

Welcome to the spring edition of the Research Newsletter. Research at The National Archives is going from strength to strength! We have more good news to report as The Thames Consortium, comprised of The National Maritime Museum, The National Portrait Gallery and The National Archives has been awarded six **Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships** (CDPs) per year for the next three years to support doctoral students. We are really pleased to be involved and are thrilled that students will have access to a museum, an art gallery and an archive through which to explore their themes.

Two proposals for studentships were selected from The National Archives. The first project focuses on the strategies used by and on behalf of war widows and orphans in the north of England to obtain relief and safeguard their property during the 1640s and 1650s. It will use research from county archives in northern England as well as the State Papers collection in The National Archives. The second project selected focuses on damage functions used to predict the future state of a heritage object or a collection. The work will address questions about the reliability of climate management tools, environmental standards and help to improve the quality of collection care.

If you are interested in applying, there will be more information available [on our website](#) in the following weeks.

Skills, training and collaboration were very much the themes of the spring. A participant in our Opening Up Archives scheme offers an insight into her traineeship at Borthwick Archives on **page 3**. The National Archives collaborated with colleagues at The Royal Historical Society, the Institute of Historical Research, The National Archives and the University of Warwick to

host the 2013 Gerald Aylmer Seminar, which was a great success (**page 2**). We also celebrated the skills within The National Archives through this year's Research Prize for publications by members of staff. See **page 6** to find out more about the winners.

Other features include a spotlight on our Higher Education Funding for Beginners workshop, a piece explaining a recent collaboration with English Heritage on building control records and a article about a useful online tool to explore the academic use of archival collections.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition.



We hope you enjoy the newsletter.

Victoria Lain

Editor and Academic Liaison

The Research Team

The National Archives

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Gerald Aylmer Seminar 2013 – Why Material Culture?

The Royal Historical Society, the Institute of Historical Research, The National Archives and the University of Warwick hosted the annual Gerald Aylmer Seminar on the 22nd February 2013 at Senate House. This year's seminar brought archivists, curators and academics together to discuss material culture.

Topics included the historical value of material culture, material culture in the digital world and the opportunities for trans-national connections. The panels engaged in deep and broad discussions, and the panellists represented the Universities of York, Glasgow, Warwick, Hertfordshire, Birmingham City, Southampton, Kings College London, Oxford and The Victoria & Albert Museum. The National Archives was also very well represented by colleagues Dinah Eastop, who talked about material culture and opportunities presented by the digital world, and Nancy Bell, who discussed how science can inform historical interpretations.

Evelyn Welch of Kings College gave an interesting talk on **'Fashioning the Early Modern: Creativity and Innovation in Europe 1500-1800'**. She highlighted the role material culture played in her 2010 HERA grant, which involved researchers at Queen Mary, University of London, The Victoria and Albert Museum, National Museum of Denmark and the Universities of Stockholm, Copenhagen and

Helsinki. By focusing on the material culture of the period, the team grappled with bigger questions around innovation, labour and manufacturing, the process through which things become fashionable and what it means for an object to be 'fashionable'.

Hannah Greig from the University of York discussed the **role of material culture in period drama**, drawing on her experiences as an advisor for films such as *The Duchess* (2008). Her talk provided a fascinating insight into the way material culture often taps into preconceived ideas of a historical period by providing visual clues to modern audiences. She asked if we, as historians, should be attempting to offer a different and perhaps more complex view of material culture.

Greig argued that production companies often feel that 'nailing particular material details issues a passport to a particular historical period'. Conversely, when there is a story to tell, the past can be distorted in order to fit the story. Greig thought these elements result in a disservice to the intricacies and unique elements of

material culture which are not standardised. She warned of a 'heritage warehouse' approach that simplifies material culture, by rolling out 'model' visual clues for modern audiences.

The keynote speech, by Sir Mark Jones of St Cross College at the University of Oxford provided an interesting overview of the role and responsibilities of museums through out their history. He highlighted the changing attitudes toward material culture and the curation and collection of cultural artefacts. He commented on the challenges museums and archives currently face, and his talk prompted a vibrant conversation on Twitter.

Videos and podcasts of the sessions are available at: historyspot.org.uk/podcasts/gerald-aylmer-seminar-2013-why-material-culture



▲ Delegates at the seminar

Borthwick Archives Trainees

As you might remember, our **Autumn 2012 Newsletter** looked at the Opening Up Archives scheme funded by The Heritage Lottery Fund. Opening Up Archives is an innovative project by The National Archives to tackle skills shortages in the wider archives sector, and aims to provide an alternative route of entry in archives and heritage work for people from a whole range of educational and work backgrounds.

Since April 2012, Zoe Harrigan has worked as a trainee, placed at the Borthwick Institute for Archives based in the University of York and she has shared some of her experiences:

I studied history of art at the University of Leicester and since graduating, I have had a variety of jobs ranging from selling tickets in Kensington Palace, to running busy photographic labs. I applied for the traineeship when I saw the possibility of learning so many new skills. I was not disappointed - not only were we given intensive training in palaeography and Latin, we also developed key techniques for conducting research using archives. We were also given the chance to learn about specific archival subjects such as wills and probate, parish registers and family history, and church court records throughout history.

Our time here at the Borthwick has been varied, and we've been involved in the day to day operations of the archive as well as a number of one-off projects. We've conducted searching services, reprographic services, retrieved archives for visitors, transcribed many documents and assisted readers. We also took part in a podcast for BBC History Magazine (August 2012), focusing on the recipes held in the family archive of the Earls of Halifax, and assisted the University of York's Head Chef in constructing a menu for an upcoming prestigious luncheon. However, our main project for the year was to curate an exhibition in the archive's public exhibition space, showcasing the highlights of the Borthwick's archives.

We did background reading and trawled through catalogues before selecting the 11 collections which best represented the overall contents of the archives. We conducted research to choose documents that were accurately representative of the archive, and both visually appealing and interesting enough to be used over and over again. The research provided a real insight

Continued overleaf ▶



◀ Shelf in the exhibition focusing on the Terry's chocolate manufacturers collection. The exhibition is within the Raymond Burton Library at the University of York.

into the historical significance of the city of York. Ecclesiastical records dating back to the thirteenth century paint a picture of York when it was the 'Capital of the North', and archives of local businesses such as Terry's and Rowntree's have shown us how the people of York have influenced British industry. It was an extraordinary project in which we learnt a lot about the Borthwick and York, and about how to curate an exhibition. I am proud of the results and we have received good feedback from both visitors and staff.

I am going on to study conservation and heritage at postgraduate level, and my year at the Borthwick will prove to be very useful. I'll be able to confidently conduct research for my work knowing that I am capable of reading documents dating from both medieval and early modern periods, in Latin and English. This gives me an enormous head start in my studies, and I look forward to getting stuck in as soon as possible.

As the third year of the Opening Up Archives scheme begins, we welcome the thirteen new trainees to their host archives across the UK, and hope that the new Borthwick trainees find the traineeship just as valuable an experience as we have.

Higher Education Funding for Beginners

A training seminar entitled 'Higher Education Funding for Beginners' was held by the National Archives at the end of February. The event was aimed at archive practitioners, to introduce them to sources of higher education funding that could benefit their services. Archives are essential for academic researchers, but recent research by the National Archives and University College London revealed that higher education funding streams are relatively untapped by archives.

The day included presentations by the AHRC and RCUK, outlining their strategic approach, main funding channels and connections to projects involving archives. These presentations were supplemented with case studies illustrating partnerships between archivists and academic institutions.

The case studies underlined that it's not just about the money –partnerships can provide value through academic expertise and subject specialism. The case studies showed how some archives had used academic funding bids as part of a long term strategic approach to develop collections or areas of their collections – including tackling some of the

archive housekeeping, cataloguing and conservation as well as research.

Discussions demonstrated that the seminar had encouraged interest in these funding streams. Attendees flagged up ways that The National Archives can support the sector through brokering partnerships between archives and academics, offering strategic advocacy with funders and academia, providing access to case studies, good practice and advice and training.

The National Archives is working to follow up on the seminar. There will be a new funding adviser which will allow a more strategic approach to opening up new sources of funding – including academic funding streams and promoting the use of archives in academic partnerships. We will also be holding a conference in September to explore successful partnerships between academia and archives in more depth. The event will investigate how we can capture the use of archives in academic research to provide vital evidence to underpin funding bids and support partnership development.

The Rothschild Archive Summer School: The American Project

9-13 September 2013

The Rothschild Archive London is conducting a research project on the financial involvement of Rothschild in the Americas over the long nineteenth century. The project is based on the large quantity of archive materials that form part of the Archive's holdings in Britain and France. Dr Valerie Johnson, Head of Research at The National Archives will be speaking on sources at the event.

In connection with the project the Archive offers a summer school on historical methods and archival research hosted by King's College, London. The programme will include sessions on palaeography, research methods, nineteenth-century financial records, the structure and organisation of archives, digitisation and working with sources. The sessions will combine theory and practice in an informal setting.

Participants will learn how to work effectively with primary source materials, employ different approaches to Atlantic history in their research, gain a greater understanding of nineteenth-century finance and become familiar with the sources available in The Rothschild Archive. Furthermore they will develop an understanding of how collections are acquired and archives are organised. The Archive is seeking qualified applicants with an interest in the nineteenth-century Atlantic world that will employ materials in the Rothschild archives in their research projects. Preference will be given to students who have already chosen dissertation topics and written a dissertation proposal.

The Archive will cover lodging for students accepted on the course but students will be responsible for their own travel arrangements.

Applicants are encouraged to submit their materials via email to **Kathryn Boodry**.

Supporting research at The National Archives | Spring 2013

Railways change lives

This autumn, The National Archives and the National Railway Museum will host railway history conferences on two consecutive weekends, with the programme running once at Kew on Saturday 7th September and at the NRM in York on Saturday 14th September. The conferences, entitled 'Railways Change Lives' will focus on the personal and social histories revealed by the complementary collections at both sites, and the changes wrought by the advent and development of the railways in Britain on the landscape, the lives of individuals, and society as a whole. The speakers will include records specialists from both organisations, as well as academic transport historians. For more information, and to book a place visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/railways-change-lives for the Kew date and nrm.org.uk/planavisit/events/railwayschangelives for York.



Research Prize

The National Archives' Research Prize is given annually in recognition of the most outstanding peer-reviewed article or book chapter written by a member of staff. There are two categories: interpretative research (into the records); and applied research (solving a 'how-to' problem, such as assessing the reaction of materials to different environmental conditions, or how to appraise digital records). The judging panel consisted of Clive Cheesman, Richmond Herald of Arms, Professor Grace Ioppolo, Professor of Shakespearean and Early Modern Drama at the University of Reading and Dr. Jenny Bunn of University College London.

The judges picked the following winners:

Winner of the interpretative category: James Ross, Advice and Records Knowledge

Runner up of the interpretative category: Hester Vaizey, Licensing

Co-Winners of the applied category: Sarah Vansnick & Nicola Fleming, Collection Care



Runner up of the applied category: Anna Buelow, formerly Collection Care

The winners of the award received £100 in vouchers and were presented with their trophies at the March Management Board meeting held at The National Archives. Congratulations to all who won, and thank you to everyone that submitted their work. The Research Team will be organising a Research Prize for this year and will be in touch with updates.

Publications

James Ross. "Mischievously Slew'en': John, Lord Scrope, the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, and the Murder of Henry Howard in 1446." In Hannes Kleineke (ed.), *The Fifteenth Century X Parliament: Personalities and Power*, pp. 75-96, Woodbridge, 2011.

Hester Vaizey. "Empowerment or Endurance? War wives' experiences of independence during and after the Second World War in Germany, 1939-1948. *German History* Vol. 29: 57-78, 2011.

Sarah VanSnick and Nicola Fleming. "Re-housing and a preliminary evaluation of conservation treatment methods for scraperboard artworks." *Journal of the Institute of Conservation* 34: 145-58, 2011.

Anna Bülow and Agnes Brokerhof. "The QALY in collection care - a cost effectiveness approach to collection management." Paper, 16th Triennial Conference from the International Council for Museums-Committee for Conservation (ICOM-CC), Lisbon, September 19-23, 2011.

◀ Left to right: Hester Vaizey, James Ross, Nicola Fleming and Sarah VanSnick

Pipe Roll Society lecture and AGM

Dr Sophie Ambler will be giving a free lecture at The National Archives on Tuesday 25 June 2013. The lecture, entitled 'The Church and the Propaganda of Political Reform in Thirteenth Century England', will explore the role that churchmen took in overseeing government and in the dissemination of reforming political programmes to the wider population.

The lecture will follow the Annual General Meeting of the Pipe Roll Society, the aim of which is to enlarge the public's knowledge of medieval history through the publication of pipe rolls and associated records of medieval government. Many scholars of 12th and 13th century England will have used its volumes, most of which are editions of documents held at The National Archives. The lecture is planned for 16:30 but please check [The National Archives](#) or the [Pipe Roll Society](#) websites closer to the date for full details.

Best practice guide on appraisal and selection

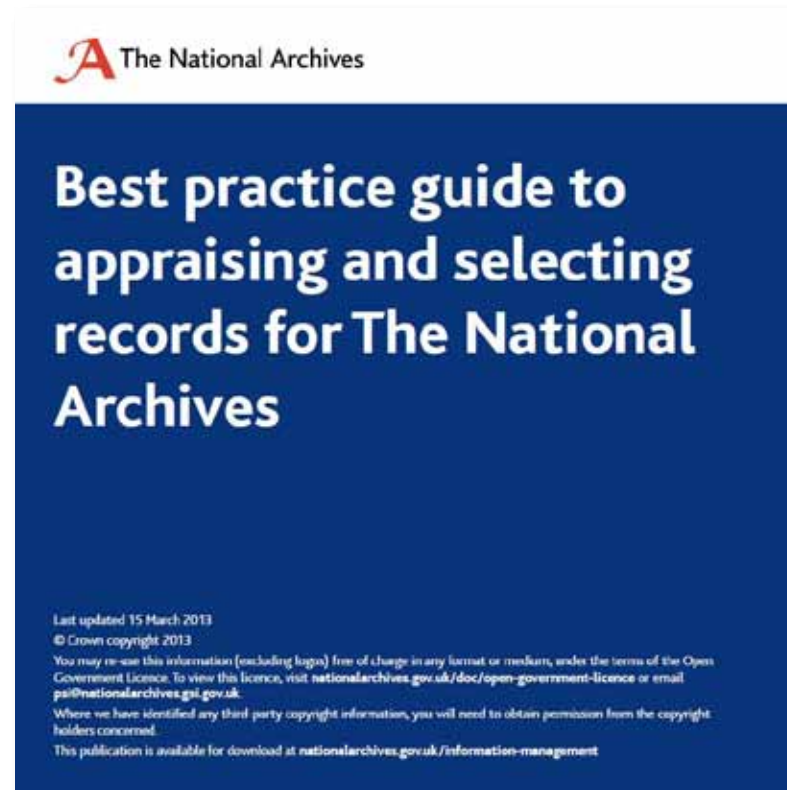
'Best practice guide on appraising and selecting records for The National Archives' is a new piece of operational guidance which aims to help public record bodies meet their responsibilities under the 20-year rule. It forms one part of a wider set of guidance documents which cover the records transfer process, including appraisal and selection, sensitivity review, and cataloguing and physical preparation.

The best practice guide includes practical advice on how to approach appraisal and selection, including using 'macro review' techniques to make the process more efficient. It directly relates to The National Archives' records collection policy, and builds on the collection

themes by outlining a set of 'generic selection criteria' in order to help departments identify files which are likely to hold historical value.

The format of the guide is such that it will provide links to other information and documents which are relevant to the transfer of public records, including operational selection policies, administrative forms and webpages. It was written in consultation with records management staff across a range of government departments and agencies.

The guide is available on our [website](#).

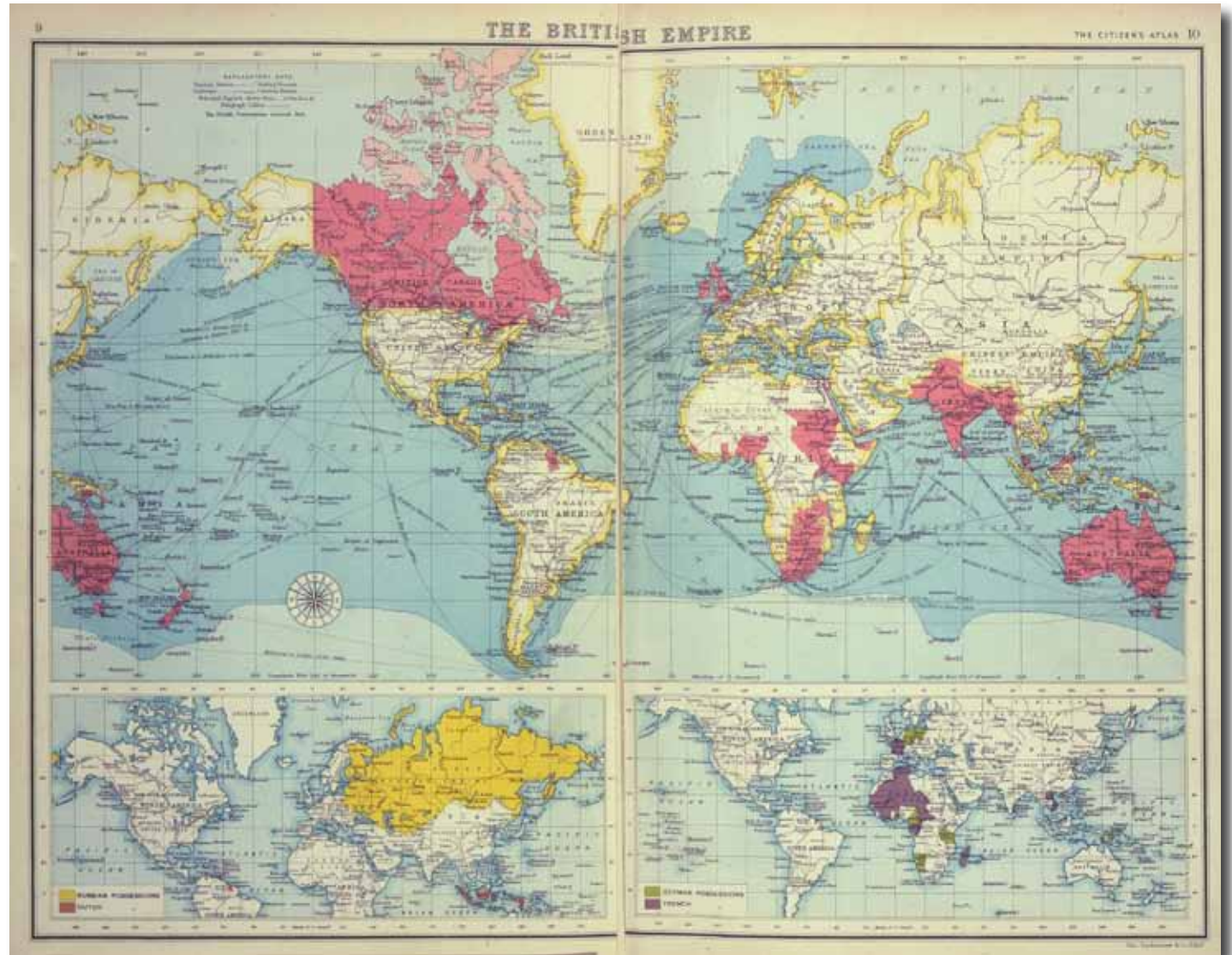


Fifth release of colonial administration records

We are working with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) to transfer and release **colonial administration records**, referred to as the 'migrated archives' between April 2012 and November 2013. This is in accordance with **FCO's published timeline** on **GOV.UK**

The fifth tranche was made available in the reading rooms at The National Archives from Friday 26 April 2013. The collection forms record series **FCO 141: Foreign and Commonwealth Office and predecessors: Records of Former Colonial Administrations: Migrated Archives**. This release contained records from Ceylon, Kenya, Malta, Mauritius, New Hebrides, Nigeria, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Palestine, Sierra Leone and Singapore. The records cover a wide range of subject matter relating to colonial administration. The material reflects events in the territories generally pre-independence and the views of Her Majesty's Government at that time.

A **guide to the fifth tranche of files** has been published on our website and provides more information on how to search the records. For up to date information about the records and ongoing release, go to our **colonial administration records page**.



▲ FO 925/30207: The Citizen's Atlas. Edited by J.G. Bartholomew, LL.D. J. Bartholomew & Co, Edinburgh. 1912

Citation capture: A useful online tool to explore the academic use of archival collections

**Matt Greenhall, Engagement Manager,
Archives Sector Development**

With the approach of the Research Excellence Framework in 2014, the publication of high-quality academic research has been of paramount importance for academics and universities. The continued and growing emphasis placed on the completion of high-quality research and its wider dissemination has ensured the position of archives at the centre of the research landscape, and academics as regular and prominent users of archival search rooms across the country. Yet archives often struggle to gauge the volume and nature of academic publications associated with the collections they hold.

They often depend on their close relationship with individual academics, the submission of copyright declaration requests for images, or periodic user surveys to gain an impression of how academics use the collections they hold and the subsequent publications that result from their wider research. Whereas understanding the quantitative and qualitative extent of academic research is at the

forefront of academic and university preparation for the REF, the awareness of these research outputs by archives is often piecemeal.

Following a pioneering study by researchers at the University of Washington, JSTOR's Data for Research database has been revealed as an important tool to explore bibliographic information contained within the academic journal provider's 8.4 million digitised journals. Using its free, online, data-mining interface, users are able to search the contents of JSTOR's journal holdings through a series of search terms, receiving the results ordered by relevance, date of publication, or citation ranking. Although a JSTOR subscription is required to view the actual journal article itself, substantial volumes of quantitative and qualitative information can be viewed relating to author, content, chronology and citations of individual academic publications resulting from a search. Data for Research will allow archives to search for citations and references to themselves, and their collections, contained within academic journal articles. This could provide valuable information about the use of collections by academics, and to allow archives to demonstrate

the academic importance and potential use of the material they hold.

Through an examination of the academic use of archival collections, it is hoped that new partnerships can be forged and under-utilised collections brought to the forefront of research. The National Archives would be interested to hear from any archive services that have used DFR to explore the academic use of their collections, and its use as a tool to enhance collection knowledge and audience development.

For further information

- [JSTOR's Data for Research](#)
- [Research completed](#)
- [Research Excellence Framework](#)

Revealing building control records

Nicholas Kingsley describes a new partnership project between The National Archives and English Heritage to locate and make accessible to researchers a neglected resource for local and building history.

The registers and plans generated and accumulated by lower-tier and unitary local authorities in the exercise of their building control responsibilities under the Public Health Acts and later the Building Acts are one of the most important sources for the study of buildings and of changes in the historic landscape. The provisions under the Public Health Acts (and in some towns, earlier provisions under local Improvement Acts) which required builders to submit plans of developments for approval and inspection during construction were originally adoptive, and although some urban centres took up the powers soon after the passing of the 1848 Public Health Act, in rural areas the powers were often not implemented until they became mandatory after the First World War.

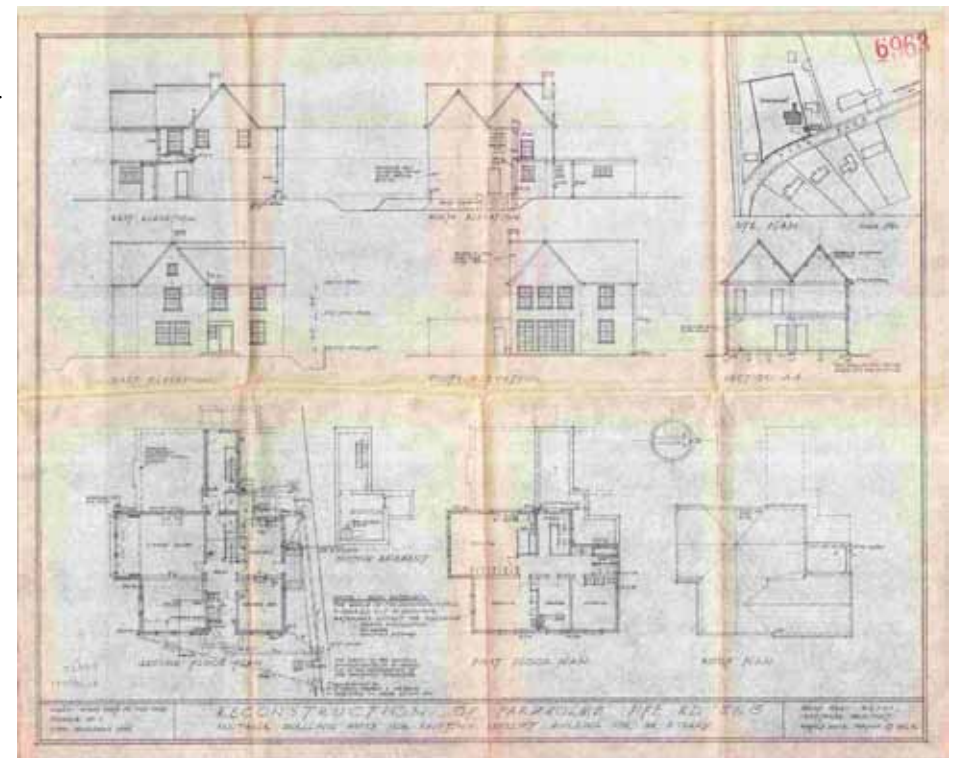
The scale of the records generated has militated against their survival, and has also encouraged many archive services to conduct purposive sampling exercises or other forms of weeding to reduce the bulk of the records. Many plans were submitted on tracing paper or as dyeline copies which have

suffered embrittlement or rapid fading, with the result that surviving records may be in poor condition or illegible, and this too has affected survival and cataloguing. Nonetheless, we believe that many archive services hold considerable quantities of the original plans (and associated forms and certificates), and/or the registers which authorities compiled of applications received and determined. Some authorities rely on the original registers as a finding aid for the plans themselves, and partly for this reason the records are not well represented in on-line catalogues.

We are now working with English Heritage to survey the survival, condition and state of cataloguing of these records in England & Wales, with a view to publishing an online guide to them for the benefit of researchers later this year. The project will take place in two stages:

- A survey of the holdings in record offices and local studies libraries around the country
- Follow-up enquiries to local authorities which retain records prior to 1996 in departmental custody

1996 has been set as the cut-off date for the survey as it marks the commencement of the most recent round of local government reorganisation, and is also before the commencement of digital record-keeping, which is now usual for these records. At the end of the project the guide to these resources will be published online on both The National Archives and the English Heritage websites.



▲ A plan for the reconstruction of Parkholme, East Sheen in 1951.
© London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Local Studies Collection

If you would like to get in touch with us, or if you have ideas for inclusion in future issues of this newsletter, email us at [**research@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk**](mailto:research@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk). Please note that we reserve the right to edit articles.

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