



Northumberland Archives Trust

# Newsletter

Spring 2023

## Trustees update

Welcome to this first edition of our new look newsletter. We aim to publish this three times a year in future and welcome your feedback.

The Trustees are delighted that a number of further projects funded by the charity have come to fruition during the past twelve months. We hope you will be encouraged by this progress made by the Trust, thanks to your support.

Our focus for 2023 will continue to be to seek grants and funding that support the work of Northumberland Archives.

Our current projects are shown below with further information available on our website [www.northumberlandarchivestrust.org](http://www.northumberlandarchivestrust.org).

## Projects Completed

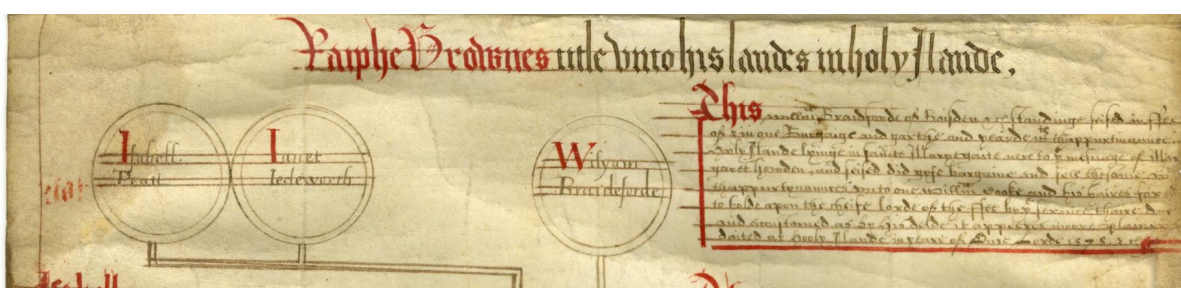
### **Online Paleography**

The Trust worked with Newcastle University and Northumberland Archives to create an educational module for undergraduates and volunteers to help them get to grips with deciphering difficult handwriting found in written records. The module is awaiting its final flight checks before being launched shortly.

### **Harriet Carr**

The Grand Tour module on art, culture, politics and conflict is now available on LEARN for use by schools.

<https://www.northumberlandarchives.com/learn/harriet-carr/carr-adults/>





## **Projects in Progress**

### ***Hospitals in the North***

The charity has provided £2,000, which together with other funding from the Bright Trust, is supporting research into the history of some of the maternity hospitals within Northumberland.

Northumberland Archives at Woodhorn now has six volunteers carrying out research into

- The life of Mona Taylor and her daughter Margery and the establishment and early years of the Mona Taylor Maternity Home, Stannington.
- The experiences of mothers and babies at Bowmer Bank and Elswick Lodge, and at Dilston Hall maternity home

Another of our hospitals in the north volunteers is beginning to look into how the Newcastle Royal Victoria Infirmary maternity unit was evacuated to Blagdon Hall during the second world war and the findings will be published as a blog on the archives website.

In the north of the county, Berwick's volunteers are focusing on trawling through the hospital records to find out all about the early days of the Castlehills maternity units.

In all of our Hospitals in the North projects, the recording of oral history will be a key element, so Berwick Archives will provide training sessions on oral histories aimed at volunteers at both Berwick and Woodhorn, and they will then be looking for former staff and patients to interview. We are pleased that the Trust's grant is making this possible.

### ***Photocentre Collection***

The Archive Service recently reported to the Community Foundation on the substantial progress that has been made cataloguing and digitising some of the amazing images within this collection.

Over 5,500 catalogue entries have been created for the electronic catalogue and more images have been digitised.

The Berwick Archivist gave a talk in February on Berwick 1952-2022 which was largely based on this collection, and the Photocentre social media streams continue to attract interest with over 1300 followers. Follow them on Photocentreberwick.

A new blog has also been started on the collection which can be found here –

<https://www.photocentreberwick.co.uk/blog>



### ***Lord Crewe Papers***

The Lord Crewe Trustees papers are continuing to be catalogued. To date four blogs have been published on some of their fascinating content which includes policies insuring against aerial damage in World War I details of the sale of Bamburgh Castle to Lord Armstrong and the amazing story of how a cake weighing 12 stones was taken by train to provide a picnic for 450 children from Gateshead who visited Bamburgh Castle in 1855.

Further details can be found in the Archives Blogs

[Lord Crewe Project - Northumberland Archives](#)

[Insurance, its more interesting than you'd think! - Northumberland Archives](#)

[Iconic Northumbrian Castle for Sale - Northumberland Archives](#)

[Oh, I Do Like to be Beside the Seaside! - Northumberland Archives](#)

### ***Platten Project – Blyth to the Future***

Work continues to bring the Blyth to the Future project - funded with help from the Platten Trust and the Community Foundation, Tyne and Wear and Northumberland - to the people of South East Northumberland. More on this project next time.

### ***Early Trading Links between America and Newcastle***

Harriet Gray, a PhD student is working with the Archive to catalogue and make available more than 250 letters from the Carr-Ellison papers which detail the American trading activities in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century of Mr Ralph Carr (1711-1806).

It is hoped that this work will be complete by the end of November and will form the basis for a series of blogs, and an online talk.



## **Projects In Development**

### ***Atkinson and Marshall, sheep farmers of Alnham and Whittingham.***

A box of correspondence and papers has been unearthed in the archive detailing the lease of land to these farmers for sheep grazing. Although this initially may not sound too noteworthy, but Atkinson and Marshall leased over 100,000 acres of land owned by the Countess of Sutherland and the introduction of this kind of large scale sheep farming was key to the mass eviction of tenants in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, known as the Highland Clearances.

Funding is currently being sought so that these letters between farmers and the agents of the Countess which contain a host of interesting material, will be reviewed and catalogued.

### **Cataloguing Project – ongoing**

Northumberland Archives at Woodhorn have identified 1096 boxes of records from 37 different estates which require cataloguing.

Each separate collection is being reviewed and a brief overview of the content of each collection, its extent and geographical reach and any themes within it is being prepared. The collection is then prioritised as low medium or high priority, depending on its uniqueness and how likely the collection is to be used for educational purposes. The high priority collections identified so far include:

- a. Allendale (Allendale) – 248 boxes (1 year)
- b. Bosanquet (Rock) – 90 boxes (4 months)
- c. Clayton (Chesters) – 3 boxes (1 month)
- d. Gibson (Hexham) – 5 boxes (3 months)
- e. Renwick (Rothbury) – 8 boxes (3 months)
- f. Craster (Craster) – 50 boxes (TBC)
- g. Greenwich Hospital – 19 boxes (TBC)

Berwick Record Office have also begun to assess their unlisted collections, or those which require re-cataloguing. The Charity is seeking funds in order to enable all of these collections to be catalogued.





### **Potential New Projects**

The Archive has identified the following projects where the Charity could help either by sourcing funding, or by providing funding itself.

#### ***Book Scanner***

The Archive would like to purchase a book scanner to improve the ease of scanning books, and to prevent damage being done to their spines.

The estimated cost of this will be £25,000.

#### ***Women's Football***

With the current interest in women's football at an all-time high, the Archive would like to commission a project researching and celebrating women's football in Northumberland.

The maximum cost of this is estimated to be £5,000.

If you can help with these or other projects mentioned in this newsletter, do let us know. You can contact the Trust at any time via the website or by emailing [secretary@northumberlandarchivetrust.org](mailto:secretary@northumberlandarchivetrust.org)