

Objects for Adoption 2012/2013

Part 2: Natural World and Recent History



Natural World



Object Name
(museum object number)

Skull of an ichthyosaur
(REDMG:1964.701.1)

Description

This is part of the fossilised skull of a dolphin-like marine reptile that lived in the early Jurassic period, about 200 million years ago. The lower jaws, teeth and other small bones are also preserved in the block, which probably came from the Dorset coast.

Where to see it

Green Space



'Mushroom' sponge
(REDMG:1998.171.1)

This strange fossil may look like a mushroom, but it's actually a sponge! It was preserved in flint from the chalk seas – over 65 million years ago. Flints formed from a silica gel which oozed into cavities in the sea floor, including those left by decaying animals.

Green Space



Fossil shark teeth
(REDMG:1964.318.1=19)

Teeth of *Lamna*, a mackerel shark related to the modern porbeagle and mako, from the base of the Reading Beds at Wheeler's Pit, a clay pit in Coley. They are over 60 million years old. The Reading Formation was the source of much of the clay for local brickmakers.

Green Space



Mammoth jaw
(REDMG:1963.166.4)

Lower jaw of a young mammoth, with milk molar teeth present, found in gravel deposits at Grovelands Pit. Hundreds of mammal bones and early stone age tools were found at the workings near Elm Park. This fossil was heavily restored in 1907-1908.

Green Space

Natural World



Object Name
(museum object number)

Leaf fossil
(REDMG:1964.226.2)

Description

This complete fossil leaf, from the Reading Leaf Bed at Waterloo Pit, Reading, is about 60 million years old. The Reading Formation is a mix of sand and silty clay deposits, showing that it was laid down in a braided river estuary. Leaves like this were preserved in the mud.

Where to see it

Green Space



White-clawed crayfish
(REDMG:1998.114.4)

The native white-clawed crayfish is threatened by a fungal disease introduced along with the escaped American signal crayfish. It can still be found in a few ponds around Reading.

Green Space



Stag beetles (male)
(REDMG:1998.186.1=5)

Stag beetles are quite common in parts of Reading, although nationally rare. Only the males have the 'antlers' which they use to fight over females. They spend most of their life as larvae, developing for three to five years in dead wood.

Green Space



Scarlet tiger moths
(REDMG:1998.200.198/199)

These beautiful day-flying insects can be seen around May and June in Reading gardens as well as along the banks of the Kennet - the red colour is brighter on live specimens. The hairy, black and yellow caterpillars feed mainly on comfrey.

Green Space

Natural World



Object Name
(museum object number)

Bittern
(REDMG:1926.58.4)

Description

These secretive brown herons came close to extinction in Britain and are still very rare. Locally they are making a slow comeback – each year a few spend the winter in reedbeds at the edges of former gravel pits around Reading.

Where to see it

Green Space



Buzzards
(REDMG:1957.308.1=2)

This case was set up by local taxidermist G.A. Topp, whose premises were then at 19 London Street. The birds' wings are raised at a dramatic but unnatural angle to fit into the case. Buzzard numbers are increasing locally and they can be seen around the outskirts of Reading.

Box Room



Pike
(REDMG:1995.144.44)

This pike is part of a representative collection of Berkshire fishes made by Mr G.H. Baxter. It was caught in the River Kennet in 1905 and weighed 18lb when it was landed.

Green Space



Roe deer (doe)
(REDMG:1995.144.36)

The Museum has a representative collection of Berkshire deer, from the dog-like Muntjac to the magnificent Red. Most of the deer seen in Reading are muntjac, but the more graceful roe deer will also come into gardens, where their love of roses makes them unpopular!

Green Space

Recent History



Object Name
(museum object number)

**St Giles Church
chandelier**
(REDMG:1947.219.1)

Description

Globe of a 17th century chandelier, probably from St Giles Church, Reading, inscribed 'THE GIFT OF ALICE CLARKE WIFE OF WILLIAM CLARK MIDWIFE DWELLING IN THE PARISH OF SAINT GIELS IN REDDINGE ANo 1640' A chandelier like this was still in use at the Abbey Church, Sherborne, Dorset in 1896.

**Where to
see it**

Reading:
People &
Place
Gallery



Bird coffin
(REDMG:1950.71.1)

Lead coffin for a dead bird, found buried below the cellar floor of a shop in Minster Street. It is inscribed 'T.Challis's Bird. Died Dec 27, 1796, AE. 13 Y.' The bird is likely to have been a linnet or goldfinch, popular cagebirds of the period.

Reading:
People &
Place
Gallery



Steam engine model
(REDMG:1998.34.1)

This model is of an unnamed Gooch broad gauge steam engine of the Great Western Railway. In 1892 GWR converted to narrow gauge in line with the rest of the railway network. The model maker, Edward Allen, was from Reading and was a tool maker by profession.

Reading:
People &
Place
Gallery



**Nameplate of
Locomotive No 5084,
Reading Abbey**
(REDMG:1963.116.1)

This steam-powered locomotive ran on the Great Western Railway. The first *Reading Abbey*, number 4064, was a Star class locomotive built at Swindon in 1922. In 1937 it was rebuilt as a more powerful Castle class, numbered 5084, which ran until 1958 having completed over a million miles.

Reading:
People &
Place
Gallery

Recent History



Object Name
(museum object number)

**Huntley & Palmers
'F.A. Cup' biscuit tin**
(REDMG:1992.2.239)

Description

This aluminium copy of the Football Association trophy was made during Reading Football Club's good 1926-1927 F.A. Cup run, in anticipation of their victory at Wembley. Sadly the tin was never put into production as Reading lost 3-0 to Cardiff City in the semi-final on 26 March 1927.

Where to see it

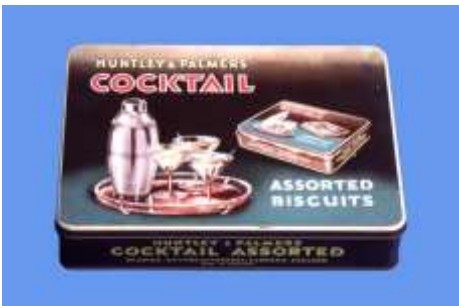
Huntley & Palmers Gallery



Jacobs 'Coronation Coach' biscuit tin
(REDMG:1992.2.1226)

This tin was probably produced for the coronation of King Edward VIII in January 1936, but after his abdication it could be re-used for the coronation of King George VI the following year, as it did not include a name or portrait. The roof of the coach forms the lid.

Huntley & Palmers Gallery



Huntley & Palmers Assorted Cocktail Biscuits tin
(REDMG:1992.2.440)

This small tin dates from about 1955. Cocktail biscuits remained popular into the 1970s, when Huntley & Palmers Public Relations office guidance stated they 'are ideal ... either on their own [or] flavoured with cheese, tomato, curry and herbs or with a savoury dip'.

Huntley & Palmers Gallery



Huntley & Palmers 'Kate Greenaway' biscuit tin
(REDMG:1992.2.933)

This 1980 tin, featuring a Kate Greenaway illustration of a tea party in a summer garden, had to be withdrawn after complaints in the press - rude images hidden in the shrubbery by a mischievous freelance designer, Mick Hill, had been noticed by a vigilant grocer!

Huntley & Palmers Gallery

Recent History



Object Name
(museum object number)

Suttons lawnmower
(REDMG:1997.17.1)

Description

Suttons, The Royal Seed Establishment, sold gardening implements as well as seeds. Although this lawnmower is branded Sutton and Sons, it was probably made by a manufacturer such as Ransomes of Ipswich. In 1905 Suttons advertised a lawnmower like this as suitable for a 'lady or boy' gardener.

Where to see it

Reading:
People &
Place
Gallery



Suttons Seeds model
(REDMG:1998.1.82)

This model shows Suttons, The Royal Seed Establishment, as it appeared in the 1930s. Their premises behind the Market Place covered nearly 6 acres and included offices, stores, order rooms and loading floors. From here, seeds were dispatched all round the world.

Reading:
People &
Place
Gallery



Palace Theatre chair
(REDMG:1986.36.1)

This upholstered end-of-row seat with inlaid wood is a demonstration model for the early twentieth century refurbishment of the Palace Theatre in Cheapside, which opened in 1907 for variety performances and closed in 1961.

Reading:
People &
Place
Gallery



Jackson's clock
(REDMG:1996.230.1)

This large public clock was positioned over the main entrance to Jackson's Department Store at 3 King's Road between 1960 and 1996. Edward Jackson established his shop in 1875. As it expanded, the corner of the High Street and King's Road became known as Jacksons Corner.

Reading:
People &
Place
Gallery