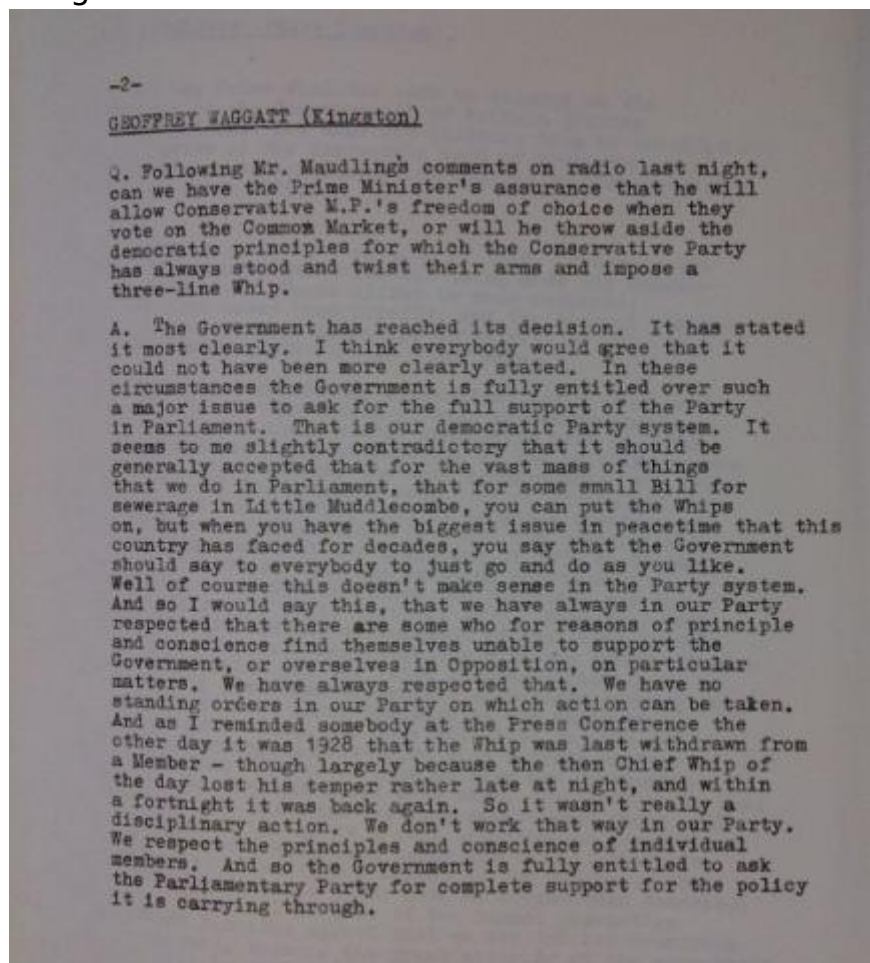


Bodleian Libraries acquire Sir Edward Heath Archive

16 June 2011

The Bodleian Libraries, with support from the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF), have acquired the archive of former Conservative Prime Minister, Sir Edward Heath (1916-2005).

Image



A question from Party members at the Central Council meeting in July 1971

It comprises almost 1,000 boxes and includes a rich and diverse collection of papers from his time in office, in the shadow cabinet, as well as personal papers from his early life as an undergraduate at Balliol College, and his active role in student politics during the 1930s.

The archive has great research potential as it offers a range of primary sources for scholars and students with an interest in 20th century history and politics.

Biographers will also be able to reveal less-known aspects of Heaths' private life such as his distinguished war service, and of his passion for music and sailing.

Vernon Bogdanor, Research Professor, Institute of Contemporary History, King's College, London; formerly Professor of Government, Oxford University, said: "Edward Heath was one of the most influential politicians and prime ministers of the post-war period. His archive will enable historians and political scientists to obtain a deep understanding of his political legacy; and it will undoubtedly serve as a rich resource for graduate students in a variety of disciplines."

Dr Sarah Thomas said: "The Heath archive is an essential link in the chain of papers of 20th century prime ministers that the Bodleian already holds. This unrivalled resource includes the papers of Prime Ministers Asquith, Attlee, Macmillan, Wilson and Callaghan, as well as Disraeli's from the nineteenth century. Scholars will welcome the opportunity to review public and private papers relating to the entry of Britain into the EU, and the many other political events in which Edward Heath played a significant role. This archive will surely be at the heart of future historical study of post-war Britain."

Carole Souter, Chief Executive of the NHMF, commented: "This is a rich and fascinating archive, documenting major historical events that have shaped this country. The National Heritage Memorial Fund was set up over 30 years ago to save our most important heritage and the Heath archive represents just that. I am delighted it will now be safeguarded for the public and scholars alike to review and learn from."

An Oxford alumnus, Sir Edward Richard George "Ted" Heath, KG, MBE (9 July 1916 – 17 July 2005) served as Conservative Prime Minister from 1970 to 1974 and was Leader of the Conservative Party from 1965 to 1975. He continued to have a major influence on British politics throughout his life and was Father of the House from 1992-2001.

The Heath Archive complements other holdings of modern British political papers within the Bodleian's Department of Special Collections, which also includes the Conservative Party Archive as well as the papers generated by numerous politicians of all parties, public servants, diplomats, journalists and broadcasters from 1840 to the present. The Conservative Party Archive was established as a source for academic study at the Bodleian Library, Oxford in 1978.

The archive has been saved thanks to the generous support of Friends of the Bodleian and numerous private donors and a grant from the National Heritage

Memorial Fund (NHMF) towards the purchase.

The archive is to be catalogued. Full access will be given to scholars and researchers after cataloguing is completed in 2012 but it is expected that some earlier access will be possible on a case-by-case basis.

Notes to editors

Sir Edward Heath

Sir Edward was born in 1916 at Broadstairs, Kent, and educated at Chatham House Grammar School in Ramsgate and Balliol College, Oxford, before serving in the Royal Artillery at home and in Europe during World War 2, and later in the Honourable Artillery Company. He entered Parliament in 1950 as MP for Bexley, serving in the Conservative Governments from 1951 to 1964 as (successively) a Whip, Chief Whip, Minister of Labour, Lord Privy Seal at the Foreign Office, and Secretary of State for Industry, Trade and Regional Development. Sir Edward served under Sir Winston Churchill, Sir Anthony Eden, Mr Harold Macmillan and Sir Alec Douglas-Home, and was Leader of the Conservative Party for 10 years between 1965 and 1975, and serving as Prime Minister from 1970 to 1974, during which he signed the Treaty of Accession in Brussels. He continued to sit in the House of Commons for his constituency, Old Bexley and Sidcup, up to his retirement in 2001 and was Father of the House from 1992 to 2001.

About the archive

The archive contains:

- Personal papers, including papers back to his school days, studies at Balliol College, Oxford in the 1930s, and trips as an observer to Nazi Germany in the late 1930s and Spain during the Civil War;
- Papers from his time in various ministerial positions, 1959-1964;
- Papers as Shadow Chancellor, 1964;
- Papers as Leader of the Opposition, 1965-1970;
- Papers as Prime Minister, 1970-1974;
- Papers as Leader of the Opposition, 1974-1975;
- Papers from the period after he ceased being Leader of the Conservative Party, 1975-c2005;
- Material relating to his interest in European integration, 1939-1999
- Material related to his many personal interests including music and sailing.

The archive was purchased for the nation for £825,000. A significant tranche of official papers did not form part of the sale, but were donated by the Heath Trustees along with the rest of the archive.

The acquisition has been made possible thanks to generous support from The National Heritage Memorial Fund, the Friends of the Bodleian and numerous private donors.

The Bodleian Libraries

The Bodleian Libraries of the University of Oxford form the largest university library system in the United Kingdom. They include the principal University library—the Bodleian Library—which has been a library of legal deposit for 400 years; major research libraries; and libraries attached to faculties, departments and other institutions of the University. The combined library collections number more than 11 million printed items, in addition to 30,000 e-journals and vast quantities of materials in other formats. For additional information see www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk.

Further information

For enquiries on the [Bodleian Libraries](http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk) contact Sarah Henderson, Head of Library Communications,

Phone: 01865 287 398 Email: sarah.henderson@bodleian.ox.ac.uk.

Alternatively, speak to Oana Romocea, Press Officer,

Phone: 01865 277 627 Email: oana.romocea@bodleian.ox.ac.uk.