The Bank of England Archive Online: Openness versus ‘The Headline’!

Lorna Williams
Senior Archivist
Bank of England Archive
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Welcome to the Bank of England Archive Catalogue

The catalogue contains descriptions of over 57,000 records held by the Bank of England Archive. In common with many other archives, a number of records have not yet been released for research because they are very recent or for reasons of sensitivity or confidentiality. For more information please click on the following link: When are records made available to the public?

To do a quick search of the catalogue, use the box at the top right of the page, or for a more in-depth search, click on ‘Advanced search’ on the left hand menu.

Should you require any information about visiting the Bank of England Archive, please follow this link: Visiting the Archive

Catalogue Feedback
Why did we choose to publish archive images online? .......We didn’t!

But we did choose what IT project to do – online digitised content:

• Affordable
• Popular
• Showcase the archives
• Increase access to the archives
• Modern and dynamic service
• Reduce handling of material
Why did we choose the selection that we did?

- Range of material
- Open
- Our copyright
- Important
- Most used/popular
- Less well used but of possible wide interest
- Fragile material
- Complete series
- Uncontroversial
The Headlines

**The Telegraph**

Bank of England helped the Nazis by selling stolen gold to Germany, according to a new report. The sale of gold was made to help finance the Second World War.

**The Guardian**

The Bank of England has admitted that it helped the Nazis sell gold stolen from Czechoslovakia. The sale of gold was made to finance the war.

**BBC News**

Bank of England helped in sale of looted Nazi gold

A document from 1965 shows that the Bank of England was involved in the sale of looted gold.

**Chancellor and Czech gold**

Bank of England's part

Govt. view

Not entitled to intervene

From our political correspondent

The sale of the Bank of England's gold to Germany was again revealed in the House of Commons today. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was asked about the sale during Prime Minister's Questions.

**The Guardian**

The sale of gold was made to finance the war, according to new documents.

**The Telegraph**

The Bank of England's role in the sale of Nazi gold is revealed in new documents.

**BBC News**

The sale of gold was made to finance the war, according to new documents.
Court of Directors’ Minutes 1694-1912

Archive Catalogue Reference: G4/1-55

From the foundation of the Bank in 1694 to the present day the Court of Directors has met on a regular basis to discuss a range of matters related to the administration of the Bank. Up until May 1998 the meetings were held weekly, after which time they were held monthly. The details of the meetings are recorded in the Minutes of the Court of Directors and as such they form one of the Bank’s most important and extensive record series.

Originally the Court of Directors consisted of the Governor, the Deputy Governor and 24 Directors, of whom only the Governor and Deputy Governor worked full-time in the Bank. It soon became the practice for the Governor and Deputy Governor to serve for not more than two years and for the Deputy Governor to succeed the Governor; this procedure continued, with few exceptions, for over 200 years until Montagu Norman’s Governorship.

In 1946, with the nationalisation of the Bank, the Court was reduced in size to the Governor, the Deputy Governor and 16 Directors. In 1998 two Deputy Governors were introduced to Court as part of the Bank of England Act 1998 and in 2009 the number of Directors was reduced to nine following the Banking Act 2009.

Throughout its existence, the Court has been the highest forum for discussion in the Bank. For the first 200 years topics ranged from finance to staff matters.

Each volume of minutes has a contemporary index. The minutes and indices are presented separately.

Bank of England’s historic minutes focus on internal issues

Emily Cadman

By any criteria, 1914 to 1946 were among the most challenging times for the Bank of England, with two world wars, the Great Depression, and the abandoning of and then return to the gold standard.

But those hoping for enlightenment on its thinking at the time from the historic committee meeting minutes published by the BoE on Wednesday will be disappointed.

On September 5 1940 — a day after Hitler vowed to destroy London in the blitz — the minutes of the Court of Directors are concerned solely with granting pensions to long-serving staff and permission for an unnamed woman clerk to withdraw a resignation request.

The Court of Directors, which dates from the foundation of the bank in 1694, is now the body that has oversight of the BoE. But the only real insights from the newly published documents are on staff pay, conditions and subcommittee appointments.
Choices?

• Do you have a choice? Or perhaps it’s a restricted choice?

• To put material online or not to put material online?

• How to put material online? Catalogue? Gallery? Digitised content? Social media?....

• What to select to put online? Consider public opinion and the dreaded bad headline!
The future…..

• Social media

• Photos

• Monetary Policy Committee papers

• More digitised content…..and analysis?
Photos from the Bank of England's vaults

By Paul Kerley
BBC News Magazine

26 January 2016 | Magazine

From an extraordinary expansion, to the preparations for World War Two gas attacks, a new exhibition offers a fascinating look back at life at the Bank of England.