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# DWL Conservation Newsletter



*Anatomische Abbildung des Gehirnes (Leipzig) Drawing by J F Schroter*

Dear Readers,

This conservation newsletter is the first circular to report on ventures undertaken in the Conservation Department at Dr Williams's Library. Conservation matters will be discussed. This small department formally came into existence with the reconstruction of the basement area in 2008. Several initiatives have been carried out on the building internally and externally to make it watertight. Major cleaning projects have been undertaken and the renovation and upkeep of the building naturally create spaces which enhance the collections by establishing the right environments for books and manuscripts. This is an ongoing concern. Considering the age of the library and the building, collection care is a new venture, so bear with us as we slowly catch up with the essential work that has been planned for the next few years. Our next building project will be the insulating of the roof area.

**Manuscripts:** The creation of a database, designed to record the use of each manuscript requested by the library readers, has helped both to prioritize conservation work and to consider future plans for digitization. This, and the setting up of a small conservation studio and two environmentally controlled strongrooms, have proved to be of great value to the library, helping to safeguard its unique collections, but also generating the possibility of creating a number of special projects, designed to preserve and conserve collections that are at risk.

**The DWL Adopt Scheme at Dr Williams's Library:** The Adopt Scheme originally began some years ago but stalled with the building of the new strongrooms. I have decided to reintroduce this scheme, concentrating on vulnerable paper bound books and pamphlets, of which DWL has a wide variety. In the archive these range from the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and include many examples of historic paper, both plain and decorated. Such items are fragile and need protecting but this work can be carried out at reasonable cost. To follow the development of the DWL

Adopt Scheme watch out for an open afternoon in the lecture hall directed especially at those who have already adopted items. Attendees will have a tour of the new strongrooms and conservation department. This will be preceded with three short talks illustrated with slides and then afternoon tea in the lecture hall. The first of these open afternoons will be held in March 2014.

Jane Giscombe  
October 2013