

Paper manufacturing, printing and publishing resources in Special Collections

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QG HCOL028

The Wolfson Reading Room

Special Collections Centre

The Sir Duncan Rice Library
University of Aberdeen
Bedford Road
Aberdeen
AB24 3AA

Introduction

Many individuals, organisations and businesses have deposited their papers with the University; 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.

Special Collections hold a wealth of material relevant to the study of paper manufacturing, printing and publishing. There are records of many companies such as Aberdeen University Press (AUP) and Culter Paper Mills, trade unions such as the Scottish Typographical Society, organisations such as the Spalding Clubs and individuals such as bibliophile John Peter Edmond.

There has been a continuous printing trade present in Aberdeen since the setting up of a printing press by Edward Raban in 1622. Also, one of Aberdeen's treasures is the *Aberdeen Breviary* (Edinburgh 1510) which is the first major publication known to have come from a Scottish press and the first devotional book to have been printed in Scotland.

Archival collections

Organisation papers

Printing and Media Unions: papers: 1926 – 2006 (MS 3779).

Scottish Typographical Society: 1853 – 1958 (MS 2471, MS 2648).

Society of Graphical and Allied Trades: 1924 – 1949 (MS 2649, MS 2650).

Society of Lithographic Artists: 1945 – 1964 (MS 2678).

Spalding Club: 1839 – 1869 (MS 604 – MS 612, MS 848, MS 973, MS 2264).

New Spalding Club: 1886 – 1928 (MS 485 – MS 486, MS 607, MS 613, MS 2257, MS 2264, MS 2529 & MS 3023).

Third Spalding Club: 1928 – 1956 (MS 2256, MS 2258 – MS 2259, MS 2492 & MS 3252).

Business papers

Aberdeen Journals Ltd.: 1876 – 1978 (MS 2770).

Aberdeen People's Press papers: 1969 – 1979 (MS 3025).

Aberdeen University Press: 1869 – 1996 (MS 3233).

Culter Mills Paper Co. Ltd: 1865 – 1965 (MS 3076).

George Cornwall and Sons, printers, Aberdeen: 1914 – 1936 (MS 2871). For more records see Aberdeen University Press papers.

C. Davidson and Sons Ltd.: Paper Manufacturers, Aberdeen: 1852 – 1977 (MS 3232).

James Fenton, printer: c.1830 – 1877 (MS 3393).

John Philip, bookbinder: memorandum book: 1805 – 1807 (MS 3549).

Alexander Pirie & Sons, paper-manufacturers: 18th century – 20th century (MS 2911) and (MS 2769/1/129).

D. Wyllie & Son, publishers and booksellers, Aberdeen: 1848 – 1938 (MS 3205).

Personal papers

Edmond, John Peter, librarian and historian: notes on Aberdeenshire printers: c.1850 (MS 2894).

MacLean, Colin, publishing director of Aberdeen University Press: 1979 – 1990 (MS 3457).

Strachan, Peter, journalist: 20th century (MS 3454).

Walker, George, bailie, Aberdeen: papers regarding research on printing in Aberdeen: c.1860 (MS 972).

Correspondence about commencing dates of north-east and north Scottish newspapers, mostly from the newspaper offices and Peter Anderson, librarian: 1912 (MS 2388).

Volume of collected bookplates of north-east persons and families: 18th century – 20th century (MS 2772).

Oral history collections

University of Aberdeen Oral History Archive: comprises nearly 200 interviews with individuals connected with the University (MS 3620) - of particular interest is the interview conducted with Dr Harold Watt, former director of Aberdeen University Press (MS 3620/1/33).

Printed collections

The Local Collection, accessible via the Reading Room, contains relevant printed material such as copies of Aberdeen publications and newspapers: Aberdeen Censor, Aberdeen Pirate, Aberdeen Shaver, Alma Mater, Bon Accord, Leopard and the Gaudie. The extensive reference section of the 'S' Collection (covering bibliography and the wider aspects of print culture) is also available here.

The printed collections contain a wealth of material relating to the history and practice of printing, publishing and paper manufacture.

There are also named collections of relevance:

Herald, King and Thomson pamphlet collections containing c.14,000 pamphlets dating from 1715 to the 19th century.

Lambda Collection which comprises the output of north-east of Scotland authors, whether native or adopted.

Lib R Collection which contains many examples of the output of private presses, for example by William Morris.

'S' Collection covering bibliography and the wider aspects of print culture.

Special Books Local Collection (SBL) comprising books, pamphlets and journals printed in Aberdeen from 1622 to 1800 inclusive. It includes the output of Aberdeen's first printer, Edward Raban (1579-1658), whose press was active between 1622 and 1649m, the work of Francis Douglas (1719-1786); John Boyle (c. 1730-1794?), and the Chalmers family in the 18th century. The collection largely represents the output of relatively small-scale printing establishments, set up to satisfy the demands of readers in Aberdeen and area for printed material.

Dr H. M. R. Watt Collection covers 20th century printing practice and typographical design.

Access

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

Further reading

For further reading please 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.

'Beyond Words: Illustrated Books in Aberdeen University's Historic Collections' (University of Aberdeen Development Trust, undated).

Anderson P. J. (ed.), *Studies in the History and Development of the University* (AUP, 1906). This contains the most detailed bibliography relating to the Universities.

Beavan, I., 'The Book Trade in Aberdeen and Area, 1700-1832', in *Studies in the Provincial Book Trade of England, Scotland and Wales before 1900.*, ed. by D. Stoker (Aberystwyth: University of Wales, 1990), 54-75.

Beavan, I., 'Raban and his Successors: Local Printing (1622-1800) held in Aberdeen University', *Northern Scotland*, 18 (1998), 97-104.

Edmond, J. P., *The Aberdeen Printers, Edward Raban to James Nicol, 1620-1736* (Aberdeen, Edmond & Spark, 1884).

Keith, Alexander, *Aberdeen University Press: an account of the Press from its foundation in 1840 until its occupation of new premises in 1963* (AUP, 1963).