

News release

MUSEUM *of the*
HISTORY *of*
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19 March 2015

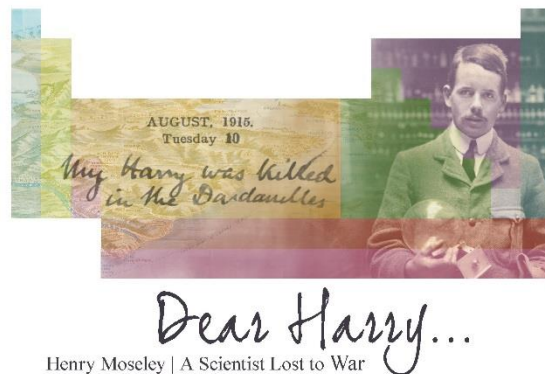


‘Dear Harry...’ Henry Moseley: A Scientist Lost to War

14 May – 18 October 2015

Henry ‘Harry’ Moseley was an exceptionally promising young English physicist in the years immediately before World War I. His work on the X-ray spectra of the elements provided a new foundation for the Periodic Table and contributed to the development of the nuclear model of the atom. Yet Moseley’s life and career were cut short. He was killed in 1915, aged 27, in action at Gallipoli, Turkey.

With support from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), the Museum of the History of Science is staging a centenary exhibition, ‘Dear Harry...’ – *Henry Moseley: A Scientist Lost to War*. This marks Moseley’s great contribution to science and reveals the impact of his death on the international scientific community and its relationship with government and the armed forces.



Using entries from Moseley’s mother’s diary, Moseley’s original scientific apparatus from the Museum’s collections, and drawing on Moseley’s personal correspondence, the exhibition presents an intimate biographical portrait set against the wider stage of international scientific discovery and World War I.

Through his research and experiments in Oxford and Manchester – where he worked with ‘father of nuclear physics’ Ernest Rutherford – Moseley made significant and lasting impacts in both physics and chemistry. Had he lived, the young Moseley would surely have been a

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prime candidate for one of the 1916 Nobel Prizes. Instead, as Isaac Asimov wrote, “in view of what [Moseley] might still have accomplished ... his death might well have been the most costly single death of the War to mankind generally.”

The international scientific community was fleetingly re-united in its condemnation of the loss of such a scientific talent, and Moseley’s death led to wider changes in the way that science, scientific research, and scientists were used in war.

Thanks to the HLF’s Our Heritage grant award, the ‘*Dear Harry...*’ project will conserve apparatus and archives in the Museum’s collections, permit a subsequent permanent redisplay of this important material, and deliver a broad programme of public events, education work, and digital resources. The funding has also allowed the Museum to partner with the Royal Engineers Museum, Library and Archive, the Royal Signals Museum, the Department of Physics at the University of Oxford, and Trinity College, Oxford, where Moseley studied. Rarely-seen artefacts from each of these collections will be featured in the exhibition.

‘*Dear Harry...*’ has been timed to allow many of the key dates in Moseley’s preparations for Gallipoli, and ultimately his death in August 1915, to be presented exactly 100 years later. A ‘live blog’, both online and in-gallery, will pick out this centenary anniversary using extracts from archive material to present the events and thoughts of Moseley 100 years to the day. ‘*Dear Harry...*’ tells the moving and personal story of the life and legacy of Henry ‘Harry’ Moseley – son, scientist, and soldier.

Press view: Tuesday 12 May 2015, 10.30am at the Museum of the History of Science

To attend please contact Scott Billings at scott.billings@mhs.ox.ac.uk.

www.mhs.ox.ac.uk/moseley

For further information and images contact:

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Public engagement officer
Museum of the History of Science

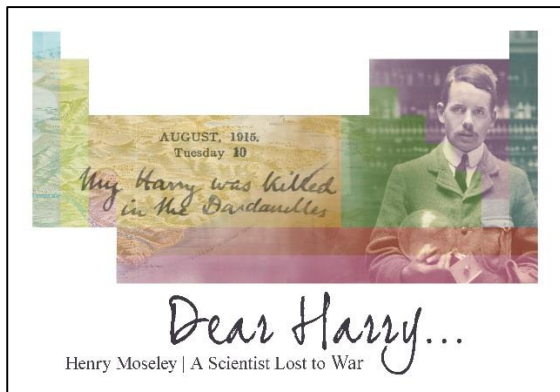
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High resolution image also available for download at www.mhs.ox.ac.uk/moseley/press.



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Notes to Editors

About the Museum of the History of Science

MHS houses an unrivalled collection of early scientific instruments in the world's oldest surviving purpose-built museum building, the Old Ashmolean on Broad Street, Oxford. It is a department of the University of Oxford and an active public museum, offering a programme of special exhibitions, family-friendly events, gallery tours, table talks and much more, along with taught sessions for schools.

www.mhs.ox.ac.uk / [@MHSOxford](https://twitter.com/MHSOxford)

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About the Royal Engineers Museum, Library and Archive

The Royal Engineers Museum is Kent's largest military museum, and holds its only Designated Collection of historical and international importance. The many galleries tell the story of Britain's military engineers from the Roman period to the modern Corps of Royal Engineers. The millions of items in its collection tell a sweeping epic of courage, creativity and innovation and the stories of individuals of great renown (General Gordon, Lord Kitchener, John Chard VC) and the average Sapper who has helped the British Army move, fight and survive for over 200 years.

www.re-museum.co.uk / [@REMuseum](https://twitter.com/REMuseum)

About the Royal Signals Museum

The Royal Signals Museum is a military museum based at Blandford Camp just outside the town of Blandford Forum, Dorset. It tells the fascinating history of the Royal Corps of Signals, the development of Communications Technology and highlights the achievements of its soldiers through a series of displays and interactive exhibitions. These displays illustrate the wide ranging role of the Corps which includes Communications, Interception and Electronic Warfare and Codes & Code Breaking from Crimea to current operations.

royalsignalsmuseum.co.uk / [@SignalsMuseum](https://twitter.com/SignalsMuseum)

About the Department of Physics, University of Oxford

The Physics Department at the University of Oxford is one of the largest physics departments in the world, conducting ground breaking research spanning science from the cosmos through the Earth's climate and the amazing properties of quantum systems to the smallest particles.

www.physics.ox.ac.uk / [@OxfordPhysics](https://twitter.com/OxfordPhysics)

About Trinity College, Oxford

Trinity College was founded in 1555. Its original purpose was the training of Catholic priests, while two of the 12 fellows were charged with teaching up to 32 undergraduate scholars and commoners. Today the college thrives as a centre of academic excellence, and the Trinity community comprises 50 fellows (tutorial, professorial and research), and some 300 undergraduates and 100 post-graduate students. The college opened its first science facility (a mechanics workshop) in 1885.

www.trinity.ox.ac.uk / [@TrinityOxford](https://twitter.com/TrinityOxford)

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About the Heritage Lottery Fund

From the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife, we use National Lottery players' money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about.

www.hlf.org.uk / [@HeritageLottery](https://twitter.com/HeritageLottery)