

Cambridge University Library buys Sassoon Archive

An important new acquisition adds to the library's collection of the poet's legacy



Archives for the 21st century
The latest news on implementing the government policy



A year of discovery

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Cambridge University Library buys Sassoon Archive

This summer, the Cambridge University Library will open its doors to the public to see the most important collection of any British First World War poet.

The university, already a leading institution in the preservation of Siegfried Sassoon's literary work, will be able to enrich its collection thanks to a campaign involving former Poet Laureate Andrew Motion, who called it good news. 'It is a very rich archive and it has been a lot of money to raise,' he said.

The campaign to raise the money was led by Cambridge University's librarian, Anne Jarvis. The collection includes diaries kept by Sassoon on the Western Front in Palestine between 1915 and 1918, journals of his literary career and drafts of his autobiographical trilogy: *The Old Century* (1938), *The Weald of Youth* (1942) and *Siegfried's Journey* (1945).

Motion explained that the improvement of the Sassoon collection was 'not only good news as a symbolic statement, but a lot of the material in the archive forms the backbone of our understanding of what it was like on the frontline during the First World War.'

Sassoon's poetry and papers show us the dark reality of a soldier's life on the Western Front during 'The Great War'. In 1917, a year after being awarded the Military Cross, Sassoon refused to return to duty after being wounded and published *The Soldier's Declaration*, a handwritten copy of which exists

in the archive. Sassoon said, 'I am making this statement as an act of wilful defiance of military authority, because I believe that the war is being deliberately prolonged by those who have the power to end it.'

The archive also shows the records of Sassoon's turbulent personal life, including his complicated love life. He had a number of homosexual relationships with men such as Ivor Novello and Beverley Nichols as well as a longer affair with the aesthete Stephen Tennant before marrying Hester Gatty in 1933. Love letters to Gatty form part of the archive.

A grant of £550,000 from the National Heritage Memorial Fund as well as other substantial grants from the Monument Trust, the J.P. Getty Jr Trust, Sir Siegmund Warburg's Voluntary Settlement and numerous private individuals, made the purchase possible.

Cambridge University Library is already a leading institution in the preservation of Sassoon's manuscripts and letters, and will now be the new home for the collection. Anne Jarvis said, 'We are delighted to have secured the future of the Sassoon archive, and to be able to make these extraordinary documents available in the University Library.'

In July a display of the Sassoon collections will open in the Library's public Exhibition Centre, bringing together documents from the new collection with other Sassoon treasures.

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Archives for the 21st Century

Hello! It's been an exciting few months since I joined Archives Sector Development at the beginning of December, not least because I'm working for both The National Archives and the Museums, Libraries & Archives Council on the *Archives for the 21st Century* action plan.

Archives for the 21st Century is the new government policy that sets out a strategic vision for the archives sector. It's the first policy we've seen like this for ten years during which time there have been huge advances in technology that present both challenges and opportunities for the services that archives can offer.



Right now we're working on the action plan for how we will lead and support the implementation of the policy, and how best to engage with the decision makers in archives services about the work and the challenges ahead. There are some big issues to talk about around the provision of services, people development, online access, digital

preservation and how we can work in partnership to deliver better archives and cultural services – to name but a few!

In each issue of *Archive Sector Update* I'll be letting you know where we are with developing the action plan and turning the strategic vision into a reality. In the meantime if you want to know more or tell me about your ideas or any work you are doing that contributes to the delivery of *Archives for the 21st Century*, email me at asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

Amy Beeson
Senior Manager – Development

► nationalarchives.gov.uk/policy/aft21c

What's your story?

If you've got a great story to tell about your archives, we want to hear about it!

Please email asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk to submit an article for the next issue of *Archive Sector Update*.

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Innovative survey set to uncover our nation's religious heritage

The UK's first comprehensive survey of religious archives is under way. Over the next six months questionnaires will be sent to around 2,500 religious organisations from all faith traditions within the UK to help uncover the rich and diverse religious background that forms part of our nation's cultural heritage.

The Society of Archivists and The National Archives are supporting an initiative by the Religious Archives Group to find out the extent and nature of the country's religious heritage and how it is cared for. The survey will help build an overall picture of the historical records of religious institutions, develop a better understanding of the religious archives sector as a whole, and encourage best practice where appropriate.

Clive Field, President of the Religious Archives Group and Chair of the survey steering committee, said: 'This innovative survey, which has been conceived for the common good, will help to celebrate the far-reaching contribution which the faith communities have made, and continue to make, to our national life'.

Claire Muller, Resource Discovery Officer at The National Archives and running the survey, added: 'As this is the first attempt at a comprehensive overview of religious archives in the UK, it is vital that as many institutions as possible take part. By creating a better knowledge of their existence and location, this survey will assist creators and owners to realise

the full potential of their historical records and help to identify opportunities for the future.'

The survey, funded by the Pilgrim Trust, will be conducted in stages. The results will be used to enrich the online National Register of Archives, managed by The National Archives, where institutions volunteer information to share about their archive collections. Over the coming months, questionnaires will be sent to institutions across the religious spectrum.

If you know of any religious organisations who might like to participate, please email asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

The Religious Archives Group Conference took place on 22 March 2010 at the British Library. The conference tackled the theme of 'Modern Records: challenges and opportunities'.

The varied programme covered the management of religious records including case studies from the Religious Society of Friends and Church of England. Other presentations included the legalities of Data Protection, the records of Pentacostalist churches, and a project documenting the roots and development of the Rastafarian faith in the West Midlands.

► rylibweb.man.ac.uk/rag2/activities/conference/

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New guidance for electronic records

The National Archives has produced new guidance on managing electronic records using existing infrastructures and resources.

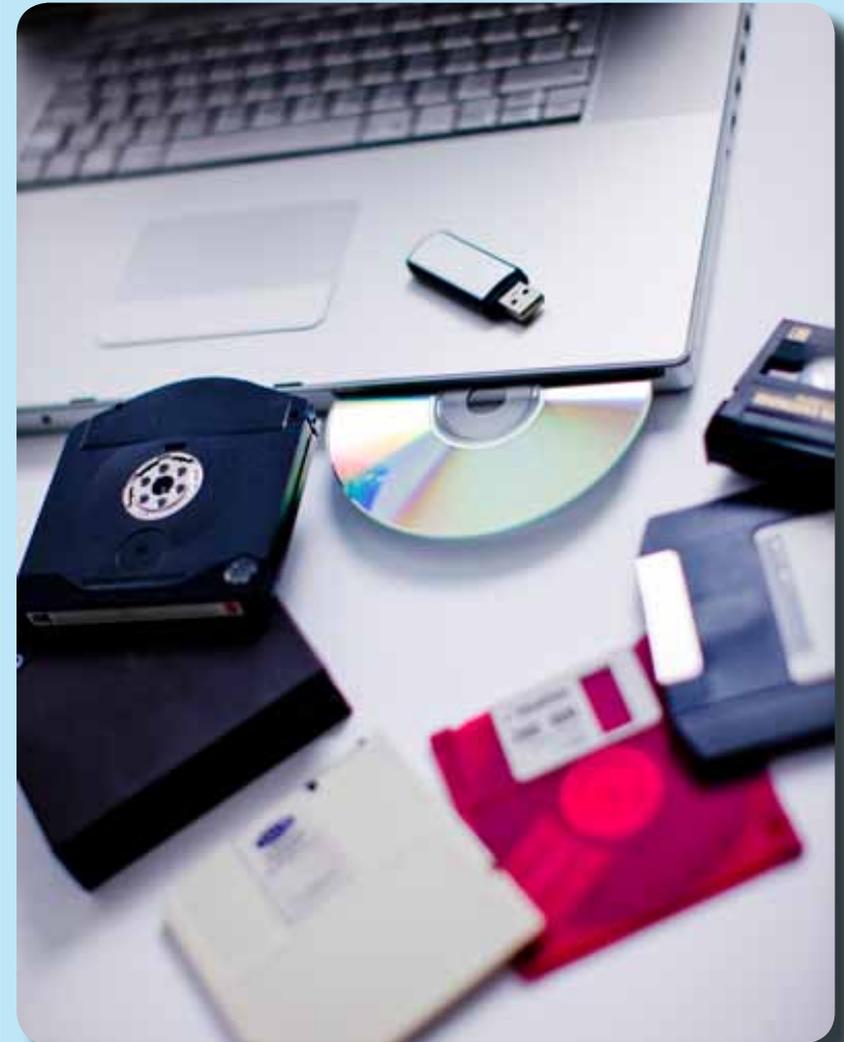
The seven guides discuss specific topics on management of electronic records and cover topics such as developing records management policy; developing a filing structure; establishing management rules; access control management; disposal policy and management; email management; and integrating management of paper records.

This guidance is not sector-specific and can be adopted by any organisation.

Section 46: a new tool

The National Archives is developing a new automated support tool to assist public authorities to assess whether their record management systems conforms to the revised Records Management Code issued by the Lord Chancellor under Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act.

We intend to launch the new tool by the end of March 2010. This will replace the one currently available on our website for use by all public authorities to assess the degree to which they comply with the new Code and provide a risk assessment.



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National cataloguing grants awarded

The archive collections awarded grants as part of the 2009 scheme had local, regional, national and international significance. The money will give the successful archives the opportunity to catalogue a backlog of collections that have the power to throw new light on particular moments and places in the past.

After cataloguing is completed, archive users will have better access to historical information that covers aspects of British life, from art and literature to politics, from design to landholding and urban development, from law courts to heavy industry, medieval manors, riverside bleaching grounds and even coronation carpets!

Users can look forward to uncovering the records on the design of the mausoleum of Shah Abbas II at Kum, or find out just what everyone was talking about in the bluestocking circles of the late 18th century.

The programme is supported by the Pilgrim Trust, the Foyle Foundation, the Wolfson Foundation, the Monument Trust, the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation, the Mercers' Company Charitable Foundation, the Goldsmiths' Company and the Charlotte Bonham Carter Trust.

► nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives/cataloguing_grants_scheme.htm

Awards for 2009

- Bury Archives Service 'Close Relations,' the Bealey's of Radcliffe archive (£15,782)
- Conwy Archive Service Dolgarrog Aluminium Works archive (£14,526)
- East Riding of Yorkshire Archives: 'Crowns, Colonies and Countrymen,' the Calverley-Rudston family archive (£23,739)
- Gloucestershire Archives: 'From the Cotswolds to Westminster,' the Hicks Beach family, Earls of St Aldwyn (£37,074)
- Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies: 'Unlocking the past,' Hawkins & Co solicitors of Hitchin (£29,673)
- John Rylands Library, University of Manchester: 'The Female Pepys,' the Mary Hamilton papers (£22,728)
- National Portrait Gallery Archive: the Sir George Scharf papers (£17,909)
- North Yorkshire County Record Office: 'All Human Life,' the North Riding Quarter Sessions (£41,527)
- Reading University Special Collections: Macmillan and Longman publishers cataloguing project (£38,165)
- University of Glasgow Archives Service: Glasgow Green to Bendigo, the Stoddard-Templeton archive (£39,990)
- Warwickshire County Record Office: Willes family archive (£32,701)

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Meeting with the International Olympic Committee

In January Cathy Smith from The National Archives joined the London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) at a meeting hosted by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in Lausanne.

The LMA presented their proposed 'Olympic Cities' project and we introduced *The Record* – our collection strategy for London 2012 – and explored possibilities for working in partnership with the IOC to support their information and knowledge-transfer frameworks. We will keep you updated on progress in future issues.

Accessions

The National Archives' annual accessions survey of the major collecting repositories in the UK and Ireland is under way. We have requested information from 301 repositories about all new accessions and additional deposits made to existing collections in 2009.

This data is added to the National Register of Archives, and cross-posted to a dedicated accessions database which allows us to publish lists of accessions by repository and by theme. The themed digests are also shared with academic and specialist publications. This information will be available at nationalarchives.gov.uk/accessions later this year.

Strategic Collections

The Record continues to support record creators and managers in identifying information crucial to the delivery of London 2012 and valuable to its permanent legacy.

Following the success of the first phase of its 'Sustained Theatre' project, the Arts Council hosted a roundtable to discuss archiving for the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic performing arts, and cultural heritage and diversity across the wider performing arts sector. The desire now is to further complete the picture of collecting activity by extending the scope to include the wider community.

If you would like to be involved in any of the projects mentioned, or if you want advice on developing your own collection strategy, please contact us.

- ▶ nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives/national-collections-strategy.htm
- ▶ email asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

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Join the Archive Awareness Campaign

The theme for the Archive Awareness Campaign 2010 is *Discovery: Archives in Science, Technology and Medicine*. It has been chosen to commemorate scientific anniversaries, as this year sees the Royal Society's 350th anniversary and the Science Museum's centenary. It is also UNESCO's Year of Biodiversity and the Science Museum is set to establish a new Centre for Scientific Archives.

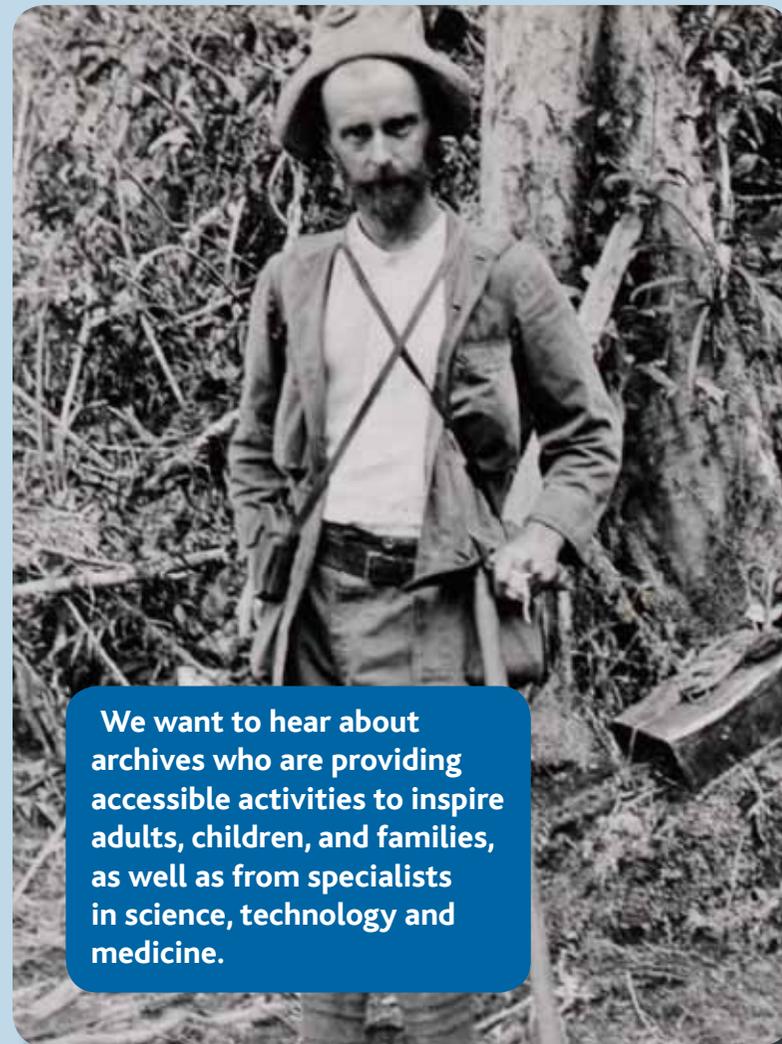
The aim of the 2010 campaign is to get archive services from across the UK, including local government, universities, businesses, private holdings and the third sector, to join with us in celebrating the UK's achievements in science, technology and medicine, as well as innovative endeavours in our communities.

For all who want to find out about the history of our nation's achievements in the vital fields of science, technology and medicine, now is the time to get involved!



Register your 2010 activities and other general events on the Archive Awareness Campaign website.

► archiveawareness.com



We want to hear about archives who are providing accessible activities to inspire adults, children, and families, as well as from specialists in science, technology and medicine.

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A peek into the history of suburban life

Over the last 200 years Birmingham has grown from a market town into the fastest-growing city of the 19th and 20th centuries. A mixture of civic investment, scientific achievement and commercial innovation brought migrant workers into Birmingham's suburbs as people came to work in the metropolitan hub of the second city's manufacturing and car industries.

Suburban Birmingham: space and places, 1880–1960 is a partnership project between the University of Birmingham, Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery and Birmingham Libraries Archives. The project received £350,000 of funding from The Arts and Humanities Research Council to carry out research into the history of Birmingham suburban life.

Archivists, librarians and curators are working as 'fellows' to carry out research alongside University of Birmingham Art Historians, Dr Richard Clay, Dr Francesca Berry and Professor Ian Grosvenor. The Fellows are working together on producing text, digitising images and preparing short films for a new website.

Displays on suburban Birmingham will feature in the new £190 million Library of Birmingham (opening in 2013), and in the new HLF-funded 'Birmingham History Galleries' in Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery as part of the recently opened display spaces of the University of Birmingham Special Collections.



Screenshot of Suburban Birmingham website, to be launched soon

Twice a year the Fellows hold open Continuity Days to report back on their findings. If you are interested in attending one of the open days please contact the project administrator.

► email d.clements@bham.ac.uk

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Enter the first National Archive Volunteering Project of the Year Award

The National Archives is one of a number of partners supporting the first National Archive Volunteering Project of the Year Award. It's been designed to celebrate the contribution of volunteers within the archive sector and to promote good practice in volunteering.

Award-winners will be able to use the award to celebrate the work of their volunteers and publicise their service locally, regionally and nationally. Nominations are open until 31 March 2010 and the awards will be announced in June, to coincide with National Volunteers Week.

The award will recognise projects involving volunteers working within an institutional archive service in the UK. To be eligible the project must have involved work taking place in 2009-10, although it can be part of an ongoing programme (as long as a significant part of the work took place in 2009-10). Evaluation of the project must include feedback from the volunteers involved in the project. Projects will be assessed on their impact on volunteers, on the service, and the culture sector.

The award has been created following the recommendations of the *Volunteering in Archives* report, funded by the Museums, Libraries & Archives Council and published last year by the National Council on Archives (NCA). It is one of the initiatives contributing towards the development of volunteering as part of the *Archives for the 21st Century* action plan.



To nominate a project, simply download the application form from the NCA website and return it by email.

The closing date for entries is 31 March 2010.

▶ nca.org.uk/research_and_development/volunteering_in_archives/national_archive_volunteering_project

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Winner of 2009 Wadsworth Prize

The Wadsworth Prize is awarded by the Business Archives Council for an outstanding contribution to the study of British business history. The winner for 2009 was *Defending the Indefensible: The Global Asbestos Industry and its Fight for Survival* by Jock McCulloch and Geoffrey Tweedale.

McCulloch and Tweedale give a fascinating, thoughtful and concerned history of the asbestos industry, governments and victims of asbestos across the globe. In the early 20th century, asbestos had a reputation as a lifesaver. In 1960 however, scientists realised that even relatively brief exposure to asbestos could cause cancer. Then why, ask McCulloch and Tweedale, was the bulk of the world's asbestos mined after 1960 and why is it still used in many countries around the world today?

McCulloch is a professor from the School of Global Studies and Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology whose main interests are in contemporary African history and the politics of health. Tweedale is an historian from Manchester Metropolitan University Business School. His book *Steel City* was also awarded the Wadsworth Prize by the Business Archives Council in 1995.

This year's prize was judged by John Marshall, Jeanette Strickland and Professor Peter Scott. The award was presented to Dr Tweedale by Sir Geoffrey Owen, President of the Business Archives Council on 24 November 2009 at The National Archives.

'The prize underlines the key importance of archives. It would have been quite impossible to have written our book in its present form without business archives.'

Geoffrey Tweedale (*pictured right*), Wadsworth Prize winner



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New digital preservation group for Wales

The Archives and Records Council Wales (ARCW) set up a digital preservation group in 2009 to consider the issues surrounding digital preservation in Wales as laid out in the ARCW strategy. The need to preserve, maintain and provide access to digital records, to work collaboratively and build partnerships are central themes.

The role of the group is to consider the issues relating to digital preservation in Wales and propose options for action. In order to identify the issues, a survey of Welsh institutions was undertaken, based on the survey previously carried out in England. The survey identified the key issues as being both strategic and practical.

Advocacy, collaboration and strategic planning were seen as critical, along with skills and capacity building, technical support and advice and guidance. The group has developed an action plan which will support the development and implementation of digital preservation in Wales.

► email sally.mcinnes@llgc.org.uk



Mary Ellis, Museums, Archives & Libraries Wales (CyMAL): Museums Archives and Libraries Wales, at the recent digital preservation roadshow, sponsored by CyMAL and the Society of Archivists

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Celebrating 20 years of the National Manuscripts Conservation Trust

The National Manuscripts Conservation Trust (NMCT) celebrated its 20th anniversary in January 2010. To mark the occasion the trust teamed up with Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge to deliver a dedicated series of lunchtime talks.

Former grantees to NMCT contributed to this event by giving an impressive series of six lectures and presentations about collections and items that have been conserved with the help of NMCT. The lectures, delivered by either a conservation expert or a curator, focused on the conservation work itself, drawing out their significance to the institutions that hold them and some of the challenges which they present.

In addition, Museums, Archives & Libraries Wales (CyMAL) and the NMCT joined forces in 2008 and 2009 to fund preservation projects, securing the future of irreplaceable Welsh archives. The survival of priceless manuscripts in Wales received a helping hand thanks to this new initiative that has channelled £56,987 to Welsh archives. To date, the new initiative has benefited seven Welsh archives.



Detail from manuscript preserved with help of NMCT funding, courtesy of Hereford Cathedral

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If you would like to get in touch with us, or if you have ideas for inclusion in future issues of *Archive sector update*, email us at asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk. Please note that we reserve the right to edit articles.

Some key contacts in Archives Sector Development are given here, but for a full list visit our contacts page on The National Archives' website:

▶ nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives/contacts.htm

Head of Archive Sector Development: Nick Kingsley

Public sector team leader: Richard Blake

Private archives team leader: Norman James

Development team leader: Amy Beeson

Strategic Collection Development team leader: Cathy Smith

The following people are the current lead roles for each region/country:

Northern Ireland	Norman James
Scotland	Alex Ritchie
Wales	Jessamy Sykes
South-East	Melinda Haunton
South-West	James Travers
Yorkshire and Humberside	Andy Rowley
East of England	Liz Hart
North-West	Kevin Mulley
East Midlands	Dan Gilfoyle
West Midlands	Nick Coney
North-East	Tim Callister
London locals north of river	Malcolm Todd
London locals south of river	Rosie Logiudice
London specialist	Sam Velumyl and Fleur Soper

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