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Collections Development Policy for Cambridge University Library: Archives and Modern Manuscripts

- 1. Scope**
- 2. Collections overview**
- 3. Collecting purpose**
- 4. Collecting criteria**
- 5. Major collecting areas**
- 6. Disposal**
- 7. Legal status of collections**
- 8. Rights management**
- 9. References**
- 10. Acknowledgements**

1. Scope

This policy outlines the current collecting priorities for archives and modern manuscripts within the main University Library in physical form. Archives encompass personal and institutional records dating from the medieval period to the present day. Modern manuscripts are defined as those dated post-1600. The Library does not yet collect born-digital archives;

Archives are held and collected by a number of sections and departments across the University Library's Special Collections Division, principally the Department of Archives and Modern Manuscripts but also the Map Department, the Bible Society and the Royal Commonwealth Society. This policy covers the collections of the main University Library, but recognises that important collections of archives and modern manuscripts are held in a number of affiliated, non-affiliated and college libraries and archives, the development of which are covered by collection profiles for those institutions.

Collections development for archives and modern manuscripts at the main University Library takes place in a collaborative environment, in which consultation with other Special Collections staff in the main University Library, and librarians and archivists

at affiliated, non-affiliated and college libraries, and academics across the University is of great importance. The Library also recognises that it operates within a national network of archive-holding institutions and aims to work collaboratively with other repositories to ensure the best outcome for collections, donors, depositors and users.

This policy is subordinate to Cambridge University Library's 'Strategic Plan 2015–2018'.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Cambridge University Library, 'Collection Development Policy framework', Version 0.4, 24 Apr 2014, http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/CDP_framework.pdf.

Cambridge University Library Ethical Policy

This policy is informed by The National Archives, *Collection Development Tools and Guidance* (2011).

2. Collections overview

Over the course of six centuries the University Library's collections have grown from a few dozen volumes on a handful of subjects into an extraordinary accumulation of several million books, maps, manuscripts and journals, augmented by an ever-increasing range of digital resources. They cover every conceivable aspect of human endeavour, across four thousand years and in over two thousand languages. From its beginnings as an asset for a tiny community of theologians and canon lawyers in the medieval university, the Library has expanded to serve the international scholarly community and new audiences across the world. The collections of archives and modern manuscripts include some of the oldest and most valuable materials in the Library, documenting the origins of the medieval University and its growth, as well as modern personal papers of important literary, political and scientific individuals.

3. Collecting purpose

Through its collecting activities, the Library supports the mission of the University of Cambridge 'to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.'

The Library identifies its collections as an essential component to the success of the University. Its Strategic Plan for 2015–2018 states that: 'We will grow, promote and exploit our unique and distinctive collections, making them more visible and more central to research, teaching and learning'.

As well as its responsibilities in contributing to research, teaching and learning excellence within the University, the Library has additional responsibilities as a

national research library with world class special collections of international importance.

In addition, the Library has a wider cultural heritage role in growing its special collections and preserving material of significant cultural heritage to the University, the region and the wider world.

This policy is in line with Cambridge University Library's overall 'Collection Development policy framework' by stating that archives and modern manuscripts are acquired to:

- Support current University research requirements
- Respond to emerging research requirements and to support new areas of research
- Support the Library's role as a national research library with special collections of national and international importance
- Support the Library's cultural role as a repository of world class documentary heritage

In addition to this, the Library has a responsibility to acquire items for specific institutional collections to fulfil statutory requirements. It acts as a Place of Deposit for public records within various collections including the Royal Greenwich Observatory archive, the Ely Dean and Chapter and Diocesan Records, manorial records in various estate collections and probate records within the University Archives. University Archives are also acquired to enable the University to document its own practices and achievements and to assist University administrators.

These collecting aims are often met by building on existing collection strengths, thus increasing their already rich research potential. However, they may also be met by acquiring material in new or underdeveloped collecting areas.

4. Collecting criteria

Material is acquired through purchase (where funds allow), bequest, donation, transfer from University offices and through the government's Acceptance in Lieu scheme. Collections deposited on loan are accepted only in exceptional circumstances. Where collections are on deposit, the Library seeks to collaborate actively with depositors in managing the development of collections appropriately.

Material is acquired in a variety of formats, including manuscript, typescript and printed material, photographic material and audio-visual material. The Library is putting the necessary procedures and facilities in place to enable the acquisition of born digital material. Objects are occasionally acquired, primarily as donations that complement, or are an intrinsic part of, an existing collection.

Attention is focused on original material; surrogates such as newspaper cuttings and photocopies of printed sources or archival material held elsewhere are not normally accepted unless they form an integral part of a significant archival collection.

Material is appraised for acquisition by specialist staff in the Library in light of collecting strengths or agreed remit, often in consultation with subject experts and academic colleagues in the University and beyond. The Library seeks to achieve value for money. When purchasing archives from an individual or institution, it will seek an independent valuation where appropriate.

The appraisal of potential acquisitions also takes into account the amount of space they will take up and what resources they are likely to absorb in terms of making the material accessible to readers, cataloguing, conservation and administration. The University Library will not acquire items that it cannot look after nor those for which it cannot provide sufficient access. It will not accept items with unreasonable or overly onerous conditions attached. It will examine carefully, and record in writing, the implications of accepting items that will not be immediately accessioned into the permanent collection.

Where donations of material are declined, a more appropriate home may be suggested.

5. Collecting areas

5.1 Major collecting strengths

The Library collects archival collections across a wide range of subjects, sectors and periods but has identified the following collection strengths.

5.1.1 Cambridge University Archives

The University Archives comprise the internal administrative records of the University of Cambridge, dating from 1266 to the present. In appraising records for selection in the offices of creator departments, University Archives staff refer to the University Records Retention Schedule (https://www.information-compliance.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/cambridge_master_records_retention_schedule.pdf). University Archives are retained for administrative and research purposes. The archives are as diverse in their contents as the activities - self governance, teaching and research, property management, administration of justice, external relations - the University has pursued down the centuries. Thus they include records of its legislative and executive bodies, central administration, academic departments students, staff and law courts. A specific Cambridge University Archives Collection policy is under development.

5.1.2 Scientific archives and manuscripts

Scientific archives and manuscripts comprise major holdings of outstanding international significance including the scientific and mathematical papers of natural philosopher Isaac Newton (1643-1727), the papers of naturalist Charles Darwin (1809-1882), the extensive archive of the Royal Greenwich Observatory (1675-1998) containing public records including the papers of the Astronomers Royal and the Board of Longitude and the archive of the Cambridge Scientific Instrument Company. In addition, there are collections from around 200 contributors to modern science, many with connections to Cambridge. Over half date from the twentieth century (mainly pre-World War Two) with around one third dating from the nineteenth century and the remainder documenting earlier periods (pending a survey of early modern manuscripts). The holdings cover a wide range of disciplines with special strengths in physics, zoology, mathematics, medicine, geology, geodesy and geophysics, botany and biochemistry. There are also significant groupings in natural philosophy (the Macclesfield collection and others), conservation and ecology (Peter Scott, Arthur Tansley and others), astronomy, anthropology (Alfred Cort Haddon, Meyer Fortes and others), genetics (William Bateson and others), entomology (W.H. Thorpe and others) and ornithology (Alfred Newton and others). Women scientists are poorly represented in the collection. In collaboration with stakeholders, we intend to build on these collection strengths and address this gap especially by documenting contemporary science, reflecting the role of the University in key scientific developments since World War Two.

5.1.3 Antiquarian, religious and ecclesiastical archives

The Library holds a number of antiquarian collections with Cambridge connections the archives of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society. Strong theological themes are evident in the Ely Dean and Chapter archives and Ely Diocesan Records, held on deposit. It has particularly strong holdings in material relating to missionary work, including the archives of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and the Bible Society (on deposit), complemented by material held within the Royal Commonwealth Society collection.

5.1.4 Literary manuscripts and archives

Priority is given to authors with a connection to the University and city of Cambridge, and to a lesser degree with the East Anglian region. Particular, though not exclusive, interest is taken in modern and contemporary collections, and attempts are made to create ongoing relationships with living authors, and where relevant with the representatives of recently-deceased authors, to promote continuity of accessions and to preserve the integrity of fonds.

5.1.5 Social, political and military history

Social, political and military material is collected where there is a connection to the University and city of Cambridge, and to a lesser degree with the East Anglian region, or where the material in question complements existing holdings or supports current and emerging research requirements. In accordance with provisions in

sections 1 and 4 of this policy, particular regard is paid in the case of accessions of political papers to the collection strengths of the Churchill Archives Centre.

5.1.6 Topographical, landholding and local administration records

The Library holds four large estate collections that include title deeds and manorial records relating to Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire dating back to the late 12th century. The deposited archives of two major ecclesiastical bodies – the Diocese of Ely and the Dean and Chapter of Ely – also include several centuries of manorial records and related land surveys for these areas. There are large numbers of title deeds and manorial court rolls in the Doc series. Taken together these records provide an incredibly rich vein of research for 800 years' worth of community, economic, agrarian history and local justice in East Anglia. While it might not be appropriate to collect new estate collections since these come within the collecting policy of local archive services, the Library would seek to acquire records to fill in gaps, especially in long series of manorial court records.

5.1.7 Theory and Practice of English Law

A historical collection of English legal manuscripts bridges the date range of modern manuscripts addressed by this policy, and includes medieval and early modern archival documents. It is of high research potential and complementary to the legal collections in the University and ecclesiastical archives. Included are the collections of John Moore (d.1714) Bishop of Ely, Francis Tate (d.1616), Mr Justice Nicholas (d.1667), medieval statute-books, year-books, medieval and early modern readings and moots in the inns of court, law reports from the Tudor period to the reign of Charles II, and examples of manuscript law books in use in England prior to the eighteenth century. For further details, see J.H. Baker and J.S. Ringrose, *A catalogue of English legal manuscripts in Cambridge University Library* (The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 1996). Should the opportunity to acquire important related material arise, we may add to the collection from time to time.

5.1.8 Commonwealth archives and manuscripts

Focused initially around the archives of the Royal Commonwealth Society and its forerunners the Colonial Society, the Royal Colonial Institute and the Royal Empire Society, CUL's Commonwealth collections encompass a huge geographical and thematic range including political and constitutional history, focusing on colonial governance, decolonisation and the creation of independent nation states, education, economic history, missionary activities, medicine and the contribution the British Empire and colonies during World Wars 1 and 2. Most material is acquired now by donation from the families of those who lived or worked in colonial or Commonwealth countries.

A particular strength is the photographic collection, encompassing over 200,000 items by amateur and professional photographers from across the former British

Empire/Commonwealth, including the collections of the Church Missionary Society, Central Office of Information and the Colonial Visual Instruction Committee. The collection includes photographic panoramas, lantern slides, glass plate negatives, stereoscopic slides, postcards, albums, cinefilms and official prints. The collection also includes a number of artefacts and artworks ranging from panoramic watercolours to glass spearheads and Indian mica paintings.

5.1.9 Music archives and manuscripts

Responsibility for collecting music archives and manuscripts is shared between the Department of Archives and Modern Manuscripts and the Music Department. The Library's collecting interests focus primarily on British composers and musicologists, especially those with a connection to Cambridge. Donations of archival collections are actively considered, particularly where there is a relationship to existing holdings.

5.1.10 Personal papers of Cambridge academic staff and alumni

The Library has in the past collected papers of Cambridge academic staff and alumni who have made major contributions to their academic discipline or field of endeavour. We will continue to consider offers on a case by case basis.

5.2 Formats

A huge range of formats and genres already exist within the Library's archival collections. Items will be accepted in any format, whether manuscript, printed, photographic or audiovisual.

The only proviso is that the Library does not currently acquire born-digital archives since it does not yet have the means to store and preserve them securely, catalogue them and make them available. It is actively working to develop this capability.

The Library recognises that it does not currently have the specialist technical expertise or facilities to store and care for large quantities of audio-visual material. It accepts such material where it forms a part of a broader collection and will endeavour to have preservation copies made on stable media. Where the Library is offered collections which consist wholly or substantially of audio-visual materials, donors or depositors will be directed to more appropriate repositories such as the National Sound Archive or the British Film Institute.

6. Disposal

The Library reserves the right to weed, return, transfer or dispose of any unwanted material. Such material is normally identified in the process of accessioning and cataloguing. The Library reserves the right to apply similar selection criteria to the collections it already holds, but recognises that any deaccessioning must be handled sensitively, and that any depositors or their heirs must be informed and offered back deaccessioned material wherever possible.

7. Legal status of collections

Provenance and title are considered for all acquisitions and due diligence is undertaken in line with the Library's Ethical Policy to avoid the acquisition of material which might have been illegally offered for sale or imported. The Library reserves the right to reject collections where there is a lack of clarity over ownership and rights issues.

8. Rights management

The Library seeks to clearly establish the intellectual property rights and access restrictions associated with a potential acquisition and will capture information about the copyright, data protection and freedom of information implications at or before the point of accession. Where archives are accepted on deposit, arrangements for each collection are confirmed in writing at the point of transfer and reviewed periodically.

9. References

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