
H 250 Civil Defence Gallantry Awards

The last 5 pieces of HO 250’s enriched catalogue descriptions (HO 250/106-110) have now been added to Discovery. Items relating to evidence submitted to the Inter-departmental Committee on Civil Defence Gallantry Awards concerning the recommendation of awards during the period 1940 and 1949 now number over 4,300. This will be of enormous help to family and public historians.

This project was a Friends of The National Archives project and utilised enhanced descriptions that had already been created by an FTNA member, richly improving the description of this valuable resource by providing the Case Number, details of the Individual (name, age, occupation) and a Brief Summary of the Ground for Recommendation.

CO 633 Colonial Office: Union of South Africa Sessional Papers

The cataloguing of CO 633, Union of South Africa Sessional papers 1910-1926 is complete, with 2,174 item descriptions added to Discovery. Individual papers are described and can be identified. The cataloguing indicates the typical subject matter of sessional papers for other colonies.

WO 339 War Office: Officers’ Services, First World War, Long Number Papers (numerical)

The re-cataloguing of WO 339: Officers’ Services, First World War, Long Number Papers (Numerical) is now complete. This series contains records and correspondence for Regular Army and Emergency Reserve officers who served in the First World War. The content of the files varies enormously, from a note supplying date of death, to a file of several parts containing attestation papers, record of service, personal correspondence and other information.

Prior to re-cataloguing, each of the 139,912 descriptions recorded the last name of each officer with often only the initial letter of the first name. For common names, this produced multiple hits, for instance there were 512 ‘J Smiths’. Post re-cataloguing records the surname together with all forenames, as well as the last regiment served in and the Officer rank. This project was completed with the help of staff and volunteers.

RAIL 23 Barry Railway Company

The final volume of the Barry Railway Staff Records in RAIL 23 is now available on Discovery. There are 6 volumes in total (RAIL 23/46-51) now providing the details of 2,127 railway staff.
C 79 Chancery: Six Clerks Office: Supplementary Decree Rolls

C 79 is a series of Chancery decrees which were written up for enrolment, but not actually added to one of the rolls at the time. They were later sewn together to form rolls, and were given a brief index. The index was used to create a list for the series, giving the suit title and date for each entry. This series was previously unlisted and unorderable on Discovery.

H 40 Home Office: Disturbances Correspondence

Cataloguing is now complete for HO 40/3-10 – Disturbances Correspondence (Revival of Luddism and formation of movements for Parliamentary Reform, 1816-1818). A total of 56 bound volumes have been catalogued to item level. The catalogue entries for these include a transcription of the original schedules of papers in the volumes themselves where present, or summary descriptions of the contents, listing place names and subjects included therein.

This section of the HO 40 series is digitised and available on Discovery for download as a single document. The item level descriptions created in this cataloguing project will allow for increased access to this series. Researchers will be able to carry out keyword searches through Discovery to determine whether material of geographical or subject relevance is contained in a volume.

PWLB 11 West India Relief Commissioners: Mortgage Indentures (1767-1845)

Following extensive conservation work by The National Archives’ Collection Care Department, colleagues in Advice and Records Knowledge and Information Management Policy have completed the accession of PWLB 11, West India Relief Commissioners: Mortgage Indentures. Each document is now described on Discovery and is available for viewing in our reading rooms.

In August 1831, a storm which became known as the Great Barbados Hurricane swept across the Caribbean. It destroyed Bridgetown, the capital of Barbados, killing some 1,500 people and causing extensive damage on other islands. The hurricane heightened the crisis in the sugar plantation economy, already hit by the abolition of the slave trade in the British Empire and by insurrection.

In response, the British government established the West Indian Relief Commission, empowered to make loans to beleaguered plantation owners. It was intended that the loans would enable owners to rebuild their estates and return to profitability. The plantations themselves were used as surety.

The documents in PWLB 11 were submitted to the Commission as evidence of ownership to support applications for loans and mortgages. They include mortgage indentures and related documents relating to some 120 plantations in Jamaica, Barbados, St Lucia, St Vincent, Trinidad, British Guyana and Dominica from the 1760s onwards. Visually impressive, many of the mortgages include inventories and lists of slaves.
This series is an important source on the financing of plantations in the Caribbean. They complement the slave registers in series T 71, which have been used extensively by UCL’s current Legacies of British Slave Ownership project and other financial records in Treasury series.

**QFA Seals Index: Digitised Seals Card Index**

The 30,000 index cards describing seals held in The National Archives have now been digitised and catalogued under QFA 1. Each card (or set of cards) gives the name of the seal owner, the date of the document to which the seal is attached, and the colour, shape, size, subject of design, and legend of each seal with a cross reference to further impressions in The National Archives and to examples described in the ‘British Museum [Library] Catalogue of Seals’ (1886-1900). Green cards give bibliographical information. A team of volunteers ensured that unsorted cards were placed in appropriate drawers and that information on the back of cards was either transferred to a new card (immediately following) or on to the front of the existing card.

**SP 4 State Papers Naval and SP 42 State Papers Military**

As part of efforts to improve access to The National Archives’ collections, and in preparation for the commemorations of the Jacobite risings, the Early Modern Team have catalogued 15 pieces of State Papers Naval (SP 41/3-6, 11-18, 34, 41, 48) and 14 pieces of State Papers Military (SP 42/6-8, 14-17, 27, 29-31, 67-68, 111). The material in these series details the government response to the risings of 1715 and 1745 as well as to the failed invasions, and includes intelligence on global Jacobite activity. Some 5,120 new catalogue descriptions have been created, allowing historians and researchers vastly improved access to these important yet under-used collections.

**FO 93, FO 94 and SP 108: Recataloguing Treaties at The National Archives**

272 catalogue entries in the principal series for treaty protocols and ratifications, namely FO 93, FO 94 and SP 108, have had their descriptions enhanced to include the name by which they were more popularly known. This update formed the basis of a presentation given at Catalogue Day 2014.

**C 17: Court of Chancery: Clerks of Records and Writs Office: Administration and other Summonsces**

C 17 is a small series, consisting of only 3 pieces with a total of 1728 items. These exist from when the Court of Chancery introduced a new process of dealing with the administration of estates in 1852 and for a time these papers were kept separately. After 1855 these documents can be found in the main series of chancery pleadings – from C 15 onwards. The existing entries formerly appeared as unreferenced pieces and were an incomplete and on
occasion, inaccurate, listing. The new items have been specifically referenced and their descriptions expanded to include names, residences, Expartes, Plaintiffs and Defendants and document types.

**SP 35 Secretaries of State: State Papers Domestic, George I (1714-1727)**

SP 35 is one of the key record series for tracing the 1715 Jacobite rising, and until now the only way to explore these documents has been through the brief descriptions published by the List and Society Index. As part of TNA’s commemoration of the anniversaries of the Jacobite risings, the Early Modern Team, ably assisted by a team of volunteers, have catalogued 32 volumes of SP 35: SP 35/1-24, 35-39 and 71-73. The catalogue entries have been expanded where appropriate, and reference to any Jacobite activity is noted in the item description.

**C 2 Court of Chancery: Six Clerks Office: Pleadings before 1714, Hamilton (c 1620-1714)**

This major retrospective conversion project, a joint volunteer and staff initiative, began in 2008 to fill one of the largest data holes in TNA’s Catalogue. The nearly 150,000 empty entries in C 2 have now been filled with descriptions of pleadings in the Court of Chancery for the century after 1558. By far the most – 107,000 – come from the reign of Charles I and the Interregnum. Although there are few detailed descriptions in existing finding aids for these (they are mostly catalogued only by the short title, such as Corfe v Brocas), they can now be searched and the type of pleading has been added by going back to an ‘obsolete’ index. In contrast, the remaining 40,000 plus from the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I are much more fully described, thanks to the work of nineteenth century cataloguers. For Elizabeth and James, there are gems such as the lawsuit about the office of Bear Clerk in the Bearhouse in London (C 2/Eliz/A6/9), or the building of a hospital for the relief of ten poor men from the parishes of Godalming, Puttenham, Hambledon, Compton and Dunsfold, Surrey (C 2/JasI/W30/52).

**COPY 1 Records of the Copyright Office, Stationers’ Company**

The first phase of the COPY cataloguing project has provided item level descriptions for 108,000 photographs registered March 1883-1912.

**E 179 Hearth Tax (Too Poor to Pay)**

The hearth tax exemption documents for Sussex (97 documents comprising 121 folios) are now available in Discovery under reference E 179/191/424. The next county to be catalogued is Staffordshire.