

LIBRARY REPORT

For the period April to August 2016

Thomas Manning Archive

On 28 April the *Times Literary Supplement* published an article on Thomas Manning and his Archive, written by the Librarian and Archivist, to coincide with our launch event for the collection that same day.

The Archivist completed the catalogue of the Manning Archive during the summer and it is now available on Archives Hub. The catalogue and the publicity around the *TLS* article generated research interest in the collection, and there were eight separate visits by scholars to see the archive during the summer, including academics based in the USA and Hong Kong. It is likely that scholars will begin to publish findings from the archive starting next year, and we are particularly excited at the prospect of new research on Manning being published in Chinese in mainland China.

The Librarian and Archivist are delivering a talk as part of the RAS lecture series for 2016-17, which will focus on the RAS collections and particularly on Manning. They were also invited to give a paper at a conference on Britain and China, 1600-1900 at the Courtauld Institute on 12 November.

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RAS Archives

Six new collections have been catalogued and are now available to search on Archives Hub, which is a free archives catalogue that acts as a national gateway to archive collections held in UK research collections. The six newly-catalogued collections are:

1. Thomas Manning
2. Sir Richard Burton
3. Henry Thomas Colebrooke
4. Henry Miers Elliot
5. Edward Walter Hutchinson
6. John Cecil Cloake

The Elliot and Hutchinson catalogues were prepared by volunteers, Amy McCaffrey and Shao Peng Kao, who both blogged about their experiences at the Society which made for interesting reading. The new online catalogues have already proved of benefit in attracting researchers to the RAS.

Archives Hub is moving to a new platform and we will not be able to submit new content for two months. The Archivist intends to use this time to continue organizing the Society's records, and to assess the Brian Houghton Hodgson material ready for cataloguing on to Archives Hub when it comes back on line.

The Reginald Campbell Thompson Nineveh excavation film has now been digitized and is on YouTube and our website. Amara Thornton and Michael McCluskey of Filming Antiquity provided a blog post about the film which formed the basis of a permanent webpage explaining the film. In May, the film formed part of a presentation by Amara Thornton at the British Museum.

Our social media presence continues to grow, with nearly 3000 followers on Twitter and 200 subscribers to the blog. The Archivist wrote a blogpost on Thomas Manning which featured on the Archives Hub website for August. The Sir Richard Burton Papers were also highlighted in their August newsletter.

... Explore Your Archive will run from 19-27 November 2016, during which time we hope once again to creatively engage the public with the Collections. Explore Your Archive is an annual campaign by The National Archives which aims to showcase the potential of archives to excite people, bring communities together, and tell inspirational stories. Our participation in the campaign last year was successful, showing the potential for the collections to bring in new audiences and be used in creative ways.

Donations

We accepted a donation from one of our Fellows, John N. Cloake, consisting of material that formerly belonged to his father, John Cecil Cloake. The donation comprised photographs and archives. The photographs include 1 album of prints of Baghdad and Brazil, 1 album of prints of Afghanistan, 7 albums of prints of Iran, and 1 collection of loose prints of Isfahan, Iran. The photographs were mainly taken between 1968 and 1972 and document architecture, topography and culture. The photos of Iran should prove of particular lasting interest, dating from shortly before a period of significant political and social upheaval.

The archival material consists of two sets of manuscripts and notes: Draft Manuscript and Notes towards a book on the Azerbaijan Crisis [1945-6]; and a Draft Manuscript and Notes for a book on Old Tehran made by John Cecil Cloake and Margaret Cloake during his posting to Tehran ca. 1970, with allied correspondence.

A Specimen Medal for the RAS, with a tree design in silver by Pinches, was donated by Joe Cribb in August.

In August, the Executive Editor passed to the Library a large number of books which had been received for review in the Journal and not taken up. 108 were added to the Library, with a similar number disposed of.

Cataloguing

Between April and August we added 1695 records to the online library catalogue, including 725 books and over 900 pamphlets.

Volunteers

We continue to receive wonderful support from volunteers and have also been grateful for the contributions of several work placement students.

Archival volunteers continued to have considerable input. Amy McCaffrey and Shao Peng Kao completed the ordering, packaging and cataloguing of the Henry Miers Elliot and Edward Walter Hutchinson papers. Amy then moved on to repackaging some of our Indian photographs. Shao Peng completed her Masters at SOAS and returned to Taiwan. We also said good-bye to Selene Obolensky, who did foundational work on the Burton Papers before they were catalogued by the Archivist. Ian Scholey continued to volunteer and made considerable progress listing and repackaging the slides in the Quaritch Wales Collection.

Ali Syed began volunteering in late August. He started working on the papers of William Pettigrew and on repackaging photographs.

For four weeks during May and June we hosted Ruby Rees-Sheridan from Sussex University's MA in History of Art and Museum Curation. Ruby undertook a full audit of our Photographic Collections and began the process of cataloguing and repackaging them in conservation-quality materials. This process has since been continued by the Librarian and Archivist, and upwards of a third of the photographic collection is now fully catalogued and correctly housed.

Alana Farrell finished volunteering in early June. ... Ziyad Wanis returned as a volunteer cataloguer in August. Roger Parsons has also continued to catalogue library books and we are very grateful for his consistent efforts.

Jamie Stokes completed a two-week work placement at the Society in April and May as part of his Library and Information Studies MA at UCL. Jamie made particularly good progress with cataloguing our 'Tracts' collection (bound volumes of C19th pamphlets) and created detailed cataloguing guidelines for this material. In August, we had two A-Level students ... on a week-long work placement.

Many of our volunteers and placement students wrote about their time at the Society, and these pieces of reflective writing can be found on our blog.

Our NADFAS volunteers have continued to visit one day per month to mend and repair books.

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Conservation

The conservation work by the Camberwell MA students on Persian MS 19+51 and the two Tod paintings was completed on schedule and to a high standard. The students presented their work at the Camberwell MA symposium, and the objects were exhibited there as part of the display of the students' work. We have copies of the conservation reports, and we published a well-received post about the project on our blog.

Overall, the project was a resounding success and we hope to be able to build on our links with the staff at Camberwell to carry out similar work in future.

Journal exchanges

The last Library Committee decided to stop sending JRAS to a number of lapsed or online-only journal partners, and this instruction was passed to CUP at the beginning of the summer. This reduced our list of exchanges from ca. 72 to ca. 54.

Users and enquiries

The Library was very busy over the summer, seeing record levels of use. The Library received 108 research visits (2015: 79; 2014: 95), and answered 126 remote enquiries about the collections (2015: 98; 2014: 74).

Most visits and enquiries pertained to Persian manuscripts, the Manning Archive, Indian art collections, photographs, the RAS archive, and books and journals on India.

The increase in library use can be attributed to the important new acquisition made by the Society, as well as the continued success of our cataloguing and profile-raising efforts.

Reprographic services

There were 1296 digital images and 145 photocopies made between April and August, including 1287 digital photographs by users. We charged £44.50 for reprographics during this period.

Visits and conferences

We held a successful launch event for the Manning Archive in late April that was attended by several of the funders and others associated with the acquisition, as well as members of the Manning family, and Fellows and friends of the Society. In early April we welcomed a group visit from the Friends of the National Libraries, who were one of the funders of the acquisition. ...

We welcomed a group of students from SOAS to examine Malay manuscripts, as well as the new curator of the SADACC Trust to learn about the Society and to explore possible future collaborations. The Librarian and Archivist visited the Royal Society for Asian Affairs to meet with their Archivist and enjoyed an introduction to that Society's collections and history.

Manuscript Cultures project

The Manuscript Cultures project team visited from the University of Berlin and University of Hamburg during May, completing the spectroscopic examination of Hodgson MS 35 over the course of a week. The team indicated that the images they captured were useful, and will send us copies for our reference once they have been processed. Once we have the images, we intend to describe the project and some of the preliminary research findings on our blog.

Loans to exhibitions

We have been asked to lend our copy of the book *Mediaeval Sinhalese Art*, by A.K. Coomaraswamy, to an exhibition at Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft. The exhibition is titled *The Book Beautiful: William Morris, Hilary Pepler and the private press story*, and runs from 12 September 2016 - 11 April 2017. Coomaraswamy was connected with and an influence on prominent figures in the exhibition's story, including C.R. Ashbee and Eric Gill. The museum has requested the book on loan from January until the end of the exhibition as they have secured a copy from a private collection until then.

The three items going to Singapore for the *Artist and Empire* exhibition have been collected: Shaikh Zayn-al-din, *Melia azedarach L (Persian Lilac)*, and *Elephant Yam*; and E. Weddell, *Rafflesia arnoldii*.

The engraving of Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy and the manuscript of the *Tarikh i Bukhara* have returned from the National Museum of India in Delhi where they formed part of the exhibition 'The Everlasting Flame: Zoroastrianism in History and Imagination.

The painting of the Mausoleum of Jahangir is returning from Paris in early October.

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Loan from the Horniman Museum

The Zhenwu statue arrived on loan from the Horniman Museum at the end of August, and is *in situ* in the Reading Room until early December. The statue featured in the lecture, "Zhenwu, the Dark Warrior: Daoist Belief and Imagery in China", which Dr Rose Kerr gave at the Society on 27 September.

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Ed Weech
Librarian