

Unlocking the Secrets of Camden Place

Ovation Data helps protect and preserve history for future generations

Camden Place has a rich history dating from the early 1600's and an archive of documents in various formats and condition which required great care in handling. Conserving such a collection digitally means it can be shared with the widest possible audience and easily used as research materials.

NAPOLÉON III EMPEREUR DES FRANÇAIS.



> Background

Heritage stories can be told through tangible assets, artefacts, buildings and architecture. These physical footprints from history populate museums and country houses, while others are locked away in company archives and cabinets. Once located, they can be displayed and shared through a comparatively simple process.

Written documents such as old letters, minutes, record books, press cuttings, tickets or other ephemera are possibly even more telling. Those that survive can offer unique insights into people or events that shape our history and provide the colour to our heritage. These paper clues and insights are more difficult to share and may be challenging to display. A glass cabinet can show an interesting page from an open book, and a frame can showcase a caricature or drawing. Yet a wealth of pages and a variety of formats often need more sophisticated handling.

> Challenge



Today, Camden Place is the home of Chislehurst Golf Club, but more importantly, it was also the final home of Napoleon III, France's first elected president and last emperor. Interest in the French Imperial family's time in exile at Chislehurst is growing, along with requests for information about recently discovered materials. These include a few documents from the Club's own archive, others from a private collector, and letters and material found in a Croydon attic.

Digital technology overcomes many obstacles in uncovering the wealth of information locked in these paper trails. While digital files make it easy for researchers or interested parties to access and navigate collections of information, curating this content requires careful thought. Ovation Data faced the challenge of making it possible to share the secrets locked in these documents without damaging the materials.

> Solution

The Club approached Ovation Data because it wanted to create digital files of its precious bits of paper, some of which were in very delicate condition and ranged in size from a postcard to huge broadsheets, in colour or black and white. Ovation's dedicated technical experts ensured that materials were handled with care and that only quality copies were produced. Ovation's efforts successfully solved important challenges and included:



Digitized raw materials, transforming them into digital objects that Camden Place staff can easily handle, and researchers can safely study



Made it possible to begin sharing the Camden Place secrets globally, with a digital audience



Kept all original documents safe in special archive storage, environmentally controlled at Ovation's offices nearby



Served to reveal and help promote the rich history and uniqueness of Camden Place



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> Results

The treasured historical assets of Camden Place have joined the archives of other organizations protected by Ovation and removed from the risk of damage or loss. Our historical and custom equipment, proprietary techniques and processing facilities recover and preserve data from compromised media and ensure its resilience.

Ovation continues to innovate and evolve new data technologies. We unlock and transcribe any record from paper records to tapes to digital discs, and transform them into searchable, actionable data. We offer unique and creative ways to share these newly modernized memories.



Ovation provided us with ideas and information to help ensure that we have an archive of images that can be used in multiple purposes over many years. We plan to create a searchable archive for specialists, teaching materials for educators and virtual events and exhibitions for the public. We have documents whose content can be displayed without concerns of security and the capability to reach a much wider audience.

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