Welcome

The Centre for Nineteenth-Century Studies would like to welcome you to this two-day workshop on ‘Packaging the Past for Children, c. 1750-1914’. We are fortunate to be in one of County Durham’s finest buildings. Durham Castle, built on the orders of William the Conqueror in 1072 and the former home of the Prince-Bishop of Durham, now forms part of Durham’s UNESCO World Heritage Site, along with Durham Cathedral. These Senate Rooms take their name from the fact that the University Senate used to meet here in the nineteenth century.

There has been much recent interest in the history of childhood but scholarly attention is only just turning to history in childhood, or the ways in which different pasts were repackaged for, and understood by, children. The uses of the past are widely accepted as one of the most important areas for study of adult culture with a burgeoning interest in public history in Britain. However the focus on children’s consumption of the past in the period between 1750 and 1914 has received less attention despite the fact that recalling and understanding the past was perceived to be critical to shaping identity and forming good citizens. Scholarly explorations of children’s uses of the past have tended to focus on literature or education in the Victorian period. While these two avenues have been useful, we propose that only through exploring the variety of media and different pasts marketed to children can we fully understand the scope of children’s interactions with the past.

Our workshop seeks to offer new approaches to children as consumers of the past through its exploration of the long nineteenth century, its emphasis on material and visual culture and its comparative approach engaging with scholars across disciplines and periods. Rather than portraying children as passive recipients of history education, this interdisciplinary workshop will present original research from a wide range of specialisms to show how children were actively involved in packaging the past, from playing with historically themed toys and games to performing in plays and pageants.

Over these two days, we aim to offer new perspectives on visual and material culture which are vital to understanding children’s uses of the past. Our title, ‘Packaging the Past’, deliberately encompasses the past as both subject and site for the production and consumption of other historical, mythical or imagined pasts. Papers will investigate the materials and texts produced for and by children, as well as representations of real or imagined childhoods, and how children are actively involved in producing their own interpretations of the past today.
Questions we hope to explore through discussion include:

➤ How does comparing and assessing multiple pasts help us understand their unique cultural work in the British imagination?

➤ What role did these different pasts play in children’s everyday lives?

➤ How can visual, material, and performance cultures enhance our understanding of children’s engagement with the past?

➤ In what ways were, and are, children active agents in creating, as well as consuming, the past?

➤ How can we bring children’s voices back into the discussion of the uses of the past?

Map of Locations

1 | Durham Castle

2 | The Town House
Schedule

Wednesday 6 May

13.30 - 14.00 | **Registration, Tea and Coffee**  
Senate Suite, Durham Castle

14.00 - 14.20 | **Welcome and Opening Remarks**  
Rachel Bryant Davies & Barbara Gribling

14.20 - 15.50 | **Keynote Address: Prehistoric & Biblical Pasts**  
Melanie Keene, University of Cambridge

15.50 - 16.20 | **Tea and Coffee Break**

16.20 - 17.50 | **Panel 1: Antiquities**  
Virginia Zimmerman, Bucknell University, Pennsylvania  
Helen Lovatt, Nottingham University

17.50 - 18.30 | **Interim Summary: Pasts at Play**  
Rachel Bryant Davies and Barbara Gribling  
*Comparing Classical and Medieval encounters in toys and games*

18.30 - 21.00 | **Conference Dinner at The Town House, Durham**
Schedule

Thursday 7 May

08.45 - 09.15 | **Tea and Coffee**

09.15 - 10.45 | **Panel 2: Pictured Pasts**
Stephen Basdeo, Leeds Trinity University
Rosemary Mitchell, Leeds Trinity University

10.45 - 11.00 | **Tea and Coffee**

11.00 - 12.30 | **Panel 3: Approaches to Packaging the Past for Children through Museum Education**
Eileen Atkins, Culture Bridge North East
Sarah Price, Palace Green Library, Durham University
Simon Woolley, Beamish Museum, Co. Durham

12.30 - 13.15 | **Lunch**

13.15 - 14.45 | **Panel 4: Performed Pasts**
Bennett Zon, Durham University
Ellie Reid, Oxfordshire History Centre

14.45 - 15.00 | **Tea and Coffee Break**

15.00 - 15.50 | **Plenary Discussion**
Matthew Grenby, Newcastle University
Matthew Eddy, Durham University

15.50 - 16.00 | **Concluding Remarks and Close**
Keynote | Prehistoric and Biblical Pasts

Chaired by Bennett Zon
14.20 — 15.50

Noah’s Ark-aeology and Nineteenth-Century Children

Melanie Keene, History & Philosophy of Science, Cambridge University

Noah’s Ark appeared throughout the nineteenth century in various guises and for diverse purposes, from high art to hymns, plays to clockwork peepshows. It could be figured as a logical and engineering problem, an excavatory archaeological goal, a moral exemplar and divine covenant, or even as the original name for Hamley’s London toy-shop. Indeed, Noah’s Arks occupied a central role in nineteenth-century childhood: their recreation as painted wooden houseboats, lids lifting to reveal carved pairs of miniature animals, was for many children their first encounter with animals, history, and biblical lore.

A range of surviving museum objects and literary recollections attest to the potency of juvenile interactions with Noah and his Ark. For Household Words in 1850, the ‘wonderful Noah’s Ark!’ was an essential part of childish Christmas, albeit in cheap variants which proved unsuitable vessels for a deluge: ones ‘not found seaworthy when put in a washing-tub’, and whose animals were ‘crammed in at the roof’ in rather ungainly fashion. For others, Noah’s Ark must, like the rest of Victoria’s modern Britain, be recast in progressive guise: in 1843 Albert Smith assumed they would soon be given a scientific makeover, in ‘the form of chemical-experiment boxes: the beasts and birds will turn to rows of labelled reagents, and Noah and his family ... will be transformed into test-tubes and spirit lamps’. Stories, too, were inspired by these particular artefacts: Tom Hood’s From Nowhere to the North-Pole (1875), subtitled ‘A Noah’s Ark-æological narrative’, began with a child playing with a Noah’s Ark toy-set, before embarking on a humorous picaresque adventure around the world.

In this talk I will explore Noah’s ‘Ark-æology’ in the nineteenth century, as the tale was introduced, analysed and retold, constructed, marketed and played with, sought, sanctified and invoked, as a key part of the past packaged for children.

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Melanie Keene is a Fellow and Graduate Tutor at Homerton College, University of Cambridge. She researches the history of science for children from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries, and is the author of Science in Wonderland (OUP, 2015).
Panel 1 | Antiquities

Chaired by Clemence Schultze, Durham University

16.20 — 17.50

*Bringing Egypt Home: Children’s Encounters with Ancient Egypt in the Long Nineteenth Century*

Virginia Zimmerman, Bucknell University, Pennsylvania

From table games to the British Museum, from popular fiction to the Thames Embankment, opportunities to encounter Egypt could hardly be avoided by the child of the long nineteenth century. These encounters often emphasized the otherness of the Egyptian civilization, removed from nineteenth-century Britain in just about every way imaginable — time, place, religion, social norms, aesthetics, etc. However, even as Egypt was seen as exotic, it was also domesticated—this paper examines the unexpected conjunction of Egypt and home.

Egypt was brought home to England and made available to the public in museums and monuments, as well as in the Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly and the Egyptian Court at the Crystal Palace. This paper will briefly examine depictions of these public encounters before turning to the ways in which Egypt was brought into the private home. A central text for consideration is E. Nesbit’s *The Story of the Amulet* (1906), in which the child protagonists use an Egyptian amulet to travel through time. Though they visit a variety of times and places, Ancient Egypt is the source of the magic, a magic that weaves together archaeological artefacts and home. In fact, when the amulet speaks to the children, it speaks with “the voice of your mother.” The paper will also examine didactic literature, in particular Sarah Atkins’s *The Fruits of Enterprize* (1821) which frames an account of Belzoni’s adventures “with the observations of a mother to her children.” The final text to be discussed is Mother Goose in *Hieroglyphics* (1849), in which the conflation of familiar nursery rhymes and the Egyptian writing system blends the exotic and the domestic. In each example, bringing Egypt home mitigates otherness but also reimagines England and the English home.

Virginia Zimmerman is Professor of English at Bucknell University, where she teaches courses on Victorian literature and children’s literature. She publishes in both fields, all her work sharing an interest in time and material culture. Recent publications include “The Curating Child: Runaways and Museums in Children’s Fiction” in *The Lion and the Unicorn* (2015), “‘Time Seemed Fiction’ -- Archaeological Encounters in Victorian Poetry” in *Journal of Literature and Science* (2012), “Natural History on Blocks, in Bodies, and on the Hearth: Juvenile Science Literature and Games, 1850-1875” in *Configurations* (2011), and *Excavating Victorians* (SUNY 2008). She recently published her first novel for children, *The Rosemary Spell* (Clarion/HMH 2015), which also takes up the topic of packaging the past for children.
Re-packaging epic heroism: Victorian Argonauts for adults and children

Helen Lovatt, Nottingham University

Charles Kingsley's *The Heroes: Greek Fairy Tales* (1857) contains a retelling of the Argonaut myth aimed at children. It is an important text in the history of Greek myth in children's literature. But to what extent is the retelling distinctively written for its young audience, or how much does it fit into ways of writing in the period, for whatever age group? One way of addressing this question is to compare it with William Morris' *The Life and Death of Jason*, which was published in 1867 and reworked the Argonaut myth in a novel length narrative poem, his first popular literary work. What is distinctively Victorian about these engagements with Greek myth and epic heroism? How much and in what ways do they draw on Apollonius and Euripides? What are the other landmark works in the Argonautic tradition which form important influences? Why was Greek myth considered so appealing to children in this period?

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Helen Lovatt is Associate Professor of Classics at the University of Nottingham. She has published two books on epic poetry (*Statius and Epic Games*, Cambridge 2005 and *The Epic Gaze*, Cambridge 2013) and an edited volume on vision and epic (*Epic Visions*, Cambridge 2013). She is currently working on the Argonaut myth, trauma and grief in Virgil's *Aeneid*, and Flavian epic. She has published several articles on Caroline Lawrence's *Roman Mysteries* and is editing a volume on classical reception in children's literature, *Changing the Classics for Children: Metamorphosing the Greeks and Romans in Children's Literature*, with Owen Hodkinson.
Panel 2 | Pictured Pasts
Chaired by Barbara Gribling
09.15 — 10.45

The Public School Robin Hood: The Outlaw in Nineteenth-Century Children’s Books

Stephen Basdeo, Leeds Trinity University

During the late-Victorian and Edwardian period many children’s books telling the story of Robin Hood were published, such as John B. Marsh’s Robin Hood (1865), Howard Pyle’s The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood (1883), Henry Gilbert’s Robin Hood and the Men of the Greenwood (1912), and Paul Creswick’s Robin Hood and his Adventures (1917). Stephanie Barczewski argues that Robin Hood in late Victorian children’s books is an anti-imperialist figure, and she bases this assertion largely upon the fact that Robin Hood children’s books are critical of Richard I’s foreign adventures. Yet the situation was more nuanced than that: many of the late Victorian Robin Hood children’s works that were published in the period projected Robin Hood and his fellow outlaws as men who lived up to the Public School Ethos, cultivating the virtues of athleticism, fair play, chivalry, and devotion to duty. Indeed, Edward Gilliatt’s novel In Lincoln Green (1898) is even set in a very ‘Victorianised’ medieval public school. Thus these works represented the ideal qualities that young men would need if they were to serve the country, and thus, as the proposed paper argues, were subtly imperialist.

Stephen Basdeo is a PhD student at Leeds Trinity University. He is currently completing his thesis entitled ‘The Changing Faces of Robin Hood, c.1700-c.1900’. Stephen also has published upon the popular penny serial author Pierce Egan the Younger, and has a publication forthcoming in The Bulletin of the International Association for Robin Hood Studies.
Cavalier Children: Sentimental History and the Stuarts

Rosemary Mitchell, Leeds Trinity University

This paper is a draft version of a chapter in my forthcoming book on gender and domestic ideology in Victorian historical culture, which will consider the historical representations of children and the Civil War, such as W. F. Yeames, *And when did you last see your father?* (1878), C.M. Yonge’s *The Pigeon Pie* (1860), and Frederick Marryat’s *The Children of the New Forest* (1847). In this chapter, the tension between Whig historiographies which celebrate the defence of civil liberties and parliamentary government from the ‘tyranny’ of Charles I, and Tory Romantic appropriations of the Stuart royal family as an ideal domestic unit, destroyed by the Civil War, will be explored. In particular, attention will be paid in this paper to representations of the children of Charles I in, for instance, paintings such as C. W. Cope’s *The Death of Princess Elizabeth* (1855) and texts such as F. T. Palgrave’s poem, ‘The Captive Child’ in his *Visions of England* (1881).

Rosemary Mitchell is Reader in Victorian Studies and Associate Principal Lecturer in History at Leeds Trinity University. She was Director of the Leeds Centre for Victorian Studies from 2008-2015, and is currently Deputy Director (External). She acts as Associate Editor for the Journal of Victorian Culture and is a steering committee member of the British Association of Victorian Studies. Her best-known work is her 2000 monograph, *Picturing the Past: English History in Text and Image, c. 1830-70*, but she has also published numerous journal articles and book chapters, edited several collections of *Leeds Working Papers*, and written more than 150 articles for *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. 
Panel 3 | Approaches to Packaging the Past for Children through Museum Education

Chaired by Hazel Edwards

11.00 — 12.30

**Young people as co-constructors of their learning experiences**

Eileen Atkins, Area Manager, County Durham and Tees Valley, Culture Bridge North East

Looking at successful and impactful examples of young people led projects using museums and archives collections and the development of the Cultural Passport for County Durham linked to Arts Council England’s Cultural Education Challenge.

Eileen has been working in museum education for 16 years. Starting her career at Beamish Museum, she has worked at Nuneaton Museum in Warwickshire developing community engagement and schools programmes and she was the Learning Officer at Discovery Museum in Newcastle (Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums - TWAM) leading on the schools and family learning programmes and developments. She has also had a number of seconded roles working on more strategic regional programmes around museums and cultural education. She was the Professional Development Officer in TWAM’s Hub work through Renaissance in the Regions. Since 2013, Eileen has worked regionally in the North East based Arts Council England Bridge Organisation as Museums Manager in Bridge North East at Sage Gateshead and as Area Manager for County Durham and Tees Valley in the current Culture Bridge North East programme managed by TWAM.

Sarah Price, Head of Heritage Collections Education Team, Durham University

*From yokes to whistles*

A hands-on approach to teaching the long 19th century Durham University’s Learning Team uses a source based approach to teaching children and young people about the long-nineteenth century. This presentation will consider the advantages of using original sources and promoting a hands-on approach with students of all ages.

Sarah Price is Head of Engagement and Learning at Palace Green Library, leading the team that is responsible for the provision of all forward-facing work undertaken by the University Library’s Culture Durham department. This includes temporary exhibitions at Palace Green Library, front of house operations and the informal and formal learning and engagement programme at all the cultural sites of the University (Palace Green Library, Oriental Museum, Durham Castle, World Heritage Site and Botanic Garden). She has a PhD in History (focusing on how local government structures affects riots and radical protest in the late 18th and early 19th century - a fairly niche subject!) and is also a trained project manager and archivist.
Enquiry based immersive learning experiences

Simon Woolley, Head of Learning, Beamish Museum

An examination of how history and source based evidence can be creatively adapted for the schools workshops to bring the past to life, focusing on the ‘Joe the Quilter enquiry schools workshop’ on offer at Beamish as a case study.

Simon Woolley is a trained teacher with 10 years of Primary School based experience. He was an outdoor education professional for 5 years and has been in his current role for 15 years as Head of Learning at Beamish Museum. Simon is an experienced and innovative museums educator who has been actively involved in regional initiatives, networks and joint projects in the North East as well as leading on and developing the formal and informal learning provision at Beamish. Beamish Museum, through its role as an Arts Council England Major Partner Museum (MPM), coordinate a museums education network for all museums in County Durham led by Simon and his team.

Notes

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Panel 4 | Performed Pasts
Chaired by Rachel Bryant Davies
13.15 — 14.45

Victorian recapitulationism and the musical hand signs of Tonic Sol-Fa

Bennett Zon, Durham University

By the time Darwin published *The Origin of Species* (1859) evolution had already become an established part of the Victorian intellectual landscape, as competitor theories vied for prominence. Widely popular amongst them is Ernst Haeckel’s theory of recapitulation, famously encapsulated in the idea that ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny – the individual recapitulates the species.

Recapitulation influenced music in many ways, not least in the way singing was taught by John Curwen, founder of the Tonic-Solfa movement. Founded in the 1840s under the influence of militant recapitulationist Friedrich Fröbel, Curwen created a pedagogy steeped in recapitulationary ideas. Foremost amongst these is Fröbel and Curwen’s belief that physical movement should embody intellectual activity. For Frobel this involved creating ‘gifts’ (playthings) to teach subjects through physical movement; for Curwen, using hand signs to teach the do re me of music.

Curwen’s hand signs were special, because each one not only indicated an individual pitch, each pitch recapitulated a human characteristic. Thus, doh is strong, re hopeful, mi calm.

This paper examines Curwen’s hand signs as emblematic of recapitulationism, exploring how each sign moved; how each physical movement embodied a particular characteristic; and how each characteristic informed and reflected man’s emotional response to music.

Bennett Zon is Professor of Music at Durham University. Zon researches in areas of long nineteenth-century musical culture, with particular interest in British science, theology and intellectual history. He has published *The English Plainchant Revival* (Oxford University Press, 1999), *Music and Metaphor in Nineteenth-Century British Musicology* (Ashgate, 2000) and *Representing Non-Western Music in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (University of Rochester Press, 2007). Zon is currently writing *Evolution and Victorian Musical Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 2016), and he and Bernard Lightman have co-edited *Evolution and Victorian Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 2014). Zon is General Editor of Nineteenth-Century Music Review (Cambridge University Press) and the book series Music in Nineteenth-Century Britain (Ashgate). With Carol Harrison he co-directs the International Network for Music Theology, and is Director of the Centre for Nineteenth-Century Studies at Durham University.
Re-enacting local history: Stepney Children’s Pageant 1909, the first of its kind.

Ellie Reid, Oxfordshire History Centre

In 1909 pupils from 21 elementary schools in the East End of London participated in a re-enactment of episodes from local history, in the first modern pageant to be written for and performed by children. Social reformer Canon Samuel Barnett, founder of the university settlement Toynbee Hall (1884) and Whitechapel Art Gallery (1901) enlisted the support of pageant master, Louis N Parker, the originator of the Edwardian craze for historical pageants, to propose the event. The project drew on an influential and talented group of individuals who supported Barnett’s initiatives. After months of preparations, the pageant was performed at the Whitechapel Art Gallery during two afternoons and eleven evenings by a total of 600 children, and succeeded in gaining royal patronage.

This paper will explore: Who were the organisers and what were their aims? Who were the performers and their audience? How was the pageant organised and staged? What history did it tell? How was the pageant reported and happened next?

Ellie Reid is the Local Studies Librarian at Oxfordshire History Centre and member of the advisory board to The Redress of the Past: Historical Pageants in Britain, 1905-2016, a major Arts and Humanities Research Council funded project examining historical pageants in twentieth-century Britain. More details about this project can be found at: https://www.historicalpageants.ac.uk
Plenary Panel Session
Chaired by Matthew Grenby and Matthew Eddy
15.00 — 15.50

Matthew Grenby
Matthew Grenby is Professor of Eighteenth-Century Studies in the School of English at Newcastle University. He has written books on eighteenth-century novels, children's literature and child readers, and is currently editing the third volume of the Letters of William Godwin. He is President of the British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies.

Matthew Eddy
Matthew Eddy is senior lecturer in the Department of Philosophy at Durham University. He is an expert on the science and the intellectual culture of Britain and the British Empire from the Enlightenment to World War I. He has active interests in visual culture and childhood, and has published widely on the history of education, book history and science in context. He recently organized a workshop in Durham on the Graphic Evidence of Childhood.
Workshop Organisers

Barbara Gribling

Barbara Gribling is a Junior Research Fellow in History at Durham University interested in perceptions of the past and childhood. She is the author of a forthcoming book on the image of Edward the Black Prince in Georgian and Victorian England to be published by the Royal Historical Society in their series Studies in History (expected 2016) and an edited volume on *Chivalry and the Medieval Past* (out June 2016). Her current work, *Consuming the Past: How the "Age of Chivalry" was sold to British Children, 1880-1938* explores children and their encounters with the medieval past beyond the classroom through exhibitions, tourism, pageants, books, toys and games. She is also preparing an article, 'Playing with the Past', which examines changing visions of the British past in different editions of the popular Historical Pastime Game (produced by John Harris and John Wallis) in the nineteenth century.

Rachel Bryant Davies

Rachel Bryant Davies is an Early Career Associate with the Oxford Archive of Performance of Greek and Roman Drama. Her book, *Staging the Ruins of Troy and Carthage during the Nineteenth Century*, is to be published by Cambridge University Press (expected 2017) and she has chapters on Greek myth in toy theatres, and burlesques of Homer forthcoming with Chicago and Oxford University Presses. Her new project, 'Classics at Play: Greco-Roman antiquity in British children's culture, 1750-1914' examines how antiquity was repackaged beyond formalised educational settings, with an emphasis on unravelling how toys, games and leisure entertainments interacted with more overtly pedagogical paraphernalia. She is currently researching interactions with the *Iliad* in children's periodicals.

Cover Images: 'Wallis's New Game of Universal History and Chronology, London, ca. 1840' © Victorian and Albert Museum. This board game from 1840 is a reworked issue of the 1814 edition of the game and the central area of the game has been updated to reflect later historical events. The earlier game had at its centre a portrait of George IV as Prince Regent. This has been replaced with five further playing spaces including William IV and Queen Victoria, the Marriage of Queen Victoria and a railway train running through an embankment.
Acknowledgements

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