

## SCOTTISH COLLECTIONS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY LIBRARY

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The Scottish connections in the founding of the University of Sydney in 1850 were significant, and represented by many of the first professors across a number of fields. The first professors of chemistry and physics, medicine, geology, philosophy, modern literature, education, economics, zoology, veterinary science and agriculture were Scots. Three Scots held the philosophy chair for 66 years between 1890 and 1963.<sup>1</sup> Many Scots contributed, in differing ways, to the development of the University Library.

Sir Normand MacLaurin, born in Fife, and vice-chancellor in 1887-89, 1895-96 and Chancellor from 1896, was instrumental in the building of the first specially designed library. It was during his Chancellorship that Fisher Library (named after a bequest by Thomas Fisher to the University for “establishing and maintaining a library”) was built in the south-west corner of the Quadrangle. The first Fisher Library was opened by MacLaurin in 1909, and the original library reading room is now known as MacLaurin Hall.

Acquisitions to establish a University Library predated first actual teaching<sup>2</sup> with the purchase in 1852 of a number of dictionaries and other philological works on various languages, including Greek, Latin, French, German, and Sanskrit, from the library of the Reverend Dr Mackean, together with some classical authors including Aristotle, Plato and Horace. Foundation professors requested books in their fields for purchase and the library collection grew with the addition of the library of the defunct Sydney College. The Stenhouse collection was purchased and presented to the University in 1878 by the businessman Thomas Walker. Nicol Stenhouse (also Scottish born) was a lawyer and leading figure in the literary and cultural life of Sydney. Most notable perhaps was the gift of the extensive library of the first Chancellor, Sir Charles Nicholson, rich in incunabula, medieval manuscripts and archaeology.<sup>3</sup>

Over the last one hundred and fifty years, either by single acquisitions or the acquisition of formed collections the holdings of works on Scotland and the Celtic world grew. As formal programs in the teaching of Celtic studies became established in the 1970s, including a Chair in Celtic Studies, the acquisition of books to support these courses increased.

<sup>1</sup> Dictionary of Sydney, *The Scots*, <https://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/scots>

<sup>2</sup> Barff, HE, *A Short History of the University of Sydney, in connection with the Jubilee Celebrations, 1852 to 1902*. Angus and Robertson, 1902. [Internet Archive [https://archive.org/stream/cu31924030639474/cu31924030639474\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/cu31924030639474/cu31924030639474_djvu.txt)]

<sup>3</sup> Radford, Neil, *"A singular ornament in the university"* (2002), <https://library.sydney.edu.au/about/uslhistory/radford02.html>

Material relating to Scotland and the Celtic world can be found throughout the general print and digital collections of the library, but the core of these research collections are held in the Library's Rare Book and Special Collections.

Three named collections provide significant holdings in Scottish material. These collections built by scholars had been acquired over the last fifty years. These are the Broun, Chadwick and Leaver collections. In addition to these collections other significant works can be found in other named collections and throughout the general rare book collection.

The Malcolm Broun collection is the most recent and substantial of the collections on Scotland. Malcolm, who died in 2014, is remembered as the founder, president and driving force of the Sydney Society for Scottish History and an active member of the Scottish Australian Heritage Council. Malcolm was the founding editor of the *Journal of the Sydney Society for Scottish History*. The Broun collection has greater historical depth and breadth than the other collections with works dating from the seventeenth century. Malcolm was a studious collector of works relating to Scotland and was a scholar in the field as well as a leading silk at the NSW bar.

The Chadwick collection of Norse and Celtic studies is the library of the noted Celtic scholar Professor Nora Kershaw Chadwick (1891-1972) of the University of Cambridge. A leading mid-twentieth century scholar in the field of Celtic Studies the collection is particularly strong in scholarly monographs and facsimiles of medieval manuscripts. The collection was acquired by the Library, with assistance of the Friends of the Library in 1971 the year before her death. Professor Chadwick's works include *Early Scotland* (1959) *Celtic Britain* (1963), *The Druids* (1966) and *The Celts* (1970).

The Harry Leaver Memorial Collection of Celtic Studies research material was compiled by Dr Harry Leaver from the University of Western Australia and donated to the Rare Books and Special Collections Library. The collection includes some major journal runs, and many works on Welsh.

Rare and scarce works relating to Scotland can be found in other collections in Rare Books, most notably the Macdonald collection. This is the private collection of Hugh Macdonald, the English scholar and bibliographer and contains 10,000 items of sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth century English and European literature in Australia. Material can also be found in the Deane and Slessor collections.

The Rare Books Library's general collection of over 60,000 books includes many works of interest to researchers in Scottish and Celtic studies. The stunning and faithful facsimiles of the Book of Kells and the Lindisfarne Gospels add to the resources for Scottish scholars.

Of particular value to researchers are the postgraduate theses on Scottish and Celtic subjects submitted by students of the University of Sydney over many years, some of which are available online. These are accessible through Rare Books and Special Collections.

Major online resources for researchers include Early English Books Online (EEBO) of works printed between 1473 to 1700, and Eighteenth-Century Collections Online (ECCO) of works between 1701 to 1800. JSTOR provides the full-text of major academic journals and scholarly literature from around the world.

Other resources can be found through the Library's Celtic Studies subject guide at <https://libguides.library.usyd.edu.au/c.php?g=508133&p=3475750> which provides a guide to key resources in Celtic Studies.

The University Library also provides the publishing platform for the key journal in Australian Scottish studies, the *Journal of the Sydney Society for Scottish History*, <https://openjournals.library.sydney.edu.au/index.php/JSSSH>, as well as the Sydney Studies in English, <https://openjournals.library.sydney.edu.au/index.php/SSE>.

The University of Sydney Library is open to the public though access to some databases may be restricted to University staff and students. Access to material in Rare Books and Special Collections needs to be made through a reading room booking at <https://library.sydney.edu.au/collections/rare-books/request-form.html>.

Research library collections are the accumulation of acquisitions and gifts over decades and, indeed, centuries. In turn each generation of researchers, staff, students and scholars benefit from these collections whose value increase over time with additional purchases and gifts.