



**WHIPPLE
LIBRARY**



**UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**
Department of History and
Philosophy of Science



Annual Report

2013-14



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Whipple Library Annual Report 2013-14

2013-14 was a year of significant developments in the Library, from affiliation to the University Library and extended opening hours, to our first participation in Open Cambridge and the launch of a new seminar series, all of which are described in more detail below. We continued to serve a wide range of readers from across the University, both students and staff, and trust that the Whipple also maintains its role as a congenial base for visitors to the Department. Although the number of HPS undergraduates was slightly down on previous years, we were proud of a good write-up in *The Cambridge Student's* 'Battle of the Bibliothèques', which complimented the Library as "unassuming but not dull" and "a sea of serenity". Instrumental in creating that successful atmosphere is the Library staff, which in 2013-14 comprised Anna Jones (Librarian), Dawn Moutrey (Library Assistant), Agnieszka Lanucha (Library and Departmental Assistant), and lunchtime invigilators Riana Betzler, Andrew Buskell and Sophie Waring.



Affiliation

The Whipple Library and its staff started the new academic year in a new relationship with the Department, having become an Affiliated Library of Cambridge University Library on 1 August 2013. The UL's affiliation programme is a direct outcome of the General Board's Review of Teaching and Learning Support Services (2008), which made various recommendations in the interests of the delivery of more effective and efficient library and other academic support services around the University to students and staff. By bringing the department and faculty libraries into closer relationship with the UL the aim is to improve the user experience by enabling better

coordination of acquisitions and other essential reader services. The historic ties between the Library and Museum, and with the rest of the Department mean that the Whipple enters into affiliation in a strong position, keen to benefit from central improvements in the interests of our users, while also retaining the autonomy necessary to continue serving the research needs of the HPS community.

Most of the changes evident during the first year have been administrative, with the Librarian and Library Assistant becoming members of University Library staff, with line management from the School Librarian for Humanities and Social Sciences, Dr Linda Washington (sometime also Whipple Librarian). This has brought opportunities to serve on a number of additional committees, which in turn is helping to foster mutually beneficial relationships with staff at the main UL. Anna Jones was invited to contribute to a workshop on the processing of donations at the UL in March, and gave a short presentation on the work of the Whipple to the All Staff Briefings in May. We look forward to developing these relationships further as the affiliation programme develops over time.

Extended opening hours

We were extremely pleased to be able to extend the Library's opening hours to 7pm on weekday evenings full term from the start of the Lent Term, fulfilling a long-held ambition of several generations of student representatives and librarians alike. Although practical for the most important of reasons, synchronizing the Library's closing time with that of the Department had meant that heavily timetabled students, especially

those reading for Part IB, had limited opportunities to use the Library other than to collect or return an overnight loan in gaps between lectures. By extending opening until 7pm we are now more accessible to students attending late afternoon lectures, and also provide a more attractive regular work space for MPhil and Part III students and visitors who don't have desks elsewhere in the Department, and who can benefit from working a longer day.

The Department's support towards providing the infrastructure to enable evening opening was and remains crucial, from the conversion of the fire exit in the Storey's Gate into an out of hours entrance with swipecard reader to providing funds for additional staffing to cover the extra hours. PhD students Andrew Buskell and Sophie Waring generously added two evening shifts a week to their lunchtime invigilating hours to relieve regular Library staff at the end of the standard working day.

Acquisitions

Among several generous donations received during the year, the Library was particularly pleased to receive a collection of 16 books in German on various topics in the Life Sciences from Dr Jonathan Harwood, formerly of the University of Manchester. Most were titles not otherwise held in Cambridge, so we are grateful to have had the chance to accession these books, and extend our

Closing today at

7.00pm

thanks to Dr Harwood and to Dr Nick Hopwood for negotiating the donation and bringing the books to Cambridge.

A total of 507 books, pamphlets and theses, and 47 ebooks were accessioned by the Library in 2013-14. The proportion of ebooks increases as new titles are routinely published in both formats and we opt to purchase electronically those that will be of particular use in teaching. The stability of publisher platforms for accessing ebooks and variable licensing conditions affecting the facility to download remain concerns for the academic library community, but as Cambridge increases its coverage and expertise in this area we hope to have a positive influence in representing the realities of the end user experience to publishers and aggregators.

Notable among the acquisitions of 2013-14 was a rare copy of the second issue of Louis Auzoux's *Leçons élémentaires d'anatomie et de physiologie* (1839), bound in its original paper wrapper, with printed advertisements on the back cover. The text relates directly to the Auzoux anatomical models held in the Museum, and will be used as part of an exhibition of Auzoux's work planned by the Museum to coincide with the 'Curating Cambridge' festival in the Michaelmas Term 2014.

Special collections

Conservation project

The timing of the generous institution of the new Whipple Museum for the History of Science Conservation Fund, celebrated at a launch in March 2013, proved fortunate for the Library. Daniel Barbaro's *La pratica della prospettiva* (Venice, 1568) is a noteworthy book in the Whipple collection, partly for its content – the woodcuts in Barbaro's architectural treatise make it a good example of the developing use of illustrations in scientific books in the sixteenth century – but also because of its highly unusual binding.



Unusual decorated binding

Much valuable evidence of binding practice over time has been lost from early printed books that passed through the hands of early twentieth-century collectors who were susceptible to the temptation to improve the look of their treasures by having them rebound. To our great and lasting fortune, R.S. Whipple was not of such mind, and so many of his books are in original coverings, albeit in poor condition in several cases. Barbaro's *La pratica* is a folio book printed on paper, bound in pasteboard and decorated with hand-coloured strips of parchment. Its quirky appearance makes it a popular book with visitors, and we became aware in the summer of 2013 that the loosening of a piece of parchment on the front board could lead to further damage if not attended to.

Colleagues at the Cambridge Colleges Conservation Consortium, based at Corpus Christi College were delighted to have the chance to examine the unusual binding at close quarters, and carried out a neat repair before returning the book in a specially fitted archival box to help protect it from further shelf wear. We are grateful to the donors who provided that books in the Whipple Collection should be eligible for treatment under the Conservation Fund, and to Prof. Taub for allowing us to draw on this resource at an early stage.



Damage to parchment strip on front cover



After conservation

Exhibitions

Women Popularisers of Science

The Library hosted two book displays in the small exhibition space on Level 1 in 2013-14. Dawn Moutrey (Library Assistant) prepared a sequence featuring 'Women popularisers of science' in September, including a number of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century works by women authors aimed at encouraging an interest in science among children and young adults. This served well to highlight to our incoming and regular users the pedagogical literature that is a strength of our special collections, and also proved popular with our first batch of Open Cambridge visitors.

Skulls in Print

In February 2014, HPS PhD student James Poskett launched 'Transatlantic Professor: Samuel Morton between the United States and Britain', a small exhibition examining the publication history and subsequent influence of Samuel Morton's provocative treatise of 1839, *Crania Americana*. James had been delighted to discover when consulting the Whipple's copy of the American edition of this book a few months earlier that it contains an additional set of loose plates used to promote the book before and after publication. Because the plates had a purpose separate from the volume itself it is rare to find the two together, so the copy has special significance for the Library as well as to James's work.



The exhibition formed the basis of an interview James gave to the University research website about his work on Morton and scientific racism (<http://bit.ly/1dfbWbk>), which, by virtue of further promotion via social media led to further interviews with a Native American radio station and Brazilian newspaper *O Globo* (<http://glo.bo/1osPRa8>). Congratulations and thanks to James for his work in preparing and promoting the exhibition, and we hope its success will help encourage other students to take advantage of these opportunities to showcase their work to a wider audience.

Tom Telescope

The Department celebrated the re-opening of the refurbished Globe Gallery in the Museum on 24 October 2013 with a lecture by Prof. Jim Secord on the publication history of a series of books for children on Newtonian philosophy, authored by the pseudonymous 'Tom Telescope'. The Library was delighted to host a small pop-up display of successive editions of Tom Telescope from our collections for the occasion, together with a number of other eighteenth and early nineteenth century books describing and illustrating the orrery.

Events & Outreach

Library visits have been a popular feature of the Open Cambridge heritage weekend in recent years, and we were very glad to be able to open the Whipple to members of the public on a drop in basis on Friday 13 September 2013. A leaflet was prepared to highlight particular features (including temporary displays) as people walked round, and the Librarian offered informal tours at

different times during the day. We were pleased with the total of 36 visitors for our first effort, and hope to repeat the event in future.

The Librarian prepared a short presentation, illustrated by examples from the Library's special collections, for a visit of the Bolton Society (of chemical bibliophiles) to the Museum on 11 November 2013, and we were glad to welcome the 2013-14 cohort of Cambridge Graduate Trainee Librarians to the Library for their annual visit on 1 July 2014.

User education – Science in Print series

For several years the Library's user education programme had been enhanced by a collaboration with HPS Affiliate Roger Gaskell who co-presented, with Jim Secord, a pair of workshops for the weekly Departmental Graduate Training Seminar on 'How to use printed books as original sources'. The sessions looked at various aspects of the bibliography of books printed in the hand and machine press periods, using examples from the Whipple's special collections, but the workshops were necessarily compressed, with much content to fit into a short space of time.

We were delighted to be able to extend this offering in 2013-14 into a discrete mini-series of four sessions called 'Science in Print: Understanding book production from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries', held in the Old Library during the Michaelmas Term. The series was open to students at all levels, as well as to postdocs, and by virtue of wide-reach marketing via hps-discussion, a full complement of 18 participants was signed up quickly, including several people from outside the Department, mostly graduate students and postdocs. The series filled an obvious gap since, although the University is rich in printed sources for research, there are relatively few opportunities to study book production in a systematic way.

The opening session surveyed techniques and developments during the hand press period illustrated by 15 examples from the Whipple collections, which people were invited to look at closely. Roger's comprehensive discussion of printing and illustration techniques in week 2 was complemented by an optional field trip made possible by a further helpful collaboration with staff from the University Library Rare Books Room who led tours of the Historical Printing Room for those able to attend. We returned to the Whipple for a discussion of analytical bibliography and the advantages and disadvantages of using digital surrogates in the third session, and the series concluded with an introduction to nineteenth-century book production by Jim Secord. Good attendance across the sessions and positive feedback via a concluding survey attested to the success of the series, which we hope will become a regular feature of the Whipple's user education programme in future. Sincere thanks are due to Roger Gaskell for the time and insights he shared to help make the series possible.

Staff activities & development

The Librarian represented the Whipple at the annual conference of the 'Rare Books and Special Collections Group' of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) in Canterbury in September 2013. The theme of the conference was 'The Future of the Past: Digitisation of Rare and Special Materials', and speakers from a range of large and small institutions with recent experience of digitising print and manuscript material made for a stimulating and informative two days.

All three permanent members of staff attended the annual libraries@cambridge conference on 'Quality' at the Computer Laboratory in West Cambridge on 9 January 2014, and two posters were submitted on behalf of the Library. Aga Lanucha's explored possible uses of the social media site Pinterest in libraries, based on a joint presentation she gave to the Cambridge Librarians in Training group the previous September, while Anna Jones's summarised the achievements of the 'Science in Print' series.

Pinterest for libraries



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Science in Print

UNIVERSITY OF
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Department of History and
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Understanding book production from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries

The Whipple Collection

R.S. Whipple donated his collection of historical scientific instruments and books to the University in 1944, intending that they be used to support the study of the history of science. From this core, the Library's special collections have grown to more than 8000 items covering many aspects of the history of science, technology and medicine. They constitute an important research resource, but are also integral to the Department's teaching activities.

Matching collections & expertise to user needs

The study of books as part of material culture is an important aspect of the history of science.

Students and academics alike benefit from easy electronic access to early printed texts via EERO, ECCO, etc., making content available at their desk and saving travel time to distant libraries.

Less engagement with the physical book, however, means that some aspects of the manufacture and history of early print is poorly understood.

Whipple slots in the Graduate Training Seminar programme were too short to address issues in detail.

Collaboration with colleagues in HPS and in UL Rare Books Department allowed for sharing of expertise in expanded format.



The Science in Print series

5 weekly sessions held during Michaelmas Term in the Whipple Old Library & UL:

I. Survey of the hand press period (Roger Gaskell)

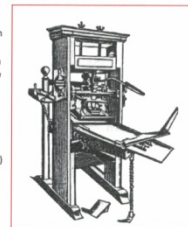
17 scientific books from the Whipple Collection on display for participants to observe and handle, introducing themes for the series

II. Book production in the hand press period (Roger Gaskell)

III. Optional field trip to join UL Introduction to Historical Printing Room (Will Hale/Emily Dourish)

IV. Analysing books from the hand press period (Anna Jones)

V. Book production in the nineteenth century (Prof. Jim Secord)



Target audience

Series advertised via hps-discussion list to appeal to wide audience.

Deliberate aim to include participants at all levels from undergraduates to established academics, and from different disciplinary backgrounds; bibliographical principles apply across subjects.

Flexible booking via Whipple staff meant spaces could be managed according to availability and demand.

Excellent response and turnout for all sessions, from Part III students to former Chair of Library Syndicate!

Benefits

Opportunity for members of the Department at all levels (students, researchers, academics, affiliates and library staff) to collaborate in an informal setting to explore common interests, share specialist knowledge and learn from each other.

Opportunity for Whipple and UL staff to collaborate in areas of shared interest.

Helped to spread knowledge of the Whipple Collection and encourage its further use, in line with R.S. Whipple's intentions.

Generated interest in Whipple Books Blog and will hopefully stimulate more guest posts.

Opportunity for Whipple staff to enrich personal knowledge of special collections while fulfilling an important used education function.

Lessons for future

Experience of delivering seminars will help planning for content and scope of future sessions.

Further reading to improve confidence when delivering complex ideas to a sophisticated audience.

Find a way to market so that interest is maintained across a broad range of participants and not limited to new graduate students.

With thanks to: Roger Gaskell, Jim Secord, Dawn Moutrey, Aga Lanucha, Will Hale, Emily Dourish & Ed Potten



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