

Institution: University of Sussex		
Unit of Assessment: 27 – English Language and Literature		
Title of case study: Mobilising and Moving Beyond the Archive: A Re-Engagement with Victorian Visual Practice, Generating Innovation with Curators, Artists, and Schools		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2012 – 2019		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Hannah Field	Senior Lecturer in Victorian Literature	September 2015 – present
Lindsay Smith	Professor of English	September 1986 – present
Bethan Stevens	Senior Lecturer in English and Creative & Critical Writing	September 2013 – present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2016 – 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact <p>'Beyond the Archive' originated with an AHRC-funded project to produce the first catalogue of the vast, neglected archive of wood engravings made by the celebrated Victorian 'woodpecking' firm Dalziel Brothers, held by the British Museum since 1913. Amongst the many thousands of illustrations they created throughout the 19th century, the Dalziels illustrated Tennyson and engraved all the images for Lewis Carroll's <i>Alice</i> books between 1865 and 1871. Using digitisation and open access, the project opened up this archive and extended the reach of Victorian image culture to impact communities beyond the academy. It has generated new understandings among curators, artists, teachers and students of the dynamic interactions between Victorian literature, art, and technological change. It has realigned creative and critical practices to encourage new forms of pedagogy and prompted artists and curators to enter into an explicit and generative dialogue with the archive in their work.</p>		
2. Underpinning research <p>Field, Smith and Stevens represent a renowned centre of research excellence in Victorian literary and visual culture in English at Sussex, an institution which has long fostered interdisciplinary research on image-text relationships. In 2008, Smith founded Sussex's Centre for Visual Fields (now the Centre for Photography and Visual Culture) with the aim of facilitating innovative work with external partners on visual technologies. In 2015, Stevens' expertise in 19th-century wood engraving and long-term collaboration with the British Museum (BM) generated a project to explore 49 fragile and uncatalogued albums of Dalziel material that had been largely unused since their acquisition in 1913. Between 1839 and 1893, the Dalziels were the preeminent practitioners of the recently invented technique of wood engraving, which enabled the industrial production of extraordinarily detailed illustrations, bringing fine art to the Victorian masses.</p> <p>Stevens' AHRC-funded Dalziel Project [G1], for which Smith was mentor, involved substantial primary-source research on the Dalziels' archive of 54,000 proofs, resulting in the creation of an open access dataset hosted at the BM [R1]. Innovative catalogue entries that make connections between material and artists across and beyond this complex body of work are accompanied by project photography (nearly 14,000 photographs) and summarise the historical and material knowledge discovered in Stevens' primary research. This involved close attention to wood</p>		

engraving technique – largely lost when it was rendered obsolete by photomechanical processes – and its distinctive aesthetic. It also foregrounded the company's radically collaborative methods of commissioning and engraving works of art. Diverse research outputs bring to light many previously unknown illustrations, with often anonymous designers foregrounded and identified for the first time (including women such as Margaret Dalziel, or Ann and Mary Byfield, working in an industry dominated by men) [R4]. Stevens has delineated the tension between individual artistic expression, and mechanical production methods in which all artwork was necessarily signed 'Dalziel', developing methods for recovering and re-contextualising images and artists otherwise lost in the archive. The project has also resulted in creative-critical work exploring these themes [R5], and writing for public audiences.

Once catalogued, photographed, and thereby opened up to scholarly and public enquiry for the first time, the project was able to move beyond this archive to fully mobilise its possibilities in the present. Stevens' expertise on the Dalziel collection and wood engraving was augmented by Smith, whose pioneering and distinguished interdisciplinary research [R2] has 'significantly deepened our understanding of Carroll' (Richards, 2017). Field's appointment in 2015 further extended the project's scope, bringing outstanding research in the intersections of image and text in Victorian culture [R3]: her work on 19th-century illustration and children's literature, particularly her monograph on novelty picture books for children (2019), also connects to Dalziel via Carroll [R6]. Through shared interdisciplinary archival expertise in interconnected but distinct Victorian print cultural practices – moveable (three-dimensional) books, photography, and wood engraving – Field, Smith and Stevens have been able to use and extend the Dalziel archive to generate new and innovative approaches to Victorian visual culture.

This multi-faceted collaboration has produced new understandings of the reception and continued vitality of the *Alice* books and their illustrations. One example is the creation and curating of a publicly available online exhibition – 'Alice to Alice: Dalziel 1865–1871' (www.sussex.ac.uk/english/dalziel/exhibition-map) – which for the first time places Carroll's work in the context of the huge range of engravings the Dalziels produced during their *Alice* period. This and other activities have engaged new constituencies with the Dalziel materials, contexts, and techniques, including the 'Woodpeckings' conference held at the BM in June 2017 (which developed a dialogue with curators and curatorial practice) and a series of impactful research-led creative workshops on the BM's collections and Victorian visual culture. Field, Smith and Stevens have further exposed the complex interplay of artistry, economics, and technology that determined image-text relations in this period through their work with 19th-century archives at the British Library, at the Sussex archival hub The Keep (where they have digitised illustrations from the university's 'Baker Books' collection), and the Victoria & Albert Museum (V&A), where Field and Stevens were able to undertake research as Exchange Fellows in 2018-19 and 2019-21 respectively.

3. References to the research

- [R1] Stevens, Bethan (2016) *India-Proofs of Wood-Engravings by the Brothers Dalziel*. British Museum, London. Online catalogue published within the BM's database. Submitted to REF2.
- [R2] Smith, Lindsay (2015) *Lewis Carroll: Photography on the Move*. London: Reaktion. Submitted to REF2.
- [R3] Field, Hannah (2016) 'Amateur Hours: The Visual Interpretation of Tennyson's Poetry in Two Manuscript Albums'. *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 21(4), 471–99. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13555502.2016.1171248>
- [R4] Stevens, Bethan (2017) 'Wood Engraving as Ghostwriting: The Dalziel Brothers, Losing One's Name, and Other Hazards of the Trade'. *Textual Practice*, 33(4), 645–77. Submitted to REF2.
- [R5] Stevens, Bethan (2018) 'News from the Thames (Blake! There's Something in the Water)' in Bruder, Helen P and Connolly, Tristanne J (eds.) *Beastly Blake*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 253–91. Submitted to REF2.

[R6] Field, Hannah (2019) *Playing with the Book: Victorian Movable Picture Books and the Child Reader*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Submitted to REF2.

Key Research Grant

[G1] Stevens, Bethan (2015-17), 'Wood Engraving and the Future of Word-Image Narratives: The Dalziel Family, 1839-1893', AHRC Fellowship Grant ([AH/M008584/1](#)), £149,997.

4. Details of the impact

With Stevens' original research on the Dalziels and their huge array of wood engravings as its foundation, 'Beyond the Archive' has distinctly impacted on the practice of curators and artists, and brought new understandings of the Victorian period and its possibilities to students and their teachers.

Curatorial Impact

In cataloguing the large and complex Dalziel archive, Stevens collaborated with BM curator [text removed for publication] to design a new method that could capture a diverse array of material in a single record, describing multi-media contents, multiple artists, and complex image-text relations [R1, S1c]. Once integrated into the BM's general online catalogue (free-to-access with 1.3 million page views per month), this became a major asset for the museum, transforming an obscure and uncatalogued archive into an open access resource with global reach. For [text removed for publication] at the BM, this is 'the most enduring legacy' of the first phase of the 'Beyond the Archive' project; the 'cataloguing and imaging of the huge Dalziel archive of prints which has made this wonderfully rich and engaging body of work accessible to a global audience of millions who use the BM online database' [S1a]. The catalogue's specific innovations – developing ways of enabling users to navigate 'very large collections', consisting of work that is 'difficult to curate and convey to contemporary audiences' [S1b]; how to fully 'reveal the value of such material' through description and cross-reference [S1c] – had further impact amongst the museum's curators. When curator [text removed for publication] took on the task of cataloguing the BM's Cruikshank collection in 2018, she was directed to the Dalziel archive, 'as an exemplary project [for] cataloguing and communicating 19th-century art' [S1b]. For [text removed for publication], Stevens' work provided 'a model for cataloguing volumes with multiple illustrations' [S1b]. Beyond the BM, [text removed for publication], curator at the V&A, has noted how the Dalziel catalogue 'sets a new gold standard for museums and galleries' in this field [S2a].

[text removed for publication], curator at the V&A, was an attendee at the 'Woodpeckings' conference Field, Smith and Stevens hosted at the British Museum in 2017. The knowledge she gained there brought new materials and approaches to her work on specific V&A displays (such as *Making an Impression*, shown at the V&A between 2019 and 2020) and plans for the major exhibition *Alice: Curiouser and Curiouser*, originally scheduled to open in the Sainsbury Gallery at the V&A in June 2020 (but postponed to March 2021). For the exhibition, billed as 'charting the evolution of *Alice in Wonderland* from manuscript to global phenomenon' (www.vam.ac.uk/exhibitions/alice-curiouser-and-curiouser), [text removed for publication] drew on Stevens' expertise and advice [S2b] and explains how the Dalziel research and catalogue 'led directly to us requesting to borrow two [Dalziel albums] for the exhibition'; albums that she 'had never come across' [S2b] before. For both the exhibition and the display, she 'relied' on the 'Woodpeckings website as well as the extensive cataloguing and excellent images of the Dalziel images in the British Museum online catalogue' [S2b].

The project team's own *Alice*-themed exhibition – 'Alice to Alice' (2016) – is a collaboratively curated virtual exhibition housed on the project website 'Woodpeckings' (www.sussex.ac.uk/english/dalziel), innovatively designed to draw audiences into the multifarious world of Victorian wood engraving and engage them creatively in the research. The success of this led to a second virtual exhibition, 'Beyond the Archive' (2020), that displays the visual and textual responses of schoolchildren to the Dalziel material. [text removed for publication] (BM) has celebrated the project's engagement as 'brilliant and inventive', encouraging 'a very broad audience, from literary scholars, wood engravers to school kids, to make their own explorations of the diverse and sometimes wacky visual universe' of the Dalziel

Archive [S1a]. The website (with 11,297 users between 2016 and 2020) was launched at the Brighton Digital Festival in 2016 and the project was featured in *The Guardian* [S3]. For [text removed for publication], its innovation lies in its seamless linking of 'theoretical and historical academic interpretation, cataloguing, widening participation and the contemporary creative practice of wood-engravers all in one project. I've never seen anything done as holistically as that before' [S1b].

Impact on Artists

One of the key impacts of 'Beyond the Archive' has been its rich connections with contemporary artists and creative writers. Engaging them in the research-based recovery of historical techniques has produced new work, and profoundly influenced the artistic practice of all those involved, as noted by engraver and author Simon Brett in *Multiples*, the journal of the Society of Wood Engravers [S5]. Artists were invited to research-based workshops at the BM in April and July 2017; four – [text removed for publication] – went on to collaborate closely with Stevens, and together wrote a feature article in *Printmaking Today* (March 2018) detailing the artwork and practice that grew from the collaboration [S5]. As a result of her encounter with the Victorian archive, [text removed for publication] purchased new equipment to engage with Victorian techniques, the project triggering 'a different phase of work for me' [S4]. [text removed for publication] produced a new print responding directly to the Dalziels, *What Hope for Holding Back the Sea (Ballot)*, which won the Printmaker's Prize in the New Light Art Prize exhibition, and has been widely exhibited [S5]. [text removed for publication] *Dalziels' Apprentice* responded by manipulating techniques of 19th-century wood engraving in work that was exhibited at Bankside (2018) and the London Original Print Fair at the Royal Academy (2018) [S6b]. For [text removed for publication] the engagement was revelatory: he explains that working 'on the history of engraving techniques has changed the way I work, in that now I very often do two versions of each composition – a wood engraved version and a larger lino cut version which is a bit like a sculptor making a maquette for a larger work ... So, this work has given me new tools and insight'. Of the art he has produced as a direct result of working with the project, he explains, 'I am reproducing a Victorian method ... because the technique augments my own contemporary practice' [S6a].

The same approach was adopted by the project team for their workshop with creative writers at the BM in December 2016 [S7]; this led to an interview with Stevens featuring in *The Library of Ice* (pp. 117-123), a major work of creative non-fiction by Nancy Campbell ('a dreamlike book' – *The Guardian*; 'a sparkling and wonderful meditation' – *The Independent*). There was strong, extensive feedback from all the practitioners, who said they had learnt 'masses' [S4, S7]. Beyond influencing work by renowned practitioners, the project's research has raised the profile of Victorian printmakers in the local community: Stevens and Smith assisted in securing a blue plaque for the Dalziel brothers unveiled in Brighton in 2019 [S5]. The Word & Image Department at the V&A has also recognised the on-going legacy of the BM events by proposing two similar study days in spring 2020 in order to use the Dalziel archive to creatively bring together UK and US printmakers (delayed due to Covid) [S2b].

Impact on Teaching and Learning

Field, Smith and Stevens connected their extensive research on the Dalziel archive with their practitioner collaborations to engage with teachers and schoolchildren, organising a series of events between 2017 and 2020. Taking the digital archive and artwork into more than twenty-five bespoke workshops, the team have enabled over 500 participants to produce research narratives and mixed-media reinventions of Victorian word-image texts [S8]. This work has included students at the National Art and Design Saturday Club; children at the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff; and pupils at eight schools across the UK. These workshops subsequently informed teaching practice and improved learning outcomes, as [text removed for publication], teacher at [text removed for publication], confirmed: 'The students were really engaged and learnt a lot about Victorian literature. [The activities] served as a great way to get them thinking about childhood in the past and how it has changed. The students learnt about print-making and how images were created historically'. In terms of her own professional development, 'It has shown me the importance of visual support to engage young students and the story-telling using images activity would be great to replicate in the classroom' [S9]. For [text

removed for publication], teacher at [text removed for publication], 'a great legacy of this project [was] helping the students engage and think about museums and their collections in a different way' [S10].

A further innovation was the project's 'Beyond the Archive' virtual exhibition, showcasing creative work and critical engagement produced by the young people [S8]. Many examples, each testifying to the intensity and spark of the research-based activities, are published on the Woodpeckings website, and were intended to form the basis of a physical exhibition at Brighton's Jubilee Library which had to be moved online in 2020. The success of the online version led to the project being celebrated by the National Archives in their annual publication, 'A Year in Archives 2020'. The virtual exhibition was accompanied by two online events with artists, curators, librarians and archivists from The Keep, The Jubilee Library, the BM, the V&A and The Society of Wood Engravers. For [text removed for publication], these events were 'innately creative ... the children gained a huge amount from responding to these pictures and the work that they have made in response to them has really blown us away. This sort of activity is enormously valuable for the children. It is looking at something old and making it new and relevant to them' [S10]. Work produced in response to the workshop with the National Art and Design Saturday Club – a charity dedicated to raising attainment, broadening horizons and enhancing life skills among young people – was also exhibited in the National Saturday Club's three-day exhibition at Somerset House (June 2017) [S8, S9].

As these examples demonstrate, the dynamic engagement of curators, artists, teachers and schoolchildren with the newly accessible Dalziel archive and the project's research expertise has generated valuable new understandings of the period and enriched their creative and critical practices.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- [S1] Supporting statements from curators at the British Museum **a.** [text removed for publication]; **b.** [text removed for publication]; **c.** [text removed for publication]
- [S2] Supporting statements from curators at the V&A: **a.** [text removed for publication]; **b.** [text removed for publication]
- [S3] Data from Google Analytics.
- [S4] Feedback forms from artists' workshop at the British Museum; email correspondence following artists' workshop at the British Museum.
- [S5] Magazine articles and blog posts concerning the project; newspaper articles from *The Guardian* (www.theguardian.com/books/gallery/2016/nov/26/alice-in-wonderlands-engravings-a-forgotten-story-dalziel-brothers-in-pictures), *iNews*, *Brighton Bits*, *The Argus*.
- [S6] Supporting statements from artists: **a.** [text removed for publication] and **b.** [text removed for publication]
- [S7] Feedback forms from writer's workshop at the British Museum.
- [S8] Page scans from exhibition catalogue from National Saturday Club; a selection of work produced by students and young people (see also www.sussex.ac.uk/english/dalziel/beyond-the-archive/ and www.sussex.ac.uk/english/dalziel/category/createandcomment/).
- [S9] A selection of tutor and student feedback from work with schools and young people (more examples available on request).
- [S10] Supporting statement from secondary school teacher [text removed for publication].