

Great North Museum:
Hancock Library



Library Collections Management Policy Appendix C SANT Collection

1. Collection History

The formation of a library was suggested in John Bell's letter of 1812 regarding the creation of the Society. In the first Society meeting in 1813, Bell was presented with two books, and in 1816 he was appointed the position of librarian, which he held until 1849.

The Society had several homes in the 19th century, preceding its move to the Keep in 1848. Here, a room below the Great Hall was fitted out as a library. However, as the collection expanded a new home was required and the library moved to the Black Gate in 1909-1910. It remained in this location until the move to the newly and purpose-built Great North Museum: Hancock (GNMH) Library took place in 2009.

The move to the GNMH Library provided an opportunity for the holdings of the SANT collection to be made available on Newcastle University's online catalogue and for its wealth of material to be used as reference by both students and members of the general public.

2. Collection Description

The SANT Collection holds a wide range of material on antiquarian and archaeological topics, and acquisitions are made through donations, purchase and exchange.

The collection contains around 30,000 items. Within this are included approximately 7,000 printed books, which incorporates both rare special collections material and newly published texts. Also available are around 1700 tracts (pamphlets, offprints etc) and over 250 journal titles, of which around 50 titles are current.

The collection is particularly strong in the areas of local history and archaeology. The section on Roman Britain holds a comprehensive range of publications on the Roman frontier in the North East and is used extensively by Society members and Newcastle University archaeology staff and students.

Books on the history and architecture of Newcastle and Northumberland contain a wealth of local information, and local directories and poll books provide a fascinating source of primary evidence.

The large numismatic section includes a range of books on Greek and Roman coinage and is complemented by the numismatic texts in the Cowen Collection.

2.1 Pre-1850 Material

The collection contains many pre-1850 publications. The earliest is *Zachariae Lillii Vicentini Orbis brevium*, a compendium of geographical information printed in Venice in the early 16th century. There is also a range of wonderful 17th century publications relating to the English parliament and the Civil War, for example: *A Full relation of the Scots besieging Newcastle ...* (London: Alsop, 1644). Some items have been the subject of special projects and reporting, for example *Camden's Britannia*, of which there are several copies within the collection and some rare. A report has now been published containing details of the care and conservation of these rare volumes. Of particular local interest are items published in the North East, including Henry Bourne's *History of Newcastle upon Tyne*, printed in Newcastle in 1736.

2.2 Tracts

The Society's collection of tracts is a treasure trove of material of historical interest including 'The Allan Tracts' (publications produced by George Allan in Darlington at one of the first private presses in England, set up in 1768), 'Is cheap or dear bread best for the poor man?' 1841 (discussion of the Corn Laws) and 'Observation on the proposed railway from Newcastle upon Tyne to North Shields and Tynemouth', 1813.

2.3 Periodicals

There is a large collection of journals within the collection.

Historical journals include: The Gentleman's Magazine, Publications of the Surtees Society, The Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (and Scotland), Camden Society Publications, The English Place-Name Society, The Harleian Society, The Royal Numismatic Society etc.

Current journals include: The Antiquaries Journal, The Archaeological Journal, Journal of the British Archaeological Association, Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Scottish Historical Review, Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian Society, Northern History, Yorkshire Archaeological Journal and many more.

Journals are obtained either by exchange (we currently have 38 such arrangements) or subscription.

Subscription to electronic journals is arranged, managed and maintained through SANT.

The collection also includes bulletins, newsletters and reports which have been/are received periodically.

2.4 *Archaeologia Aeliana* and Exchanges

Perhaps the most consulted periodical in the collection is the Society's own publication, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (AA). A project to digitise all *Proceedings of the Society* and the complete run of *Archaeologia Aeliana* has taken place and are now freely available via the Archaeology Data Service website.

The AA is exchanged with many other Societies, and this has resulted in the library holding a diverse range of journals from local, national, and international organisations.

2.5 Maps

An extensive collection of maps has been catalogued and are housed within the SANT Office. These include James Corbridge's Map of Newcastle upon Tyne (1723), Andrew and Mostyn Armstrong's Map of the County of Northumberland (1769), Thomas Oliver's 1844 Plan of Newcastle upon Tyne and Gateshead, the Plan of Intended Streets at the Quayside by John Dobson after the Great Fire of 1854 and John Wood's Town Atlas of Northumberland and Durham of 1820-27. Valuable, original maps are housed in the SANT Archives, while facsimiles are available in the map collection in the SANT Office.

Historical maps within books can be found throughout the collection and are open to special projects and further research. Of particular interest are John Warburton's 'Vallum Romanum' (1753), the 'Map of the County of Northumberland' in Emanuel Bowen's 'Large English Atlas', and the various editions of William Camden's 'Britannia'.

2.6 SANT Archives

The Society archives, older bequests, original maps and artefacts are housed at the Northumberland Record Office at Woodhorn, amounting to over 7,000 items.

Items are also held at the Bagpipe Museum in Morpeth.

3. Specific Collecting Principles

SANT aim to encourage a deeper understanding of the history and archaeology of North East England. The collection, therefore, reflects the Society's area of interest covering all periods of the history of North East of England.

4.

Responsibility for Collecting

The collection is the property of SANT and is managed by the Honorary Librarian, assisted by SANT volunteers. Collection and disposal decisions are the responsibility of the Honorary Librarian.

Subscription to periodicals and Exchanges are managed by SANT. Consideration of cost and space should be duly given and titles reviewed periodically.

A SANT Library Committee meets twice a year to discuss collection matters. The Honorary Librarian reports to the SANT Executive and Council.

4.1

Collection Fund

There is a small fund for SANT library matters including the acquisition of new items, journal subscription and repair of stock. This fund is agreed by the SANT Executive Committee and managed by the SANT Honorary Librarian.

4.2

Cataloguing and Classifying the Collection

Catalogue records for all new items are added to the Society's 'Master Booklist'. This is periodically published on the SANT website in a public-friendly version. In addition, we have separate catalogues of the SANT Map Collection and our current and historical periodicals, also published on the website.

SANT utilise their own alpha-numeric shelfmark system which they adopted in the 1930's and still use to the present day. This is based on a combination of letters and numbers that signify the geographic area and historical period.

Most of the collection has been added to Newcastle University's Library catalogue (Library Search). Each item is given a Dewey Decimal classification, but the SANT classification number is included in the description. Every effort should be made to get new material onto Library Search. This is done in liaison with the GNMH Library Coordinator and the Content and Discovery Team at Newcastle University Library.

4.3

Processing and Repair of Stock

All processing of new books, journals and tracts is undertaken by SANT volunteers who also carry out rebinding and minor repairs to stock.

5.

Location and Arrangement of Stock

Items can be found in the following locations:

- Public Access
- Public Access Stacks
- Controlled Access
- David Gardner Medwin Room (Archive Store)
- Resource Centre (Discovery Museum Store)
- SANT Office
- Northumberland Archives at Woodhorn

The location of stock is directed by the Honorary Librarian and SANT Library Volunteers.

5.1

Public Access

As a general rule, newer books and 'key' (often duplicated) items can found on the Public Access shelves. Books here are mostly with shelfmarks A and B, and under 30cm tall.

5.2

Public Access Stacks

Periodicals, including current journals, are stored within the rolling stacks in the Public Access area of the Library.

5.3

Controlled Access

Pre-1850 books, oversize books (above 30cm), fragile or special collections, historical and foreign-language journals, and tracts are held in the Controlled Access area of the Library.

5.4

David Gardner Medwin Room (Archive Store)

A few oversize, delicate and/or rare books and maps are held in the archive store.

5.6

Resource Centre (Discovery Museum Store)

An overflow of books and journals are stored in the Resource Centre at the Discovery Museum. SANT stock is also stored in this space.

5.7

SANT Office

Some of the more valuable books and the main map collection are stored in the SANT Office, with rarer items being held in the David Gardner Medwin Room.

5.8

Northumberland Archives at Woodhorn

SANT's archives contain records of the society as well as historic documents, research notes, drawings, maps, plans and photographs. Approximately 6000 items are stored at Northumberland Archives, where most can be consulted in the public search room.