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Toc H Resource Guide

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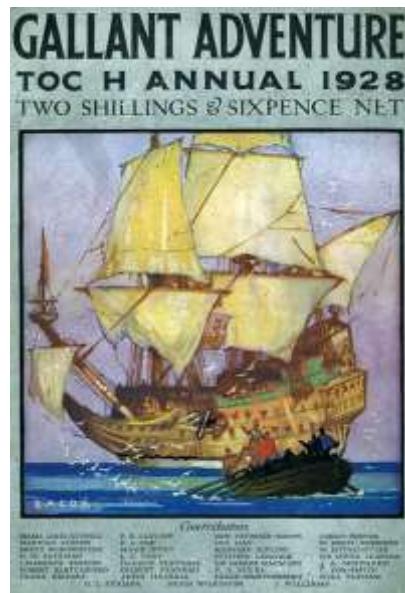


TOC H ARCHIVE: **RESOURCE GUIDE**

This guide provides an overview of the scope and content of the Toc H Archive held at the Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham. The collection comprises a large quantity of archival materials charting the activities and development of the Toc H Christian organisation throughout much of the 20th century and into the 21st century.

The Toc H Archive is of potential use for exploring the history of charitable initiatives, the development of community work, projects and activities with young people, as well as wider issues relating to health and wellbeing.

We welcome enquiries from potential researchers at any level and are very pleased to offer advice and assistance in using our archives in one-to-one or small group sessions by appointment.



Overview

Records of Toc H include administrative papers, including minutes of Central Council together with minutes of many of its committees. These committees include the Elections Committee, Central Executive Committee, Finance and Property Committee (formerly separate committees), Revenue Committee, Women's Association Joint Appeals Committee, Youth Service Committee, Schools Committee, Central House Committee, General Purposes Committee, Personnel Committee and National Projects Committee.

The collection also includes extensive sequences of records relating to individual Toc H branches, as well as material relating to Toc H membership and information about individual Marks and centres. There are papers relating to the League of Women Helpers as well as papers relating to work with the military services.

The collection comprises large quantities of photographs of individuals associated with Toc H and activities undertaken; a significant amount of Toc H publications and promotional literature including handbooks, magazines and journal issues; and documents relating to Toc H national strategy and policy. The collection also includes newspaper cuttings, artefacts, sound and audio visual materials.

Material is arranged into the following series:

- /A: Central administration
- /B: Local administration
- /C: League of Women Helpers
- /D: Events
- /E: Community Work
- /F: Military Services
- /G: Overseas
- /H: Research papers
- /I: Press cuttings
- /J: Publications
- /K: Images
- /L: Audio-visual recordings
- /M: Artefacts

History of Toc H

Toc H is an international Christian movement which developed from a soldiers' rest and recreation centre named Talbot House founded in Poperinge, near Ypres or Ieper, in Belgium during December 1915. Talbot House was named in memory of Gilbert Talbot, son of Edward Talbot (1844-1934), Bishop of Winchester, who had been killed at Hooge in July 1915. It was founded by Gilbert's elder brother, Neville (1879-1943), who was a senior army chaplain, and Reverend Philip Thomas Byard Clayton (1885-1972), known as 'Tubby'. The name 'Toc H' is an abbreviation for Talbot House: 'Toc' signifying the letter 'T' in the signals spelling alphabet used by the British army.



Tubby Clayton

Poperinge was a busy transfer station where troops fighting on the battlefields of Flanders were billeted. Talbot House was designed to be an 'Every Man's Club' where all soldiers, regardless of rank, were welcome. The house was open to men and officers alike and included a library, kitchen and garden. A chapel was created in the attic for religious services and devotions. Clayton organised debates and concerts and men could post messages for missing comrades.

In 1920 Clayton established a Christian youth centre in London which was also named Toc H. After acquiring a property in Queensgate Place, Knightsbridge, Clayton opened the first Toc H hostel designed as a home for men coming to London for work but having nowhere to stay. The property quickly proved too small and they soon moved to a larger house in Queensgate Gardens - this was named, in army fashion, Mark I. By 1921 there were three Marks in London. The first outside London was established in Cheltenham. Bands of men were initially awarded a Rushlight before being elevated to Branch status and consequently granted one of the famous Lamps, first introduced in 1922. Further branches of Toc H were also established in other countries across the world, including Australian branches in Victoria and Adelaide, established during 1925.

The earliest statement of the aims of Toc H was designed by Clayton, Rev 'Dick' Sheppard and Sir Alexander Paterson early in 1920. It was subsequently revised in 1936 and 1967 and is known as the 'Four Points of the Compass'. The statement can be summarised as: 'to love widely; to build bravely; to think fairly; to witness humbly'.



Toc H attracted the patronage of Alexander Paterson, Henry Willink and G. K. Chesterton. During these early years, the Prince of Wales (the future Edward VIII) was an active supporter and appeared at many annual festivals. The movement was granted a Royal Charter in 1922, the same year Clayton became the vicar of All Hallows-by-the-Tower in London. This led to the church becoming Toc H's Guild church.

Toc H was initially only open to men but under the leadership of Alison MacFie, the League of Women Helpers was established to support Toc H work. The League developed an active role in Toc H, especially during the Second World War when many men were away fighting. The League later became known as the Women's Section and merged fully with the men's movement in 1971.

By the 1940s and 1950s the movement was large and powerful although contained few young members. In the late 1950s a Project scheme was established where young people could volunteer with environmental work, manual projects, play schemes and work with the elderly, disabled or disadvantaged.

In the present day, the Toc H movement is still guided by its original ethos: attempting to ease the burdens of others through acts of service and promote reconciliation in order to bring disparate sections of society together.

Navigating the Toc H archive catalogue

The Toc H Archive catalogue comprises over 2000 individual records. These records provide the necessary scope and content for researchers to determine whether they wish to visit the University of Birmingham and view the original materials. The catalogue is fully searchable via www.calmview.bham.ac.uk

**Central administration. Ref: TOCH/A**

Constitutional, strategic, staff, financial, council and membership records. There are sub-series relating to some local units but these are records from a central or generalised perspective, 1920-2013

Local administration. Ref: TOCH/B

Comprises an extensive sequence of administrative records relating to local branches; as well as papers relating to Toc H Marks, and Toc H Centres and Houses, 1920-[2010s]

League of Women Helpers. Ref: TOCH/C

Later renamed the Women's Association, includes administrative records; papers relating to events and festivals; papers generated by individual branches; and publications, 1924-2011

Events. Ref: TOCH/D

Material relating to Toc H Festivals, papers relating to the World Chain of Light; and general papers relating to events, appeals, and fundraising campaigns, 1921-[2000s]

Community Work. Ref: TOCH/E

Papers relating to work with young people, refugees, asylum seekers, and traveller communities. Also includes papers relating to specific projects within communities, [1920s-early 21st century]

Military Services. Ref: TOCH/F

Comprises material relating to Toc H Service Clubs during World War Two; the British Army of the Rhine [BAOR]; and Clubs in Germany post-World War Two, 1922-1995

Overseas. Ref: TOCH/G

Papers and publications relating to Toc H activities in Europe, Asia, South America, Australia and New Zealand, North America, and South Africa, [20th century]-2004

Research papers. Ref: TOCH/H

Papers and publications relating to the history and development of Toc H; papers of individual Toc H workers; and a small number of theses and dissertations relating to Toc H history and development, 1912-2016

Press cuttings. Ref: TOCH/I

Newspaper cuttings and scrapbooks relating to Toc H members, activities and events throughout the 20th century and early 21st century, [20th-21st centuries]

Publications. Ref: TOCH/J

Sequence of published materials created by Toc H, including serial publications and printed books and pamphlets; and a small number of printed works not produced by Toc H, 1920-2019

Images. Ref: TOCH/K

Slides and photographs relating to Toc H people, activities, events and properties, [20th century]

Audio-visual recordings. Ref: TOCH/L

Vinyl recordings, audio-cassette recordings, reel to reel recordings, and audio-visual presentations; and visual recordings, including VHS recordings, DVD recordings and film reel recordings. Some material is not currently accessible to researchers due to obsolete media formats, [20th century]-[2000s]

Artefacts. Ref: TOCH/M

Toc H related artefacts including lamps, badges, textiles and other miscellaneous objects, [20th century]

Associated collections at Birmingham

In addition to the 'official' Toc H Archive, the Cadbury Research Library also holds collections of personal papers which relate to Toc H activities and members. These catalogues are available to be searched via www.calmview.bham.ac.uk

Bell, Heather Agnes (d 2005), welfare officer, Twelfth Army in Burma:

Captioned photograph album titled 'Glimpses of Britain, India, Burma, Ceylon and East Africa' with photographs of the Toc H Headquarters in Calcutta, Toc H in Meiktila, and the Toc H Officers Advance Training School in Ceylon, [1940s]. Ref: MS940

Nock, Oswald Stevens 'Ossie' (1905-1994), railway engineer and Toc H member:

Printed materials collected by O. S. 'Ossie' Nock and primarily relating to his involvement with Toc H Mark I in London between 1927 and 1930, [early 20th century]. Ref: TOCH/ACC/1

Parsons, Joe and Margaret, Toc H members:

Printed publications, leaflets and ephemera relating to Toc H and collected by Joe and Margaret Parsons. Includes material relating to various Toc H Birthday Festivals as well as items relating to Toc H in Gibraltar, 1930-1965. Ref: MS951

Thacker, Martin:

Signed manuscript letter, dated Monday 29 June, in which Thacker describes taking part in the final day of the Toc H 21st anniversary celebration at Crystal Palace with ten fellow members of Solihull Branch of Toc H (LAdd/6407). With a typescript transcription

Material held at other institutions

Additional records relating to Toc H activities and members can be found in other archive repositories around the UK and also in Belgium. The following list provides additional avenues for researchers to explore:

Talbot House Museum in Popinge holds material relating to Tubby Clayton and the foundation of Talbot House. See: <http://www.talbothouse.be>

Material relating to individual branches may be located at local record offices. A study of local newspaper archives may also provide information relating to Toc H activities, members and buildings.

Information relating to the involvement of TocH in hospital broadcasting can be found at <http://hospitalradio4u.com/>