One of the positive effects (I hope you agree) of our new web and communications strategy is that we have been reaching out to Fellows and Members on a more regular basis not only with emails from us to you but with surveys which allow information to pass from you to us. Last year we undertook a comprehensive survey of history teachers in higher education on issues of gender in the discipline and were delighted by a response from 707 people, over a fifth of all historians in academic posts. This formed one of the bases of our report on ‘Gender Equality and Historians in UK HE’ which you can find at: http://royalhistsoc.org/rhs-report-gender-equality-historians-higher-education/. More recently we surveyed early-career historians to try to find out what publishing formats and services were most in demand among the rising cohort, to guide the Society’s future publications policy, to which we had 172 responses from people at the appropriate career stage. And earlier this year we undertook a survey aimed directly at you the Fellowship and Membership to get a better sense of your own priorities for the Society and your judgements about our success (or otherwise) at addressing those priorities. To this latter survey we had 432 responses, which represents about 15% of our Fellows and Members - a very healthy response rate by the standards of online surveys, though still of course a minority and not necessarily a representative sample, something we always keep in mind. Nevertheless, the results were revealing (and you can find them in full on our website). Our questions were pitched in a way that forced people to make choices - infuriatingly to some, but it’s a tactic that does bring out opinion - and yet even under these circumstances opinions were very diverse and priorities well distributed: which leads us to conclude that some of us value highly most everything we do, and no-one is keen to see us do less. Addressing professional issues that affect historians - Open Access, ‘impact’, research-council priorities, libraries and archives - with government and funding bodies was mentioned by over half of all respondents; providing information on similar issues by nearly half. A wide range of other issues was mentioned by over a fifth - raising awareness of issues inside the academic profession, publicizing showcases for historical research, supporting postgraduate research with grants and prizes, supporting early-career historians in other ways. Similarly, and almost magically, all of our existing publications were almost equally rated by a fifth to a sixth of you - Transactions, the Camden series, Studies in History, the Bibliography of British and Irish History. Even issues that were rated lower priorities
- history in the schools, issues of cultural heritage - attracted the votes of a fifth to a sixth. A similar pattern can be detected in your views on future priorities: the highest-rated issues were those that arise in our discussions with government and funding bodies (research-council policy, Open Access, ‘impact’), then joint work with other learned societies to represent the humanities more broadly, and collaboration with libraries, archives and museums. Yet even lower-rated priorities - widening participation in history at school and university, work on linking schools to universities, disseminating good practice in teaching in higher education - attracted 10% to 20% of you. A consistent two-thirds of you felt that we were effective in representing your views and representing the interests of historians, that our staff and officers were serving you well, and that your subscriptions give good value. Our email bulletins and the new website received very strong endorsements of 80-90%. Two-thirds of you thought we might make application to the Fellowship simpler, and a similar two-thirds wanted more opportunities to get directly involved with the work of the Society. Perhaps the clearest critical message was that only a fifth of you thought we were as good at representing historians outside as inside higher education. Council will be considering the results of this survey at its next few meetings, but we are already moving to act on some of its findings. Perhaps the clearest critical message was that only a fifth of you thought we were as good at representing historians outside as inside higher education. Council will be considering the results of this survey at its next few meetings, but we are already moving to act on some of its findings.

If you would like to organize such an informal meeting at your university or other research centre, please feel free to write me directly at pm297@cam.ac.uk. Finally, it’s clear that we need to work more systematically to ensure that we are representing the interests of historical scholarship wherever it is found, inside or outside HE. We do already have a close working relationship with the National Archives and the British Library - with whom we sponsor the annual Aylmer Seminar for archivists and historians, always a sellout in February at the IHR - and we have further events under discussion with the National Archives and Research Libraries UK. We have maintained a good practice of ensuring that one Vice President is always drawn from the ranks of historians outside academia (currently Suzanne Bardgett, Head of Research at the Imperial War Museum). Of course many Fellows and Members are independent scholars without institutional attachments. They have always been a central part of our constituency. Again I invite historians of all stripes to write to me personally if they feel there are issues or initiatives that we ought to be tackling that affect historical research outside institutional settings - such as, in the past, we have sought to do in taking up issues of data protection, freedom of information, access to archives and copyright. We are, as this survey amply demonstrates, a Society of many parts that acts on many fronts.
Forthcoming Events

Thursday 18 June 2015
Symposium: University of Northampton
‘Masculinity and the Body in Britain 1500-1900’

Wednesday 1 July 2015 at 6.00 p.m.
Prothero Lecture
Professor Colin Kidd
‘The Grail of Original Meaning: Uses of the Past in American Constitutional Theory’
Venue: UCL

8-9 September (All day)
Teaching History in Higher Education
Venue: Senate House, London

Friday 25 September 2015 at 6.00 p.m.
Professor Elizabeth Harvey
‘Last resort or key resource? Female foreign labour, the Reich labour administration and the Nazi war effort’
Venue: UCL

Wednesday 28 October 2015
The Colin Matthew Memorial Lecture for the Public Understanding of History
in co-operation with Gresham College, London
Professor Timothy Garton Ash
‘Free Speech and the Study of History’
Venue: London

Friday 27 November 2015
Presidential Address
Professor Peter Mandler
‘Educating the Nation. III: Social Mobility’
Venue: UCL
The October 2013 edition of our RHS newsletter carried an interesting and timely series of articles about the history and valuable roles played by a number of our prestigious record societies. What was perhaps left unsaid was how we all have to adapt to new challenges, chief amongst them being the impact of the ‘digital revolution’. What follows is a personal view based on thirty years’ experience in the role of a Literary Director of the Sussex Record Society. It is based on a discussion I facilitated at our Annual General Meeting held at Fishbourne Roman Palace in June 2013, which has since led to various initiatives, chief amongst them being the reorganisation of our website – the kind of heart-searching recently gone through by the RHS.

The Sussex Record Society is one of the oldest in the country having been formed in 1901, and with 95 volumes to date we have a distinguished record for publications. We like to feel that our editors have produced scholarly editions that have set a high standard for editorial practice both in treatment of transcriptions and provision of informative, scholarly introductions. Thankfully, gone are the days when it was assumed that one simply introduced a volume by reference to the nature of the document, its size, condition, and the chest in which it happened to be found.

Membership has changed in nature - the balance between institutional and individual members and the composition of those individuals - but its size has remained pretty constant over the past fifteen years at around 300. We aim to produce a volume a year, and although there is always slippage - fingers crossed - we are not too far behind schedule at the moment. Membership of our Council has also been relatively stable and the long service of key officers has been critical to our success. We have been particularly fortunate in the services of several very able Treasurers, while our Secretaries likewise have been a tower of strength over many years. Most important, we feel our finances are in good order, thanks also to some important, generous legacies.

While this augurs well, we are also aware that we face a number of new challenges in the twenty-first century. Like most record societies we have witnessed increased pressures on our volunteers over the last twenty-five years as the balance of what is entailed in ‘publishing’ has swung from working with a commercial publisher to doing most of the work ourselves - one by-product of technological advances. Copy-editing, formatting, illustrations, the index, bibliographies, etc., are all handled by us in the production of camera-ready copy. And the matter of ‘true costs’ has been largely hidden thanks
to unstinting efforts by key members of Council. A new and important figure has emerged almost without our noticing, namely our ‘Webmaster-General’, without whom we would now be lost. And we only really appreciate what he has achieved when we talk with the professionals who are now going to service our website - with full financial costs.

Our discussions now centre not only on what we should publish in our printed series, but how we might augment our services to our community by different ‘publications’ online. We have already made great progress in putting up copies of out of print volumes and placing supporting photographic material for current volumes online. Might we now consider putting shorter runs of source material - the kind of documents that might once have been assembled in a ‘miscellany’ volume - online? If so, what kind of editorial practices should we develop for website management? We have developed various advice papers for our editors over the years, but greater attention should perhaps now be given to the principles underlying what we might produce online. How do we ensure that we continue to offer a credible service to our members?

Since their formation after the Second World War, we have enjoyed a close relationship with our respective county record offices based in Chichester and in Lewes (now Falmer). As the work of record offices around the country comes under increasing threat in times of austerity, how might those partnerships be strengthened to assist in bringing important archives to the attention of our public? In the age of the ‘digital revolution’ what is now meant by the term ‘catalogue’? And how might a record society assist new generations of historians with finding aids in the more complex, yet apparently simple world of ‘Google search’ and multi-layered online catalogues? Is there a place for record society volumes and that young ‘early-career’ academics could do worse than offer their services to a local society.

These challenges may also bring about structural changes in the running of our societies. We have already encountered the emergence of a ‘webmaster’, but the days of a single general editor or pair of ‘literary directors’ might also be numbered; we need to envisage an editorial team that tackles a range of tasks from commissioning volumes, to production, distribution and marketing. Councils of the early twentieth century could rely on retired clergymen, solicitors, businessmen and philanthropists to give of their time willingly and fully. The late twentieth century witnessed the arrival of ‘professionals’, county archivists, retired teachers and academics, but such people are no longer capable of giving their time so freely, whatever might be said about the value of ‘impact’ and ‘public engagement’. The downside of being fortunate in having long-serving and experienced officers on Council is that when they go, they leave a bigger hole to fill.

There is not only the matter of to whom societies might look for future members of councils and officers; there is also the question of where to find editors? How do we persuade hard-pressed academics, over-conscious of the REF, to edit volumes? Such work is time-consuming, quite technical and relatively under-appreciated these days, even though we have been assured that REF panels value such editions. We cherish our editors as best we can: we offer reasonable expenses, provide editorial assistance, employ our Council members as readers, and give support in work on the technical apparatus, matters like the index, bibliography, illustrations and glossaries. Yet this is a great and increasing weight to place on all concerned, all of whom are unpaid volunteers; for how much longer can our societies run like this? Yet we still feel there is a place for record society volumes and that young ‘early-career’ academics could do worse than offer their services to a local society.

At the County History Societies Symposium held at the IHR in September 2014, addressed by our illustrious President amongst others, it was heartening to discover that most record societies seem to be in good shape, flourishing even. The challenges of the digital revolution have been embraced and discussion even turned to the potential use of social media and ‘active websites’. Of the 26 societies represented on the day, 25 had a website, a mark of great change over the past ten years. Record Societies may have begun in an era of antiquarianism, but they are now more firmly than ever part of the wider infrastructure of History - and long may that continue.
Sir William Ivor Jennings (1903-65) was one of the twentieth century’s most prolific and prominent scholars of British and Constitutional constitutional history. Jennings, who was Master of Trinity Hall and Downing Professor of the Laws of England at Cambridge, left lasting works such as Cabinet Government, The Law and the Constitution and The Approach to Self-Government, which all remain in print despite being written well over six decades ago. In addition a rich corpus of articles, broadcasts and public information publications, including an appraisal of the Magna Carta for the 750th anniversary, serve as further evidence of his substantial contributions to scholarship and public service. Beyond Britain Jennings, from the late 1930s till his death in 1965, was incredibly dynamic in advising and influencing states on political and constitutional matters across the world including Canada, Ceylon, Ethiopia, India, Ghana, Maldives, Malta, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Rhodesia, South Africa and Sudan. As that list of territories demonstrates Jennings was sought widely due to his expertise, hard work and skill at delivering ‘the goods’. Jennings published some key works on these cases including The Constitution of Ceylon, Constitutional Problems in Pakistan, Democracy in Africa and Constitutional Laws of the Commonwealth. However, Sir Ivor Jennings had an invaluable and substantial archive consisting of diaries, memoranda, policy papers, unpublished articles and private correspondence with major figures. The collection was purchased from Lady Jennings by the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, in 1983. Few scholars were aware of its existence and even for those few that did it was difficult to access due to Jennings’ near indecipherable handwriting and the unedited structure of the papers. Dr Harshan Kumarasingham, Institute of Commonwealth Studies/University of Cambridge, was confident of the collection’s scholarly value and submitted it to the Society’s Camden Series, which publishes, through Cambridge University Press, edited volumes containing unpublished sources important to British history with expert commentary. The Camden Series enabled Dr Kumarasingham to bring together various critical documents into one easily accessible volume. For the first time scholars of British constitution making, Political History, Decolonization, Diplomatic Studies and Imperial and Commonwealth History can find and compare Jennings’ insightful material on Malaya to Malta, New Zealand to Nyasaland and covers issues including self-determination, federalism, monarchy, government, electoral systems, the role of religion, power distribution, ethnic conflict, international diplomacy and backroom politics. All these issues remain as important in the contemporary era as they did in the crucial period following Decolonization when Jennings worked. This edition gives rare first hand details and evidence of the state-building and constitution-making across the world. Already the material on Ceylon is being used in the current round of constitution-making in Sri Lanka. Jennings has largely been neglected, if not left as unfamiliar, by British historians. His work in the United Kingdom has hitherto been mainly used instead by public law academics, while others have examined particular case studies such as his role on the Reid Commission in Malaya. In some cases his critical work or at least the extent of it has been largely unknown, such as in Pakistan, where he had particularly powerful, but controversial role advising the Governor-General over the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly or in addressing Eritrean appeals for independence from Haile Selassie’s Ethiopia. The Camden Series has allowed all this material and more to come to light and broken new ground by publishing a volume that covers many countries. Britain itself is, however, found in all the pages since this is the intellectual context in which Jennings worked, wherever he was geographically. A unique and previously unpublished account of the principles behind Magna Carta and its international value can be found here also with great relevance for current attention on this 800 year old parchment and influence abroad.
To paraphrase Kumarasingham’s introduction there are three main reasons why Jennings is important for historians.

First, Jennings is particularly useful for his guidance on the existence of constitutional conventions. He asked three questions: were there any precedents for these conventions; did the actors in those precedents believe they were bound by them; and what was the reason behind such conventions? Conventions were, as Jennings famously proclaimed in *Law and the Constitution*, ‘the flesh which clothes the dry bones of the law’, which are essential to an understanding of the British constitution.

Secondly, an area of particular interest for imperial and political historians is Jennings’ observation of the Crown and Cabinet and their political prerogatives. Its utility is its inventory and deployment of constitutional precedents from at least the seventeenth century. In fact, arguably Jennings’ preferred sources for his writings were historical – the memoirs of political and constitutional practitioners. Jennings harnessed examples from courtiers and counsellors around sovereigns including Queen Victoria and George V to assert judgements on less than clear-cut topics such as the personal prerogatives of the Crown to dissolve Parliament, refuse assent, and sack ministers, and the exercise of patronage.

The third area where Jennings was arguably at his most influential was in the shaping of constitutions in the Commonwealth and beyond, owing to his being the most physically and intellectually available expert on constitution-making during the high tide of decolonization of the British Empire. As a study of democracy and responsible government recently concluded, individuals such as ‘Ivor Jennings’ were ‘important at the inception of Westminster’, as the British system is heavily reliant on the first two of Jennings’ contributions outlined above – conventions and the powerful personalities who exercise them. Jennings was seen as the man who could get things done. Related to this broader point is the fact that Jennings directly drafted (or at least recommended to the states he advised) a Westminster constitutional system – a system readily exported, easily manipulated, and evasive of comprehensive description.

By promoting the publication of this unique volume, the Camden Series and the Royal Historical Society will allow scores of scholars across the world the opportunity for the first time to view rare and primary material that give insight and understanding to the struggle of democracy in the post-colonial world and the problematic application of the British parliamentary system to lands that could not be further away from Westminster.
Historical research and writing has always largely been an activity for the individual historian, the ‘lone scholar’. Most historians continue to regard this as the fundamental characteristic of historical work: a well-informed single mind posing questions, studying the sources, assessing the evidence, refining concepts and shaping the arguments. Yet in recent decades, stimulated by research councils and other funding bodies, and in some cases by the impetus and opportunities for ‘interdisciplinary’ research, an increasing number of historians have become involved in collaborative research projects. Some are converts, enthusiastically adopting this style of work alongside their own personal research and writing; others emerge with mixed feelings; many no doubt remain sceptical, for various reasons. What, then, are the pros and cons of working collaboratively on large research projects? What follows are reflections on my own experience with a particular project.

Over the past few years - and for more years than there was actual funding - I have been a co-investigator, with Professors Philip Williamson and Stephen Taylor, for the project ‘Special prayers, fasts and thanksgivings’, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC; project E007481/1). The project explores all the occasions from the 1530s to the present day when the civil and ecclesiastical authorities in the British Isles called on all members of the kingdom either to petition God for intervention in earthly affairs, or to offer thanks for such providential intervention, in the belief that calamities such as bad weather, famine, plague and war were providential warnings against sin, and that military success, good harvests, royal births and deliverance from plague were signs of divine favour.

At the project’s heart is the production of the first comprehensive list and analysis of all occasions of such ‘special worship’ during the period, ordered for observance in England and Wales, in Scotland, or in Ireland, and later in the United Kingdom, together with transcriptions of the orders for these occasions and the texts of the services, prayers or addresses read out in every parish church, all to appear in a three-volume edition with full scholarly apparatus. The third volume will add the nine annual commemorations observed for various periods in England and Wales, or Ireland, or Scotland from the seventeenth century: for the monarch’s accession, the failure of the Gowrie plot (1600), the discovery of the Gunpowder plot (1605), the failure of the Irish uprising (1641), the execution of Charles I (1649), the Restoration of the monarchy...
(1660), the Great Fire of London, the monarch’s birthday, and Remembrance Sunday. The project is also exploring the wider questions prompted by special worship: what contemporaries considered to be important for the kingdom or the national community; changing religious beliefs and the use of the churches for ‘propaganda’; the relationship between church and state; the involvement of government ministers in decisions on religious matters and, conversely, the roles of the bishops or, in Scotland, the general assembly, in public life.

The great and obvious advantage of collaborative research is that it allows scholars to pursue large and complex fields of research that are well beyond the scope of the individual scholar, perhaps especially in today’s climate of periodic national research assessments with their demands for regular publications. ‘State prayers’, for instance, required expertise – or a readiness to acquire expertise – across five centuries and the whole of the British Isles, as well as in a variety of subjects, including ecclesiastical and political history, the liturgy, book history, printing and publication. We were able to gather together this expertise through the creation of a team of co-investigators, the appointment of a research assistant, Alasdair Raffe, and consultation with a board of advisors. Large, collaborative research projects can also produce the kind of publications which have the scope and detail to achieve an enduring value, and stimulate new avenues of research for other scholars. The first volume of the ‘State prayers’ edition is becoming an essential reference work for early modern studies of Britain, and the project as a whole is assisting or stimulating research by a growing number of scholars across a range of historical subjects. Working collaboratively also stretches one’s academic horizons and enables each investigator to take ambitious strides into new fields, with an immediate support network. As the junior of the three investigators on ‘State prayers’, after recently completing my first monograph, I found working on such a big project forced me out of my chronological and conceptual comfort zone, and allowed me to ‘stand back’ from my work and think more conceptually.

Working collaboratively does have its perils and challenges. It tends to generate a collective research capacity greater than the number of investigators, leading to unexpected discoveries – an excellent outcome in itself, but expanding the amount of the work and the time required for completion. For ‘State prayers’ a further element has been the ever-increasing range of sources available in online collections, with the effects that an original estimate of the number of occasions proved to be a substantial under-estimate, the evidence for observances became richer, the geographical range spread to include comment on observances in the overseas colonies and dominions, and the scale of the edition grew considerably.

Though everyone on the project was a historian, because we work on different periods with different types and amounts of evidence, we each had different ways of conducting research as well as different conventions in transcribing documents and citing sources. At times, we interpreted the significance of events differently; we think differently and write differently -- the styles of the introduction and commentaries are different from the way that any of us writes individually. Working collaboratively also means that each investigator is dependent on the work schedules of the others, and progress can be disrupted by the intervention of competing work and other commitments. Despite these challenges, my overall experience of working collaboratively has been enormously positive. For me, the greatest benefit has been how it has enabled me to develop intellectually as a historian and broaden my conceptual, chronological and disciplinary horizons. It has also enabled me to develop professionally: I value tremendously the working relationships that I have been able to build, both with my co-investigators and with the board of advisors, and have learned many things, such as how to edit (complex) texts. Though I retain a strong belief in the ‘traditional’ forms of academic research and publication - the single-authored monograph - I do believe that large collaborative projects contribute positively both to the academic discipline of history - as ‘State prayers’ is beginning to do - and to the broader study of, or engagement with, history by the public, as is the case with, for example, ‘The Clergy of the Church of England Database’.

When the Council of the Royal Historical Society visited the University of Huddersfield on 21 October 2014 they were taken on a tour of the University’s new, state of the art, archive Heritage Quay and its opening exhibition by History student, Adam West. Adam was initially intimidated by the idea of ‘talking to all these clever people’ but he then realised ‘I know more about this than they do’. The reason he was so confident is that Adam and other students, Ben Cudbertson and Owen Jenkins, had created the first exhibition hosted by Heritage Quay, as part of their Year 2 Work Placement module, where students explore a potential career. All three were able to find out about a career in archives through constructing the exhibition on the early history of the University, going back to the foundation of the Huddersfield Scientific and Mechanic Institute in 1825 and the Young Men’s Mental Improvement Society in 1841. They selected suitable items from the archives, researched and wrote exhibition notes, and laid out the cases.

Heritage Quay is designed to be fully accessible to the public, so that they as well university scholars, can use its holdings, which include the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Scholes Monaghan Wesleyan Missionary, and Rugby League archives. Public engagement is an important aspect of the work we do on the History degree as well as in the work of the archive. Students are encouraged not just to think about the skills they are developing in their studies but to apply them in the real world. Public engagement has become an increasingly important part of the work that historians do as part of our research activities, so learning how to work with the public is useful preparation for students who anticipate an academic future as well as the majority who will go into other kinds of careers. It is also an effective way of learning about the nature of the discipline, the different ways that academics and non-academics think about the past, and how to manage communication between the two. This year students on the Year 2 module Hands on History have been involved in the Geographies of the Mind project. This is a joint venture between the University, Wakefield Mental Health Museum, and the West Yorkshire Archive Service. Module leader Dr Rob Ellis researches the history of mental
health in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the project will lead to an exhibition at Wakefield MHM, opening in May and running through the summer. The students were given a brief to ‘investigate the physical and social geography of the West Riding Pauper Lunatic Asylum from its inception in the 1800s, its evolution into mental hospital in the beginning of the 20th century and the modern history of Stanley Royd. Students will explore the physical geography and development of the asylum/hospital through archival documents, maps and site visits. They will question the social and emotional cartography of the asylum/hospital through museum artefacts, archival documents and oral histories’.

Claire Hudson, one of the students on the module, said ‘I feel that Hands on History has enabled me to break any stereotypes I once had in terms of asylums in that I no longer look at them and think of people being locked in rooms or chained to the walls, but of a community who enjoyed life there on the whole. Also in terms of what I am looking at I also now see the asylums as being protective of the patients within the walls rather than protecting “the outside world” from the patients through the high walls and distance from the city centre. In general, (the module) has given me a “real” experience, if you like, as I am working to deadlines which are sometimes (but not often) moved in order to suit the client better, therefore this has taught me to be flexible with my time.’

Another student, Alison Grogan, commented ‘I feel that I’ve gained invaluable experience and confidence in working with a “real” client in the Mental Health Museum for the Hands on History module. It has helped me gain key skills in the form of the research, planning, design, display and marketing necessary to curate our exhibition....It also provided great experience of visiting and utilising an archive (WYAS), something I’d never done before’.

In Year 3 students are offered the opportunity to take the History in Practice module as an alternative to a dissertation. Students work in small groups to deliver a product - an exhibition or teaching resources to an external client. This year two History students worked alongside Computer Games Design students for the first time to deliver a virtual reconstruction of a Laudian chapel for Temple Newsam house, Leeds. Temple Newsam is a Tudor-Jacobean house on the site of a Templar preceptory. Many of its rooms have been restored to their original form, or an interesting point in their subsequent history, but this is not possible for the chapel which was subsequently turned into a kitchen and no longer looks at all like its original form, although some artefacts, such as some of the panel paintings and part of the pulpit, survive. When PhD student Maggie Bullett, who works on preaching in the Pen-
nineteenth century, visited the house to look at items in the archive she met curator Adam White, who was wanting to put on an exhibition about the chapel, but had very limited space in which to do it. He asked if there was any way in which the University could help to create something which could be displayed on a computer. Negotiations with the Computer Games Design department led to the construction of a project in which History students would do the historical research and design, while CGD students would create the virtual model, including a flythrough of the chapel in use. Temple Newsam Conservator Ian Fraser produced a 3D model of the chapel, and provided access to items in the house and the conservation workshop, while Maggie, and students Jack McLean and Luke Humphage, travelled the country looking for examples of all the fixtures and fittings that would form the basis of the CGD students’ work.

The History students not only learned how to deal with archival, visual and material culture sources, but the nuances of status and religious affiliation implied by particular objects. They have also learned to communicate historical ideas to Computer Games Design students, Temple Newsam staff, and to the wider public, all of whom need different registers. Maggie Bullett, meanwhile, has learned more complex project management skills, dealing with actors and musicians, film rights and permissions, to complete the project. We hope to launch the reconstruction in May at Temple Newsam, and will blog about it on Historians at Work, where students communicate with the wider public about their public engagement activities.

While undergraduates learn public engagement skills, our postgraduate students are increasingly likely to be involved in co-production projects. Recently staff and postgraduate students at Huddersfield ran a workshop exploring the nature and process of co-production with community groups. Co-production is about working with others, rather than working for them, and is a relatively new way of working for most historians, breaking down barriers between academics and non-academics, and enabling non-academics to shape and contribute to the research process, retaining the results for their own purposes, as well as allowing for more conventional academic products.

Students’ understanding of the practice and purpose of research is strengthened by seeing how their work is put to real world use, as is their confidence that in choosing to do a History degree they have not only studied a subject which they love but which will give them valuable skills for the world of work after they graduate.
The Camden series is one of the oldest established series of text editions, stretching back to the middle of the nineteenth century. Over 325 volumes of the Camden back-list are now available on-line. The extraordinary success of this retro-conversion, orchestrated by our publisher Cambridge University Press, has demonstrated the enduring value of text editions. It has also generated the society a considerable windfall income, which we now propose to invest in further support for research and publications across the profession. We continue to invite all colleagues in the discipline, at all stages of their career, to consider whether they might wish to contribute a volume (of between 60,000 - 120,000 words) to Camden. We could all probably think of a source or series of texts that would be extremely valuable if made more widely available. Although Camden’s historic reputation is for publishing texts drawn from the medieval or early modern period, many of our most successful recent volumes have been of nineteenth and twentieth century materials, often a diary or a selection of letters and documents drawn from a larger corpus (see, for example, Harshan Kumarasingham’s article in this newsletter on pp. 6-7). Editing a text also represents a shrewd choice for many early career historians.

The Camden volumes are included in the subscription package for all our subscribing libraries: a total of over 3,000 copies of each volume. This is more than ten times the exposure of most first monographs, which often sell fewer than 250 copies. Volumes are also offered at a discount to our 3,500 Fellows and Members. The work on a text edition can also fit well into the career pattern between a first and second book, which often coincides with a period when teaching or family responsibilities make prolonged trips back to archives difficult. Text editions also play very well in REF. Their enduring value, far less vulnerable to shifts in tastes and fashion than interpretative work, means they meet one of the leading benchmarks for 4* publications: ‘a primary or essential point of reference’ or 3* publications: ‘an important point of reference’.

Over 325 volumes of the back list of Camden Society publications are now available on-line through Cambridge Journals Online, providing an extraordinarily rich conspectus of source material for British history as well as window on the development of historical scholarship in the English speaking world.

A number of volumes are freely available through British History OnLine.

If you wish to discuss a possible submission to Camden, please contact the editors. Details may be found on the RHS website at: http://royalhistsoc.org/publications/camden-series/
2014 Gladstone Prize Shortlist

The Royal Historical Society offers an annual award of £1,000 for a history book published in English on any topic that is not primarily British history. To be eligible for the prize the book must be its author’s first solely written book on a historical subject which is not primarily related to British history. The book must also be an original and scholarly work of historical research and have been published in English during the calendar year by a scholar normally resident in the United Kingdom.

The jury has announced the short-list for the 2014 Gladstone Prize. The short-list, drawn from a fine list of original and scholarly works covering a wide range of topics and periods of history, is detailed below.

Andrew Arsan
*Interlopers of Empire: The Lebanese Diaspora in Colonial French West Africa*
(Hurst)

Andrew D.M. Beaumont
*Colonial America and the Earl of Halifax, 1748-1761*
(Oxford University Press)

David Motadel
*Islam and Nazi Germany’s War*
(Harvard University Press)

Lucie Ryzova
*The Age of the Efendiyya: Passages to Modernity in National-Colonial Egypt*
(Oxford University Press)

Giora Sternberg
*Status Interaction during the Reign of Louis XIV*
(Oxford University Press)

Erica Wald
*Vice in the Barracks: Medicine, the Military and the Making of Colonial India, 1780-1868*
(Palgrave Macmillan)
The Whitfield Prize

2014 Whitfield Prize Shortlist

The Royal Historical Society offers annually the Whitfield Prize (value £1,000) for a new book on British or Irish history. To be eligible for consideration the book must be on a subject within a field of British or Irish history and have been published in English in 2014. It must also be its author’s first solely written book and be an original and scholarly work of historical research.

Karl Gunther
Reformation Unbound: Protestant Visions of Reform in England, 1525-1590
(Cambridge University Press)

Krista Maglen
The English System: Quarantine, Immigration and the Making of a Port Sanitary Zone
(Manchester University Press)

Richard A Marsden
Cosmo Innes and the Defence of Scotland’s Past, c.1825-1875
(Ashgate)

Mo Moulton
Ireland and the Irish in Interwar England
(Cambridge University Press)

John Sabapathy
Officers and Accountability in Medieval England, 1170-1300
(Oxford University Press)

Mark R. F. Williams
The King’s Irishmen: The Irish in the Exiled Court of Charles II, 1649-1660
(Boydell Press)
The Prothero Lecture

The Grail of Original Meaning: Uses of the Past in American Constitutional Theory

Professor Colin Kidd

Wednesday 1 July 2015 at 6.00 p.m.

Venue: Gustave Tuck Lecture Theatre, UCL

Originalism has been a controversial presence in American constitutional jurisprudence since the 1980s. Reacting against the liberal ‘living constitution’ jurisprudence of the Warren and Burger Courts, conservative jurists urged fidelity to the original principles which had animated the Constitution in the late eighteenth century. However, the quest for original meaning is not as straightforward as conservatives have assumed. Not only is original intent tantalisingly elusive, it raises major issues of historical interpretation. How far do the assumed historical underpinnings of originalism mesh with the findings of academic historians? To what extent has the conservative invocation of the Founding Fathers obscured a lost American Enlightenment? Nor is ‘tradition’ in American constitutional law an unproblematic matter. How far does a desire to restore the original meaning of the Constitution ignore the role of ‘stare decisis’ (precedent) in America’s common law heritage? Colin Kidd explores the tensions between originalist jurisprudence and historical scholarship since the 1980s, and examines the various usable pasts in operation in American constitutional theory. Originalism, it transpires, has many mansions. Moreover, the various schemes of historical interpretation in American constitutional jurisprudence do not map easily onto a simple liberal-conservative divide. The lecture will also interrogate more general issues about the relationship between academic and ‘applied’ history.