

CILIP Rare Books and Special Collections Newsletter

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*Kelmscott School students explore an 18th century plan of east London at One Pool Street.
©Outreach, UCL Special Collections.*

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Editors' notes

Welcome to our first Newsletter of 2023, which has a theme of new beginnings. Within, you can enjoy hearing from some of our new and existing Committee members, some early news about this year's RBSCG conference and future events, and hear from other members. In particular in this issue, we hear about the outreach team at UCL's new Stratford campus, and from Heather Johnston about moving the library of the Royal Marines - a project several years in its success! This issue also launches our new 'Treasure in Focus' series, where members will explore, in depth, an interesting item from their collection. We would love to hear from you about any items, collections, or projects you would like to share: as ever, please email us to contribute.

The Newsletter is published in March, July, and November, with deadlines for submission the previous month. We look forward to sharing the discoveries, successes, and challenges of 2023 with all of our members.

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Chair's update

Welcome to the first *Newsletter* of 2023! I am really looking forward to an excellent issue including articles about UCL Stratford East, the Royal Marines, and a treasure from Lincoln's Inn Library to enjoy.

There have been some changes on the committee which I am delighted to share with you. Jill Dye, who previously worked on the 2022 conference at St. Hilda's College Oxford, has stepped into the role of Treasurer for which we are extremely grateful! Dunstan Speight will remain on the committee in 2023 in order to mentor Jill and provide a seamless transition in this time-consuming role. We are delighted to welcome Rhian Isaac who is the Special Collections Senior Librarian at Leeds Library. Rhian takes over from Christine Megowan as Day Events Coordinator. Rhian would be delighted to hear from any members who have ideas for day events. Christine Megowan has now taken over the role of Bibliographic Standards Committee Chair, and Iris O'Brien steps down. Iris is staying on the BSC committee and the RBSCG committee thanks her for her time as Chair. The BSC is also looking for a new committee member, of which you can find further details later in the *Newsletter*.

We will be pleased to launch a full events programme for 2023 in the next few months. This includes the return of the "In Conversation" series and a summer visit. We also hope to soon have details of a DCRM(B) course run by the BSC and the new professionals day returning to our offer. As I mentioned in my last Chair's Update, we will be proceeding with an online-only conference this September (dates to be confirmed but likely to be early September). The working title is "Old Hands, New Ideas" and it will explore ideas around palaeography, provenance research, transcription projects, and scientific analysis of lost texts, among other things. We are in the early stages of planning so watch this space for further details.

We were disappointed, as a committee, to learn of the changes to the CILIP Conference which will now focus on new, emerging, and established leaders in the sector. Part of the changes mean that they will no longer offer a place to a Special Interest Group (SIG) member to represent their area of the sector or a bursary place to be awarded by the SIG. With the loss of the Member Network Forum, which gave us a place to communicate with CILIP, influence changes, and represent the rare books and special collections sector, we were concerned that we no longer had a forum or route to influence policy and initiatives at CILIP. We have written to CILIP and expressed our concerns and they have assured us that there are plans for greater member and Special Interest Groups involvement which will be announced this year. We wait to see the form these new ideas will take and will, of course, communicate them to our members. We would also be pleased to hear any comments you have about the CILIP conference.

Finally, as well as continuing with our account on Twitter you can now find us on Mastodon: ciliprarebooks@glamr.us. We are also considering an Instagram account and our social media manager, Laura, would be glad to hear your thoughts on this.

In the meantime, please do get in touch if you have any events, initiatives, or dilemmas you think the RBSCG can help you with!

Lucy Evans
RBSCG Chair
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News from the Committee

Welcome to our new Committee member!

We are pleased to welcome Rhian Isaac to the RBSCG Committee as our new Day Events Organiser!

Rhian says:

I am the Special Collections Senior Librarian for Leeds Libraries, based in the beautiful Grade II* listed Central Library. I look after a variety of different material from early printed books and manuscripts to twentieth-century diaries and private press publications. My interest in special collections began during my time studying at the University of Manchester where a visit to John Rylands sparked a lasting curiosity in rare books. I later completed an MA in Archive Administration with rare book librarianship as an additional module - hopefully the best of both worlds! Over the last few years, I have delivered a range of events and activities to engage new audiences with collections and I hope to bring this experience to the role of Day Events Organiser. I am looking forward to working with colleagues to organise visits and develop the RBSCG events programme.

New Year, New Role

We are delighted that some of our colleagues on the Committee have taken on new roles.

Christine says:

My involvement in the RBSCG committee began in 2018 while I was the Cataloguing Librarian: Rare Books/Llyfrgellydd Catalogio: Llyfrau Prin at Cardiff University. After realising I was the only delegate from a Welsh institution at the 2017 RBSCG conference I thought, if we could not bring Welsh institutions to the conference, maybe we could bring the conference to a Welsh institution. The following year, I was co-opted onto the RBSCG committee to help plan the 2019 conference in Cardiff.

With my term as Conference Co-organiser coming to an end, I was reluctant to give up the connection to the wider professional community and volunteered for the role of Day Events Organiser.

Of course, as 2019 turned into 2020 the world turned upside down and our traditional model of in-person workshops and library visits was no longer possible. Instead, I found myself setting up an RBSCG Zoom account and trying to find ways to encourage discussion and a sense of professional community online. Organising the 'RBSCG in Conversation' series of events gave me a chance to interact with professional colleagues across the UK and Ireland (and beyond). I am proud to have created opportunities for people to exchange knowledge and ideas regardless of their institution's travel funding and professional development support.

As the world began to emerge from lockdown and we returned to planning in-person events and conferences, I also took on a new role as Project Manager and Rare Book Specialist at the University of Edinburgh. With less time available for committee work, I felt it was time to pass the Day Events torch to someone new. Rhian has now stepped up to the challenge, and I look forward to seeing how she continues to develop our Day Events offerings in the coming years.

Apparently though, I just can't stay away from the RBSCG committee. As I was stepping down from Day Events, Iris O'Brien (Early Printed Collections Cataloguing and Processing Manager at the British Library) announced that she was stepping down from the role of Chair of the RBSCG Bibliographic Standards Committee. Having been a BSC member for several years, I couldn't resist the lure of a new role, particularly one that aligns so well with my professional interests and expertise. With apologies, it appears that you will be seeing more of me in the next few years as I attempt to follow in Iris' mighty footsteps.

Event Speakers Sought

The RBSCG are planning an online *RBSCG in Conversation* event in May to discuss Equality and Diversity in the Special Collections field.

RBSCG in Conversation is an informal open forum for members of the rare books and special collections community to share questions, concerns, and creative solutions to current issues. From collections and representation to cataloguing and staffing, we would like to facilitate discussions around key issues and developments relating to EDI, and find out how the RBSCG can support its members in this area. We are looking for people who would be willing to speak for five minutes on relevant projects and activities that relate to any aspects of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity at the event.

Please contact Erika (e.delbecque@ucl.ac.uk) and Rhian (Rhian.Isaac@leeds.gov.uk) by **Friday 17th March** if you are interested.

Bibliographic Standard Committee Member

The RBSCG is seeking to recruit a new member of the Bibliographic Standards Committee.

The UK Bibliographic Standards Committee is a sub-committee of the Rare Books and Special Collections Group committee. Its remit covers all matters relating to the description of, and intellectual access to, rare book and special collections. Additionally, it reviews international bibliographic standards for special collections and liaises between the special collections community, CILIP and other bibliographic networks. The role involves attendance at BSC meetings.

Please contact the outgoing BSC Chair (Iris O'Brien: iris.obrien@bl.uk) for more information. Please send all expressions of interest (~200 words) to the Secretary (secretary.rbscg@cilip.org.uk) by **Friday 31 March 2023**.

Receiving Our Monthly Bulletin

Did you know that our secretary, Alex Kither, sends out a monthly bulletin with news, information, and the odd job advert relating to the world of rare books and special collections?

If you haven't been receiving it, please go to <https://www.cilip.org.uk/page/youremailpreferences> and when completing the form, under "Special Interest Groups", ensure you have ticked "Rare Books & Special Collections Group".

Share Your Stories

RBSCG members have fascinating tales to tell about our work, our collections, and our projects. If you would like to share your activities with other members, why not suggest an article for the Newsletter? Each issue includes brief 'Treasures in Focus' articles, longer pieces about particular projects, activities, or collections, promotion of upcoming events, and exhibitions and reviews of the latest titles related to rare books and Special Collections work.

We would also like to publish reviews of events related to rare books and special collections - get in touch if this is something you would like to do. Or just let us know whether this is something you would be interested in reading in the Newsletter!

We would particularly like to focus an upcoming issue on Special Collections in public libraries, so please do get in touch if you would like to contribute to this theme. Just email the editors with your proposal and we will get back to you as soon as possible. Our deadlines for submission are February (spring issue), June (summer issue), and October (autumn issue). We look forward to hearing from you.

Eastward Bound! Special Collections education and engagement at UCL's new campus

Big developments are afoot at University College London (UCL) where in addition to gearing up for our forthcoming 200th anniversary, we're also developing a new campus out in Stratford, East London – better known to many as the [Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park](#).¹ Fortunately UCL's Special Collections are at the heart of activity! This article gives you an overview of how we're working in brand new spaces and some of the exciting projects on the horizon.



UCL East campus at Stratford, photographed in 2022. One Pool Street is on the left of the WaterWorks River and Marshgate on the right. © Jo Baines.

UCL East: what can you find at our new campus?

Firstly, some logistics: UCL's new Stratford campus currently spans two buildings. One Pool Street opened in November 2022, and houses three floors of teaching and research facilities and publicly accessible spaces, including a café, a cinema, and an exhibition area. One Pool Street will also house over 500 students – there are two self-catered accommodation towers above the educational areas. Marshgate is the second (much bigger) part of UCL East, due to open in September 2023. It will

¹ www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk

contain over 34,000 sqm of academic space with many publicly open areas. Special Collections at UCL East works a bit differently to Bloomsbury; at Stratford we are based within the [School of Creative and Cultural Industries](#). At One Pool Street, the Urban Room is our home and when Marshgate opens we'll be working in the Culture Lab.

UCL's Special Collections team are incredibly excited to be working at UCL East, and four new roles have been recruited to work expressly at the new campus including ourselves. We work across both One Pool Street and Marshgate, maintaining strong contact with our Bloomsbury site as the majority of our collections will be staying put in their current homes.

Jo: Embedding Special Collections into UCL East teaching and learning

As the Academic Liaison Librarian / Archivist, my role is largely focused around embedding Special Collections in learning and research activity at UCL East. What makes this position unique is how much we're starting from scratch here. Special Collections does amazing work at its Bloomsbury campus (which I get to support too), but at UCL East every single degree programme is brand new! There are over 60 degrees starting at UCL East over the next few years, ranging from undergraduate studies in Heritage, Media, and Art and Technology right the way through to postgraduate courses in Citizen Science, Digital Engineering, and Robotics. What this means for Special Collections is that we have a great opportunity to be embedded sustainably in teaching and learning from the very beginning, rather than being an added extra that comes later as modules develop. UCL East also has a set of distinct curriculum drivers that make its courses unique; all degrees need to be interdisciplinary, engage with local communities and partnerships inclusively, help students develop entrepreneurial mindsets, and consider sustainability as part of their offering.



Jo giving a talk about Special Collections at the Urban Room, UCL East, January 2023. © SEI Stories.

Spreadsheets and Special Collections: mapping our collections to the curriculum

I began working at UCL in February 2022. My first year has primarily focused on three key areas: getting to know our collections, getting to know UCL and our amazing academics, and supporting the brand-new Public History MA when it launched in September 2022.

The first thing I did (entirely to type) was to make a very big spreadsheet detailing all the courses starting at Stratford before trying to find out as much information as possible about the modules and academics involved. Focusing on the courses starting in September 2022, I then cross-referenced each module with our key collection strengths.

Future Projects

Alongside Public History, I'm currently involved with supporting the Bartlett School of Architecture to develop their courses in the Urban Room, planning which collections will be used in the forthcoming Heritage BA, and supporting the new MASc in Creative Health. Anna and I are also collaborating on co-curating an opening exhibition for the Culture Lab. It's a busy but exciting time to be working at UCL Special Collections, and we'll be sure to share updates – and an invite to visit us – in future!

Anna: Outreach at East

This is a very exciting time to be part of UCL Special Collections! As a member of the team based at UCL East I am invigorated by the new spaces, collaborations, and opportunities the new campus affords. The Special Collections Outreach programme in east London precedes the building, with Head of Outreach Vicky Price having built solid community partnerships over the past 5 years. Now that our first building One Pool Street is open, it's a real catalyst to forge new relationships with communities, schools and cultural organisations within our four neighbouring boroughs - Waltham Forest, Newham, Hackney, and Tower Hamlets - and increase engagement with our extraordinary collections.



MA Public History students investigate a range of Special Collections items related to activism, during a session on Community Outreach. © Outreach, UCL Special Collections.

New narratives

East London is such a melting pot of histories and experiences; we're looking forward to working with a diversity of people to tell new stories about our collections. As part of the new cultural quarter of the East Bank we're also thrilled to be within the vicinity of a host of dynamic cultural institutions, including V&A East, London College of Fashion, BBC, and Sadler's Wells. The collaborative possibilities feel infinite!

At One Pool Street there is a vibrant atmosphere, a sense of wanting to work across departments and disciplines, and find new ways of working together and with our communities. The building itself plays to this with a host of [multi-use spaces](#)³ which we can draw on for different aspects of our activity. The Urban Room is a welcoming public space on the ground floor, with programming with and for the communities. The Slade Studio is a beautifully spacious, bright art studio, with all the fixtures and functions you could need to promote creative activity. Third floor teaching rooms boast incredible panoramic views of the Olympic Park, and there's a roof terrace which can provide a bracing break between archival activities.

Pool Street Partnerships

We've been poised to utilise all UCL East has to offer the Outreach Programme and so have enjoyed a packed two months since One Pool Street opened.

I collaborated with Year 9 History enthusiasts at Kelmscott School in Waltham Forest for an after-school club called Becoming an Historian. Over six weekly sessions students defined the skills and qualities which make a good historian, learnt how to undertake historical research of primary resources, and each explored an item from UCL Special Collections in-depth, within their chosen theme of the History of London. Example items included John Thomas Smith's [Vagabondiana \(London, 1817\)](#)⁴ and an archival [report from the Metropolitan Sewers](#) by John Philips (London, 1849)⁵. The students communicated their historical research of the rare books and archival documents they studied in different ways for different audiences – via informative museum labels presented in a [mini digital exhibition](#)⁶ and through a more personal perspective on [Twitter](#)⁷. To conclude the club, the students came to visit UCL East on 30 January 2023 – the very first school group through the doors of One Pool Street! Supported by the Outreach team, the students were delighted to experience the original historical items they had been researching – having worked from facsimiles until that point. One student observed:

'It was interesting to see the details on the real-life item, as it was much more intricate than online.'

The Outreach team are collaborating with UCL's Slade School of Art and Bartlett School of Architecture to deliver a [National Saturday Club](#)⁸, in the gorgeous Slade Studio. This offers free weekly art and design workshops for 13-16 year olds in east London. With the broad encompassing theme of 'the body,' during the programme participants can work with a wide range of tutors and learn a huge variety of techniques and practices, including life drawing, film-making, watercolour

³ www.ucl.ac.uk/creative-cultural-industries/spaces

⁴ https://ucl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/44UCL_INST/155jbuu/alma9931415824104761

⁵ <https://archives.ucl.ac.uk/CalmView/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=CHADWICK%2f45-66%2f51-53%2f52>

⁶ <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/special-collections/2023/01/31/kelmscott-school-historians-present-a-history-of-london-a-digital-exhibition-with-special-collections/>

⁷ <https://twitter.com/UCLSpecColl/status/1620455904645902339>

⁸ <https://saturday-club.org/>

painting, and photography. The Special Collections Outreach stint kicked off at the beginning of February with an exploration of our collection of fascinating [anatomical watercolours by Sir Robert Carswell](#).⁹ The thoughtful participants went on to create their own close-observation drawings. Using magnifying glasses they made impressive studies of lesser-celebrated features such as fingernails, knuckles, eyelids and ears. We're looking forward to our forthcoming workshops with the group, further inspired by Carswell's work.



A Saturday Club session in the Slade Studio, exploring Sir Robert Carswell's anatomical watercolours. © Outreach, UCL Special Collections.

Like Jo, I am also involved with the MA Public History, teaching sessions including introductions to Special Collection and Community Outreach, and supervising a student project. My project Archiving UCL East involves the students seizing the opportunity to document the opening activity of UCL East. However, unlike the formal (and essential!) approach taken to manage organisational records, the students will be capturing the *informal* side of this landmark in UCL's history. Through oral history interviews, the collection of ephemera and taking of photographs, the project aims to give voice to those currently underrepresented within UCL's collections - the students. The intention is for the new archive to be formally accessioned into Special Collections and made publicly available.

Looking ahead, our major community initiative [The New Curators Project](#)¹⁰ is on the cusp of commencing - although in its third year, this will be the first time we can host the east-based programme within our own building! The Project is open to 18-24 year old east Londoners, who

⁹ https://ucl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/collectionDiscovery?vid=44UCL_INST:UCL_VU2&collectionId=81354471590004761

¹⁰ <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/special-collections/2022/12/14/the-new-curators-project-2023-is-open-for-applications>

don't have a degree and are looking to start a career in the cultural heritage sector. Delivered in collaboration with [Newham Heritage Month](#),¹¹ participants will hear from guest speakers working across the sector, learn how to undertake historical research, visit a range of east London archives, and work together to produce a pop-up exhibition to display during June 2023, Newham Heritage Month.

On the horizon

It's certainly feeling good to get our feet on the ground in east London. Building on the work of our brilliant Bloomsbury colleagues this is a fantastic opportunity to use our collections in new ways. As our collection care processes are pinned down and our new Marshgate building opens up, we hope it will become easier than ever for more people to engage with and interpret our collections. Do keep in touch, and please come and visit! Did we mention the view?

Jo Baines, Academic Liaison Librarian / Archivist - Special Collections
Anna Fineman, Outreach Programme Manager
University College London

¹¹ www.newhamheritagemonth.org/

Moving the Royal Marines: relocating the library of the Corps of the Royal Marines

The National Museum of the Royal Navy (the National Museum) was formally established in 2009 from several naval service museums. The collection is the most comprehensive collection of Royal Navy heritage in the UK, and tells the epic story of the Royal Navy from its origins to today.

One of the key parts of this collection came from the Royal Marines Museum (RMM). RMM covered the full history of the Corps of Marines from its origins as part of the regular army, between 1664 to 1748, to the present day. In 1755, the Marines came under the control of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, and thus became part of the Royal Navy. RMM's collection was a varied special collection of military and naval history, but it also included travelogues and diverse social commentary of the Royal Marine's experiences. The library collection in particular held 7,278 catalogued books and individual journals, and over 400 articles and other resources.

The Royal Marines had been at the Eastney, Portsmouth site, holding an established library from the 1880s. The RMM, specifically, was later located in the old Officer's Mess in 1958, with the library housed in the basement (formerly the kitchen) and the research room in the former scullery and washing up area. Though it was a fabulous building, it was no longer suitable for library or museum stores by the early 2000s, and collection access for the mobility-impaired was limited. The library also suffered a flood around 2009 due to a burst pipe and some volumes had been damaged. In response to poor conditions in some of the stores at RMM, the National Museum funded a large



Packing- Centre of Operations (Courtesy of the Trustees of the National Museum)

project to upgrade an existing stores and research room in the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard to a new Collection Centre to accommodate these collections. Since 2017 we have been in the ambitious and necessary process of documenting and moving these from the old RMM site at Eastney into the new Centre. The extensive library has been the last element to be unboxed and moved into this new space.

The move began in August 2019 when the library was packed into 400 boxes. The final collections were hurriedly moved out on 19 March 2020, only five days before the first national lockdown and staff were furloughed for a number of months. Unboxing the material, moving it, and merging it into the existing National Museum library collection stored in the new Centre was greatly impacted and delayed. This was only begun in late November 2020 and is now just in the final stages. There have been many challenges and successes to this project, including duplicated material between collections, an abundance of untraced finds, and the discovery of rare materials.

Discoveries

At the start of the move the library was officially catalogued as holding just over 6,000 volumes. However, through the process over 900 previously uncatalogued items were found which were to be retained, some of them real gems. For instance, this edition of *Sketches of Japanese Manners and Customs* by Jacob Mortimer Weir Silver, 1867. Serving as Lieutenant in the Royal Marine Light Infantry, he collected these while attached to the Battalion of Royal Marines in Japan, 1863-1864.



A Daimio and Family witnessing fireworks. 1867 (Courtesy of the Trustees of the National Museum).

This substantial quantity of unanticipated, unlisted material had a severe impact on the delivery date of the project. It became quickly apparent that part of this problem stemmed from previous Royal Marines establishments. As the sites at Chatham, Deal, and Plymouth were closed over the years, library material was transferred to the museum at Eastney without being listed into the collection.

Additional time was therefore needed to unpick this, and to identify core elements for retention, to confirm their provenance, and to catalogue them. Everything that was kept, even those already catalogued, have had to be checked and updated and mapped to their new shelf location. We also use an in-house version of the Library of Congress Classification scheme, which had to be updated to accommodate this material. The largest changes have been in the Military Science and in Royal Marines regulations sections.

Resulting materials which have been retained relate to army units which served as marines, land training, amphibious and land operations, weapons training, and military vehicles. This includes over 360 previously unidentified training pamphlets dating from the First World War to the end of the Cold War. The main lesson learnt is to allocate additional staff time and budgets for the potential of unknown backlogs.

Rare collections

One real success of the project was the discovery of rare items in the collection. Previously, the RMM had not recorded its rare or scarce book items. During the project it was discovered that 27 of these items were either unrecorded or poorly documented. Particular highlights include:

1. *Memorandum on the Power of Russia to operate against Northern Afghanistan 1899*. This is a set of three early intelligence reports on the possibilities of a Russian advance through Afghanistan and the Hindu Kush, using troops from her bases in Transcaspia and Turkestan. To date this has been identified as globally unique.

2. *Narrative of The Operations of a Small British Force under the command of Brigadier General Sir Samuel Auchmuty employed in The Reduction of Monte Video on The River Plate AD 1807*. It was written by a Field-Officer on the staff in South America, at the time of the reduction of Monte Video and intended

only for the perusal of his private friends. This is not well documented: we have located only one other global copy traced to the British Library and further research on our copy will need to be done.

3. *An exact relation of the several engagements and actions of His Majesties fleet, under the command of His Highness Prince Rupert: and of all circumstances concerning this summer's expedition, anno 1673*. This contains an account of the Battles of Schooneveld, June 1673, during the Third Anglo-Dutch War. Two other printed copies have been traced in the United Kingdom at this time.

Some items cover Royal Marine regulations and standing orders; these relate to individual units and cover only a short period of time. Others cover military music, naval battles, and military tactics. An example of the latter is: *The Secret Strategical Instructions of Frederick the Second, for His Inspectors*



Memorandum on the Power of Russia, 1899 (Courtesy of the Trustees of the National Museum)

General (1811). This records 31 actions to be taken by his generals on battlefields of the period and contains detailed coloured maps illustrating each of the examples in the text.

Dealing with duplication

Duplication of material has also been a challenge, with up to 13 copies of just one title identified. With limited shelving, rationalisation and disposals have been a necessary element to this project. Considerations were made for provenance, condition, edition, and handling copies of key texts, and at times resulted in more than one copy being kept. Some material was easily identifiable as a straight duplicate and put through our rigorous Museums Association compliant disposal process, detailed below. Other items were deemed to be surplus, such as items containing either secondary source material where we held an original, or those which were close in content to other material already held. Examples of our surplus material include biographies of significant political figures or general histories of First and Second World War action which have been widely published.



Duplication in the RMM Library (Courtesy of the Trustees of the National Museum)

Luckily, we had an existing rigorous disposals process which would be used within the project. First, disposal lists were created which were then approved by the Head of the Collections and Research, before passing through our Collections, Research, Learning and Access Board, and then the Board of Trustees. Due diligence for provenance and legal ownership was carried out as part of this process. Once approved lists for disposal are agreed, they are then published on the Museums Association website and shared with other peer organisations. Through this process more than 1,200 items have been rehomed with other relevant collections. The particular support from our counterparts at the National Maritime Museum, the Imperial War Museum, and National Army Museum during this stage highlights the essential role of peer networks in special collections.

Looking forward

It is now very exciting to be completing this monumental project, and to be reflecting on the challenges and successes. Some of this collection and other parts of our library are available online via JISC, and directly through our Collections Portal: <https://collections.nmrn.org.uk/search/simple>

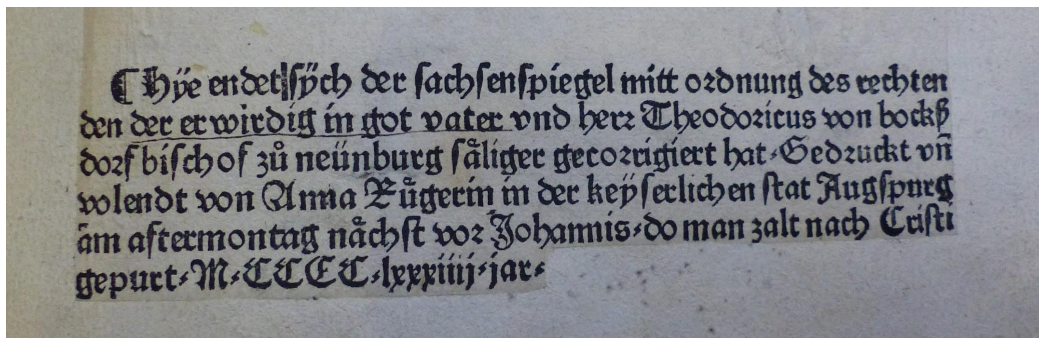
Moving forward we are re-addressing complex stories in our collection as many items represent the diversity and complexities of the history of the Royal Navy and human history generally, as well as reflecting the time and environment in which they originated. We have begun the process of exploring and reviewing our collections and the stories they represent, to determine how they can be appropriately showcased and discussed in a modern forum. For example, one of our items is an Arabic manual of astronomy taken by a naval brigade of HMS St George from the M'Wele stronghold and the Arab ship M'Barruk, August 1895. The manual may have been taken deliberately for navigation reference, to be assessed for intelligence purposes, or as a consequence of conflict. We have started to document these items more fully to understand how they have come to us, find means of better contextualising them, and more appropriately represent the cultures and peoples they relate to.

**Heather Johnson, Librarian (Special Collections)
National Museum of the Royal Navy**

Treasure in Focus

Anna Rügerin and *Der Sachsenspiegel* (1484)

Among the collection of early printed books at Lincoln's Inn is a sizeable number of law books printed in what is now Germany, but what was then part of the Holy Roman Empire. This includes two early printed editions of *Der Sachsenspiegel* – the earlier of which is the first book known to have been printed by a woman. The woman in question, Anna Rügerin, was based in Augsburg. *Der Sachsenspiegel*, the first of the two books for which she is identified as the printer, was produced in 1484, a mere twenty years after the printing press arrived in Augsburg. Anna was married to the printer Thomas Rüger and, with a considerable amount of capital tied up in projects such as *Der Sachsenspiegel*, presumably had little choice but to carry on the business after his death. Rügerin's knowledge of the printing trade was not only gained through her husband's work but through her own family connections. The printer Johann Schönsperger the Elder was her brother and she used his Gothic type for *Der Sachsenspiegel*.



Colophon detailing Anna Rügerin as printer (Courtesy of The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn)

The text

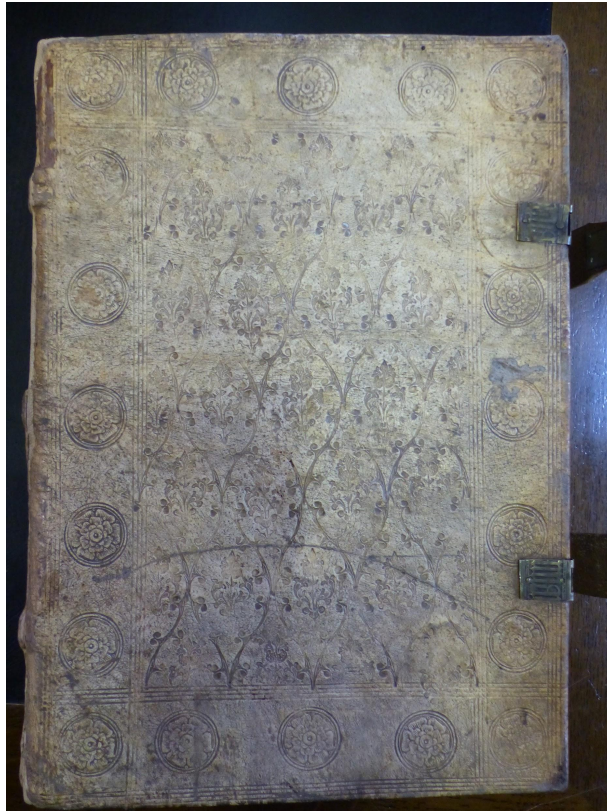
Originally mainly reliant on the collective memory (or imagination), the 13th century witnessed a movement to record customary law. This process can be traced to Eike von Repgow's *Sachsenspiegel*, written c.1220-35 and circulated widely in manuscript. The work is divided into two main sections: Landrecht and Lehnrecht. It incorporates oral custom, written laws, and some canon law materials. The title 'Sachsenspiegel' ('Saxon mirror') might suggest to us that it is a straightforward record of contemporary practice, but the mediaeval tradition of 'mirror' writing was a tradition of presenting an idealised picture for instructional purposes, and this is also present here.

The *Sachsenspiegel* circulated widely and rapidly in manuscript and was much imitated in German and eastern European territories. It was used in Prussia until 1794 and in Anhalt and Thuringia until 1900. It paved the way for a fundamental shift in legal procedure. In a predominantly oral-based procedural system, the official deciding a case had a great deal of discretion. As a result, many mediaeval legal proceedings were essentially arbitrations, aimed at achieving a consensus, rather than the application of strict, recorded rules. Written codes provided a benchmark against which future cases could be measured. Written customary law could now be checked rather than 'agreed' by those present in Court, circumscribing the freedom of the judge/ arbiter to create a decision aimed at most effectively resolving the dispute.

The fact that the *Sachsenspiegel* was written in German both aided its wide dissemination and meant that it was an important part of the development of the language. A number of the aphorisms quoted in the text remain as proverbs today – such as this guide to which court should have jurisdiction: “Wo der Esel sich wälzt, da muss er Haare lassen” (Where the donkey rolls, there it sheds its hair).

The binding

Unlike many of the Library’s English law books which have been used extensively and rebound many times, this copy retains its original binding, although it has been re-backed. The binding is a very typical late mediaeval German binding in alum-tawed pigskin with blind-stamped decoration.



Der Sachsenspiegel binding (Courtesy of The Honourable Society of Lincoln’s Inn)

Provenance

This copy of *Der Sachsenspiegel* was given to the Library by Charles Purton Cooper (1793–1873) as part of a collection of almost 2,000 continental civil law books, the results of a projected collection of the legal codes and reputable commentary for virtually all European countries and the United States. Cooper abandoned this project when he was appointed to the Record Board and gave the collection to the Inn in the hope that the project might be revived. This donation is the source of many of the Inn’s collection of incunabula.

**Dunstan Speight, Librarian
Lincoln’s Inn**

Reviews

Mary Wellesley. *Hidden Hands: The Lives of Manuscripts and their Makers*. London: Riverrun, Quercus Editions, 2022. 368 pp., illus. ISBN 9781529400946. £12.99.

Hidden Hands: The Lives of Manuscripts and Their Makers is an extremely detailed description of scribes and artists throughout the European Middle Ages, whose stories add an insight into the production of their work. This book presents some of the most renowned works of the medieval period, including the *Lindisfarne Gospels* and *The Canterbury Tales*, alongside lesser known biographical texts, outlining how they were created and whose narratives they tell.

In *Hidden Hands* Wellesley sets out chapters dedicated to specific texts, describing how little is known about the makers of most manuscripts housed in libraries, museums, and archives around Europe, which highlights the extensive research behind the creation of this book and the importance of bringing these stories to light. The book contains seven chapters in total which cover topics relating to the creation and collection of manuscripts throughout history and are entitled *Discoveries*, *Near-Disasters*, *Patrons*, *Artists*, *Scribes*, *Scribes and Authors*, and *Hidden Authors*, with the contents also including a detailed introduction, an epilogue entitled *The Decline of the Manuscript*, and an afterword (*The Use and Misuse of the Past*).

The opening chapter *Discoveries* details how the *St Cuthbert Gospel*, a tiny manuscript that survived the invasion of the Vikings, was lost for centuries before being discovered in 1104 by a group of monks in Durham Cathedral. This book is now considered to be the earliest surviving example with its original binding in Europe. What is fascinating is Wellesley's descriptions of how it was often chance encounters or unexpected events that lead to the discovery of these important works. This minute manuscript may never have been discovered were it not for this group of monks' curiosity.

Perhaps the most insightful chapter in this book is *Hidden Authors* in which Wellesley gives details of the female authors whose lives have, amongst the majority of society, been lost to history. This section of the book explores how in the medieval period women were both scribes writing their own works and/or authors whose stories were recorded by others educated in writing. She explores the lives of anchoresses who led a life of prayer, in solitude, away from society. Writings about these women were composed by Margery Kempe, who details how they spent their time in *The Book of Margery Kempe*. Wellesley also explores one text that is the only surviving first-hand account of an anchoress's life, written by Julian of Norwich. *Revelations of Divine Love* is the earliest known example of a book compiled in English by a female author. The works explored in this chapter tell us that women have played an integral role in written history for over a thousand years. Their words illustrate the experiences of women in this period, from domestic duties to lives dedicated to God.

Here Wellesley is adding important information to the history of literature, telling us how significant it was that women thought it worthwhile to have their stories written down, at a time when their opinions were not often considered valid in society. They still wanted to leave their mark in history. As well as this, the book brings to light the background work that went into the creation of these manuscripts, from the development of the writings and illustrations, to the annotations that were added by the readers. Wellesley describes unexpected stories that allow a contemporary audience to understand the lives of these authors, within a more human context.

**Aimee Holdsworth, Subject Library Assistant
Leeds Arts University**

Exhibitions

Manchester: Workers' Playtime: Culture and community in industrial Lancashire

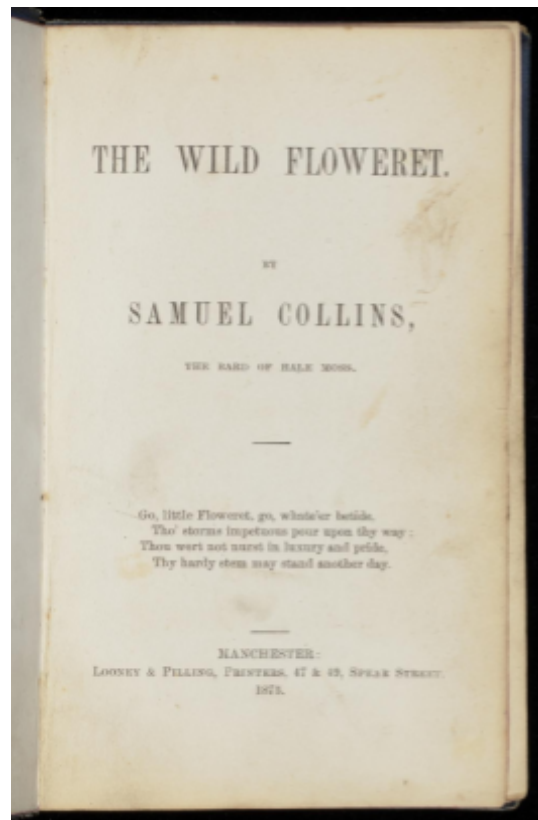
Nineteenth-century industrial Lancashire was a land of smoke and tall chimneys, fortunes for the Cotton Lords, and misery for their workers, the 'hands'. But that's only part of the story.

Workers' Playtime goes beyond the factories to explore the cultures and communities created by the workers in pursuit of a better, fuller life for themselves and their children. It is a tale of political, economic, and cultural self-organisation in pursuit of mutual improvement and creative expression. Above all, it is a tale of culture and community made by the hearts and minds of the hands themselves.

Items on display

- Explore workers' lives outside of the factory including playing sport, trips to the seaside or supporting the growing Co-operative Movement.
- Uncover the club and societies set up by workers including the Moss Side Debating Society and the brass band from Dobb Lane Sunday School.
- Read books by Lancashire mill-workers Ethel Carnie Holdsworth, Ben Brierley and Sam Fitton who became popular writers.
- Explore the social side of working-class politics and the early history of the Labour Movement.

The exhibition has been curated by Michael Sanders (Professor of 19th Literature and Culture, University of Manchester). Mike is co-investigator on the AHRC-funded Piston, Pen and Press research project exploring how industrial workers in Scotland and the North of England, from the 1840s to the 1910s, engaged with literary culture.



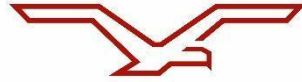
*Title page of The Wild Floweret. R234359.
© The University of Manchester.*

Workers' Playtime will be open at the John Rylands Research Institute and Library in Deansgate, Manchester from 29 March 2023 to 9 September 2023. The Rylands is open Wednesday-Saturday, 10am-5pm. Free entry.

For more information visit www.library.manchester.ac.uk/rylands/visit/events.



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March 2023

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