



Brunel
University
London

BFSS Archives ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT 2021



[Edit profile](#)

Brunel University London Archives

@BrunelUniArch

Archives of Brunel University London, its predecessor colleges, and the BFSS

📍 Uxbridge brunel.ac.uk/about/Archives 📅 Joined March 2020

255 Following 333 Followers

Overview of the year

We are pleased to present the eighth British and Foreign School Society (BFSS) Archives Annual Impact Report 2021.

This past year has been, without doubt, an extraordinary and challenging year for all. As you know, Brunel closed its campus to all but essential workers on 23 March 2020, so the Archives team were forced to work from home, providing a limited remote service. We thankfully returned to working on-site in a limited capacity from September 2020, following COVID-secure working guidelines.

Saying that, we have managed to make significant progress with a number of existing and new projects. Among the many achievements to tell you about are –

- Research Impact Award – *Unlocking the Secrets of Slavery and Abolition* Exhibition – Research Impact Award
- Inclusion in The National Archives – A Year in Archives 2020
- 4,975 BFSS entries in the CALM archive catalogue
- @BrunelUniArch Twitter – 332 Followers and 143 BFSS related tweets
- Secondary sources scanning project

Over the past year, we have not been able to open the Reading Room to internal or external visitors, and so we have not been able to welcome any student volunteers or researchers. However, over this period we have received 46 enquiries and have continued to improve accessibility to the BFSS Archives – such as sharing images and stories on Twitter, and digitising secondary sources. In line with the Government’s Roadmap and the easing of lockdown, we are looking to re-open the Reading Room to external visitors as soon as possible.

On a staffing note, the Archives and Records Team have moved within the Library Services structure and have merged with the University Special Collections. Our department is now known as Records, Archives and Special Collections.

Finally, it became increasingly clear that with the challenges of the past year, we were not going to be able to complete moving the entire University Archives by September this year as planned. As such, the University has approached the landlord of the Old School House to negotiate a further 12 months on the lease. A new lease has been drawn up and is currently with our Legal department. However, we have continued to review our collections in preparation for the move – an update on this work is provided later in this report.

Staff

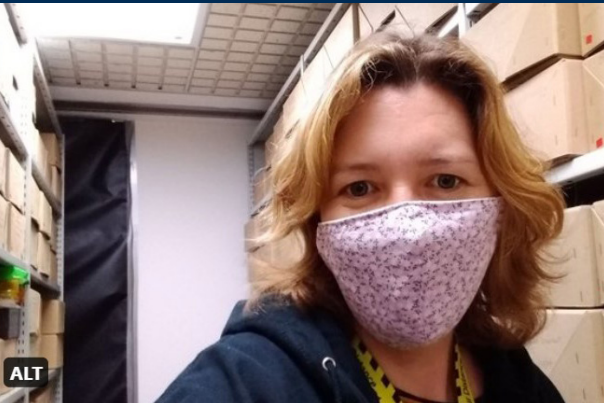
Mandy Mordue, Head of Records, Archives and Special Collections

Phaedra Casey, Archivist

Sarah Trim-West, Archive Assistant

That’s brilliant. Thanks so much and for your care and trouble.

RESEARCHER, JULY 2020



Archives

The British and Foreign School Society (BFSS) Archive is a unique collection which covers the period 1798 to 1976. It contains a wide range of materials in many formats, such as official papers, letters, publications, student registers, photographs, maps, plans, trophies, clothing and furniture. It is approximately 178 linear metres.

The records include Joseph Lancaster’s letters (1810-12), committee minutes and papers, financial records, handwritten student applications with supporting testimonials and correspondence, student registers, teaching practice reports, establishment and progress of the British Schools, 19th century schools’ (both UK and foreign) correspondence, Education Commissions returns from British schools, BFSS charities and funds, agents and inspector reports, annual reports, student magazines (such as the B’s Hum), photographs of staff, students and buildings, teaching manuals and lesson books, portraits of principals of the teacher training colleges, clothing such as blazers, ties and sporting honours caps, furniture and memorial plaques. It also contains particularly unique and irreplaceable items such as a copybook of examples of handwriting and needlework done by slave children from a British school in Jamaica, (presented to the BFSS in 1826), individual sewing samples, sketchbooks and other personal memoirs of former staff and students, and silver ‘monitorial’ medals.

These records contain a wealth of detailed information on the Society and its colleges, schools, staff and alumni, as well as the overall progress of education in Britain and overseas during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

There is also a large selection of educational books and pamphlets, many of them rare editions, dating from the 19th century, including works by Lancaster, Bell, Pestalozzi and Froebel – leading educationists of the time, and Victorian and Edwardian children’s books. One collection of books was presented by David Salmon, biographer of Joseph Lancaster and former student and tutor of Borough Road College, and Principal of Swansea Teacher Training College.

Cataloguing

As you can imagine, cataloguing is not something we have been able to do while working from home, as we would never take archives out of the building for this task.

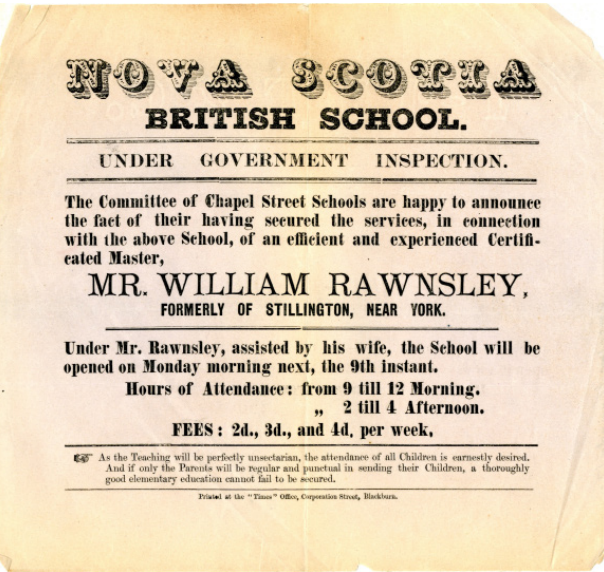
During the last year, 152 new items have been added to the catalogue, while 660 catalogued descriptions have been added to and improved. There are now 4,975 entries for the BFSS Archives.

Images now available via our catalogue include the entire series of Borough Road College student year groups and sporting photos, the entire volume of British School drawings, plans and elevations, and the file of BFSS Foreign Correspondence Haiti letters. Over the last year, a further 494 scans of items have been attached to their catalogue descriptions.

Usually we do wait until a whole series or file of records has been digitised before adding the images to the catalogue, thus making them available online. This is because the public can get confused, or frustrated if they can see, for example, “Letter 1” and “Letter 3” of a file, but not “Letter 2”. However, during lockdown we decided that whatever we could make available online would be a bonus to everyone having to research from home. Therefore, any items previously scanned, for example in response to an enquiry, and suitable to be attached to our online catalogue, have been attached. This includes some BFSS Foreign correspondence, some Secondary Sources (articles about the BFSS), some Stockwell College photographs of students and staff, and some Saffron Walden College photographs of students and staff.



BFSS/STC/PH/SYG/File 1948-1961



Wow! This is fantastic. I am most grateful to you for this and your other email responding to my enquiries.

RESEARCHER, NOVEMBER 2020

Thank you very much – and especially for your generosity. I fully understand the delay – we are watching your COVID situation with concern [from Australia].

RESEARCHER, NOVEMBER 2020

Catalog

Conservation

Loans

Movement

Catalog 12th of 21

IDENTITY

Repository

Brunel University Archives

DOCUMENT_REF

Extent

Title

A History of Borough Road College: Chapter 1

AccNo

Author

Bartle, G.F.

CONTENT

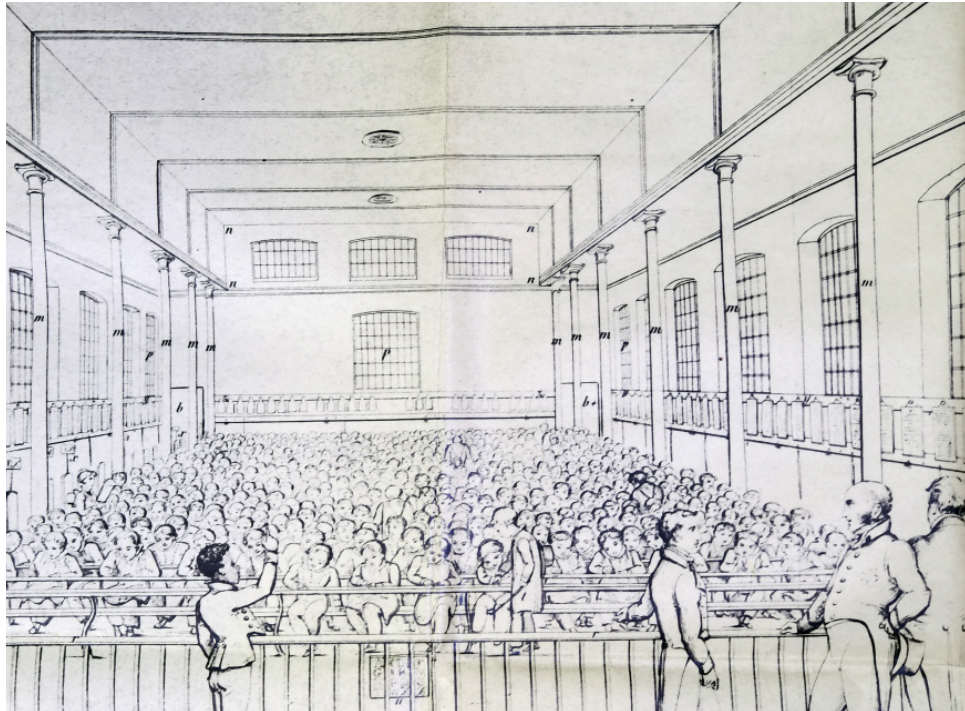
Description

Chapter 1: Joseph Lancaster pp 1-8

Format

Both hard and electronic copies

Multimedia



Opening up the archives

❑ **Secondary sources scanning project** – the Archive holds a large number of printed items relating to the BFSS, such as booklets, articles, offprints, typescripts, essays etc, which are not archival, but which are very useful reference items, both for staff and researchers. We refer to these as Secondary Sources, and they have their own section on the Calm catalogue, BFSS/SS. A project is underway to catalogue and digitise these items, to increase ease of use, availability and knowledge of their existence.

So far, 47 BFSS printed items have been scanned, totalling nearly 800 pages. Twenty-six of these articles were written by George Bartle, three by Gillian Collins, previous BFSS archivists. We plan to attach each digitised item to its catalogue entry on the CALM catalogue, so that staff and researchers can not only search for, and see that we hold the item, but can actually access it online. Due to copyright restrictions, many of the attached digitised items will be accessible via the online catalogue to staff only, as we are not allowed to publish, (and this includes making it available online), any item that is not the copyright of the BFSS or Brunel University. Any items which are copyright of the BFSS or Brunel, or are old enough to be out of copyright, will be made available online to all. Under UK copyright law, “Fair Use” means we are allowed to supply a single copy of one article from an individual issue of a journal to a researcher for private study. This means that the items which have digitised but not made available to the public via our catalogue, can be requested individually by a researcher, and we can email them out to the individual, even while working from home.

- ❑ **A Year in Archives 2020** – is an annual publication by The National Archives which brings together stories and case studies from across the archive sector, showcasing and celebrating archives and their work.

We made a successful bid to be included in the ‘Highlights’ which provides a snapshot of work. You can see our entry at Greater London – The National Archives
- ❑ **Ann Springman – Oxford Dictionary of National Biography** – we have been contacted by the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography to write an article for Ann Springman – Superintendent of Stockwell College.

This work will build on existing entries for Joseph Lancaster, William Allen, Henry Althans and Henry Dunn by George Bartle, a previous BFSS archivist, which were commissioned over 25 years ago. The deadline for the article is September this year so we will update you on this work in next year’s report.



Thank you very much for your assistance
– I have readily downloaded the scanned pdfs. You have developed an excellent way of delivering items – Congratulations.

RESEARCHER, NOVEMBER 2020

- ❑ **Public Engagement – Research Impact Award – Winner**

Brunel launched its inaugural Research Impact Awards on 11 June 2020 to celebrate excellence in research that addresses real world problems and changes the world around us.

The awards recognised those people who have focussed on generating excellent and impactful research and ensuring that its benefits are harnessed to improve how we live, work, learn and understand the world.

The awards celebrate the significant academic achievements of research activities across the following key impact areas of –

Academic impact – for research that has made a demonstratable contribution to academic advances, across and within disciplines, including significant advances in understanding, methods, theory and application

Cultural impact – for impactful and engaged research where the outputs generated significant cultural impact either through a specific media, to a particular audience or within a specified culture or geography

Economic impact – for impactful and engaged research where the outputs generated significant economic impact at local, regional, national or international scale

Educational impact – for impactful and engaged research where the outputs have contributed to the quality of education either at Brunel or more widely within the education sector

Environmental impact – for impactful and engaged research where the outputs delivered significant environmental benefits at local, regional, national or international scale

Global impact – for impactful and engaging research where the outputs have generated impact benefitting one or more developing countries

Policy impact – for impactful and engaged research where the outputs have made a clearly identified impact on an area of policy at a local national or international level

Public engagement – for impactful and engaged research where either the impact of the research has been significantly enhanced through two way dialogue with a particular public, or

the research has been communicated effectively with the wider public through innovative or inspirational methods.

We are delighted to say that the Being Human: Unlocking the Secrets of Slavery and Abolition Exhibition, which we told you about in last year’s report, was the winner of the Public Engagement category as part of a series of public engagement activities led by Dr Inge Dornan.

Winner – Dr Inge Dornan – Senior Lecturer in Politics and History

For a series of public engagement activities on ‘Unlocking the Secrets of Britain’s Slave Past’ as part of the nationwide Being Human Festival. Inge, in collaboration with Dr Holly Maples (now Essex University), Dr Alison Carrol, Archivists Mandy Mordue and Phaedra Casey, Sebastian Jenner and Thomas Ryan (RSDO), delivered an archival exhibition, led walking tours of the local connection to slavery and abolition, devised a theatrical performance based on an abolitionist meeting, and hosted a public lecture with BBC’s Professor David Olusoga. Full details can be found at Celebrating the winners of our first Research Impact Awards (brunel.ac.uk): [intra.brunel.ac.uk/news/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?List=5fca333d%2Db062%2D4b16%2Da437%2D73a07f717689&ID=4540&Web=67061212%2D344e%2D4c65%2Dbaf6%2Dd2f8a3f27fd4](https://brunel.ac.uk/news/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?List=5fca333d%2Db062%2D4b16%2Da437%2D73a07f717689&ID=4540&Web=67061212%2D344e%2D4c65%2Dbaf6%2Dd2f8a3f27fd4)

It was a pleasure to work with Mandy and Phaedra on this exhibition, ... and to see the outstanding results of their skills and talents in exhibition curation in promoting the BFSS archival collection to staff and students at Brunel as well as to members of the public.

DR INGE DORNAN, SENIOR LECTURER



@BrunelUniArch

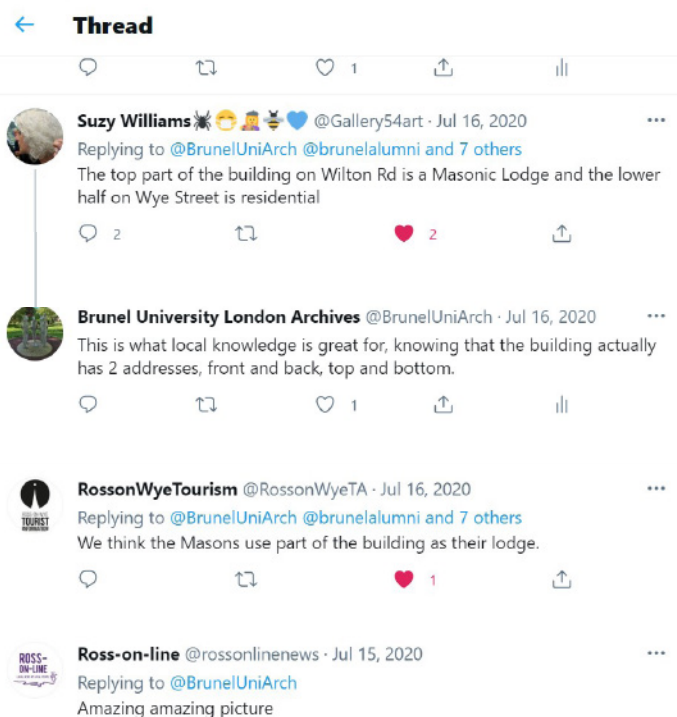
We reported the launch of our own Twitter account – @BrunelUniArch last year. Since then, our followers have gone from 89 to 332.

Please follow us.



Over the last year, we have published 143 tweets using items from the BFSS Archives. BFSS tweets are tagged #BFSS, making them easy to find should you wish to take a look.

We have joined various national Twitter campaigns, such as #Archives30, which takes place every April. A list of subjects is announced in advance, and archivists show what they have, using the hashtags provided.



Other Twitter campaigns we have taken part in include:

#Archive30

#IWD2020 – International Women’s Day

#exploreyourarchive

#throwbackThursday

#HBAH – History Begins at Home

#ArchiveZ – a new letter of the alphabet each week. We managed all except X. V was vaccinations, using a document from Borough Road College.

#WorldTeachersDay

#NationalSportingHeritageDay

#AskAnArchivistDay

#BHM2020 – Black History Month

#FromtheArchive

#RemembranceDay2020

#AustraliaDay

#InternationalStudentsDay

#HistEdMonth – History of Education Month

#OTD – On This Day

#KnowherName – a hashtag to bring together stories about women who deserve to be better known

#ArchiveAdventCalendar

And finally

#Pretendtobeatimetravellerday – archives are all about time travel, but we also have stripy scarves like Dr Who’s...



The hashtags have provided the opportunity to showcase a huge variety of archives from the BFSS, covering topics such as British Schools, international students (going back to the early 19th Century), the BFSS Foreign Correspondence, the “Slave Book” and anti-slavery, war memorials, sporting photos and memorabilia, travel, Borough Road College, Stockwell College and Saffron Walden College.

We also created our own hashtag, inspired by the virtual LEJOG (Land’s End to John O’Groats) run. Each Monday, starting in Cornwall and working our way north to the Scottish Border, we take a look at a British School. As there were no British Schools in Scotland, we’ll have to stop at Berwick upon Tweed British School. Deciding against naming this campaign #LEBUT, we have called it #VirtualBritishSchoolTour2021.

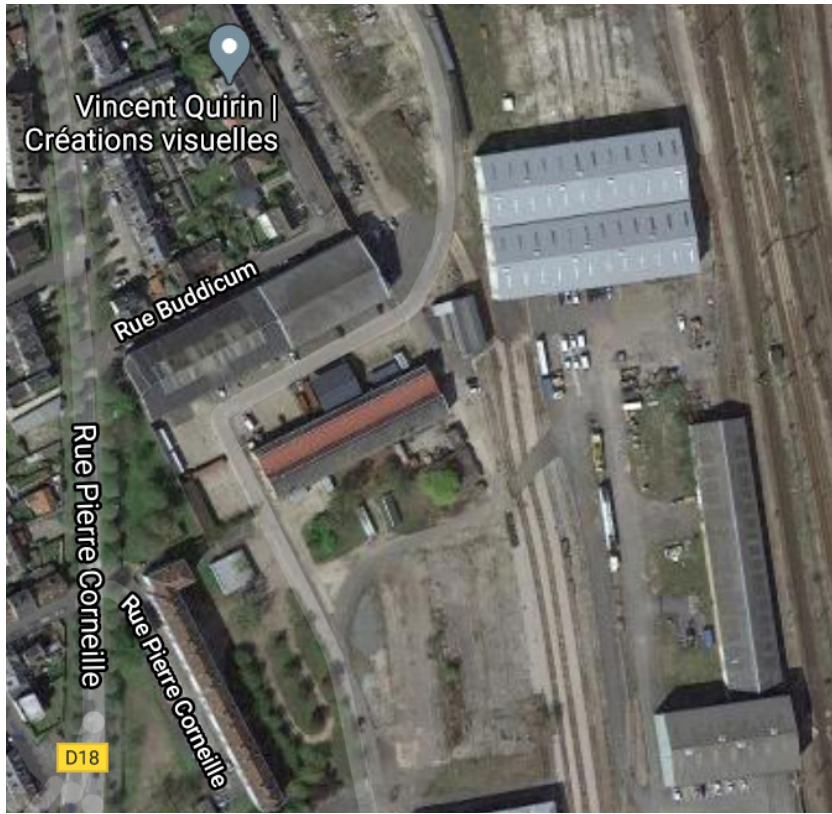
The huge amount of digitisation work that we have undertaken in recent years has been a fantastic help with regard to virtual outreach – in fact, without it, none of the above would have been possible while working from home.

A year in, we now have 332 followers, which for a little department like ours, with part-time staff, is pretty good! Our followers include other Brunel departments and individual members of staff, students and alumni, other archives, archivists, museums, both UK and abroad, academics, tourist information centres, genealogists, national and local history groups and bloggers, local newspapers, and interested members of the general public.

We are now averaging about 35 000 views of our tweets each month. It’s been a learning curve – for example, we now know that every tweet needs an eye-catching photo attached to it, otherwise it goes almost completely unnoticed. It’s hard to say what sort of tweets are the most successful, as there does not seem to be a pattern to it – it can be surprising what captures the imagination of the public. Generally, however, people seem to really like the “Then and Now” type tweets, where an historic archival photo is contrasted with a more modern one, such as this hockey tweet:



We took a conscious decision to strike a friendly, chatty tone, which we decided was important during lockdown, and which has been really well-received. Too many people think archives are not for them, and it’s important to break down such perceptions by showing people that archives (and archivists) are welcoming and open to all, and contain all sorts of interesting items, not just documents for purely academic research.



Google map showing Rue Buddicum, Sotteville-lès-Rouen, France. Note the adjacent railway sheds and lines.



ACC2021/3 PP Margaret Young. Margaret in Sudan with Save the Children, c. Aug 1952



ACC2021/3 PP Margaret Young. Margaret in Sudan with Save the Children, c. Aug 1952

Enquiries

Since last year's report, we have received 46 BFSS archive enquiries – many of which had to be dealt with either entirely 'working from home', or during the one or two days a week we managed to be onsite, during the various stages of lockdown. The fact that we were able to continue the enquiry service to such an extent is thanks to the many years of work put into the creation of online resources, web-based cataloguing, and scanning by the archives staff and volunteers.

The enquiries have included the following:

- ☐ British Schools – at Harleston, Taunton, Essex, Hertford, London, Calverley, Boscombe, Charlbury, East Ord, Pembrey Copperworks, Llanelli Copperworks, Rouen (France)
- ☐ BFSS staff including William Allen
- ☐ BFSS and anti-slavery, including the "Slave Book" and its needlework – several enquiries on this this year
- ☐ BFSS Foreign Correspondence – relating to Mexico, Honduras
- ☐ BFSS National Religious Education Centre
- ☐ BFSS and the education of girls
- ☐ Borough Road College – including arrangements in WW2, alumni from the 19th Century & 20th Century, and staff
- ☐ Stockwell College – alumnae
- ☐ Saffron Walden college – alumnae
- ☐ Bangor Normal College – staff

An interesting enquiry we received this year came from the archivist at the Bibliothèque municipale de Sotteville-lès-Rouen, in Normandy, France. The archivist requested help with research on the schooling of the children of British workers in the area.

During 19th Century, British workers and engineers settled in the Rouen area in connection with building the railway, and cotton and linen factories. In 1848, the British were 6% of the population of the city, and even had their own newspaper. To this day, some of the local population have British surnames.

Despite there being a building in Sotteville-lès-Rouen known locally as the "British Schoolroom", there was no trace of it in the BFSS archives. Using secondary sources, we then researched which companies in Sotteville were British-owned since it would have been they who set up the school, possibly with the help of the BFSS – much like the British Schools set up at copperworks and mines in Wales, for example. There might not have been a separate schoolroom at first, quite often a room in the factory would have been used. The link to British workers, and probably the school, in Sotteville-lès-Rouen, was the construction of the French railway system, specifically the company of Allcard, Buddicom and Co.

Unfortunately, a contemporary list was never compiled of all the schools in other countries, unlike the 1897 list we have for England and Wales. **Transcripts | Brunel University London:** brunel.ac.uk/about/Archives/BFSS/Transcripts

However, the BFSS archives do contain references to British Schools in Paris and documents about British Schools in Nord-Pas de Calais for children of British workers. For example, there was a British School in Croix, near Roubaix.

There are 100s of letters in the archives about British Schools in France in the 19th Century, the catalogue descriptions for which can be viewed online: **CalmView: Overview** (brunel.ac.uk): [archivesearch.brunel.ac.uk/CalmView/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=BFSS%2f1%2f5%2f1%2f1%2f4](https://brunel.ac.uk/archivesearch.brunel.ac.uk/CalmView/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=BFSS%2f1%2f5%2f1%2f1%2f4)

This enquiry is a great example of how the pandemic did not bring research, even joint research in different countries, to a halt, and how the work we have put into cataloguing online before the pandemic was a great help when it hit. Although working from home, and physically separated from colleagues for many months, this enquiry offered an enjoyable discussion with an archivist in France.

For further reading, please see the following links:

BRITISH WORKERS IN FRANCE, 1815-1848 on JSTOR: [jstor.org/stable/41416881?seq=1](https://www.jstor.org/stable/41416881?seq=1)
Allcard, Buddicom and Co – Graces Guide: gracesguide.co.uk/Allcard,_Buddicom_and_Co

Accessions

We have received three new BFSS accessions over the past year –

- ☐ A small collection of Borough Road College publications 1961 – 1965, from an alumnus
- ☐ BFSS 2019 publications – our annual deposit from BFSS HQ.
- ☐ A small collection of papers from Miss Margaret Young, a Stockwell College alumna.

The pandemic has been a huge hindrance to taking in accessions. Royal Mail deliver to the University's post room on campus, from where our internal postmen deliver items to the archives in the Old School House. This is only possible when a member of archive staff is onsite, which for a large part of the last year has not been the case. Therefore, any potential donors have been asked to hold on to their items until the situation improved, so that they did not get lost in the post, or subjected to undue amounts of damaging to-ing and fro-ing. However, the number of offers of items has

also reduced significantly in comparison to previous years, which is understandable – people cannot be expected to think of saving items for archives, or to go out to the post office, under lockdown conditions. Unfortunately, it is possible that items that might have found their way to us in normal times will have been lost during the pandemic – but this is the nature of archives – what we hold is what has survived.

One donation which we did receive, through precise arrangements which had been put in place years in advance, is the small collection of personal papers (PP) of Margaret Young a Stockwell College alumna, (ACC2021/3). Miss Young, who passed away in February 2021, was most determined that her papers should come to us after she died, so had made the necessary arrangements with us and her solicitor back in 2016. In the end, it was quite a small parcel that arrived, but interesting none the less.

Margaret attended Stockwell College from 1954 to 1956 and qualified as a teacher. Unusually for the time, she did not come straight from high school, having first qualified as a children's nurse, and worked at Great Ormond Street Hospital, as well as for the Save the Children charity in Africa. Incidentally, Save the Children was founded by another Stockwell College alumna, Eglantyne Jebb. Margaret's papers show that she went out to Khartoum in Sudan in 1952. The journey, which she recorded meticulously, took 2.5 days. The papers also include items from her teaching practice, such as sketch books and teaching aids that she created – quite a common thing to receive in donated personal papers, as the teachers spent so long handmaking their personal teaching aids, without the aid of technology, that they were loath to get rid of them in later life.

We also found a record of Margaret in the existing Stockwell College papers, including reports on her teaching practice, and a photograph.



Relocation

In last year’s Report, we reported that we were planning to move into the University Library in the heart of the campus. However, this move has now been postponed for at least a year, though we have continued to prepare for the move.

As part of the planning and preparation work, we have been reviewing closely all of our holdings, and whether we are the best place for them – best practice is that archives should be housed by the repository that is the best fit for them and where they will be most used. In full agreement with the BFSS, some BFSS archives and artefacts have been identified for relocation. Some of these items have now been deaccessioned and rehomed – full details below.

BFSS Darlington College

Our records showed that the bulk of the BFSS Darlington College’s records had been transferred to Durham County Record Office in October 1978 (Ref: E/Dar, Acc 908). We decided that we should offer the remaining boxes to Durham Record Office as we felt it would be more appropriate for all the Darlington College Archives to be in one place to aid accessibility of the archives.

The archives we offered to Durham included:

- Opening Ceremony – invitations, acceptances (1872, 1876)
- Staff Correspondence / College administration (1868-1975)
- College Committee minutes (1940-1961, 1965-1975)
- University of Durham Institute of Education handbooks (1948-1977)
- Estates papers, including plans (1870s-1981)
- Development plans (1937-1971)
- Student Administration – including applications, testimonials, files, and exam results (1870s-1978)
- Human Resources papers – including academic staff files (1960s-1970s)
- College Nursery School
- Printed items, including prospectuses, Old Student Association newsletters (1948-1972)
- Selection of photos

Durham gladly accepted the offer and the archives (63 boxes and 5 tubes of rolled plans) were transferred and received safely on 26 November 2020.

Saffron Walden Museum

The following artefacts were gifted to Saffron Walden Museum.

- 1) Framed etching of George Stacey Gibson – Founder of Saffron Walden College 1884. Artist – L Dewell Henstone Etching
- 2) Framed photographic portrait of Miss F Steele – Principal of Saffron Walden College 1884-1890.
- 3) Framed photographic portrait of Miss JM Dunlop – Principal of Saffron Walden College 1891-1922
- 4) Framed photographic portrait of Miss AE Varley – Principal of Saffron Walden College 1922-1933
- 5) Framed photographic portrait of Mrs Brazendale – Matron of Saffron Walden College 1891-1897.
- 6) Framed portrait of Harry Hayes – 1891-1924 – succeeded his brother George Hayes as Headmaster of Boys British School, Saffron Walden. Oil on canvas
- 7) Framed drawing of Saffron Walden College, n.d. (duplicate item)

Saffron Walden Museum was pleased to accept the offer and the items were transferred and safely received on 16 March 2021.

Silver Tea and Coffee Service

Another item we identified was a silver teapot, coffee pot, milk jug and two handled large “cups”. The inscription read “Tea and coffee set. From the students of the Bangor Normal College to Mr and Mrs John Thomas on their marriage 1889”.

In 1889, John Thomas was the Mathematics tutor at Bangor Normal College (founded with support from the BFSS) in North Wales. Catherine was the college matron. John seems to have been extremely well-thought of by his students which is shown in the extract from the College’s centenary booklet below (and they generally had a soft-spot for college matrons too), which explains the wonderful wedding gift of the silver service.

‘Whilst appreciating his ability and attainments and culture, we especially set a high value upon his ... general kindness with which, during the thirty-six years of his connection with the College, he ever devoted to its service. He co-operated in the happiest manner with his colleagues and left upon all the students the happiest impressions...Although he was of rather forbidding appearance, his even disposition won for him the admiration of generations of students. It is worthy of note that in the many accounts of their



college days written by former students we have failed to find a single adverse comment on “Old Factors,” as he was fondly called”. [Bangor Normal College’s centenary booklet of 1958].

Research showed that John, born in 1834, had connections to the BFSS during his childhood as a pupil at Blaenau Ffestiniog British School.

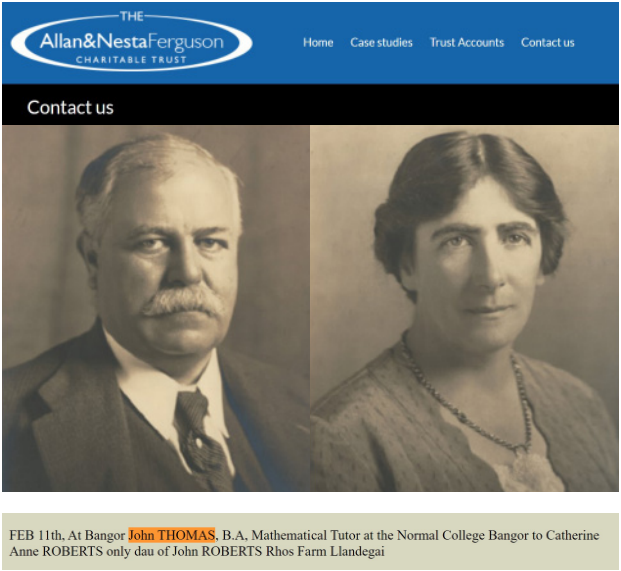


Blaenau Ffestiniog British School. 39 A470 – Google Maps

The former British School is the building on the right of the photo, with the blue door (one at each end, for boys and girls). The school was built in 1846. This is slate-mining country, and a steam railway Home – Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways (festrail.co.uk), built to transport the slate from the quarries, still runs behind the row of buildings on the left of the photo. In the 20th century the former school became a drill hall, and its last use was as a Masonic Lodge.

John was also a pupil-teacher (teaching assistant) there from approximately the ages of 14 to 18. He then moved to London in 1854 to train as a teacher at the BFSS’s Borough Road College. Once qualified, he returned to Wales and taught at Llan Ffestiniog British School for two years, before returning to Blaenau Ffestiniog British School as Headmaster. After a few years teaching he went to Bala College to study for an external degree of the University of London, graduating in Mathematics in 1863. In January 1864 John became Mathematics tutor at Bangor Normal College, and became Vice-Principal in 1891. He retired due to failing eyesight in 1899, and died in February 1901. Students, at their own request, carried his coffin to the funeral. (Educational Record XV June 1901 pp 592-3).

Catherine, nee Roberts, was the daughter of a local farmer. She was twenty years John’s junior. The couple had three children; two daughters, Nesta and Idwen, and a son, Meirion, who was only six years old when John died in 1901. Nesta gained a BSc in Botany,



one of the first female students to graduate from the University of London. Idwen attended the Royal College of Music in London, and Meirion gained an MA from Cambridge and became a Professor in Botany at Newcastle, and a Fellow of the Royal Society. old-merseytimes.co.uk/marriages1889.html

After John’s death Catherine took in student lodgers to supplement her income, and both sisters married students. Nesta married Allan Ferguson (PhD Physics). Their son John Ferguson was the founding Dean of the Open University, and Chair of the BFSS in the 1970s – 80s. He and his wife also founded a charity, the Allan and Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust. fergusontrust.co.uk

Idwen married Henry Banister, who became a lecturer in Psychology at Cambridge. Their son, Stephen Michael Banister, cousin of John Ferguson, was Secretary of the BFSS from 1978 to 1996.

So, we have not one, but two possible paths for the silver service getting into the BFSS archives! Having also traced descendants (also academics), of John Ferguson and Stephen Banister, the silver tea service was presented to Professor David Bannister in December 2020.

This story of John and Catherine Thomas and their descendants is a perfect example of what the BFSS achieves through educational opportunity for all. British schools were often the first schools in the village or area. Blaenau Ffestiniog is remote, even today. If a child did not live close enough to a school to walk to it, quite simply, they would not get an education. The BFSS had six schools in the area around Blaenau Ffestiniog, one specifically called Festiniog [sic] Slate Quarries, built in 1845 with space for over 700 boys and girls. **Transcript of the BFSS British Schools List 1897 (brunel.ac.uk): brunel.ac.uk/about/Archives/Documents/Excel/British-Schools-1897.xlsx**

The opportunity for education and social mobility the BFSS offered was huge – a serious matter, given that the sole industry in the area was slate mining, and the life expectancy of a Welsh quarryman was only 47 years. In this case, attendance at a British school by a boy in a remote slate-mining village in the 1840s led to his son, daughters, grandchildren and great-grandchildren all gaining degrees, and several becoming professors.

In the 19th Century there were approximately 4,000 British Schools in England and Wales. How many families had the lives of their future generations changed through the chance to attend a British School?

Looking forward - 2021-2022

In the coming year, we will

- Continue to digitise material - to be uploaded in our CALM catalogue and to use on social media
- Continue cataloguing Stockwell College archives
- Continue to prepare for our move

As mentioned previously, we will be re-opening the Archive Reading Room to researchers. We also intend to restart our successful student volunteering/work experience programme.

Circular D.

EDUCATION COMMISSION.

Form I.—By the term "a School" is meant a distinct group of scholars under the instruction of a head master or head mistress, and not a separate school building.

Form II.—If an Educational establishment consists of a boys' school, a girls' school, and an infants' school, under three separate head teachers, a copy of this circular should be filled up by each head teacher.

Form III.—The expression "belonging to the school," means all who are receiving instruction at the time the return is made, and all who are absent for a limited period consequent on illness, bad weather, or other circumstances.

Form IV.—If the Evening School is held only in the winter months, the answers should refer to the attendance of its last session.

Form V.—In answering questions numbered 21 and 22, it is advisable to begin with statements for the years 1905 and 1907.

L.—SCHOOL.

1. State the name of (a) the county and (b) the town or place in which the school is situated.

2. State the name of the school.

3. State the population of the town or place.

4. By what name is the school generally known?

5. Was the school building here (a) erected or (b) enlarged since 1851, and (c) what number of children is it calculated to accommodate?

6. What has been the increase of accommodation since 1851?

7. Is the school situated in (a) an agricultural district, (b) a mining district, or (c) a manufacturing district?

8. Is the school for boys, girls, or infants, or is it a mixed school?

II.—SCHOOL.

9. State the total number of scholars belonging to the school under the heads of—

(a) Boys in the week-day school.

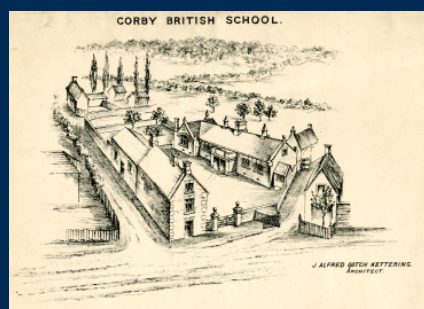
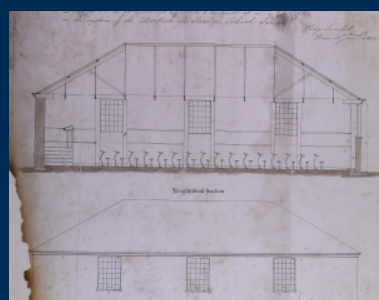
(b) Girls in the week-day school.

10. If there is an evening school, state the total number of scholars belonging to it under the heads of—

(a) Boys in the evening school?

(b) Girls in the evening school?

11. How many of the scholars belonging to the evening school (a) have never attended a week-day school, and (b) have attended a week-day school five years?



SCHOOL RETURN.

Name and Situation of School..... *St. Philip's - Bristol.*

Name of Teacher; and when and where trained..... *Mr. Philip's - Bristol.*

Number of Pupil Teachers or other assistants..... *1 Assistant - Miss Phillips*

Name of Secretary or other correspondent..... *Rev. J. P. Sturt - Bristol.*

Class of School (whether boys, girls, infants; mixed boys & girls, or mixed girls & infants)..... *Boys - Girls - Boys & Girls*

Capacity of School..... *400 children*

Date of Government inspection (if any)..... *Last date - March 1869*

Average attendance..... *for past month 298*

Scale of Fees..... *St. 2d. - Infants 1d.*

Ages of Children:—This answer is approximate

under six years	100
from six to eight	30
from eight to ten	30
from ten to twelve	60
above twelve years	40

Number present at date..... *394*

Signed..... *Mr. P. Sturt*

Date..... *October 28th 1869*

Remarks or further information on next page.
This school was commenced by me in August 1864.



Brunel University London Archives,
Old School House, 1 Hillingdon Road,
Uxbridge, Middlesex UB10 0AA
01895 265911