Letter from the Director

‘Rhodes Must Fall’. The wide and continuing interest in this issue, which blew up in late 2015, has brought academic historians into closer contact with the public than at any time in recent years. The fate of the statue of Cecil Rhodes, which adorns Oriel College, Oxford—Rhodes’s own alma mater to which he was a major donor—and the wider questions that this memorialisation throws up concerning relations between the present and past, has inserted matters historical into daily news bulletins and cultural discussions ever since.

Here at the IHR, in accordance with our mission to link together academic and public history, we have twice considered these issues in the current academic year. First, in October 2016, one of our seminars on the present state of History in the series ‘History Now and Then’ was devoted to it, and our distinguished contributors—Dame Jinty Nelson, Margot Finn, Martin Daunton and David Starkey—presented different views, as may be imagined. Then, earlier this year at our conference on ‘History, Heritage and Ideology’, before an audience of academics, fundraisers and the public, we considered how universities should commemorate benefactors. David Cannadine, Chair of the IHR Trust, our own fundraising organisation, used his experience teaching British History in American universities where the interrogation and rejection of the past by the present is even more advanced than in Britain, to inform his opening lecture on the subject. In four subsequent sessions we noted that these issues had troubled our Victorian and Edwardian forebears as well; considered the sometimes conflicting duties of institutions to uphold their reputations and honour their supporters; noted how other institutions like museums and galleries have dealt with similar problems; and considered more generally the intrinsic difficulty of viewing the past from the perspective of the present. No one would deny today from judging Rhodes himself harshly for his racism, exploitation and imperial arrogance. Yet in judging him now we are also judging those then who admired his achievements and who thought them worthy of a public accolade. Historical research may lead to justifiable changes of interpretation and view when considering an individual or an event. But many do demur when asked to sit in judgment on earlier ages which may have lacked this knowledge and which certainly lived by other standards. Even more object to an iconoclasm that would alter the physical fabric and tear down that statue of Rhodes along with many more images and memorials we have inherited. In this alternative view, we have a duty to be responsible custodians.

The majority of our audiences, like the majority of academic historians and the majority members of the public, seem to favour conserving rather than removing or altering our heritage. But no one who attended these deeply interesting academic events could be in any doubt that there is a powerful case on the other side: as speakers reminded us, when nations break their chains and claim self-government, historians and the majority members of the public, seem to favour conserving rather than removing or altering our heritage. But no one who attended these deeply interesting academic events could be in any doubt that there is a powerful case on the other side: as speakers reminded us, when nations break their chains and claim self-government, it is always the statues of their infamous oppressors that fall first.

Lawrence Goldman
April 2017

Institute of Historical Research

The Institute of Historical Research is a world-renowned centre promoting the study of history through academic research, the provision of primary resources, and support offered to historical scholars. We are a member institute of the University of London’s School of Advanced Study, which promotes the humanities within higher education.

The heart of the IHR is a 200,000 volume open-access library, specialising in the history of Britain, Western Europe and North America, from the 5th century to the present, featuring an unparalleled collection of printed primary sources. The IHR is also home to three research clusters and a publications department:

- The Centre for Metropolitan History specialises in urban history, especially the history of London.
- The Victoria County History is the flagship local history project which has been running since 1899.
- IHR Digital is a leader in digital humanities with 25 major resources online including British History Online.
- The Publications Department produces monographs, essays and a leading English language academic history journal, Historical Research.

Our staff teach Master’s degrees, supervise doctoral students and provide specialized research training. Each year, more than 20 early career fellows come to the IHR to finish doctorates or to start postdoctoral work, with an equal number of visiting fellows working alongside them.

The IHR hosts a full events programme, reflecting the vibrant research taking place in the historical profession today. We host annual conferences, lectures and over 70 research seminars per fortnight.

Since its foundation in 1921, the Institute has been promoting and supporting historical research. Though scholarship has changed and research methods have evolved, as we approach our centenary our aims remain the same: to facilitate the study of history among academics and by the public more generally.

Past and Future

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Cover image: New Planet (Новая планета) by Konstantin Yuon, 1921.
Tempera on cardboard. Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, Russia. via Wikiart.

Letter from the Director

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New Acquisitions
The Library continues to acquire an impressive number of books, covering numerous subjects, which are placed on the "New Books" shelf for a few weeks before making their way to the open access shelves or storage in the Tower. Some dust jackets are also displayed in a case in the stairwell between the ground floor and basement, but highlights are also posted online at www.history.ac.uk/library/collections/recenthighlights

Acquisitions range from Baronial reform and revolution in England 1258-1267 (2016) to The Biographical Turn: lives in history (2017) along with a substantial number of diaries, letters and other records from the First World War, reflecting publishers’ activity during this centennial period, and several new Latin American titles.

Accessibility
In November, the Library received an additional height adjustable table and PC with adaptive technology, including software to aid with on-screen reading, dyslexia, and dictionaries are installed on the ground floor and available for those needing such facilities. Additional software, such as screen magnifiers, is now also available on all the PCs in the Library.

History Day
The Institute of Historical Research and Senate House Library held the 4th Annual History Day on 15 November 2016. The event has grown each year, attracting nearly 200 visitors this year.

Alongside displays from libraries, archives and history organisations, this year there was a publishers’ fair. Organisations attending for the first time included the Royal Horticultural Society’s Lindley Library and History UK.

Panel sessions were held throughout the day. Professor Lawrence Goldman (IHR), Dr Alix Green (Essex) and Dr Suzannah Lipscomb (New College of the Humanities) discussed Public History. Dr Julian Harrison (BL) chaired a session on ‘Libraries versus Archives’, at which Isobel Hunter (TNH), Victoria Northwood (British Record Association), Dr Richard Espley (SHL) and Leslie Ruthven (Goldsmiths) debated similarities and differences, and gave advice on how to navigate them. At the Digital Research panel, Seif El Flashandi (IHR) introduced the Libraries of London project, Jonathan Blaney and Sarah Milligan (both IHR) explained digital citation and Emma Burnett (BHUL) discussed the importance of digital literacy.

Participants found the event immensely useful. Researchers benefit from being able to speak to librarians and archivists from a range of institutions in one place, and the history professionals have an excellent opportunity to network and update their knowledge allowing them to help researchers make links with other collections.

Before the event we collated blog posts about ‘Hope and Fear’ in library collections, a theme chosen to coincide with the 2016 Being Human Festival. This produced an impressive range of subjects, including Joanna Southcott’s (1750-1816) box of prophecies from the Harry Price collection in Senate House Library, a photograph of London’s first Gay Pride rally in 1972 from the Bishopsgate Institute’s Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE) archive, and an image of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius from the Geological Society.

Keep an eye on the event blog at historycollections.blogs.sas.ac.uk for podcasts and other material from the 2016 event, blog posts on the diverse history collections covered and information on the next event, scheduled for Autumn 2017.

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**CMH News**

**New early career lecturer**
We were delighted to welcome Dr Peter Jones as our new Early Career Lecturer in Urban History in January. Peter joins us from Queen Mary, University of London, where he completed a doctorate exploring literary representations of urban rootlessness, vagrancy and itinerancy on the streets of Victorian London. His main interests are in 19th-century literary and popular culture and his current research is exploring the ways that histories of street commerce and popular culture can disrupt familiar narratives of urban progress in 19th-century London. He is also working on a monograph entitled *Crossing the Bridges* which analyses tensions between popular mass leisure and Victorian improving institutions in south London.

Peter is the organiser of the forthcoming Literary London Society’s conference on *Fantastic London: Dream, Speculation and Nightmare* (Institute of English Studies, 13-14 July 2017), and is planning a number of events at the Centre, looking in informal street trade, the history of insecure dwelling, and architectural failure. While at the IHR, Peter hopes to bring together literary scholars, urban historians and geographers around topics of shared concern relating to the plots that shape large European cities. Proposals or expressions of interest for collaborative endeavours would be welcomed.

**Layers of London**
The Heritage Lottery Fund-supported project Layers of London is now coming towards the end of its development phase. We have started to add historic maps (including Morgan, 1682 and Rocque, 1746) maps and 1940s RAF aerial photographs to the test version of the website and community groups are currently testing the platform’s functionality. The website and app are also being tested by schools in Barking and Dagenham as we plan to promote it to schools as a platform to develop projects related to World War II. The test version of the website is now at alpha.layersoflondon.org/the-map and is available to anyone to upload material (photos, text, audio, video or datasets) on any place in London – simply click on ‘Add Note’ (you will be asked to create an account before uploading content).

Work on the website will continue over the coming months, but an application to the HLF for a second phase of funding is due to be submitted in June. You can find out more about developments at layersoflondon.blogs.sas.ac.uk, and get the latest news by following @layersoflondon on Twitter. If you would like to be involved in the project, complete the online form on the website and the project team will be in touch.

**English Furniture Makers Online**
The first phase of the English Furniture Makers Online project, funded by the Furniture History Society, is now into its sixth month and is making good progress. *The Dictionary of English Furniture Makers, 1660-1840*, has been digitised and we are now in the process of putting the information from that into a database along with apprenticeship and freedom records from the London Joiners’ Company, 1640-1720. It is hoped that a fully searchable online database will be available by the end of September 2017.

**VCH News**
**Castle Donington**
Thanks to the support of donors, supporters and volunteer researchers, VCH Leicestershire has produced its first book since 1964, a VCH short detailing the history of Castle Donington. Best known today for its airport and for the motor-racing circuit and rock festivals at Donington Park, Castle Donington was once a medieval town. It was a place where things happened – the castle was ordered to be destroyed in 1216 (but probably wasn’t), its rooms and the hedge round the park were vandalled by the royal army in 1322, four lords were executed, the mills were swept away by floods on three occasions, river crossings were garrisoned by the crown and taken for parliament in the civil war, there were food riots and the burning in effigy of Tom Paine. Nonconformity and Underditch Hundred. Watts also worked with Pugh’s successor, Christopher Elrington, on Warwickshire, specifically the cities of Birmingham (Warwickshire volume 7, published 1964) and the city of Coventry and borough of Warwick (volume 8, published in 1969). For Birmingham, he wrote the chapter on public health, in conjunction with Christopher Elrington, and also the section, no doubt because it was closely related, on the charities for the poor. In volume 8, he contributed to the section on the outlying parts of Coventry, Coventry’s mills, public education (with Diane Bolton), and several of Coventry’s churches. All of these entries were published after he left the VCH for a lectureship in General Studies at High Wycombe College in 1959. While his suburban career was in education – he was responsible for the foundation of the Open University in Hampshire, and was involved in the creation of the Solent U3A (The University of the Third Age) among other achievements – he remained wedded to the cause of local history publishing in the Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club, in the Economic History Review and, notably, a history of his home village, Titchfield: a History (1982).

At the time of his death, he was president of the Titchfield Historical Society. His work for the VCH is fondly remembered by his contemporary, Susan Reynolds, and is preserved, not only in the red volumes but also on British History Online. He is survived by his children, Peter and Annie.

**Pollard Prize**
The closing date for this year’s Pollard Prize is Friday 26 May. The prize is given to the best paper presented at an IHR seminar by a postgraduate student or by a researcher within one year of completing the PhD. All entries must be supported by a seminar convenor and should be sent to Dr Julie Spraggan at julie.spraggan@sas.ac.uk. First prize is a fellowship in the prestigious IHR journal, Historical Research, and £200 of Wiley books. More information can be found at www.history.ac.uk/fellowships/pollard-prize/

**IHR News**

The Russian Revolution - *Kerensky and his cult*  
Speaker: Boris Kolonitski (Saint Petersburg State University)  
20 June 2017, IHR

The Russian Revolution - *Lenin and Leninism: A Centenary Perspective*  
Speaker: James Ryan (Cardiff University)  
25 April 2017, IHR

Cromwell association event  
17 May 2017, IHR

Researching Archives in the Digital Age  
In association with the British Records Association  
18 May 2017, IHR

HobbsamwMemorial Lecture 2017  
In collaboration with Birkbeck  
Speaker: Catherine Memdale  
22 May 2017 Champions Hall, Senate House

The Russian Revolution - *Kaleidoscopes of Revolution: Regional approaches to Russia's revolutionary period*  
Speaker: Sarah Badcock (University of Nottingham)  
23 May 2017, IHR

Microhistory Colloquium  
2 June 2016, IHR

Thomas Frederick Tout: *Refashioning History in the 20th*  
9-10 June 2017, IHR

The Deana & Jack Eisenberg Lecture in Public History 2017  
Speaker: Eric Foner (Columbia University)  
19 June 2017, Beveridge Hall, Senate House

**IHR Events News**

Online pre-registration at all IHR Events is required

**Early American History Workshop**  
31 March 2016, IHR

**The Russian Revolution - Lenin and Leninism: A Centenary Perspective**  
Speaker: James Ryan (Cardiff University)  
25 April 2017, IHR

**Cromwell association event**  
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19 June 2017, Beveridge Hall, Senate House

**Historical Research**  
The next issue of Historical Research will appear in May (vol. xi, no. 248). Articles will include Alban Gautier on butchers and die-bearers in Anglo-Saxon courts; Sam Drake on the impact of the 100 Years’ War on the Cornish port of Fowey; Nicola Clarke on Howard women and religious change during the Reformation; and Zabu Nina Aziz on Indian anti-colonial activism in exile, 1905–20.

**IHR Research Guides**  
The latest research guide will appear in April *History Through Material Culture* by Leonie Hannan and Sarah Longair includes chapters on approaches to the material world, planning a research project, developing a methodology and locating and analysing sources.

Available to pre-order at: www.manchesteruniversitypress.co.uk/series/ihr-research-guides/
Night at the Library: Books of Hope and Fear

On 18 November, nearly 70 readers were trapped in the IHR Wohl Library at night. To make matters worse, they were set a series of puzzles from visitors from the past (a Dutch immigrant; the king’s printer, Thomas Newcombe; and Charles II himself), and challenged to escape the room before the sand in an hourglass ran out.

This, ‘Night at the Library: Books of Hope and Fear’, was the IHR Library’s contribution to the 2016 Being Human festival. The library was awarded a small grant, and sought to create an event that replicated some of the processes involved in historical research, making use of the library environment in an intriguing way for those who were so far unfamiliar with what the Library has to offer.

The theme drew on that of the festival and on the 350th anniversary of the Great Fire of London: given the anniversary and the IHR’s long-standing association with metropolitan history it seemed to be a natural fit. We were grateful to the readers who kindly put up with the inevitable disruption, but who we hope appreciate the opportunity to promote the library and the IHR within the School of Advanced Study and beyond.

We will now explore other ways of making use of the experience and the puzzles we developed, for example as exercises for Library induction tours, for training or educational events, and for an online version.

What did people think?

- re-ignited my interest in British history
- intriguing clues and lovely to explore the Library
- it made history come alive in my mind

The winning groups were offered a trip to the top of the Tower for a glass of something fizzy and a panoramic view of London by night, including Wren’s St Paul’s Cathedral.

The lecture was followed by a seaside-themed reception, complete with fish and chips, cornish pasties, and samples of Caspyn Cornish gin. We were able to screen some lovely footage from the Wellcome Collection in the background, as well as tourism films from the mid-20th century, which aimed to entice visitors to seaside towns. Punch and Judy man, Professor Robert Styles, entertained and informed the guests at the reception. We watched as Robert set up his traditional Punch and Judy theatre and he then led the “backstage” tours, displaying a collection of puppets, including some antiques, and answered questions about the history of Punch and Judy.

The event also provided a launch for the associated exhibit, also titled By the Seaside. The exhibit covered fashion and morality at the beach; seaside cures; art, music and literature inspired by the seaside; the close connection of ice cream with the English beach; and beach photography and tourism.

The central case displayed a fantastic Edwardian bathing costume, on loan from IHR Wohl Librarian, Matthew Shaw. Kelly A Spring curated the excellent display on the history of ice cream, tracing the introduction of ice cream by Italian immigrants, and the early migration of that ice cream to the seaside.

The South East Archive of Seaside Photography (SEAS) kindly loaned us about 20 incredible framed tintypes and ambrotypes, portraits of couples and groups at the beach. The early beach photographer was itinerant and was perceived at the time as more vulgar salesman than photographer, regarded with at best indifference and frequently with contempt. The work produced by these practitioners has been readily dismissed as inartistic disposable wares – cheap seaside ephemera. These photographers provided while-you-wait ambrotypes (photographs on glass) or ferrotypes (photographs on enameled iron, commonly called tintypes) and these curated items provide an opportunity to reconsider the previous aesthetic, technical and cultural disregard with which they were treated. These also provide images of late 19th and early 20th English couples, friends, and families who might not have been able to afford studio portrait photography and who, therefore, are less often captured in photos. It was intriguing to learn more about some of the habits and practices common to early beach tourism in England and about how these have changed. Drinking of large glasses of seawater was a standard part of the seaside cure in the late 18th century; some doctors felt it was acceptable to add milk to the salt water in order to make it – allegedly – more palatable. Seawater was even bottled and sold inland, much as spa water was then and still is. Measures of modesty and the measures used to enforce modest behaviour shifted dramatically over time. It was entirely acceptable at some resorts for men to bathe naked up into the Victorian period, and regulations about gender segregated bathing fluctuated with time and geography. There is, of course, an element of the marketplace in all of these matters. Local governments and business-people used the need for modesty as an excuse for forcing bathers into rented bathing machines, tents, huts, and changing rooms.

By the seaside - event and exhibit at the IHR

The IHR enjoys an associate fellowship connection with Historic England and this year we invited some of the Fellows from Historic England to deliver a lecture. This took place on 21 November, and was a wonderful and well-attended evening. John Cattell provided an overview of the work of Historic England. Allan Brodie then provided a stimulating talk on change to seaside communities, their beaches, and waterfronts, accenting with beautiful photographs, old and new. Brodie has already published books on English seaside resorts and on Blackpool and his new book on seaside and seafronts in England is well underway.

Joe Acheson of Hidden Orchestra, and his publisher, Full Thought Publishing, kindly allowed us to set up a listening station at the exhibit, featuring Acheson’s Marconi and the Lizard EP. As Acheson explains: “Lizard Point is the most southerly point of the UK mainland. Radio pioneer Guglielmo Marconi built a hut there in 1901, to experiment with sending radio signals over longer distances – it was in that hut that the first ever ship-to-shore SOS signal was received. I spent a week there in August 2016, in the National Trust’s first ever sound artist residency. The ‘Marconi and the Lizard EP is the result of that residency.’

We intend for this to be the first in a series of annual events of this kind, in collaboration with Historic England.
The English Furniture Makers Online project (EFMO) began in September 2016, a collaboration between the Furniture History Society and the Centre for Metropolitan History at the IHR. The first phase has been generously funded by the Furniture History Society. The aim of the project is to explore the crucial role English furniture makers played in the social and cultural history of England over the 300 year period, 1600-1900. The project will bring together scholars and specialists to create a unique resource to make freely available information about the lives and work of English furniture makers.

The first phase of the project will last for 12 months and culminate in a fully searchable online database. Central to this phase is the digitisation of material published in Dictionary of English Furniture Makers, 1660 – 1840 (DEFM). The project will publish the digitised material online with a suite of search and analysis tools that will allow researchers to access the material in different ways, whether through casual browsing or sophisticated scholarly inquiry. Enhancing the information from the DEFM will be the apprenticeship bindings and freedom registers of the London Joiners’ Company, 1640 – 1220. This new evidence throws light on the wider practice of the London furniture trade in the period and takes the project forward in important ways.

Following the completion of this initial phase the project aims to move into a second stage, where the emphasis will be on new research to broaden the thematic and chronological scope of the project. Utilising the technical infrastructure developed in the first phase, new research will provide access to new sources, new scholarship, and new learning and teaching materials to create an enduring resource that will foster an ongoing engagement with the history of the English furniture industry.

This research will investigate the ways in which British furniture trades operated over the period 1600 – 1900, a period of enormous change and innovation. Through a case study approach, and by sampling particular key moments, the project will explore the dynamics of the trade and the various occupations involved.

The primary focus will be on the people who fuelled the industry: apprentices, journeymen, specialised artisans and craftsmen, well-heeled citizens and their clientele; 18th- and 19th-century furniture companies, and the so-called gentry masters and slaughter shop workers who supplied the warehouses and department stores that emerged in the aftermath of the Industrial Revolution.

The methodological approach will not be one conventional to furniture history: applying a subject-based methodology which links labelled artefacts and documentary evidence to particular makers. This approach limits the examination to rare survivals with most attributions made to exclusive tradesmen at the top of the furniture-making hierarchy and thus excludes the vast majority.

The project aims to take a holistic approach by combining the methodologies of furniture, art, and history, and cultural history with the methodologies of design, social, economic, political and urban history, to produce a broad examination of Britain’s furniture trades and the people it employed. Primary information uncovered through research can be tested against the theories and methodologies established in the published scholarship. Sources such as inhabitants’ lists, tax assessments, and 19th- century census records provide systematic information that offers a snapshot of particular moments. Cross-referencing this information with lively company and trade society accounts, and with miscellaneous sources such as inventories, tradesmen’s accounts, wills and personal correspondence, enables an examination of how and why tradesmen became associated; how their labour forces were structured; how they organised their manufacture and retail; and how they interacted with their consumers.

The intention is to identify the various occupations and furniture makers in the trade, through a consideration of how the industry was organised and how it changed over the years; how craftsmen and workshops interacted; how they adapted their manufacture to meet consumer demand with the rapid and constant transformations in designs, styles and forms of furniture, and technical advancements. How did furniture makers retail their products: through sub-contractual relationships, or directly to patrons and the general public, and how did this evolve over the centuries? How did the industry adapt its practices to the social, cultural and political events that occurred in Britain from the beginning of the 17th century to the end of the Victorian era?

The trade card of William Gardner at ‘The Sign of the One Cane Chair’ in St. Paul’s Churchyard, 1703. Source: Lincoln Record Office, 2.4RC/1a/11/6;17.

Crown and country: Research profiles in the IHR

The IHR is home to many different research projects. Here we highlight two studies written by members of the Institute, one medieval and the other modern. Jenny Stratford, a Senior Research Fellow at the IHR, has been honoured for her study of the treachery of Richard II and the English Royal Treasure. Royal Holloway, where Nigel Saul and Caroline Barron were invaluable advisors. It deals with the treasure itself, and its use in war and peace in the 14th and 15th centuries. A royal treasure was a bank and an arm of diplomacy, as well as an expression of magnificence. In present-day terms this treasure was worth billions. The roll begins with eleven crowns. It goes on to list the secular and liturgical jewels and plate in 1206 entries. Significantly most objects are given weights and values, so that the most conspicuous can be traced in earlier and later reigns.


Traditionally the last Friday in November sees the ceremonial inaugural session (the rentrée solennelle) of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres with a big audience under the great dome of the Institut de France on the left bank of the Seine. My medal was announced from the podium with those of the other prize winners. The committee which awards the medal had met earlier in the year and I was contacted soon afterwards – to my surprise and delight. I had no idea my book was eligible.

What is the book about?

In the 1990s a unique document was rediscovered in the National Archives at Kew. This long roll in French measuring over 28 metres listed Richard II’s treasure in 1398 or 1399 near the end of his reign. It was the starting point for my book, an Arts and Humanities Research Council supported project based at Royal Holloway, where Nigel Saul and Caroline Barron were invaluable advisors. It deals with the treasure itself, and its use in war and peace in the 14th and 15th centuries. A royal treasure was a bank and an arm of diplomacy, as well as an expression of magnificence. In present-day terms this treasure was worth billions. The roll begins with eleven crowns. It goes on to list the secular and liturgical jewels and plate in 1206 entries. Significantly most objects are given weights and values, so that the most conspicuous can be traced in earlier and later reigns.

Is there a French perspective?

The inventory was compiled after the truce with France at Andrés in 1396, and after Richard’s second marriage to the child Isabeau, daughter of King Charles VI. There was an influx of French goldsmiths’ work – Isabelle’s immensely rich trouseau and gifts from the Valois. French and English donors commissioned gifts bearing the symbols of the peace process, so unpopular with Richard’s opponents, the English and French royal badges of the white hart and the broom. The inventory sheds further light on the famous Wilton Diptych in the National Gallery. Ironically, in 1415 Henry V pledged many of the Valois gifts to his war captains to finance the Agincourt expedition. The rich Agincourt material I explored for the book involved me in the planning of the Agincourt exhibitions in the Tower of London and in the Musée de l’Armée in Paris, as well as other commemorations organised by the city livery companies in 2015. What is this a unique document?

In 14th-century France formal inventories of the valuables of the Valois kings and princes were taken by their Chambres des comptes. There is no comparable English series until the Tudor period. Edward III had decreed that everything held in his chamber (the department responsible for the royal treasure) was secret and exempt from the scrutiny of the exchequer. Objects from the English treasure usually emerged on occasion only when they were pledged to guarantee loans to the crown. The inventory corrects the longstanding historiographical bias...
Tell me about the website ‘Richard II’s treasure’

The website was produced in collaboration with the IHR in 2007 as part of my work for the Richard II treasure project based at Royal Holloway. It was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Special thanks are due to all of my collaborators, especially the IHR, who made this website, with its detailed text and over 50 images, such an enduring and frequently visited resource. It has led to several television appearances for the roll.

When did you first use the IHR on a regular basis?

In the early 1980s I came across the wonderful executors’ papers of John, duke of Bedford, brother of Henry V – another rare survival. Much of the non-archival research for my book, The Bedford Inventories, the Worldly Goods of John, Duke of Bedford, Regent of France (1389–1425), published in 1993, was carried out using the incomparable resources in the Institute for late medieval English and French history.

What changes do you note in the Institute over the years?

There are two big changes, the first being geographical. The Public Record Office in Chancery Lane moved to Kew and became The National Archives. The British Library moved from the British Museum to St Pancras. Whereas it was almost automatic for postgraduates and researchers to come together on an almost daily basis in the IHR after working in either place, a sensible day’s work today often prohibits visiting more than one institution. Thank goodness the flourishing seminar programme regularly brings people with common interests together at the IHR. The second change is the then unforeseen world of the internet. Since the refurbishment this is happily catered for in the IHR. With unmiring courtesy the library staff now assist readers to access online as well as printed resources. Among other changes there are now more courses offered through the IHR, such as the palaeography course I teach each year to postgraduates of the University of London and other universities. I also serve on the committee of the Friends of the IHR. The Friends play an important support role in the difficult current financial climate and are always glad to welcome new members.

Dr Martin Spychal studied for his PhD at the IHR between 2012 and 2016

Dr Martin Spychal, many congratulations on the successful defence of your doctoral thesis on the Great Reform Act. What is it about?

It’s about the parliamentary boundary changes that took place in England in 1832. It considers the factors that made the wholesale reconstruction of England’s electoral map a necessity, before demonstrating how the country’s first ever boundary commission surveyed England’s ancient electoral system and developed the 1832 Boundary Act.

What brought you to the IHR?

The kind encouragement of Arthur Burns, my MA dissertation supervisor at King’s College London. He prompted my application in the summer of 2012 for one of two AHRC/ESRC PhD studentships advertised by the IHR. I started work on a studentship (under the supervision of Miles, Philip and Kathryn Rix [History of Parliament]), I came across the working papers of the boundary commission, a miscellaneous Treasury file (T72) at The National Archives. While these documents had been held since 1854, and known about by historians of cartography, no-one had completed an analysis of the archive, let alone attempted to correlate its multitude of maps, correspondence and reports into the story of 1832. I also realised that the boundary commission was staffed by men with links to the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, giving the SDUK and Brougham papers held by UCL a whole new relevance to the Great Reform Act.

What people seminar in 2015, which came second in the Pollard Prize, and which will be published shortly in Historical Research. The library, particularly the parliamentary and electoral politics collections, has also been invaluable, and the training courses for historians have covered everything that I’ve needed.

Your thesis also examines a new spirit in British government which emerged in the 1830s. What was this spirit and why is it important?

I found that an authentic desire to be impartial and to complete a ‘scientific’ investigation into Britain’s electoral system was a guiding principle of the boundary commissioners. On one level, discussing their work using such language provided the Whig government with a means of deflecting Tory and Radical criticism of boundary reform. It also reflected the habits and language of a burgeoning culture of scientists, geographers, statisticians and political economists during the 1820s who wanted to create a science of government. Significantly, the boundary commission was the first big investigatory commission of the 1830s, and the techniques that it developed, and the language it used, were appropriated by better-known bureaucrats of the period, such as Edwin Chadwick and Joseph Parkes.

Is there a hero in your story?

The one and only Thomas Drummond, a Royal Engineer and inventor who had worked for the Ordnance Survey during the 1820s and developed the Light into the Drummond Light by 1830 (later used to illuminate the world’s theatres). After being handicapped by Lord Brougham to supervise the commission, Drummond used his experience on the Ordnance Survey, as well as his mathematical expertise and natural aptitude for project management, to supervise a highly ambitious survey of England’s ancient electoral system. You can read more about him in my forthcoming article in Historical Research.

You currently work for the House of Commons. Does the research for your doctorate inform your work for HoP?

I work as a research fellow for the House of Commons 1832-1945 section, writing biographies of MPs and articles on constituency politics, primarily between the first two Reform Acts, so yes, every day! The skills that I developed over the PhD help with the quick turnaround required for our articles. My research has also led me with a geekish knowledge of constituencies, franchises, boundaries and polling places in the reformed electoral system as well as a series of further research questions about the impact of 1832 that constantly inform my work.

Does the story you tell about 1831-2 have any relevance to the work of the Boundary Commission today, or to any other aspect of the reform of parliament in our age?

Yes! The 1831-2 boundary commission and the 1832 Boundary Act established a legislative and practical template for boundary reform that was replicated in 1867-8, 1884-5 and 1918. Today boundary reform remains the chief means of electoral reform, and the difficulties facing the current boundary commission are similar to those experienced in 1832. I believe that by ensuring that parliamentary boundaries remain consistent with community identities, registration data, and the lofty ambition to find a framework for completing boundary reform in an impartial, or politically ‘fair’ manner.

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How has the Institute helped your work develop?

I attended the IHR Library and seminars on a regular basis in the IHR after work. The library, particularly the parliamentary and electoral politics collections, has also been invaluable, and the training courses for historians have covered everything that I’ve needed. The kind encouragement of Arthur Burns, my MA dissertation supervisor at King’s College London. He prompted my application in the summer of 2012 for one of two AHRC/ESRC PhD studentships advertised by the IHR. I started work on a studentship (under the supervision of Miles, Philip and Kathryn Rix) with the broad remit of parliamentary boundary change in 19th-century Britain.

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The centenary of the Russian Revolution: New directions in research

Dr Matthew Rendle
University of Exeter
Guest editor, Historical Research: The Centenary of the Russian Revolution: New Directions in Research (February 2017)

This year marks the centenary of one of the major events of modern world history – the Russian Revolution. The global influence of what happened in Russia in 1917 is undeniable. The collapse of the tsarist empire in the February Revolution threatened to change the course of the First World War, whilst the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks in the October Revolution created the world’s first self-styled communist state, spreading inspiration and fear across the globe, and laying the foundations for international geopolitics for the rest of the 20th century. Even now, 1917 remains relevant, continuing to provide a source of ideas for social movements across the world, while its ‘mistakes’ are invoked by the current Russian leadership to justify its actions in Crimea and Ukraine.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that plans to commemorate the centenary have long been underway. An ambitious multi-volume collection entitled ‘Russia’s Great War and Revolution’ has been in the pipeline for much of the last decade and has started to produce its first volumes. Other edited volumes are on the verge of publication, ranging from collections of articles looking at key areas and social groups to specialist studies of particular themes. Conferences and lecture series have already started and will gather pace this year, no doubt resulting in further publications. Web projects are also underway, including an ambitious project to create a diary of 1917 through quotes from the writings of contemporaries.

With these developments in mind, the February 2017 issue of Historical Research has been devoted to the Russian Revolution. It has a slightly different and, we hope, complementary agenda: to showcase a sample of research currently being undertaken by early and mid-career scholars on the revolutionary period, broadly defined to range from late imperial Russia to the 1920s, regardless of topic. There are undoubtedly many subjects currently being researched, but this special issue highlights a number of contributions to the existing historiography. The first contribution is to the traditional area of politics where Alastair Dickens and Lara Douds use distinct analytical concepts to examine the February Revolution in Krasnoiarsk and the Bolsheviks’ coalition with the Left Socialist Revolutionaries in late 1917 into early 1918. The second contribution relates to space. Clearly, at a certain level, every town, village, factory and regiment had its own revolution, and articles by Dickens, Kitty Lam, Yuenin Rachel Lin, Matthew Rendle and Christopher Gilley demonstrate how the revolution evolved in different ways in different places and how controlling various spaces was crucial to ensuring a Bolshevik victory. The third contribution is an attempt to highlight the role of revolutionary justice in its various forms. There remains a tendency to ignore law as something irrelevant amidst the violence of revolution and civil war, but there was a vibrant debate over revolutionary justice that made clear its importance in building a new state and regulating state-liberties, equal rights and democracy.

The special issue is freely available throughout 2017 at onlineibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/hisr.v90.247/issue/1

The Russian Revolution

Past and Future

The special issue of Historical Research: The Centenary of the Russian Revolution: New Directions in Research (February 2017) is freely available.

Matthew Rendle
University of Exeter
Guest editor

The centenary of the Russian Revolution: New directions in research

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Matthew Rendle
University of Exeter
Guest editor
The Medieval Libraries of Great Britain database

Sara Charles, Editorial Assistant, Bibliography of British and Irish History, IHR

At IHR Digital, we are always interested in new digital projects at other institutions, and we feel that Past and Future is an ideal forum to showcase new developments from outside the IHR. A new online database from the University of Oxford titled Medieval Libraries of Great Britain (MLGB3-mlgb3.bodleian.ox.ac.uk) is a great digital resource that will be of use to all medieval historians, but particularly to those concerned with book history, libraries and provenance. It also has the potential to open up new ways to study patterns in textual transmission.

Many historians in these fields will be familiar with the output of Neil Ripley Ker, an Oxford palaeographer who tirelessly compiled volumes of catalogues charting Anglo-Saxon and medieval manuscripts, expertly recording palaeographic and codicological details, as well as provenance data. The dissolution of the monasteries was responsible for the widespread destruction and dispersal of established medieval book collections, and therefore a specific need was identified to reconstruct the contents of monastic libraries. The Medieval Libraries of Great Britain is an invaluable resource, and has become the standard work of reference for contextualizing libraries and provenance. It also has the potential to open up new ways to study patterns in textual transmission.

Fortunately, Richard Sharpe, Professor of History at Wadham College, and James Willoughby, a research fellow in medieval history at New College and currently a research fellow in medieval history at Wadham College, and a professor of history at Wadham College, and a professor of history at Wadham College, are familiar with the output of Neil Ripley Ker, an Oxford palaeographer who tirelessly compiled volumes of catalogues charting Anglo-Saxon and medieval manuscripts, expertly recording palaeographic and codicological details, as well as provenance data. The dissolution of the monasteries was responsible for the widespread destruction and dispersal of established medieval book collections, and therefore a specific need was identified to reconstruct the contents of monastic libraries. The Medieval Libraries of Great Britain is an invaluable resource, and has become the standard work of reference for contextualizing libraries and provenance. It also has the potential to open up new ways to study patterns in textual transmission.

The MLGB3 entries provide much more information on provenance evidence, and on how the book was catalogued, shelf-marked, and shelved in its medieval library setting. The addition of manuscript images available under the creative commons licence also greatly enhances the user experience. Although the images are high-quality when expanded, they lack any further digital tools to zoom or navigate, and therefore a link to the catalogue description from the holding institution might be beneficial to the user (image 3). Other advantages of the database include searchability by author or title, medieval catalogue, modern location, shelf-mark, pressmark... the options are almost endless. The variety of ways to search, filter and sort will appeal to scholars (particularly from library backgrounds). For more unstructured exploration, the browse function offers plenty of interesting discoveries (image 4).

A search on a medieval library, such as Barking Abbey, will display the original contents of the institution, further divided into their modern locations. Italicized symbols to the left of the manuscripts indicate the provenance evidence. For example: e signifies ex-libris, m signifies margina, providing a visually comprehensive display. For now, only manuscripts are listed, but printed books will be added as the database expands. Unfortunately, there is no RSS feed to alert users to new updates (image 5).

As the database grows, it will inform researchers on not just collections of medieval libraries, but the acquisition history of particular authors or texts. As a resource for book historians, it offers a great deal of information for future researchers.
Open access monographs at the IHR

Dr Philip Carter, Head of IHR Digital, which is jointly responsible for the Humanities Digital Library

A selection of scholarly books, published by the IHR, is now freely available online. A number of titles, taken from the IHR’s Conference Series, appear as part of the ‘Humanities Digital Library’ which was launched at the start of the year (www.humanities-digital-library.org). The Library is a new ‘open access’ (OA) publishing platform for peer reviewed scholarly books. It is an initiative of the School of Advanced Study, University of London, and has been created by the IHR’s Digital team, along with the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies.

Currently the Humanities Digital Library includes monographs in history, law and classics. It is a major extension of titles, taken from other disciplines researched in institutes across the School of Advanced Study. External partners include the British Library, who host and manage the Library in collaboration with the School of Advanced Study. The IHR has also contributed 20 titles to the new Library, published by the Institute of Historical Research.

Open access—the provision of free, accessible and re-useable scholarly content—is now a feature of humanities journal publishing. To be eligible for the next Research Excellence Framework (REF) and the latest Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), it will now be crucial to publish OA monographs and other materials. Monographs must be available as OA, either via a journal or an author’s institutional repository. Attention is now shifting to open access for other publishing formats, notably the scholarly monograph. Given the monograph’s importance to the humanities, it is a move promoting an understandable debate over questions of academic quality and sustainability. At the same time, the momentum is now with those advocating open access monographs. In December 2016 the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) stated its intention ‘to move towards an open access requirement for monographs in the exercise that follows the next REF (expected in the mid-2020s)’. And in response, academic publishers are gearing up for what looks like being a significant development in scholarly book publishing.

The Humanities Digital Library is the IHR’s and the School of Advanced Study’s contribution to this new landscape. They are not alone in their endeavour. Across the UK, new university presses are being launched as open access publishers, while commercial and established university imprints are also exploring OA options for books.

In this populous arena, the Humanities Digital Library is distinctive in two ways. First, it offers a mixed-environment: a combination of first-time digital monographs together with new PDF and eBook versions of works that previously only existed in print. Examples from the IHR’s Conference Series include Gender and History (essays in honour of the medievalist Pauline Stafford) and A History of the French in London, which were first published in print in 2012 and 2013 respectively.

Second, the Humanities Digital Library offers a new flexibility in publishing formats. Monographs and edited collections of 80-100,000 words will likely remain the dominant currency. But we are also inviting historians to experiment with shorter (and perhaps longer) forms where their research is best communicated in a scholarly text of, say, 40,000 words.

In addition, the Library makes possible a new kind of ‘born-digital’ monograph. Innovations include hyperlinks from books to supplementary content—for example, source material or extra images—that can’t be accommodated in traditional print formats. These are opportunities with the potential to shape how historical research is written and read in the future.

In each case the work of commissioning, peer reviewing, editing and promoting new historical monographs will remain with the IHR’s publishing team. What changes are the potential scope, scale and ambition of these new works—and, as well as the discoverability and availability of existing titles previously published by the Institute and now available as open access.

These opportunities are important for building external partnerships. Of these, that with the Royal Historical Society is especially notable for the IHR. The RHS’s ‘New Historical Perspectives’ series will include monographs, edited collections and short form works by early career historians who are within a decade of having received their doctorate. Many other publishers of open access books require sizeable author fees, while OA university presses waive charges only for ‘home’ academic staff. Thanks to an RHS / IHR partnership, ‘New Historical Perspectives’ series are also OA, with works published open access with no charge to the author.

Following the launch of the Humanities Digital Library, further IHR books and journals are planned for release over the next year. The first monographs in the ‘New Historical Perspectives’ series are also OA, with volumes due for publication in late 2017 and early 2018.

We are also contacting other potential partners, such as learned societies, museums or galleries, in order to extend the range of historical publishing on the platform. If you’re an early career historian (or someone working in partnership with a recent PhD), or if you belong to a potential partner organization, please do get in touch. Contact details are available on the Humanities Digital Library website.

IHR welcomes new staff

Maureen McTaggart, Media and Public Relations Officer, School of Advanced Study & Vanessa Rockei, Fellowships and Publications Officer

VCH welcomes new editor, Professor Angus Winchester

The IHR’s Victoria County History (VCH) project has appointed a new editor, Professor Angus Winchester from Lancaster University. Professor Winchester brings a wealth of knowledge to the role, having taken up his post (one day per week for a fixed term of one year to November 2017).

The VCH is an important resource for county and local historians as well as anyone researching genealogy and family history. Professor Winchester, who honed his local historian skills while an assistant editor with the VCH in Shropshire and as a lecturer at the University of Liverpool in the 1980s, will lead an initiative that has been built into a national treasure over 117 years and which is without parallel. He has also been a member of the VCH National Advisory Board since 2007.

‘Having been associated with the VCH for so long, it is an honour to step into this role’, says Professor Winchester: ‘I look forward to working with colleagues in the Institute of Historical Research and with the wider local history community across the country, as the VCH moves forward in the changing world of local history research and publishing in the 21st century.’

Professor Winchester co-led a major Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded project, ‘Contested common land: environmental governance, law and sustainable land management’ (c.1600-2006).

This was an interdisciplinary study, linking environmental history and environmental law, and has contributed to current policy debates on the future management of common land.

Since 2010 Professor Winchester has taken the lead in reviving work for the VCH in Cumbria at Lancaster University, developing a volunteer-based project under the auspices of the Cumbria History Trust, written and edited several books and scholarly editions including two major 17th-century works on Cumbria, and wrote the history of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society for its 150th anniversary in 2016.

Professor Winchester retains a strong interest in local history communities. He has served as president and chairman of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society. He is also founding president of Cumbria’s Lorton and Derwentfells Local History Society and, in 2014, set up Lancaster University’s Regional Heritage Centre.

IHR Digital welcomes new department head

Dr Philip Carter joined the Institute in October 2016 as Head of IHR Digital and Senior Lecturer in Digital History. IHR Digital is the Institute’s research centre for the study of digital history, and for the publication of historical resources and scholarship online. It provides and extends primary and secondary resources used worldwide, including British History Online, the Bibliography of British and Irish History, History Online and Reviews in History.

Our new Head of IHR Digital comes to us from the University of Oxford, where he was a Lecturer in Tibetan and Mongolian Studies and Associate Editor at the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, and a member of the History Faculty. At the ODNB, Philip was responsible for the Dictionary’s pre-1800 coverage and for art and architectural content, as well as research projects, institutional partnerships and linking. He was also closely involved with Oxford University Press in the Dictionary’s digital development. Philip’s combined background in academic research and online publishing leads well into his role in the IHR.

Prior to the ODNB, Philip studied history at Magdalene College, Oxford, where he focused on 18th-century British social history for his doctorate. He was also a Junior Research Fellow at Wolfson College, Oxford, and taught early modern British history at the universities of Birmingham and North London, and for Tufts University MA. He is a fellow of the Royal Historical Society and a member of the editorial board for the Society’s ‘New Historical Perspectives’ books series. Future projects include a return to 18th-century research with a study of the master of ceremonies, and a proposed history of national biography in Britain.

Philip has a long association with the IHR, having been a Junior Research Fellow here more than 20 years ago. The Institute, he says, has always been his history base outside of Oxford. He looks forward to enhancing that base, by providing quality resources for the academic community, for those working outside of academia, and for people interested in history for pleasure. In his new role, he is keen for digital history to be accessible to the widest possible community, rather than a specialist preserve for the few. His hope is to take IHR Digital as a centre of value to historians and researchers who are active throughout Britain and overseas.

Philip is delighted to be working with an innovative digital humanities team, within which he can continue to develop his own skills in a nationally-acclaimed institute.
The Importance of Being a Reservist

Ben Thomas, Alan Pearsall Fellow 2015-16, IHR

The strength of the RNR in 1894 was 19,500, meaning that around one-in ten of the total British seafaring population was also a Naval Reservist. Breaking this down into national units, England provided 50.2% of recruits, Wales 5.6%, Scotland 31%, and Ireland 14%. This suggests that, roughly, each of the home nations was providing the same proportion of Reservists as their share of the UK's seafaring population warranted, although Scotland was slightly over- and England slightly under-represented. Yet here is where looking at the issue from a national perspective also hides important regional variations. For when we look more closely at these figures, we find that 5,198 of the 7,150 Scottish Reservists were drawn from a single Scottish region - the Highlands and Islands. This sparsely-populated geographical area - whose share of the total UK population stood at only 0.5% - contributed a fifth of the RNR's entire UK strength. Indeed, Stornoway alone delivered 2,612 Reservists in 1894, only 150 men less than the rest of non-Highland Scotland combined. Similar figures are also notable in Ireland, where Kinsale and Galway provided a third of all Irish recruits, despite these two towns making up only 0.4% of the Irish population.

The RNR therefore appears to be an institution that meant more to some communities or occupations than others. For fishermen in rural Ireland and Scotland in particular - where work was highly seasonal - the RNR provided a useful source of extra income without compromising a family's basic income stream. For this very reason, the Victorian and Edwardian RNR was dominated by fishermen, for whom the relatively light terms of service, coupled with the ability to locally control their recruitment, was highly valued. Yet this developing relationship caused consternation within the Admiralty, who were never convinced that fishermen had the skills necessary to be useful aboard large warships. This led them to scrap local battalions in 1905-6, and to insist instead that Reservists undertook their drill aboard RN ships.

The upshot of this move was that the RNR declined massively in popularity right across the country. Coastal communities were stripped of a major source of income, and saw an important part of their local economy and social fabric ripped out by an apparently heartless Admiralty. Yet local relationships nevertheless continued to mark the force right up to 1939, especially in the Hebrides and Shetland, which continued to provide a disproportionate number of the UK's Reservists. The result of this trend is that the history of the RNR can be seen as the history of an institution whose shape and identity was forged through an uneasy interplay between the economic needs and desires of local communities on the one hand, and the defence concerns of the Admiralty on the other.

What does this mean for our traditional understanding of British naval identity? I would suggest that, by focusing so much on the regular Navy, scholars have failed to recognise that the Navy's reserve force was actually the most immediate way in which many individuals and communities exercised their control over local life and culture. As a result, we have for too long ignored the role the Navy played in shaping local economies and identities across Britain. This, surely, was just as important as its contribution to a sense of British imperial identity.
The Straschnov Studentship

We are pleased to announce that this award will be ongoing yet another year, the Veale-Straschnov Award for Doctoral Historical Research for Mature Students. This prize will cover full fees of a mature student (25 or over) starting a doctorate at the IHR. It will cover fees for one year initially, with the possibility of extending through their third year (full time) or fourth year (part-time). For further information, please see www.history.ac.uk/fellowships

This award is made possible by a generous legacy left by Dr Elspeth Veale (1916-2015) in remembrance of her late sister, Jean (1919-1996) and brother-in-law, George Straschnov (1911-1999). Dr Veale started visiting the IHR in the evenings after work in 1947, when she was a full time teacher at the Skinner’s Company’s School for Girls in Stamford Hill, London. She was granted a one-year research fellowship at the IHR in 1950, which enabled her to take a year off from work to concentrate on her thesis. She was finally awarded her doctorate from the University of London in 1953 and later published The English Fur Trade in the Later Middle Ages in 1966.

I benefited myself from an Institute Fellowship in 1951 — a very different world — and am glad to repay it in this way.

Excerpt from a letter from Dr Elspeth Veale to professor Dr David Cannadine, 5 September 2001

Throughout her career and life, she was a great supporter of London history. She attended and later sponsored the medieval seminars at the IHR, she was a long-serving Treasurer of the London Topographical Society, and she was the Dean of the School of Humanities at Goldsmiths College, University of London.

The IHR is so very grateful to Dr Veale and to all of those who have chosen to remember the IHR through a legacy. In recent years, benefactions have enabled us to grow our events programme, create new Fellowships, expand support to scholars at the start of their careers, and form an endowment, which will support the IHR for years to come. If you are thinking of leaving a legacy to the IHR, contact Michelle Waterman in the Development Office (michelle.waterman@as.ac.uk).

The IHR’s Archives

In the last issue of Past and Future, we shared our plans to fundraise for an Archivist to properly catalogue and conserve the IHR’s Archives, as well as to prepare the catalogue on online publication. We are delighted to announce that the University of London’s Convoction Trust has awarded the IHR £50,000 towards the project, which will unlock the £250,000 pledge made by The Foyle Foundation. Taken together with the Friends of the IHR’s continued support for this project, this brings us within £13,000 of our funding goal.

This project lies at the very heart of the Institute, which was founded in 1921 to facilitate and promote the study of History. The IHR Archives are the foundation to this mission. The records are invaluable when looking at the national and centralizing role that the IHR has played in the development of the discipline of historical research.

We are grateful to our three lead funders and hope that their generosity will inspire others to support the IHR Archives as well.

Project Update: Layers of London

Led by the Centre for Metropolitan History, the Layers of London project will create a ground-breaking interactive online map through an extensive programme of public engagement and crowd-sourcing, working in particular with schools throughout all the London boroughs, engaging with tens of thousands of schoolchildren. The result will be a dynamic website allowing users worldwide to explore and engage with London’s history and heritage.

Our development phase is now well underway, and we recently held a successful workshop for school teachers in Barking & Dagenham – the London borough with which we are piloting the project. Teachers attended from All Saints, Eastbrook, who hosted us, as well as from Becontree Primary and Gascoigne Primary. We have also started working with local volunteers. For a project that will depend heavily on public contributions of information, the initial response has been very encouraging. We have found that everyone from older amateur historians to arts groups (Studio 3 Arts, Barking www.studio3arts.org.uk) to groups with no obvious interest in history (DABD – a charity working to combat social exclusion) are finding the project interesting and are keen to contribute to it.

Our work to date has shown that significant information about the history of different neighbourhoods is found in the collections of small community groups and through personal knowledge acquired by the persistence and passion of heritage enthusiasts, who have not traditionally had the resources to share their knowledge more widely nor to publish their work. As such, until now, a wealth of information about London’s local history has not been adequately accessible.

The project has been able to attract a large number of key partners, even from this very early stage, attesting to its importance and expected impact. These partners include the British Library — which has contributed a number of key historic maps of London — the National Archives, the Museum of London Archaeology, Historic England, and the London Metropolitan Archives. In addition, we are continuously engaging with other organisations who are interested in getting involved and in contributing to Layers of London as the project develops. The London Topographical Society, ARUP and The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, to name a few. The total project cost is £1,475,045 and we need to raise £180,142 to reach our target and unlock £943,900 pledged by the HLF.

Remote Access to The Churchill Archive

In an IHR blog post of 30 January 2017, Matt Shaw, IHR Librarian, picks up the extraordinary and dramatic story of London; and a bursary to support a project in Historical Research. The IHR’s Archives are invaluable when looking at the national and centralizing role that the IHR has played in the development of the discipline of historical research.

We are grateful to our three lead funders and hope that their generosity will inspire others to support the IHR Archives as well.

In the last issue of Past and Future, we shared our plans to fundraise for an Archivist to properly catalogue and conserve the IHR’s Archives, as well as to prepare the catalogue on online publication. We are delighted to announce that the University of London’s Convoction Trust has awarded the IHR £50,000 towards the project, which will unlock the £250,000 pledge made by The Foyle Foundation. Taken together with the Friends of the IHR’s continued support for this project, this brings us within £13,000 of our funding goal.

This project lies at the very heart of the Institute, which was founded in 1921 to facilitate and promote the study of History. The IHR Archives are the foundation to this mission. The records are invaluable when looking at the national and centralizing role that the IHR has played in the development of the discipline of historical research.

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Past and Future

The IHR’s world-renowned programme of seminars continues to go from strength to strength. Seminars meet weekly during term time and all are welcome. Please note not all seminars meet each term. An up-to-date programme for each seminar can be found on the IHR’s website at www.history.ac.uk/ihrs seminars and is also displayed within the IHR.

The Comparative Histories of Asia seminar began in 2007. At this time, it was building on a number of important trends in the study of history. First, as a forum focused primarily on Asia, the seminar has been part of a larger movement towards ‘decolonising’ historical scholarship. To this end, the historians we have invited put Asian actors, Asian languages, and Asian cultures at the centre of their narratives. They aim to study and understand these non-western subjects on their own terms, rather than by comparing them with western models. Second, by emphasising comparisons and connections across Asia, the seminar has been part of the evolving field of global history. Global history has many facets and many centres, but some of the most inspiring scholars that have taken part in the CHA seminar tend to use Asia as a prism to study wider trends, from the spread of religions, to the flow of people and objects around the world.

Over the years, the convenors of this seminar have reflected this larger mission. Naoko Shimazu, then at Birkbeck, University of London, must be credited with providing the energy and charisma to get the seminar started. Her research, anchored in East Asia, especially Japan, has been concerned with the social and cultural history of war, with the cultural history of international diplomacy. Embodying the global outlook of the convenors, Naoko has now moved to Yale-NUS College Singapore. Another early convenor was Sunil Amrith, who was also at Birkbeck. His research is based in South Asia and South East Asia and has traced the history of international organisations’ involvement in public health policy, and the movement of migrants across the Bay of Bengal. Sunil, like Naoko, has left London, though he moved west and is now at Harvard University. Our current convenors reflect the importance of connections and comparisons to the study of 19th and 20th century Asia. Taylor Sherman’s work has ranged from a study of the public sphere in China to research on environmental history and disasters in early-modern China. Owen Miller works on economic, urban and labour history in 20th-century Korea. Bérénice Guyot-Réchard has used a study of the public sphere in China to look at a travelling ‘Peep show’ in Peking. Photograph 1869 By: John Thomson From: Gold and Platinum-toned albumen print by Michael Gray, 1997 © Wellcome Images

To this end, we conduct an annual PhD student presentation prize, for which students are invited to give a shorter paper at the seminar. These seminars are an essential part of our mission to stay at the cutting edge of our field. In addition, the seminar has experimented with more inclusive formats, including lunchtime sessions. Comparative Histories of Asia was founded in order to take part in newly-emerging trends in the study of history, and we look forward to evolving as our field changes over the coming years.
Get involved in history

Short courses and training

Each year the Institute of Historical Research runs a wide-ranging and extensive programme of training in historical research skills for both professional historians and independent researchers, who are interested in developing or topping up their skills. Using a range of teaching approaches (workshops, seminars, lectures, hands-on practicals and visits), important and specialist skills are explained and explored by expert practitioners. Courses vary in length from one day to one term, and cover a wide range of subjects from archival use and languages to databases and the internet.

General Historical Skills

An Introduction to Oral History (Tuesdays, 17 January – 21 March 2017)
This course introduces all the practical and technical skills necessary to conduct interviews for historical research, showing how to get the most out of participants while also providing a complete grounding in theoretical and ethical questions. Fee: £225

Day School in London History, Summer 2017 (20 July 2017)
The London History Day School is presented in association with the CMH on London and its surrounding area, exploring both its identity as a capital city but also the special qualities of many constituent towns, villages and suburbs. Participants will have ample opportunities to discuss their own work with each other and with the experts; the aim is to provide a showcase for London local history and a forum for the exchange of ideas, views and approaches. Fee: £75

Explanatory Paradigms: An Introduction to Historical Theory (26 April-28 June 2017)
A critical introduction to current approaches to historical explanation, taught on Wednesday evenings by Professor John Tosh, Dr John Seed and Professor Sally Alexander. Each session will examine a different explanatory approach, such as Marxism, gender analysis or postmodernism, equipping students to form their own judgements on the schools of thought most influential in the modern discipline. Fee: £180

Oral History Spring School (4-6 May 2017)
The IHR Spring School, run in association with the Oral History Society, will addresses 6 major areas: memory; experience; representativeness and generalisability; the researcher’s habitus; re-use of recordings; outputs and impacts. The final day will include best practice in teaching oral history. Fee: £265

Archival Research Skills

Methods and Sources for Historical Research (24-28 April 2017)
An introduction to finding and gaining access to primary sources for historical research in archives, museums and online through an intensive programme of lectures and archival visits. Repositories to be visited will include the British Library, the National Archives, the Parliamentary Archives and the Wellcome Library amongst many others. Fee: £265

Information Technology Courses

Historical Mapping and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) (Summer 2017 TBA)
GIS is being used in a variety of contexts to make sense of information with a spatial component, be it at the level of buildings and streets or at the level of nations, to perform sophisticated geospatial and topographical analyses. The workshop will include hands-on practical sessions using GIS software to view and manipulate historical data. Fee: £150

Databases for Historians I (3-6 July 2017)
This course introduces the theory and practice of constructing and using databases. Through a mixture of lectures and practical hands-on sessions, students will be taught both how to use and adapt existing databases, and how to design and build their own. Fee: £265

Languages

Further Medieval and Renaissance Latin (Wednesdays, 26 April – 28 June 2017)
A third course, carrying on from the first two IHR Medieval and Renaissance Latin courses, to round out students’ grasp of the language and allow them to tackle more advanced Latin texts. Fee: £250

To book or to view our full range of courses visit: www.history.ac.uk/training

Contact us: ihr.training@sas.ac.uk