From the private diaries of monarchs and letters from Prime Ministers, to household account books and a kitchen maid’s recipes, *Treasures from the Royal Archives* provides an unparalleled insight into the lives and activities of generations of the royal family. Through nine thematic chapters, such as ‘War and Conflict’ and ‘Pastimes and Passions’, this handsome publication brings together over 100 historic documents, many published for the first time, reflecting the extraordinary breadth of material within the Royal Archives. Its publication marks the centenary of the establishment of a permanent home for the Archives in Windsor Castle’s famous Round Tower and is accompanied by an exhibition at the Castle of 25 of the most fascinating items from the collection (until 25 January 2015).

The death of Queen Victoria in 1901 created the need for a proper repository for the royal family’s papers. Over her 63-year reign, the Queen had corresponded copiously with her ministers, senior members of the Armed Forces and of the Church, ambassadors, heads of state, and her own extensive family in Britain and throughout Europe. Documents pre-dating Victoria’s reign were gradually added to the collection, including some of the papers of the exiled Stuart monarchs, and those of George III and George IV, following their discovery in the basement of Apsley House, London. It was King George V who in 1914 realised the plan to bring all the Archives together in one home, where documents relating to the Sovereign and the Royal Household continue to be kept today.

Among the most charming items in the book are the paper dolls painted by the young Princess Victoria, the future Queen, as well as one of the love letters that she and Prince Albert exchanged. In 1862 the couple’s eldest son, Albert Edward, Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) visited the Middle East and recorded his adventures in a diary, including climbing pyramids and visiting ‘the Sphynx’. A century earlier, Queen Charlotte, consort of George III, describes in her journal visits to the theatre, stays in country houses, dinners with aristocratic families and the minutiae of Georgian domestic life.

Readers will discover first-hand accounts from members of the royal family serving in conflict. These include notes on the Battle of Jutland in 1916 by Prince Albert (the future King George VI), a Sub-Lieutenant on board HMS *Collingwood*. His elder brother, the Prince
of Wales (later King Edward VIII), served in France during the First World War. In September 1916 the Prince describes a demonstration of 'land submarines' (tanks), which had been developed in secret under the guidance of Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, and drew sketches of them for his father, King George V. A letter from Churchill to King George VI in 1941 expresses his gratitude for Their Majesties' support during his first few months as war leader, writing that he had been 'greatly cheered by our weekly luncheons in poor old bomb-battered Buckingham Palace'.

_Treasures from the Royal Archives_ also includes a number of documents relating to significant moments in history. A telegram sent from Ernest Shackleton to King Edward VII in 1909 reports on the explorer's achievements in reaching the South Magnetic Pole and asks permission to name a mountain range after Queen Alexandra. The King replied with congratulations and 'gladly' gave his assent. There are also examples of formal correspondence exchanged between monarchs and foreign heads of state. Among these is a letter of condolence sent to Queen Victoria by the President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, following the untimely death of Prince Albert from typhoid in December 1861.

_Treasures from the Royal Archives_ is published by Royal Collection Trust. It is available at £19.95 from [www.royalcollection.org.uk/shop](http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/shop) and from Royal Collection Trust shops in London and Edinburgh, and at £29.95 from all good bookshops.

The exhibition _Treasures from the Royal Archives_ is part of a visit to Windsor Castle until 25 January 2015.

A free augmented-reality app brings to life Major John Chard’s account of the Defence of Rorke’s Drift in the Anglo-Zulu War, made for Queen Victoria in 1879 and in the Royal Archives. The app has been produced in collaboration with Gamar. Find out more at [www.royalcollection.org.uk](http://www.royalcollection.org.uk)

A selection of images is available from [www.picselect.com](http://www.picselect.com)

For further information, please contact the Royal Collection Trust Press Office, T. +44 (0)20 7839 1377, press@royalcollection.org.uk.

_**Notes to Editors**_

_Royal Collection Trust_, a department of the Royal Household, is responsible for the care of the Royal Collection and manages the public opening of the official residences of The Queen. Income generated from admissions and from associated commercial activities contributes directly to The Royal Collection Trust, a registered charity. The aims of The Trust are the care and conservation of the Royal Collection, and the promotion of access and enjoyment through exhibitions, publications, loans and educational programmes. Royal Collection Trust’s work is undertaken without public funding of any kind.

[www.royalcollection.org.uk](http://www.royalcollection.org.uk)