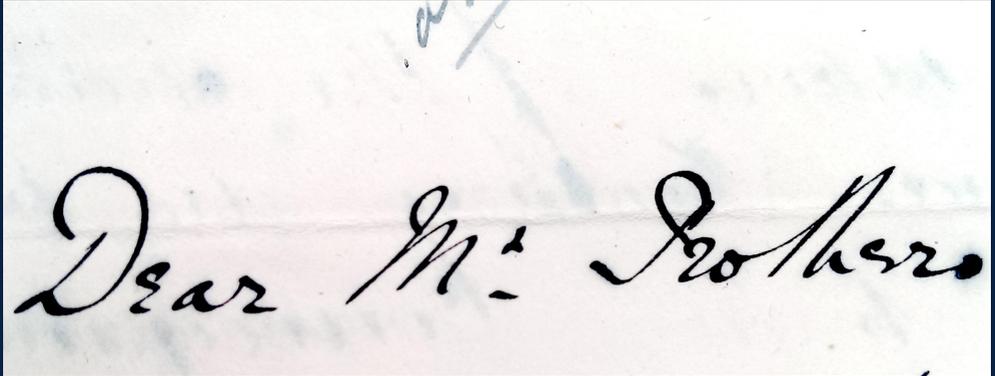




ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

..... NEWSLETTER



..... MAY 2019





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Cover image: Detail of Letter from the RHS Archives



PRESIDENTIAL LETTER

Margot Finn reflects on the ongoing work of the RHS in representing the views and supporting the work of Members and Fellows



The tag line on the RHS website is ‘Working for history and historians’, and the past six months have seen conspicuous evidence of the Society’s labour for the discipline. Having launched two major reports on equality, diversity and inclusion before our 150th anniversary year drew to a close at the end of November 2018, the RHS has been working to ensure that new projects and investments—of time, skill and finances—underpin a dynamic organisation fit for twenty-first-century challenges.

As I outline below, we’ve met with the Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research & Innovation, contributed to difficult discussions about the History curriculum in schools, co-hosted the Annual Gerald Aylmer Seminar with the Institute of Historical Research (IHR) and The National Archives (TNA), and made a series of substantial interventions in policy debates on ‘Plan S’, the new open access mandate for academic journal article publication. All this has been accomplished on top of the routine business of the RHS. Awards of funding to early career researchers (reported on page 12), scrutiny of the applications for Fellowship and Membership, the organisation of our public lectures and campus visits outside London, and the publication of our book series and *Transactions* all have continued apace. If current cross-party Brexit politics provide little cause for optimism, the generosity of colleagues who contribute their time and expertise to the RHS in addition to their already highly demanding workloads continues to be a source of real inspiration.

Longstanding friend and Fellow of the Society, Lord Cormack, has been instrumental in orchestrating meetings between the RHS and relevant government ministers for several years now, and in January presided



John Siblon at the launch of the Race, Ethnicity and Equality Report at City and Islington College

at our productive and enjoyable dinner meeting with Chris Skidmore, Minister for Universities. It was an especial pleasure to meet with a Minister who is also an active historian and an RHS Fellow. Our lively and wide-ranging discussion of the state of History in schools, universities and cultural organisations started this year not at ground zero, but with a shared understanding of what makes History and historians tick.

January also witnessed the first of several RHS contributions to policy discussions on History in schools. The Runnymede Trust team, whose online ‘Our Migration Story’ resource won one of the RHS Public History Prize awards in 2018, organised a meeting at Parliament with education-ists, civil servants, learned societies and MPs Dawn Butler and Helen Hayes. Key issues of debate included identifying topics to engage all pupils with History and how best to encourage hard-pressed schools and teachers to take up new GCSE and A-level subjects, which reflect up-to-date research. (It was good to see the contributions to these discussions of my predecessor, Peter Mandler, who was also in attendance, so warmly acknowledged by participants). These pedagogical challenges resurfaced at the Society’s annual meeting with representatives of the English and Welsh examination boards—this year, much to our delight, also attended by an expert in the Scottish Highers. Teaching ‘difficult histories’ was likewise a central theme of the stimulating February roundtable I attended, hosted at Cumberland Lodge by RHS Fellow Canon Edmund Newall (a former student of another RHS president, Martin Daunton, who provided a keynote address).



A hundred or so archivists, university-based historians and interested others spent an enjoyable day at TNA interrogating the implications for the practice of History of new digital technologies at the Gerald Aylmer Seminar. Held annually since 2002 and focused this year on ‘Digital and the Archive’, the event included informed contributions from past and current RHS Council members including Jo Fox, Alice Prochaska, and Jane Winters. The Society’s new Digital Committee (chaired by Jane Winters) has been providing new links with TNA staff expert in digital developments for over a year now, a collaboration which we hope will feed into enhanced resources for Fellows and Members in coming months.

Council member Jane Winters has now been joined by Heather Shore as co-editor of the Society’s New Historical Perspectives book series, founding co-editor Penny Summerfield having retired after her major contribution to the RHS (together with Simon Newman) in establishing this fully open access, no-fee-for-authors enterprise. The series’ first volume, Ed Owens’s *The Family Firm: Monarchy, Mass Media and the British Public, 1932-53* will be published in autumn 2019. Ed is a Lecturer in the School of History and Heritage at the University of Lincoln. We are aiming to publish four volumes a year, and now have twelve volumes under contract. Our goal is to match the exemplary standards and record established by the editors of the Society’s longstanding Studies in History series—which has now published over 100 volumes and will complete in autumn 2019—with the added attraction of an open access digital version to accompany the high-calibre hard copies.

On a less cheery note, VP for Publication Richard Fisher has spent more time than is reasonable tramping to meetings about Plan S with the RHS President. Announced in autumn 2018, Plan S is the brainchild of ‘cO-Alition S’, a consortium of European funders that includes UK Research and Innovation (UKRI, which controls UK research councils and English Quality Related research funding) and charities such as the Gates Foundation and the Wellcome Trust. Plan S is premised on the assumption that open access is evolving much too slowly and that research funded by the public should be openly accessible to the public. The latter is a laudable goal in many ways, but inevitably the devil is in the detail—and further complicated in this case by Plan S’s implicit assumption that the normative researcher is a bioscientist who works in a large team consistently bankrolled by large national funding bodies. The Society has been proactive—together with colleagues from disciplines that span from African Studies to Astronomy—in attempting to engage productively with Plan S consultation whilst pointing out the obvious disparities between



between cOAlition S's vision of science and the actual and much wider parameters of of *Wissenschaft*. The appointment of Katherine Foxhall as our new Research & Communication officer (see page 9) has significantly enhanced our ability to grapple with these thorny issues, which have far-reaching implications for learned societies, for university-based researchers and independent historians, as well as for colleagues from the archive, library, cultural and heritage sectors.

The articles below will, we hope, give the membership a wider but also more granular view of the Society's labours since November. What lies ahead in the coming months? VP for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Frances Andrews has been making rapid strides with this vital new portfolio, including the first meetings of our new LGBT+ Working Group. We are hoping to elect a fifth VP—with a core focus on Membership—at the May Council meeting. July will see our annual Prothero Lecture—delivered by Sujit Sivasundaram, and featured below on page 7—as well as the annual publications prize-giving. We will also be conferring two awards recognising excellence in the teaching of History, with the prize for inspirational supervision named in honour of former President, Jinty Nelson. The same month sees Shahmima Akhtar take up her two-year postdoctoral fellowship—generously funded by the Past & Present Society—at the RHS and IHR to help us build on the 2018 Race, Ethnicity & Equality in UK History report. And that, I promise, is only a selective list. If you wish to learn more, do please subscribe to *Historical Transactions*, the blog we launched to mark the 150th anniversary: <https://blog.royalhistsoc.org/>. And please do encourage other historians—nationally and internationally—to apply for the Fellowship and Membership. The next deadline is 3 June.

*Margot Finn,
University College London*



To contact the President:
president@royalhistsoc.org

EVENTS PROGRAMME

2019



Friday 5 July 2019 at 6.00 pm

The Prothero Lecture

Sujit Sivasundaram:

‘Waves Across the South: Monarchs, Travellers
and Empire in the Pacific’

followed by a Reception and the Presentation of

Publication, Fellowship and Teaching Awards

Gustave Tuck Lecture Theatre, UCL

5 – 6 September 2019

Symposium

‘Charity, Welfare and Emotions in Early Modern Britain’

Nottingham Trent University

Friday 20 September 2019 at 6.00 pm

Penny Roberts:

‘Truth and Justice during the French Religious Wars’

UCL

October 2019

*The Colin Matthew Memorial Lecture
for the Public Understanding of History*

in co-operation with Gresham College, London

David Olusoga

London

Friday 29 November 2019 at 6.00 pm

Presidential Address

Margot Finn:

‘Material Turns in British History: Part III’

UCL



PROTHERO LECTURE 2019

*Sujit Sivasundaram will deliver
this year's Prothero Lecture on the
Pacific in the Age of Revolutions*



The Pacific has often been invisible in global histories written in the UK. Yet it has consistently been a site for contemplating the past and the future, even among Britons cast on its shores. In this lecture, I reconsider a critical moment of globalisation and empire, the so-called age of revolutions at the end of the eighteenth century and the start of the nineteenth century, by journeying with European voyagers to the Pacific ocean.



Port au Prince Memorial Site





The lecture will point to what this age meant for Pacific islanders, in social, political and cultural terms. Certainly, what was involved in undertaking a European voyage changed in this era, even as one important expedition was interrupted by news from revolutionary Europe. Yet more fundamentally, I trace the consolidation of vocabularies and practices of monarchy across the Pacific. I also consider the rise of counter-revolutionary imperialism through agreements of alliance and alleged cessation.

This allows me for instance to place the 1806 wreck of the ‘Port au Prince’ within the Pacific’s age of revolutions. This was an English ship used to raid French and Spanish targets in the Pacific, but which was stripped of its guns, iron, gunpowder and carronades by Tongans (see the image for the memorial site). To chart the trajectory from revolution and islander agency on to violence and empire is to appreciate the unsettled paths that gave rise to our modern world. Such a view foregrounds people who inhabited and travelled through the earth’s oceanic frontiers. It is a global history from a specific place in the oceanic south, on the opposite side of the planet to Europe.



The Prothero Lecture
will take place on Friday 5 July 2019 at 6.00 pm

Sujit Sivasundaram:

**‘Waves Across the South: Monarchs,
Travellers and Empire in the Pacific’**

It will be followed by a reception and the presentation of:
Publication, Fellowship and Teaching Awards
Gustave Tuck Lecture Theatre, UCL



INSIDE THE RHS:

*Katherine Foxhall joined the Royal Historical Society in March 2019 after taking time away from a full-time academic post to spend more time with her two young children, and to finish her new book **Migraine: A History**, which will be out this summer with Johns Hopkins University Press*



Since completing my PhD in History at the University of Warwick in 2008, I have held research and lecturing posts in Manchester, London and Leicester, focusing on the histories of migration and medicine. This post at the Royal Historical Society really appealed to me because it offered a different way to contribute to the discipline of history as a whole.

In my job for the RHS I am responsible for editing and commissioning posts for the Historical Transactions blogs, maintaining the website and social media accounts, and carrying out policy research for the Society's various initiatives. I am thrilled to be working with the RHS in a role that includes so much engagement with historians and the historical community, and to be involved the Society's important work on open access publishing. Having been generously funded by the Wellcome Trust for many years I have experience of open access publishing from the author's perspective, but I see current trends in open access publishing – particularly the implementation of the PlanS initiative – as one of the greatest challenges that our discipline, along with social sciences and humanities in general, currently faces. I am also very keen to expand the Society's work in initiatives that focus on supporting early career scholars in history.

INSIDE THE RHS:

Professor Christopher Marsh is a historian of England in the period 1500-1700, with particular interests in music and popular culture. He has also worked on the history of religion, social relations, gender and visual imagery and is currently preparing a website that will feature digital images and new recordings by The Carnival Band (and invited guests) of a 'top 100' broadside ballads from seveneenth-century England.



I was prompted to stand for the RHS Council by the retirement of my colleague, Sean Connolly, who had himself been a Council member for many years. He encouraged me to put myself forward, motivated partly by a feeling that somebody who lives and works in Northern Ireland should be involved (I am English but I have lived in Belfast since 1992). As everybody knows, Northern Ireland is distinctive in several important ways, a fact that is reflected in its universities. I also like the idea of joining forces with like-minded individuals from other institutions, all committed to standing up for history and to monitoring the health of our discipline.

I have been extremely impressed - and shocked at times - by the conclusions of the Society's recent reports on gender, race and ethnicity. I am also attracted to work that will take me out of the university sector and put me in touch with all the other types of historian who make up the discipline today. In administrative terms, I'm more an all-rounder than a specialist, so I hope to make a contribution to the Society's work in a variety of areas. My first key task is to work with Karin Friedrich and Oleg Benesch to award this year's Gladstone Prize. In fact, I have a stack of fascinating books staring hopefully up at me as I write...

INSIDE THE RHS:

Professor Helen Richardson works on medieval European history, specialising in the study of the history of the Crusades and the Military Religious Orders (the Knights Templar, Knights Hospitaller and Teutonic Knights). Recent publications have focused on a heresy trial in Britain and Ireland, the trial of the Templars (1308–11), and the administration of the Templars' estates during that period. She is currently working on the sources for the Third Crusade, specifically the life of Queen Sybil of Jerusalem (queen 1186–1190), and is writing a trade book on women's involvement in crusading.



I decided to join Council because I wanted to make a greater contribution to History as a scholarly discipline at a national level. I am particularly concerned about the dichotomy between scholarly historical study, underpinned by meticulous research, and popular history that too often is based on myths long since discredited by scholars. These myths can lead to dangerous misunderstandings about past and present human societies.

In my own research area, I've worked to bridge this gap in publications, talks to the general public and TV and Radio appearances, but I think a more organised strategy is needed. I am still thinking about what that might be! The Royal Historical Society is uniquely placed to promote History as a professional discipline with high standards, requiring similar levels of rigour as scientific research. The RHS is able to campaign on behalf of history and historians working within and outside academia, holding government and research councils to account, and ensuring that they are fully informed on the nature of historical research, the needs of researchers, and what the 'scientific' study of History can contribute to society.

SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION OF HISTORIANS

Sarah Slator, a PhD Candidate at Oxford Brookes University talks about how RHS funding has supported her work



My PhD topic examines the international diplomacy and the work of campaign movements that responded to the Rivonia trial in South Africa, a trial of well-known anti-apartheid campaigners, including Nelson Mandela, which took place in 1963-64. My research focuses on the responses of the United Kingdom and the United States as they were significant allies of South Africa and also were countries where a significant amount of anti-apartheid protest occurred. In December 2018 I completed the information gathering part of my studies and I have begun writing up my findings.

The geographical spread of my research has required me to undertake archival visits to the United States and to South Africa as well as to the National Archives in London in order to gather the necessary archival material from the Governments of the UK, the US and South Africa as well as the records for various significant organisations active in campaigning for an end to apartheid at the time. The Royal Historical Society was invaluable as a source of funding that allowed me to undertake necessary archival visits.

I was awarded a small grant in October 2017 which allowed me to stay in London and spend four days at the National Archives in Kew. This time allowed me to complete the archival research into the response of the UK Government towards the trial that I had begun on a number of shorter day trips over the preceding year. Having this block of time where I could work methodically in identifying and viewing the necessary collections was incredibly helpful.



The farmhouse at Lilliesleaf Farm in Rivonia

In July 2018 I was awarded a Martin Lynn Scholarship that provided me with funds to visit South Africa in December 2018. During this trip I visited a number of archives in Johannesburg and Pretoria as well as meeting with George Bizos, a member of the legal team who defended Nelson Mandela and his colleagues.

This award was invaluable in allowing me to gather information from the perspective of the South African Government as well as organisations based in the country. This information complements what I have obtained from archives in the UK and US and will allow me to complete a thesis that is well supported by the necessary archival records.

*Sarah Slator
Oxford Brookes University*

SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION OF HISTORIANS

Apurba Chatterjee, a PhD candidate at the University of Sheffield talks about how RHS funding has supported her work



Archival work is at the core of historical research, and the support that the RHS extends to postgraduate researchers in this direction is really commendable. In the summers of 2017 and 2018, I was lucky to receive two generous grants towards my primary research. The source material that I have collected in the course of those two periods is vital to my PhD thesis. As I write up my thesis now, I appreciate that it would not have been possible for me to access those materials without the financial assistance from the RHS. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my research supervisor who directed me to this funding scheme in the first place, and everyone at the RHS for the approval of my research grants, as well as for their help and kindness throughout the application process and its aftermath.

The two grants – the first for research in the United States, and the second for research in London – have enabled me to look at a vast range of written material, including the official records of the British East India Company, private papers and correspondence, artists' archives, and visual resources. The sources collected during my research trips feature throughout my thesis, thus strengthening the project as a whole.

As a researcher working on the relationship between visual arts and politics in early British empire in India (c. 1730-1820), visual material like drawings, printed illustrations, and paintings are at the core of my project. My engagement with these sources, thanks to the RHS, helped reveal a very complex image of the early British empire in India, in many ways more complex than is already known. The study of images alongside textual sources was helpful in giving an insight to the workings of power and politics in eighteenth-century India.

As my research progressed, I understood that images not only gave expression to British Indian empire, but were themselves shaped by Britain's imperial experiences. Visual arts supported the political regime of British India, and also contributed towards shaping the expectations of the British of themselves as ruling India and of Indian life, and Indians' understanding of the British and of their own existence under British authority.

The grants enabled me to look not only at written source material but also at sources from the visual arts, which have tended to receive less attention from historians, thus encouraging new and diverse pursuits of historical enquiry and research. I sincerely hope that postgraduate researchers in the future would also apply for, and continue to benefit from, research grants from the RHS.

Apurba Chatterjee
University of Sheffield



New Historical
PERSPECTIVES



INSTITUTE OF
HISTORICAL
RESEARCH

SCHOOL OF
ADVANCED STUDY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON

New Historical Perspectives is a book series for early career scholars commissioned and edited by the RHS, and published by the Institute of Historical Research and the University of London. The series is Open Access, so it's highly discoverable, and work is published at no cost to authors. Formats include monographs, edited collections, and longer or shorter form works that can be single or multi-authored. Anyone who is within ten years of getting a doctorate from a university in the UK or Republic of Ireland is eligible to submit a proposal.

<https://royalhistsoc.org/publications/new-historical-perspectives/>

RHS TEACHING PORTAL

Vice President Ken Fincham provides an update on the planned RHS Teaching Portal



Plenty of evidence demonstrates the claim on our website that the Royal Historical Society ‘advocates best practice in teaching history in universities and schools’, most recently with the launch of the Jinty Nelson Teaching Prize in 2018, and now extended to two awards each year. Additionally, we are planning a major step forward – a teaching portal on our website. This idea was approved by Council in 2017, a working party is busy at work as you read this report, and we hope to unveil the portal by the anniversary meeting in November 2020.

The portal is intended to support the teaching and learning of history, filling the void left by the demise of the old History Subject Centre and other bodies, in four distinct ways. First, by providing a hub with links to other scholarly bodies, online resources, archives and databases; second, by offering guidance on good practice and innovation on pedagogy, and a platform to share challenges we all face in HEIs such as refreshing the curriculum, revising methods of assessment and student engagement, as well as all matters relating to the TEF juggernaut; third, by addressing career progression for teachers of HE; and finally, by giving guidance to history students in HEIs on studying at university and the careers that a degree in history can lead to.

The intended audience is mixed – both teachers and students of history at HE and FE and, if time and money permit, we plan to extend the scope to including history at secondary schools. We are working closely with the Historical Association, and a central principle is to avoid duplication of what is already available elsewhere. Once launched, we hope that the teaching portal will be constantly refreshed with contributions from the Fellowship, overseen by an editorial team.

With this in mind, we would welcome Fellows’ views on what they would find useful in the portal, or else short papers (no more than 1000 words) on some teaching-related initiative that they have pioneered and wish to share. Please send them to me: K.C.Fincham@kent.ac.uk

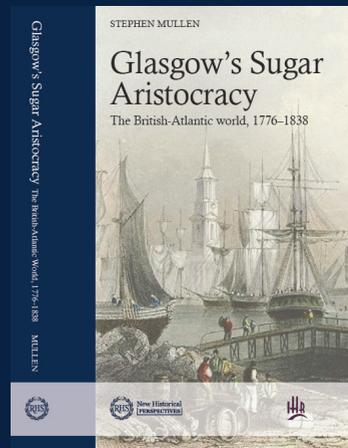
In March 2018, the RHS published a briefing for Historians on Open-Access & the future of book publishing. You can read the briefing on the RHS website at the following address:



<https://royalhistoc.org/oa-briefing-march2018/>

The first titles in the *New Historical Perspectives* series will launch in 2019. Among the first volumes will be:

- Edward Owen, *The Family Firm: Monarchy, Mass Media, and the British Public, 1932-53*
- Stephen Mullen, *Glasgow's Sugar Aristocracy: The British-Atlantic World, 1776-1838*
- Sarah Goldsmith, *Danger, Risk and Masculinity on the Grand Tour, 1700-1780*
- Christopher Phillips, *Britain's Transport Experts and the First World War*



RECOVERING HISTORY: THE RHS AT 150

Eilish Gregory and Imogen Evans write about their experiences on the Royal Historical Society-Marc Fitch Project

Since its foundation in 1868, the Royal Historical Society has firmly established itself as a society which strives to promote history as a discipline, encourage historical scholarship through publications and research, and participate in public engagement within schools and universities. Several events have been organised to mark its 150th anniversary, including lectures, public engagement forums, and symposiums. Another activity has been a historical re-evaluation of the Society's Prothero Papers in the project entitled 'Recovering History: the Royal Historical Society at 150 Years'. The project is generously funded by the Marc Fitch Fund, which financially supports activities historical projects that seek to preserve and showcase artefacts deemed of important historical scholarship across the UK and Republic of Ireland. This includes help towards conservation, transcriptions, scrutiny of significant primary sources, and digitalisation.



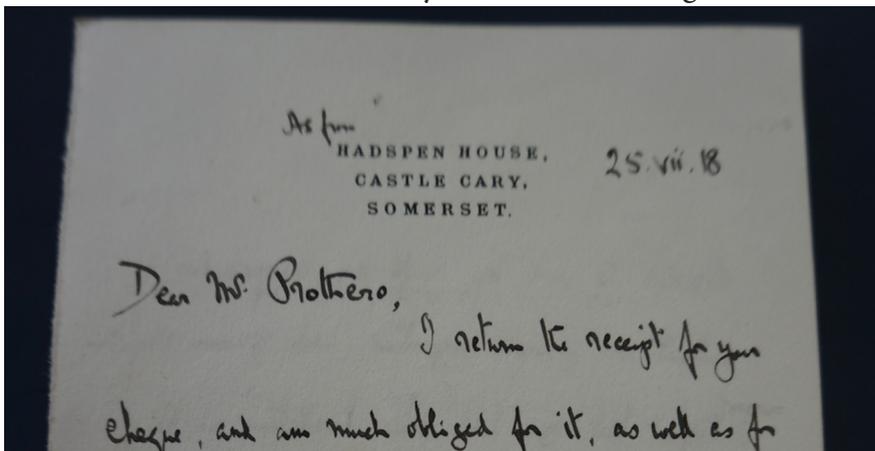
George Walter Prothero (1848-1922), was an eminent historian whose portfolio included history lecturer at King's College, Cambridge; editor of the *Quarterly Review*; Director of the Historical Section, Foreign Office; and Member of the British Peace Delegation at the end of the First World War.

Prothero was President of the Royal Historical Society between 1901

and 1905, and the annual summer lecture is named after him in honour of his contribution to historical scholarship. Our 'Recovering History' project will digitise and display sampled documents of the RHS archives to celebrate its holdings, recognise Prothero's contribution to historical scholarship, and learn more about the Society's history. The project will exhibit remarkable papers found in the samples, and will provide short posts to be published online, made available through the RHS blog and Twitter account. The work is being conducted by two history researchers: Dr Eilish Gregory, an early career researcher who completed her PhD on Catholicism during the English Revolution at University College London, and Imogen Evans who completed her BA in History at King's College London, and is currently studying an MA in history at University College London. Our task has been to survey archival material in the Prothero papers, provide an updated index on the manuscripts, a summary catalogue, and to take photographs as part of the digitisation component of the project.

In the first stage, we have been re-indexing the Prothero papers (originally catalogued in the 1960s). We have finished going through the first large batch of correspondence that Prothero received from fellow historians, admirers, ambassadors, and government officials between 1886 and his death in 1922. The original catalogue has been a useful guide to verify the accuracy of the content descriptions. However, re-scrutinising Prothero's correspondence has shown the extent to which Prothero was involved in important political and social matters, which was largely overlooked in the original lists.

As scholars, we are obliged to return to the original sources, and in this case, the letters have revealed how the RHS was managed at the turn of the twentieth century, the academic rigour of historical



A Letter Addressed to Prothero, from the RHS Archives

research, and the prominent role of Prothero and other historians in major political and social debates during the First World War and the peace process.

The Prothero correspondence is richly varied and there have been exceptional pieces in the collection. For Imogen, the letters Prothero and his wife received in the early 1910s from the anti women's suffrage movement were fascinating. Although the position of the Protheros was unclear, the letters reveal how activists sought his approval. Prothero's involvement in prison reform, advocating for conscientious objectors during the First World War also proved interesting. From 1916, conscientious objectors faced prison under sentences of hard labour. Prothero was involved in setting up a guide for prison reform, and was clearly attentive to the social sufferings of conscientious objectors during this troubling period.

As an early modern historian of British religion, society, and politics, the first set of papers which caught Eilish's attention displayed Prothero's determination to find information regarding the 1583 High Commission. The High Commission was headed by Archbishop of Canterbury John Whitgift, who drew up articles for religious uniformity to suppress nonconforming ministries. Prothero's correspondence captures the lengths that historians go through to trace surviving manuscripts, writing to several archives across the country in search of the original Star Chamber decrees. He would later publish his findings in the work *Select Statutes and other Documents Illustrative of the Reigns of Elizabeth and James I* (1894). Eilish has also found letters which reveal a darker moment of the Royal Historical Society towards the end of the First World War. A combination of correspondence from struck-off member Felix Lieberman and surviving Council minute books reveal that German and Hungarian born members of the Society were struck off as Fellows in line with other societies in London, including the Royal Society. Lieberman was eventually reinstated as a Fellow in 1924. The RHS faced difficult choices during the war, but this moment teaches us how contemporary events shaped both scholarship and our Society.

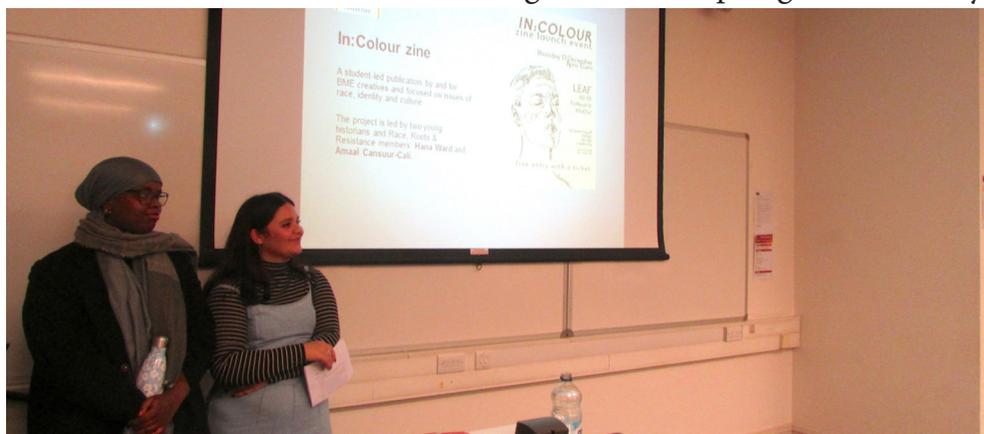
The 'Recovering History' project has begun to reveal the history of the RHS in its first century. The Prothero papers have established that the Society has always been an institution which has actively promoted academic scholarship, and has engaged in public affairs. Prothero did not limit his historical and analytical expertise to the past, but used his knowledge to address contemporary issues, particularly at the outbreak of the First World War. Through digitisation and re-assessment of the Prothero papers to celebrate the Royal Historical Society's anniversary, the project will reveal more about the Society's past, and . . . will teach us about an important chapter of our discipline's history. . .

RACE, ETHNICITY AND EQUALITY REPORT IN MANCHESTER

Kerry Pimblott (Manchester) writes on President Margot Finn's visit to discuss the release of the RHS report with historians at University of Manchester

On 21 February 2019 the University of Manchester's History department welcomed RHS President, Professor Margot Finn, to reflect on the results of the RHS's landmark report on Race, Ethnicity and Equality in UK History. This event, which was co-sponsored by Manchester's Race, Roots & Resistance Collective, was an opportunity for staff, students and community members to critically reflect on and respond to the report's findings as well as learn more about ongoing initiatives within the department, and UK higher education, to tackle systemic inequalities.

Our discussions were structured around three important themes raised by the report: the need to (1) decolonise the History curriculum; (2) create a safe, inclusive, and equitable culture for teaching, learning and research; (3) forge effective pipelines for BME student recruitment from schools into undergraduate and postgraduate study.



Amaal Cansuur-Cali and Hana Ward, editors of the In:Colour Zine.



Catherine Millan, Widening Participation Coordinator at the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Centre

Decolonizing the HE-Sector History Curriculum

Some of the RHS report's key findings and recommendations relate to the limited scope of university History curricula and the under-representation of BME students in the discipline. The report calls for strategic curricular interventions designed to 'challenge the racial foundations of the discipline and to reflect the full diversity of human history.' During the event, Danielle Chavrimootoo (Senior Lecturer in Teaching and Learning, Kingston University) emphasised the importance of an inclusive Level 1 curriculum to facilitate student recruitment and retention. Chavrimootoo has partnered with the department to perform a curriculum audit and staff and student surveys with the aim of embedding equality and diversity into the Level 1 programme. In response to the RHS report's concerns about 'the absences of Black British history' in the university curriculum, Eloise Moss (Lecturer in Modern British History, Manchester) highlighted the field-specific response of Manchester's modern British historians, a full report on which is available on our blog: <https://uomhistory.com>

Creating a Safe, Inclusive, and Equitable Culture

While the curriculum certainly constitutes 'an obstacle to racial and ethnic diversity in History as a discipline,' the RHS report reminds us that it is only part of the problem.

‘Stereotyping of BME students’ and researchers’ interests, dismissive comments about BME historians’ language competence, funding constraints on research conducted outside the UK and a pervasive unwillingness to grapple with difficult histories all contribute to the underrepresentation of BME students and staff in our discipline.’

With these broader challenges in mind, student and staff representatives from the Race, Roots & Resistance Collective offered insights into their own efforts to foster a safe and equitable environment for teaching, learning, and research. Kerry Pimblott (Lecturer in U.S. and African Diaspora History, Manchester) provided a broad overview of the Collective’s mission, spotlighting its concern with inter-generational and cross-disciplinary mentoring and networking through initiatives such as the Works-in-Progress Seminar and the In:Colour Zine. The student editors of In:Colour, Amaal Cansuur-Cali and Hana Ward, both History undergraduates, described the genesis of their publication and its role in building community and facilitating the self-expression of BME students and community members.

Forging Pipelines for BME Student Recruitment and Retention

Finally, Catherine Millan, Widening Participation Coordinator at the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Centre delivered a presentation on the groundbreaking work of the Diversity Champions Project in reaching BME students in schools across Greater Manchester.



President Margot Finn speaking with Professor Sasha Handley

Millan traced the origins of the project back to the surge in hate crime that followed the Manchester Arena terror attack in 2017. Inundated with requests from school teachers to perform training and workshops, Millan launched the Diversity Champions as a vehicle for developing the leadership skills of students vulnerable to harassment and hate crimes due to their race, ethnicity, religion, ability, sexual orientation or gender identity. The History Department is partnering with the Diversity Champions to deliver key content on the Holocaust as well as on histories of race and resistance in modern British History.



Danielle Chavrimootoo (Kingston) at the University of Manchester event

Professor Finn's visit encouraged us to continue building our community of BME staff and students. We picked up some very useful tips about how best to foster pipelines for BME student recruitment at all levels, and how to link up with similar initiatives across the HE-History sector as a whole.

*Kerry Pimblott
University of Manchester*

In October 2018, the RHS published:

Race, Ethnicity & Equality in UK History: A Report and Resource for Change

You can read the briefing on the RHS website at the following address:

<https://royalhistsoc.org/racereport>



HISTORICAL TRANSACTIONS

The Historical Transactions blog has a new editor, Katherine Foxhall, and is seeking submissions from historians. Would you like to write for the blog?



A Stack of the Prothero Papers from the RHS Archive

In particular, we would like to hear from you if you have an idea that fits with the following themes:

Beyond this Day – We are all familiar with the idea of “on this day in history”. But what counter-narratives lie behind major (or minor) historical events? Does your perspective, or a source that you are working on (e.g. a letter, a speech, a record of an event) offer a new way of approaching a familiar story or shed new light on our knowledge of larger historical forces? This new series of posts will provide informed, scholarly commentary on historic events, and we are keen to hear about ideas for pieces to be published on the corresponding day.

From the Archives – Have you found a document, image or object in the course of your work, research or study that you would like to bring to the attention of a wider historical public? We welcome short descriptions and analyses (accompanied by an image) of finds such as this from any kind of repository, located anywhere.

Research in Progress – Do you have preliminary ideas or significant sources that you'd like to share ahead of (for example) a funding application or book proposal submission? Are you embarking on a new project that has innovative methodological or interdisciplinary aspects?

Historians in/on the News – Can you offer an informed opinion on a current topic? Has your research been used in a radio or television programme that our readers would be interested to hear about? Is something related to your work happening in real time? If so, we can often work quickly to share your knowledge.

The standard length of our blogs is c.500-1000 words, depending on topic and focus, and posts will be publicised via Twitter to over 20,000 followers.

If you are interested in writing for the Historical Transactions blog on any of these themes, or if you have any other ideas, please contact the Historical Transactions editor, Katherine Foxhall by email:

k.foxhall@royalhistsoc.org.



THE ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

- **REPRESENTS** history as a discipline, and historians as a group
- **PROMOTES** the vitality of historical scholarship through support for research and publication
- **ADVOCATES** best practice in history teaching in universities and schools
- **PROVIDES** a forum for all historians to meet and exchange ideas
- **SUPPORTS** and encourages early career historians



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