

News, Notes, and Queries

Livingstone Online

Livingstone Online (<http://www.livingstoneonline.ucl.ac.uk>) is a new venture based at the Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine at University College London. The website makes available the first scholarly, online edition of the medical and scientific correspondence of David Livingstone (1813–1873); the missionary, explorer, naturalist and doctor. The site will also include some of his manuscripts and published papers. Livingstone Online is publishing fully annotated transcripts and facsimiles of the letters and other documents. The Wellcome Trust has awarded Livingstone Online a three year project grant to realize its goals. Director of Livingstone Online is Christopher Lawrence, Professor Emeritus at UCL.

Together, the variety and range of Livingstone's papers constitute a unique historical and interdisciplinary resource. Over 2000 letters survive. These letters cover a vast range of subjects. Their contents include family and religious matters, observations on African customs, geography, the slave trade and a great deal relating to the details of the organization of expeditions. A large number of his letters contain material on science (notably astronomy and meteorology) and medicine. Natural historical accounts of flora and fauna are prominent. Medical matters include both clinical observations and descriptions of African culture and geography in the Hippocratic *Airs, waters and places* tradition. Livingstone was seeking out healthy areas suitable for European settlement. A great number of the letters reveal the politics and social life of British scientific societies (notably the Royal Geographical Society) and other institutions, such as universities, in the nineteenth century.

Livingstone's surviving letters are scattered across the world. There is no one collected

edition. All letters written by Livingstone along with his other writings that were known before 1985 have been listed in G W Clendennen and I C Cunningham, *David Livingstone: a catalogue of documents* (Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, 1979) and I C Cunningham, *David Livingstone: a catalogue of documents: a supplement* (Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, 1985). A few letters have been discovered since then and others may exist. Many letters are known only as copies of originals. Some exist only in printed form. Letters to Livingstone have not yet been catalogued.

Livingstone material is located in over eighty archives and libraries and other material is in undesignated private hands. However, the bulk of the letters is held in a small number of institutions in Britain and Africa. Of these the National Library of Scotland (NLS) has impressive holdings, including a large (although not comprehensive) number of copies of letters held elsewhere. The NLS has a substantial number of letters to the doctor and botanist John Kirk. The holdings of the NLS have recently been increased by the acquisition of the John Murray Archive. This collection from the publishing house, John Murray, contains more than 150,000 letters by a variety of individuals, including many by Livingstone. The British Library and the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) of London University also have important collections. In Africa the National Archives of Zimbabwe and the Livingstone Museum in Zambia are institutions with sizeable holdings. There are also letters in South African libraries.

Livingstone Online already makes available detailed transcripts and high-quality images of the Wellcome Library's collection of Livingstone letters and some of correspondence from the NLS. The Wellcome Library's letters were bought during the last years of Henry

Wellcome's lifetime when Livingstonia were highly marketable as collectibles. Unfortunately, little is known of their earlier provenances. Written in the period 1841–1865, these letters were addressed to a variety of correspondents, including Sir Richard Owen, Sir Roderick Impey Murchison and Sir Henry Bartle Frere.

With the Wellcome Trust funding we will concentrate further on letters in the NLS but are already scanning, transcribing and editing letters

in other institutions, notably the David Livingstone Centre at Blantyre and the Royal Geographical Society of London. We also aim to release a database version of Clendennen and Cunningham's works. We would appreciate hearing from anyone knowing of any newly discovered Livingstone material. Contact: Livingstone Online, Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine at UCL, 183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BE; e-mail: livingstoneonline@ucl.ac.uk

Call for Papers

'Treating Diseases and Epidemics in Southeast Asia over the Centuries', Penang, Malaysia, 9–10 January 2008

The Second International Conference in the History of Medicine in Southeast Asia (HOMSEA) with the theme 'Treating Diseases and Epidemics in Southeast Asia over the Centuries' intends to explore how the inhabitants of Southeast Asia faced the ravages of innumerable diseases and epidemics over the ages. Adopting a liberal time frame (prehistoric to modern times), participants are encouraged to trace the development of medical and religious responses to diseases and the devastation of epidemics. Further lines of thought are offered for deliberation, viz. 'How did the peoples fight off diseases that might spell their extinction?', 'What did communities do to prevent the spread of certain illnesses?', 'Were European colonial administrations more successful in disease containment than indigenous authorities?' These are just some of the questions that deserve attention. Individuals are invited to present a 20-minute working paper relevant to any aspect of the conference's theme. They are

requested to submit an abstract (150–200 words) to the Secretariat. Scholars who wish to organize a panel (4–5 presenters; 1-hour per panel) based on a particular topic relevant to the conference's overall theme are to submit to the Secretariat the following materials: Proposed Panel: Abstract (350–400 words); each of the panelists should submit an abstract of 150–200 words. Deadline for abstracts: 1 May 2007; deadline for working papers: 15 November 2007.

For further information and inquiries, submission of abstracts, proposed panel, and working papers, please contact: The Conference Secretariat, The Second International Conference HOMSEA, Asia-Pacific Research Unit (APRU), School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11800 Penang, Malaysia; Tel: 604 6533888 Ext. 3377; Fax: 604 6563707; e-mail: shakila@usm.my; website: <http://www.usm.my/ijaps/announcements/announcement3.pdf>

Conference: 'The World and Lady Mary: Gender, Medicine, and Culture in the Time of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu c.1690–1765'

The Centre for Eighteenth-Century Studies at the University of York is planning a conference with international speakers on this theme to be

held in York in April 2008. Our intention is to revisit the political, medical, and gender cultures of the eighteenth century, using the varied career

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and experiences of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu as a lens and point of reference. Rather than a personalised biographical approach, we consider this life as in some sense indicative of many important developments in the society and culture of the period. The significance of foreign travel, the role of scientific innovation, and the tensions of class and gender in urban sexual,

political and literary cultures are key interests for historians of medicine, empire, women writers, and politics in the eighteenth century. We seek expressions of interest from those wishing to offer papers in these areas as we start to plan the strands and sessions of the conference.

Suggestions and enquiries to: jcdg1@york.ac.uk or E.Major@shu.ac.uk