Introductory Guide to the Stonyhurst Archives

The primary holdings of the Archives relate to the history of the school from 1593 to the present day. An outline is given in Part 1 below. Whilst the largest archival collections come from the 19th and 20th centuries at Stonyhurst, there are considerable surviving materials from our predecessor English Jesuit Colleges of St Omers, Bruges, and Liege.

Please note, school records of individuals will remain closed for the duration of the record subject’s lifetime. Enquiries to the Archives requesting information related to such individuals will be unable to be answered. Where the date of death is unknown, standard presumption of 100 years from birth will be followed.

In addition, over some centuries, the Archives have acquired significant manuscript materials concerning topics related to the history of Catholicism in Britain. A selection of significant collections have been identified in Part 2 below, however there are many individual items beyond those described.

Should research concern works by, or associated with particular individuals, the Index of Known Authors, Subjects, Translators, Compilers, and Scribes can be consulted via a link from the Archives webpage. This document lists the names alphabetically of individuals linked to manuscript volumes in the Archives.

For more information on any of the collections mentioned below, please complete an enquiry form on the ‘Contact’ section of the Stonyhurst Collections website, directed to the Archives.
Part 1 – College Records

Pupil Records

- Pupil lists (1770s onwards). Detailed records series about pupils are incomplete in some periods. Published information on pupils from St Omers and Bruges Colleges can be accessed in CRS Volume 69 by Fr Geoffrey Holt SJ.
- Financial records related to pupils (19th and 20th centuries).
- Pupil ‘Valetes’, which note general details of a pupil’s activities at Stonyhurst. These began to be published in the Stonyhurst Magazine in the 1920s.
- Records collections from activities and societies including Sports, Debating, CCF, and the Sodality.
- The Philosophers (most records 1870s to 1916).

Institutional and Financial Papers

- Records series such as the Day Books (17th to 20th centuries, with gaps), Prefects’ Journals and Logs (18th to 20th centuries), and Ministers’ Journals (18th to 20th centuries)
- Buildings and Architectural plans and papers (19th to 21st centuries)
- Staff Records (19th and 20th centuries, with gaps)

Estate and Local Papers, including Parish Records

- Incomplete records series, including farming financial accounts, estate journals, rent books (19th and 20th centuries)
- Parish Records (1784-early 20th century)
- Historic property records and deeds (19th century)

The Stonyhurst Drama Archive

This collection contains works for public performance at the College from the 1620s to the mid-20th century.

- 17th and 18th century materials include:
  o Playscripts written and performed at the English Jesuit Colleges of St Omers, Bruges and Liege.
  o Smaller performance work by pupils, including odes, declamations, dialogues and other poetry.
- 19th and 20th century performance items include:
Manuscripts of plays of secular playwrights, and some printed copies, altered to make them suitable for performance on the Jesuit school stage.

A large collection of printed 12mo plays, most from the 19th century, most from series such as Samuel French’s Acting Editions.

The Stonyhurst Photographic Archive

This collection contains thousands of photographs of Stonyhurst since the 1850s. These include images of the buildings, pupils and staff, and the surrounding estate. There is also a large collection of glass plate negatives. This collection is not yet catalogued, and as a result access can be limited.

Part 2 – Manuscripts Collections

English Catholic family papers, including:

- Shireburn of Stonyhurst (13th to 18th centuries)
- Weld of Stonyhurst and Leagram (18th/19th centuries)
- Montague of Cowdray (13th to 18th centuries)
- Rookwood of Stanningfield (14th to 18th centuries)
- Arundell of Wardour (19th century)
- Walmesley of Dunkenhalgh (18th century)
- Selby of Biddlestone (18th/19th centuries)
- Waterton of Walton (19th century)
- Forcer of Kelloe (17th/18th centuries)

These collections differ greatly in size and extent, with some being very limited and others very extensive. For more information on any of the collections please contact the Archives Manager.

Papers of 18th, 19th, and 20th century Jesuits, particularly:

- Fr John Thorpe (1726-1792)
- Fr Thomas Reeve (1752-1826)
- Fr Charles Wright (1752-1827)
- Fr Charles Brooke (1777-1852)
- Fr Thomas Glover (1781-1849)
- Fr Francis West (1782-1852)
- Fr William Waterworth (1811-1882)
Fr Edmund Purbrick (1830-1914)
o Fr James Pinnington (c.1835-1917)
o Fr John Gerard (1840-1912)
o Fr Joseph Rickaby (c.1845-1932)
o Fr Charles Newdigate (1863-1942)
o Most Rev Alban Goodier (1869-1939)
o Fr Philip Watts (1883-1943)
o Fr Hubert Chadwick
o Fr B Fitzgibbon

Manuscripts of Catholic Theology and History (Middle Ages to the 20th century)
o Mediaeval and early modern texts of Catholic theology, spirituality, and education
(for more information, see the Index of Known Authors and the Boardman Collection Catalogue provided on the Archives webpage)
o Manuscript texts related to recusancy in Britain, including histories, martyrologies, polemics, and autobiographies of saints, 17th/18th centuries
o Collections of unbound sermons and homilies, 17th to early 19th centuries

This a very extensive and varied collection, impossible to outline briefly. Specific and targeted enquiries should be directed to the Archives Manager to identify MSS to support research on these collections.

Papers which belonged, or relate, to former pupils (OS), including:
o Charles Waterton of Walton Hall (1782-1865)
o Sir Thomas Wyse (1791-1862)
o Percy Hetherington Fitzgerald (1834-1925)
o Alexander Hill Gray (c.1836-1927)

The Archives also hold manuscript collections of:
- Heraldry – 17th/18th centuries
- Liturgical Music – Middle Ages to the 19th century
- Mathematics, Geometry and Geography – 18th/19th centuries

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