

Transport resources in Special Collections

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QG HCOL035

The Wolfson Reading Room

Special Collections Centre

The Sir Duncan Rice Library
University of Aberdeen
Bedford Road
Aberdeen
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Introduction

Many individuals 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.

Transport is one of the stated strengths of Special Collections, mainly due to the material bequeathed by Andrew O'Dell (1909-66), the University's first Professor of Geography. The O'Dell collection ranks as one of the major railway collections in Britain but also includes material covering all aspects of transport history.

Other collections includes those relating to coaches, trams and buses (such as Grampian Transport) as well as shipping transport.

Printed collections

The Local Collection, accessible via the Reading Room, also contains relevant printed material such as publications of the Great North of Scotland Railway Association.

Preeminently, the O'Dell collection (OD) ranks as one of the major railway collections in Britain, but also includes all aspects of transport. The collection consists of over 10,000 volumes from the 1830s to present and is still accruing. The collection is particularly relevant to railway transport in the north-east of Scotland, with an emphasis on the history of the Great North of Scotland Railway Company (GNSR) and the London & North Eastern Railway (LNER).

The collection is composed of a wide range of ephemera, maps/plans, timetables, plans, and guide books for the many railway companies that operated in Scotland and in England and Wales (as well as in Europe and world-wide). There are also small sequences of works on inland waterways, sea transport, road and aviation. Some of the highlights include: an unbroken run of Bradshaw's Railway Manual (1858-1923), a full run of the Railway Magazine from 1897 onwards, plans and maps of Scottish railway routes which date from the 1850s to the 1900s and 128 scrapbook volumes compiled by Professor O' Dell which contain much material of local interest.

There is in addition some manuscript material for the GNSR and LNER:

GNSR

Register of guards and brakemen: 1853 - 1949

Goods Dpt. Register of staff: 1920 -1923

Passenger Dpt. Register of staff off duty:
1897 – 1926

Passenger Dpt. Register of changes in working staff: 1865 – 1884

Pay-bills (salaries): 1899 – 1925 (incomplete)

LNER

Traffic Dpt. Register of changes in the working staff:
1924 - 1937

Register of staff changes: 1938 – 1944

Traffic Dpt. staff book: 1938

Salaried staff date of birth book: 1882 – 1943

Advances of salaries granted to managing, clerical and supervisory staff: 1925

Pay bills (salaries): 1923 - 1929

Salaries paid: 1934 - 1935

Wage payments (carbon copies): 1927 – 1931

Archival collections

Family and estate papers

Amongst the family and estate collections there are papers relating to the development of railways, especially those relevant to the Great North of Scotland Railway Company:

Burnett of Leys (Crathes Castle papers), specifically the development of railways: 19th century (MS 3361).

Duff, Earls of Fife (Duff House), specifically the development of railways: 19th century (MS 3175).

Forbes and Hay of Seaton, specifically Aberdeen Railway Company papers: 19th century (MS 2253 and MS 2414).

Fordyce family of Brucklay Castle and Aberdeen, specifically the development of railways: 1844 – 1865 (MS 3220).

Fraser of Philorth estate papers for example contain letters of subscription to the Fraserburgh Railway Company, legal papers concerning a process against the Great North of Scotland Railway Co. Ltd., legal documents relating to the Buchan and Formartine Railway Co. and correspondence about a proposed Roseheartly-Fraserburgh railway in the early 20th century (MS 3004).

Gordons of Buthlaw and Cairness, specifically the development of railways: 19th century – 20th century (MS 1160 and MS 3193).

Gordon of Cluny, specifically the development of railways: 19th century – 20th century (MS 3600).

Leith-Ross of Arnage, specifically the development of railways: 19th century (MS 3346).

Organisation papers

Amalgamated Engineering Union (Aberdeen Branches): 1832 – 1962 (MS 2640, MS 2667).

Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen: 1918 – 1968 (MS 2676).

Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, British Rail Kittybrewster and Ferryhill Local Departmental Committees: 1961 – 1992 (MS 3557).

National Union of Dock Labourers: 1912 – 1927 (MS 2879).

National Union of Seamen: 1926 – 1959 (MS 2644).

National Union of Vehicle Builders: 1891 – 1966 (MS 2672).

Scottish Commercial Motormen's Union: 1922 – 1964 (MS 2660).

Ship Constructors' and Shipwrights' Association: 1916 – 1965 (MS 2670).

Steamfishing Vessels, Engineers' and Firemen's Union: 1906 – 1957 (MS 2680 and MS 2880).

Business papers

Aberdeen Harbour Board photographic collection: 1880s - 1930s (MS 3595).

Aberdeenshire Light Railways Company records: 1889 – 1898 (MS 4020).

Aberdeen Steam Navigation Co.: 1835 – 1925 (MS 2479).

Invergarry and Fort Augustus Railway, and the Inverness and Lochend Light Railway papers: 1897 – 1899 (MS 3238).

Knox and Machray's Royal Mail Coach Office: 1831 – 1837 (MS 2639).

George Washington Wilson and Co., photographers (for images of various forms of transport): 1850 – 1905 (MS 3792).

Grampian Regional Transport Ltd. (formerly Grampian Regional Transport, Aberdeen Corporation Tramways/Transport and Aberdeen District Tramways Company): c.1872 – 1993 (MS 3508).

Great North of Scotland Railway Company (see O'Dell collection below which contains some manuscript material).

LNER (London and North Eastern Railway) Benevolent Fund: minute book: 1926 – 1968 (MS 3505).

P&O Scottish Ferries Ltd. records: 1810 – 2002 (MS 3697).

S.S. Woodford, England to China, log book: 1791 – 1792 (MS 2769/II/122).

Personal Papers

Alexander, Sam, industrial trainer, photographs of helicopters serving oil and gas industry: 1979 – 1981 (MS 3811).

Graham, George, engineer: Caledonian Railway research: 1888 (MS 2125).

O'Dell, Andrew, papers, some relating to transport research: 1930 – 1970 (MS 2882).

O'Dell, Andrew, Aberdeenshire railway and harbour papers: typed transcriptions: 1749-1909 (created early 20th century) (MS 2762).

O'Dell, Andrew, notebooks of railway newspaper cuttings and land surveyors' calculations: mid-20th century (MS 3094).

For main papers relating to Andrew O' Dell see *Printed Collections* section above.

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 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).