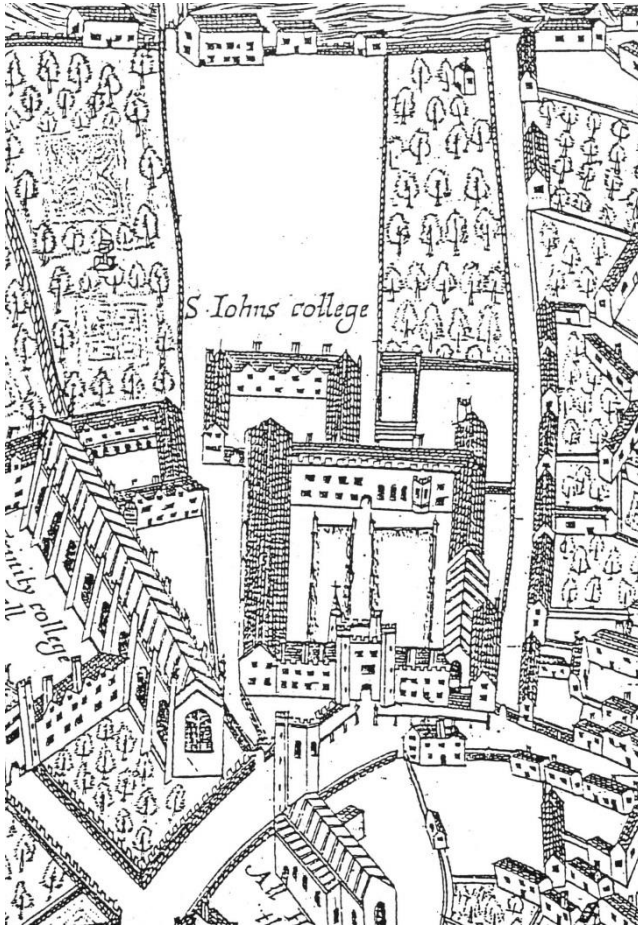


St John's College



Quincentenary of the Opening of the College

29 July 2016

Our beloved College of St John the Evangelist came into legal being on 9 April 1511 as the result of the expressed intentions of Lady Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and Derby, the mother of King Henry VII. Lady Margaret had died in 1509 and it was her loyal counsellor, John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester and Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, who brought her wishes for St John's to fulfilment. In 2011 the College celebrated the Quincentenary of its foundation.

It was not until 1516, however, that the buildings of First Court – comprising the Great Gate, the Hall, the first Library, residential chambers and the much rebuilt Chapel of the suppressed Augustinian Hospital of St John – were ready for occupation. These buildings can be seen on the view of Cambridge in 1592 by John Hammond, on the front of this service leaflet. (The small court behind was added by the third Master, Nicholas Metcalfe, in 1529–1530.) The early historian of the College, Thomas Baker, wrote that “we are not to imagine, as some have dream't, that there was any settled Society or School of Learning ... whilst the Building was going up, and the noise of Axes and Hammers banish't more peaceable Studies.” Neither the first Master, Robert Shorton, nor the small handful of early Fellows actually lived here whilst the buildings were under construction, and there were no students.

On 29 July 1516, then, Bishop Fisher came to Cambridge to open the College formally. A lawyer named Thomas Stacy drew up an ‘Act or Instrument of Opening St John's College’, detailing the events of that day. In “a certain high vaulted building within the College” (most likely the new Hall) Fisher, accompanied by another of Lady Margaret's executors, Henry Hornby (Master of Peterhouse), opened and read out a licence sealed by King Henry VIII giving permission for the College to be built and opened.

The ‘Act’ also states that the opening was taking place in the fourth year of the reign of Pope Leo X, whose permission for the suppression of the Augustinian Hospital and establishment of the College had also been secured by Fisher from Rome. It is almost certain that Fisher, acting on a licence issued three days earlier by the Bishop of Ely, then proceeded to

re-consecrate the Chapel, doubtless with the celebration of Mass. If music was sung, it was quite possibly by Robert Fayrfax who, in 1507, had been paid 6 shillings and 8 pence for “a newe masse” by Lady Margaret, or by William Cornysh, Master of the Children of the Chapel Royal. Cornysh’s ‘Ave Maria, Mater Dei’ that we sing today appears in the Eton Choirbook, put together c.1490–1502, and it is likely that this beautiful Marian prayer would have been known to a pious woman at the early Tudor Court such as Lady Margaret.

At the opening ceremony in 1516, the College’s second Master, Alan Percy, was admitted to his office, as were thirty-one Fellows. Shortly afterwards they were joined by six students (rising to more than twenty over the next three years) and seven staff. The College’s first Statutes were drawn up and chained to a stall in the Chapel for all to see. These are the events that we remember and celebrate today, exactly five hundred years on.



John Fisher (1469–1535)
from the Holbein portrait-drawing in the Royal Library, Windsor

ORDER OF SERVICE

WELCOME

given by The Rev'd Canon Neil Hearisides, Assistant Chaplain

HYMN

Of the Father's love begotten
Ere the world began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega,
He the source, the ending he,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see,
Evermore and evermore.

O that birth for ever blessèd,
When the Virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving,
Bare the Saviour of our race,
And the Babe, the world's Redeemer,
First revealed his sacred face,
Evermore and evermore.

O ye heights of heaven, adore him;
Angel hosts, his praises sing;
Powers, dominions, bow before him,
And extol our God and King;
Let no tongue on earth be silent,
Every voice in concert ring,
Evermore and evermore.

Words *Marcus Aurelius Clemens Prudentius*
(348–c. 413)
Tr. *John Mason Neale*
(1818–1866)

Tune DIVINUM MYSTERIUM
Melody Piaë Cantiones
Theoderici Petri Nylandensis' 1582

READING

read by The Master

Jesus said, ‘As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

‘This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.’

John 15 vv. 9–17

THE ADDRESS

given by The President

ANTHEM
sung by the Choir

AVE MARIA, MATER DEI

Ave Maria, mater Dei,
regina caeli,
domina mundi,
imperatrix inferni,
miserere mei
et totius populi Christiani;
et ne permitas nos
mortaliter peccare;
sed tuam sanctissimam voluntatem
adimplere. Amen.

*Hail Mary, mother of God,
queen of heaven,
mistress of the world,
empress of hell:
have mercy on me
and on all Christian people;
and do not allow us
to commit mortal sins;
but help us to fulfil
your most holy will. Amen.*

Words *Traditional Prayer*

Music *William Cornysb*
(1465–1523)

PRAYERS

led by The Rev'd Canon Neil Heavisides, Assistant Chaplain

THE SOLEMN BLESSING OF THE COLLEGE

*given by the Rt Rev'd Stephen Conway,
Visitor of the College and Bishop of Ely*

God our Creator,
in Jesus Christ you have revealed the very Word of life,
and by your Spirit you have made that Word known
through the apostles and evangelists.
Look upon us now in this College of St John the Evangelist,
and sustain us as a community whose pursuit of knowledge
shapes its members for generous service to the world.
And may the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you,
now and always.

Amen.



*These Arms, which are now
born by both the Colleges of
CHRIST'S & S^t JOHN'S in CAMB-
RIDGE. were used in the Seal of
MARGARET Countess of RICH-
MOND & DERBY.*

Printed for

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