

## UK archives awarded United Nations Recognition

In 1993, a United Nations advisory committee met to produce an action plan to preserve significant documentary heritage from across the globe by cataloguing and protecting historical archives for future generations to learn from and enjoy. The result was the **UNESCO Memory of the World Programme**, the documentary heritage equivalent of UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

The collection includes historical documents such as the Bill of Rights, the HIV/Aids collections from Lothian Health Services Archive, The Children Society and the Peterloo Massacre Relief Fund. Alongside some of our more well-known archives in the UK, the programme also has a responsibility to champion lesser-known but uniquely important collections and make them understood in terms of national significance. The aim is to represent UK society as broadly as possible through cultural heritage.

On **International Archives Day, 9 June 2020**, we are delighted to announce that UK Memory of the World Committee and the **Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport** has endorsed the inclusion of three significant archives which will join the wealth of national material already on the prestigious UK register.

The 'inscription' onto the UK Memory of the World Register of these significant examples highlights the critical importance of their survival and accessibility of UNESCO's commitment to their preservation. They are:

- **The Crutchley Archive: books from master dyers of wool fabrics in Southwark, London 1716-1744 (Held at Southwark Archives)**

The Crutchley archive provides a unique, important and detailed record of a once ubiquitous industry which has all but vanished from the UK. The provision of measured recipes for dyes and the survival and preservation of quality samples, makes this collection very significant in understanding a prominent 18th century UK industry, both at home and internationally.

- **James Watt Papers and the Separate Condenser (Held at Birmingham Library)**

The James Watt Papers and specifically his work on the separate condenser nominated here contain a unique insight into the inspiration and development one of the most important scientific and technological advancements of the industrial revolution, a turning point in UK and world history.

- **IK Brunel's Screw Propeller Report (Held at SS Great Britain)**

IK Brunel's Screw Propeller Report marks an immensely important turning point in UK and world history. While Brunel did not invent the screw propeller, his experiments and the production of this meticulously evidenced document enabled its adoption and were pivotal in creating the modern world economy through trade.

## Notes to Editors:

Link to approved images and additional copy:

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1K0Oxlrg1sy\\_Mfq94z7xYRIgKu9e\\_UX-1?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1K0Oxlrg1sy_Mfq94z7xYRIgKu9e_UX-1?usp=sharing)

## Quotes approved for inclusion:

### **Matthew Lodge, UK Ambassador to UNESCO, said:**

*“On behalf of the UK Permanent Delegation to UNESCO, I am delighted that these rich and varied examples of the United Kingdom’s documentary heritage will be inscribed onto UNESCO’s Memory of the World Register. In UNESCO’s 75th anniversary year, and for the UK as a proud founding member of the organisation, the inscription of these documents marks a further positive step in our international efforts to preserve and share material that tells the story of modern humanity’s journey. From the records of the textile dye houses in the 18th century, to James Watt and IK Brunel’s inventions that shaped Britain and the modern world, these documents remind us all of our nation’s history and our shared heritage. We look forward to continuing to support UNESCO’s work and this valuable programme over the coming years.”*

### **James Bridge, Secretary-General, UK National Commission for UNESCO said:**

*“Recording and sharing our memories through archives can build understanding within and between communities and nations – this is UNESCO’s goal. The information in the archives can both help prevent us from making the mistakes of the past and give us the means to provide wiser solutions for the future.”*

### **Rachel Hosker, Chair of the UK Memory of the World Committee, said:**

*“This year, the committee recognised the importance of continuing this year’s process of assessment and placing of collections on the register, more than ever during the current pandemic. I’d like to thank them for very quickly adapting and responding to managing this process online, ensuring the governance and decision making was as robust as it always has been.”*

*“Cultural heritage is an expression of our society and evidence of how that society functions, develops, changes, reacts and creates is an important part of understanding human nature and national. Ensuring that this is promoted to governments, communities and is internationally seen, is a key part of why the UNESCO UK Memory of the World Programme exists. This expression, as the world changes and goes through difficult times, is even more important, and why we’re continuing to build and grow the UK programme.”*

### **About the UNESCO UK Memory of the World Programme:**

The first inscriptions to the UK Memory of the World Register were announced in July 2010 to highlight documentary heritage, which holds cultural significance specific to the UK. The UK Register helps raise awareness of some of the UK's exceptional, but lesser-known documentary riches by awarding them with the globally-recognised Memory of the World status, but within a UK context and is separate to the International Register.

The UK Register complements the UNESCO Memory of the World International Register, which is a catalogue of documentary heritage of global significance and outstanding universal value. Country-level Memory of the World Registers exist around the globe, helping to promote documentary heritage of national significance.

### **About the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme:**

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) is the 'intellectual' agency of the United Nations and was established in 1945.

The UNESCO Memory of the World Programme aims to facilitate preservation of the world's documentary heritage, to assist universal access and to increase awareness worldwide of the existence and significance of this documentary heritage through both an international Register and individual country Registers. This globally-recognised status celebrates some of the UK's most exceptional archive riches.

The International Memory of the World Register recognises documentary heritage of global significance and includes UK-based documents such as Magna Carta. The UK Memory of the World Register honours documentary heritage of national and regional significance and includes documents such as the Death Warrant of King Charles I.

### **The UK National Commission for UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation)**

The UK National Commission (UKNC) works to support the UK's contribution to UNESCO and bring the benefits of UNESCO to the UK. It is the hub for UNESCO-related matters in the UK.

The UKNC has four core priorities:

1. We provide expert, independent policy advice to the UK and devolved governments on UNESCO related issues.
2. We advise and support individuals and institutions in the UK, its Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies on accessing UNESCO accreditation and prizes and how to derive more value from their involvement with UNESCO.
3. We support the UK Government's agenda in helping UNESCO to become more effective.

4. We act as a hub for the UK's over 160 UNESCO designations. In carrying out these roles, the UKNC relies on advice and support from its Expert Network including specialists in the fields of education, culture, the sciences and communication and information from across Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England.

## **Media Contact**

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