



UCL Special Collections



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UCL Special Collections comprise over half a million rare books, manuscripts, and archives dating back to the fourth century which are open to all. They provide a wealth of resources for individual or group study, and there are many highlights to delight and intrigue anyone who wishes to view them.

UCL Special Collections is recognised as one of the foremost university collections in the UK. Notable highlights of the collection include the papers of Jeremy Bentham, the George Orwell Archive, and the renowned Graves and Ogden personal libraries of rare books and manuscripts.

Unique to UCL are also the archives of institutions and organisations which feature largely, such as the UCL College Archives, the Latin American Business Archives, Jewish communities and the Institute of Education, all of special interest and research value.

The main subject areas covered are the histories of science, medicine, law, art, archaeology, architecture, education, languages, literature, social history (particularly London) and political science. Specialties include 19th and 20th century papers of writers, philosophers, politicians, social reformers, scientists and medical pioneers of the day (for example, Bentham, Henry Brougham, Edwin Chadwick, William Ramsay, and Francis Galton), as well as the specialist libraries of the Malacological Society, the Hertfordshire Natural History Society, and the Johnston-Lavis collection on volcanology.





The manuscripts and early printed book collections contain illuminated religious, literary and scientific texts from the 11th century to the Jacobean period, an extensive range of first editions, and over 150 incunabula. Highlights include rare or unique works by Euclid, Dante, Galileo, Copernicus, Newton, Milton, Flaxman, Bentham, Joyce and Orwell. Added to these are the ground-breaking artistic and literary outputs of the Small Press movement from the end of the 19th century to the present day.

For an overview of our collections, please see the following resources:

UCL Special Collections and UCL historical archives:

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/library/special-collections>

IOE archives and rare books:

<http://libguides.ioe.ac.uk/archspecoll>

<http://libguides.ioe.ac.uk/specialcollections>

Digital Collections

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/library/digital-collections>

Access and location

The Special Collections can be viewed by appointment at our two onsite reading rooms, one in the South Junction of the Wilkins Building and one in the Institute of Education Library, and also at a dedicated reading room at the National Archives in Kew. For further information on holdings, access and opening hours, please contact the relevant enquiry teams:

For UCL rare books and archives:

spec.coll@ucl.ac.uk

020 7679 7827

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/library/special-collections/access-facilities>

For UCL historical archives

(material relating to the history of UCL):

records.office@ucl.ac.uk

020 7679 2065

For IOE rare books and archives

(material relating to the history of education):

ioe.arch-enquiries@ucl.ac.uk

020 7612 6983

<http://libguides.ioe.ac.uk/usingthearchives>

