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HISTORIC COLLECTIONS, INSTITUTE OF NAVAL MEDICINE

The library of the present collection comprises the pre-1900 stock, with additions to 1948, of both Haslar and Stonehouse. Having been the working collection for 19th-century naval surgeons, it now gives an overview of what those surgeons would have studied.

The Royal Hospital Haslar took its first patients in 1753, and the library and museum were added in 1827: the initial book-stock cost £400, with £150 per annum allowed thereafter. Royal Naval Hospital Stonehouse at Plymouth was completed in 1762, and a library added in 1832: £700 was allocated in 1834 to fit out the museum and library, plus £200 for books. Thereafter £100 per annum was allowed to buy books and specimens.

From 1836 the two libraries shared an annual book budget of £100, supplemented in 1838 and 1842 by the bequests of, respectively, Robert McKinnal, Surgeon RN, and Dr Leonard Gillespie, Physician RN. The languages covered include French, Latin, Greek and Italian, and eight of the books date from the sixteenth century.

The library at Haslar survived a bombing raid in 1940 which destroyed most of the museum, while Stonehouse's library also had a near miss during air raids: a bomb-splinter can still be seen embedded in Vol. 36 (1891) of *The Edinburgh Medical Journal*. When Stonehouse closed in 1995 its books and other material were transferred to Haslar. In 1996, Haslar passed from the control of the RN to the Defence Secondary Care Agency, and the historic books of both Haslar and Stonehouse were transferred to the Institute of Naval Medicine. The resulting library has been managed under a partnership arrangement between the Admiralty Library and INM since 2000.

Also on display is a collection of surgical instruments, medical ceramics, pictures and other naval medical memorabilia. Some of these come from the older collections, and some have been more recently donated.

The Historic Collections are kept in Monckton House, Grade II* listed and built in 1854. It was requisitioned by the Admiralty in the late 1930s, and during the war served as a sick bay for WRNS personnel from HMS Dolphin. The Royal Naval Medical School moved here from Clevedon in 1948, and the house now forms the core of the INM complex.

The Historic Collections are open to interested visitors by arrangement: but please note that we cannot supply service records, hospital patient records, medical records or medical officers' journals. These are housed at The National Archives, Kew.

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