

Academic and professional historians

The National Archives enjoys long-standing and constructive relationships with many practising historians and other academic researchers, for whom our collections are vital.

We are investing time and resources to developing new services to help meet the needs of the academic and specialist market, and of future historians.

Our work with and for academics includes:

- Developing alliances and making links
- Academic and specialist publishing
- Events and conferences
- Academic inductions

Developing alliances and making links

We have continued to develop alliances with higher education institutions and the academic community.

Senior staff of The National Archives sit on the Royal Historical Society Council and the Economic and Social Research Council Research Resource Board. Staff who are experts in their field participate regularly in seminars organised by the Institute of Historical Research, speak at academic conferences and write books and articles which are published in professional journals.

School of Advanced Study

During the year The National Archives became an Associate member of the University of London's School of Advanced Study. The main purpose of the association is to explore opportunities for cooperation between the School and The National Archives.

Our staff now have access to the School libraries and there are links to the National Archives on the School's website www.sas.ac.uk. A link to the National Archives Resource Centre & Library catalogue will be added soon.

Future benefits will include an opportunity for a limited number of staff to participate in the School's training programme and for organised visits to the various libraries.

Extending academic networks

We have created new web pages specifically designed to alert academic researchers to our services. Researchers can provide feedback or suggestions for improving our service. A more detailed questionnaire allows academics to submit feedback on more specific matters such as academic publications, academic inductions, Pathways to the Past, the online catalogue (PROCAT), and DocumentsOnline.

The pages include an electronic portal for enquiries about specific areas of our work in which we have invited feedback. A cross-departmental group of staff at The National Archives oversees the development of this initiative and of mutually beneficial links with the academic community.

The Genesis project, which aims to identify and develop access to women's history sources in the British Isles, was funded by the Research Support Libraries Programme (RSLP) and based at The Women's Library in London. One of our staff has served on the RSLP steering group for Genesis, has edited final datasets for PRO contributions to the project and supervised the work of a RSLP Project Researcher at the PRO. She also attended the RSLP Open Day in Islington as an external expert.

This same member of staff co-ordinated the Women's Suffrage Conference Advisory Panel with the Director of Women's Library, acted as member of the Panel, and

also attended the Mayor's Commission on Black and Asian Heritage focus group organised by the Greater London Authority.

Academic and specialist publishing

Two new major calendar texts have been published in partnership with Boydell and Brewer – *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem Volume XXI*, covering 1418-1422, and the *Calendar of Curia Regis Rolls, 1249-1250*.

Further editorial work has continued on the final volume of the *Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous* and on the *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem Volume XXII*, the latter in partnership with the University of Cambridge and generously funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Board.

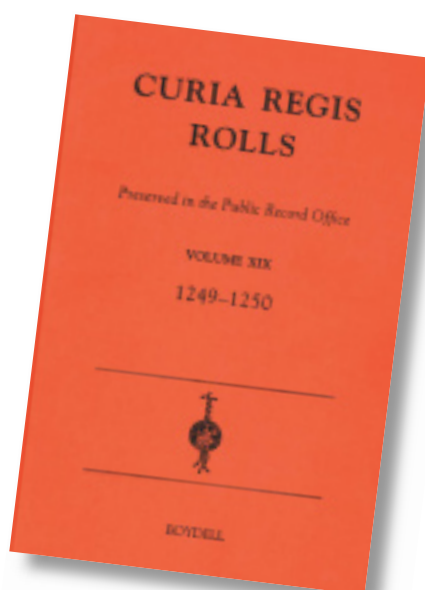
Work has also been revived on the *List and Analysis of State Papers Foreign* series for 1597. Research on two new handbook titles has begun. The Economic and Social Research Council is funding a Guide to *Medieval Irish*

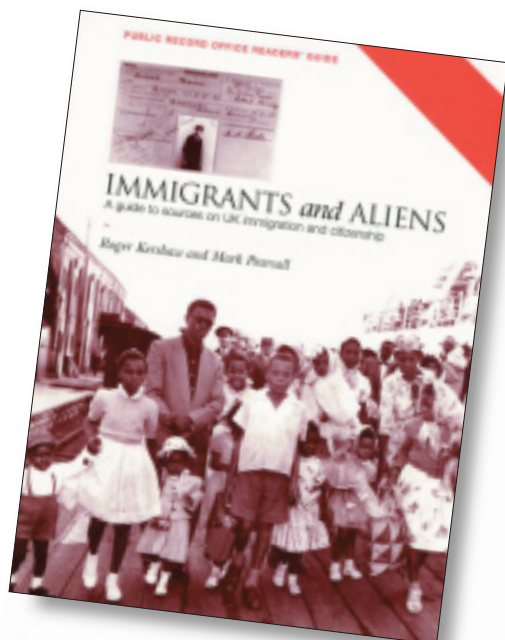
sources in The National Archives, in partnership with Bristol University, and the Arts and Humanities Research Board is funding *A Guide to Naval Records in The National Archives* in partnership with Exeter University.

We have also worked in close association with microfilm publishers on the development of collections of microfilm aimed at the academic community. Together with Adam Matthew Publications we have launched a new product, *Sex and Gender Studies: Manuscript Sources from the Public Record Office*. The first two modules, covering Empire and Suffrage sources, are now available, with further material to follow on Equal Opportunities and Pay.

Other continuing projects with Adam Matthew Publications include Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Newsletters, Special Operations Executive Papers and further updates in the Cabinet Papers series, which provides microfilm versions of complete sets of Cabinet Minutes and Memoranda as they are released.

Our work with Primary Source Media, part of Gale Group, has culminated this year in the publication of Series One of *The Middle East: A Documentary Resource*, focusing on Arab-Israeli Relations 1917-70. The collection of selected documents held at The National Archives offers researchers an opportunity to study documents that are vital to understanding key issues in the political history of the Middle East.





A new Reader's Guide *Emigrants and Expats: A guide to sources on UK emigration and residents overseas* now complements the successful *Immigrants and Aliens: A guide to sources on UK immigration and citizenship*.

Events and conferences

In October 2002, we staged a conference on the history of taxation. The event, at which the E179 (hearth tax) database (see page 20) was launched, drew together academics from a range of disciplines. We also hosted a highly successful conference for the Overseas Pensioners Association (OSPA). Feedback from both conferences was excellent.

We also hosted visits from, among others, the Greenwich Group and the International Map Collectors Society.

Preparations have also been underway for a new series of seminars on subjects as varied as the Merchant Marine, West Indian Ancestry, Prisoners of War, and Marriage and Divorce records.

Our staff have contributed to the following academic events:

- Medieval and Early Modern Records Information Service (MEMRIS)
- The Oxford Medieval Seminar, All Souls College, in November 2002, on "Council, Chancery and Rule by Recognisances under Henry VII"
- A lecture at Lancaster University in November 2002 to North-Western lecturers, students and archivists on researching at the PRO, and the PRO's archival network
- The Institute of Historical Research methods and sources course on Women's History
- Expert talks on copyright at conferences, seminars and colleges at several venues in England and Wales
- The international history seminar at the Institute of Historical Research
- An expert meeting on the Ethics of Digitisation and Digital Photography.

We held a successful workshop on the digitisation of archival resources for higher education in March.

Academic inductions

To meet rising demand, we have held 26 onsite and four regional academic inductions this year. Much of the induction content is available to researchers on the National Archives website and we are now actively investigating the provision of more specialised inductions and document tutorials.

We are receiving more requests for inductions from departments not necessarily offering traditional history courses; one example being the MA in Garden History offered by Birkbeck College, University of London. In future we will also provide inductions for groups of librarians and information professionals. Feedback from the induction sessions continues to be very positive and encouraging.