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Dr Deborah Brunton (The Open University)

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Dr Jenny Cronin (Researcher)

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Introduction to the history of Scottish Healthcare

*Dr Deborah Brunton (The Open University)*

Medical provision to the poorer classes in the period before the NHS has often been criticised as patchy and uneven. However such a view overlooks the establishment of an important principle: that a range of high quality medical care should be open to those unable to pay. This paper explores the establishment of this concept in Scotland by exploring some examples of efforts to care for the sick and to tackle outbreaks of fever in Edinburgh and cholera in Perth in the early nineteenth century.

The Provision of Health Care under the Scottish Poor Law: Central Scotland in the late Nineteenth Century.

*Emeritus Professor John Stewart (Glasgow Caledonian University)*

This paper examines the provision of health care under the Scottish Poor Law in the late nineteenth century, focusing on the Central Belt. It draws on archival material located in record offices/local archives in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Stirling, Dundee, and Paisley.

Following reform in 1845, poor law authorities were required to provide medical relief. This was particularly important in Scotland since, unlike England and Wales, such bodies were forbidden from relieving the ‘able-bodied’. The Scottish system is, therefore, often viewed as a particularly harsh form of social welfare. One outcome was that poor law medical officers felt under considerable pressure to grant medical relief, sometimes when it was not strictly required. There were also significant differences between urban and rural Scotland in terms of what could be expected of poor law health care. Nonetheless the paper also suggests that significant improvements were taking place by the late nineteenth century.

The Archives of the Royal Scottish National Hospital.

*Sarah Bromage (University of Stirling) and Alison Scott (Glasgow Life)*

Established in 1862 the Royal Scottish National Hospital (originally known as the Scottish Institution for the Education of Imbecile Children) was the foremost hospital providing custodial care for mentally impaired children in Scotland in the 19th and 20th centuries. In April 2012 NHS Forth Valley transferred its collection of historical records to the University of Stirling Archives including the records of the Royal Scottish National Hospital (RSNH).
The importance of the RSNH, and the richness of its archives, was recognised by UNESCO in 2013 when the collection was added to the UK Memory of the World Register. Through the support of the Wellcome Trust the University Archives carried out a programme of conservation and cataloguing to provide access to this collection for researchers. In this talk Sarah and Alison will discuss the history of the hospital, the cataloguing and conservation of the collection and future plans for outreach activities utilising the archive.

**Reflections on Scottish convalescent institutions before the NHS, and the records of the Schaw Convalescent Home at Bearsden.**

*Dr Jenny Cronin (Researcher)*

In Scotland, the movement to establish charitable convalescent institutions began in 1860. The perceived benefits of country and seaside convalescent homes in hastening the sick poor back to health, made them hugely popular with sponsors and patients alike. Supply, it seemed, could not keep up with demand; increasing numbers of convalescent homes were established, but most still had waiting lists. The homes were also very popular with infirmaries, particularly because they facilitated an earlier discharge of patients.

In 1896, therefore, the Schaw Convalescent Home opened as a convalescent annex to the Glasgow Royal Infirmary. However, despite a healthy countryside location, it was rarely full, which suggests that there was more to attracting patients than providing convalescence in pleasant surroundings. This paper uses the findings of studies on the origins of Scottish convalescent homes, alongside more recent research into the Schaw Home records, to explain the consistent shortfall in its patient numbers. More importantly, it will provide further explanations for the overall success of convalescent homes before the NHS.

**Peaks and Troughs: The Records of the Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Glasgow.**

*Dr Iain Hutchison, University of Glasgow*

*Child Health in Scotland: A History of Glasgow’s Royal Hospital for Sick Children* was published this year, the culmination of a four-year research project. This paper evaluates both the richness of the archival material on the hospital, and the gaps in the surviving records that meant that other approaches needed to be pursued in order to achieve a fairly rounded story.
It is perhaps ironic that archival records for the period following the creation of the NHS, and especially following the first of several reorganisations of hospital provision from the mid-1970s, were the most problematic. Oral testimony for the later history of the hospital was particularly important, but also provided non-official perspectives from the 1920s onwards. The written records of the hospital begin in 1861, more than two decades before the hospital opened its doors to the first patients. Those early records give an insight to the political jostling in an era when charitable support could generate ungentlemanly behaviour, while early patient casenotes give insight, not only to hospital care in the pre-antibiotic era, but to the social and economic context to Glasgow and a far-flung rural hinterland. Nursing records, combined with oral testimony, show how this undervalued profession care for children, some of who were not many years younger than the nurses themselves.

**William Macewen, a Glasgow Police Surgeon of the 1870s**

*Ross McGregor (Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow)*

In 1871, William Macewen, later to become one of the pioneers of surgery in the 19th century, was appointed Police Surgeon at the Glasgow Central Police Office. The Police Office was used as a clearing station for casualties of all kinds, with Macewen attending to an astonishing variety of cases, from rotten fish to high profile murder cases.

Before Accident and Emergency Units in hospitals, police surgeons regularly dealt with emergency situations and casualties. Often, patients would stumble through the Police Office doors seeking assistance, or the Police Surgeon would be called into the street to attend a crime or accident scene. Already a restless innovator, Macewen used the experience to experiment, research and report on a range of clinical subjects, including infanticide, abortion, fear, homicidal and accidental wounds, gun-shot wounds, and alcoholic coma. Included in our archive of Macewen’s papers are journals, scrapbooks and correspondence relating to this intriguing part of his career. This talk will highlight some key features of these papers.

**The Centenary Year of the Royal College of Nursing**

*Fiona Bourne (Royal College of Nursing Archives)*

In this the 100th year of the Royal College of Nursing, this paper will take a look at the founders and origins of the College and how the centenary has been celebrated throughout 2016. With new library & archive service management since 2012, the archivists have been moving towards this milestone with varying degrees of preparation.
Part of this was the very swift and targeted introduction of an audience engagement plan and a centenary project board. Of particular relevance to staff working in the archives and library special collections teams is how the collections have been used, what sort of events have happened and how the past has been represented. It isn’t history or media or marketing use, it is the balanced engagement with archive collections and information to create a sense of ownership. All this with 2.1 staff! Fiona will explain how they did all this and stayed sane.

**Midwifery matters: Finding sources to shed light upon the 1915 Midwives (Scotland) Act.**

*Dr Lindsey Reid (Scottish Midwifery Researcher)*

The Centenary of the 1915 Midwives (Scotland) Act fell on 23 December 2015. This Act, the primary legislation for midwives in Scotland, allowed for statutory regulation, and organisation of midwifery in Scotland. Similar legislation for midwives in England and Wales was passed in 1902.

Issues surrounding a Midwives Bill for England and Wales included opposition, medical attitudes, both English and Scottish, and why the Bill did not apply to Scotland. Later, came the campaign for, and opposition to, a similar Bill in Scotland. Accordingly, questions arise surrounding a Scottish Bill for midwives: why was there a thirteen year discrepancy between the two Acts? Was there any previous unofficial legislation or education for midwives in Scotland? and, why was the Midwives (Scotland) Act passed when it was?

These questions form the basis of the discussion in this presentation. The paper also includes details of records and sources used in the search for light upon the under-researched 1915 Midwives Scotland Act.

**‘A Charter for Emancipation?’ The Highlands and Islands Medical Service.**

*Dr Patricia Whatley (University of Dundee)*

The Highlands and Islands Medical Service (Dewar) enquiry was established in 1912. The last of the Liberal reforms, it examined medical and nursing services in the Highlands and Islands and concluded that medical services were inadequate and largely dependent on doctors working under the Poor Law.
Following the recommendations of the Dewar Report the Highlands and Islands Medical Service (HIMS) Board was appointed in 1913. Its remit was to administer schemes prepared by the Board to improve the medical and nursing service in the Highlands and Islands, funded by a Treasury grant.

Despite its early progress being hindered by the movement of doctors and nurses out of the Highlands to support the war effort and post war inflation it was successful in improving medical services and has been heralded as the ‘forerunner of the National Health Service’ and ‘a charter for emancipation’ for the doctors who worked within it. This presentation will assess its development.