

# National Librarian's Report to the Board

27 November 2019



## LIBRARIAN'S KEY EVENTS THIS QUARTER

### 3 October 2019

Attended the *Exciting Old Town Updates* event at Edinburgh Castle;

### 9 October 2019

Took part in the Scottish Government Accountable Officer Development Event;

### 14 October 2019

Attended launch and screening of *Strike for Freedom: Frederick Douglass in Scotland* at the Playfair Library, University of Edinburgh;

### 16 October 2019

Hosted donor Alex Graham and his partner Rosie Millard on a visit to the Library;

### 17 October 2019

Welcomed Welsh Government officials, who are conducting a review of the National Library of Wales;

### 28 October 2019

Attended a Paisley Museum Reimagined Trustees meeting;

### 4 November 2019

Attended the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities Advisory Board annual meeting followed by IASH's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary dinner;

### 6 November 2019

Met with Tony Ageh, New York Public Library's Chief Digital Officer, New York; met with Camilla Hellmann, President of the American-Scottish Foundation; had lunch with one of the Library's New York donors;

### 7 November 2019

Co-hosted an American Patrons National Library and Galleries of Scotland dinner at the Links Club, New York;

**20 November 2019**

**8 November 2019**

Attended the Wallace Awards at the University Club, New York (picture above);

Attended the Legal Deposit Libraries bi-annual meeting and chaired the Agency for Legal Deposit Libraries meeting at the British Library;

**22 November 2019**

Attended the Library's Annual Lecture: *Kate Adie in conversation with Allan Little.*



On Wednesday 6 November the National Library of Scotland were winners of the Partners in Smart FM with Craiglalan Controls as well as the overall winners.

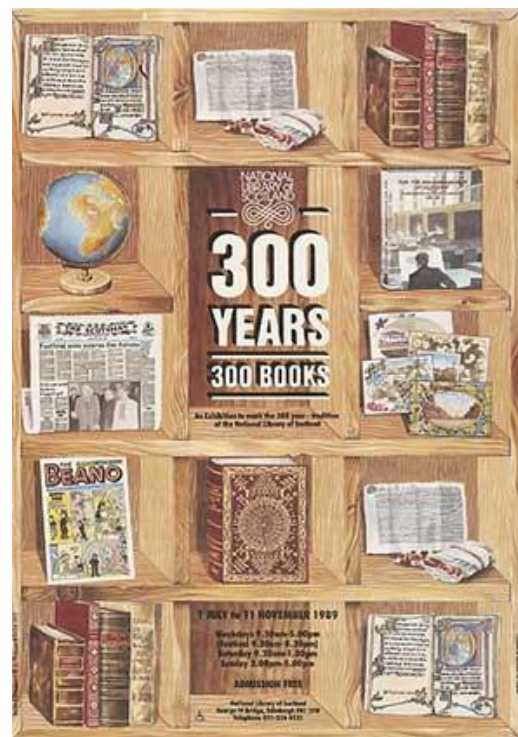
Pictured are Julie Bon, Head of Collections Care, Ian Symonds, Head of Estates, Craiglalan Controls' personnel and Sally Philips who presented the award.

<http://www.pfmawards.co.uk/category/2019-awards/>

## Hidden Collections – Quarterly Update

As part of the Library's Hidden Collections Programme the Metadata & Maintenance Team completed cataloguing work on the Admiralty Charts providing improved access to 35,000 items. These nautical charts cover global commercial shipping routes, ports and harbours, and are the world's most widely used official paper charts.

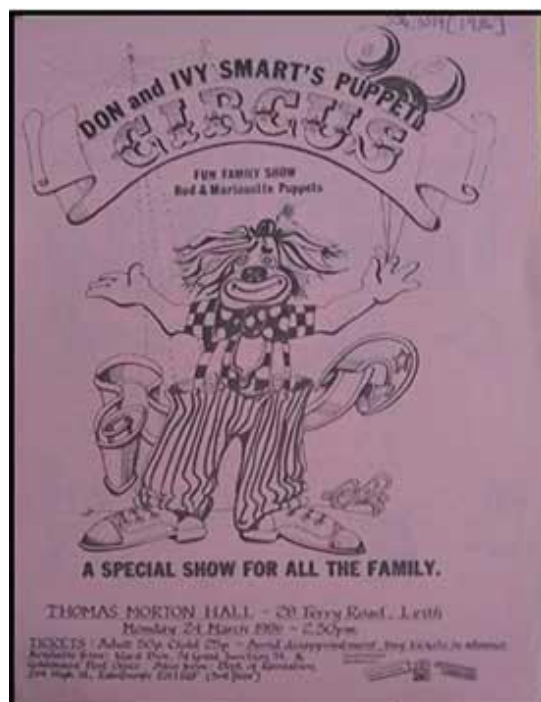
Work resumed on the poster collection as part of integrating hidden collections ephemera into the general ephemera workflow, and has uncovered a 'make your own dragoons helmet' poster, featured below. Scottish theatre programmes are also included in this work and will be added to the [Scottish Theatre Programmes Database](#), further enriching the Library's holdings.



As part of the alignment of digitisation and hidden collections work, the collection of National Library of Scotland exhibition posters have been digitised, with the Digitisation Cataloguer providing description for both the physical and digitised material. This is an example of the Library's 'invisible' hidden collections – material we didn't even know was uncatalogued - and highlights the efficiency of this integrated approach.



A temporary Hidden Collections Preparation Assistant joined the team in September, funded by the National Librarian's Innovation Fund. They have started preparation work on the William Gallacher Memorial Library Collection. Having a dedicated staff resource to sort, size and box this large collection has allowed the cataloguing staff to continue to work with other hidden collections while preparation work is ongoing.



## Digital Resources and web statistics: 2019-20 Q2

This document combines the statistics for Library digital resources on external services and nls.uk domain web statistics from 1 July – 30 September 2019 unless otherwise stated.

### External services

#### Wikipedia

1,300 images used in  
3,741 pages with  
7,896,225 views  
Increase of 251,192 from last quarter



#### YouTube [bit.ly/YouTubeNLS](http://bit.ly/YouTubeNLS)

201 videos with  
21,475 views  
17,000 minutes watched  
61 new subscribers



#### Internet Archive

4,850 items in  
13 collections  
294,477 views



#### Flickr [bit.ly/FlickrNLS](http://bit.ly/FlickrNLS)

2,500 images with  
201,316 views (11 Jul – 1 Oct)



### Update

#### WikiCommons

On 15 October the Library and Wikimedia UK hosted a workshop, *Culture to Commons*, to explore with colleagues from National Museums of Scotland and University of Edinburgh, approaches for preparing cultural heritage data for WikiData (<https://www.wikidata.org>) and images for WikiCommons. In our first test we successfully prepared and loaded the data and image relating to Dr Sandy Wood, an Edinburgh surgeon, who is featured in the Library's Edinburgh characters collection.

#### Alexander Wood

- WikiData page <https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q15917346>
- WikiCommons image <http://bit.ly/SandyWood>
- Wikipedia article [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander\\_Wood\\_\(surgeon\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Wood_(surgeon))



A follow up internal workshop is being planned, with a view to loading Library image-based content to WikiCommons along with associated metadata linked to WikiData.

## nls.uk domain use

The following charts and statistics give an insight into the audiences of four National Library domains.

- **Top channels** refers to where the audiences have come from. **Organic search** indicates users were directed to nls.uk from a search engine, **Direct** means users have followed a link from the nls.uk domain (for example from maps.nls.uk to the map ordering service) and **Social** means users have followed a social media link (for example from Twitter or Facebook)
- **Top referrals (non-Library)** provides information on users who have followed links from other websites to the nls.uk domain (for example Wikipedia)

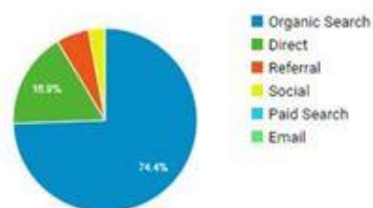
## Other information

[data.nls.uk](https://data.nls.uk) was relaunched in September. Quarterly statistics for this domain will be included in the Q3 2019 report.

### Digital Gallery [digital.nls.uk](https://digital.nls.uk)

137,437 users with 182,765 view sessions  
5.99 pages per session  
3:15 minutes average duration on site

#### Top Channels



#### Top referrals (non-Library)

<a href="https://en.wikipedia.org">en.wikipedia.org</a>	1054 users
<a href="https://baidu.com">baidu.com</a>	281 users
<a href="https://futurelearn.com">futurelearn.com</a>	221 users

#### Location of users

53%	UK (57% Eng, 40% Sco, 2% Wal, 1% NI)
18%	USA
6%	Australia
4%	Canada
4%	India

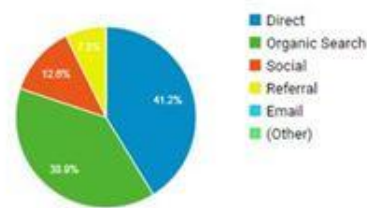
The number of web sessions was: 182,765. The top 5 'landing pages' for these sessions included:

[/](#)

### Maps [maps.nls.uk](https://maps.nls.uk)

374,244 users with 814,964 view sessions  
4.11 pages per session  
4:27 minutes average duration on site

#### Top Channels



#### Top referrals (non-Library)

<a href="https://archiuk.com">archiuk.com</a>	1,039 users
<a href="https://en.wikipedia.org">en.wikipedia.org</a>	972 users
<a href="https://uk.search.yahoo.com">uk.search.yahoo.com</a>	923 users

#### Location of users

86%	UK (77% Eng, 18% Sco, 4% Wal, 1% NI)
4%	USA
2%	Australia
1%	Canada
1%	India

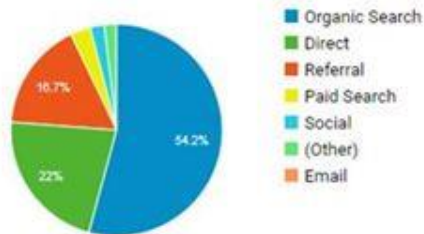
The number of web sessions was: 814,964. The top 5 'landing pages' for these sessions included:

[/geo/explore/side-by-side](#) (16%)  
[/geo/explore/](#) (16%)  
[/geo/find](#) (8%)  
[/os/6inch-england-and-wales/](#) (4%)  
[/towns/](#) (1%)

## Main website [www.nls.uk](http://www.nls.uk)

129,251 users with 204,772 view sessions  
2.30 pages per session  
1.48 minutes average duration on site

### Top Channels



### Top referrals (non-Library)

[historic-uk.com](http://historic-uk.com) 812 users  
[dayoutwiththekids.co.uk](http://dayoutwiththekids.co.uk) 563 users  
[uk.search.yahoo.com](http://uk.search.yahoo.com) 365 users

### Location of users

70% UK (56% Eng, 41% Sco, 2% Wal, 1% NI)  
12% USA  
3% Australia  
2% Canada  
1% India

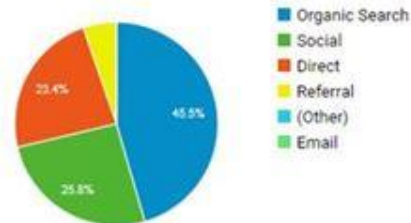
The number of web sessions was: 204,772. The top 5 landing pages for these sessions included:

/catalogues (3%)  
/family-history/births-deaths-marriages (3%)  
/digital-resources (2%)  
/exhibitions (2%)  
/about-us/job-vacancies (1%)

## MOVING IMAGE [movingimage.nls.uk](http://movingimage.nls.uk)

44,514 users with 55,981 view sessions  
2.37 pages per session  
4.05 minutes average duration on site

### Top Channels



### Top referrals (non-Library)

[en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org) 302 users  
[en.m.wikipedia.org](http://en.m.wikipedia.org) 184 users  
[baidu.com](http://baidu.com) 82 users

### Location of users

79% UK (56% Sco, 42% Eng, 1% Wal, 1% NI)  
8% USA  
2% Canada  
2% Australia  
1% Spain

The number of web sessions was: 55,981. The top 5 landing pages for these sessions included:

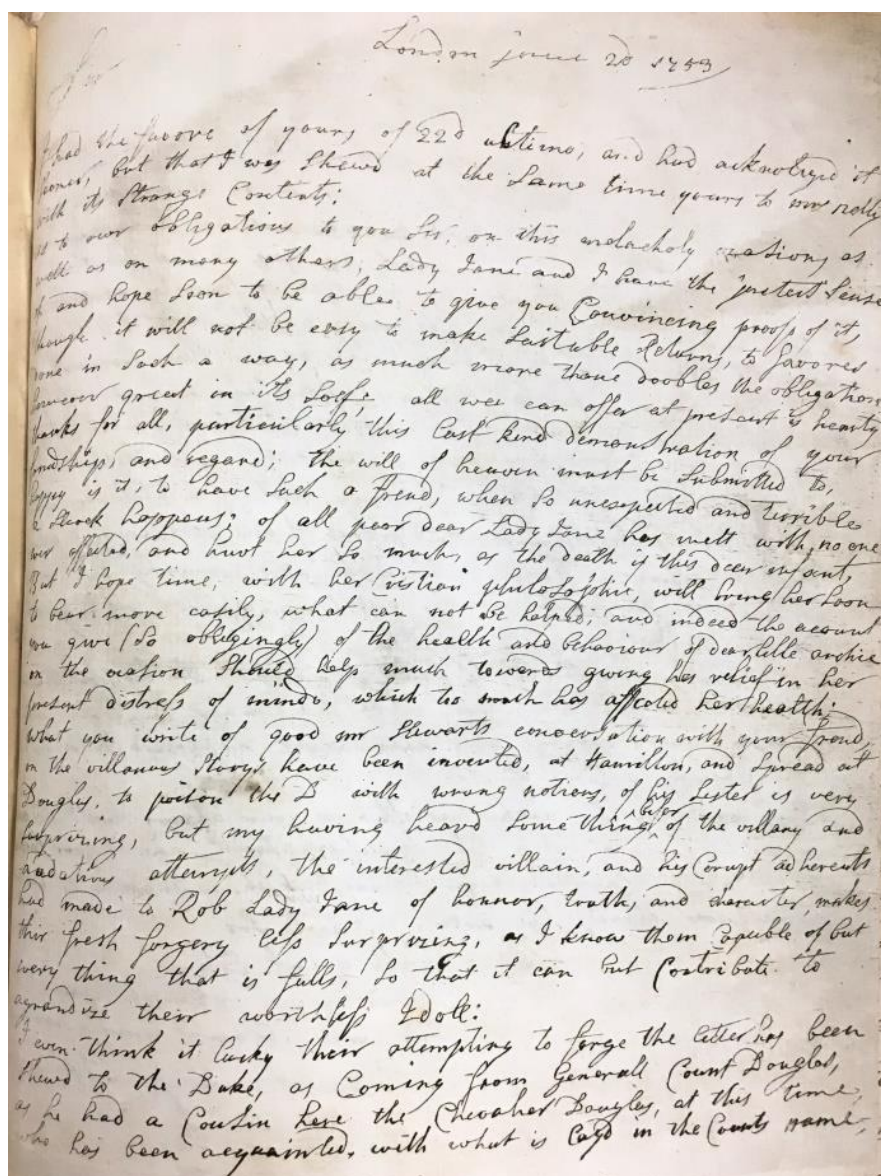
/film/2639 - (Braemar gathering) (2%)  
/film/0536 - (Neil Armstrong in Langholm) (1%)  
/film/1603 - (Paddy Black memorial mission) (1%)  
/film/3696 - (The Port Line railway) (1%)  
/film/5973 - (Ninian oilfield central platform) (1%)



## Archives and Manuscripts – some recent acquisitions

### Acc.14117: Letters concerning the Douglas Cause

The Library recently acquired several letters on the Douglas Cause which were pasted into a published volume outlining the history of the Case. It was a cause célèbre in the 18<sup>th</sup> century which revolved around the inheritance of the fortune and lands of the first Duke of Douglas. The childless Duke's sister, Lady Jane, who had recently married Colonel John Stewart, returned from France having given birth to two children at the age of 50. Archibald Douglas, the surviving son, would contest the inheritance with the Duke's kinsman the Duke of Hamilton who believed that the children had been purchased in France. The letters are by Colonel Stewart and provide information about their time in France and the condition of Lady Jane following the birth of her children. After the Scottish Courts initially found in favour of the Duke of Hamilton, the House of Lords ultimately found in favour of Archibald Douglas.



London June 20 1743

I had the favour of yours, of 22<sup>d</sup> ultimo, and had acknowledge it  
before, but that it was shew'd at the same time yours to my self  
with its strange Contents;  
As to our Obligations to you Sir, on this melancholy occasion, as  
well as on many others, Lady Jane and I have the justest Sense  
and hope soon to be able to give you Convincing proof of it,  
though it will not be easy to make Lastable Return, to favours  
done in such a way, as much more than doubles the obligations  
thinks for all, particularly this Last kind demonstration of your  
friendship, and regard; the will of heaven must be submitted to,  
if it is to have such a friend, when so unexpected and terrible  
a stroke happens; of all poor dear Lady Jane has melt with no one  
but I hope time, with her Christian philosophy, will bring her soon  
to bear more easily, what can not be helped; and indeed the account  
you give (so obligingly) of the health and Obnoxious of dear little Archie  
on the occasion should help much towards giving her relief in her  
present distress of mind, which too much has affected her health;  
What you write of good Mr Stewart's conversation with your friend,  
on the villainous story, have been invented, at Hamilton, and spread out  
Douglas, to poison the D with wrong notions, of his Sister is very  
surprising, but my having heard some things of the villain and  
audacious attempt, the interested villain, and his corrupt adherents  
and made to Rob Lady Jane of honour, truth, and character, makes  
this fresh forgery less surprising, as I know them capable of but  
every thing that is full, so that it can but contribute to  
aggravate their wretched Deeds:  
I can think it lucky their attempting to forge the letter has been  
shew'd to the Duke, as coming from General Count Douglas,  
as he had a Cousin here the Chevalier Douglas, at this time,  
who has been acquainted with what is said in the Count's name,



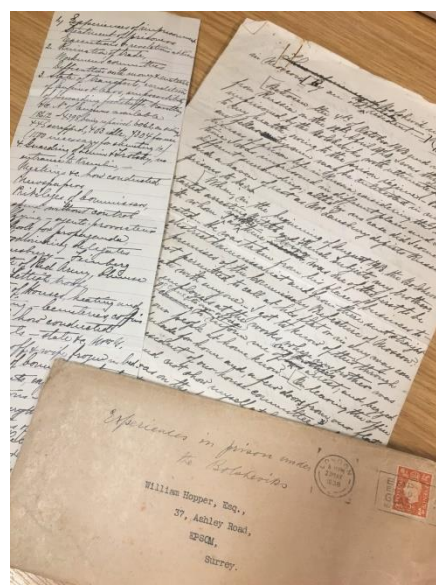
### Acc.14096: Papers of Douglas Drysdale

The Library bought the archive of Douglas Drysdale (1915-1984), an engineer and Scottish National Party Vice-Chairman. This adds to the Library's unrivalled holdings of the papers of post-war Scottish Nationalist organisers and politicians. After establishing the SNP's Dollar branch with his wife Olwen in 1962, Drysdale stood as the SNP candidate for Clackmannan and East Stirlingshire in the 1964 and 1966 general elections, and held responsibility for the party's Finance Committee until he retired in 1969. The archive contains a comprehensive series of private correspondence, committee papers, press clipping albums, and other personal ephemera, and complements the Library's rich collection of the personal papers of Drysdale's contemporaries, including William Wolfe, Robert McIntyre, Arthur Donaldson, James Halliday, and Rosemary Hall. The archive is a valuable resource for the study of the organisation of the SNP in one of its formative decades, and also gives an insight into the life and career of a successful Scottish businessman during the 1960s.



### Acc.14098: A Scotsman's account of the Russian Revolution

William Hopper was born into a prosperous Scottish family in Moscow in 1848, a member of the industrialist community credited with having introduced modern football to Russia. In later life Hopper found himself entangled in an extraordinary series of events as his family's iron foundry and machine tool factory were seized following the Russian Revolution. Between 1918 and 1920, he was imprisoned three times by the Red Army, having arranged his siblings' safe passage out of the Soviet Union and attempted to organise a committee to represent the claims and interests of



British property owners still living in Moscow. Upon his return to Britain as a refugee in 1921, Hopper sent this account of his ordeal to his local MP, who posted the manuscript to Unionist Central Office in London to be reprinted as anti-socialist election campaign material. It would remain unpublished, but it nevertheless provides a fascinating insight into the experiences of a Scot who was caught up in one of the defining moments of the twentieth century and lived to tell the tale.

### **Acc.14112: A Barns-Graham Family Album**

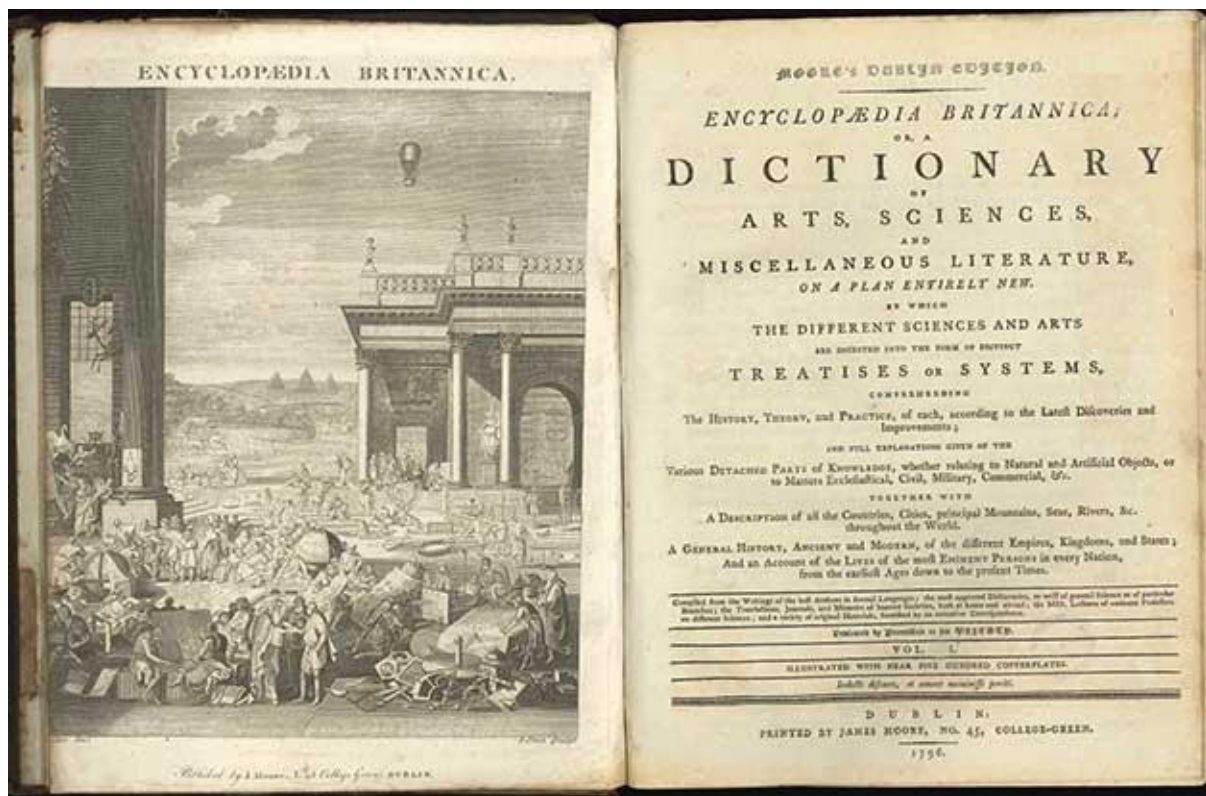
A recently-purchased addition to the Scots Emigration manuscript collection, this charming photograph and scrap album belonged to Jean Meldrum Barns-Graham, aunt of the artist Wilhelmina Barns-Graham. The album contains over 250 snapshot photographs taken during the 1890s, and covers Jean's comfortable early life at the Barns-Graham family's Stirlingshire estate, the journey of several members of her family to New Zealand on board the R.M.S. Gothic in 1896, and life on the North Island, where she and her brother set up the 'Strathblane Sheep Station' near Gisborne in partnership with another Scottish family. Jean never married and spent the rest of her life in New Zealand, but the album returned to Scotland via one of her nephews, who later returned to Fife. The album will be invaluable as a resource for scholars of late-Victorian elite Scottish society and culture, as well as providing an unusual illustrated record of the migration of two Scottish families.



## Rare Books purchases

*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Dublin, 1791-1798

First and only Irish printing, by James Moore, of the famous Edinburgh encyclopaedia; it is based on the third Edinburgh edition with a few minor additions and alterations. Moore claims in his preface to vol. 1 that his version is superior to the Edinburgh original, and that despite the huge economic distress in 1790s he has completed his project, thus proving all the doubters wrong, who had thought "works of this magnitude will fail in Ireland." Moore's publication ran to 20 volumes and cost him £20,000 to produce, making it at the time the most expensive publishing enterprise ever to be undertaken in Ireland. Volumes were supplied to subscribers as they were completed, at a cost of one guinea per volume. One of the subscribers was the famed Irish statesman and philosopher, Edmund Burke. This is a complete set of a rare printing; nearly all surviving sets outside Ireland are recorded as lacking volumes and plates.



P & B Rowan £5,500

AB.8.219.14-33

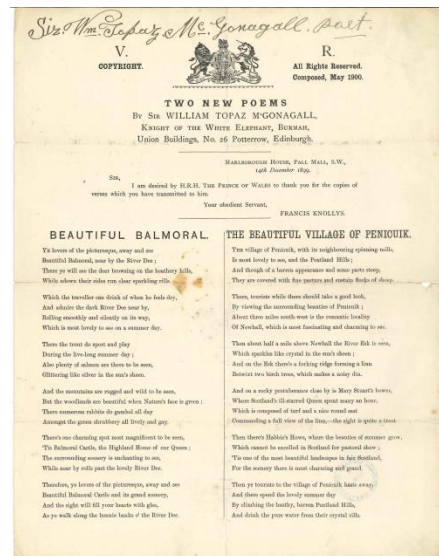


William McGonagall, *Two new poems [Beautiful Balmoral & The beautiful village of Penicuik] + The beautiful sun*, Edinburgh, 1900 + Dundee, 1883

Two rare examples of broadside poems from the seemingly inexhaustible pen of William Topaz McGonagall (1825-1902), fêted as the one of the worst poets ever. McGonagall spent most of his adult life in Dundee and *The beautiful sun* is a good example of his earlier Dundee-printed work. The work was reprinted in Edinburgh in 1897, two years after he moved to the city, with a few minor changes to the text.

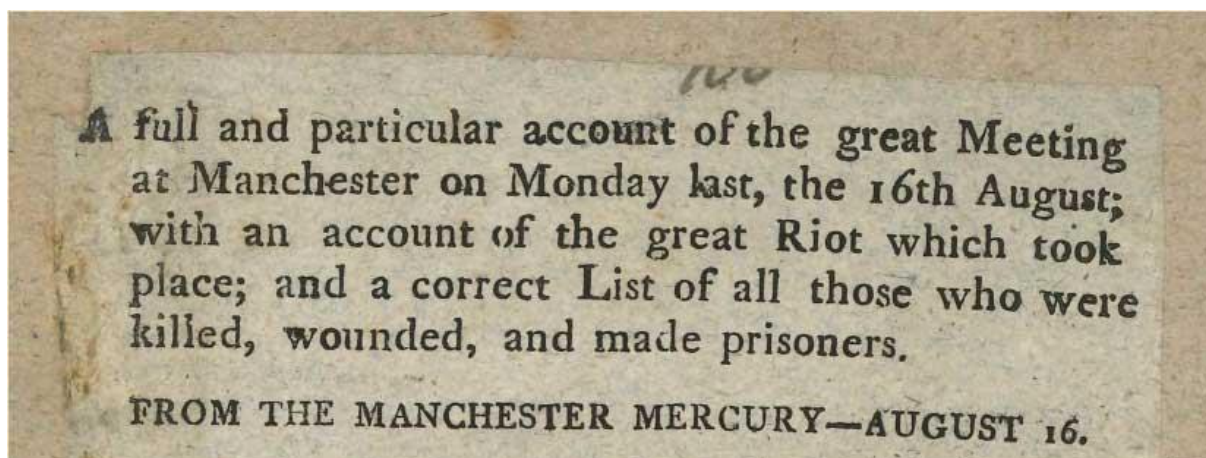
Dominic Winter (auction) £1,950

AP.4.219.5 + AP.4.219.7



*A full and particular account of the great meeting at Manchester, Glasgow, 1819*

A broadside printed for a Glasgow bookseller, John Muir, giving details of what later became known as the Peterloo massacre, when the local militia charged a large crowd gathered in Manchester demonstrating for parliamentary reform. The cavalry charge resulted in several people being killed or injured. The broadside reprints an account in the local newspaper, the *Manchester Mercury*, which was unsympathetic to the demonstrators. The broadside's postscript, dated the following day, Tuesday, August 17, 1819 reports a false rumour spread in the city of an armed uprising by 'Reformers' taking place, which led to shops closing down and the army being mobilised.

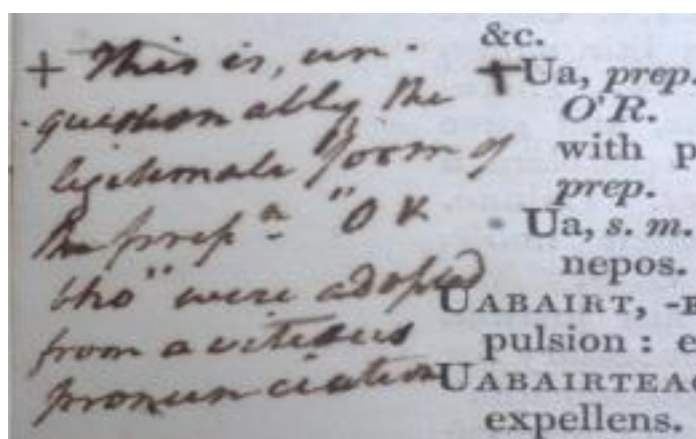


Meyer Boswell Inc. \$ 1,250.00

AP.6.219.9

*Dictionarium Scoto-Celticum: a dictionary of the Gaelic language*, Edinburgh, 1828

The history of Scottish Gaelic dictionaries goes back to the early 17th century, but in the first half of the 19th century six Gaelic to English dictionaries were published, reflecting a scholarly interest in the language at a time when its use was being openly discouraged by the authorities. In 1806 the Highland Society of Scotland set up a committee in



1806 to produce a full-scale dictionary, which eventually appeared in two volumes in 1828, published by Blackwood's of Edinburgh. This is an annotated copy by an unknown Highland scholar, who makes numerous references to Hebridean usage of Gaelic, presumably with a view to contributing to a revised edition of the dictionary. Some of the scholar's additions would appear in later dictionaries such as Dwelly's of 1901.

Karen Thomson Rare Books £2,500

AB.8.219.11

Charles D. Young & Co., *Illustrated and descriptive catalogue of machinery, implements, tools*, London & Edinburgh, 1854

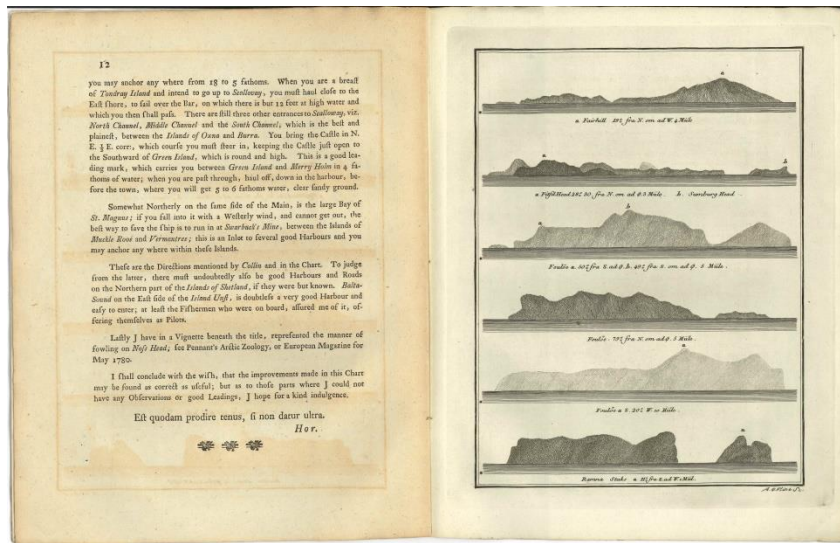
A lavishly illustrated trade catalogue by an Edinburgh-based manufacturer of iron goods, Charles D. Young. The catalogue is in parallel English and Spanish text and was aimed at the Chilean market. Young manufactured pre-fabricated iron buildings, thanks to the recent invention of corrugated iron, as well as wire for fences. Charles Denoon Young came from a family of inventors and ironworkers. After initially working in partnership with his brother, he set up his own firm in 1847. By the mid-1850s he claimed his firm was worth over £58,000, a huge sum for the times, but lax accounting and cash-flow problems meant he was bankrupt by 1858. He moved to Perth but went bankrupt a further two times, and in the 1870s spent 7 months in the local prison for failure to pay his creditors.

Charles B. Wood III Inc. \$2,750

AB.9.219.1



Poul de Løvernørn, *Description of a new improved chart of the islands of Shetland*, Copenhagen, [1787]



A sailing guide to the Shetland isles produced by an officer in the Danish navy, based on his observations taken during an expedition to the area the previous year when he found that existing sea-charts were inaccurate. He produced this English-language version as well as a Danish-language one.

Samuel Gedge Ltd. £1,250

AP.4.219.4

James Craig Annan, *Venice & Lombardy: a series of photogravures*, Glasgow, 1896

These images of Italy arose from a trip the Scottish photographer James Craig Annan made to the country in 1894 with the artist, David Young Cameron. The photographs he took during this trip, which are represented in this book, are regarded as some of his finest. They show his mastery of using a hand-held camera to capture fleeting moments (what Cartier Bresson would later define as the 'decisive moment'). The resulting 11 photogravures (etchings derived from the photographic negatives) are classics of the pictorialist tradition in late 19th-century and early 20th-century photography. The hugely influential American art dealer, publisher, and editor Alfred Stieglitz referred to one the prints reproduced in this book 'The white friars' as 'one of the greatest pictures ever made by means of the camera'. This copy is no. 5 of 75 copies, although it is highly likely, due to the book's great rarity, that far fewer than 75 copies in book form were actually produced.



Stewart & Skeels, LLP £15,000

In process (purchased with assistance from the Art Fund and Friends of the National Libraries)



## Map acquisitions

Maclure, William

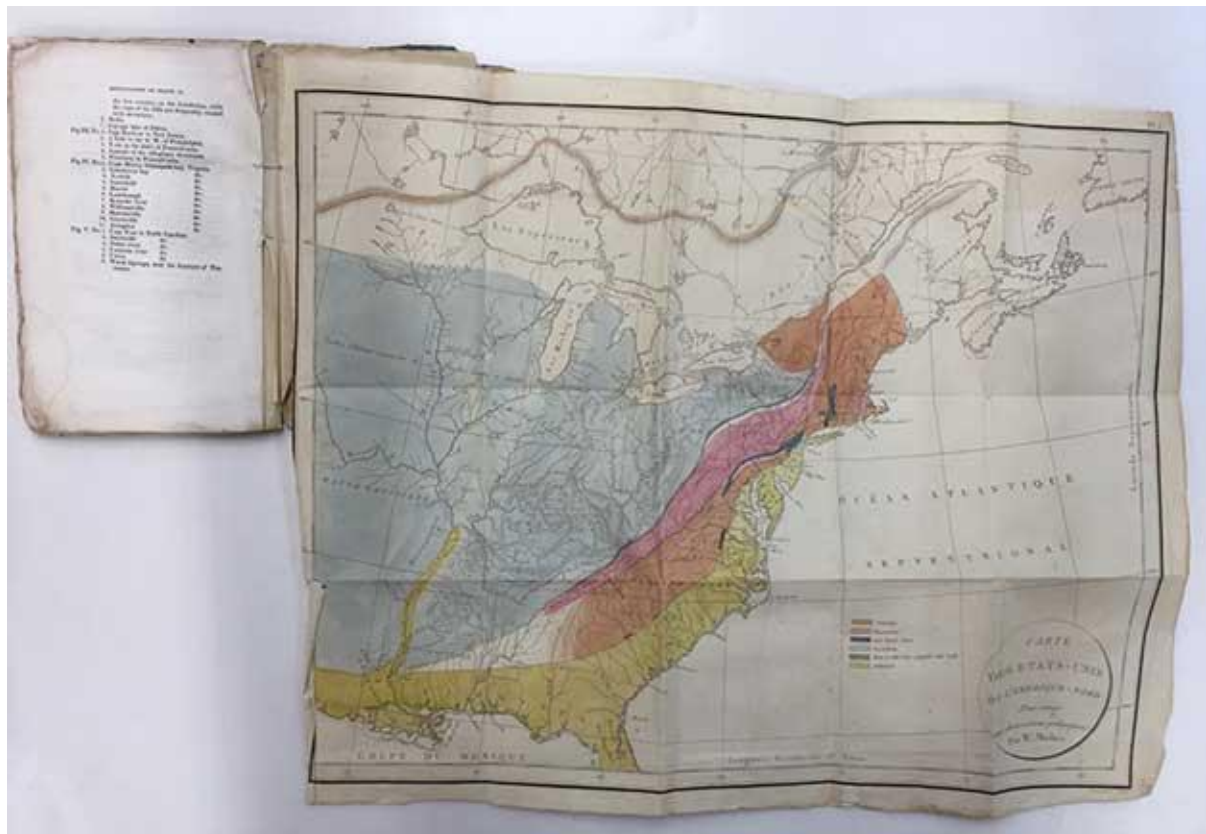
*Observations on the Geology of the United States of America; with Some Remarks on the Effect Produced on the Nature and Fertility of Soils by the decomposition of the different classes of rocks ....*

Philadelphia: Printed for the Author by Abraham Small, No. 112 Chesnut Street, and sold by Him and J. Melish, 1818.

Purchased courtesy of the R.W. Clark Fund

William Maclure was born in Ayr in 1763. After travelling to New York, France and Switzerland, he settled in Virginia after 1796. He learnt geology and decided to map the entirety of the United States. He travelled throughout most states of the Union to collect his data, wrote a scientific paper, the basis for this work, and created the map. It was first published in 1809. This is the third issue of the map. The previous issues, of 1809 and 1811 are extremely rare, making this third issue the most achievable and best value.

Maclure also collaborated with social reformer Robert Owen, best known in Scotland for his works at New Lanark, on a similar experiment at New Harmony, Indiana, becoming Owen's financial backer for the scheme.

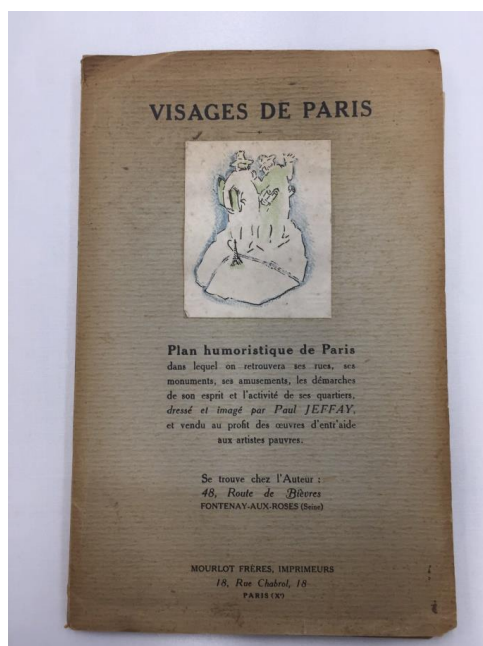


Jeffay, Paul (Saul Yaffie 1898-1957)

*Visages de Paris – Plan humoristique de Paris dans lequel on retrouvera ses rues, ses monuments, ses amusements, les démarches de son esprit et l'activité de ses quartiers, dressé et image par Paul Jeffay, et vendu au profit des oeuvres d'entr'aide aux artistes pauvres.*

Paris : Mourlot Frères, 1933

This entertaining and whimsical pictorial map of Paris was designed and published by the Scottish born Jewish artist, Paul Jeffay (born Saul Yaffie) in 1933. It was created and sold to benefit out-of-work fellow artists and offers a humorous pictorial snapshot of the city in the early 1930s. Artists and painters unsurprisingly feature prominently, with numerous comic vignettes of female nudes & artists at their easels. Along the banks of the Seine fishermen stand or sit with rods in hand, some admiring the group of beautiful mermaids basking in mid-stream, west of Notre Dame, whilst stalls line the Left bank. The principal buildings, streets and quartiers are all marked and their particular local identity, history & individual character illuminated in the vivid and entertaining pastiche of humorous vignettes that fills the map.



## Recent Acquisitions by the General Collections team

### Swann Gallery vintage posters auction success

The Library was successful on all three bids at the recent Summer Auction at the Swann Gallery, New York. The three lots were for vintage posters relating to, or produced in, Scotland. One lot was for an advertisement for National War Bonds from 1918. A further lot included two large posters for the 1961 and 1965 Edinburgh International Festivals, featuring strong design work by the French writer and visual artist Jean Cocteau. The final lot was for a small 3D model of Scotland's landscape used by Canadian Pacific Steamships to advertise the nation as a holiday destination for golfers.





## Advanced Higher Workshops

As in previous years, we are offering a programme of workshops for Advanced Higher students to support their transition from school to Higher / Further Education, to offer basic research skills, and to offer an experience of using a research Library. The 90-minute sessions are delivered by the learning team and staff from Reference Services between September and December. Twelve sessions have been offered to schools within the City of Edinburgh (via the school library service), and these are fully booked. We are also delivering additional sessions on request for schools outwith Edinburgh, e.g. Galashiels, Scottish Borders; Tranent, East Lothian; Shetland and Fife.

## Her Century



A partnership between the Moving Image and Sound Collections and Film Hub Scotland has produced a timely moving image touring programme: Her Century. The tour will visit cinemas and venues all over Scotland, with talks and a newly commissioned zine to accompany the films. Scotland's women lived through major social change in the twentieth century, challenging their roles in society and fighting for equality: at work and at home, classroom to croft, girlhood to motherhood. These films are screened together for the first time in a touring programme full of contemporary relevance and guaranteed to spark debate and discussion, with a dose of laughter and nostalgia. Curated by the MISC Learning & Outreach Officer Dr Emily Munro, these rarely-seen films follow women's histories through 100 years of filmmaking in Scotland. <https://www.filmhubscotland.com/projects/current/her-century/>

## Acquiring the Dean-Myatt Collection



In September the National Library of Scotland fully acquired the remainder of the Dean-Myatt Collection, of over 10,000 shellac discs (78s), alongside some wax cylinders, vinyl and cassettes from Mr Bill Dean-Myatt, based in the West Midlands.

The collection includes recordings dating back to 1898 - the first known commercial bagpipe record – and includes rare and representative examples of bagpipe music and Gaelic songs, music hall numbers and spoken word. Artists include Harry Gordon, Harry Lauder, Bob Smith, Willie Kemp and Heloise Russell-Ferguson. There are also many recordings from labels like Beltona, recording traditional music since 1923, Scottish Records from Dundee, Gaelfonn and Waverley Records which specialised in accordion music.

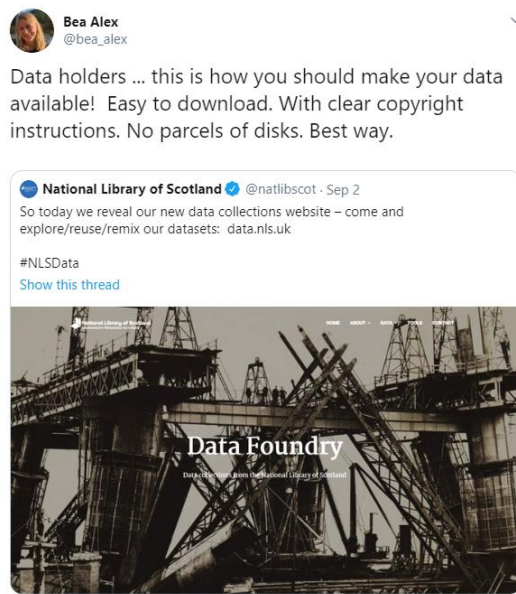
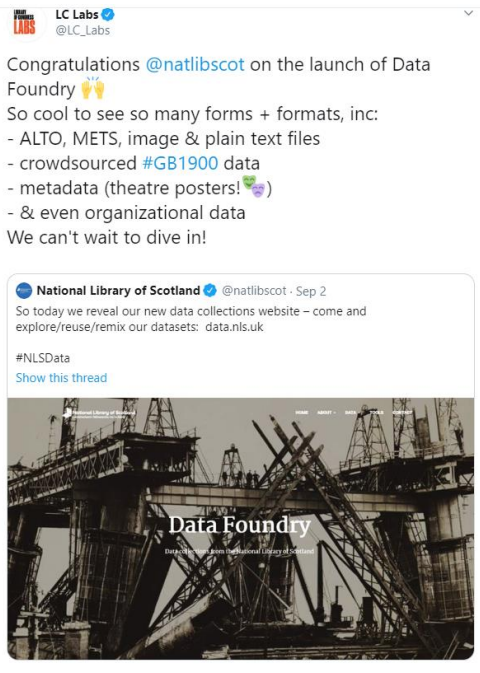
The acquisition was challenging, as it required the team to move thousands of heavy and fragile discs from Walsall to Edinburgh, but thanks to good preparation everything arrived in Edinburgh safe and sound.

So far, the National Library of Scotland has catalogued 3,000 of the 12,000 works and the process of cleaning and digitising is under way. *'The sound is currently locked into the format and we have to process it. Some will be available for click and play next year. Others will take longer to clear copyright and it may be that people will have to listen in the library. But eventually, we hope to digitise the entire collection and these fragile formats can go back into storage to preserve them for the future.'* Alastair Bell, Sound Collections Curator

# Digital Scholarship Service update

## Data Foundry

Following the Data Foundry successful launch on 2 September, work will now continue to publish one new dataset each month, and to encourage use of the collections. There has been positive feedback from library and research communities.





## Artist in Residence

The Creative Informatics programme has funded an Artist in Residence, who will work with the Library's collections. Over nine months, Martin Disley will work with image collections using GAN (generative adversarial networks), a form of neural network for unsupervised machine learning.



## October dataset released

The next dataset was published on the Data Foundry on 22 October. Publications from the [Edinburgh Ladies' Debating Society](#) include complete runs of two Edinburgh journals, 'The Attempt' (10 volumes, 1865-74) and its successor 'The Ladies' Edinburgh Magazine' (6 volumes, 1875-80). This dataset has been presented according to the Library's data standards: as ALTO XML/METS with image files, and as a plain text download

## University of Edinburgh Summer School visits

In August Colin McIlroy and other curatorial colleagues presented a selection of modern literary archive highlights to a visiting group of students from the University of Edinburgh's Summer School programme. Highlights included one of Alasdair Gray's ledgers; a form of commonplace book featuring a combination of diary entries alongside his unique prose, and illustrated throughout. Also shown were selections from the Muriel Spark archive; the students were able to trace the conception, development, and re-drafting of Spark's short story 'Chimes' across four decades.



Detail from Alasdair Gray's ledger.

Also in August Colin McIlroy and Ian Scott respectively showed items to illustrate the Library's modern literary manuscripts, and Harry Potter-related items, to a group of Chinese Masters students as part of the University of Edinburgh's pre-sessional English language course. Items from the modern manuscripts collections included letters from Muriel Spark's vast correspondence with significant literary figures such as Patricia Highsmith, John Updike, Doris Lessing (pictured) Graham Greene, and Elizabeth Taylor. We also showed letters from Robert Louis Stevenson and his wife Fanny Stevenson to Anne Jenkin.



Doris Lessing to Muriel Spark, on the opening night of Spark's play  
*Doctors of Philosophy*, 1<sup>st</sup> October 1962.



## Ian Rankin project

The project to catalogue and promote the Ian Rankin archive began on 2 September when Rosemary Hall started her post as Ian Rankin Project Curator. In her first weeks Rosemary completed an initial inventory, spoke to Ian Rankin about his archive, and began to promote the Library's acquisition of the Rankin archive through social media.



Manuscript of *Knots & Crosses*

## Scotland and the Arctic : a year of Conversation

In October Paula Williams, Curator of Maps, Mountaineering and Polar Collections, opened the day of conversation with a short presentation on Scotland's links with the Arctic, illustrated with items from the Library's collections. The seminar was hosted by University of Glasgow's School of Interdisciplinary Studies at The Crichton, Dumfries, and organised by Dr Lizanne Henderson and poet Tom Pow, and aimed to reassess Scotland's links with the Arctic regions. Participants in the conversation included representatives from the Scottish government introducing their new Arctic policy and from a polar think-tank; academics working in the fields of plastics, biological life-worlds and depiction of polar-bears; first nation storytellers from the Yukon and Greenland, as well as artists and musicians.

## At the Water's Edge: Photographs from the MacKinnon Collection

This exhibition will open on 15 November 2019 with National Galleries of Scotland's counterpart exhibition *Scotland's Photograph Album: The MacKinnon Collection* opening at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery on 16 November 2019. The Library's exhibition will run until 15 February 2020, with the NGS display closing the next day. *At the Water's Edge* is presented in celebration of Visit Scotland's 'Year of Coasts and Waters' in 2020. It will show a selection of individual photographs and albums from the MacKinnon collection, purchased with the support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Scottish Government and the Art Fund, relating to life in Scotland's coastal communities in the 19th and early 20th centuries. One side of the display case will focus on landscapes and images of traditional coastal communities in Scotland's Highlands and Islands, the other will be devoted to commercial and industrial life on the coast, featuring images of shipping and shipbuilding and people working in the fishing industry. Visitors will also have the opportunity to watch a slide show displaying images of some of the impressive glass plate photographs in the collection, as well as a short film *Awa' tae sea* which features an interview with a retired fisherman reflecting on his memories of working in the Buckie area. This film was commissioned by Alice Heywood, one of the Library's Learning and Outreach officers.

*Scotland's Photograph album* will be a large-scale exhibition held in the Portrait Gallery's main photographic exhibition space which will highlight all aspects of the c. 15,000 images in the collection and showcase a century of dramatic transformation and innovation in photography and Scotland's social history. The exhibition will feature more than 100 selected images from the MacKinnon collection, and transport the audience back to a period of changing rural communities, growing cities and enduring historic sites. MacKinnon project curator Blake Milteer and James Crawford, writer, publisher and presenter of BBC's *Scotland From the Sky*, will discuss key themes in the collection in the Hawthornden Lecture Theatre in the National Gallery on 19 November. An article devoted to Blake Milteer's work on the MacKinnon collection will appear in the next issue of *Discover*, and Blake will be giving a talk on the collection in the Board Room early next year.



## Loan and exhibition highlights

### Dunbar Town House: Bodies of Evidence touring exhibition

This exhibition explored the history, discovery, scientific analysis and reburial of a group of Scottish Soldiers taken prisoner after the battle of Dunbar in 1650. In order to fulfil a loan request from East Lothian Council a framed facsimile copy of the Peebles Covenant was created. The 'Kindome of Scotland by John Speed', the 'Letter to the Committee of the ...' and the 'brief narrative of the great victore ...' were displayed in a case alongside a facial reconstruction of one of the Scottish soldiers found in Durham.



Peebles Covenant copy on display

Three other Library items on display

The Scottish Battlefield Trust provided a demonstration activity of the Battle of Dunbar at the exhibition opening event and a reception for over thirty descendants of the 1650 Scottish Soldiers who had travelled from the USA and Canada to attend the re-enactment week in Dunbar.



Scottish Battlefield Trust battle reenactors



## Doors Open Day Conservation Workshop George IV Bridge

Doors Open Day gives the public free access to hundreds of fascinating buildings across Scotland. The Library has participated in the programme for many years. However, this year for the first time the offer included a series of scheduled guided tours of the conservation workshop.

Two members of the team, conservators Simona Cenci and Shona Hunter, delivered the tours. Each tour was fully booked. By the end of the day, a total of 44 people had visited the workshop, allowing them to appreciate and understand the work that is carried out. In a relaxed and informal manner, Simona and Shona talked about their work, their training, and the unusual tools and equipment that they use on a daily basis. A selection of model books, hand-tools and project documentation was displayed within the workshop, and people were given the chance to examine some paper fibres using our stereo microscope. This useful piece of equipment was bought with the help of a benefactor. In addition, the ultrasonic humidity chamber, once described as 'Snow White's coffin' was also demonstrated.



Doors Open Day tour of the conservation workshop

## Medical history meets medical students

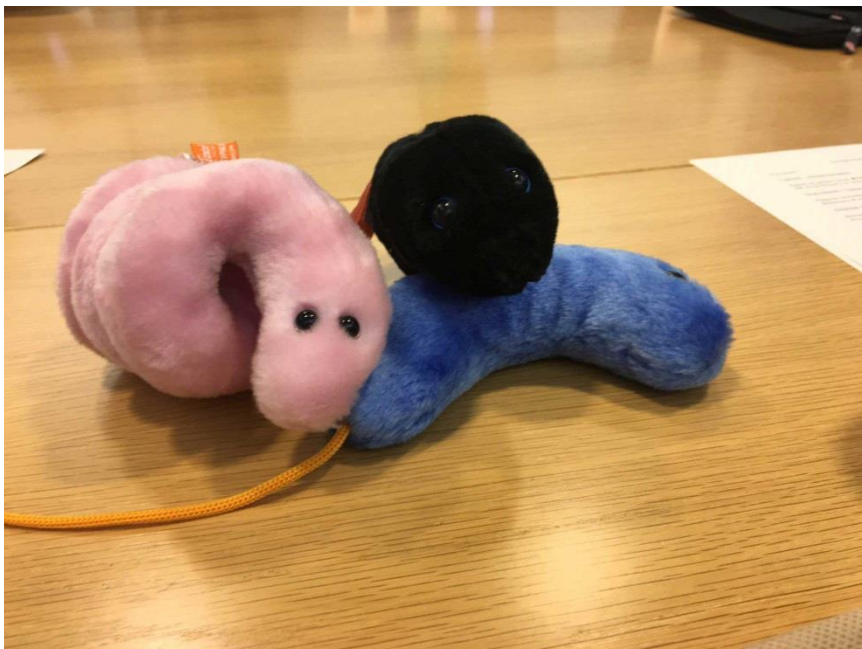
Francine Millard, Digital Projects Officer, and Fiona Laing, Curator, Official Publications, welcomed the 9<sup>th</sup> annual visit of Dundee University Medical School students; valuable digital and print resources form part of Dundee's BMSc International Health module.

These visits enable student doctors to take a year out from medical training to hone research skills to provide them with a deeper understanding of worldwide health issues.

Historical background on lethal diseases, such as cholera, plague and leprosy, can be found on the Library's [Medical History of British India website](#). As well as investigating attitudes and medical understanding through the past 150 years, students gain insight into the role of libraries in preserving knowledge and providing access to collections.

In this year's visit we explored the stigma that is still attached to leprosy sufferers today, and the modern instances of bubonic plague in Idaho and New Mexico. While touring the George IV Bridge Building we discussed the archiving of websites and social media and the future of print material in an increasingly digital world.

Students were introduced to cholera, plague and syphilis microbes: not in the laboratory as nineteenth century scientists in India were, but in the form of giant toy microbes (pictured).



## Mòd Ghlaschu / Glasgow Mòd 10 – 19 October 2019

The Library made its annual trip to join the Gaelic Mòd, which was held in Glasgow this year. This is our ongoing partnership with An Comunn Gàidhealach, and also in fulfilment of its Gaelic Language Plan commitments.

This is the fifth visit to join the Mòd in this way. The Mòd is a huge event in the Gaelic calendar and is attended not only by participants of all ages and local communities. A presence at the Mòd not only gives the Library a pop-up in a different town each year, but reaches a very broad sector of the Gaelic and local population.

A small exhibition of Gaelic treasures from 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> centuries was taken to the the Kelvin Hall and was on display from 8 – 28 October.



Display at Kelvin Hall



Show and tell event 11 October

BBC Alba contacted the Library prior to the Mòd offering to film an appeal for early Mòd programmes. This was broadcast as part of the evening news programme An Là, on 10 October.

The Library held two events prior to the Mòd. The first was a showing of Gaelic films on 9 October as part of the MISC Cine[sthesis] series.

We also participated in a Gaelic Activity Day organised with Glasgow Life on 11 October. Historic Gaelic sound recordings and archive film footage of the Highlands and Islands were running all day at Kelvin Hall. Naomi Harvey (Gaelic song PhD



researcher formerly on placement with Scotland's Sounds), organised and ran a Gaelic song taster workshop using the Library's new Gaelic music resource *Ceol nan Gaidheal*.

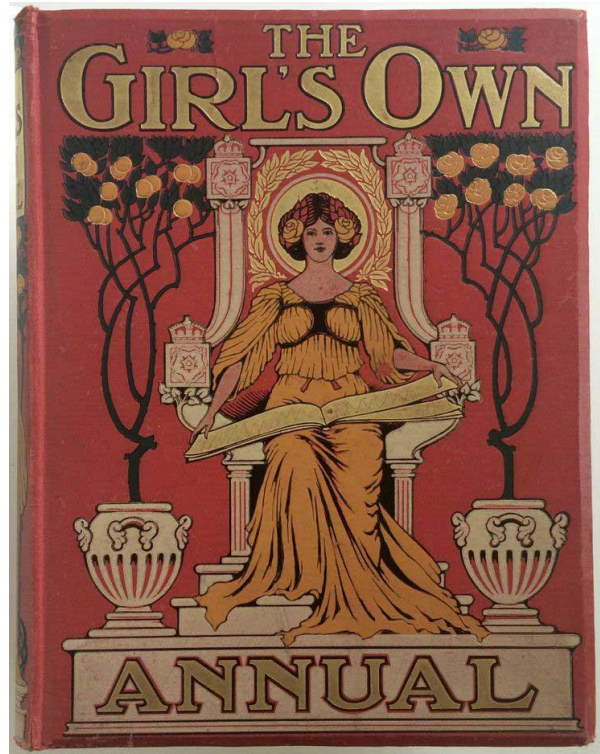
Finally, we had a stand in the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall for four days as part of the Mòd Fringe. This allowed us to engage with competitors and visitors about the Library's collections, services and projects, and we came away with a number of enquiries to follow-up. Additionally, it was a great opportunity to explain our interest in securing donations to add to the collections, e.g. early Mòd programmes, local and Gaelic pamphlets, film footage and sound collections.



Colleagues from throughout the Library were involved in the planning, preparation, helping and hosting of these events.

## Napier workshops

General Collections recently delivered workshops and tours for third year students at the School of Arts & Creative Industries, Napier University, in cooperation with the Visitors' Services and Metadata teams. The workshop compared coverage of science in "The Boy's Own Paper" (B.O.P) and "The Girl's Own Paper" (G.O.P) using both our printed and digital resources, and also acted as an introduction to the Library for students. Science articles in "B.O.P." often focused on the performative aspects of science such as conducting experiments for an audience whilst in G.O.P the focus was on scientific observation of things both in the natural and domestic realms.



## Behind Glass investigation into the exhibition of born digital content

A Guided Research Placement as part of Edinburgh College of Art's MSc by Research in Collections and Curating Practices has begun at the Library. A group of five students will be working on a project called Behind Glass, which will look at the topic of displaying born-digital content in exhibition environments. This is much needed work to help the Library address the conundrum of how eBooks, eJournals, web archive content and other born digital collections can be exhibited along with other collections content. The students are working with Sheena MacDougall and a variety of colleagues throughout the Library, and will be pitching their proposals for solutions shortly. A display of non-print legal deposit publications and other born digital collection items will be presented in March next year to coincide with International Women's Day.

## Scottish Ballet Event



NLS Video Preservation Technician Jess Cooling at work on the Scottish Ballet archive.

In 2019 Scottish Ballet turned fifty. The Moving Image and Sound Collections is working to digitise their archive, including original footage on film and videotape dating to the 1970s. On 3 October in Edinburgh, staff from Scottish Ballet and from the Library presented a behind-the-scenes look at the video digitation process now underway, and showed how digital restoration can bring performances back to life, with fascinating overlays of past and recent productions.

When one of the pieces of digitised footage was being shown, a member of the audience piped up “that’s me!” She then waited at the end to talk to staff about being a child dancer with the Scottish Ballet for a Christmas Nutcracker. It was just a small moment, but one which it is hoped will be replicated many times over when the full collection of around 300 recordings is fully digitised and available to view in March.



## New sound collections in the Unlocking Our Sound Heritage project



The UOSH project has picked up several collections from external stakeholders recently. At the end of July, a collection was brought in from University of Glasgow comprising a range of material, from academic seminars to field recordings of the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders' work-in, via the Scottish Theatre Archive.

Two large collections were picked up from the North East in August: Aberdeen City Art Gallery & Museum's collection of oral history, containing some spoken Doric and Aberdeenshire Museums Services' John Junner archive of traditional music. Mr Junner, a schoolteacher and musician from Strachan, was an acknowledged authority on the music of James Scott Skinner, a violinist, fiddler and composer from Banchory, and many local musicians were recorded. David Cook, of Aberdeenshire Council, said: *"Whilst the recordings are in good condition, they are threatened by physical degradation and some are stored on formats that can no longer be played. Being part of this national initiative will ensure some of our local recordings of Scots music will be digitally preserved and available to folk at home and abroad for future enjoyment and learning."*

In October, a collection from University of St Andrews which contains a wide range of formats from vinyl LP, via Shellac discs to open reels, was received. On the same pick-up run, the first phase of 500 recordings of traditional music from Springthyme Records was also brought in. The team are looking forward to finding out what they contain.