Archives & Records Association
Cumann Cartlann agus Taifead
Ireland/Éire



UCD Archives: P263-226; Medical illustration depicting the formation of a new nose by the Indian method. This man had lost his nose due to lupoid ulceration. This can be seen as an early form of plastic surgery. The illustration is dated April 1857 and the attending surgeon was Edward Hamilton (1824-1899).

Inside This Issue

P.2 A Word from the Chair
P.4 ARA Archive Volunteering Award for 2021
P.5 Diaries of Seán Lester, available online at Dublin City University Library
P.7 Digitisation grant awarded to UCD Archives
P.9 Simple Care of Collections for Archivists - Tracing paper
P.12 ARA Diversity Allies
P. 14 Irish Archival Terms
P. 16 Irish Archives Resource...Coming soon

A Word from the Chair

Welcome to this year's Spring Newsletter.

It is difficult to believe that we have been in the grips of a global pandemic for over a year now. For many of us, our home and working lives continue to look substantially different from what went before, and opportunities so meet with family, friends and colleagues have been limited. Like many organisations, ARA, Ireland did not hold an Annual General Meeting as normal last year as we were all in the midst of locking down, and at the time remained hopeful life would return to normal fairly soon and plans for group events would simply be delayed. Unfortunately this was not to be, however, as we are now all 'old hands' in the world of Zoom we held his year's AGM online on 30 March, and I very much enjoyed seeing some of you in person, albeit virtually.

The AGM was preceded by an informative and insightful session delivered by our regional Diversity and Inclusion Allies, Lorraine Bourke and Alicia Conley. These new roles were created in 2020 to support the Archives and Records Association (UK and Ireland) priority of making archives more representative of wider society - both as places to work, and places where we can explore the differing perspectives and experiences of a wide range of individuals and communities. If you want to find out more about the role of the Diversity and Inclusion Allies or discuss how you can make positive changes within your own workplace, I would encourage you to get in touch with Alicia and Lorraine. Contact details and short biographies for the allies and all ARA Ireland committee members can be found on the ARA Ireland website.

In October 2020, the Archives and Records Association, UK and Ireland launched a skills survey to better understand the changing needs of the sector and inform future programming. At the request of the ARA, Ireland committee, specific questions were included to ascertain satisfaction around training provision, and how to better support members during the pandemic and in normal times. ARA, Ireland's Skills Survey Task Force have been coordinating and collating survey responses from ARA members and non-members across the island of Ireland, the results of which are now available on the ARA, Ireland website. Some very useful feedback was provided around a number of areas, which the committee will consider going forward. In total, 65 respondents identified as being from Ireland, 80% of whom were satisfied with the training opportunities provided in the region. In order to build on this successful result, we are currently seeking to appoint a second Training Officer. This is an interesting and diverse brief whereby you can widen your network and pick up some really useful transferable skills, so if anyone is interested please contact our Training Officer Fionnuala Parfrey who will be happy to talk to you about the role.

ARA Ireland continues to advocate in respect of the interests of the sector and members. This includes issuing a statement to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth in October 2020, highlighting concerns around the management of the records of the Commission of Investigation on Mother and Baby Homes and incoming Bill; and issuing further correspondence in February of this year to relevant Ministers, the Chair of the Commission and the National Archives, regarding concerns over the destruction of survivor testimonies and oral recordings provided to the Commission.

The regional committee continues to work with ARA UK and Ireland to update communications channels and build upon web content, including the launch of a new Blog on the ARA Ireland website. I would encourage anyone to contact Communications Officer Niamh Ni Charra with contributions to the Blog, which is a means to share information and new developments, and highlight the fantastic work going on across all disciplines within the sector.

On behalf of ARA, Ireland, I would like to conclude by expressing our deepest sympathies to the family, friends and colleagues of Gregory O'Connor, who passed away on 31 December 2020. Gregory had worked at the National Archives as an archivist for over 30 years, where his affable nature and generosity in sharing his considerable archival knowledge has been highlighted by those who knew him, and will be sadly missed by researchers and colleagues alike.

Janet Hancock

Chair, ARA, Ireland

ARA Archive Volunteering Award for 2021

Sally Bevan, London Metropolitan Archives

This 2021 award will go ahead as previous years and we hope it will be an opportunity to thank our volunteers for all their continued support and work over this very difficult time.

This year in particular we welcome projects which demonstrate how archives have supported volunteers through the past year and have adapted projects to suit their circumstances whether remotely or in new ways of working together…. but apart.

Winners will have a national platform to celebrate their volunteers' contribution to the service and gain publicity for their archive's role in supporting individuals and community through volunteering programmes.

Note that the timescale for applications has changed and the deadline date for 2021 will be 7th May 2021. Awards will be announced during Volunteers week 1-7th June.

2020 Award Winner was West Yorkshire Archive Service Anne Lister Diary Digitisation and Transcription Project:

"The panel really liked WYAS's Anne Lister Diary Digitisation and Transcription Project because of its clear focus, and how well planned it is. It is an excellent example of a remote volunteer project which enables both local and international engagement. It has attracted an audience who may never have used archives before, as well as raising the profile of the archive service.

It was very interesting to see applications where the project had focused on remote volunteering which is a relatively novel concept, or projects which adapted quickly to remote volunteering in the light of COVID-19."

The Archives and Records Association seeks to celebrate the role of volunteers in supporting archive services, and to collect good practice case studies to inform the wider sector. This award is a key strand of the work of ARA's Volunteering in Archives, Action Plan, bringing to life the recommendations the ARA report Managing Volunteering in Archives. The award is also supported by The National Archives, the Welsh Government's Museums, Arts, Archives and Libraries Division, and the Scottish Council on Archives.

This award is open to archives across the United Kingdom and Ireland. Awards will be publicised widely throughout and beyond the sector.

A short nomination form is available from the ARA website
http://www.archives.org.uk/careers/volunteering/volunteering-awards.html
and organisations may nominate projects, or ongoing volunteer programmes, that ran during 2020/2021.

Nominations will be assessed against three key outcomes:
A) Impact on volunteers
B) Impact on service
C) Wider impact

Completed nomination forms need to be returned to volunteeringaward@archives.org.uk by **7th May 2021.**

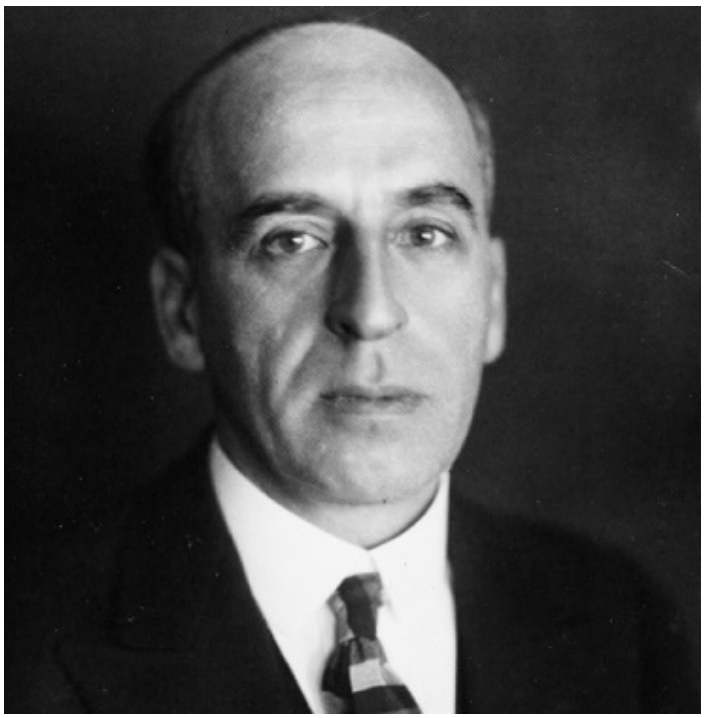
If you have any queries about the award please contact Sally Bevan, Volunteering Awards Administrator, (020 7332 3820) or via volunteeringaward@archives.org.uk

Diaries of Seán Lester, former High Commissioner of the League of Nations available online at Dublin City University Library

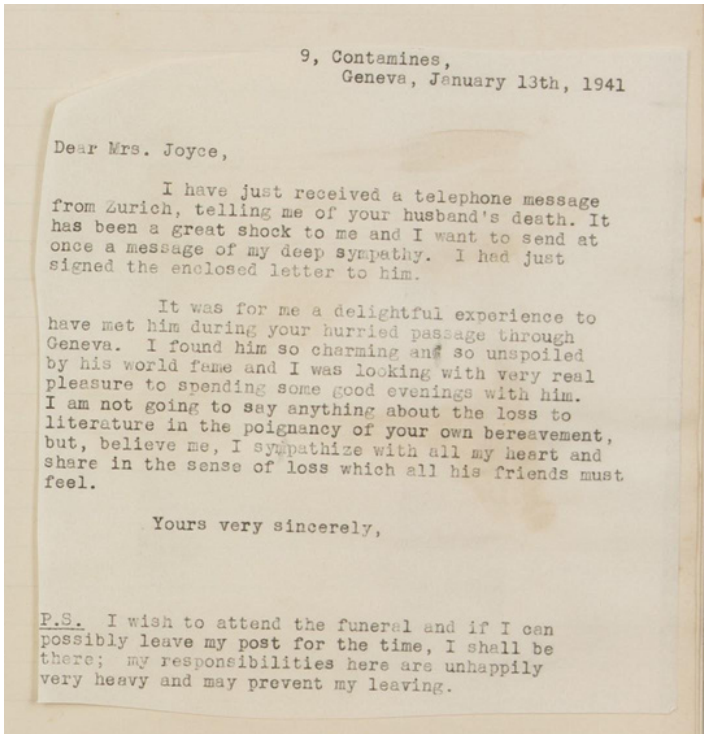
Killian Downing, Archivist, Dublin City University Library

The diaries of the former Irish diplomat, Seán Lester, are now accessible to the public online, thanks to a digitisation project at Dublin City University Library. Lester's personal papers cover his years as a High Commissioner of the League of Nations in the Free City of Danzig (now Gdańsk) in the mid-1930s, and subsequently in Geneva during the League's remaining years.

The collection contains diaries kept by Lester from 1935 to 1942, containing handwritten and typed notes, photographs, correspondence and codewords . During World War 2, Lester buried the diaries in a metal case near the League of Nations headquarters in Geneva. After the war ended, he retrieved the case and returned with the diaries to Ireland where this collection was subsequently donated to DCU Library by Patricia Kilroy and Ann Gorski, daughters of Seán Lester.



Seán Lester was one of Ireland's most important international diplomats



9, Contamines,
Geneva, January 13th, 1941

Dear Mrs. Joyce,

I have just received a telephone message from Zurich, telling me of your husband's death. It has been a great shock to me and I want to send at once a message of my deep sympathy. I had just signed the enclosed letter to him.

It was for me a delightful experience to have met him during your hurried passage through Geneva. I found him so charming and so unspoiled by his world fame and I was looking with very real pleasure to spending some good evenings with him. I am not going to say anything about the loss to literature in the poignancy of your own bereavement, but, believe me, I sympathize with all my heart and share in the sense of loss which all his friends must feel.

Yours very sincerely,

P.S. I wish to attend the funeral and if I can possibly leave my post for the time, I shall be there; my responsibilities here are unhappily very heavy and may prevent my leaving.

Copy letter from Seán Lester to Nora Barnacle on the death on James Joyce, 13 January 1941, DCU Special Collections and Archives IE DCUA C1/9/c1_9_0041

Correspondence between James Joyce and Seán Lester is among the highlights of this collection as Lester assisted the Joyce family by obtaining a visa for their daughter Lucia, after officials refused to issue her with a visa. On the 80th anniversary of James Joyce's death, one particularly poignant letter stands out written by Lester to Nora Barnacle, Joyce's wife, lamenting the passing of Joyce and his literary legacy to the world. Lester remarks in a copy letter

"I found him so charming and so unspoiled by his world fame and I was looking with very real pleasure to spending some good evenings with him"

The Seán Lester diaries provide a fascinating insight into historical events during this period, including the rise of the National Socialist German Workers' party in Danzig, the increasing persecution of Jews, the failed attempts to appease Hitler in the lead up to war, and the eventual outbreak of the Second World War.

The Lester Diaries are available through AtoM, a web-based, open-source application for standards-based archival description.

.



Seán Lester's diaries inside the metal case he buried them in during WW2

Digitisation Grant Awarded to UCD Archives

Kate Manning, Principal Archivist, UCD Archives



The Royal Irish Academy has awarded a Kevin B. Nowlan Digitisation Grant of €9,853 to UCD Archives for a project entitled Drawing Disease: Nineteenth-Century Medical Illustrations from Richmond Hospital, Dublin. Archivist Meadhbh Murphy prepared the grant and will work with Audrey Drohan, Digital Library Manager, UCD Digital Library, to put the entire collection of nineteenth-century medical illustrations online.

The collection was transferred to UCD Archives in January 2012 by the UCD School of Medicine and Medical Science and was accessioned as UCDA P263 Richmond Hospital Medical Illustrations. It consists of medical illustrations dating from c1828-c1870 and two catalogues of the drawings. An earlier grant awarded by the Wellcome Trust to a collaboration between UCD Archives and the UCD Centre for the History of Medicine in Ireland, enabled project archivist, Lorraine McLoughlin, to digitise the bulk of the 1,000 drawings and to prepare an initial catalogue. A complete descriptive catalogue has since been prepared by Meadhbh Murphy.

The project proposes to complete the digitisation of the illustrations (there are 321 outstanding from the existing 1,000 images), digitise both catalogues and create two open access digital platforms, one in UCD Digital Library and one in the DRI, using the metadata in the completed descriptive catalogue.

The illustrations depict venereal, digestive, carcinogenic diseases (and much more besides). They are beautifully drawn, if sometimes unappealing to look at! Some of the diseases are now uncommon in developed societies but may persist in other parts of the world, or are otherwise unusual, and may prove to be unrecognisable to physicians with modern training. Many illustrations have accompanying case studies shedding light on the illustrated disease, the treatment used, and on the patients themselves.

Free online delivery of this material will enable broad access to an important collection.



P263-245
This medical illustration depicts a man inflicted with morbus Addison or Addison's disease. This is an endocrine disorder and can result in darkening of the skin. This was drawn in July 1859 and the attending surgeon was Samuel Gordon (1816-1898).



P263-181
This medical illustration depicts a man who is 35 years of age and is suffering from syphilitic rupia.

Simple Care of Collections for Archivists - Tracing paper

Zoe Reid, National Archives of Ireland

I gave a lecture recently, and one of the illustrated slides that I showed provoked the following question:

'*In your presentation this evening, you had an image of tracing paper which was brittle pieces had fallen off it. There is tracing paper like this where I work. ---I was just wondering how should this best be packaged /stored when it is in such brittle condition?*'



Damaged tracing paper of an architectural plan

In this short article, I will do my best to answer that, as many collections will contain drawings on tracing paper, a fragile paper that can be difficult to handle and store.

What is tracing paper?

Tracing paper was initially developed for architects and design engineers to make fast copies of plans and building elevations and drawings. It was favoured as tracing paper offers an attractive hard, smooth working surface. During the paper manufacture, the paper fibres (cellulose) are highly beaten so that the sheet has had virtually all the air removed from the internal structure of the paper fibres. Because light falling on tracing paper does not bounce back nor scatter, it passes directly through the sheet, and it appears transparent. Additional transparency was achieved by impregnating the thin paper with linseed or poppy oil and resins, such as Canada balsam or Dammar. When exposed to air, these drying compounds produced translucent paper. However, as the papers ages, it tends to become yellow and very brittle.

What condition will tracing paper be when you find it?

Tracing paper items suffer much the same physical and chemical damage as documents. Some more specific types of damage are cracks and breaks, especially along folds. If the tracing paper plans or drawings were rolled for storage and not protected with a covering paper, the edges could often be crumpled, crushed, and torn.

The conservation treatment of transparent papers is complicated because of the very nature of this media. Most tracing papers are do not react well to a lot of moisture which means that traditional repair methods such as using wheat starch paste and Japanese tissue are not suitable, as the repair is too damp. Also, due to the tracing paper's transparent nature, these repairs can be evident and distracting. A range of alternative repair techniques that a conservator can use to stabilize the damage in these drawings is to use tissue pre-coated with an adhesive, which needs very little moisture to create a bond between the tissue and the tracing paper.

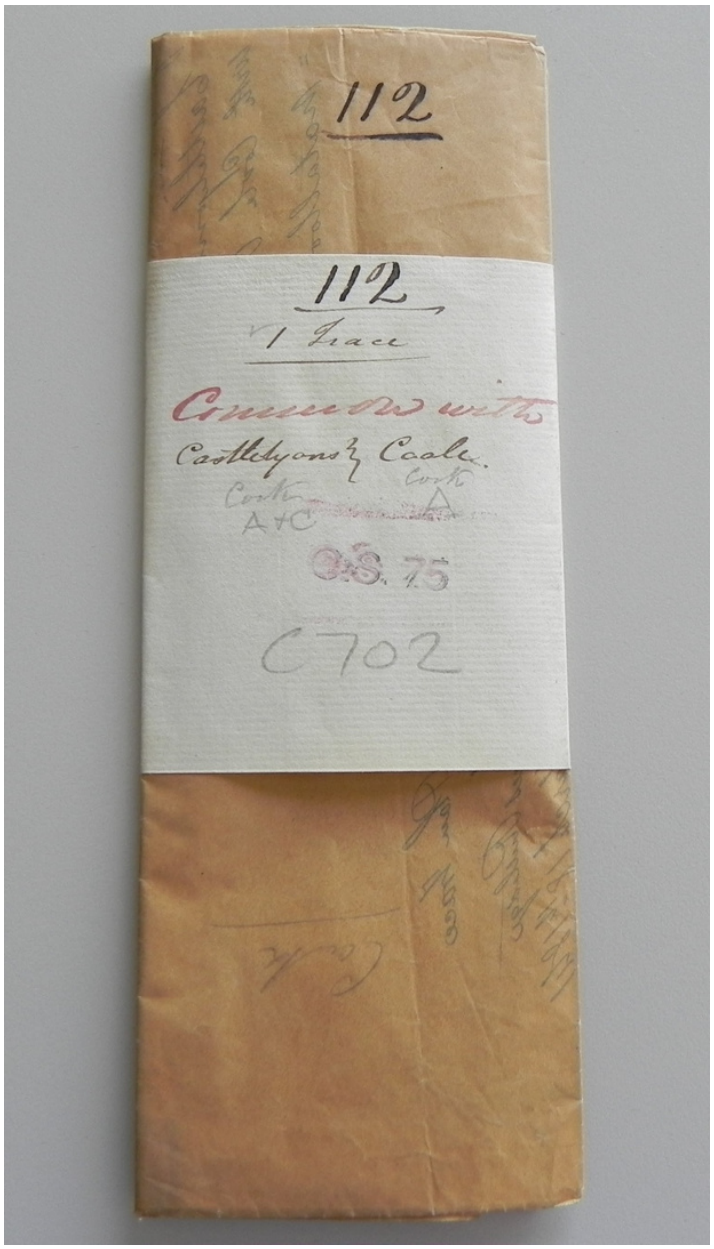
What can you do if you don't have access to a conservator?

How the documents are handled and accessed is essential. Tracing paper drawings are often brittle and highly vulnerable to further damage through handling. Often for storage, the documents were folded.

As an archivist, you have more experience handling historic documents than the average researcher, so if you can carry out some preparation work in advance, you could avoid potential damage. (1)

Look carefully at the document before you start. Tracing paper tends not to be very flexible and might resist

being opened out entirely in one go. The solution might be to open out one fold then let the document 'rest' inthat position with some light weights. As it 'rests,' the paper will naturally absorb moisture from the room's relative humidity. After an hour, or two open out another fold and repeat until the whole document is opened out. Time and patience can be beneficial here.



Folded OS survey plan on tracing paper

To unfold the tracing paper drawing, remember the following are essential:

• Clean hands- no gloves. It helps to have a gentle touch when handling the tracing paper.

• A sizeable clean working surface, which is clear of any clutter.

• A supply of Mylar (2-sides open, one long and one short) or white or blue/grey archival paper sheets folded in half to protect the tracing once unfolded.



Unfolding the tracing and housing in Mylar

If the tracing paper is in bits- literally lots of bits, keep the pieces together. If you can set them out on a sheet of white paper on a table in the order that they should be and take a photograph, you will have a copy to make available to researchers without handling and putting at risk the original.

Both Mylar and white or grey/blue archive paper can be effective housing enclosures for tracing paper drawings. If using archival paper, you can make a simple folder by folding a sheet in half to ensure that the tracing paper is protected.

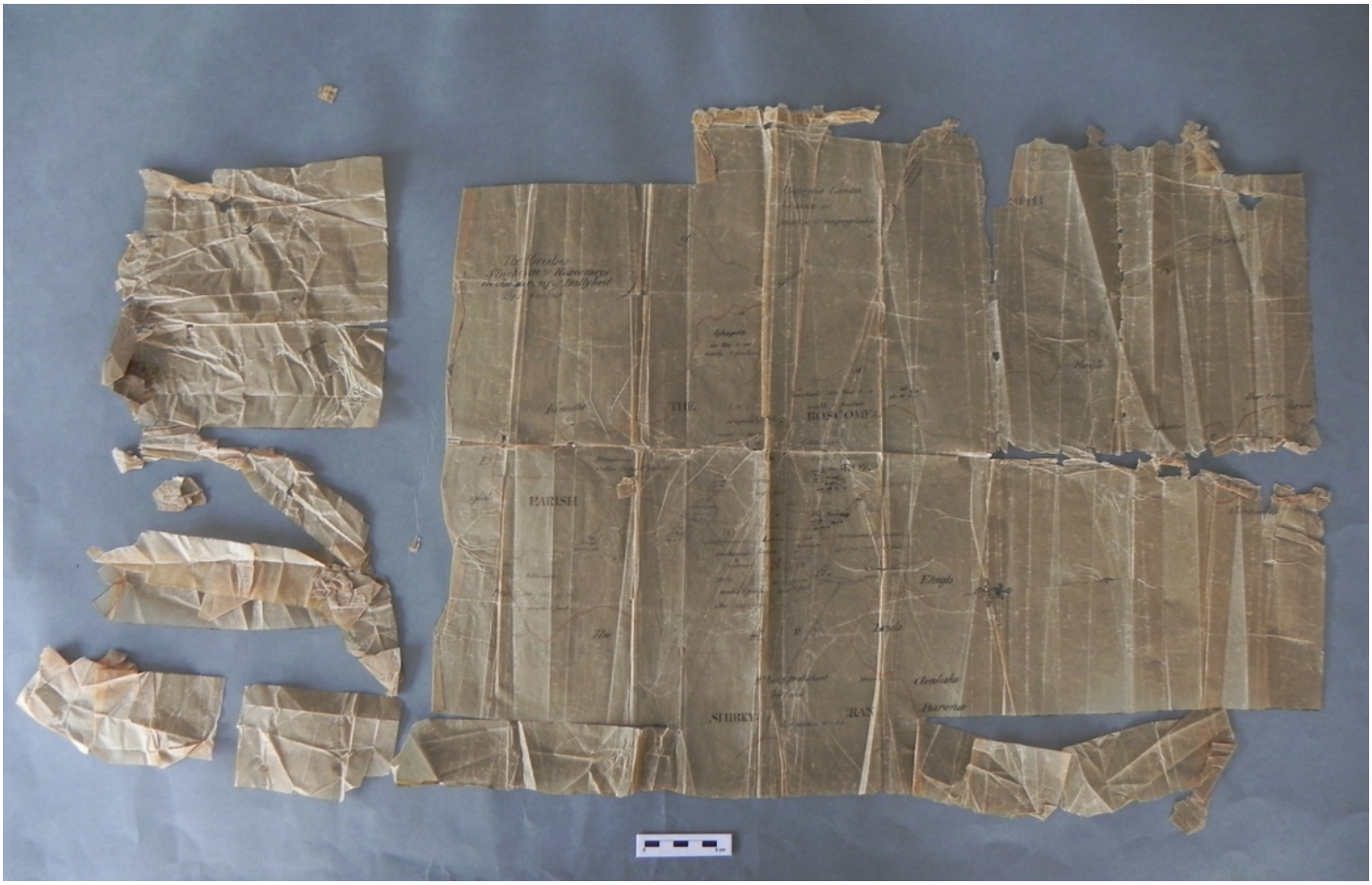
More information on National Archives conservation projects that have involved the treatment of tracing papers can be found in the links below (2,3).

Endnotes

1. Reid, Z. 'Flat out - how to unfold archival documents safely.' ARA, Ireland Newsletter, Spring 2020

2.https://naiconservator.tumblr.com/post/616642844449505280/historic-tracing-paper-maps-from-the-quit-rent

3.http://centenaries.nationalarchives.ie/centenaries/plic/Unfolding%20tracing%20paper%20PLIC_1.pdf



Very badly damaged tracing paper plan; Down Survey collection QRO_DS_1_15_2_6_3_BT_01 (2)

ARA Diversity & Inclusion

ARA Diversity Allies

Alicia Conley and Lorraine Bourke

Hello from Alicia and Lorraine, your new Diversity and Inclusion Allies representing ARA Ireland. In this article, we are going to introduce ourselves, offer an explanation of the role and purpose of the Allies, and discuss our goals for the upcoming year, specifically in the context of archives and records management on this island.

Alicia is the Archivist at Belvedere College in Dublin. Originally from the US, she moved to Ireland in 2017 to enrol in the Archives masters at UCD and has been working in various archives around Dublin since completing the course. She joined the Allies to advocate for increased visibility and attention to the needs of diverse members of the records sector, in particular the LGBTI+ community.

For the last six years, Lorraine has worked as Head of Private Records at the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI). She joined the Allies to develop her understanding of diversity and because she believes that it is crucial that archival institutions respect and reflect the diverse nature of society.

The mission of the Allies is reflected in the following statement from our Terms of Reference: "The Diversity Allies will work with the ARA Board to promote best practice in relation to diversity and inclusion across the archive and record keeping sector, forging new paths for positive change."

In order to accomplish this goal, the Allies were established in the summer of 2020 to channel renewed focus on the issue of diversity in the recordkeeping sector. Over the past eight months, we have identified several practical ways to work toward forging new paths in the diversity space.

First, Allies are to undertake three diversity and inclusion training courses per year and provide feedback on each course. Allies will then encourage and support members of the record keeping sector, particularly those in their nations or regions, to undertake the courses as well.

Allies will also join smaller working groups that reflect their specific areas of focus. Lorraine has joined the Decolonising Catalogues working group which is looking at terminology and the use of language in catalogue records. Alicia has joined the Collecting Policies and Collection Representation working group to focus on diversifying collecting practices in archives. We hope to use the knowledge we are gaining from these groups to encourage change in these areas.

The group is supported by the ARA Board and run by board members Jenny Moran, Diversity Portfolio Holder, and Karyn Williamson, Groups and Sections Portfolio Holder. Jenny and Karyn have worked extensively with the Allies to get the group off the ground and identify the most effective ways to create change.

The Allies meet over Zoom once a month and have a dedicated Slack channel to communicate to the group at large and within our working groups. Meetings always include an update from the ARA Board, news from nations and regions and updates from the working

groups.

The Allies are currently considering how best to report to the ARA Board, as the traditional reporting structure might not fit with the needs of our group. Over time we will receive funding from the board for special projects and events, and it is important we have a clear accountability structure in place before receiving any monetary support.

Communication with members of the wider records sector is a critical part of the mission of the Allies. Currently the best place to receive news and updates is the "Archl've Discovered" section of the Explore Your Archive Website, where the group will be publishing a monthly blog to communicate our ongoing work. Over time we hope to expand our communications channels, to include a dedicated section on the ARA website and potential social media accounts.

Each nation/region within ARA has at least one Ally assigned as a point of contact. We are delighted to be representing the island of Ireland and hope to work with ARAI as well as wider members of the sector to best support the work of diversity and inclusion on this island.

In terms of the issues we are facing, a 2016 ARA/CILLIP report identified significant problems around diversity and inclusion in the UK and Ireland archives workforce, including a low ethnic diversity rate, significant gender pay gap and aging workforce. In addition, archival collections often centre an elite, white narrative while not acknowledging other histories, and archives users face educational and social barriers to accessing material.

Our first goal for the year is to engage in conversation with members to identify issues and needs around diversity in the sector and ways we can address them. We want to hear from you as to what areas we should focus on and how best we can support change.
We also plan to hold trainings later in the year focusing on diversifying collecting practices and updating the language used in cataloguing around sensitive topics.

We want to make our work as responsive and supportive as possible to the needs of those in the records sector. Please contact Lorraine at **lorrainebourke1000@gmail.com** and/or Alicia at **aconley28@gmail.com** with any thoughts or feedback you may have. We look forward to hearing from you and to working with you over the coming year.

Irish Archival Terms

Over 200 Archival Terms Officially Designated in the Irish Language

Niamh Ní Charra, NUIG

A project instigated by Niamh Ní Charra, National University of Ireland, Galway (**NUIG**), and led by Ní Charra and Niamh McDonnell, National Archives of Ireland (**NAI**), in liaison with **An Coiste Téarmaíochta**, has finally come to fruition this month with the introduction and recognition of over 200 archival terms into the Irish language. The project, supported by both NUIG and NAI and welcomed by **An Coiste Téarmaíochta** [the Irish language Terminology Committee], was initially begun in February of 2020 before being delayed due to the current pandemic.

Ní Charra is the project manager and project archivist for the Conradh na Gaeilge [The Gaelic League] collection in NUIG since 2018. Early on in the process of cataloguing this iconic collection, which is predominantly in the Irish language, she flagged issues with bilingual listing due to the absence of official archival terminology in the Irish language. With the support of NUIG, Ní Charra began to investigate further. "I was using the excellent Irish language translation department here in NUIG to translate the archival listings I was sending them, while I continued with the archival work. The contract for archiving this amazing collection is finite and my time was/is better spent on the actual archival work, while leaving the translation to the language experts."

However, Ní Charra, who speaks Irish herself, began to realise that since the Irish language is an incredibly rich


Conradh na Gaeilge

Craobh Pháirce Tuaid - Conradh

Is ionann beirt gan teanga le beirt gan cíos

"Ní Éireannach do Gaedilgeoir"

Tugtar le fios gur ball de Chonradh na Gaedilge

Máire Ní Raghallaigh ón bhliadhna 1904-'05

agus an mbeirt mar sin atá d'fiachaibh

cúis Chonradh na Gaedilge do chur an aghaidh in

gach slighe is féidir leo

Ruin-cléirigh

Conradh na Gaeilge membership card, NUIG, G60/4/6/1

one, and without official terms, translators are left with multiple options for some of the terms and little guidance on which one to choose. In addition, other terms simply did not have any Irish language equivalent, or the specific meaning as it related to the archival context was being lost. Ní Charra reached out to Niamh McDonnell at the National Archives of Ireland (NAI), to see if they had any official terminology. While the NAI had indeed had archival terms translated into Irish, these too were simply translations rather than terms officially designated in Irish.

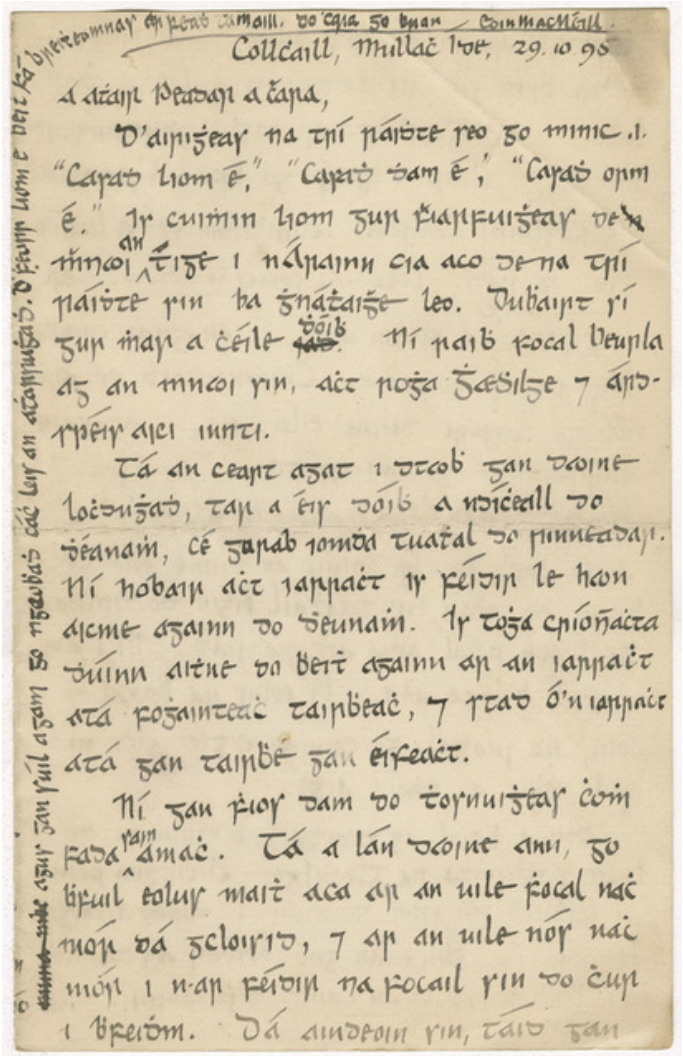
Irish language archive collections exist all over the country and archival listings have been translated into



Poster warning of the dangers of diphtheria to children, NAI, JUS 3/90/3/52

Irish on an ad hoc basis, as needed. Until Ní Charra started drawing them all together, and recognising the problem at hand, the inconsistencies between listings, from an archival standards point of view, had not been recognised. With the support of both NUIG and NAI, Ní Charra and McDonnell set about having this omission rectified. This began with reaching out to **An Coiste Téarmaíochta** [the Irish language Terminology Committee].

An Coiste Téarmaíochta is the language council that chooses Irish terminology for words and new concepts. Founded in 1968, it initially was a division of the Department of Education until 1999, when it became part of Foras na Gaeilge, an all-island public body established under the **Good Friday Agreement** to promote the Irish language. It consists of approximately 20 members from universities, state bodies and language bodies, and experts on various matters, and meets on a monthly basis. The Coiste immediately recognised the need for Irish language archival



Letter to an tAthair Peadar [Ua Laoghaire] from Eoin Mac Néill, 1895 NUIG, G60/44



Banc Taisce an Phoist poster in Irish encouraging people to open savings accounts in their post local office NAI, JUS 3/90/3/52

terminology to be officially designated, and were fully supportive of the project.

Over a number of months, Ní Charra and McDonnell, with the assistance of colleagues in both NUIG and NAI, compiled over 200 archival terms to be considered by the committee, along with their definitions to aid the committee in understanding their true meaning in the archival context. Ní Charra also listed out all of the translations which had been provided to-date, flagging terms which had received multiple translations and others where none existed. She then liaised with Jenny Ní Mhaoileoin of An Coiste Téarmaíochta, answering any queries the committee had in relation to particular terms (with the assistance of McDonnell), and flagging any translations which came back which did not quite convey the archival context.

Earlier this month, the task was completed. This resource, in pdf form, will now be added to the ARA Ireland website, free to download. Ní Charra is also liaising with Dr Luciana Duranti to have the Irish

language terms added to the ICA's Multilingual Archival Terminology Database, joining another 26 languages, and has been designated the Irish language administrator for the ICA database.

Both Niamh Ní Charra and Niamh McDonnell are extremely grateful to their colleagues in both institutions for their assistance, to the institutions themselves for the support, and to all members of An Coiste Téarmaíochta, in particular Jenny Ní Mhaoileoin for their hard work. It is fitting, that in the month of March, which includes the annual Irish language campaign Seachtain na Gaeilge, that this resource has been made available. It is hoped that it will be used to make Irish language collections more accessible to and more inclusive of native speakers, and encourage other language communities to consider doing the same.

COMING SOON – Watch this space!

Natalie Milne, IAR

IRISH ARCHIVES RESOURCE
ACHMHAINN CHARTLAINNE NA hÉIREANN

The Irish Archive Resource is delighted to announce that it will soon launch a brand new website! Extensive work has been undertaken over the past year on the database and to the front end of the site to make it more user-friendly and visual. It will also importantly be available as Gaeilge as a bi-lingual site which will allow the online portal to host Irish language collections. Final testing is currently being carried out but it is expected to launch at the end of April so keep an eye out at IAR.ie