

Postgraduate Travel Award

The Birmingham Eighteenth-Century Centre and the [British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies](http://www.bsecs.org.uk/) are delighted to invite applications for their first annual postgraduate travel award.

The award is designed to support a doctoral researcher enrolled at a UK university or postdoctoral researcher normally resident in the UK in visiting and using the eighteenth-century resources of the [Cadbury Research Library](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/facilities/cadbury/index.aspx) at the University of Birmingham. The extensive eighteenth-century holdings of this collection are detailed [here](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/activity/18c/research/Library.aspx).

Applicants are also encouraged to take advantage of the rich eighteenth-century resources available in Birmingham more widely, including the Library of Birmingham, Birmingham Museum Trust, Soho House, Think Tank and the Assay Office, as well as the Barber Institute of Fine Arts at the University of Birmingham.

2014 winner

The 2014 winner was Freya Gowrley (Edinburgh)

As the recipient of the BSECS and Birmingham Centre for Eighteenth-Century Studies Travel Award I spent a week in the Cadbury Research Library, part of the University of Birmingham's thriving research culture. The travel award gave me the opportunity to conduct work vital for the completion of my PhD, which examines the relationship between women, material culture and domesticity in the period 1760-1820. Whilst there, I consulted a huge array of eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century sources, including scrap books, diaries, pocket books, travel journals and letters (many of which are included in the [BECC reading list](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/activity/18c/research/Library.aspx)).

Specifically, I focused on correspondence and ephemera relating to women's experiences, paying particular attention to records of gift exchange, travel journalism and collecting or purchasing material objects. These included the travel diary of Mary Ann Keene, a young girl who described a familial tour through the West of England and Wales in fascinating detail, and the letters of Ann Ambler, written mostly to her cousin's children, and which shed crucial light on schooling and educative practices in late eighteenth-century Britain. I also examined the diaries of Ann Prest, kept using the *Ladies own Memorandum Book* of 1771. Filled with short, daily entries regarding Prest's day-to-day activities, the diaries constitute important examples of this kind of journal-keeping, whilst simultaneously providing information on contemporary forms of social activities such as tea drinking, travelling, and weddings. Finally, I was able to consult the capacious Jerningham correspondence, comprised of 1764 letters and 10 volumes of journals. Like the Ambler letters, many of the Jerningham letters discuss the young family members' time at school, and also include letters from well-known correspondents, such as the 'Ladies of Llangollen' and Fanny Burney.

During my time at the Cadbury, both the archivists and colleagues from the University of Birmingham were welcoming and extremely helpful. Several of the Cadbury's archivists took time out of their own schedules to sit with me and discuss further resources to consult during my time there, and if I had any queries or problems at all, they were quickly and efficiently dealt with. Ultimately, visiting the Cadbury Research Library allowed me to access a wealth of primary source materials dealing with essential themes for my PhD thesis, which I would have been unable to consult without the Travel Award.

Informal enquiries about the award may also be directed to becc@contacts.bham.ac.uk.