

BROADSHEET

ISSUE 27



WELCOME TO THE ISSUE (number 27)

The brain is an unfathomably complex organ. There is not a single physical human function, creation or emotion that doesn't have some inextricable link to the estimated 10 billion interconnected neurons contained in this mysterious mass of fat and protein we carry within our skulls. Some of the earliest known forays into our grey and white matter date from Neolithic times. Both cave paintings and skulls from ancient burial sites show evidence of the practice of trepanning—the drilling or scraping of a hole in the skull. This earliest of surgical interventions was intended to treat a variety of disorders ranging from migraines to psychological disturbances. In 1965, Hugo Bart Huges, a Dutch librarian and former medical student, tried to lead a one man revival of trepanation (which he believed had numerous benefits) by using a garden variety drill to administer a hole in his skull...

We daresay that it's probably for the best that most recent explorations in brain surgery and neuroscience haven't been carried out by curiously brave individuals in their garages with DIY tools. Not least because what is learned, discovered and recorded about this labyrinthine organ is best shared and used for the benefit of all.

This issue offers up an intriguing array of examples of the compassion, power and curiosity of human brains at work in art, science, healthcare and war. Extremely complex, full of connections and pointing to the unknown—is it really that much of a leap to find parallels between archives and the brains behind them?

The Editorial Team

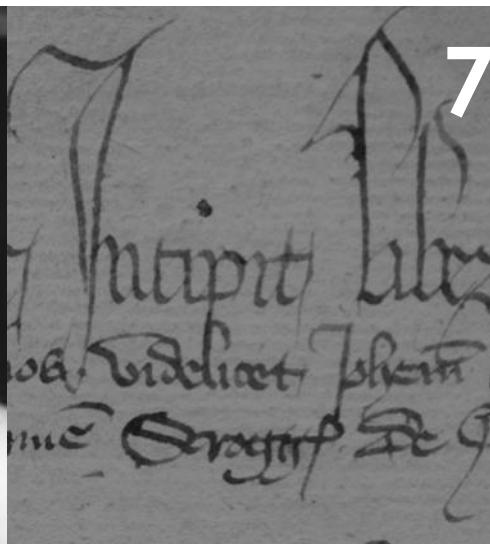
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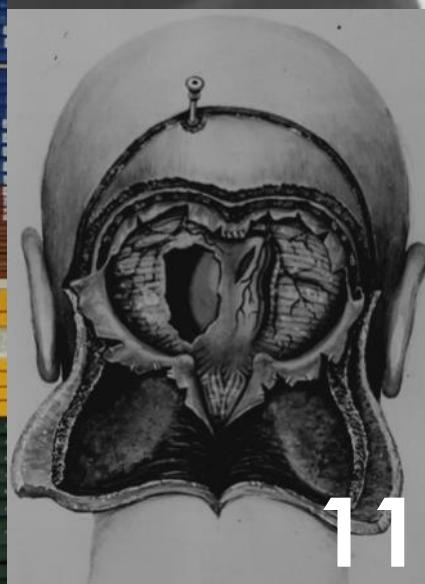


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BEATRICE HUNTINGDON AND

“ a comprehensive insight into the private lives of two of Scotland's most elusive artistic talents... ”

Beatrice Huntington and William 'Spanish' MacDonald were two of the most significant and accomplished voices in twentieth century Scottish art. Their work is often discussed in the same breath as that eminent foursome the Scottish Colourists, and the vibrancy and confidence of Huntington and MacDonald's work fits comfortably alongside these more familiar contemporaries.

William 'Spanish' MacDonald (1883 – 1960), or Mac to his friends, was born in 1883, the same year as F.C.B. Cadell. His early training was in Paris, where he worked as an engraver and etcher. From Paris he travelled to Spain, which was to become the inspiration behind many of his best known landscapes. He exhibited widely in the Royal Scottish Academy and the Scottish Society of Artists. This month's cover is a self-portrait by MacDonald.

Beatrice Huntington (1889 – 1988), born and raised in St Andrews, also began her early training in Paris (and later Munich). An accomplished cellist (having studied under Julius Klengel in Leipzig), she is best remembered as a portrait painter of considerable skill and empathy. She regularly exhibited at the Royal Academy and the Royal Scottish Academy, and sat on the hanging committee of the latter until the late 1930s. The image on this page is Huntington's *Nurse and Baby*.

The Beatrice Huntington / William 'Spanish' MacDonald archive is housed in their erstwhile apartment on Hanover Street, Edinburgh. It includes extensive correspondence, photographs, notes and personal ephemera which offer a clear and comprehensive insight into the private lives of two of Scotland's most elusive artistic talents. Access to the archive is by appointment via the owner, William Syson: [william.syson@btinternet.com](mailto:wiliam.syson@btinternet.com)

By STUART HARRIS-LOGAN

ON THE COVER

WINDOWS ON THE PAST

Records of the notorious window tax have made available online by the National Records of Scotland. The rolls have been added to the other eighteenth century tax records on the ScotlandsPlaces website, including duties on carriages, carts, clocks and watches, dogs, horses, servants and shops.

The window tax schedules list taxpayers in the burghs and in country parishes throughout Scotland, spanning fifty years from 1747. They show what duty Scots who lived in larger properties right across Scotland paid for each window in their house. In 1747, when the tax was introduced to Scotland, only those with ten or more windows were liable to pay the duty, on a sliding scale from 6 pence to 1 shilling per window per year. Later all houses with seven or more were liable until the tax was finally abolished in 1851.

Most people did not live in houses large enough to be liable for the tax, but the rolls reveal taxpayers whose dwellings ranged from the relatively modest, with under ten windows, to the substantial houses of the New Town in Edinburgh, where the philosopher David Hume paid for 18 windows in 1773-4. At the top of the scale were the huge country houses of aristocrats like the Duke of Roxburghe who in 1748 paid £14 and 4 shillings for 294 windows at Floors Castle near Kelso.

The rolls prove that some householders blocked up their windows in order to reduce their tax burden, but staff at the National Records of Scotland suspect that there is more myth than history surrounding this practice. Many of the apparently blocked windows on Georgian buildings in the New Town were in fact blind windows designed to maintain the building's symmetry. Since the tax was on the wealthy, the difference of a few shillings per year was not necessarily enough to force people to give up their daylight. The term 'daylight robbery' is often linked to the window tax, but the phrase was not recorded until the twentieth century. However, Victorian health campaigners were certainly referring to the window tax as a 'tax on light and air' by the time it was abolished in 1851.

The window tax rolls are the latest additions to a treasure trove of historical information held on the ScotlandsPlaces website, www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk, which brings together records from NRS and two other Scottish national collections: the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) and the National Library of Scotland (NLS).

SCOTLAND'S WIKIMEDIAN IN RESIDENCE

Taking up the post of Wikimedian-in-Residence at the National Library of Scotland (NLS) means, at first glance, sandwiching oneself between two cultural behemoths. It's difficult to tell which institution offers the more daunting statistics: the NLS boasts an estimated 17 million item collection, comprised of 15 million printed items, 100,000 manuscripts, 2 million maps, and 25,000 newspaper and magazine titles – a collection which grows by about 320,000 items each year. On the other hand, in just 12 years [Wikipedia](#) has already accumulated over 4,285,000 articles in English, the product of more than 625,500,000 edits by some 77,000 active contributors, and the site now attracts hundreds of thousands of unique visitors daily – and that's not even taking into consideration the host of other Wikimedia projects that have developed in addition to the flagship encyclopaedia site.

Facing stats like these, it's difficult to know where to begin. But the key actually lies in the numbers themselves: despite the NLS's ever-expanding collection, it is primarily accessible to a comparatively small pool of registered readers. Wikipedia, on the other hand, and its multitude of sister projects like [Wikimedia Commons](#) and [Wikisource](#), has an astounding reach around the world, but as an openly editable knowledge source is highly sensitive to issues regarding verifiability and licensing. One contains more knowledge than you could explore in several lifetimes, while the other offers an incredible platform for open knowledge distribution. The role of the Wikimedian-in-Residence is designed to effectively lay the foundation for an on-going collaborative relationship between the two.

Since the task of individually sharing the immense wealth of knowledge contained within the NLS is quite impossible, my residency will focus on working with the staff members who work with the collection on a daily basis. Training workshops will cover basic Wiki-editing and encourage participants to use Wikimedia projects as a means to share some of the fascinating insights uncovered as a result of digitisation projects and the development of exhibitions. I will also be working with curators and team managers at the NLS to identify information or material which might easily be released to Wikimedia projects such as [Wikimedia Commons](#), thus better linking the detailed and expansive digital collections with interested Wikimedia users.

I am myself quite an experienced and enthusiastic NLS customer; in addition to my work as Wikimedian-in-Residence I am a post-doctoral researcher and teaching assistant based in the University of Edinburgh's Department of English Literature, and I received my PhD from the University of Edinburgh in 2012. I am a whole-hearted lover of libraries and archives, and the George IV Reading Room is a much-loved sanctuary. I see this position as a welcome opportunity to introduce this wonderful institution and sector to a world of interested 'netizens' who might otherwise not have access to its many treasures – sharing my sanctuary with thousands who are not fortunate enough to live in or near the Scottish capital.

By engaging with Wikimedia UK and embracing the Wikimedia mission, the NLS takes a great stride towards opening up its resources and acknowledging a community of researchers that extends beyond Edinburgh, and, as access to higher and further education is a challenge for many, beyond a rather restricted academic circle. Perhaps most importantly, it marks a growing movement to understand our place not just nationally, but internationally as well.



By **ALLY CROCKFORD**
National Library of Scotland

UNCOVERING THE HIDDEN

At the end of last summer an interesting piece, in urgent need of conservation treatment, made its way to my desk: the Wilton Kirk Session. An anonymous donor had withdrawn the volume from an auction sale and gifted it to the National Records of Scotland, where it has become part of the collection of Church Records – a collection of great significance to the local and social history of Scotland, kept under the Charge and Superintendence of the Keeper of the Records of Scotland.

The volume, a reverse leather binding with blind tooling on the boards and spine, arrived into our studio in a pretty poor condition. In fact, even though the text block was in good nick, the binding was in a sad state: the leather spine had become detached leaving the lining and sewing supports exposed, the covering leather was also coming off the boards almost completely and the pastedowns were detached too.

However, every cloud has a silver lining! To my amazement the detached pastedowns were actually revealing something not originally meant to be seen. Was it maybe a secret?

"Bound in Rf sheep. Collection Book upon the Back. Open Back".

A note from the bookbinder saying how the book was originally bound! Well, what can I say – as a book conservator I couldn't have asked for more. How lucky! In fact, given that the binding was fall-

ing apart, this fortunate discovery has proved to be a big help for me in carrying out the conservation treatment and has allowed me to rebind the book in a way that is very close to how it had been originally done.

However, finding the necessary materials is not always easy and in this case the elusive material was sheep skin. After looking with not much luck for some sheep leather suitable for our purpose, I resorted to one of the best aspects of being part of the very small world of book and paper conservation – the amazing level of mutual support and collaboration amongst colleagues. We contacted friends in the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth, who we have a good relationship with. After some brief discussion on the state of Scottish and Welsh rugby they agreed to send us a suitable skin.

So the volume was covered with a new reverse goat skin, reproducing the original style, whilst the old part of the original binding has been retained and stored inside the custom-made box. As for our amazing discovery, the original pastedowns have been left detached. Unashamedly, the secret of the anonymous bookbinder is going to remain in the open for years to come.

By GLORIA CONTI
Conservator
National Records of Scotland

Bound in Rf Sheep
Collection Book upon the
Back & Open Back

UNESCO

Eleven items have been selected to represent the outstanding documentary heritage of the United Kingdom. From the Domesday Book to Hitchcock's Silent Films, these unique items span nearly 900 years, come from across the country and embody pivotal moments in the history of their communities and the UK as a whole.

This is the third group of inscriptions to the UNESCO UK Memory of the World Register, an online catalogue created to help promote documentary heritage across the UK and the world. The register is part of a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) programme to support and raise awareness of archives and is available at www.unesco.org.uk/register.

Tim Williams, Deputy Chair of the UK National Commission said, "We're pleased to welcome these UK museums, libraries and archives into the UNESCO family through the Memory of the World programme. These range from some of the UK's largest, national-level institutions, to local records offices. Regardless of their size, this designation is an important recognition of some of the outstanding heritage they hold."

A

berdeen Burgh Registers Aberdeen City Council

The fantastic collection of burgh records for Aberdeen held by Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Archives have long been a source of pride for the city and particularly for those who have worked most closely with the records over the years. The first eight volumes of burgh registers covering the period 1398-1509, have been included in the UK.

The 5,238 pages comprising these first eight volumes represents the earliest and most complete body of surviving records of any Scottish town. Alongside the government's Exchequer Rolls and the Register of the Great Seal, these records are the only near-continuous record which survives for Scotland in the fifteenth century and an unrivalled insight into the political and social life of the Scottish medieval town. The depth of detail in these records is unique as the registers include not only the records of the town council, which usually met twice a week, but of the bailie, guildry and head courts.

Aberdeen's mediaeval city council functioned both as a policy making unit and as a legal court. Thus the early council records contain not only documents of detailed council discussions of policy but also of the council's more routine concerns, such as legal decisions in hundreds of disputes between citizens, either at the instigation of individuals or the council's own officials. The registers include the elections of office bearers and councillors, admissions of burgesses, property transfers, promulgations of regulations and prices, property and trade debts, cargoes of foreign vessels, statements regarding public health issues, rentals of burgh lands and fishings, royal missives, tax rolls and much more besides.

This endorsement from UNESCO presents huge potential by way of publicity and promotion for the archive: it sends a positive message to users both at home and overseas regarding the quality and depth of the records held by Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Archives. The records, which have recently been digitised by the National Records of Scotland, are also the subject of a collaborative project with Aberdeen University aimed at widening access to these fascinating records of which only a tiny percentage have previously been published.

Phil Astley, City Archivist, Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Archives



Royal Scottish Institution University of Stirling. Established in 1862 the Royal Scottish National Institution was the foremost institution providing custodial care for mentally impaired children in Scotland in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It gained an international reputation for its enlightened approach to care and treatment attracting patients from England and across the British Empire.

The extensive archives of the institution which survive provide a comprehensive record of the management and operation of the hospital. Of particular note is the large collection of over 3,000 application forms for admission to the institution. These documents provide a wealth of information about children from all across Scotland who re-

quired treatment and care; the lives of their parents and families; and the figures in their local communities who supported their applications. The stories of these children are recorded in the case notes and other hospital records which document their treatment and care. Unsuccessful applications were also retained by the institution resulting in an archive which provides a wider historical picture of the mental health of children across Scotland.

We are delighted to receive this recognition of the importance of the RSNH Archive and hope that the award will help us in our efforts to secure funding to catalogue and conserve the collection.
Karl Magee, University Archivist, University of Stirling



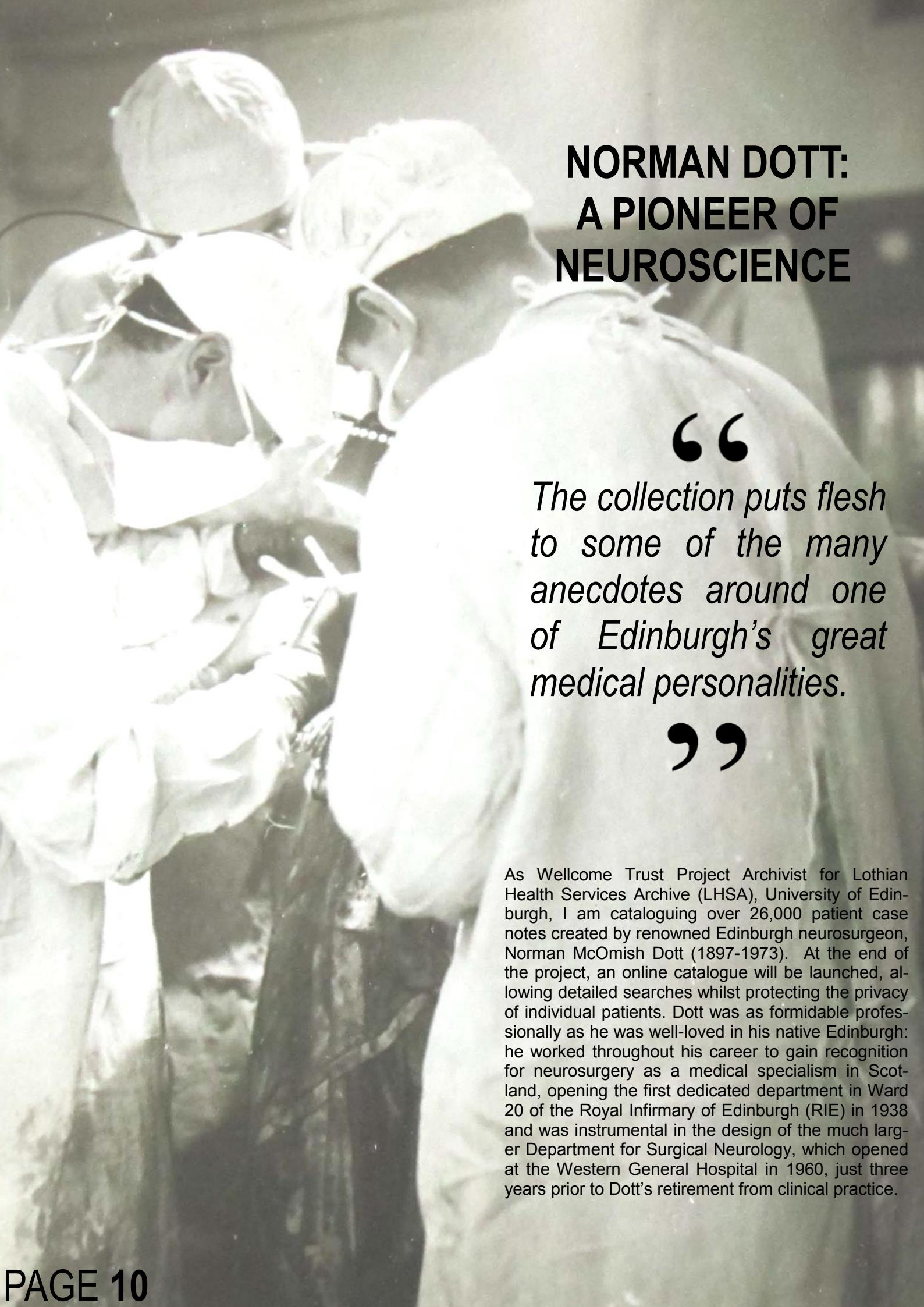
Haig Diary National Library of Scotland As the centenary of its outbreak approaches in 2014, the First World War continues to resonate with researchers and the general public alike. As the first truly modern war on a major scale the world had witnessed, the First World War affected the protagonist nations including Britain in a way no war had previously; not least in the estimated 750,000 British men who never returned home. As such, the legacy of an enduring national interest in the war almost 100 years after it began is not entirely surprising.

The role of the British Army in the war and the competence or otherwise of its generals similarly continues to be a subject of debate. As Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force, Field Marshal Douglas Haig commanded the largest British Army ever assembled, and for his role in the war has become arguably the most controversial general in the Army's history. Although not without his detractors, at the end of the war Haig was considered something of a national hero for the part he played in delivering victory for the Allies. At his death in 1928, the state funeral accorded to Haig saw hundreds of thousands of people across the country pay their respects at his passing. In the years after his death, however, Haig's reputation was eroded to the extent that in the popular conscience at least he came to be vilified as the man more than any other responsible for the high casualty rate of the British Army; a man whose bungling incompetence saw the death of 20,000 men on the first day of the Somme alone.

Haig kept a diary throughout the war, and this momentous document now forms part of Haig's personal papers at the National Library of Scotland. The diary is vital to understanding key battles such as the Somme and Passchendaele through Haig's own words, recorded on an almost daily basis. It is of national importance because, although no one single document can tell the whole story, it is at the heart of the documentary evidence that has informed modern opinion on the First World War. Whilst research in more recent years has begun to move away from focusing on the successes or failures of a small number of generals, the diary has remained central to an understanding of not just the role played by Haig, but of the British Army, its generals and allies. It offers an insight into how and why decisions were made as events unfolded in the fields of Belgium, France and beyond. Regardless of one's viewpoint on Haig's own character or abilities, the diary is an essential element of the documentary heritage of the First World War. Written in these circumstances, the diary offers an immediacy that few documentary sources can in the day-to-day record and analysis of this cataclysm.

It is an honour that UNESCO has recognised the significance of this unique document by including it in the UK register, particularly in the run up to the centenary of the outbreak of the War next year.

Alison Metcalfe, Manuscript and Archive Collections,
National Library of Scotland



NORMAN DOTT: A PIONEER OF NEUROSCIENCE

“
The collection puts flesh to some of the many anecdotes around one of Edinburgh’s great medical personalities.
”

As Wellcome Trust Project Archivist for Lothian Health Services Archive (LHSA), University of Edinburgh, I am cataloguing over 26,000 patient case notes created by renowned Edinburgh neurosurgeon, Norman McOmish Dott (1897-1973). At the end of the project, an online catalogue will be launched, allowing detailed searches whilst protecting the privacy of individual patients. Dott was as formidable professionally as he was well-loved in his native Edinburgh: he worked throughout his career to gain recognition for neurosurgery as a medical specialism in Scotland, opening the first dedicated department in Ward 20 of the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh (RIE) in 1938 and was instrumental in the design of the much larger Department for Surgical Neurology, which opened at the Western General Hospital in 1960, just three years prior to Dott’s retirement from clinical practice.

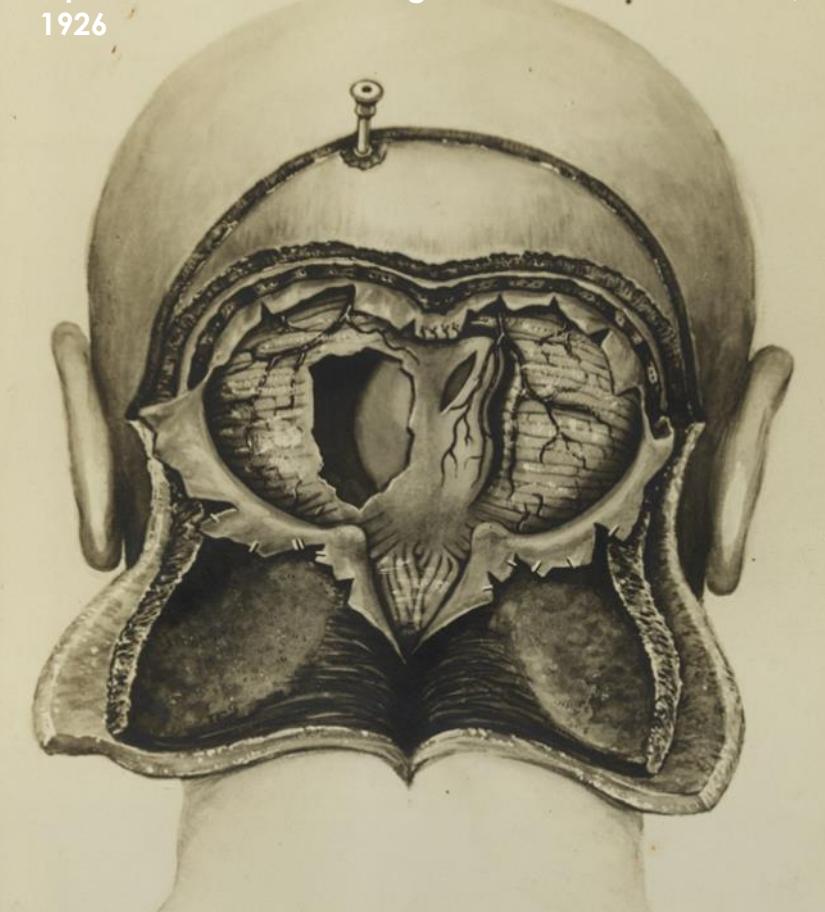
Surgical sketch of operation to remove cyst

1933



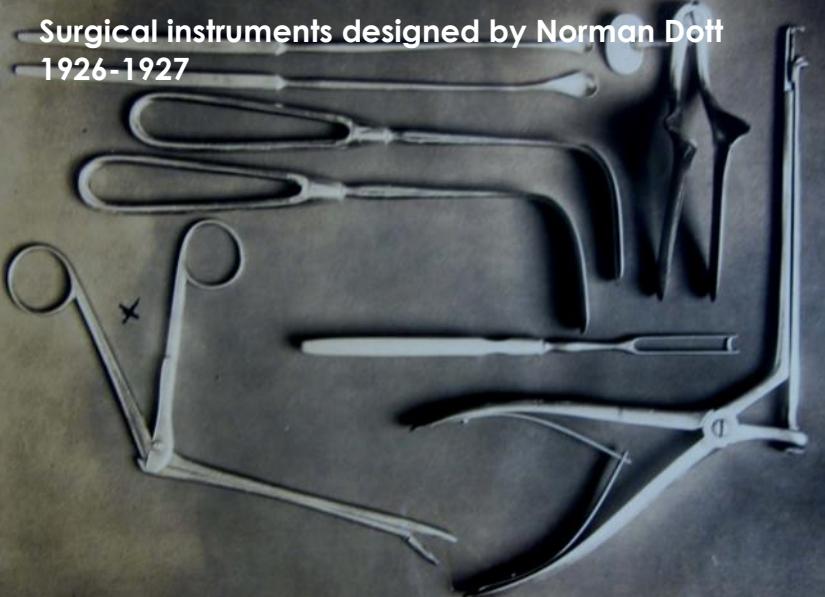
Operation sketch showing removal of brain tumour,

1926



Surgical instruments designed by Norman Dott

1926-1927



As plentiful and varied as the case notes with which I am working may be, they only document part of Dott's life. Norman Dott was a notorious workaholic, tirelessly dedicated to his patients and his metier, even visiting his patients in Ward 20 to carve the turkey on Christmas day. However, he was also a member of numerous medical societies, a teaching professor in the University of Edinburgh, a correspondent with fellow neurosurgeons and a committed advocate for his personal medical interests after retirement. And since Dott had so many facets, so do the archive(s) that he left behind. By far the largest collection of material related to Dott outside LHSA is held by our University of Edinburgh colleagues in Special Collections. Therefore, in order to piece together more of Dott's personality, I paid a visit to the public side of our shared reading room in the University's Centre for Research Collections...

LHSA's case notes reflect Dott's clinical practice, while the bulk of Dott's papers in Special Collections relate to his teaching career at the University, where he lectured in physiology and paediatric surgery as well as in his own specialism (he became Professor of Neurological Surgery in 1947). The collection also contains personal papers and correspondence, texts of lectures and addresses to medical societies around the world, and photographs of surgical projects, mostly recording the development of the Department of Surgical Neurology at the Western General Hospital. The collection was donated to the University by Dott's widow, Peggy, in 1979.

The collection puts flesh to some of the many anecdotes around one of Edinburgh's great medical personalities. For example, Dott designed neurosurgical instruments or improved existing ones, sending them back to the manufacturers, represented in Special Collections by a photograph of an operating table commissioned in 1926. However, included with the photograph is a long list of Dott's alterations to his design over time and correspondence from Archibald Bennet & Co. of Leonards Works, Edinburgh, giving more than a hint of the surgeon's famed exactitude and perfectionism. The letter states that: 'the work was spread over a considerable time, finality was never in sight till the end, and parts were being added and added to as the work progressed under [Dott's] personal instructions.'

Influential professionals such as Dott had complex working lives and affiliations: traces of parallel careers are often housed in different archival collections, and it is not always obvious where links lie. Looking at the Dott papers held by Special Collections has led me to find the origins of events and decisions that are played out in the LHSA case notes with which I am working. As I progress with the project, I look forward to discovering a remarkable Scottish career within and across two distinct collections, which would not have been possible without archives weaving collaboration into their own working lives.

By LOUISE WILLIAMS
Lothian Health Services Archive

INTERVIEW FIONA MACLEOD



Fiona is the Senior Archivist with High Life Highland's Archive Service. Her job involves managing and developing the archive collections as well as overseeing the work of a team of staff in the delivery of the public archive service based in Inverness.

Describe archives in three words. Unique, identity, accessible.

Why Archives? I began working as an Archive Assistant with the Highland Regional Council Archives in 1992. There were only two members of staff and I was really thrown in at the deep end when the Regional Archivist went on holiday three weeks later, so I just had to get on with it! Over the years my interest in the profession grew, and I undertook the distance learning MLitt at the University of Dundee.

What do you feel are the main challenges currently faced by the sector? There are many challenges facing the sector at present but for me personally, trying to keep up-to-date with technological advances and current thinking behind the creation and retention of digital records whilst keeping on top of the more traditional elements of the job is certainly a challenge.

If you had an unlimited budget what would you do? If money was no object I would have an archive van/bus, similar to a mobile library. It would be properly kitted out so we could take archives around the Highlands and people could come and undertake research at designated stops. Although we have Archive Centres covering Caithness, Skye and Lochalsh and Lochaber, Highland Archives still covers an area of 16,920km² which is about 22% of the landmass of Scotland but with just 3% of the nation's population. Delivering a service to these areas is a continuing challenge and a mobile archive would go some way to addressing delivery of the Service to our more remote areas - as well as being great fun for the staff!

What has been the highlight of your career so far? The highlight has to be moving in to new premises four years ago. The £10.5 million Highland Archive and Registration Centre was opened to the public in 2009. We have 9km of shelving, a conservation studio, dedicated Family History Centre, a searchroom which can seat up to 30 readers and a learning centre which can accommodate school and community groups – a far cry from our previous accommodation of five reader spaces (two if they were consulting maps) and four outstores.

Do you have a favourite record or story? About two years ago we took in the archives of the Highland Health Board. Amongst the various hospitals represented are the records of Inverness District Asylum, later known as Craig Dunain (background image) where patients came from all over the north, including the Western Isles. One story in particular always prompts a great deal of interest during tours of the Archive Centre and talks given by staff. May Davidson, aged 31 from Strathglass was admitted to the Asylum in 1875. May's occupation was given as 'knitter' and her cause of insanity was noted as 'weakness of body and eyesight brought on by knitting and confinement to the house'. May continued to knit throughout her stay and was eventually discharged into the care of the Asylum Matron in 1910.



TRIBUTE

Friends and colleagues will be saddened to learn of the death of John McLintock, a registered member of the Society of Archivists who served on many committees. John died on 26 May after a brave, two-year battle with cancer. Before his early retirement in 2012, he had been Head of Architectural and Engineering Drawings and Cartographic Collections at the National Records of Scotland (NRS).

Born in 1957, John was educated at the Royal High School in Edinburgh and was a graduate of the Department of Scottish History at Edinburgh University. He joined the Scottish Record Office (SRO, the predecessor to the National Archives of Scotland, now NRS) in 1984. Previously he had worked for Glasgow University Archives and as Archivist for the Trustees Savings Bank.

John's career was both long and varied. He planned and oversaw the introduction to SRO of 'STAIRS', its first computer system for cataloguing Scottish Office files. From 1993 to 2002, he served as Registrar of the National Register of Archives (Scotland), a post he greatly enjoyed. He also produced An Archival Account of Scotland, the first national audit of the state of archive provision in the country and therefore a ground-breaking piece of work. This foundation will bear fruit later in 2013 with the joint publication (published by the Scottish Council on Archives, in conjunction with the National Records of Scotland and the British

Library Preservation Advisory Centre) of a national profile report on the preservation of Scottish archive collections.

John was appointed Head of Maps and Plans in 2002, where he managed/superintended the transfer of the existing plans catalogue into CALM. He also undertook extensive work in arranging and reducing the backlog of unlisted plans (no mean task), and drew up comprehensive rules and guidance to enable cataloguing to professional standards. Later, he supervised and coordinated the transfer of this very extensive collection of plans to upgraded storage in Thomas Thomson House, Edinburgh.

John was a recognised and published expert on the early history of HM General Register House, the principal building of the National Records of Scotland. As such, he was the driving force behind the 3D imaging project - conducted in collaboration with Historic Scotland - that produced a digital visualisation of the building. This was a highly successful and innovative combination of scholarship and technology, moving between the 18th and the 21st centuries. John's most recent article on James Salisbury's Lost Architectural Model of General Register House appears in the Georgian Group Journal Volume XX1, 2013.

John will be much mourned and missed by all who knew him. He leaves behind him a worthy legacy, and many fond memories.

By LINDA RAMSAY

W WWW.SCOTTISHARCHIVES.ORG.UK

E CONTACT@SCOTTISHARCHIVES.ORG.UK T +44 (0)131 535 1362

A GENERAL REGISTER HOUSE 2 PRINCES STREET EDINBURGH EH1 3YY