (MS 1025) of letters, papers and photographs relating to China and Tibet in the 1930s. These belonged to Edward Alfred Stewardson (1904-1973), who in 1935 was appointed Professor of Physics at the National Central University in Nanking (Nanjing) as a result of an Anglo-Chinese Cultural Agreement. The collection includes letters to his parents and photographs taken in countries such as Korea, Vietnam and China. Stewardson married Winifred Muriel Jones in Shanghai in 1936 and two years later the couple went on an expedition into Eastern Tibet.

A typed volume of letters documenting the Tibetan life and customs observed during this expedition, with accompanying maps, is also present in the collection. Following the outbreak of the Second World War, Stewardson was appointed head of Physics at Leicester University College, becoming their first Professor of Physics in 1946. He went on to have a long and fruitful career at Leicester working on soft X-ray spectroscopy and atomic physics.

Special Collections

We have made important additions to the East Midlands Special Collection in support of our online exhibition *Florence Nightingale Comes Home*: two first editions of reports written by Florence Nightingale and published as (part of) official findings following enquiries commissioned by the British government. The reports ensued at two distinct turning points in the history of nursing and hospital sanitation. In both instances Nightingale combined her expertise as a nurse and talent for data analysis to devise practical solutions and institute standards that established nursing as a profession.

Nightingale's first report about army hospitals in the Crimean War was published in the comprehensive *Report upon the State of Hospitals of the British Army in the Crimea and Scutari, Together with an Appendix* (London 1855), compiled by a government-appointed Commission of Enquiry. This is now in the East Midlands Special Collection.

The second report we purchased is Nightingale's *Suggestions on the Subject of Providing, Training, and*

Organising, Nurses for the Sick Poor in Workhouse Infirmarys, published as part of the *Report of the Committee appointed to consider the Cubic Space of Metropolitan Workhouses, with papers submitted to the Committee. Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty* (London 1867).

After Nightingale's campaign to improve the management of army hospitals during the Crimean War, she laid the foundation of professional nursing with the establishment of her nursing school at St Thomas' Hospital in London. It was the first secular nursing school in the world (now part of King's College London). In the *Suggestions* Nightingale turned her attention to workhouse infirmaries. She was determined that the sick poor should be treated the same as the rest of the community, and given the same standard of nursing.

Both reports show Nightingale's fundamental understanding of nursing and public health as a common good for all society. Further notable additions have been made to the East Midlands Special Collection. We have acquired two novels by JM Barrie published in 1888, at the beginning of his literary career. They are connected to Nottingham by the stint of journalism Barrie completed at the *Nottingham Journal*, from 1883 to 1884. Here Barrie wrote daily lead articles and Monday columns under the pseudonym Hippomenes, along with Thursday essays attributed to 'A Modern Peripatetic'. His articles can be viewed in the print issues of this newspaper, held in the East Midlands Special Collection. They document the author's striving to find his literary voice through journalism.

The new acquisitions, *Auld Licht Idylls* and *When a Man's Single*, mark Barrie's breakthrough to success. Both draw on his affinity for provincial social circles, particularly from his native Scottish town Kirriemuir and Nottingham, where he first staked his claim to a self-reliant life away from home. According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica, *When a Man's Single* is 'a humorous transcription of his experiences as a journalist, particularly in the Nottingham office'.

“In the *Suggestions* Nightingale turned her attention to workhouse infirmaries. She was determined that the sick poor should be treated the same as the rest of the community, and given the same standard of nursing.**”**



Digital preservation in action

2020 has been a challenging year in many ways, but it has been a year of great progress for digital preservation of our collections, as we have procured and implemented a digital preservation system (Preservica) to help us actively manage our digital collections. This system will allow us to ensure these collections can be safely preserved and accessed by future generations of researchers.

We have been acquiring digital collections for many years, often arriving in the form of CDs, DVDs and 3.5 inch floppy disks, hidden in boxes amongst paper records. We have also created digital content ourselves through our image digitisation programme and projects to digitise audiovisual collections such as VHS tapes.

We know that digital content faces several risks to its long-term preservation including hardware and software obsolescence, hardware failure and accidental damage. However, one of the biggest risks to digital content is 'benign neglect'. We are used to storing paper records away in a cupboard and being able to easily return to, and use, those records decades later.

If we use this same approach to manage our digital content, we risk it becoming inaccessible within a few short years due to the pace of technological change, with the fragility of some digital formats rapidly rendering hardware and software out of date and unsupported by current platforms.

Digital files held on physical media carriers such as floppy disks are recognised to be at greater risk of loss due to the fragility or obsolescence of the physical media carrier itself. Over the past year we have been concentrating our efforts on transferring digital files held on CDs, DVDs and 3.5-inch floppy disks into our online digital preservation system, and this work will continue over the next year. Once files have been transferred from a disk and uploaded into our preservation system, we are able to link them to our collection management system. This means that, once catalogued, researchers will be able to access these digital files in our reading room directly from the Manuscripts Online Catalogue without needing to retrieve or find equipment to playback multiple physical disks.

Even when we can read a disk, we may still struggle to make sense of the digital files on it. Many files were created in early word processing or publishing software formats that have fallen out of use today.

Uploading this content into our digital preservation system allows us to analyse and report on risks to continuing access. Preservica includes built in viewers for playing back digital content and includes out of the box ability to migrate files to more user-friendly file formats for our researchers to easily access today. Of course, we always preserve the original files as deposited with us.

Collecting new types of digital content

As well as helping us to manage and preserve our existing digital collections and expand our ability to collect digital content in the future, Preservica also gives us tools to collect new types of uniquely digital content, in particular emails and websites.

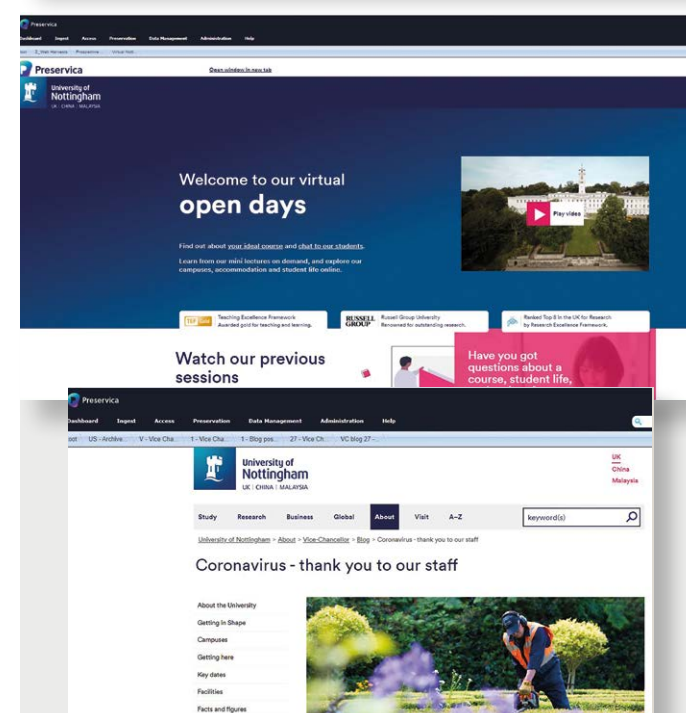
We have been looking at ways to collect digital content that reflects life on campus such as that created by the Student Union and student societies. Now for the first time, we can collect web-based content such as webpages, for example the University's home page, and blogs, including the Vice Chancellor's and the Registrar's.

Along with the rest of the archive sector, we are very aware of the importance of documenting work related to the pandemic for the benefit of future generations. We have been able to make a start on capturing key digital content, such as blogs and press releases, to document the University community's response to these challenging and difficult times and we are continuing to seek other relevant digital content.

Suggestions for online content published by members of the University which ought to be captured for posterity would be very welcome: mss-library@nottingham.ac.uk

We have written several blog posts about our work with digital collections to date, including a blog giving tips on how to preserve your own personal digital content including that created on social media. Go to <https://blogs.nottingham.ac.uk/manuscripts> to find out more.

“Along with the rest of the archive sector, we are very aware of the importance of documenting work related to the pandemic for the benefit of future generations.”



From the old, to the new

Pictured top and opposite page: Image shows a variety of CDs, DVDs and Floppy Disks received by Manuscripts and Special Collections.

This image shows Preservica capture of the Virtual Open days website, an online experience created by the University in 2020 to allow students to remotely explore the campuses and courses. Archive of the University of Nottingham: Student and Staff Life, UL/E/5.

The art of anatomy

LAURA MERCER, POSTGRADUATE RESEARCHER IN CLASSICS AND ARCHAEOLOGY

The Nottingham Medico Chirurgical Society is one of the oldest medical book societies in the country, so it is unsurprising that its library contains many works of scientific value. Yet the importance of this collection extends far beyond the medical community. There are many beautiful (if slightly macabre at times) illustrations hidden throughout these works; illustrations that are of artistic value. A volunteer project, run by Manuscripts and Special Collections, aims to catalogue highlights from the illustrations and uncover more about them, such as their illustrators, printing techniques and significance. As a PhD student I was attracted by the opportunity to apply my research skills to a new area and investigate the histories and stories behind these images.

Already this project has uncovered some familiar names not usually associated with the medical field. Thomas Willis' book *Cerebri Anatome* (1664) has a surprising illustrator: Sir Christopher Wren. Best known for his later work as an architect, Wren spent his earlier years studying subjects including astronomy, mathematics and medicine. According to his son, Wren was slightly bitter about leaving these fields and complained that "King Charles II had done him a disservice in taking him from the pursuit of those studies, and obliging him to spend all his time in rubbish (architecture)"¹. Wren was a student of Willis and often participated in dissections. He drew the illustrations of the brain, skull and cranial and autonomic nerves, whilst the volume's other illustrations were done by his co-illustrator Richard Lower. The most famous illustration is Wren's 'figure of the human brain viewed from below displaying the cerebellum and nerves' – the so-called Circle of Willis. This was later reproduced, with minor variations, in *Dr Willis's Practice of Physick* (1684).

A highlight of this project for me is the wide range of works covered and the challenge of dealing with a new subject area and illustration style in each

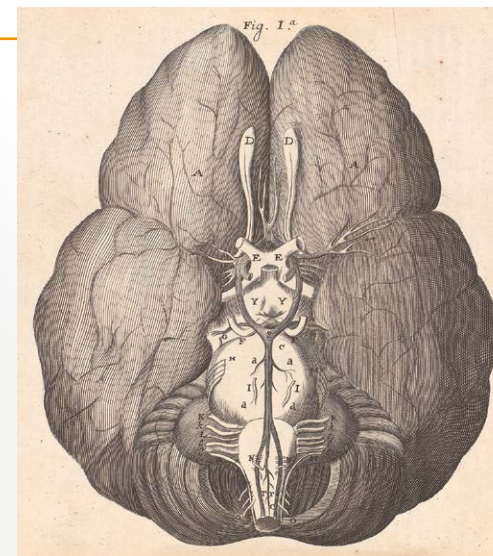
book. Sometimes a great assortment of topics can be found in a single volume. *The Works of Ambrose Paré* (1691) contains images ranging from animals, to skeletons with props, to "monsters" (people with deformities). There are also multiple surgical scenes, such as one depicting the restoration of a dislocated thigh, with the figures wearing contemporary clothing and operating a pulley system.

Other works contain illustrations demonstrating how to carry out procedures and the instruments required. Brothers Charles and John Bell both illustrated their own works, *Illustrations of the Great Operations of Surgery* (1821) and *The Principles of Surgery* (1806), to educate the reader on the techniques needed. Of note is Charles Bell's drawing of a skull with multiple fractures to demonstrate the circumstances of using each tool.

A highlight of the collection is *The Anatomy of the Arteries of the Human Body: with its Applications to Pathology and Operative Surgery* (1841-4) by Richard Quain, illustrated by Joseph Maclise. This work contains chromolithographs of dissections to showcase the arteries inside a body. Fabric bindings, metal pins and hooks, and blocks used to position the corpse are included in the illustrations as are the surgical tools in the background.

Also to be found in the collection are books on skin conditions. A notable example is the *Atlas of Skin Diseases* published by the New Sydenham Society, which contains watercolours by Edwin Burgess, who served as both the illustrator and lithographer for this work. The first seven plates were copied from Ferdinand Ritter von Hebra's *Atlas der Hautkrankheiten* (1856), including one of a woman

“A highlight of this project for me is the wide range of works covered and the challenge of dealing with a new subject area and illustration style in each book.”



Pictured: Drawing of a skull, in Charles Bell, *Illustrations of the Great Operations of Surgery* (1821). Med Chi Collection, Over.X WO100 BEL, barcode 6001885368.

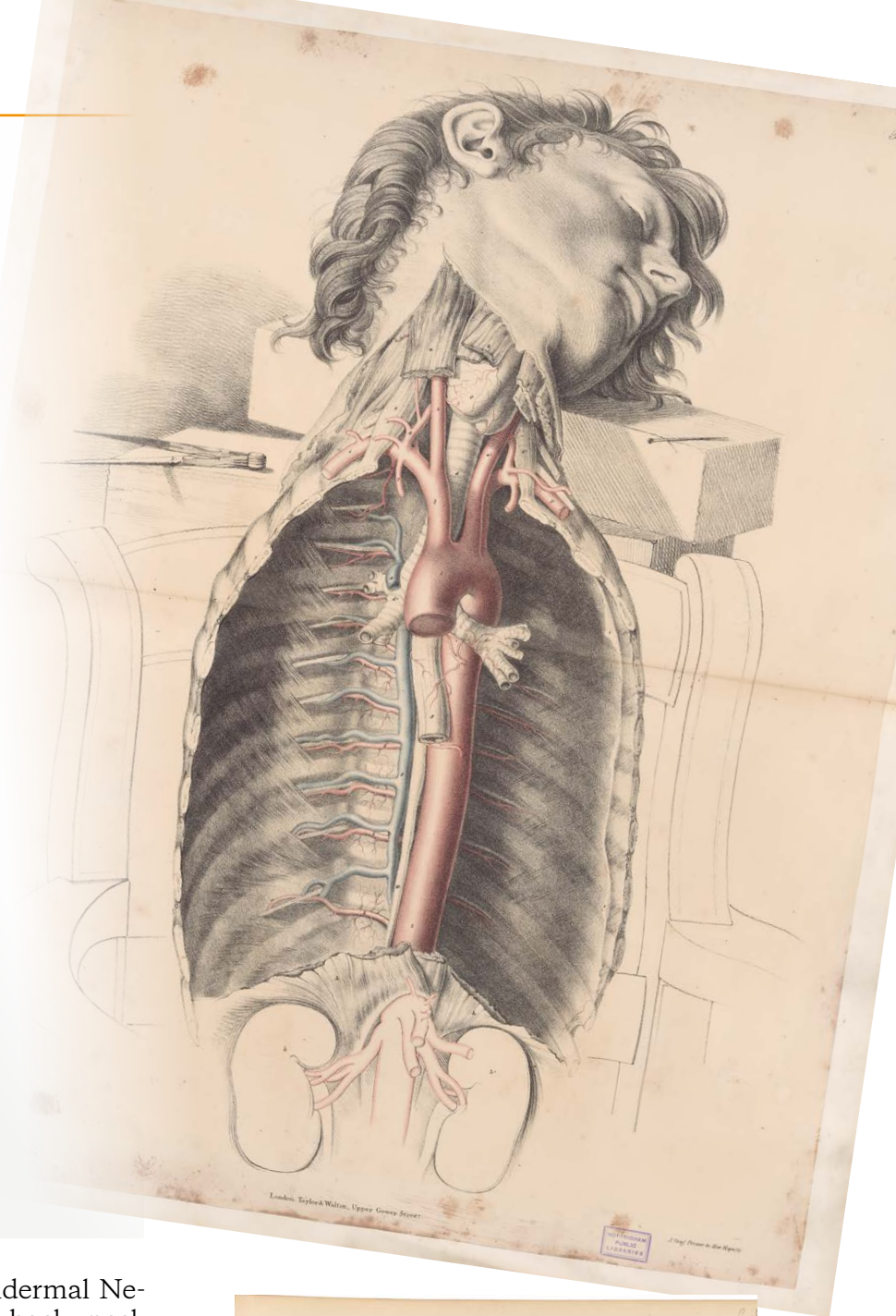
"The human brain" by Christopher Wren, in Thomas Willis, *Dr Willis's Practice of Physick* (1684). Med Chi Collection, Os WZ250.W51 WIL, barcode 6200619173.

Lithographic drawing of dissection of a human body, showing the thoracic aorta and the intercostal arteries, with the intercostal veins by Joseph Maclise, in Richard Quain, *The anatomy of the arteries of the human body with its applications to pathology and operative surgery...* (1840-1844). Med Chi Collection, Over.X WG168 QUA, barcode 6001885116.

"Ichthyosis hystrix" in New Sydenham Society, *Atlas of Skin Diseases*. Uncatalogued.

diagnosed with Ichthyosis Hystrix (Epidermal Nevus) with brown papules covering her back, neck and arms. Burgess designed the remaining plates, which were drawn from life and said to be life-size. While several of these images could be considered gruesome, they effectively capture the emotional distress caused to the patients by their condition. As John Hutchinson (the society secretary) writes in the preface, the plates are "not only illustrations of typical varieties of disease, but faithful portraits of individual patients".

The Nottingham Medico Chirurgical Society, commonly known as Nottingham Med-Chi, was founded in 1828. The Med-Chi Library contains approximately 700 volumes. The majority of these have been catalogued electronically and the entries can be viewed on NUsearch the University of Nottingham's library catalogue, <https://nusearch.nottingham.ac.uk>. To browse the Collection, enter the collection reference MCS in the search box. Manuscripts and Special Collections also holds the administrative archive of the Med-Chi Society, collection reference MCH.



¹ Parentalia.



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