

# Nomination form

## Part A: Essential information

Give a brief description of the documentary heritage being nominated, and the reasons for proposing it. Highlight the nature, uniqueness and significance of the nominated documentary heritage.

### **The Tokyo War Crimes Trials 1946-1848**

The collection is one of the most complete and unique sets of original documents of the International Military Tribunal Far East (IMTFE). This collection is more complete than any other such collection outside of the United States. It has enormous significance for the Asia Pacific region as it documents the history of Japanese ambitions in the Pacific prior to WWII. It rivals in significance the Nuremburg collection held by Harvard Law School. It was presented to the University of Canterbury in 1949 by Justice Erima Harvey Northcroft, the New Zealand Member of the IMTFE.

See: [http://library.canterbury.ac.nz/mb/war\\_crimes/toc.shtml](http://library.canterbury.ac.nz/mb/war_crimes/toc.shtml)

### **2.1 Name of nominator (person or organisation)**

**University of Canterbury Library**

### **2.2 Relationship to the nominated documentary heritage**

**Custodian**

### **2.3 Contact person(s)**

**Jill Durney, Macmillan Brown Library Manager**

**Jeff Palmer, University Library Archivist**

### **2.4 Contact details**

Name	Address	
Jill Durney Jeff Palmer	Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch, NEW ZEALAND	
Telephone	Facsimile	Email
03 3642987 ex 8660 03 3642087 ex 8663	03 3641816	Jill.durney@canterbury.ac.nz Jeff.palmer@canterbury.ac.nz

## **3 Details of the Nominated Documentary Heritage**

**3.1 Title of documentary heritage item or collection** Justice Erima Harvey Northcroft, Tokyo War Crimes Trial Papers

**3.2 Catalogue or registration details** Archives Reference: MB 1549

### **3.3 Photographs or a video of the documentary heritage**

There is some photographic material in the collection which has been digitized and made available via the Library's Digital Library

### **3.4 History/Origin/Background/Provenance**

In January 1949, Justice Erima Harvey Northcroft, Member of the IMTFE (International Military Tribunal for the Far East) for New Zealand, donated his nearly complete set of trial documents to the University of Canterbury (then University of Canterbury College).

The International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE), most commonly known as the Tokyo War Crimes Trial (29 April 1946 to 12 November 1948), was one of the most important trials of the twentieth century. The IMTFE was charged with bringing the highest levels of Japanese war criminals to trial. The Tribunal consisted of eleven members from eleven nations: Australia, Canada, China, France, Great Britain, India, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Netherlands, the Soviet Union, and the United States of America. Justice Erima Harvey Northcroft was chosen to represent New Zealand on the Bench of the IMTFE. After the trial In January 1949, Justice Northcroft kindly donated his nearly complete set of trial documents to the University of Canterbury At the time of his bequest, Justice Northcroft was well aware of the importance of this resource. Since that time, as original copies of the material have dwindled, disintegrated, and been lost, the value of Northcroft's gift has risen exponentially. This collection is now one of the most complete sets of IMTFE documents in the world. It contains almost 380 volumes and nearly 110,000 pages. Evidence can be found therein for examinations of virtually any topic regarding Asia in the first half of the twentieth century, particularly as it applies to the growth of Japanese imperialism

See: [http://library.canterbury.ac.nz/mb/war\\_crimes/intro.shtml](http://library.canterbury.ac.nz/mb/war_crimes/intro.shtml)

### 3.5 Bibliography

Boister, Neil and Cryer Robert, **The Tokyo International Military Tribunal: a reappraisal**, (Oxford ; New York : Oxford University Press, 2008.)

Cryer, Robert and Neil Boister (eds.), **Documents on the Tokyo International Military Tribunal: charter, indictment and judgments**, Oxford ; New York : Oxford University Press, 2008

Pritchard, R John and Sonia Magbanua Zaide (eds.), **The Tokyo War Crimes Trial: The Comprehensive Index and Guide to the Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East**, (New York & London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1987)

Pritchard, R John(ed.) **The Tokyo Major War Crimes Trial: The Records of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East with an Authoritative Commentary and Comprehensive Guide**, (Lewiston (New York), Lampeter (Wales): The Edwin Mellen Press, 1998)

### 3.6 Names, qualifications and contact details of up to three independent people or organisations with expert knowledge about the values and provenance of the documentary heritage

Name	Qualifications	Address
Professor Neil Boister	PhD University of Nottingham, UK, 1999	School of Law, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch, New Zealand <a href="http://www.laws.canterbury.ac.nz/people/boister.shtml">http://www.laws.canterbury.ac.nz/people/boister.shtml</a>
Professor David McIntyre	MA (Camb) MA (Washington) PhD (London)	Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch, New Zealand <a href="http://www.pacs.canterbury.ac.nz/people/mcintyre.shtml">http://www.pacs.canterbury.ac.nz/people/mcintyre.shtml</a>

**I assert that the above named referees have given their written permission for their names and contact details to be used in connection with this nomination for the**

**Asia/Pacific *Memory of the World* Register, and their names to appear on the website. (Contact details will not appear on the website or be disclosed by the MOWCAP to any third party).**

<b>Signature</b>	<b>Full name (Please PRINT)</b>  <b>Belinda Rowan Jill Durney</b>
	<b>Date</b>  <b>30/11/09</b>

**4.1 Owner of the documentary heritage (name and contact details)**

Name University of Canterbury	Address Private Bag 4800 Christchurch New Zealand	
Telephone 03 3642987 ex 8660	Facsimile 03 3642816	Email jill.durney@canterbury.ac.nz

**4.2 Custodian of the documentary heritage (name and contact details if different from the owner)**

Name	Address	
Telephone	Facsimile	Email

**4.3 Legal status**

Details of legal and administrative powers for the preservation of the documentary heritage.

Physical ownership of the collection belongs to the University of Canterbury.  
Intellectual rights are managed in accordance with international law.

**4.4 Accessibility**

Describe how the item(s) / collection may be accessed:

The collection may be viewed in the secure archives reading area of the Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury. User registration and identity verification is required. Users must pre-order items at least 24 hours prior to their visit. Remote reference services are available.

All access restrictions should be explicitly stated below:

Photographs not to be reproduced unless credit line reads 'U.S. Army Signal Corps' (see reverse of Ph: 25982 box 338).

**4.5 Copyright status**

Describe the copyright status of the item(s) / collection

We are unaware of any copyright restrictions.

**5.1 First criterion: authenticity. Is the documentary heritage what it appears to be? Has its identity and origin been reliably established?**

Yes. The collection was given to the University by Justice Northcroft himself, the New Zealand judge at the trial.

**5.2 Second criterion: world significance. Is the documentary heritage unique and irreplaceable, something whose disappearance or deterioration would constitute a harmful impoverishment of the heritage of humanity? Has it created a great impact over a span of time and/or within a particular supra-national cultural area of the region? Is it representative of a type, but it has no direct equal? Has it had great influence – whether positive or negative – on the course of history?**

Yes. Individual documents within the collection are unique and the collection as a whole is not replicated anywhere in the world.

The collection details events at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (1946-1948). This was an internationally constituted War Crimes Trial rivalled in its significance only by the Nuremberg Trials. The implications of the collection are supra-national. The experiences of many Asia Pacific nations under Japanese control during World War Two are detailed along with the individual experiences of soldiers and civilians. The consequences of the actions of the Japanese imperial army and its Commanders during World War Two are made explicit. The effects of the tribunal in the areas of law, social justice, military and social history are significant and are being felt to this day.

**5.3 Third, world significance must be demonstrated in meeting one or more of the following criteria. Because significance is comparative, these criteria are best illustrated by checking them against items of documentary heritage already inscribed (for example) on the International *Memory of the World Register*:**

**Time: Is it especially evocative of its time (which may have been one of crisis, or significant social or cultural change; it may represent a new discovery or be the “first of its kind”)**

Yes. World War Two 1939-1945.

**Place: Does it contain crucial information about a locality important in the history of the region and its cultures? Or did the location have an important influence on the events or phenomena represented by the documentary heritage? Or is it descriptive of physical environments, cities or institutions since vanished?**

Yes, the collection has particular significance for the whole of the Asia-Pacific region that experienced Japanese military expansion during World War Two. The global nature of World War Two meant that events in this area also had a major effect on the rest of the World.

**People: Is it related to people in a social and cultural context that reflects significant aspects of human behaviour, or social, industrial, artistic or political development. It may reflect the important roles and impact of key or certain individuals or groups.**

Yes. The collection has a particular focus on individuals in command of Japanese forces during World War Two. It reflects critical social, political and military developments both within Japan and across the entire Asia Pacific region.

**Subject and theme:** The subject matter may represent particular historical or intellectual developments in natural, social and human sciences, politics, ideology, sports and the arts.

World War Two. Social History. Military History. Asia Pacific History. War Crimes. Legal History. Imperialism. International Law

**Form and style:** The item(s) may have outstanding aesthetic, stylistic or linguistic value, be a typical or key exemplar of a type or presentation, custom or medium, or of a disappeared or disappearing carrier or format.

Most of the collection is printed on World War Two era newsprint. This carrier is highly acidic, brittle and is rapidly deteriorating. There is a very real possibility that this unique collection might become unreadable within a decade.

**Rarity** Does the content or physical nature of the documentary heritage make it a rare surviving example of its type or time?

While a handful of documentary collections of the IMTFE exist elsewhere in the world it is unlikely that any contain the scope and depth of the collection held at the University of Canterbury

Some of the documents within the collection are unique. See:

[http://library.canterbury.ac.nz/mb/war\\_crimes/toc.shtml](http://library.canterbury.ac.nz/mb/war_crimes/toc.shtml)

**Integrity** Within the natural physical limitations of carrier survival, is the documentary heritage complete or partial? Has it been altered or damaged?

It is, as far as can be determined, a complete record of the material deposited by Justice Northcroft in 1949. As far as can be determined the collection has not been altered or damaged by human agency.

**Threat** Is its survival in danger? If it is secure, must vigilance be applied to maintain that security? Detail the nature and scope of threats.

The main threat to the collection is in inherent instability of the carrier (medium) upon which the documents are recorded. Rapid acidification of the newsprint is taking place which will result in the collection becoming unusable in its current format within a few years. Migration to an archivally sound and sustainable medium is essential to ensure continued access to the contents of the collection.

*Attach a separate statement if space is insufficient!*

**Is there a management plan in existence for this documentary heritage?  
Are there strategies to preserve and provide access to it?**

NO

**If yes, describe or attach a summary of the plan. If no, please provide details about current method of storage and custody of the materials.**

The collection is currently housed in the University of Canterbury archival warehouse. This is not a climate-controlled facility and although relatively stable environmentally does experience unacceptable variations in temperature and relative humidity.

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**Please provide any other information that supports the inclusion of this item(s) / collection on the Asia/Pacific *Memory of the World* Register.**

Attach a separate statement if space insufficient.

This is a unique collection of huge historical significance. Inclusion in the Register will ensure that we are able to attract resources to ensure its ongoing survival and preservation. There is significant and growing international interest in this collection from scholars researching aspects of WWII history - military law, international law, social history, and war crimes, through to individuals seeking information about family members caught up in the war in the Pacific. There has been significant interest from Japan itself, including recently from the Japanese Broadcasting Corporation researching a documentary series on the trials. As knowledge of the collection has grown, so has scholarly and legal interest in the impact of these trials. The lack of research over the decades into the Tokyo Trials, has, according to legal expert, Neil Boister, led to more recent cases (eg that of Slobodan Milosevic prosecuted for crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia) repeating many the same mistakes encountered during the Tokyo trials. He concluded that the trials proved significant in developing a legal framework for the prosecution of war crimes, a framework that is only now being fully explored.

**Nominees may find completing the following checklist useful before sending the nomination form to MOWCAP.**

MOWCAP website reviewed

Introduction read

summary completed (maximum 100 word) (section 1)

Nomination and contact details completed (section 2)

If this is a joint nomination, section 2 appropriately modified

Documentary heritage identified (sections 3.1 – 3.3)

History/Origin/Background/Provenance completed (section 3.4)

Bibliography completed (section 3.5)

Names, qualifications and contact details of up to three independent people or organizations recorded (section 3.6)

Declaration signed and dated that all referees have given their written permission for their names to appear on the MOWCAP website (section 3.6)

Details of owner completed (section 4.1)

Details of custodian – if different from owner - completed (section 4.2)

Details of legal status completed (section 4.3)

Details of accessibility completed (section 4.4)

Details of copyright status completed (section 4.5)

Evidence presented of authenticity (section 5.1)

Evidence presented of world significance (section 5.2)

Evidence presented against one or more additional criteria (section 5.3)

Information presented on rarity, integrity and threat (section 6)

Summary of Preservation and Access Management Plan completed. If there is no formal Plan provide details about current and/or planned access, storage and custody arrangements (section 7)

Any other information provided - if applicable (section 8)

Sample photographs or VDO prepared for MOWCAP use (if required)

Printed copy of Nomination Form made for organisation's records

Electronic copy of Nomination Form made for MOWCAP use (if required)