

Literary resources in Special Collections

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QG HCOL024

The Wolfson Reading Room

Special Collections Centre

The University Library
University of Aberdeen
Bedford Road
Aberdeen
AB24 3AA

Introduction

Many individuals and organisations have deposited their papers with the University and as a result, it has acquired an unrivalled collection of material, not solely relating to the history and culture of the north-east of Scotland but of national and international importance.

The literary holdings at Aberdeen, especially its printed collections, are particularly rich, reflecting a long history of acquisition, donation and bequest. King's College held legal deposit status from 1710 to 1836, enabling the collection of popular English literary works of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Other great strengths include the Bernard Lloyd Collection on Sir Walter Scott; materials by and about Charles Dickens; works by other Victorian authors; John Bisset Chapman's collection of 20th century literature, and substantial holdings of books by many north-east writers.

The archival collections include personal papers of well-known literary figures including Olive Fraser, Cuthbert Graham, Sir Herbert Grierson, Sorley MacLean, George MacDonald, James Leslie Mitchell (alias Lewis Grassie Gibbon), Charles Murray, Nan Shepherd and Iain Crichton Smith. Archival collections also include individual items of importance such as works by Thomas Hardy, Allan Ramsay and Percy Bysshe Shelley, while Chapman's papers contain correspondence with many 20th century literary luminaries e.g. Aldous Huxley.

Printed collections

The Local Collection contains relevant materials such as core reference works.

There are numerous other printed collections of, or containing material of, particular relevance e.g. the late 18th and the early 19th century British imaginative literature, especially the Gothic novel, with women writers well-represented. Many

volumes are 1st editions bound in original boards with paste labels.

One of the world's most distinguished collections on Charles Dickens, including 1st editions of all 15 novels and complete runs of the two periodicals he edited.

Other relevant collections

Alford Mutual Improvement Association Library

John Bisset Chapman Collection

Juvenile Collection of children's literature

Lambda Collection (which includes books from many north-east authors)

George MacDonald Collection

Dr James Melvin Collection

Bernard Lloyd Walter Scott Collection: one of the world's finest collections relating to Scott containing 6,000 volumes and also including playbills, song sheets, chapbooks and some objects

Victorian Literature and Victorian Poetry Collections

Archival collections

Organisation papers

Aberdeen Literary Debating Society:
1836 – 1837 (MS 518).

Literary Club: 1826 – 1827 (MS 3959).

Literary Club: 1892 – 1893 (UNIVERSITY 354).

Literary Society: 1870 – 1940
(UNIVERSITY 291)

Personal papers

Angus, Marion, poet: paper: 1934 – 1969
(MS 2737).

Beaton, Helen, writer. Original manuscript of 'At the Back o' Bennachie': 1915 (MS 3477).

Benlowes, Edward, poet: 'Theophila, or Love's Sacrifice' manuscript: early 18th century (MS 2773).

Beverley, William, poet: poems: 1836 – 1840 (MS 1012).

Blackhall, Sheena, poet and novelist: papers:
1987 – 2002 (MS 3648).

- Bottomley, Gordon, poet: 1896 – 1946 (MS 1102 and MS 2985).
- Broukhuisen, Jan van, poet: collection of poetry: early 19th century (MS 548).
- Buchan, Peter, poet: papers: 1811 – 1915 (MS 2303 and MS 2420).
- Bulloch, John (fl 1867 - 1895), journalist: 19th century (MS 690, MS 876, MS 930 & MS 931).
- Bulloch, John Malcolm (1867-1938), journalist: 1850s – 1900 (MS 553, MS 840, MS 911, MS 967, MS 970, MS 1021, MS 1072, MS 2482, MS 2798, MS 3051, MS 3135, MS 3149, MS 3180, MS 3239, MS 3310 & MS 3331).
- Burness, John, poet: manuscripts of 'Thrummy Cap' and other works: 1799 (MS 1013).
- Cadenhead, William, poet: 'Ode to Spring, or The Truth in Parenthesis': c.1848 (MS 935).
- Chapman, John Bissett, collector of contemporary literature: 1915 – 1947 (MS 2265).
- Colville, Samuel, poet: 'The Scotch Hudebras, or The Whig's Supplication': 1680 (MS 412).
- Davison, Francis, poet, author and translator, psalms, translated into metrical verse: 17th century (MS 664).
- Fergusson, Robert, poet: letter to Charles Lorimer: 1773 (MS 2842).
- Fraser, Olive, poet: papers (MS 3336).
- Gavin, Dr. Catherine, novelist: papers: 1923 – 1988 (MS 3616).
- Gibbon, Lewis Grassie, journalist and author: personal correspondence and related papers of John Buchan, J.M. Bulloch and others, and an account by Jean Baxter: 1929 – 1960 (MS 2377).
- Gordon, John, of Fechil: poems: 17th century (MS 2851).
- Grierson, Sir Herbert, literary scholar: papers: c.1900 – 1972 (MS 2478).
- Hardy, Thomas, author. Original manuscript of 'An imaginative woman: a Wessex Tale': c. 1906 (MS 617).
- Hardy, Thomas, author: letters to John Malcolm Bulloch, journalist: 1904 – 1937 (MS 2445).
- Hardy, Thomas, author: letter to Theodore Watt, editor of 'Alma Mater' and poem entitled 'Aberdeen': 1905 – 1906 (MS 593).
- Imlah, John, poet: papers: 1846 – 1980 (MS 3462).
- Johnstone, James Fowler Kellas, bibliophile. Papers: 1906 – 1924 (MS 1087, MS 1088, MS 1089, MS 1090, MS 1091, MS 1092, MS 1093, MS 1094 & MS 1095).
- Lang, Andrew, journalist and poet: poem 'November, or A Criticism of Life': 1885 (MS 2390).
- Linklater, Eric, novelist: script of 'Rosemount Nights': 1923 (MS 3490).
- Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth, poet: letter to W.G. Simpson regard poetry: September 1879 (MS 2335).
- MacDonald, George, author: 1852 – 1924 (MS 1031, MS 2165, MS 2166, MS 2167, MS 2231, MS 2254, MS 2291, MS 2716, MS 2717 & MS 2718).
- MacDonald, Grenville, author: letters and papers concerning his father the author George MacDonald: 1922 – 1924 (MS 2291).
- MacGill-Eain, Somhairle ('Sorley MacLean'), poet: 20th century (MS 2864).
- McKenzie, Agnes Mure, novelist: 1920 – 1955 (MS 2750).
- Macpherson, Ian, novelist: 'Rebels in Homespun' typescript: 1940 (MS 3275).
- Matheson, Robert, author and poet: poems: 19th century (MS 2401).
- Milne, John, of Glenlivet, poet. Broadsheets and manuscripts: 1865 – 1871 (MS 1018).
- Murray, Charles, poet: letters and poems: 1920s – 1940s (MS 3788).
- Nicoll, Sir William Robertson and his family, Mildred Robertson Nicoll, author: 1822 – 1996 (MS 3518).
- Ogston, Rev. David, Church of Scotland minister and author: manuscripts of autobiographical novels: 1980s (MS 3339).
- Ramsay, Allan, poet: 'The Royall Youth may now advance': c.1715 (MS 955).
- Robertson, Edith Anne, poetess and author: 'Mair like a dream' typescript for a BBC broadcast: 1966 (MS 2794).
- Scott, Sir Walter, lawyer and writer: letter to Captain Basil Hall in which he discusses the character of Jonathan Oldbuck in 'The Antiquary': October 1831 (MS 2455).
- Scott, William Bell, poet and artist: biographical notes: 1892 (MS 2836).
- Shelley Percy Bysshe: 'The Magnetic Lady to her Patient': 1822 (MS 937).
- Shire, Helena Mennie, literary scholar: papers: 1832 – 1990s (MS 3407).
- Smith, Iain Crichton: 1981 – 1989 (MS 3100).
- Swan, Annie Shepherd, novelist: 1894 – 1946 (MS 3517).
- Taylor, Rachel Annand, author and journalist: papers: 1899 – 1908 (MS 2742).
- Taylor, Alexander, poet: papers: 1845 – 1860 (MS 3440).
- Thom, William, poet and weaver: papers: 1841 – 1963 (MS 2304, MS 2497 and MS 3089).

Toulmin, David, author: c.1925 – 1990s (MS 2823, MS 2830, MS 3065, MS 3114, MS 3569).

Watson, Sir William, poet: a sonnet 'To Aberdeen': 1904 (MS 929).

Access

Materials are available upon request for consultation in The Wolfson Reading Room. Please search online catalogues to identify individual items.

Further reading

For further reading please also see the studies of a number of manuscripts, printed books and collections in the journals *Aberdeen University Library Bulletin*, *Aberdeen University Review* and *Northern Scotland*.

A number of the above papers were highlighted in: Beavan, Iain; Davidson, Peter; Stevenson, Jane. *Library and archive collections of the University of Aberdeen: an introduction and description*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press with the University of Aberdeen, 2011)

A brief bibliography of Grampian Region prose literature 1858-1979. Cuthbert Graham, [1979].