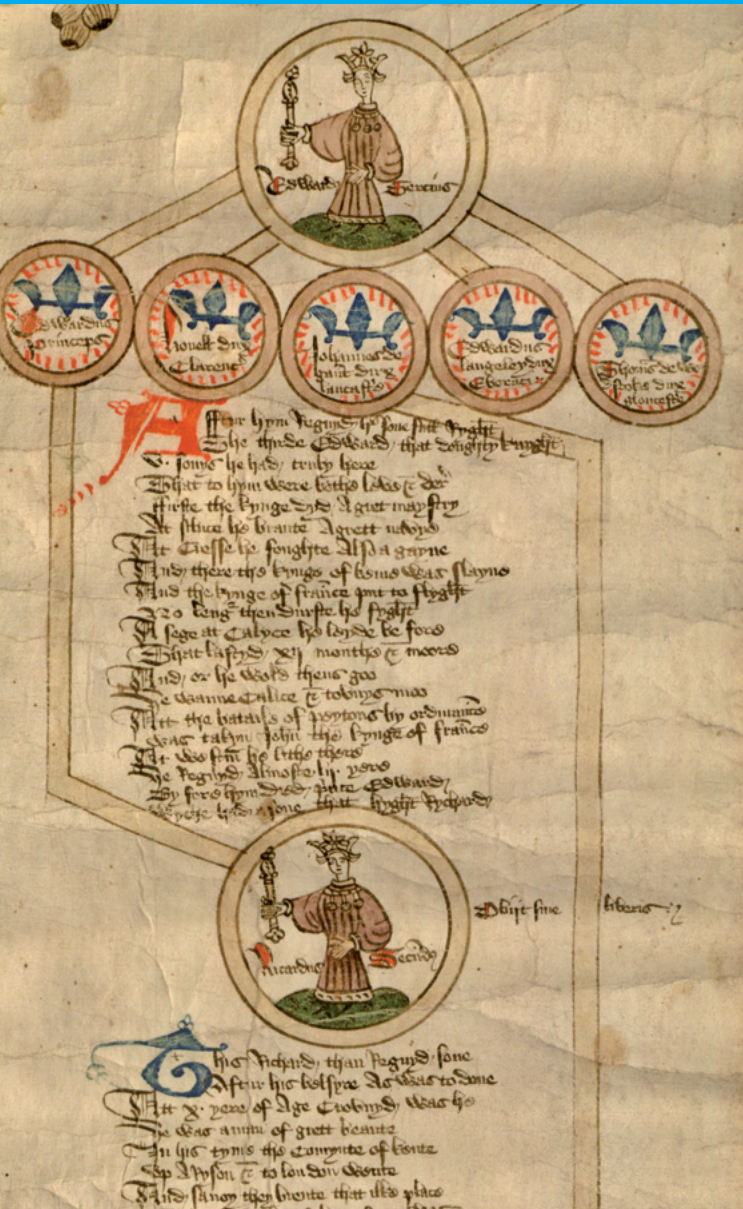


Catalogue access to the collections is available in a variety of formats, both electronic and hard copy. For full lists of collections, and for up to date information regarding their cataloguing status, please refer to the departmental website. Summary descriptions of most of the collections can also be found at <http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk>



About the Special Collections Department

Our primary role is to facilitate the teaching and research activities of the University. Our staff are pleased to share their expertise by providing guidance and suggestions to help you to pursue your research more effectively. It is expected however, that you will conduct your own research, and there is a limit to the amount of time our staff can spend on each enquiry. There is an extensive reference library to help you.

Opening Hours

During the academic year 2010-2011 our opening hours will be subject to change. Please consult our website for the latest information and plan your visit accordingly.

The Special Collections Reading Room is to be found downstairs on Level 1 of the University Library. There is no charge for access. When you first arrive you will be asked to register as a reader and photo ID will be requested. No bags are allowed in the Reading Room and only pencils are to be used. Original materials are fetched for you upon request. If you are visiting on a Saturday or are likely to require specialist advice, please enquire beforehand. Wheelchair access is available – please ring in advance.

Department of Special Collections

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University Library Manuscripts & Muniments



Manuscripts & Muniments

About the Manuscripts and Muniments Collection

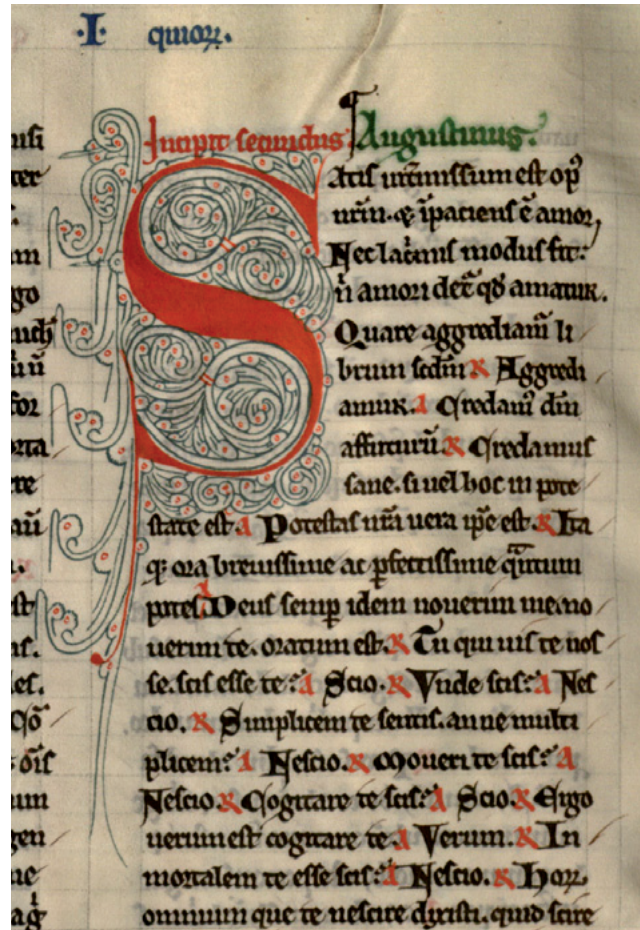
Although manuscripts have always featured within the Library's collections (and a few items from today's holdings can be traced back to the medieval libraries of St Andrews), it was not until 1959 that a Manuscripts Department was established for the specialised care of this type of material. Since then, many diverse manuscripts and manuscript collections have been added to the Library's holdings by purchase, gift and deposit. These are now held within the Library's Special Collections Department which not only provides vital support for teaching and research within the University, but also functions both as an important centre for historical studies in the wider academic community and as a public resource centre.



Manuscripts

The Special Collections Department holds a diverse collection of manuscripts, dating from the early middle ages to modern times, and of widely varying nature: single volumes, letters or documents, as well as collections relating to individuals, families and institutions, businesses, organisations and movements. Particular strengths include papers relating to:

- St Andrews and North-East Fife area, including local solicitors' records, estate collections, architectural plans, and, on deposit by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland, the records of the former burghs of North-East Fife and the Kirk Session records of the congregations of the presbyteries of Cupar and St Andrews.



- Individuals or studies connected with the University, particularly 19th century science and literature.
- The Roman Catholic Modernist movement.
- Middle Eastern and Asian collection, containing some fine specimens dating from the middle ages to the 19th century, mostly in Arabic, Persian or Turkish.
- Microfilms of series of important manuscripts held in other repositories (e.g. The National Archives) are available within the department, to assist the research activities of the University and the wider community. This collection is strongest in late medieval and early modern material (e.g. the English State Papers, Harleian Manuscripts), but also includes copies of the 1841-1901 census returns for Fife.

Muniments

The University Muniment Collection, as the institutional archive is known, is also held within the Special Collections Department. The Muniments contain the non-current records of the institution and its component parts, and predate the foundation of the University.

St Andrews, as Scotland's first university, possesses a particularly fine collection of muniments which begin with charters dating from 1215. The Papal Bull of Foundation of the University (1413) is just one of a superb series of medieval and early modern records which form the surviving record of the daily life of the institution throughout its 600 years. The formal papers of staff and officers of the University and financial, administrative and academic records of the last three centuries and beyond provide a rich source for local, national and biographical history.

The archive of the University Library is particularly fine, and includes a virtually unbroken series of catalogues since its foundation, and a valuable series of borrowing registers from 1738-1925.

