Cataloguing Projects update March 2016

CAB 3: Committee of Imperial Defence: Home Defence Memoranda (A Series), 1901-1939

Cataloguing is now complete for the series CAB 3, Committee of Imperial Defence: Home Defence Memoranda (A Series), 1901-1939. All 8 volumes have been catalogued to item level, giving a description, provenance and date (as well as folio numbers) for each individual memoranda within the volumes. Previously each piece was simply listed with a range of paper nos, e.g 1-40, and a range of dates. In addition, cross-references were given to the digitised (duplicate) copies of the memoranda, which from 1901 to 1914, are to be found in CAB 38. The highlighting of this additional source is another helpful feature for researchers.

The enhanced descriptions will be of great benefit to military historians, as these memoranda illuminate the changing nature of home defence strategies before, during and after the First World War. The papers give vivid insights into British military psychology – recurring fears of invasion, demonstrated by numerous papers concerning the implications of a Channel Tunnel. Some of the most interesting memoranda concern the ‘Continental air menace’ scare of the early 1920s – the fear that the French air force might be used to bomb Britain.

HO 396: Home Office, Aliens Department: Internees Index

This series contains record slips of Germans, Austrians, Italians and their spouses who were interned or considered for internment during the Second World War. The project covered pieces 1-106, the category of German and Austrian internees who were allowed to remain at liberty. These pieces had been indexed on the Moving Here website (which has now been archived on the UK Government Web Archive). Due to the poor quality of the images on the website there were missing entries, poorly transcribed data and gaps where data had been omitted. A group of volunteers worked through spreadsheets of the entries and using images of the documents filled in as much of the missing data as possible. Where they could the volunteers tried to provide correct place names, however due to the poor clerical recording at the time that the slips were created, some errors and gaps remain. The additional and cleaned up data has now been added to Discovery and 44,778 items have been created. These entries are now searchable by name, data of birth and place of birth on Discovery.