

Research Note

Exploring the Second World War Friends Ambulance Unit and Friends Relief Service Records

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Abstract

This Research Note gives a brief introduction to the Library of the Society of Friends, based at Friends House in London, and focuses on a recent Wellcome Trust-funded project to catalogue and preserve the archival collections of two Quaker relief bodies in the Second World War: Friends Relief Service and Friends Ambulance Unit.¹ The aim is to give a high-level overview of the collections, referencing some of the existing historiography and hopefully shining a light on some areas of particular interest for new academic research.

Keywords

Second World War, humanitarianism, history of medicine, refugees, pacifism, relief

Introduction

In early 2020 the Library of the Society of Friends (LSF) embarked on a project to catalogue and preserve the Second World War Friends Relief Service (FRS) and Friends Ambulance Unit (FAU WW2) archive collections. The project met challenges along the way, not least the disruption caused by the pandemic, which rendered a project which relied on onsite access to physical collections almost untenable for a period of time. We completed the main aims of the project in late 2022.

There are two contemporaneous histories of the work of these organisations, written shortly after the war: *Quaker Relief: an account of the relief work of the Society of*

1 The project 'Creating a World Without War: pacifist approaches to humanitarian relief in World War II and after' (218221/Z/19/Z) was supported by the Wellcome Trust and ran from 2020 to 2022.

Friends, 1940-1948 by Roger C. Wilson (1906–91),² which is an account primarily of the work of FRS, and *Friends Ambulance Unit: the story of the FAU in the Second World War, 1939–1946* by A. Tegla Davies (1912–70).³ Both are very much insider accounts (Wilson was general secretary of FRS, Davies was chair of the executive committee of FAU WW2). There are several published books by former members such as Clifford Barnard's *Binding the Wounds of War: a young relief worker's letters home, 1943–47* and Bill Brough's *To Reason Why*.⁴ In the last ten years, academic interest in the organisations has increased and there have been articles on the work of both organisations, several of which are referenced later on in this research note, as well as chapters in books, and books on specific areas of the work such as Susan Armstrong-Reid's *The China Gadabouts: new frontiers of humanitarian nursing, 1941–51*.⁵ Lyn Smith's *Pacifists in Action: the experience of the Friends Ambulance Unit in the Second World War* based on oral history interviews of FAU WW2 members held at the Imperial War Museum Archives is also essential reading.⁶

The Wellcome Trust-funded project culminated in new online catalogue metadata for the two collections being made available, as well as preventative preservation work on the physical files and volumes. The project, originally scheduled for 24 months but running over by a further six months due to the pandemic, ensured that 117 boxes of FRS archival material and 65 boxes of FAU WW2 archival material are fit for researchers and protected against damage and degradation. Inaccurate finding aids and incomplete lists have been replaced with detailed, multi-level catalogue data ensuring ease of access and searchability including people and place names.

The library and archival holdings at Friends House now offer researchers the chance to look afresh at the FRS and FAU.

Introduction to the Library of the Society of Friends

The Library of the Society of Friends is based at Friends House in London, which is also home to the London-based staff of Quakers in Britain. We are an appointment-only library, open to all and free to use.⁷ Our mission is to develop,

2 Wilson, R., *Quaker Relief: an account of the relief work of the Society of Friends, 1940–1948*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1952.

3 Davies, A. T., *Friends Ambulance Unit: the story of the FAU in the Second World War, 1939–1946*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1947.

4 Barnard, C., *Binding the Wounds of War: a young relief worker's letters home, 1943–47 from the Friends Ambulance Unit and British Red Cross in North-West Europe*, London: Pronoun Press, 2010; Brough, B., *To Reason Why*, Whickham: Hickory Tree Press, 2001.

5 Armstrong-Reid, S., *The China Gadabouts: new frontiers of humanitarian nursing, 1941–51*, Vancouver: UBC Press, 2018.

6 Smith, L., *Pacifists in Action: the experience of the Friends Ambulance Unit in the Second World War*, York: Sessions, 1998.

7 'Visit the Library', *Quakers in Britain*, <https://www.quaker.org.uk/resources/library/visit-the-library>, accessed 07/02/2023.

preserve and share collections relating to Quakers and the Quaker faith in order to support the life of the Church in the present and future and to support a wider understanding of Quaker faith and practice.

In their 2022 archives-based research note for *Quaker Studies*, Jordan Landes and Mary Crauderueff mentioned the story of Quaker libraries and archives starting in the seventeenth century; one of the starting points of the LSF collection was a minute in 1673 recommending the collection of two copies of everything written or published by Quakers, and one copy of anything published against Quakers.⁸ Thus, we have custody of an unparalleled collection of seventeenth-century Quaker and anti-Quaker tracts. As the library formed and developed further in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the published works extended to books which featured Quakers or subjects important to Quakers, journals and periodicals from around the world and academic theses which use our collections.

We hold the central organisational archives for Britain Yearly Meeting (formerly London Yearly Meeting) from the seventeenth century onwards, as well as the archives of independent Quaker organisations and family and personal papers. We also hold the London and Middlesex Quaker Meeting records. (Outside of London, Quaker Meetings deposit their Meeting records locally, most often in the local authority archives. The majority of these can be located using the National Archives Discovery tool.)⁹

In 2021, we finalised an updated collections development policy as part of a process of reviewing our purpose and priorities. The updated policy outlines a prioritised and selective approach which focuses on our unique contribution to Quaker research. It also sets out our aim to develop a collaborative approach, to identify material more suitably held elsewhere and to move away from a focus on the physical custody in one place of all Quaker material.¹⁰ This was both a recognition of the digital age in which access is increasingly online, a practical approach in the face of pressures on physical space and sustainability, and a recognition that in the past we may have collected material of local significance which would be more appropriately kept in its geographic home.

The next steps will be further development of our collections management and digitisation strategies. Part of a collections management strategy includes tackling our backlogs of cataloguing. In 2005, a study in the UK found that 52 per cent of local authority archives had large cataloguing backlogs;¹¹ a similar study on cataloguing backlogs in the North West of England in 2004 found that the majority

8 Minute i, 15th 7mo. 1673, Second Day Morning Meeting of Ministers & Elders (YM/MfS/MOR/M/1), LSF.

9 'Discovery Tool', *The National Archives*, <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>, accessed 07/02/2023.

10 'About the Collections', *Quakers in Britain*, <https://www.quaker.org.uk/resources/library/library-collections>, accessed 07/02/2023.

11 Greene, M. A. and Meisner, D., 'More Product, Less Process: revamping traditional archive cataloguing', *The American Archivist* 68 (2005), p. 210.

of archives surveyed estimated that around a third of their collections were inaccessible.¹² The ‘Logjam’ methodology developed for assessing backlogs which came out of the North West report is still being used, and developed, which suggests the problem of backlogs has not reduced greatly since the original study.¹³

Having backlogs of uncatalogued material is therefore not unique to LSF, and within permanent staffing, only small collections can be catalogued and made accessible. To achieve cataloguing of larger collections we must find external funding. In 2019 we applied to the Wellcome Trust Research Resources section which helped collection and information professionals develop library and archive material for humanities and social science research with a focus on health and the history of medicine.¹⁴ We knew our Second World War humanitarian collections would provide a wealth of information for such research, and with the support of a range of academics, our application was successful and we were granted funding for a two-year cataloguing and conservation project.

Outline of the Project

The project had three main goals: cataloguing the Friends Ambulance Unit (FAU WW2) and Friends Relief Service (FRS) collections; undertaking vital preservation and conservation activities so the collections were protected from further degradation; and promotion of the collections to the research community and wider audiences.

These collections had been open to researchers previously, but with high-level handlists which were inaccurate and of limited use for locating material within the collections. The collections were also still in either original packaging or later non-archival standard packaging, much of which was dirty and difficult to handle. Some parts of the collection had already been closed due to the fragility of the paper or impossible handling conditions of the files.

Project archivist Jill Geber began work in 2020 and made a good start with a new box listing of the FAU WW2 collection before the coronavirus pandemic interrupted progress – initially we thought for a few weeks, but as we all know, the disruption continued for all of 2020 and significant parts of 2021.

12 ‘Logjam: An Audit of Uncatalogued Collections in the North West’, *The National Archives*, <https://cdn.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/Logjamfullreport.pdf>, accessed 07/02/2023.

13 ‘Logjam Methodology for Uncatalogued Archives – New Survey’, *Scottish Council of Archives*, <https://www.scottisharchives.org.uk/latest/news/logjam-methodology-for-uncatalogued-archives-new-survey/>, accessed 07/02/2023.

14 ‘Research Resources’, *The Wellcome Trust*, <https://wellcome.org/grant-funding/schemes/research-resources-awards-humanities-and-social-science>, accessed 07/02/2023 (note this funding scheme is now closed).

We managed to complete the core parts of the project, uploading catalogue data for both collections to our Online Public Access Catalogue by October 2022.¹⁵ There are some improvements still to be made to the catalogues with the addition of metadata for the photograph, film and publications series.

The promotional aspects of the project, due to the challenges to our proposed timescale, have not been as ambitious as we had planned. We have a good network of historians, academics and researchers who we stayed in contact with throughout the project, some of whom have already visited to consult the newly accessible collections. We hope this piece will attract more researchers.

In addition to the research community, we have ambitions of reaching wider audiences. Before the pandemic we provided FRS material to a project for schools created by the University of Central London (UCL) and the London-based Holocaust Educational Trust on the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Belsen.¹⁶ We are keen to work with the Peace Education team in our organisation on school visits and resources. We are in the process of improving the FAU Wikipedia page and creating an FRS Wikipedia page, which will provide improved entry points to the subject matter for a wide public audience. We will be looking for other opportunities to broaden access to these collections.

History of the Organisations

The Religious Society of Friends in Britain first provided relief for victims of war in a centralised way in response to the Franco-Prussian war in the 1870s. From then on, the establishment of an 'emergency' or 'war victims' relief committee to respond to crises and conflict became the vehicle for raising money from Quakers and centrally organising work using these funds; this usually involved sending workers to affected areas to provide feeding programmes, house-building, hospital work and support for those displaced by war.

Although the FAU in the First World War was formed before the introduction of conscription in 1916, its founders saw conscription on the horizon and got ahead of this by creating an organisation to provide an avenue for conscientious objectors who would not join the armed forces effort (Quaker MP Arnold Rowntree (1872–1951) helped found the FAU. It was also one of the driving forces for obtaining conscientious objection in the 1916 Military Service Act in Parliament). The creation of the FAU, a non-combatant body, which nevertheless would work closely with both British and French forces to provide emergency aid to soldiers wounded during fighting, presented an alternative palatable to the

15 FAU collection catalogue top level available here: 'Archives of Friends Ambulance Unit (1939–1946)', *Library of the Society of Friends Catalogue*, <http://quaker.adlibhosting.com/Details/archive/110013908> and FRS collection catalogue top level available here: 'Friends Relief Service', *Library of the Society of Friends Catalogue*, <http://quaker.adlibhosting.com/Details/archive/110014201>, accessed 07/02/2023.

16 'Homepage', *Belsen 75*, <https://www.belsen75.org.uk/>, accessed 07/02/2023.

tribunals assessing individual's conscientious objection. However, due to this close relationship with the military, the FAU was not a universally accepted organisation in the Religious Society of Friends, and therefore was set up as a separate, independent body.

The Second World War saw the creation of both types of organisation again: a centrally managed War Victims Relief Committee, which would eventually become Friends Relief Service, and another iteration of the FAU as an independent body, albeit now reporting to the Yearly Meeting as some other independent but closely connected Quaker charities did.

A 'Germany Emergency Committee' had already been created in 1933 when Hitler seized power in Germany, in a characteristically prescient move by Quakers, who understood there would be great need for support when the Nazis started imposing fascist measures on the Jewish population, as well as any other elements in society who openly opposed them. This committee would go on to be named the Friends Committee for Refugees and Aliens (FCRA).

The work of all three bodies occasionally overlapped, members seconded between them and different parts of the organisations were merged at various times, so it is necessary to study all three to get a full picture of the nationally organised Quaker humanitarian response to the Second World War. They also interacted with similar committees set up at local level by monthly and local Meetings in the UK, as well as Quaker charities, such as the Bedford Institute Association. However, our project, funded by the Wellcome Trust, focused on cataloguing the FRS and FAU WW2 collections only.

In simple terms, FAU WW2 tended to do work which was medical in nature, and predominantly in conflict zones, from giving medical aid to soldiers, to providing inoculations and other medical aid to civilian populations. Two of their best-known programmes in the Second World War were: their China Convoy work, which involved providing medication and medical aid to communities in China who were cut off by the Sino-Japanese War and affected by the civil war;¹⁷ and the Hadfield Spears Unit, which was a mobile surgical unit operating in the Middle East.¹⁸ The FAU WW2 also did domestic aid work, such as helping in

17 This area of work is well known due to the size of the FAU programme but also due to a thriving network of relatives of the China Convoy members, several of whom have published books on the subject often featuring family archive material. Examples include Hicks, A., *A True Friend to China: "the lost writings of a heroic nobody"*. *The Friends Ambulance Unit "China Convoy", 1945–1951*, Hong Kong: Earnshaw Books, 2015, and Jones, D., *A Life on the Road Less Traveled: the story of Parry Jones*, West Conshohocken, PA.: Infinity Publishing, 2008.

18 There is less published about the Hadfield-Spears work from the FAU perspective. Laure Humbert explains what the archives hold for those studying the relationship between FAU and the Free French forces in a blogpost on her project site: <https://colonialandtransnationalintimacies.com/2021/02/03/example-post-2/>, accessed 07/02/2023.

hospitals in London during the Blitz, but gradually most of this UK work was handed over to FRS.

The work of FRS was generally less strictly medical in nature, and less 'emergency response' than the FAU WW2, and spanned both domestic work and overseas work. Much of the work of the FRS, especially on the domestic front, was referred to as 'social services' work and would indeed lay the bedrock for changing ideas about what kind of care in the community we should have for the elderly and vulnerable in society, which would feed into the post-war development of the National Health Service (launched 1948).¹⁹ In Europe, their work was mainly in supporting displaced persons and took place towards the end of the war and after.

Historian Nerissa Aksamit discusses this distinction in terms of the 'first, second and third phases of relief' in more detail in the introduction to 'Training Friends and Overseas Relief: The Friends Ambulance Unit and the Friends Relief Service, 1939 to 1948', going on to discuss how this difference in activity in the field impacted both organisations.²⁰

Areas for Research

The collections cover a broad range of activities and an interesting range of people. As well as the potential for medical history research, social history research and research into conflict in the twentieth century, the records give an insight into the development of Quaker humanitarianism specifically; the lessons learned during the Second World War would impact greatly on the British Quaker approach to this work in the second half of the century. It is also possible to detect through the collections the great challenge fascism mounted to pacifism in this period. Tobias Kelly, writing about the FAU in the Second World War, alludes to this challenge (as well as the already discussed tensions in the FAU in regard to working closely with the military):

The question of whether it was actually possible to live with a commitment to peace in the midst of such widespread violence, and the linked question of just what compromises had to be made in order to relieve the suffering of others, would haunt the FAU throughout the six years of war.²¹

¹⁹ Roger Wilson, general secretary of FRS went on to become Professor of Education and Social Development at University of Bristol and sat on advisory boards for the newly established NHS.

²⁰ Aksamit, N. K., 'Training Friends and Overseas Relief: the Friends Ambulance Unit and the Friends Relief Service, 1939 to 1948' (2019), Graduate Theses, West Virginia University Research Repository, 7405, <https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/etd/7405>, accessed 07/02/2023.

²¹ Kelly, T., *Battles of Conscience: British pacifists and the Second World War*, London: Chatto & Windus, 2022, p. 186.

There are reflections throughout the FAU WW2 and FRS collections from members whose pacifism was sorely tested by this conflict.

Unique Nature of Quaker Humanitarianism

Quakers were not the only bodies involved in Second World War relief work who espoused Christian or pacifist beliefs, but it does seem that having these values at their core and having a strong lobbying approach led to Quakers establishing unique ways of working in the field, at odds with official bodies such as governmental organisations and military forces who were forced to bend their rules to benefit from Quaker assistance. This was seen in the starkest contrast in the European relief work at the end of, and in the aftermath of the war, where Quakers sidestepped non-fraternisation rules and insisted on aiding all those in need, not just allies in need. Fiona Reid and Sherif Gemie discuss this unique approach in their 2013 *Quaker Studies* article, ‘The Friends Relief Service and Displaced People in Europe after the Second World War, 1945–48’.²² The newly catalogued collections may provide an interesting point of comparison with those of other contemporaneous relief bodies to find further points of difference or commonality in approaches.

Quaker Organisations

For anyone interested in Quaker organisational theory, there is much to learn from these collections, and a comparison to be made between the two. Both organisations ran on similar lines with committees and sub-committees taking high-level decisions, carrying out strategic planning, assigning budgets, and sections, or departments carrying out operational work ‘on the ground’. Interestingly, both organisations faced calls from their membership for more representation in decision-making, finding the committee structure too remote, bureaucratic and hierarchical.

In 1952, Roger Wilson (1906–91), former general secretary of FRS, gave a useful overview of the tensions within, and between both organisations in terms of their organisational approaches in an appendix to his history of the FRS.²³ This is a good entry point before understanding the complex layers of committees, and constant re-organisations reflected in the records.

People

There were many notable people who served in the FAU WW2 and FRS. A list of some of those who were members of the FAU WW2 be found on the current FAU Wikipedia page.²⁴ Many went on to do work that drew on their wartime

²² Reid, F. and Gemie, S., ‘The Friends Relief Service and Displaced People in Europe After the Second World War, 1945–48’, *Quaker Studies* 17 (2013), pp. 223–43.

²³ Wilson, *Quaker Relief*.

²⁴ ‘Friends Ambulance Unit’, *Wikipedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friends%27_Ambulance_Unit#People_associated_with_the_FAU, accessed 07/02/2023.

experiences, such as Chris Barber (1921–2012) who became an influential chair of Oxfam,²⁵ and Laurie Baker (1917–2007) whose egalitarian approach to architecture in India earned him the nickname ‘the Gandhi of architecture’.²⁶ Researching in the collections can provide an insight into individuals’ specific experiences, and the general experiences which contributed to their activities and outlook in later life.²⁷

There are series of personnel records which could provide fruitful sources of broader analysis. Both collections have personnel cards which have been microfilmed. The FAU First World War personnel cards have been digitised and give an idea of the biographical and service record information the cards hold.²⁸ (We hope in future to secure funding to digitise the Second World War personnel cards also.) FAU WW2 has various other lists under the personnel office including weekly and monthly ‘disposition’ lists tracking where members are and what they are engaged in, and specific lists for different training and activities. FRS likewise has ‘disposition’ lists and information on training of members. Of particular note, FAU WW2 has detailed personnel files under its China Convoy section records for local staff who were recruited on the ground in China. The personnel records contain a lot of biographical information which could lend itself to statistical analysis (such as religious belief or social background of those who worked for the FAU). These files also give a fascinating insight into wartime life in China and the pressures on young Chinese people living in a time of great upheaval, with correspondence between the workers and others, and between FAU staff about the workers. Often, they highlight the close friendships and intimacy between FAU China Convoy workers. One letter from ‘Dora’ Chau, a young Chinese woman who worked as a stenographer in the FAU headquarters, to Duncan Wood illustrates this intimacy:

Social activity in Kunming, I find, can be even more hectic than during pre-war times in coastal towns. I realized almost immediately I arrived that one would have to make a few rules, and stick to them – or health, wealth, and reputation all go. So I say on average 150 times a week... ‘I’m sorry but I don’t date Americans in town’, which is sometimes followed by explanations of why I don’t.²⁹

25 Chris Barber obituary, *The Times*, 20 August 2012.

26 Burte, H., ‘Laurie Baker (1917–2007)’, *Architectural Review*, 25 November 2019, <https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/reputations/laurie-baker-1917-2007>, accessed 07/02/2023.

27 Letters from Laurie Baker while working as part of the China Convoy can be found at MSS 876/SECTIONS/CC/CHI/MED/3, and both Baker and Chris Barber feature in the staff meeting notes for China Convoy at MSS 876/SECTIONS/CC/LON/10–15, LSF.

28 ‘Friends Ambulance Unit World War One Personnel’, *Quakers in Britain*, <https://fau.quaker.org.uk/>, accessed 07/02/2023.

29 Letter from ‘Dora’ Chau to Duncan Wood, 15 June 1944 (MSS 876/SECTIONS/CC/CHI/PER/9), LSF.

We would like to do more to highlight these collections to non-Quaker audiences who may not realise the diverse nature of this primary source material. It is also worth noting that while war victims' relief work had been done centrally by women before, the Second World War was the first time the FAU formally allowed women to become members and this was not without opposition at the time, which is documented at various points in the collection.

Both organisations also had internal publications and circulars which shed much light on the day-to-day life of their members. FAU WW2's main internal publication was *The Chronicle*, and for FRS it was *The Star*. These publications can give a different perspective to the events described, perhaps more drily and diplomatically, in minutes and reports, and certainly give a great impression of the personalities of the members. For example, in a snippet from *The Star* (no. 20) 1944, we get the impressions of a relief worker staffing a Colonial Seamen's Centre in Liverpool. In a short paragraph we get a sense of the sort of social tensions that this work could give rise to, and perhaps the opinions of the relief workers, which would rarely be revealed in the same way in minutes or reports:

Our biggest trouble is the food; the men eat lots of rice and the food must all be highly spiced and well laced with pepper; I hate to think of my digestion in a few months' time. The cook is West African, he is an old rascal who would fetch tears to an F.R.S. hostel warden's eyes. Rationing does not mean a thing to him, in private life he only deals with the black market, and he expects me to do the same.³⁰

Activities

The FAU organised its members into distinct sections for work in various settings in the UK and overseas. Therefore, the main records of the field work will be found under the 'Sections' sub-fonds in the catalogue. Where collection references are absent below, the information on these sections of the organisation will be found throughout minutes, reports and other documents in the collection as there was no clear sub-fonds of records surviving for these activities (either as the records did not survive or the work was too dispersed to create whole record series).

Home (UK) Sections included:

- Harvesting (closed down 1945)
- Hospitals (in various locations, from 1940 to 1945) (MSS 876/SECTIONS/HOS)
- Language Training Section at Chelsea (1945–1946)
- London Sections (1940–1942)

30 *The Star*, no. 20, 1944 (FRS/PUB/STAR/3), LSF.

- Relief and Shelter Sections (1940–1942)
- Women's Section (1940–1941)

Overseas Sections included:

- Austria (1945–1946) (MSS 876/SECTIONS/AUS)
- China Convoy (1941–1946) (MSS 876/SECTIONS/CC)
- Ethiopia (1942–1945) (MSS 876/SECTIONS/ETH)
- Finland Convoy (Jan-Oct 1940) (MSS 876/SECTIONS/FC)
- Free French Forces: Hadfield Spears Hospital (1940–1945) and S.I. 84155 (1941–1945) (MSS 876/SECTIONS/FFHS)
- Mediterranean (1943–1945) (MSS 876/SECTIONS/MED)
- Middle East (1940–1943) (MSS 876/SECTIONS/ME)
- North-West Europe (1944–1945) (MSS 876/SECTIONS/NWE)
- Spears Clinics in Syria (1941–1946) (MSS 876/SECTIONS/SC)

FRS organised its work in departments, and therefore the main records of the field work will be found under the 'Departments' sub-fonds in the catalogue. The main areas of activities – evacuation and hostels work, and that carried out overseas – are summarised below.

FRS was responsible for the evacuation of groups of people from London and provincial towns and cities bombed between 1940 and 1942 and for the administration of about 80 hostels, which it established in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The hostel files are organised by the name / area of the hostel so one can search the name of a hostel, and find the relevant records, or browse through a list of hostels.³¹

The overseas work is broken down by area. The areas covered are:

- Austria (1944–1948) (FRS/OSD/RT/AUS)
- France (1943–1948) (FRS/OSD/RT/FRA)
- Germany (1944–1948) (FRS/OSD/RT/GER)
- Gibraltar evacuees (1944–1946) (FRS/OSD/RT/GIB)
- Greece, Middle East and Balkans (1939–1948) (FRS/OSD/RT/GRME)
- Italy (1943–1946) (FRS/OSD/RT/ITA)
- Morocco (Casablanca) (1943–1945) (FRS/OSD/RT/MOR)

31 'Evacuation and Hostels Files', *Library of the Society of Friends Catalogue*, <http://quaker.adlibhosting.com/Details/archive/110014052>, 07/02/2023.

- Netherlands (1944–1950) (FRS/OSD/RT/NL)
- Poland (1943–1948) (FRS/OSD/RT/PL)
- Palestine and East Africa (work with Polish refugees) (1942–1944) (FRS/OSD/RT/PREF)

There are other smaller projects also covered in the collection, such as FRS involvement in running citizens advice bureaus in Britain.

Concluding Thoughts

There is not enough space here to go into detailed descriptions of these large collections but we hope this article has given a good overview and indicated some of the research potential therein. We would like to thank all the academics and stakeholders who supported us, and offered advice and motivation before and during this project. We are very grateful to the Wellcome Trust who responded in a hugely supportive manner to the pandemic and were unfailingly enthusiastic about these collections and their potential.

Author Details

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