

Two early *Stamford Mercuries* of 1715 and 1716

## The Volunteers

Stamford Mercury Archive Trust is directed by a board of trustees, but the day to day work is carried out by a dedicated group of volunteers. The jobs they carry out include compiling a complete inventory, answering enquiries from the public, and undertaking simple conservation work.

Currently they meet twice a week, on Thursday mornings and Friday afternoons. New volunteers are most welcome. For details please contact: [smatenquiries@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:smatenquiries@tiscali.co.uk)



The archive reading room. Consultation is via the archive trust's microfilm. This was specially commissioned, in association with the British Library and neighbouring local authorities, and comprises a run of all known *Stamford Mercuries*.

## Opening hours

The archive is manned by volunteers so therefore opening hours are restricted. The archive is open:

Thursday mornings, 9.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m.

Friday afternoons, 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m.

Visiting outside these hours can be arranged by special appointment.

Stamford Library, which has longer opening hours, also possesses a complete microfilm run of the *Stamford Mercury*. However, only the *Stamford Mercury* archive possesses the substantive local edition of the newspaper from 1929 to 1955.



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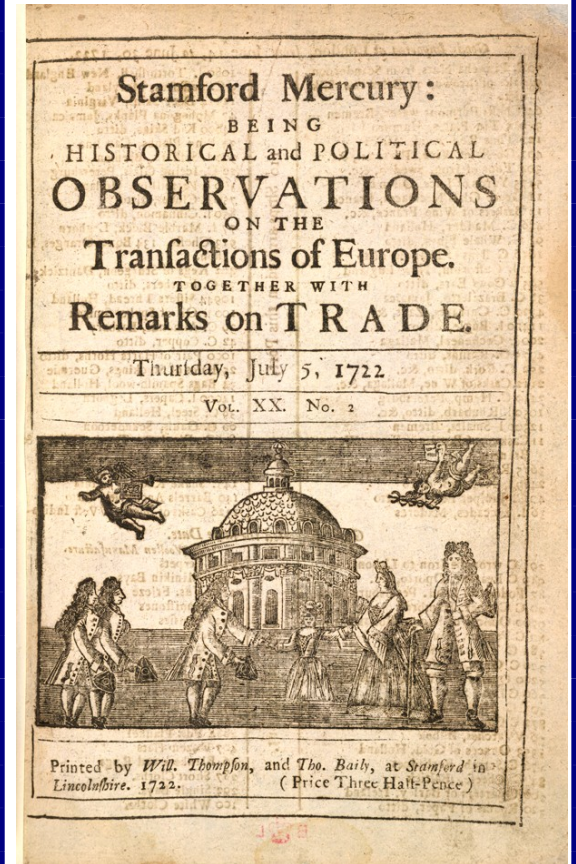


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STAMFORD MERCURY ARCHIVE TRUST

# Stamford Mercury Archive



## Information for Visitors

## General background

The *Stamford Mercury* archive is a unique collection of a single newspaper that originated in the second decade of the 18th century, and it is complete for well over two and a quarter centuries. It comprises the most comprehensive record of one of the country's oldest provincial newspapers, and is still held in the town of the newspaper's birth. It is of major importance to the nation's cultural heritage.

In 2005 the owners of the *Stamford Mercury*, East Midlands Newspapers Ltd, felt the archive needed more care and curatorial attention than a commercial company could provide. It therefore passed the archive to a specially formed trust. This was able to obtain a grant of £305,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund for conservation and long term management. As a part of this programme the papers have been rehoused on inert metal shelves and the newspapers conserved and stored in special archival boxes. They have also been copied on to film. This will help fight off the ravages time, dust and mishandling.



### Conservation.

Conservation has been an important element in the archive trust's work.

The newspapers are stored flat on inert metal shelves ...

... and are kept in inert archival boxes. This eliminates the tensions introduced from vertical storage and prevents dust settling on them.



## What the archive contains

The archive has a complete run of the newspaper from 1786, is largely complete from 1765 and is almost complete for 1716-17, 1721-24, 1736-46.

In the 18th century the *Stamford Mercury* carried worldwide and national as well as local news, while in the 19th century it was a regional paper covering all of eastern England. Only in recent times has the *Mercury* restricted its coverage to Stamford, South Lincolnshire and Rutland. It is a valuable research tool for all manner of local, national, European and early colonial history. Because of the wealth of names it contains, it is especially valuable to local and family historians.



## Access and charges

Access to the archive is free for personal research, but a charge is made for commercial use (£10/hr) as are distant enquiries answered by the trust.

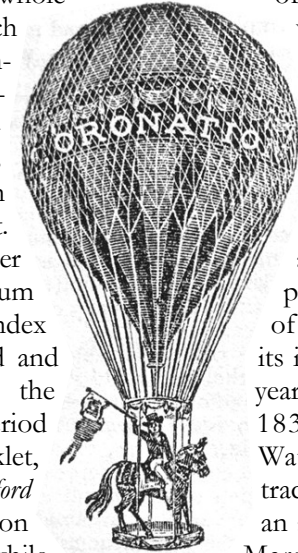
The archive is very fragile, so all visits are supervised and consultation, except under exceptional conditions, is via the trust's microfilm collection.

### Charges for distant enquiries, print-outs, etc:

First 20 minutes	free
Hourly rate thereafter	£10.00
Minimum charge after free period	£10.00
Print out per sheet	0.50p
CD or DVD containing up to 5 images	£5.00
For each further image on CD/DVD	£1.00
Large orders by negotiation	
for the reproduction of a single image	£60.00
in any publication or broadcast. (This fee may be waived for academic or educational publications.)	

## Hints for researchers

Like most newspapers the *Stamford Mercury* is not indexed so the more specific you can be in providing a date for your enquiry, the more likely will be your chances of success. Discussions are under way to digitise the whole of the collection, which will include automatic indexing. Even then, computerised optical recognition programmes have great difficulty in deciphering older print. However, there are other aids. Stamford Museum possesses an exhaustive index of the *Mercury* for Stamford and its immediate environs for the years 1800-1845. For the period 1837-1887, a small booklet, *Annals of Stamford*, traces the history of Stamford on an almost day by day basis, while Margaret Jackson's typescript, *Chronology of Stamford, 1840-1975* is equally valuable. Copies of these latter two, together with *Cassell's Chronology of World History* are held in the archive. For more general histories of Stamford, Stamford Museum and Stamford Library can help.



A stamp from an early *Mercury* showing that government stamp duty had been paid.



All the woodcuts in this brochure are taken from 19th century *Stamford Mercuries*.