

ARTS CULTURE & MEDIA

Free access collections and archives

Below is a selection of both free-to-access and restricted archives that are an extremely valuable source of information for researchers. The collection can be accessed and searched via the [JISC Hub features collections](#). Alternatively, access their wide range of [digital resources](#).

[British Library Sound Archive](#)

Almost 45,000 recorded sounds - from music, oral history, performance, accents and dialects to the natural world.

[Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi \(CVMA\): Medieval Stained Glass in Great Britain](#)

Thousands of images of stained glass windows from churches, homes and other buildings, dating back to the Middle Ages and the Reformation, plus a glossary and articles on conservation techniques.

[Early Music Online](#)

The world's oldest printed musical compositions, dating from the 16th century, including for vocal, keyboard and string instruments.

[Eton Myers Collection Virtual Museum](#)

3D models of ancient Egyptian decorative artwork and other rare items gathered from Egypt and the Middle East in the 19th Century, with statues, mummy masks, jewellery, pottery and coins.

[First World War Poetry Digital Archive](#)

Manuscripts and correspondence from British First World War poets, including Vera Brittain; Robert Graves; Wilfred Owen; and Siegfried Sassoon, plus film and other imagery from secondary sources including the Imperial War Museum.

[Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania](#)

From an area of modern day Libya which was once occupied by the Romans, this collection features inscriptions on public monuments, such as panels, altars and statue bases, both pagan and Christian, together with introductory essays.

[Musicians of Britain and Ireland, 1900 to 1950](#)

Access to more than 5000 early recordings by many leading musicians of the early 20th century, some neglected by the newly formed EMI.

[Pre-Raphaelite Online Resource](#)

3000 digital images showing the hugely influential 19th century Pre-Raphaelite art movement.

[Shakespeare Quartos Online](#)

A digital collection of pre-1642 editions of William Shakespeare's plays, noted by audience scribes during performances, including the five earliest editions of the play Hamlet.

[University of Exeter Digital Collections](#)

Rare examples of art, literature and images, including a focus on Britain's Victorian period, during the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, and features such as slides showing the story of 'Alice in Wonderland', dating from around 1900.

[Virtual Manuscript Room](#)

Parchments from an array of mostly Middle Eastern manuscripts that date back well over 1000 years, with early examples of texts from Islam, Judaism and Christianity, such as digitised fragments of one of the earliest Qur'ans, beautifully illustrated Persian manuscripts.

[Visual Arts Data Service](#)

Central access to 45 visual arts collections dating back to the 15th Century and including African and Asian art, all free and copyright cleared for use by the academic and research community.

Restricted access collections and archives

[17th and 18th Century Burney Collection Newspapers](#)

The largest single collection, almost 1300 titles of 17th and 18th century English news media, providing insight into popular opinion and political, cultural and economic news.

[19th Century UK Periodicals](#)

Insights into life in 19th Century Britain, from attitudes to childhood, hobbies, leisure pursuits, comedy and the status of women.

[British Film Institute \(BFI\) Player](#)

British history captured through the lens, with over 11,000 non-fiction films and TV clips covering key social, political and economic issues of the 20th century, including rarely seen government films and newsreels digitised and available free online.

[British Library Electronic Thesis Online \(ETHOS\) Service](#)

Over 250,000 theses on a wide range of subjects from more than 100 participating UK higher education institutions, plus a tool kit and regular news updates.

[Early English Books Online \(EEBO\)](#)

Early printed documents from 1473 to 1700s featuring plays, sermons and literature, including by Shakespeare and Chaucer.

[Eighteenth Century Collections Online](#)

Drawn from over 2,000 libraries, this collection of monographs, published in the British Isles, the British Colonies and North America, contains essays and other rare materials such as advertisements, slip songs and handbills.

[John Johnson Collection: archive of printed ephemera](#)

A wide range of materials including posters, press cuttings, cartoons, biographies and images, with a special emphasis on crime, murders and executions, but also featuring subjects including entertainment, the book trade and advertising.

[NewsFilm Online](#)

More than 3,000 hours of newsreel from the UK's Independent Television News and British Paramount News, and the international agencies Reuters and Gaumont.

[Periodicals Archive Online](#)

Almost 600 periodicals dating back to the 19th Century covering topics ranging from literature and history through to women's studies, psychology and business.