



The Social History Archive launches curated collections of primary source material for researchers

- *The Social History has launched new 'Primary Source Series' - a set of curated collections of primary source material to aid research and teaching*
- *The collections offer direct access to millions of historical records and newspapers, tailored to research themes*
 - *Collections include both archival materials and historical newspapers, curated in partnership with leading repositories and publishers*

[The Social History Archive](#), the most comprehensive collection of British, Irish and former Empire historical resources online, has launched its new *Primary Source Series*, a major digital initiative designed to offer tailored support to academic research, teaching and learning.

These curated collections bring together digitised historical records and newspapers and offer direct access to the voices, documents, and experiences that shaped the past.

Developed to include materials from leading institutions including The National Archives and the British Library, the *Primary Source Series* are organised thematically—by topic, region, or time period—making it easier for researchers and educators to locate and explore original source material.

The collections span centuries of history and include millions of pages of content, from illustrated journalism and regional newspapers to military service records, crime records, emigration documents, and colonial publications.

Twenty-four *Primary Source Series* are already available, with more planned in the future. Key Series include:

- **Women and War in Britain in the Twentieth Century:** This series delves into the experiences of women taking on essential roles during First and Second World Wars in Britain, both within the military and on the Home Front. It brings together images and transcripts from original records held at The National Archives related to the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC), the Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS or Wrens), the Women's Royal Air Force (WRAF), and the Women's Land Army (Land Girls).
- **Voices of Empire: Newspapers from British Colonial Territories 1771-1962:** Discover over 55 newspaper titles from the British Library's British Newspaper Archive collection offering insight into the British Empire, its expansion, and the narratives that shaped its rule. Covering territories across multiple continents, this collection reveals how the British press was used as a tool of imperial control and influence to justify colonisation under the guise of 'progress' and

‘civilisation’, and highlights the complex ties between colonialism, slavery, and race, among many other topics.

- **Crime, Prisons and Punishment in England and Wales 1770-1935:** This series consists of more than 1.9 million images from The National Archives related to individuals who passed through the justice system in England and Wales between 1770 and 1935. Revealing information on trials, sentences and prison life can be found within.

Designed specifically for use in higher education, *Primary Source Series* enable academics to conduct original research using authentic historical evidence, while also providing educators with rich resources for teaching source analysis and historical thinking. Students benefit from hands-on access to primary materials, fostering independent inquiry and deeper engagement with the past.

Primary Source Series are fully searchable and supported by structured metadata, allowing users to navigate complex archives with ease. Whether exploring societal developments, political change, cultural history, or the legacy of empire, the series opens up a wealth of data and new possibilities for study and scholarship.

Nick Stewart, Lead of The Social History Archive, said: *“We’re delighted to launch our new Primary Source Series. These thematic content collections offer faculties exactly what their academics and researchers need: tailored, high quality primary source data for their area of study. And there are more to come – we’re developing these on an ongoing basis so we can cater to multiple specialisms.”*

For more information or to request a free trial, please email sales@thesocialhistoryarchive.com or visit www.thesocialhistoryarchive.com/primary-source-series.

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For more information, to request images or to discuss feature opportunities, please contact:

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About The Social History Archive

The Social History Archive offers academics and researchers access to the largest collection of British and Irish and former Empire historical resources anywhere online. Catering to a range of academic interests, the ever-growing digital archive provides access to hundreds of millions of images of historical records and newspapers. Thanks to partnerships with some of the world’s most prestigious institutions and archives, like The National Archives and the British Library we can deliver a diverse range of primary sources, enabling research into the people, places and events that have shaped the world. For more see www.thesocialhistoryarchive.com