

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS NEWS

Autumn 2008



THE JOSEPH RILEY ARCHIVE

Joseph Riley's writings offer a fascinating link to the business world and religious life of 19th century Bradford. Riley (1838-1926) was a Bradford business man, best known for the magic lantern firm Riley Brothers. His son, Willie Riley, wrote "Windyridge" and many other popular tales set in Yorkshire.

Image: Joseph Riley ca. 1862.

The archive includes an account of Joseph Riley's business trip to Constantinople in 1889 and his autobiography, written in seven weeks in 1910 following the death of his second wife Mary. It is rich in detail about working life and, above all, about Methodism in Bradford. Riley became a Methodist in 1857 and preached on local circuits, and it seems to have been the most important influence on his life.

<http://www.brad.ac.uk/library/special/riley,j.php>

PAXCAT PROJECT: BRINGING PEACE ARCHIVES TO LIFE

The Commonweal Archives were gathered by individuals and pressure groups working for peace and social change, donated originally to Commonweal Library, a unique independent peace library based at the University of Bradford.

The PaxCat Project will raise external funding to catalogue these remarkable archives, enabling us to bring them to a much wider audience.



Image: hand-coloured diagram showing the subjects covered by Commonweal.

You can keep in touch with PaxCat progress via our blog

<http://commonwealarchives.wordpress.com/>

MEET BRADFORD'S GODDESS

In summer 2008, we were delighted to lend items from the Bradford Technical College Archive to an exhibition organised by Bradford College to celebrate the heritage of 175 years of technical, and later higher, education in Bradford.

Image: detail from programme for the 1882 Opening of the Bradford Technical School by the Prince and Princess of Wales. The "goddess" appears to depict Bradford: she is surrounded by materials of the textile industry, wears a mural crown, and carries a caduceus, to signify Hermes, patron of merchants.



NEW ON THE CATALOGUE: WOMEN FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

The records of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom are one of the archives covered by PaxCat. A mixture of material from the 1940s to the 1980s, the most interesting is probably WILPF British Section correspondence from the 1940s and 1950s relating to Europe, the hydrogen bomb, atomic power and links with other peace groups.

<http://www.brad.ac.uk/library/special/cw/WILPF.php>

PRIESTLEY'S WARS

Great Northern Books, who have already reprinted several novels by J.B. Priestley, have published a new book, "Priestley's Wars", by Neil Hanson, which follows Priestley's journey through war and peace, from enthusiastic World War 1 volunteer, to inspiring broadcaster during World War 2, to his essential role in the founding of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. The book uses many of Priestley's writings, most exciting of which are his vivid and moving letters home from the trenches, never before in print.



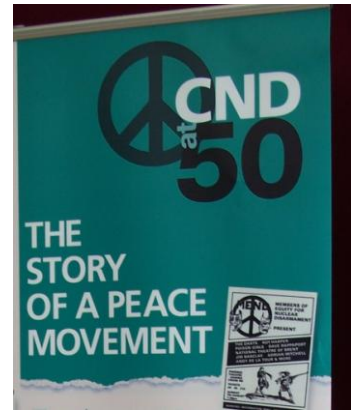
Image: Priestley's shoulder tab, from his time in the Duke of Wellington's West Riding regiment during WW1.

Great Northern books web site: <http://www.gnbooks.co.uk/>

CND CELEBRATIONS ... CONTINUED

2008 is the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. As mentioned in our Spring 2008 News, Special Collections holds the original drawings of the nuclear disarmament symbol (peace sign), created by Gerald Holtom for the first Aldermaston March.

These images have been used in several celebratory exhibitions this year. In particular, they joined the “CND at 50” travelling exhibition created by the London School of Economics for a Yorkshire CND display at the University of Bradford in November 2008. Image: detail from the display.



EXTRA! EXTRA!

Our star newspaper is a complete run of “Reynolds News”, and including variant regional editions. This paper, which was published under various names from 1850-1967, mixed a radical political stance with Sunday paper fare of crime and sensation, and the advertisements offer their own fascinating angle on the period. Our originals are very fragile, so it is good to know that the Newspapers Digitisation Project has digitised up to 1900: thanks to JISC, access to this is free to further and higher education institutions in the UK.



Our other historic papers include editions of the “Bradford Pioneer” featuring J.B. Priestley’s very early published work in a column called “Round the Hearth”. These writings are a fascinating glimpse of his development as a writer: although he had not yet found his distinctive literary style, he wrote on subjects he returned to many times in his later writings, notably the mass media, love of music, and arguments against war.

CARING FOR THE COLLECTIONS: KEEPING YORKSHIRE’S HERITAGE AFLOAT

Good news for Yorkshire museums, libraries and archives! The Yorkshire Rapid Response Network is to receive £50,000 funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Network is a joint venture between 31 Yorkshire heritage organisations, including Special Collections at Bradford, aiming to provide mutual support, training and equipment to enable members to deal more effectively with disasters, such as the floods which devastated parts of Yorkshire in 2007.

BONES, BODIES AND DISEASE

Dr Calvin Wells (1908-1978) is often referred to as the father of palaeopathology: he used his medical training to shed light on the diseases and physical problems found in skeletal remains. Special Collections holds his archive and his library of over 800 books.

The title of Dr Wells' most famous work, "Bones, bodies and disease", sums up many of the books e.g. 17th and 18th century medical texts, particularly on gynaecology and obstetrics, by authors such as Thomas Sydenham, Francois Mauriceau and William Smellie.

The book collection also includes modern works on archaeology and anthropology, practical medical and nursing works, and books on exotic travels. A few recurring themes: ear, nose and throat medicine, the archaeology of Norfolk, ancient tribes such as the Aztecs, and medical biography.

<http://www.brad.ac.uk/library/special/calvin.php>

Image: "Emblems of Immortality", caterpillar to butterfly and acorn to oak, from "Philosophy of medicine" by Robert Thornton, published 1799-1800.



FURTHER INFORMATION

Special Collections at the University of Bradford: nearly a kilometre of rare books and archives. We are open to all: please contact us to arrange an appointment.



Special Collections
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