DISCOVER
The University of Nottingham’s Manuscripts and Special Collections

ISSUE 15: MAY 2021

Captured for posterity
The student experience

Kick-starting exhibitions as lockdown eases
Explore the magical world of illustrator Kate Greenaway
Letter from the Keeper

Welcome to the latest edition of Discover. During the national lockdown, we continued to remain open to provide services to staff and students of the University, as university libraries are considered a key service. By the time you read this we will have been able to welcome back external readers. We also have the complication of sharing our building with an NHS Vaccination Centre. The Weston Gallery and the Museum of Archaeology remained closed to the public but we hope to re-open them after 17 May.

We are pleased to announce that we have recently acquired another addition to our designated DH Lawrence Collection; a letter to Lawrence’s sister Ada, 1930; a postcard to his niece Margaret, 1927; and seven postcards to his sister Emily.

The letter and eight postcards were written during the last three years of Lawrence’s life, with the final postcard written just days before his death on 2 March 1930, and on the last day he wrote any correspondence. They contain important details of his travels during these years, plus accounts of his health which were obviously provided in more detail to family members than to his other correspondents. This acquisition was supported by his personal donation for an 18 month project to catalogue our collections relating to Animal Welfare.

Archivists Sarah Colborne and Zoe Ellis started work on this project in March in addition to their current part-time roles.

We have also been awarded a grant from the National Manuscripts Conservation Trust for a nine month project to conserve the papers of the Nottingham architect Thomas Chambers Hine (1813-1899) and will report on this in a future issue.

After saying farewell to Linda Shaw at Christmas we are very pleased to welcome Nicola Wood to the role of Senior Collections Manager. Nicola comes to us from Brunel University and started work in January.

If you would like to find out more about any aspect of our work, please do not hesitate to contact me. Meanwhile I hope that you enjoy reading this edition of Discover.
Life exposed: Photographing the DH Lawrence Collections

In the previous issue of Discover we gave an update on the cataloguing strand of the two-year project to unlock the research potential and usability of our DH Lawrence collections. In this issue we turn our focus to the digitisation work.

Over a period of 15 months we are capturing images of letters and postcards, manuscripts and proofs, notebooks, typescripts, drawings and paintings. Working closely with the conservation team, the work involves handling thousands of items, capturing over 10 thousand images, and repackaging material to ensure long-term preservation of the originals.

Accurate images are captured using high specification camera equipment, with set-up and monitoring procedures followed to ensure that consistency is maintained. Our medium format cameras with 100mp digital backs capture high-resolution images, while LED flash units are used to minimise the amount of light and heat that the originals are exposed to. During the set-up for each photography session the appropriate lens is chosen for the documentation, while the accurate copy in a compressed file format to be used for reference and general access. With so many large files storage is a consideration. Photographing The White Peacock manuscript, Lawrence’s first novel, resulted in 1614 images of approximately 310MB each, requiring total storage of over 500GB. The long-term preservation of all images captured for this project is managed within our recently acquired digital preservation system.

Following digitisation, items are repackaged using archival materials and enclosures. The White Peacock is once more a notable example. The manuscript is part of a collection of literary manuscripts donated by book collector George Lazarus. Many of these were housed by Lazarus in impressive folders and bindings, such as the ornate bespoke leather box that currently holds the pages of The White Peacock. To preserve these pages in perpetuity, however, it is necessary to rehouse the individual leaves in polyester sleeves and then store these in acid-free folders and boxes. This is to provide protection against handling as well as discoloration caused by both light exposure and the acidic chemistry of the paper. The original boxes will also be preserved and photographed to ensure that we have a record of the object’s history whilst under the care of George Lazarus.

Accurate images are checked and cropped. Metadata is added - this includes the reference and title of the source material, collection information, and dimensions of the original. Images are then output. Firstly, a full resolution file in an uncompressed format as the preservation master file, and secondly a smaller derivative copy in a compressed file format to be used for reference and general access. With so many large files storage is a consideration.

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“...as photographers, Lawrence provides us with plenty of eye-catching references, whether it be a series of f numbers pencilled on the back of an envelope or mentions of the great and good in contemporary photography. Edward Weston is the image-maker we best associate with Lawrence because of his portraiture, but the writer’s correspondence files also flesh out working relationships with the photographers and gallerists Dorothy Warren and Alfred Stieglitz. Lawrence’s painting exhibition at the Warren Gallery in 1929 proved highly controversial, but fittingly for our project, in a letter to Warren in December 1928, Lawrence requests that photographers are given access to his paintings so that they can make reproductions of his work.

Digitisation work on the DH Lawrence Collection is planned to continue until the end of 2021. The project runs until March 2022.”
Kate Greenaway’s idyllic childhood

She is one of Britain’s most famous children’s illustrators and her drawings of cherubic children romping through idyllic English country-side are instantly recognisable.

Kate Greenaway (1846-1901) was born in London, and inherited her artistic talent from her father John, an engraver. In terms of subject matter, her work was the complete opposite of her father’s, who regularly provided images for The Illustrated London News, a weekly paper with a focus on attention-grabbing pictures of crime, accidents, wars and entertainment.

John Greenaway also took commissions, and during the period when he was working on artwork for a Dickens’s novel, he sent his wife and children to stay with a great-aunt in Rolleston, Nottinghamshire, a small village a few miles from Southwell, for holidays as an adult. It was here, away from the industrialised environment of London, that she found inspiration for the romanticised, rural set-
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She began her career designing greetings cards but when some of her watercolours were used in a book of fairy tales, demand for her as a children’s book illustrator rose sharply. She produced artwork for nursery rhymes, alphabet and spelling books, and painting books for children to colour in, all in her trademark style.

The subjects of her drawings were usually very young children, whose clothes were quaint and old-fashioned even for the Victorian era. They wore smocks, mobcaps and skeleton suits, which were always spotless clean despite the hours they spent fishing, picking flowers and dancing in sunny gardens. It wasn’t just the Regency fashions and architecture that made her images unique. Her preferred colour palette was pale, almost muted, and she used white space and borders more frequently than her contemporaries.

Although she illustrated over 150 books, she wrote and illustrated just two, Under the Window in 1879, and Marigold Garden in 1885. Both were books of nursery rhymes and verses for young children and were commercially and critically successful. Until the mid-18th century, books specifically for children were relentlessly educational, so the concept of children reading for enjoyment was still relatively new. Victorian children’s books were frequently moralistic and borderline sadistic, with gruesome fates visited upon characters for minor acts of childish disobedience. Greenaway was one of the first artists to instead depict an innocent nostalgia. So popular were her books that parents began dressing their children in replicas of Greenaway style outfits. She was also fortunate to live in a pioneering time for book illustrations. Children’s books were originally sparsely illustrated by rough woodcuts, if there were any pictures at all, until developments in printing made it easier and cheaper to include colour images. Only by the end of the 19th century was it possible to earn a living from children’s book illustrations. As an example of how famous she was in her lifetime, in her father’s obituary, printed in The Illustrated London News that he regularly contributed to, he was referred to as the father of the “clever and kindly artist of delightful child-life pictures.”

Kate Greenaway died of cancer aged 55 and is buried in London. Several years after her death, her brother John Greenaway arranged for an album of her sketches, unpublished drawings and proofs to be added to the University’s library. In his letter, Greenaway explained that this gift was in honour of his sister’s fondness for Nottinghamshire and the many happy summers she’d spent in Rolleston. What’s so lovely and truly unique about this album are her pencil sketches. These show the development of her ideas, such as in the drawing of a young girl with a kitten, which is very similar to the drawings of girls holding muffs that appeared in her published works. There are also pages of practice sketches of disembodied hands and faces in different poses as she perfected the tiny details. The album would be charming and unusual even if it belonged to an unknown artist, but it’s wonderful to know who created it and why we were chosen to look after it. We have thousands of examples of children’s books, some of them rare and significant, but nothing quite like the Kate Greenaway Album.

Kate Greenaway’s idyllic childhood
We are delighted to announce that we hope to open our much delayed exhibition, Florence Nightingale Comes Home, in May 2021.

Florence Nightingale is undoubtedly the world’s most famous nurse. Born in 1820 her name is as well-known today as it was within her own lifetime. Then her likeness was printed in newspapers, figurines and carte de visite photographs were sold to an eager public, and her family home was featured on postcards. Now in the 21st century her name has been invoked during a public health crisis and Britain’s new emergency hospitals bore her name. The lady with the lamp has cast an enduring shadow.

But who was the real Florence Nightingale and what lies behind the popular image of the lady with the lamp, the angel of the Crimea?

Florence Nightingale Comes Home explores Nightingale’s background, her upbringing in Derbyshire and the extent to which she and her work were influenced by home and concepts of home.

When Florence Nightingale left England with a party of nurses in 1854 few could have predicted what was to come. The very idea of sending female nurses to work in military hospitals was in itself contentious; prior to this such work had been carried out by male orderlies. In a letter dated 19 October 1854 Henry Pelham-Clinton, Secretary of State for War, informs the British Ambassador in Constantinople of the nurses’ imminent arrival.

“Dear Lord Stratford,

You will receive by this Mail a letter from Sidney Herbert respecting a Corps of Hospital Nurses which has been organised under our auspices by a most excellent & able lady Miss Nightingale, no rambling philanthropist hunting out her way to usefulness but one whose head as well as heart is thoroughly in her work…”


Florence’s work during the Crimean war lasted a mere two years, and yet it is this period of her life which has dominated public perceptions, and to some extent misconceptions, of her. The medical situation in the Crimea and in the British military hospitals in nearby Turkey was certainly dire, even by the standards of the day. With almost daily reports of stalemate in the war and of the awful suffering of the troops, the British newspaper reading public were desperate for some good news stories. This was something which Nightingale unwittingly provided.

Nightingale was just thirty-six when she returned from the Crimea and her working life was by no means over. Incensed by what she had experienced, and by what she saw as needless suffering, Nightingale went on to become an ardent and effective campaigner for improved sanitation and for the expansion of trained nursing. Her efforts and interests were legion, encompassing everything from the professionalisation of nursing to hospital design, and from caring for the sick in their own homes to gathering statistical data.

By displaying first-hand accounts of Nightingale, and drawing on unknown voices from her lifetime, the exhibition shows visitors that Nightingale’s image isn’t as simple as they might have previously imagined, and that Florence’s legacy has always been a contested one.

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

Opening dates and times: The re-opening of the Gallery will depend on the continued lifting of restrictions by the government so please check our website for the latest news: nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections

You can view the Florence Nightingale Comes Home exhibition online: nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/exhibitions/online/florence-nightingale
Five minutes with...
Robert Pearce

What is your job title?
I'm the Conservator for Manuscripts and Special Collections.

What does your work involve?
Repairing documents forms only part of my work. There are so many documents that are fragile, or in a damaged condition, that you have to decide what to focus on. The usual reason for repairing damaged documents is to use them in exhibitions, or to make them accessible to researchers. However the main focus at the present is to help make documents available for digitisation, and that requires a different kind of conservation. When I trained in conservation the style of repair was more 'belt and braces', so you ended up with a robust result. With preparations for digitisation, all you are really aiming at with modern conservation is to get the paper in a condition where it can be handled for the purpose intended.

Another important aspect of my work is preservation. Preservation deals with the whole of our collections, whereas conservation is about individual objects. So at the most basic level preservation is about having the correct storage conditions, which we can monitor continuously, and remotely, something especially important during the first national lockdown when all staff were working from home.

How did you become a conservator?
After completing a degree in fine art I worked in London as an art handler where I came into contact with conservators repairing items damaged in transit. Having spoken to them, I thought conservation might be a good career path for me. I had to complete an evening course in chemistry first in order to apply for the conservation course at Camberwell College of Art, as conservation work involves an understanding of chemistry. As part of my conservation training I spent some time working at St Paul's Cathedral, various Oxford Colleges, The British Library, and I also worked abroad, in Italy.

What type of document do you enjoy working on most?
Our collection of Soviet War Posters is a good example. Access to the originals is limited due to their large size and fragility but once conserved each poster was digitised. I love them from an artistic point of view – I think they're beautiful, and there's a human element to them too - the unnamed people whose fingerprints (and hair) you find on the paper. The way they were rapidly constructed using a stencil method is interesting - they were produced in small sections and joined together afterwards to make a single picture.

What do you like most about your job?
The work I find most rewarding is a project like the BMGB repackaging, which took about five years of planning and a huge amount of preparation. It was also quite stressful thinking 'is it actually going to work?' This archive of newspaper cuttings collected by the British Military Government in Berlin from 1946-1981 was degenerating at an accelerated rate. Newspapers are one of the most difficult things to store long-term, they are printed on cheap paper, and of course, they are designed to be disposable. By removing the cuttings from their original lever arch files, wrapping them in acid free paper and placing them in archival boxes we have hopefully extended their life considerably. I think this type of work also highlights the possibility for more research into the content of a collection - on this occasion I noticed that contemporary letters had been reused as backing for the news cuttings, an accidental survival of course, and worth further investigation.

What are the most challenging aspects of conservation work?
One of our biggest challenges is lack of secondary packaging. If items are not wrapped in suitable materials then that is a big issue in terms of preservation. Repackaging is one of the less 'glamorous' jobs, and it is an enormous task, but thankfully we've had volunteers to help with this work. Volunteering has had to stop because of Covid but hopefully we will be able to welcome volunteers back to the conservation studio in the future.

The University of Nottingham in Manuscripts and Special Collections

At Manuscripts and Special Collections we hold a huge range of archives and archival collections, from the 24,500 strong archive of the Dukes of Newcastle (Ne) to the single-volume diary of Doris Birkin of Lincoln (Ms 327), and from the records of local lace manufacturers to the Papers of the Dishley Sheep Society (Ms 9).

Whenever we get a new collection there is always that joy of learning about a company, person, or organisation. But what about the archive of our own organisation? Does our heart leap in the same way when we get a transfer of records from the Registrar's Department of the University of Nottingham, or, to be even more meta, records relating to the history of the University Library? In all honesty, yes. Preserving and making available the history of the University of Nottingham is one of our core tasks. It is something that we need the help of all staff, students and alumni to carry out effectively.

Cataloguing challenges
The catalogue for the archive of the University's predecessor, University College Nottingham, was published online some years ago (UCN), but the post-1948 records are less comprehensive and have proved much more challenging to arrange. Various attempts have been made over the decades to decide on an arrangement that would...
placements have helped us with the cataloguing of
by Alumni and Former Staff
ments and Staff
for the Photographs Collected by Various Depart-
ments within the University archive. These include:
Goverance records (UG); Strategy, Vice-Chancel-
or’s Office and Registrar’s Department papers (US);
Academic Faculties, Departments and Research
institutes (UA); Finance, Estate and Facilities, and
Resource Management (UF); External Relations
(UP); student and Staff life (UL); Student, Staff and
Alumni Societies including the Students’ Union
(UU). These descriptions can be viewed on the on-
line catalogue, https://mss-cat.nottingham.ac.uk/
Calmview/, by entering the reference number into
the search-box.
Catalogue descriptions are also now available
for the photographs collected by various depart-
ments and staff (UMP) and photographs donated
by alumni and former staff (NUP). Several student
placemets have helped us with the cataloguing of
copies of slides showing students at Highfields in the
snow 1962/3 (NUP/ACC.3083) and a large transfer
of photographs from external relations (UMP/8).
We were also gifted ephemera from alumna Helen
Young’s time at the Midlands Agricultural College,
1937-1940 (ALUM/MS 1040).

Lockdown advantages
While cataloguing work continues, lockdown
provided the Collections Team with the time to
publish the catalogue descriptions for all the main
series within the University archive. These include:
Goverance records (UG); Strategy, Vice-Chancel-
or’s Office and Registrar’s Department papers (US);
Academic Faculties, Departments and Research
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these collections, and they contain some wonderful
images that give a real sense of what it was like to
work and study at various campuses over the years.

Recording the student experience
No university archive would be complete without
material that documented the student experience.
Our holdings relating to the Students’ Union (SU)
date back to 1878, and doubled in size when a large
number of files were transferred from the Portland
Building as a result of the recent building work. The
SU has formed an archive policy to ensure sustained
and long-term management of the records of their
activities and achievements, and we are working
with the Union officers to ensure regular transfers of
records via Office 365, as well as via a collecting box
in the Portland building.

There is still a lot of cataloguing to be done, but
finalising the arrangement of the University archive
means that we can make new, university-related ac-
quisions, available more quickly. In recent months
we have received photographic material from alum-
us Haydon Luke (NUP 53), the draft autobiogra-
phy of alumnus and BBC broadcaster John Holmes
to accompany his photographs (NUP 54); scanned

We need your help
The University archive will continue to grow
and develop along with the University and to
enable this to happen we need you to continue
to deposit material with us. We are particularly
keen to ensure that the archive represents a di-
verse range of experiences.

If you are a current or former member of the
University and would like to donate material re-
lating to your time working or studying at Not-
tingham, or if you have suggestions for online
content published by members of the University
which ought to be captured for posterity, then we
would love to hear from you. Please contact us at
mss-library@nottingham.ac.uk

THE ARCHIVE IN NUMBERS

1878 the date of the earliest document in our Archive of the Students’ Union

54 the decade that we hold the least amount of content for. Donate material now to help change that

2000-2010 the campus that we hold the least amount of archival material for

UNMC
**New accessions and cataloguing**

Despite periods of working from home and having to close our reading room to external researchers, when circumstances allowed we have been able to take in new material to add to our collections.

**Business records**

In 2019 we held an exhibition ‘Fully Fashioned: Archival Remnants of the Textile Trade’ to promote and celebrate our collections relating to the hosiery and textile industries. We are delighted that since then we have continued to receive donations of related material. Recent accessions include a photographic album and leaflet concerning the firm of Stevens and Pedley (MS 1028), which was based at Steppo Works on Lortas Road in Basford, Nottingham. The souvenir album contains black and white photographs of employees at work and provides some fascinating insights into the role of women in the manufacturing process. We were also gifted tapes of a delightful animation of ladybirds, made for Coats Viyella to promote the Ladybird clothing brand (MS 1026).

**Political papers**

An area of increasing importance amongst our holdings is our collections of political and trade union papers. Recent accessions include a collection of photographic research papers and campaign materials collected by Barry Johnson (1941-2020), President of Chesterfield and District Trades Union Council and trustee of the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers’ Centre (MS 1037). The papers relate to his involvement in the East Midlands District of the Communist Party, elections in Hucknall, Nottinghamshire, and the 1978 Evening Post dispute. Barry was literary executor for fellow Communist Party official, Fred Westacott (1916-2001), and was involved in transferring Westacott’s vast archive to the University in 2004 (FWC).

**Recent cataloguing**

We have been focussing our cataloguing on our University collections, as detailed elsewhere in this issue, but we are also currently cataloguing a small accrual of personal and estate papers of the Dukes of Newcastle under Lyne. One of the most interesting items is the Reading Diary of the 7th Duke of Newcastle (Ne 6 X 20) in which he jots his thoughts on his recent reading. Bram Stoker’s Dracula, for instance, is summed up as ‘A weird story of a human vampire told in the shape of various journals. Well written but rather too long’. Another fascinating item is the Clumber Game Book belonging to the extravagant 8th Duke, which provides engaging details of the shooting parties held on the estate. One such shoot apparently took place from the back of a car travelling at 15-20 mph!

**Special collections**

We continue to acquire works for the DH Lawrence Special Collection. To complete our holdings of publications by DH Lawrence in their first printing editions, we scoped and identified works Lawrence first published in periodicals that are not yet held in our collection. We have acquired eight periodical issues from the 1920s and 1930s which feature contributions by Lawrence such as The Manufacture of Good Little Boys in Vanity Fair, September 1929, and A Britisher Has a Word with an Editor in Palms. Christmas 1923. Palms was a poetry magazine founded in 1923 in Guadalajara, Mexico.

Further important additions to the special collections include two first editions of works by Sylvia Pankhurst, in support of our collections relating to 20th century labour politics and the women’s movement. The Life of Emmeline Pankhurst, published in 1935, is a work of maturity and perspective on the life of the activist who organised the suffragette movement in Britain - and was also the author’s mother.

**During the 1930s Sylvia Pankhurst became increasingly involved in anticolonialism. Pankhurst educated herself in and promoted Ethiopian art and culture, even moving to Addis Ababa in 1956 at the invitation of Haile Selassie. The first edition of her book Eritrea on the Eve; the past and future of Italy’s “first-born” colony, Ethiopia’s ancient sea province (1952), illustrated with photographs taken by Eritrean photographer Haile Mezemgh, delves into the history of Eritrea in relation to Ethiopia. Pankhurst supports a federal union between them, in unison with the prevailing view of the United Nations. When Sylvia Pankhurst died in 1960, she received a state funeral in Addis Ababa, at which Haile Selassie named her “an honorary Ethiopian”.

Pictured: Cover of Palms issue designed by Kai G. Gøtzsche (1886-1963), a Danish artist who spent time with DH Lawrence in the Taos art colony, New Mexico. Palms, Early Summer 1924, Vol.II, No.1. Cover of the first edition of Sylvia Pankhurst’s The Life of Emmeline Pankhurst (1935). The author describes the cover photograph on the back cover: “Emmeline Pankhurst, weakened by the hunger and thirst strike, arrested at the gates of Buckingham Palace when the Suffragettes attempted to interview the King on May 21st, 1914. The huge policeman gave her a bear’s hug which caused excruciating pain. In her prison cell she suffered from it for days.” Cover of the first edition of Sylvia Pankhurst’s Eritrea on the Eve (1952).
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@mssUniNott

Re:visit
Manuscripts and Special Collections online exhibitions

More than 50 exhibitions available online
Broad topics including wartime, environment, local legends, literature and health
Downloadable assets in PDF formats

nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/exhibitions/online/