

THE Piper



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NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

**‘... do not throw this book about;
... Preserve it as your chiefest treasure.’**

Hilaire Belloc

This beautiful edition of the Piper is dedicated to the Friends and their support of the Library and the Special Collections manifested in ‘Fifty Years Fifty Books’ currently showing in the Library’s Exhibition Gallery. Through subscriptions, bequests and legacies the friends have made it possible to acquire a wide range of items and this variety is reflected in the often intriguing items now on display and the many, many more in the Archives.

We have even had a special logo designed for the Exhibition showing an elegant and exuberant bookstand incorporating ‘50’ in its curves.

Membership of the Friends brings pleasures and benefits, not just the tangible purchases, but events (important dates for these on page 8), 3 year (renewable) access to the Library building and Collections, and being part of a community of like-minded

individuals from many facets of University life. Our oldest member at 100 years old, Dr. Hutton, has just renewed his subscription and we are opening up our membership to recent alumni and students. Our website is being re-designed and there is a ‘Piper’ room on the 6th floor where back numbers and related information can be browsed.

With the 450th anniversary of Shakespeare’s birth this month it is timely to remember that brilliant, if somewhat eccentric, scholar and collector, James Orchard Halliwell-Phillips, without whose energy and enthusiasm, we would not be so fortunate as to have a wealth of

Shakespearean and Jacobean treasures within the Collections. We hope we can go on contributing to the Library for another fifty years. What we give is greatly valued by the University not only in terms of items but in the support we give and the interest we show, making the Library a wider experience for both those using it and those in whose care it resides.

As for the exhibition – Come See! is what the Library has become.

Lady Caplan

**President, Friends of
Edinburgh University Library**



Yvette Hawkins, Book sculpture in two parts, 2010.



Fifty Years, Fifty Books

In 1962 the Friends of Edinburgh University Library held their first meeting. They agreed to work to support 'the purchase of rare or valuable books, manuscripts or documents' and 'to enhance the resources and reputation of the library'. Fifty-two years later, the Library's latest exhibition has been planned to recognise the great contribution made by the Friends. The items on display in the Exhibition Gallery represent a small selection of the wide range of material purchased with the help of the Friends. The exhibition runs

from 28 March to 14 June 2014.

The difference in the collections as they were in 1962 and as they are now is striking. Back in 1962, the Library was based in the early 19th century buildings at Old College, including the beautiful Playfair Library. The collections included many early books and manuscripts, such as the library of Clement Litill or the collections of David Laing, but there was little real sense of 'Special Collections' as a concept – and no programme of adding to those collections in an organised way. The Library was there as a teaching

resource and there was little sense of the collections as something that would be of wide and public interest.

Half a century later, and although the core collections are still here and cherished, the environment is quite different. Today, the collections are many times larger than they were in 1962, and are stored in purpose-built strongrooms, curated by professional archivists, librarians and museum curators. Materials are made available through digital and social media as well as through the reading rooms situated on the 6th floor. The Exhibition Gallery makes the treasures of the Library available to festival audiences and reminds us that the collections are here because people want to see, study and use them.

Without the support of the Friends this story would have been less simple. It was through the generosity of the Friends that we were able to open the Exhibition Gallery in 2009. It seemed appropriate to use this space to celebrate the rare books and manuscripts which the Friends have helped us to



Left.
Roderick Impey Murchison, *Annotated geological map of North-West Scotland*, 1861.

Below.
Henry Purcell, *The Songs of Amphitryon: with the Musick*. London, 1690



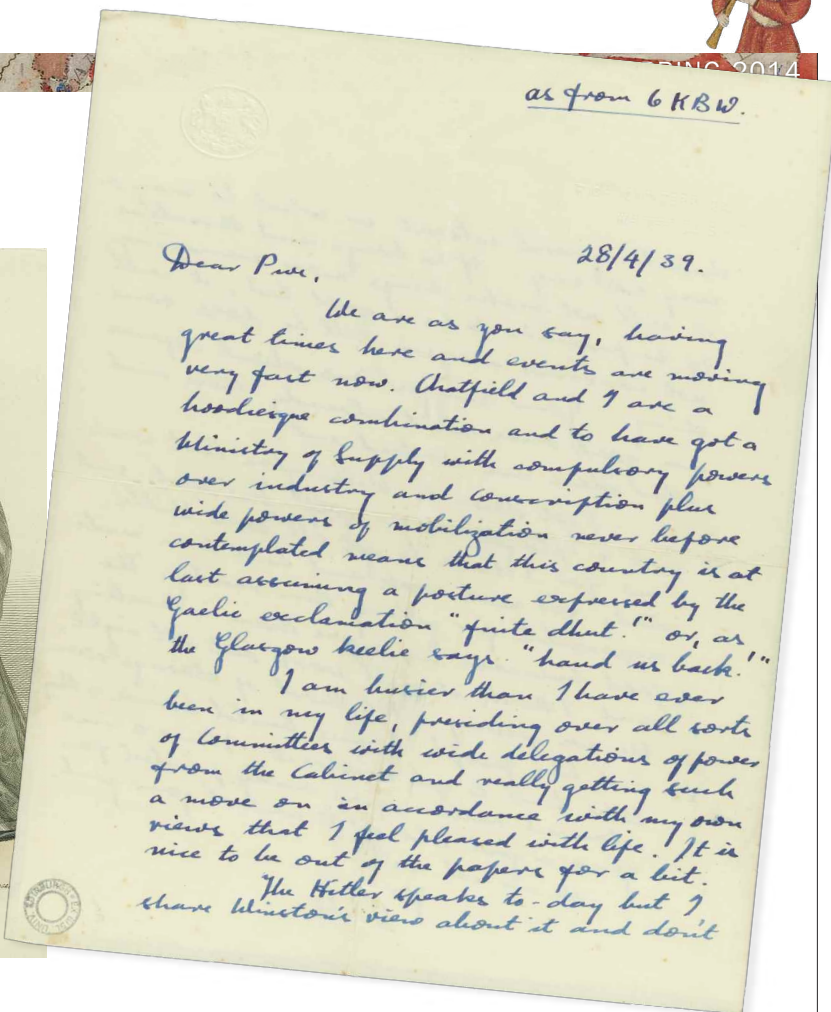


Right.

F.G. Weidmann,
Der Costum-Ball,
Wien, 1826

Far right.

W.S. Morrison,
Letter discussing
Churchill and
Hitler, 1939



acquire since 1962, and which continue to be acquired today. The Special Collections represented in the exhibition are some of the greatest assets of the University of Edinburgh – both now and in centuries to come.

From their foundation the Friends were willing to support the acquisition of a very wide range of material, as long as it fitted in some way with the needs of the collection and its users. So in the early years we find the Friends supporting the purchase of examples of manuscript student lecture notes (on the Greek Literature course of Samuel Henry Butcher in 1894–5), the secretly-printed first edition of the last book by Galileo and notes on Professor John Walker's course on meteorology and hydrography. As well as classics, astronomy and natural history, music has been a strength of the collection and in 1963 we acquired a copy of James Thomson's

Alfred: a Masque (1740), which is the first appearance in print of 'Rule Britannia'. Written by a Scottish poet about an English king, the work was intended to glorify Frederick, Prince of Wales, before whom it was performed.

One of the most important collections purchased with help from the Friends was part of the library of James Orchard Halliwell-Phillipps. Phillipps had given a major collection on Shakespeare to Edinburgh University Library in 1872. However, his large collection of Jacobean, Restoration and early 18th-century plays had been given to Penzance Library in 1866. When this collection of 600 volumes came up for sale at auction in 1964, with the help of the Friends we were able to secure it so it could rejoin the rest of the Phillipps library here. This has cemented Special Collections as one of the leading centres for the study of Shakespeare and the early British

theatre. The collection includes first editions of plays by John Webster, Thomas Middleton and Ben Jonson, works by Henry Purcell, Aphra Behn and John Dryden, and annotated prompt copies of plays including one by William Congreve.

Modern literary papers, particularly of Scottish writers, have long been a strength of the Library and the Friends have been invaluable in helping us to acquire rich collections in this area. These include unpublished fiction by William Fraser Mitchell, autobiography by John Barrington Wain, manuscripts by Frederick Burrows Urquhart, early work by James Tait Black and literary criticism by John Middleton Murry. Some of the less famous individuals have turned out to have produced fascinating collections, such as the correspondence of Gaelic-speaking, Shakespeare-loving Conservative politician W. S. Morrison, which we acquired in 2008. In 2013 we acquired

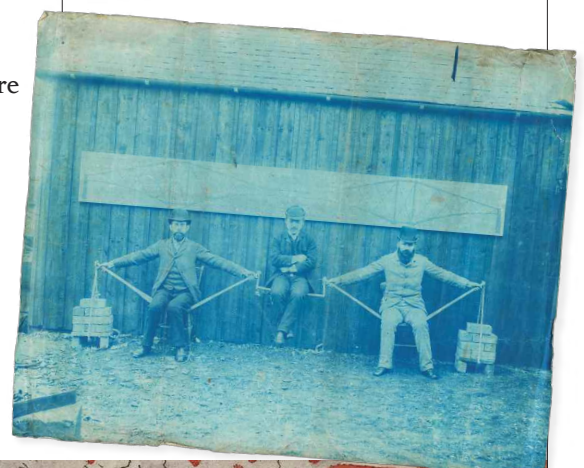


Left.
Henry Aston Barker, *A description of the defeat of the French Army*. [London]: [Printed by J. Adlard], 1816

Below.
Forth Bridge Archive

under construction provide important information about a particular moment in history. And then there are the quirky objects such as the copy of Robert Christison's *A treatise on poisons* (1832) which has, rather suspiciously, been used as a working tool by someone who clearly had a keen interest in notable poisoning crimes. Among the most delightful items in this area is a pocket-book by Professor Thomas Charles Hope, who as well as being Professor of Chemistry in the early 19th century was also a leading figure in Edinburgh polite society. This small volume lists suppers he gave, who he invited and who actually came. The article on Hope in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* notes that he 'was reputed to be capable of eating eight plates of turtle', which suggests that his entertainments were something to behold. This eclectic but scholarly range of material which the Friends have helped us acquire makes Special Collections today into one of the greatest centres of its kind.

Dr Joseph Marshall
Rare Books and Manuscripts
Librarian



the papers of Edinburgh-based publisher and photographer Gordon Wright, which include rich correspondence with Scottish writers like George Mackay Brown, and much visually-interesting material such as posters. The most recent major purchase in this area has been the archive of Hamish Henderson, who was one of Scotland's most prominent cultural figures, a poet, a leading architect of the Scottish folksong renaissance and the co-founder of the University's School of Scottish Studies. This archive contains more than 10,000 letters plus 136 notebooks and diaries.

Individual rare books have been acquired to fill gaps in the collection over the years and they include some outstanding items. In 1978 we bought William Drummond's copy of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (1609) which shows how the Scottish poet – one of our first great donors – read and annotated the work of a near-contemporary. Modern special books have also been acquired, including private press editions of

works by Hugh MacDiarmid, Norman MacCaig's own copies of his poems, work by James Robertson to celebrate the rebirth of the Scottish Parliament, and books from the library of Adam Smith. The most notable individual purchase in this area is the fine copy of Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1587), bought in 2010. This work was used as the basis for many of Shakespeare's history plays, including *Macbeth*.

Finally, there are the many items which cannot easily be categorised. Sometimes these are beautiful, such as the exquisite reproductions of Andrew Jackson Grayson's *Birds of the Pacific Slope* by the Arion Press (1986). Sometimes they give fascinating insights into the culture of a period, such as the run of *Picture Post* from 1938 to 1957, with striking illustrations and advertisements which define the culture of war-time and post-war Britain. Other items such as the circular engraved celebration of the Battle of Waterloo or the photographs of the Forth Bridge



Edinburgh College of Art Library Artists' Books Collection

ECA Library began actively collecting Artists' Books in the 1980s. The earliest books in the collection date back to the 1960s, for example Ed Ruscha's *Twenty-Six Gasoline Stations*, a now iconic paperback book made to be democratic in its original affordability and simplicity, whose deadpan images belie the careful editing eye of the artist.

The whole collection is catalogued and available to search on the online library catalogue, and the ECA Library at Evolution House mounts regular displays in the library featuring the artists' books. The ECA Academic Support Librarian also provides regular small group seminars on the collection, in which students are encouraged to handle the books. The collection is used for collaborative exhibitions across Edinburgh, e.g. in association with the Scottish Poetry Library.

The collection consists of around 1000 artists' books and is a growing collection. It is a working collection for handling, and is used regularly in group tutorials. Students and staff can also request individual artist's books for reference in the library, by completing a form at the ECA Library Helpdesk.

The collection is strong on Scottish artists such as Ian Hamilton Finlay, Helen Douglas, Jane Hyslop, Jenny Smith, Susie Wilson and Susie Leiper, but is also international in scope, including for example works by Hans Waanders, Maddy Rosenberg, and the works of Redfoxpress (featuring European contributors in the *C'est mon dada* series, and the colourful works of Francis van Maele and Antic-Ham,

often working together as 'Franticham'). Recent acquisitions include works by Callum Innes and Garry Fabian Miller. The collection also includes book-works by ECA students acquired from the annual ECA degree shows.

The collection is particularly strong in the works of Scottish book artist Helen Douglas, from her early work from the 1970s, as part of *We* reproductions with Telfer Stokes, to more recent books such as the award-winning *Illiers Combray*, 2004; *Loch*, 2005; *Queene & Belle*, 2008; and *A Venetian Brocade*, 2010. There is also a fine selection of Douglas's delicate hand-printed editions of 2006 to 2007: for example *Swan Songs*, *Reflection*, *Glyph*, the *Flit* series, *Threshold*, and *Field Notes*. Most recently the Library acquired a stunning scroll by Helen

Douglas called *The Pond at Deuchar*, along with three concertina books *Leda and the Swan*, *Apollo and Daphne*, and *The Pleasure of Minnows*.

A new development for ECA Library in 2014 is an artist's book maker bursary residency award jointly funded by the ECA School of Art and the Division of Library and University Collections, which will be awarded to a practicing book artist. This year the book artist Julie Johnstone will be the Resident at ECA Library and will produce a new artist's book for the ECA collection, in response to her month-long residency.

Jane Furness
ECA Academic Support Librarian:
Edinburgh College of Art at the
University of Edinburgh



Susie Wilson, Tunnel, 2011.



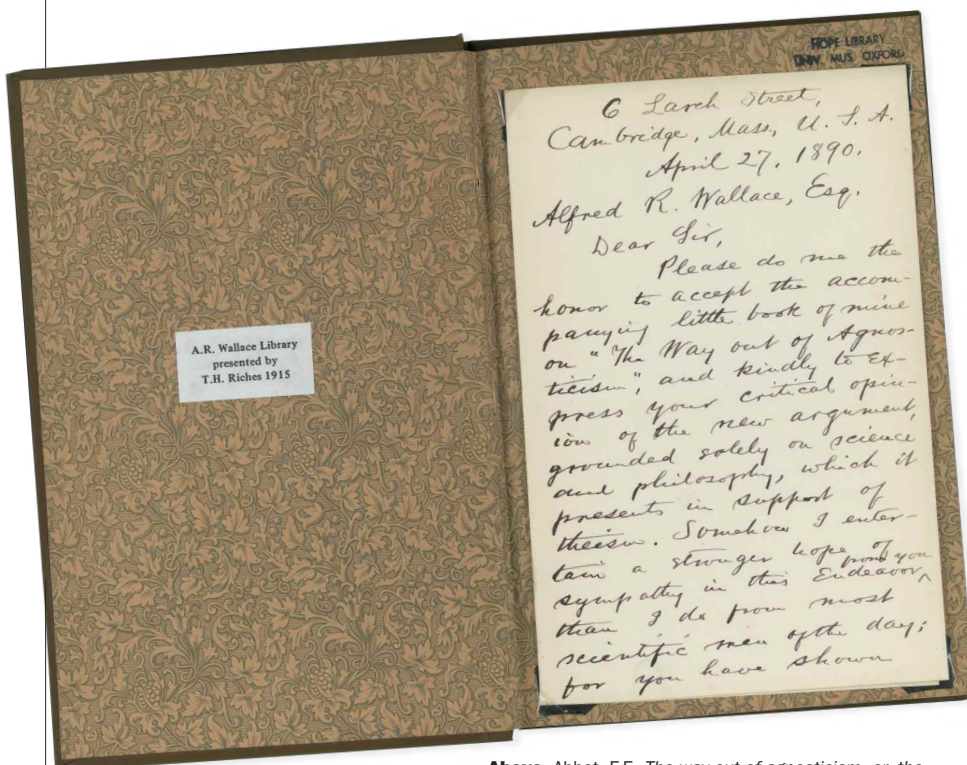
The Other Sides of Alfred Russel Wallace (1823–1913)

Earlier this year, as part of the international ‘Wallace 100’ celebrations designed to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the death of Alfred Russel Wallace, there was a display of books from our Wallace collection in the Display Wall of the Centre for Research Collections. For those readers who missed it we asked the curator, Dr Andrew Grout, to write about this fascinating collection for The Piper.

Alfred Russel Wallace is rightly celebrated as a giant among nineteenth century scientists. He is remembered mainly as a pioneer in evolutionary biology and a pre-eminent field naturalist, as demonstrated by his magnum opus *The Malay Archipelago* (1869) and in his influential relationship with Charles Darwin. But Wallace, particularly in his later years, was much more than this, as he became increasingly fascinated with unconventional ‘science’, particularly spiritualism and parapsychology, and socialism and utopian idealism. As his biographer Martin Fichman has stated, Wallace spent the last 40 years of his life searching for an overarching worldview, effectively an

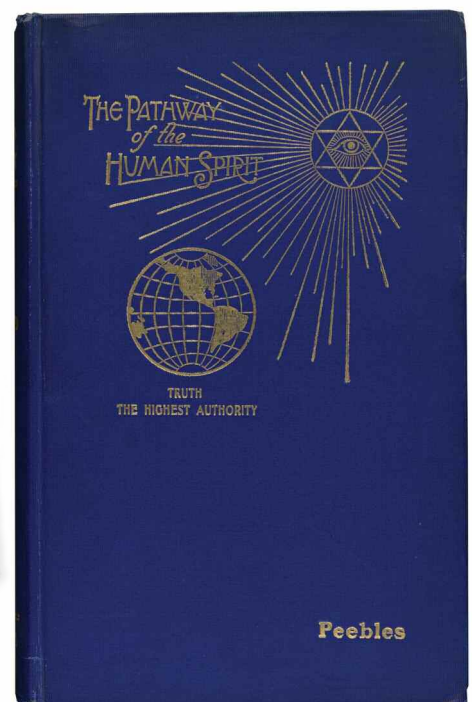
evolutionary cosmogony. In essence, he sought to explain the ‘wonder and variety of life’ and, although never labelling himself a Christian, he maintained his belief in a ‘Divine Power’ directing the processes of evolution until his death.

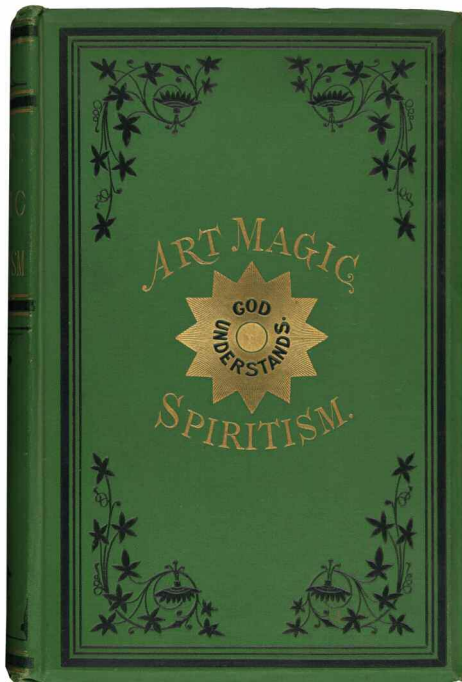
Wallace never claimed that spiritualism and its ilk should be accepted uncritically. In fact he was keen to apply a scientific method to such researches and was a critic of much that was written, as evidenced by his marginal annotations in many of the volumes: ‘all bosh!’ he wrote of one such work. However, unfortunately, these more esoteric interests – often regarded by critics as ‘subjective’ or pseudo-science – alienated him from many of the



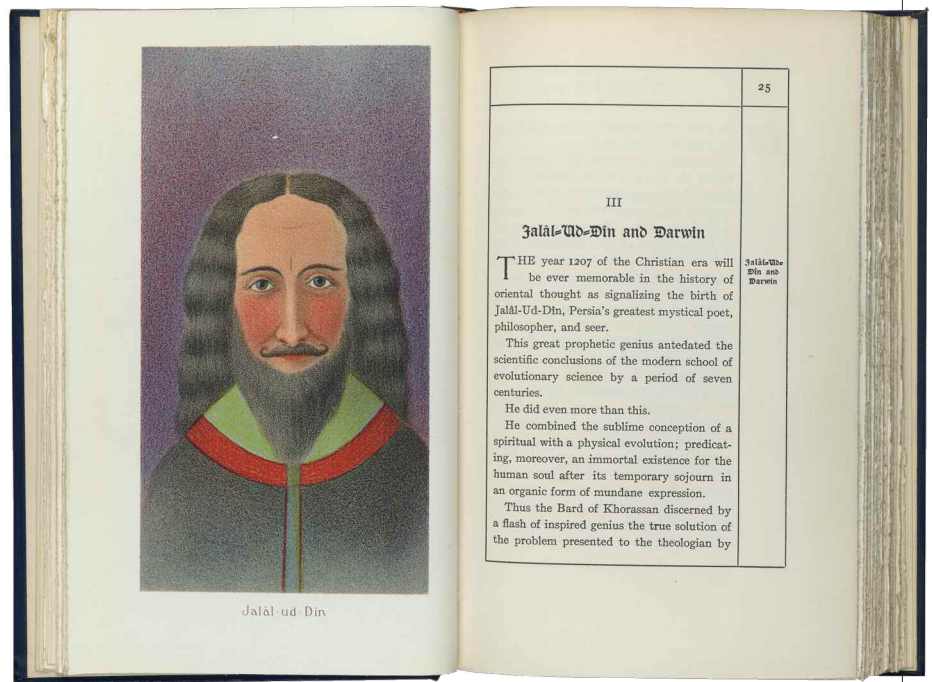
Above. Abbot, F.E. *The way out of agnosticism, or, the philosophy of free religion* (Boston: 1890). With T.H. Riches presentation label and a letter to Wallace from the author.

Below. Peebles, J.M. *The spirit's pathway traced: did it pre-exist and does it reincarnate again into mortal life?* (Battle Creek, Mich.: [c1906]).





Above. Britten, W. *Art magic, or, mundane, sub-mundane and super-mundane spiritism* (New York: 1876).



Above. Ka-Ra-Om. *Triune man: his origin and destiny immortality proved: the message of Ka-Ra-Om recorded by Novus Homo, psychic* (1911)

scientific elite of his time, and this partly accounts for the lack of attention paid to Wallace during much of the 20th century. Indeed, earlier studies of Wallace mostly ignore or trivialise his unconventional interests. However, an understanding of them is important to a real understanding of the man and his times.

The Alfred Russel Wallace collection in Special Collections consists of some 470 volumes from the naturalist's personal library. The subjects include spiritualism and the paranormal, socialism, esoteric religion, utopianism, and even astrobiology (notably the possibility of life on Mars). Following the death of Wallace the collection was purchased by the zoologist and geneticist Thomas Henry Riches, a man who, it is said, had 'the burden of wealth thrust upon him'. The remainder of Wallace's personal library – the strictly zoological

portion – was acquired by the Linnean Society, where it still resides.

In 1915 Riches donated the collection to the Hope Entomological Library at Oxford University, where the book in the collection most widely read by students of entomology was apparently William Tebb's *Premature Burial and how it may be prevented* (1905), and the collection was used mainly by members of the University Psychic Society! Eventually seen as surplus to requirements, the collection was gifted to our Special Collections in 1993.

An important aspect of the collection is that many of the volumes are extensively annotated by Wallace, and 28 contain correspondence tipped-in, mainly letters to Wallace. Some of the letters have been transcribed by the Wallace Correspondence Project whose website (<http://www.nhm.ac.uk/wallacelettersonline>) brings digital images and transcripts of many of

Wallace's fascinating letters and manuscripts together in one place for the first time.

The collection is complimented by an additional 15 letters from Wallace in Special Collections and the important and equally wide-ranging Arthur Koestler parapsychology collection, also held by the Library. The Wallace collection is now catalogued online (shelfmarks SD 8270-8742) and may be consulted in the reading room of the Centre for Research Collections.

Further reading: The best source for an understanding of Wallace's 'other' interests is: Martin Fichman, *An Elusive Victorian: The Evolution of Alfred Russel Wallace* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004). In his 'Acknowledgements' the author states that his book would not have been possible without the cooperation of the staff in Special Collections, where he spent fruitful days working on the collection.



Forthcoming Events

Thursday, June 19th

Visit to the newly refurbished Edinburgh and Scottish Collections in the Edinburgh Central Library on George IV Bridge. 2.00pm

Tuesday, October 7th

Visit to the Edinburgh College of Art Library, in Evolution House on the corner of Lady Lawson Street, and West Port. 5.30pm

Tuesday, November 25th

AGM at New College Library on the Mound. 3.00pm



Helen Douglas & Zoe Irvine, Illiers Combray, Weproductions, 2004.

Come and join us!

For a membership form, email: friendsofeul@ed.ac.uk. Find out more about the Friends on the newly

updated website at: <http://friendsofeul.wordpress.com>. And a plea to all members: please provide the Friends'

administration with your email address which would help greatly with communication.



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