Modern Records Centre

Report for 1997-8

Introduction

1997-8 has been another busy year in the Centre, particularly for the receipt of archives. There have been large additions to existing deposits as well as new deposits. Despite a reduction in the staff available, we have been able to maintain the service in the searchroom. We have reviewed our cataloguing procedures in the light of developments in archival standards, and begun the necessary development and training to implement the changes decided after that review. But above all else, the archives of the Trades Union Congress, their accessioning and cataloguing, have dominated the Centre’s work for this year.

Accessions

In 1997 the TUC decided to change the access policy to its files. The closure period was reduced from thirty to ten years. The files for the newly-opened twenty years filled 3,000 boxes, so that our pleasure at this increase in access to a wonderful archive was somewhat overshadowed by the size of the resulting deposit. The boxes arrived in the Centre in December. They had been stored in random order, so the first task was to put them into box number order. We are very grateful to the Library Porters for their work to achieve this. The TUC had commissioned a brief list of the files before putting them into storage, so a list is available to guide research. Within four months of their arrival in the Centre the files were ready to be used.

Other notable additions to deposits have been received from the CBI, the various Iron & Steel Employers’ & Trade Associations, UNISON, and the family of Maurice Edelman. New depositors include ASLEF, the AEEU (Electricians’ unions), GCHQ Trade Unions, the UK Steel Association, and the Certification Office for Trade Unions and Employers’ Associations. A complete list is given in Appendix 1.

Processing

In the last five years, particularly following the Follett report and the resulting flow of money from the Higher Education Funding Councils into university libraries, there have been major developments in the archival standards that underpin our work. The International Council on Archives has published the General International Standard Archival Description (ISAD(G)) and the International Standard Archival Authority Record for Corporate Bodies, Persons and Families (ISAAR(CPF)). The National Council on Archives has published its Rules for the Construction of Personal, Place and Corporate
Names. At the same time developments in information technology have brought new opportunities for co-operation and collaboration, both with our researchers and archival colleagues. The Centre has decided to use the Encoded Archival Description Document Type Definition (EAD DTD) for its catalogues. This is a data structure standard which conforms to the Standardised General Mark-up Language (SGML), the international standard; it also conforms to ISAD(G) and ISAAR(CPF). One crucial aspect of SGML is that later versions will be able to understand older versions. It means that electronic versions of our lists will not be unintelligible to future programs. This was a deciding factor in making this change. SGML tags enable the hierarchical nature of our lists to be viewed remotely, and to be searched using various internet search protocols. At present not many of our lists are available in this format, but we have started to compile new catalogues using it and over the next year our on-line Summary Guide will be tagged to conform to it. At the moment a special web browser or program is needed to view the lists in their tagged form. Not many systems have these browsers but we understand that this will be remedied soon. In the meantime we will continue to maintain our on-line Summary Guide in HTML, the generally available format, and itself derived from SGML. We will also continue to print out our lists to distribute them to the National Register of Archives and the National Inventory of Documentary Sources.

Much of the work implementing these changes has been made possible by a grant from the Non-Formula Funding Committee of the Higher Education Funding Council for England. The grant has paid for a full-time archivist (Alan Crookham). The Centre was very fortunate to obtain a second grant from the Committee which will enable us to employ one archivist for a year and another for six months. They will concentrate on listing in EAD. Meanwhile Alan Crookham will convert the Summary Guide to the EAD format. He will also compile corporate name authority files for use in the Centre and in the National Council on Archives’ authority files project.

As part of his HEFCE-funded cataloguing work Alan Crookham completed listing the TUC archive 1960-70 and supplemental material to the TUC 1920-60 archive. The archive occupies 27.07 cubic metres; a list of 577 folios was produced to describe it. As with all the Centre’s completed lists, a copy has been sent to the National Register of Archives and the National Inventory of Documentary Sources. We were extremely fortunate to secure a grant from the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation with the help of the Research Libraries Group. This will enable the TUC list to be retrospectively encoded with EAD tags. The Foundation will also contribute to the encoding of the list of the International Transport Workers’ Federation papers. A sources booklet covering the new TUC material has been prepared and will be launched during the Centre’s silver anniversary celebrations. The publication of the sources
booklet will successfully conclude the second phase of the HEFCE Non-Formula Funded project.

Christine Woodland’s time continued to be occupied with the negotiating, surveying, and administering of the deposit of archives. A review of the Centre’s accessioning procedures led to some changes and a backlog of initial processing was cleared. She has shared supervision of the Centre’s searchroom. She worked with Alan Crookham in reviewing the Centre’s cataloguing procedures and implementing the various changes mentioned above. She continued to keep the Summary and Supplementary Guides up to date.

Richard Temple supervised a busy year in the searchroom. He continued his re-shelving in the strongroom. Over the last two years this exercise has liberated over 140 shelf metres of storage space. He catalogued the papers of the Warwick and Leamington Constituency Labour Party (MSS.133), GCHQ Trade Unions (MSS.384), and the papers of John Foden, Chairman of the Steam Engine Makers’ Society Executive Council, 1874-1903 (MSS.259/SE/6). He produced interim lists of the papers of the Post Office Engineering Union (MSS.135/RD), the British Association for Commercial and Industrial Education (MSS.97/BACIE), David Shephard’s Fire Brigades Union papers (MSS.346C), and the Hairdressing Industry Apprenticeship Council (MSS.386). He also prepared the papers of the Coventry Trades Union Council (MSS.5) for microfilm publication by Microform Academic Publishers.

Eleanor Rowe continued to work part-time, funded by the Centre’s Development Fund. She listed the papers of BOAC’s Operational Research Department (MSS.335/AI/2) and Rolls Royce Operational Research Department (MSS.335/RR). She began work on other deposits in the Operational Research Society’s archive. She also worked on the accessioning process of the National Cycle Archive (MSS.328).

Joanne Burman has listed the papers of the Rolls Royce Joint Shop Stewards’ Combine using EAD. She continued to keep the deposits from Amnesty International up to date and accessible.

**Research**

The statistics in Appendix 2 give a quantitative picture for the year. A new feature is the number of visits to the Centre’s web pages. Only visits from outside the University have been included because the internal visits do not differentiate between those made by members of the Centre’s staff (working on the pages) and other members of the University. The number of visits is remarkable, an average of over 220 a week. The Centre’s web pages are clearly fulfilling a useful role, giving basic ‘housekeeping’ information (how to find
us, when we are open), and also giving information about what particular archives we hold, the dates they cover, and whether or not permission is needed to consult them. This use encourages us to give the Summary Guide a thorough revision, particularly so that it will conform to the NCA’s Rules for corporate, personal and geographical names.

The number of enquiries has more than doubled. The number now includes all enquiries, by telephone and email, as well as by post, to give a better reflection of the amount of time spent on this aspect of the Centre’s work. The number of reader visits has increased slightly, but they were made by fewer readers. The number of documents produced has also risen slightly. The number of photocopies has dropped sharply. There has been no change in price or procedure, so that this is difficult to explain. Possibly the previous year’s figure was anomalously high because of a few extremely large orders.

It is particularly pleasing to see that the number of pages of lists completed was almost double the previous year’s. The Centre’s staff are to be congratulated on maintaining this fundamental aspect of their work, especially when their number was reduced, and when they were having to learn new cataloguing procedures. It should be pointed out that most of the cataloguing was done by the HEFCE-funded archivist, Alan Crookham, and the Development Fund archivist, Eleanor Rowe. The Centre is very grateful to HEFCE and to the contributors to our Development Fund for making this vital work possible.

As usual, the variety of research topics pursued is remarkably wide. Appendix 2 lists some of the publications which have been based on material held at the Centre.

In January the Centre welcomed Dr Jo Melling of the Economics Department of the University of Exeter as Honorary Fellow.

**Outreach**

Christine Woodland gave introductions to archives in general and the Centre in particular to postgraduates in History and Social History, and to Open Studies students of local history. She spoke about the Centre to the Trade Unions Information Group. She gave a lecture introducing the Centre to the Warwickshire Family History Society. She has also been responsible for keeping the Centre’s web pages up-to-date. She convened a Library working party on the Library’s own web pages. She became a member of the CURL Resources Management Working Party. She continued to be a member of the committee of the Warwickshire Local History Society, the committee of the British Records Association’s Records Preservation Section, and the archive committee of the Operational Research Society.
Richard Temple gave introductions to archives and to the Centre to postgraduates in Politics and International Studies, Business Studies, and Women’s Studies. He collaborated with Coventry City Central Library in mounting an exhibition in the Central Library about the life and work of Tom Mann. The exhibition ran for several weeks in October 1997 and photographs from the exhibition have continued to be on display in one of the Centre’s exhibition cases. He was awarded a grant by the International Panel of the Society of Archivists to attend a course on management issues in archival preservation. The course was run under the auspices of the Open Society Archives and took place in July at the Central European University in Budapest.

The West Midlands Region of the Society of Archivists met at the Centre to discuss archives and the internet. Christine Woodland gave a brief introduction to the internet and talked about the Centre’s work. Richard Higgins of Durham University Library talked about EAD.

Eleanor Rowe and Alan Crookham were elected Secretary and Assistant Secretary respectively of the West Midlands Region of the Society of Archivists at the June regional meeting. They organised a clinic held at the Centre by Cathrin Cassarchis, the Society of Archivists’ Heritage Lottery Fund advisor, about applications to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Alan Crookham continued to liaise with JISC’s National Networking Demonstrator Project (NNDP) on behalf of the Centre. He prepared a poster about his work on EAD for the NFF Committee’s Easter meeting at Nottingham University, *Exchange of experience: looking to the future*.

Visitors to the Centre during the year included members of the University Court, Jean Bennett of the Engineering Employers’ Association, Judith Etherington of Churchill College archives, Andrew Milward of the National Cycle Archive, David Rea of UK Steel Association, Katherine Reedy and Jenny Morgan of the International Transport Workers’ Federation, Sheila Wyvern of the Musicians’ Union, and delegates at the European Business Librarians’ conference.

**Publications**

The archives of Coventry Trade Council (MSS.5) have been published in microfiche format by Microform Academic Publishers (enquiries to Microform Academic Publishers).

*Rubery Owen Holdings Ltd Archive*, Modern Records Centre Sources Booklet No. 9, was published, price £3.50. Written by Leonard McDonald, with a preface by Charles Jones, and edited by Richard Storey, it draws attention to
the wide range of topics in the records of a private company, which was a proto-multinational corporation.

Staff
Two additional full-time archivists joined the staff in September 1998, funded by the HEFCE. We are very happy to welcome Sarah Hepworth and David Bishop.
Appendix 1

Summary list of accessions, 1st October 1997 to 30th September 1998

The inclusion of an accession in the following list does not necessarily mean that it is available for research at present. In the case of large or complex accessions only the main constituent parts have been described.

Part 1  Additions to existing accessions

MSS.20  NALGO: a large deposit, not yet sorted, including several series of minutes.

MSS.20/LOG  NALGO Insurance Association Ltd: minutes, 1985-91.

MSS.39/NGA  A number of Typographical Association/National Graphical Association national circulars and agreements, 1940-74, have been transferred to the Centre from Lancashire Record Office where they formed part of the Blackburn Typographical Society deposit.


MSS.79/ASW/DO  Dr John Dore: papers as Secretary of the South-West (London) Division; papers of the London Division Education Sub-committee, 1980s; ASTMS/MSF Standing Orders Committee papers, 1960s-90s; MSF Training National Advisory Committee papers, 1994-6.

MSS.97/BACIE  British Association for Commercial and Industrial Education: BACIE’s commercial activities were taken over by the Institute of Personnel and Development in 1994. The BACIE papers have been added to the IPD archive: minutes series, 1930-94, including General Council minutes, 1931-94.

MSS.125  Maurice Edelman (1911-1975): additional papers, particularly covering his literary work, and including several scripts, as well as correspondence about and reviews of his publications.
MSS.159  International Transport Workers Federation: a large additional deposit.
MSS.179  National Union of Teachers: an additional deposit, including Burnham Secretariat papers and additions to minutes series.
MSS.181  Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament: through the good offices of Dr Mary Brennan, further files were added to the archive.
MSS.200/C Confederation of British Industry: further selected additions have been made to the archive, which now extends to 1987. Files have been received from the offices of President and Secretary, and the directorates for Company Affairs, Economic Affairs, Employment Affairs, International Affairs, Public Affairs and Regional and Smaller Firms. Papers relating to the Wilson Committee have also been received and integrated into the archive. The East Midlands Region of the CBI has deposited monthly reports, 1973-97 and Regional Council minutes, 1980-96.
MSS.226/X Motor industry secondary documentation: additional press-cuttings, publicity material and publications.
MSS.248  British Air Line Pilots’ Association: additional files relating to pensions negotiations, 1980s.
MSS.328  National Cycle Archive: large deposits from the Cycling Touring Club and from the National Cycle Museum Trust.
MSS.335  Operational Research Society and Operational Research Archive: various additional deposits including a transcript of an interview with Lord Halsbury and papers relating to Community OR.
MSS.346C Fire Brigades Union: Papers relating to David Shephard’s career in the FBU (he was a member of the EC, 1975-94). The papers include Executive Council minutes, 1975-94, subject files, and press-cuttings covering the 1977 national strike.
MSS.365B&C  Iron & Steel Employers’ & Trade Associations: a large additional additonal deposit, including files relating to industrial relations, 1970s-90s.

MSS.371/Coal  Qualidata (funded by the ESRC) has deposited transcriptions of Prof. C. Critcher’s interviews made in 1986-8 relating to his study of the Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire coalfield communities after the 1984-5 coal miners’ strike.

**Part 2**  
**New Accessions, 1997-8**

MSS.381  British Council Staff Association: files relating to the activities of the BCSA and the Trade Union Side at the British Council, 1940s-1980s. They include minutes of staff committees within the Council, office bulletins and trade union side papers.

MSS.382  Crossman-Lemare correspondence: Iris Lemare (1902-1997) was one of Britain’s first professional woman conductors. She was a friend of many British composers before the Second World War and some of her correspondence with them is now in the British Library. She was also a friend of Richard Crossman and her relatives have very generously given to the Centre some thirty letters from him to her, c. 1928-34.

MSS.383  UK Steel Association: UKSA was formed in 1997. It derives from the British Independent Steel Producers’ Association (BISPA) which was formed in 1967, following the Iron and Steel Act, 1967. BISPA’s members comprised some 140 companies not nationalised by the Act, about 15% of the total industry. In 1993 the privatised British Steel plc joined BISPA and the Association changed its name to the British Iron and Steel Producers’ Association (BISPA). BISPA changed its name to the UK Steel Association in 1997. For BISPA itself there are Executive Committee minutes, 1967-93, AGM papers, 1968-93, and circular letters to members, 1980-91. The files deposited include those of the Independent Steel Employers’ Association, covering various aspects of industrial relations going back to the 1940s. There are also many files relating to the BISF. Access to the archive is only by written application to the UK Steel Association.

MSS.384  GCHQ Trade Unions: The General Communications Head Quarters campaign was launched when unions were banned
from the intelligence-gathering centre at Cheltenham in 1984.
The deposit includes minutes of members’ meetings, 1984-97;
National Co-ordinating Committee minutes, 1987;
Cheltenham campaign meetings minutes, 1984-7; Campaign
Team minutes, 1992-6; general correspondence, 1984-97;
subject files; information circulars, 1984-95; *Warning Signal*,
1984-97; quarterly reports, 1992-3; draft constitution, 1984;

MSS.385  *Glass Bottle Makers’ of Yorkshire Trade Protection Society:*
Dr T. Spencer has very kindly deposited GBMYTPS (North
of England Glass Bottle Makers’ Society from 1905) pr.
quartry reports, 1875-6, 1879-80, 1887-8; ‘proposition
books’ (motions before EC, result of votes), 1886-1914,
1919-40. The style of these volumes changes over time to
become minutes of EC meetings. pr. accounts, 1923-35
(incomplete); North of England Glass Bottle Makers’ Society
reports, 1905-8, 1913-16. The deposit also includes T.
Spencer and D. Lilleyman, *Theo. Voelkel (1851-1924) - A life*
(1997), based on Voelkel’s unpublished autobiography.
Voelkel was a glass bottle maker in Germany. His trade
union activities forced him to leave Germany as a political
refugee in 1882. He found work in the glass bottle trade in
Castleford and joined the GBMYTPA. He became active in
the union, and held several offices, as well as acting as an
interpreter in its negotiations with the International Union of
Glass Bottle Makers.

MSS.386  *Hairdressing Industry Apprenticeship Council:*
papers deposited by Geoffrey Jackson, Chairman and Trustee of the
HIAC, include Council minutes, 1957, 1962-74; sub-
committee minutes, 1973; draft constitutions, 1973-4;

MSS.387  *Amalgamated Electrical & Engineering Union:*
A first
deposit has been made of the records of the Electricians’ side
of the AEEU. This first deposit includes a large amount of
material relating to Les Cannon’s case against the ETU in
1961. There are also various conference reports, annual
financial reports, and both verbatim and printed EC minutes.

MSS.388  *Certification Office for Trade Unions and Employers’
Associations:*
applications under the Trade Union and
Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, s. 115 from
trade unions for refund of costs of secret postal ballots, 1990-. The files provide a unique collection of data on ballots. They give details of the purpose of the ballot, how it was conducted, scrutineers’ reports on membership voting, outcome and costs. The ballots covered the calling or ending of a strike or other industrial action; carrying out an election of executive or other officers, amending the rules, obtaining a decision on amalgamation or merger, obtaining a decision on a political fund, obtaining a decision on an employer’s proposal for remuneration etc.

MSS.389 UNISON: NEC papers, 1998 onwards [not open for research]

MSS.390 Rolls Royce Shop Stewards’ Combine: includes minutes of Negotiating Committee meetings, 1963-87 (1979-82 not deposited); minutes of other company meetings, 1981-4; minutes of Chairman and Convenors’ meetings 1983-91; and a Bulletin, 1953-91.

MSS.391 Alan Thornett papers: papers relating to his career as a shop steward at the Cowley Morris plant, 1963-82. It includes various TGWU, British Leyland minutes, c.1967-89; subject files on British Leyland; and Trotskyite and TGWU publications, 1960s-80s.

Appendix 2

Performance Indicators, 1997-8

The Report as a whole has always served as an overall performance indicator for the Centre, and it has been seen as such by the Centre’s Academic Committee and Advisory Board. One of the Centre’s most important areas of activity is the selective preservation of the records of the past for research in the future. This has been recorded in Appendix 1 of each annual Report, in the list of records accessioned. An indicator available for the first time this year is the number of visits made to the Centre’s web pages. Figures in brackets are for 1996-7.

Visits to the Centre’s web pages

8611 external visits (not available before Jan. 1998). Only external visits have been included as internal visits include those made by the Centre’s staff when working on the pages.

Reader visits to the Modern Records Centre

1233 (1,231) visits.

These visits were made by 103 (129) researchers from this University and 231 (245) researchers from elsewhere.

Documents produced

25,632 (25,258) documents were produced.

Enquiries answered

This year’s figures include for the first time all enquiries, by post, telephone and email.

859 (311 postal enquiries only) were answered.

Photocopies produced for readers

6423 (10,153) photocopies were produced for readers.

Publications sold

73 (184) copies of the Centre’s various publications were sold.
Catalogues

766 (322) pages were submitted to the National Inventory of Documentary Sources and the National Register of Archives. 581 pages were for the TUC catalogue, but the pages also included 158 pages of lists for the Operational Research Society Archive.

External funding

One full-time assistant archivist post was funded by the Non-Formula Funding Committee of the HEFCE. Two additional full-time assistant archivist posts were funded by the Committee from September 1998.

One part-time assistant archivist post was funded by the Centre’s Development Fund.

I have already mentioned the contributions made to the Centre’s work by HEFCE, the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation and the Research Libraries Group. Donations have also been made by National Cycle Archive, the Operational Research Society, and the TUC. We are most grateful for this help. £2516 (£1,378) was added to the Development Fund from these and other sources.

A selection of recent research making significant use of the Centre’s holdings

Jonathan Boswell and James Peters, Capitalism in contention: Business leaders and political economy in modern Britain (CUP, 1997).


Charmian Brinson, ‘A woman’s place ...? German-speaking women in exile in Britain, 1933-1945,’ German Life and Letters, n.s. vol. LI, no. 2, pp. 204-18 (1998)


Heike Bungert, Das Nationalkomitee und der Westen. Die Reaktion der Westallierten auf das NKFD und die Freien Deutschen Bewegungen 1943-1948 (Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart, 1997).


Ursula Langkau-Alex, *The international socialist labor movement and the elimination of the “German problem,”* International Institute of Social History Research Paper no. 29 (IISH, Amsterdam, 1998)


Appendix 3

The Advisory Board of the Centre, 1997-8

Professor G.S. Bain (Chairman)
Dr T.R. Gourvish
Mr J. Hyde (CBI)
Mr M. Jones (TUC)
Professor P. Mathias
Mr A.D. Owen
The University Librarian (Secretary) *
Professor W. Grant *
Dr J. Hinton *
Professor R. Hyman *
Dr C. Jones *
Dr A. Mason *
Professor C. Steedman
Mrs C. Woodland, Acting Archivist *

* Members of the Academic Committee
Appendix 4

The Staff of the Centre, 1997-8

The University Librarian, Director
Christine Woodland, M.A., D.A.A., Acting Archivist
Richard Temple, M.A., D.A.A., Assistant Archivist
Joanne Burman, Records Assistant
David Bishop, B.A., M.A.R.M., Assistant Archivist (*HEFCE funded*)
Alan Crookham, B.A., M.Ar.Ad., Assistant Archivist (*HEFCE funded*)
Sarah Hepworth, B.A., M.A., Assistant Archivist (*HEFCE funded*)
Eleanor Rowe, B.A., D.A.A., Assistant Archivist (part-time) (*Development Fund*)