

Three AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Awards

From Servants to Staff: the Whole Community in the Chatsworth Household 1700- 2000

Applications are invited for three doctoral studentships commencing on 1 October 2015, funded by the AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Awards Scheme. Each three year studentship covers fees and an annual maintenance grant.

This project forms part of an established working relationship between the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at the University of Sheffield and The Chatsworth House Trust.

Project director: Dr Jane Hodson
(School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics)

University supervisors: Dr Karen Harvey (Department of History)
Dr Clare Griffiths (Department of History)
Dr Julia Moses (Department of History)

Chatsworth supervisors: Matthew Hirst (Head of Art and Historic Collections)
James Towe (Archivist and Librarian)

Application deadline: 12 Noon 23rd April 2015.

1. Overall Project Description

The aim of this project is to use the extensive archival materials in the Devonshire Collection in order to gain an understanding of the wider community who have lived and worked at Chatsworth over the past three centuries, brought together by relationships of work and service. It will employ an interdisciplinary linguistic-historical approach to explore the changing relationship between masters/employers and servants/staff between 1700 and 2000.

Key research questions to be addressed include:

- how has the language used about servants and estate workers in these archives changed across this time?
- how have the working conditions of those employed in and around the house changed?
- how has Chatsworth functioned as a community at different times?
- how can Chatsworth represent the stories of the people who have worked for the Cavendish family in an ethical and engaging manner?

The project comprises three interconnected PhD projects, which are described in detail below. Each will be a coherent project in its own right, but taken together the three projects will chart a compelling narrative across three centuries of social and economic change.

For Chatsworth the students will work on the sorting, cataloguing and indexing of household, staff, and estate records. They will prepare reports for the Collections team, write entries for the Chatsworth blog, and provide briefings on their findings to Collections and Education staff and Room Guides at Chatsworth. The 20th century project will include an oral history aspect with the results to be incorporated into the archive at Chatsworth.

2. The Three Projects

Project One: Long eighteenth century (co-supervised with Dr Karen Harvey) "Community, Conflict and Change at Chatsworth, 1700-1820"

The eighteenth century witnessed extensive building work at Chatsworth as successive Dukes updated and 'improved' the house. This consolidated the family's public and political authority at a time when significant political upheaval and social unrest threatened the traditional hierarchies upon which the Aristocracy's power was based. In theory, the household remained a microcosm of society yet on estates such as Chatsworth the family community was

threatened by new ideas about the role of the family in the state and by widening pay gaps amongst servants. This thesis will examine the community of the Chatsworth household estate in the context of these major transformations. Possible research questions include:

- How did the identity of the estate 'family' – and the place of servants within it – transform in the context of wider cultural and political transformations?
- What implications did the redesign of the house have for the relationship between 'masters' and 'servants'?
- What were the changing economic, spatial, social and linguistic distinctions between servants?
- Did the divisions between traditional elites and lower ranks and the differences amongst servants visible elsewhere impact on the Chatsworth community?

Project Two: Nineteenth century (co-supervised with Dr Julia Moses)

"A Community of Masters and Servants? Chatsworth, 1811-1914"

The nineteenth century saw the relocation of the village of Edensor, which provided (and continues to provide) housing for many of the staff on the estate. It is telling that this was also the era that saw the rise of numerous Master and Servant Acts which revolutionised employment relations in the UK and across the British Empire. By the end of the century, a new language – and understanding – of work came to replace this paradigm: servants were now 'workers', or even 'employees', and masters had been relegated to the more humble position of 'employers'. This thesis examines Chatsworth as an optic into this transformation, and it suggests that the case of Edensor epitomises the growing complexity of relationships between workers and employers, masters and servants, in Britain during the nineteenth century.

Possible research questions include:

- Why and how did the relocation of the village of Edensor take place?

- How did it relate to emerging ideas of health and wellbeing in relation to labour?
- How does it reflect changing assumptions about 'service' and 'employment'?

Project Three: Twentieth century (co-supervised with Dr Clare Griffiths)

The making of a modern estate: employment & service at Chatsworth in the 20th century

The twentieth century was a precarious period for landed estates and country houses. The disruption caused by two world wars, the impact of taxation, the economic travails of agriculture, and shifts in political power and social hierarchies all brought challenges to the integrity and sustainability of estates like Chatsworth. This doctoral project will consider the experience of those who made up the wider estate community, exploring the reconfiguration of their terms of employment and experience of service during the reshaping of one of the great landed estates. Building on recent studies of domestic service in the twentieth century, the study will make use of archival material and oral history interviews to examine the extent to which workers on the estate did – or did not – identify their own interests with those of Chatsworth itself.

Possible research questions include:

- What encouraged people to take up employment at Chatsworth in this period?
- Did they perceive their terms of service as distinct from those applicable in other types of work?
- How did the estate's changing fortunes affect employer/employee relations?
- Did the notion of an estate 'community' retain any purchase in the face of increased personal mobility, evolving notions of class, and the impact of mass media and new forms of leisure?

3. Research Materials at Chatsworth

The starting point for research will be the substantial (but incomplete) records that Chatsworth hold relating to the employment of household and other staff at Chatsworth and to those people living and working on the estate. They include: wage books for the house and garden; records of deaths and retirements; pension records; and later national insurance records and a small photographic collection. There are other collections from which information about servants and staff can be inferred such as household accounts; estate accounts; rentals; and estate and household vouchers; and the building accounts and plans which tell us about the changes to the fabric of the house.

Research in these records will be supplemented by reference to other archival material, most significantly the extensive correspondence held for each of the Dukes and for other family members; and the papers of notable individuals once in the employ of the Cavendish family, such as Thomas Hobbes and Joseph Paxton.

4. Dissemination and public engagement

Throughout the project, the students will work with the Collections team and the Education team to consider how the findings from the project can be presented to the public, culminating in an exhibition at Chatsworth on 'Staff and Servants at Chatsworth to 1950', new learning resources for schools, and historical resources on the website. It is also anticipated that the project will provide opportunities for the successful candidates to engage with the media.

5. Supervision and Training

The supervision of each of these students will be shared between two academic supervisors (Dr Hodson, and Dr Griffiths/Harvey/Moses), plus the non-academic supervisor from Chatsworth. During the first year of supervision, a co-supervision model will be adopted between the academic supervisors, and each student will meet every 4-6 weeks with both academic supervisors to ensure a joint input of linguistic and historical perspectives into the formulation of their research project.

Upon successful PhD Confirmation at the end of the first year, it will be agreed what is the most appropriate structure for the remainder of project.

These three students will be part of the White Rose College of the Arts & Humanities (WRoCAH), working alongside the main competition cohort. Within the framework of the WRoCAH Programme, PGR students in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities devise an individually-tailored programme of training through the Doctoral Development Programme, under the guidance of their supervisors. They can attend modules or take part in more informal training events, depending on their specific needs. In the case of these studentships, the Sheffield History MA module HST6042 'Presenting the Past' would provide robust training in public history, while the English Language MA module EGH625 'Linguistics in Practice' would enable students to develop the skills relevant to the linguistic component of this project. The Faculty-level module IDP6034 'Practical Public Engagement' is designed specifically for doctoral level, and will be strongly recommended to these students. Research development also takes places informally through the extensive programme of departmental and PG discussions groups.

6. Person Specification

Essential skills, qualities and knowledge:

- A first class or upper second class honours degree in a relevant discipline, such as: History, English Literature, English Language, Sociology, Geography, Archaeology. Candidates would normally be expected to hold a Master's degree in a relevant area by 1 October 2015.
- Experience of undertaking archival research, textual research and/or qualitative research (including oral history interviews).
- An appreciation of the confidentiality and Data Protection issues which may arise from the study of such material.
- Ability to be self-motivated, well-organized, and to respond to constructive criticism.
- Ability to work collaboratively as part of a team.

- Willingness to take a full part in the University of Sheffield postgraduate community, and the research activities of the School of English, Department of History and Chatsworth.

Desirable skills, qualities and knowledge:

- Experience of working in collaboration with non-academic organisations.
- Experience of writing for different audiences.
- Experience of sorting/cataloguing archival collections

7. Eligibility

AHRC studentships are only available to students from the UK or European Union. Applications cannot be accepted from students liable to pay fees at the Overseas rate. Normally UK students will be eligible for a full award which pays fees and a maintenance grant if they meet the residency criteria and EU students will be eligible for a fees-only award, unless they have been resident in the UK for 3 years immediately prior to taking up the award.

Please read the [RCUK Student Funding Guide](#) for further details.

8. How to apply

Applicants are advised to contact the project director (Jane Hodson j.hodson@sheffield.ac.uk) and/or the relevant university supervisors (Karen Harvey k.harvey@sheffield.ac.uk; Julia Moses j.moses@sheffield.ac.uk; Clare Griffiths clare.griffiths@sheffield.ac.uk) to discuss their application in the first instance.

To apply for a studentship, please send an email containing the following to j.hodson@sheffield.ac.uk:

- (1) a c.v. detailing your academic record (no more than 3 pages);
- (2) academic transcript from your university/universities;
- (3) names and contact details for two referees who will be able to provide a reference by the interview on 11th May at latest if required;

(4) 800 word statement of purpose.

As the general scope of the projects is already defined, the 800 word statement of purpose should explain: why you would be interested in undertaking this particular programme of research; your own ideas for the research; what experience and skills you would bring to the position.

Please use the statement to indicate which of the three studentships you wish to be considered for. If you are interested in more than one of the studentships please indicate your order of preference.

The statement should also include details about previous research experience and training, and anything else that you feel is relevant.

Deadline for applications is 12 noon Thursday 23rd April 2015. Please send applications direct to j.hodson@sheffield.ac.uk.

Interviews will take place at the University of Sheffield on Monday 11th May 2015.