Researching Archives for Humanities
25 February 2020

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Structure

• Defining archives
• Archival arrangement
• Working with archival material
• Finding archival material
• Archives in the Bodleian (and the University)
• Archive repositories and what they hold
• Web archives
Defining archives

“A document which may be said to belong to the class of archives is one which was drawn up or used in the course of an administrative or executive transaction (whether public or private) of which itself formed a part; and subsequently preserved in their own custody for their own information by the person or persons responsible for that transaction and their legitimate successors”

“All books, papers, maps, photographs, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by any public or private institution in pursuance of its legal obligations or in connection with the transaction of its proper business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that institution or its legitimate successors as evidence......or because of the informational value”

T.R. Schellenberg, Modern Archives, Principles and Techniques, 1965
Archival material is not defined by format

• Parchment scrolls
• Bound vellum manuscripts
• Minute books
• Letters
• Diaries
• Photographs
• Cassette tapes
• Emails
• Excel spreadsheets
• Databases
• Digital video and audio
• Websites
What are archives – some useful models

The National Archives:
http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/start-here/what-are-archives/
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URhWOKyve-I

University of Southampton:
https://www.southampton.ac.uk/archives/resources/what-are-archives.page
What are archives – some useful models

University of Nottingham
https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/researchguidance/usingarchives/whatarearchives.aspx

The Tate
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNN2LFe_iD8

Society of American Archivists
https://www2.archivists.org/about-archives
Archival arrangement

- Collection
  - Series
    - File
      - Item
    - File
      - Item
  - Series
    - File
      - Item
    - File
      - Item
  - Series
    - File
      - Item
    - File
      - Item
Archive of Professor X

Correspondence
- General Correspondence, 1980-1999
  - Letter from Professor A, 14 Dec 1993

- Email general, 2000-2010

- Email from Doctor B, 14 Apr 2001

Academic research material
- File of research material on topic A
- File of research material on topic B
- Notes on topic

Material relating to overseas trips
- Visiting Professorship at US University
- Itinerary
- Recordings of lecture series at German University
- Newspaper cutting
- Born-digital video recording of lecture 1
Working with archival material – some tips

- Working with archival material is time consuming.
- Handling
- Handwriting
- Most archives are not digitised
- Reference only
- Copyright
Handling material

University of Glasgow, handling loose papers:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iX4ivlQMoJg

University of Glasgow, handling bound volumes:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NRn3qRP5Nkk

National Archives (UK) handling guidelines:
http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/visit-us/researching-here/handling-documents/
Weston Library – general reading room rules

- Pencils or laptops only
- No food and drink
- Bags must be left in lockers
- To read all bound manuscripts and rare books on appropriate-sized foam book rests
- To consult only one box or file of loose documents at a time
- Not to touch illuminations or any written area in a manuscript
- Switch the laptops and mobile phones to silent mode

https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/weston/using/rooms/usingsc
Weston Library Reading Rooms

Rare Books and Manuscripts Reading Room

https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/weston/using/rooms/rbmrr

Charles Wendell David Reading Room

https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/weston/using/rooms/davidrr
Printed palaeography resources

Medieval:

Early modern:

Tip: The R.Pal open shelf section in the Weston Library Rare Books and Manuscripts reading room contains a wide range of palaeography books on illuminated manuscripts, medieval Latin and early modern palaeography.
Online palaeography resources

Bodleian Libraries
Rediscovering Rycote palaeography tutorial: http://rycote.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/palaeography

The National Archives (UK)
Palaeography: reading old handwriting 1500-1800: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/palaeography/
Learn medieval Latin: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/latin/
Finding archival material

• Discovery

• Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

• Archives Hub

• AIM 25

• Archives Portal Europe

• Archives Grid (USA)
Discovery

http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/
Searching discovery
Catalogue description

**Arrest of Emmeline Pankhurst, Christabel Pankhurst and Flora Drummond**

Reference: 7V/H/5/2/30
Title: Arrest of Emmeline Pankhurst, Christabel Pankhurst and Flora Drummond
Description: Photographic postcard produced by the Women's Social & Political Union (WSPU), shows Mr Jarvis reading the warrant for their arrest.
Date: 13 Oct 1908
Held by: London University: London School of Economics, The Women's Library, not available at The National Archives
Language: English
Physical description: 1 object

Have you found an error with this catalogue description? Let us know
Emmeline Pankhurst

Papers of Emily Wilding Davison. Photographs. Print reproduction of a portrait photograph of Mrs Pankhurst, standing, with a pair of spectacles on a string around her neck. Upper body only. Printed in black on brown card, with a caption at the

Held by: London University: London School of Economics, The Women's Library
Date: 1908
Reference: 7EWD/J/59

Emmeline Pankhurst

Papers of Annie Lacoc. Printed Ephemera. Postcard of a portrait painting of Emmeline Pankhurst in 1927, as an elderly woman, upper body, wearing a coat with fur collar and cuffs, against a brown background. Painted by: Georgina Brackenbury

Held by: London University: London School of Economics, The Women's Library
Pankhurst, Emmeline (1858-1928), suffragette and political activist

This page summarises records created by this Person
The summary includes a brief description of the collection(s) (usually including the covering dates of the collection), the name of the archive where they are held, and reference information to help you find the collection.

Collections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Held by</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Further information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1885-1902: corresp and papers</td>
<td>International Institute of Social History</td>
<td>Estelle Sylvia Pankhurst Papers</td>
<td>NRA 17176 Pankhurst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1898-1912: corresp with the ILP</td>
<td>London University: London School of Economics Library, Archives and Special Collections</td>
<td>BLPES/ILP/Section 4 passim</td>
<td>NRA 42988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>corresp with Adelaide Johnson</td>
<td>Library of Congress, Manuscript Division</td>
<td></td>
<td>See NUC MS 63-361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1909-11: letters (13) to CP Scott</td>
<td>Manchester University: University of Manchester Library</td>
<td>Guardian archives</td>
<td>NRA 18162 Guardian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discovery – some useful guides

http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/discovery-help/


Larkin, Philip Arthur  
(1922—1985)
Anthony Thwaite

https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/31333
Published in print: 23 September 2004  Published online: 23 September 2004
This version: 01 September 2017

Larkin, Philip Arthur (1922—1985), poet, writer, and librarian, was born at 2 Boultrey Road, Radford, Coventry, on 9 August 1922, the only son and younger child of Sydney Larkin (1864—1948), city treasurer of Coventry, who came from Lichfield, and his wife, Eva Emily Day (1886—1977), of Epping. He was educated at King Henry VIII School, Coventry (1930—40), and went up to St John’s College, Oxford, in October 1940 to read English language and literature, taking a first-class degree in 1943. Unlike many of his contemporaries during the Second World War, he took the full-length, unbroken degree course, having been rejected for military service because of his bad eyesight.
personal knowledge (2004)

Archives

BL, notebook number 1

BL, notebook of draft poems, Add. MS 52019

Bodl. Oxf., corresp.

Bodl. Oxf., notes and MSS

U. Hull, papers

U. Hull, poems and family MSS

U. Hull, Brynmor Jones L., corresp. and papers, incl. MSS and workbooks; additional papers

U. Hull, Brynmor Jones L., MSS and administrative files

Bodl. Oxf., letters to Robert Conquest

Bodl. Oxf., letters to Winifred Owen

Bodl. Oxf., letters to Bruce Montgomery

Bodl. Oxf., letters to Barbara Pym

Bodl. Oxf., letters to Monica Jones

Hutt. L., letters to Kingsley Amis

NL Wales, letters to Dannie Abse

U. Hull, Brynmor Jones L., letters to Harry Chambers

U. Hull, Brynmor Jones L., corresp. with Colin Gunner

U. Hull, Brynmor Jones L., corresp. with Brenda E. Moon
The Archives Hub

https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/
AIM 25

Archives in London and the M25 area

The step-change project has completed. Click here to find out more.

1. London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine: Library at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, 1929
2. Lionel Amery Centre for Military Archives, King’s College London: PM Alan Francis Brooke, 1st Viscount Ailmore of Dersingham
3. Great Ormond Street Hospital Archives: Artist’s impression of the 1573 building

About AIM25

AIM25 is an educational charity supporting the development of and public access to historical archives held in the London area. Archives come in many forms, but include old photographs, diaries, maps, sound and film recordings and much more. They are usually unique and irreplaceable and tell many stories about the history of London and the world. Furthermore, many historic archives remain at risk, for example when the owners of collections move home, when buildings are cleared out prior to redevelopment or when organisations run out of space.

AIM25 provides online access to collection level descriptions from the archives of over one hundred and fifty higher education institutions, learned societies, local authorities, cultural organisations and library companies within the region, for the purposes of research, teaching and public enjoyment. This work is in progress - new data is always being added, so please visit often to see latest additions.

Partners & Institutions

Over 100 institutional repositories currently participate in the AIM25 project. Click here for a full list.

https://aim25.com
Welcome to the Archives Portal Europe

The Archives Portal Europe provides access to information on archival material from different European countries as well as information on archival institutions throughout the continent.

Explore our topics:

- Buildings
- Catholicism
- Economics
- Justice
- Medical science
- Nationalism
- Religion
- Women
- Transport

Contact details and services

Within the section "About", information such as contact details or opening hours of the archival institutions can be consulted. This list only includes those institutions already featuring their archival material in the Archives Portal Europe, but also other institutions from the participating countries.

https://www.archivesportaleurope.net/
Archives Grid

https://beta.worldcat.org/archivegrid/
Archives in the Bodleian (and Oxford University)

• Medieval manuscripts
• Early modern archives and manuscripts
• Archives and modern manuscripts
• University Archives
• College archives
Medieval manuscripts in the Bodleian

- The Bodleian holds a highly important collection of manuscripts from medieval Europe and Byzantine Empire.
- British and Irish manuscripts
- European manuscripts
  - Major collection of Italian manuscripts
  - French and Flemish
  - German
  - Greek
- Mesoamerican manuscripts

Subject guide: https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/weston/finding-resources/guides/medieval
Early modern archives and manuscripts in the Bodleian

- State Papers, 1560-1700
- Political papers, 1700-1800
- Estate papers, 1500-1800
- War and diplomacy
- Empire

Subject guide: https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/westonfinding-resources/guides/early_modern_papers
Archives and modern manuscripts in the Bodleian

• Literary
  • Percy Bysshe Shelley and his circle
  • 20th century poets and fantasy writers

• Music
  • Mendelssohn, Robert Simpson, Edmund Rubbra

• African and Commonwealth and global studies
  • Anti-slavery society and Anti-Apartheid Movement
  • United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
  • The Oxfam Archive

• Academic organizations
  • British Association for the Advancement of Science
  • Society for the Protection of Science and Learning

Subject guides: https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/weston/finding-resourcesguides/literary; https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/weston/finding-resourcesguides/commonwealth_african; https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/weston/finding-resourcesguides/music
Bodleian archive catalogues

Catalogue of Western Medieval Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library
https://medieval.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/

Online catalogues of Bodleian Archives and Manuscripts (post-1500)
https://archives.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/
Other Bodleian archive catalogues

Summary Catalogues
• Archives and manuscripts acquired 1602-1975

Quarto catalogues
• Ashmole
• Canonici
• Digby
• Greek
• Laud
• Rawlinson
• Tanner

https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/modern-sc
Oxford College Archives

Welcome to the website of the Oxford Archivists' Consortium

Oxford contains the largest concentration of archival repositories in the south-east. The documents they hold include the papers of local government and administration, the records of the University and its colleges, business records, and personal correspondence. Museums and galleries all have their own papers about their collections and collections. There are maps and plans, archaeological records, the papers of religious institutions and politicians, charity and health records, and the papers of schools. In fact, there is very little you won't find in an archive somewhere in Oxford.

Although these pages deal principally with the archives of the Oxford colleges, you will find information about, and links to, many other local archives and to other resources which will help you in your research. The Oxford Archivists' Consortium (OAC) was set up in 2000 to provide a support network for all those working in archives in the city. We hope that these pages will answer any questions you have about archives in Oxford but if the answer you are looking for eludes you, please contact OAC and we should be able to point you in the right direction.

Email address: oac@osl.ox.ac.uk

Bibliography  College Archives  FAQs  Glossary

https://oac.web.ox.ac.uk/
The National Archives (UK)

• Records of central government

• Records of the central law courts

• Wills and probate records

http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/
The National Archives – major medieval record categories

• Domesday Book
• Exchequer
• Close Rolls
• Patent Rolls
• Chancery records
• Inquisitions Post Mortem
• Parliament rolls (up to 1497)

The National Archives – State Papers

• State Papers, Domestic

• State Papers, Foreign
Scotland and Northern Ireland

https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/

https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni
Parliamentary Archives

- Official records of the House of Lords
- Official records of the House of Commons
- Acts of Parliament from 1497-present
- Collections of private political papers
- Records relating to the Palace of Westminster

https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/parliamentary-archives/
Local Record Offices

• Records of local government
• Parish records
• Local business records
• Local family records
• Local history collections
• Landed estate collections
• Manorial records
• Diocesan records
National Libraries

• The British Library

• National Library of Scotland

• National Library of Wales
University Libraries

• Cambridge University Library
• Churchill Archives Centre, University of Cambridge
• John Rylands Library, University of Manchester
• London School of Economics
• The Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick
• Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham
Organisational archives

- Royal Opera House Collections
- Tate Gallery Archive
- National Theatre Archive
- Scottish Music Centre
- Royal Philatelic Society
Web archives

• Internet Archive

• UK Government Web Archive

• UK Web Archive

• Parliamentary Web Archive
Questions?