COMMEMORATION OF BENEFACTORS

30 April 2000

I would like first of all to thank the College for inviting me to preach on this important occasion. And while I am about it, I would like to extend these thanks a little further. Since I returned to Cambridge in the summer of 1994 to work at Great St Mary's I have come to appreciate and value being a member of the College. I have been hospitably welcomed on many occasions and enjoyed every visit to the college. Then when we ventured on our big appeal at Great St Mary's to re-order St Michael's Church, I naturally found myself turning to the College for support and we received generous help from the College Council. Also I am a trustee of the Wintercomfort charity for the homeless, and I and my fellow trustees have been very aware of the friendship and support of the College through some pretty dark days over the last couple of years. So my first thought is to recognise a benefactor which is not on the list – the College itself.

I would also like to remember especially one name among College benefactors. When I looked at the list, the first name I saw as I turned over the pages was that of the Craik family. This is a recent benefaction and, so, many here will be familiar both with the circumstances of the benefaction and how it has enriched the life of the college. Kenneth Craik was born in Leith in 1914. He came up to the College in 1936 from Edinburgh University as a graduate student and then, after being awarded his PhD, was elected a Research Fellow in 1941. His field of study was psychology and physiology, and, when the Medical Research Council set up a unit of Applied Psychology, Craik was invited to become its first director. He was fascinated by design and craftsmanship, and his rooms were full of things he had made and repaired – optical apparatus, watches, a home-made violin and even an ingeniously designed eskimo kayak. He took great pains to co-operate with colleagues and others, and was well-liked. One day in May 1945 he was cycling along King's Parade. As he passed a stationary car, the driver opened the door. He swerved to avoid it and was hit by a passing lorry. Nobody, it seems, was held to be at fault but later that night he died from the injuries he sustained. His parents James and Marie gave the College £4,000 to found a trust fund to assist post-graduate research, and later added a further £8,000. In the years since then, it has provided awards for students in his fields of specialisation, endowed a lecture, and has encouraged inter-departmental research.

Who is the benefactor in this story? The parents gave the money and are remembered, but surely their motives must have had more to them than a desire to give to the College. The son was also a benefactor since his talents and contribution led to the gift. And of course it was the College who provided the opportunity and environment for study and research. And, what's more, the benefits of the benefaction have continued since then. All were, in different ways, benefactors.

So acts of benefaction and generosity happen in a context. They have a history, a purpose, and a future. It was commented that in the Byzantine Empire, there was a huge amount of charitable work done by the Church, and indeed other institutions, who were major suppliers of what we would call services. They were assiduous builders of hospitals, providers of old peoples' homes, receivers of travellers and providers of work. Money and property was not seen as a source of wealth, but was intended to be used, and those who were rich saw their function as providers of services, and so enabled society to function effectively. One critic commented that it was a society geared for the distribution of wealth rather than the creation of wealth, and those with money were recognised as having an important role within society. Today we might express it differently and see money as a form of discourse – as a way we can transfer our skills or our talents or resources from one to another. It is a reminder that the community of a college certainly emphasises its academic discourse, as learning, ideas, and study are shared and transacted, but there are other forms of discourse as well, and the receiving and use of money, property and other resources are vital to its well-being. How they are received and used are matters of vital importance for the welfare of the community.

Today we are still well in the season of Easter. At this time last Sunday we were in mid-celebration, and indeed if you are a member of one of the Orthodox Churches of the Eastern Christian world you would have been spending much of last night in church for the Easter liturgy – there were two Orthodox liturgies happening within a few yards of the college, in St Clement's and St Peter's churches. One of my fellow students, not of this college but of the other of the Lady Margaret's foundations in Cambridge, Christ's College, is now one of our most respected church leaders. In his book on the Resurrection, Rowan Williams explores the idea of the Resurrection as being about the creation of what he calls 'communities of gift'. The Bible speaks of the isolation and paralysis of the apostles after the Crucifixion when as a distraught and demoralised group of men, probably with women there as well, they are found huddled in an upstairs room with the doors securely locked and barred to keep themselves from contact with others – a fairly classic strategy for dealing with despair and hopelessness. Then in a short time they became the confident founders of the Church – with a message to give which convinced many and led to the establishing and rapid growth of the Christian Church. It was a community of gift, based on the overwhelming recognition of the greatness of the generosity of God in giving life.

Paul wrote of spiritual gifts, telling that each should recognise his or her God-given abilities and be ready to use them for the good of the community. The Acts of the Apostles explains how, in the early days of the Christian Church, property was held in common. Money was given, property was sold, and the proceeds given to those in need. One unhappy benefaction is described when two donors called Ananias and his wife Sapphira sold some property and decided to give only a part of the proceeds of the sale to the church. A dreadful fate fell on the perpetrators of this act of half-giving and deception as Ananias and his wife Sapphira came to a sudden death – although it was their deception which was condemned rather than their meanness. The early Church lived in deep awareness that their life was lived within the generosity of God, shown through the death and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ. Their life then depended on their receiving this generosity and on giving generosity in turn.

Theologically, we speak of the resurrection as being an outpouring of the generosity of God, which gives new life and the joy of being finally loved and valued by our God. Our communities are formed and function under this overarching and creative act of benefaction. It was in the mind of our founders, when Bishop John Fisher of Rochester, carrying out the Lady Margaret's wishes, gave the College the ideal of being not only a school of theology but of practical theology. It was expected when the old Hospital of St John became the new College with its fifty Fellows, that a quarter of these were to go out to preach in English (these were the Catholic days of Henry VIII), and it was expected that all would, in due course, find themselves leaving to join the active priesthood. He was also concerned for what Erasmus in 1511, the year of the College's foundation, called the 'polite learning' of the Renaissance, encouraging the study of medicine, mathematics, and new approaches to the study of Aristotle. The College was founded as a community conscious of its place in a changing society, and eager to move out to embrace new learning and to bring this into the wider society of the day. Here there is a dynamic of generosity, and an ethic of benefaction.

So today we commemorate benefactors. Our celebration takes us close to the heart of the life of this community. It recognises that generosity, benefaction, or the doing of good is the basis of what we seek to do and of our life together. Those we have remembered today have been generous, and have enabled the College first to exist and then to grow and develop. It is right today to recognise that we owe our existence to the benefaction of others and that our purpose is to be benefactors in our turn.

My experience of encounters here over the last five years, which I mentioned at the beginning, may seem small, but it places me within this community of benefaction, set up by those we have commemorated today, who were in their turn both receivers and givers of benefaction – of good. Our observance of this celebration places us in this same community or network of exchange, and encourages and enables us to carry on this life and work.

John Binns (BA 1973)

ROBBIE AS AN UNDERGRADUATE

Ronald Edward ('Robbie') Robinson was elected a History Scholar of St John's in December 1938 and took his BA in 1946 having spent a period in the RAF. He became a Fellow of the College in 1949, leaving in 1971 on his election as Beit Professor of the History of the British Commonwealth at Oxford. He died on 19 June 1999 and a full obituary was published in The Eagle *1999. Here, Logie Bruce Lockhart writes about his recollections of his undergraduate days with Robbie.*

As I shared rooms with Robbie for a chaotic year and was a very close friend of his on our return from the war, I thought that I should write a short supplement to the *Eagle*'s admirable tribute, before all of us who were his contemporaries are dead.

Our routine was morning work and afternoon exercise, followed by a couple of beers at the Hawk's Club between 6 and half past seven, dinner in Hall, often meeting Sandy Smith. We would sing a strange variety of music. Sometimes it would be a bacchic rendering of the Seventh Symphony with a vocal version of all orchestral instruments. Sometimes Robbie would attempt to change our 'privileged background viewpoint' by a melancholy rendering of 'Please don't burn our shit house down', or

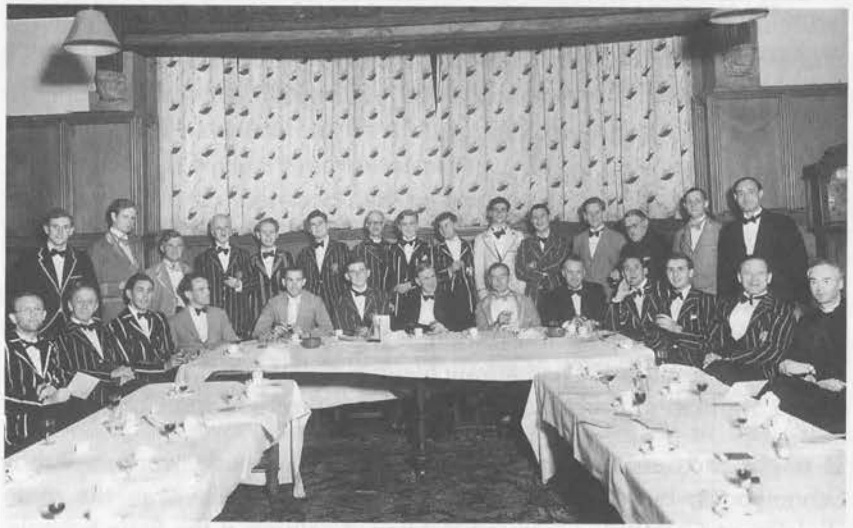
'It's the sime the whole world over,
It's the poor wot gets the blime,
It's the rich wot lives in clover,
Innit all a bloody shime!'

By his own account, he must have had a tough upbringing in Battersea, paying for extra books and tuition at the Grammar School by milk or newspaper rounds. He had strong feelings about social injustice, and he flirted at different times with the Plymouth Brothers and Communism.

It might then seem unusual that his closest friends were ex-Public School boys; but in the immediate aftermath of the war, the main division at Cambridge was not Public Schoolboys v the State Schools, but ex-Service men v 'the children'. The war had changed us profoundly. Sandy Smith did not get his MC at Pegasus Bridge for a picnic, nor did Robbie get his DFC for joyrides. Those of us who had returned from the war were drawn together by our experiences and by our age. We more or less kept to College or University rules with wry amusement; we kept strange hours. Most of us looked down on the nineteen year olds straight from school, and even on the dons who had not been to war, with what in retrospect seems to have been surprising arrogance. What right, we felt, had they got to talk about death, disease and poverty, life, suffering, hatred and love, sex and sadism? We felt that they were darkening counsel by knowledge without understanding, and that they were using words without the density of meaning which experience gives to them.

After dinner we nearly always worked together from eight to midnight in a silence interrupted only by brief requests for an opinion or factual information, or a ten minute session of room cricket in response to a visit from Frank Thistlethwaite or Sandy Smith.

He taught me two things for which I shall always be grateful: to work hard on my own, and never to accept any view without 'putting the question'.



The Eagles Club 1946, with the Master (E. A. Benians) presiding, and RER (with cigar) three places to the right. Also pictured are Sir Percy Winfield, E. E. Raven, M. P. Charlesworth and J.S. Boys Smith. The author is standing, fourth from right.

We hardly attended any lectures, except to get a booklist at the beginning of the year, so we were able to read an unusually large number of books. We summarised these as we went along, simultaneously jotting down criticisms and queries. Our view on lectures was that little was to be gained from attending them. Most lecturers, although they might have written good books, were poor public speakers; some were inaudible, and very few really organised and stimulating. For Modern Linguists only Pat Charvet lectured in the language we were studying.

If you went to a lecture at 9am and another at 11, you wasted the time from 10 to 11 and from 12 to 1 by going to the Whim or to the Baron of Beef, because there wasn't enough time to bike back to college and to set about a serious job of work in between lectures. We could read the books for ourselves and form our own opinions in half the time. It was important not to be absorbing second hand views shared with an audience of 100 bored half-listeners. Supervisors' tutorials were potentially far more valuable, but the standard varied from the sublime to the ridiculous.

Occasionally we would briefly touch on the fear and the futility, the extraordinary friendships and loyalty, the confusion and the madness of our war experiences. His time with bombers had changed him profoundly from the visionary pre-war naive socialist and pacifist idealist – just as, later, his studies of the old British Empire moved him beyond the assumption that British rule in Africa was no more than selfish and brutal exploitation and arrogant racism. He talked much of the need for a strong Third Party, or for the abandonment of political stances and class stereotyping.

His charm lay in his dislike of cant and in his complete honesty and in the way he welded experience and straight thinking with academic scholarship. He had rare warmth, having an almost mystic belief in loyalty and friendship. He could be very funny and enjoyed shocking the bourgeois, but never quite managed to conceal his seriousness about the Big Issues. We lost touch latterly, but I shall always be grateful to him. It is strange to think of him as a don, but poachers always make the best gamekeepers, and his expertise at rapport and relationships would always go down well with students of all ages.

Logie Bruce Lockhart (BA 1947)

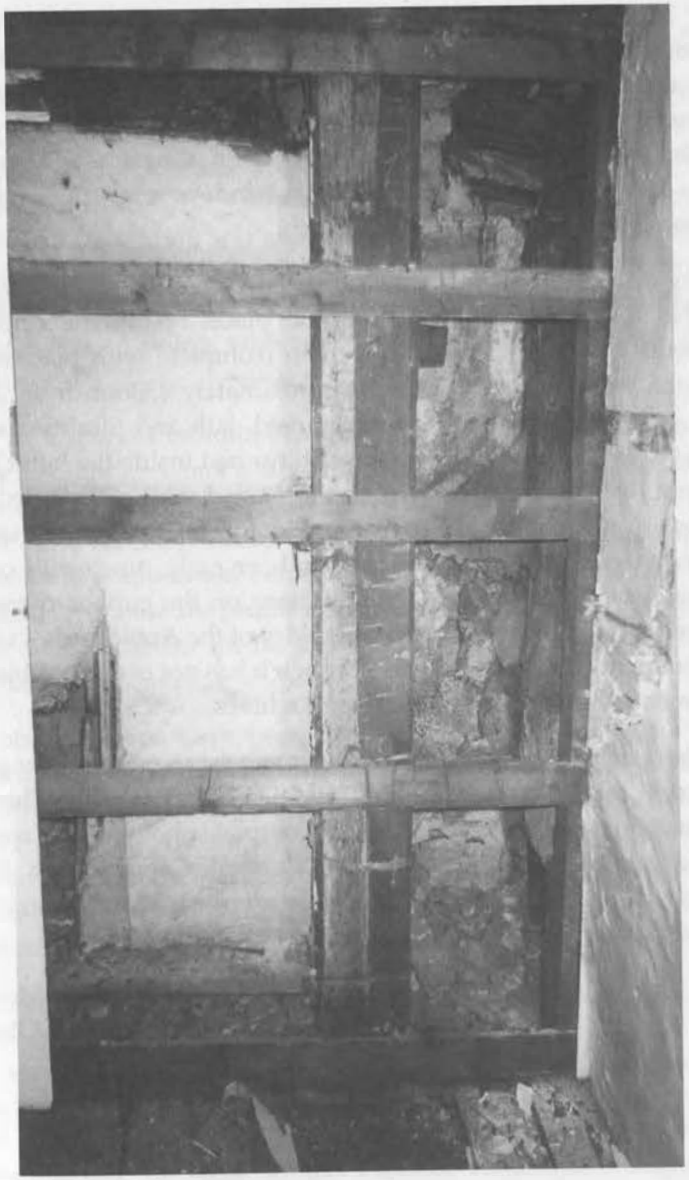
A VOID IN SECOND COURT

During the 1999 re-roofing programme – year four of a six-year project to upgrade most of the older court roofs – an interesting find was made on the top floor of K Staircase Second Court. At this time the southern range and the west range south of the Shrewsbury Tower of Second Court were being undertaken. The works involve stripping off the existing roof coverings, fitting a breathable membrane – to allow ventilation – and the replacement of the slates and tiles. The north elevation is slate and the south has peg tiles.

Maintenance Department staff members carry out repair works to the roof timbers and the top of the external wall. All the lead to gutters and dormer window roofs is renewed by a specialist contractor, as is the reslating/retiling. It is necessary to replace around 40% of the roof coverings and suitable good quality second-hand materials are used. The re-roofing is carried out, wherever possible, in conjunction with the refurbishment programme.

As the boards of the metre-wide gutter between K Staircase Second Court and F Staircase Third Court were being removed a void was discovered. (Second Court was occupied in 1602/3, Third Court in 1673) This area – measuring 3.5 metres long 2.7 metres deep and 1.8 metres in width – had a bricked up window on the western elevation which, obviously, had once overlooked the river. One of the main structural roof beams had been sawn off and a prop inserted to support it built up from the first floor ceiling level. This is possibly because it was felt that the new partition wall was unable to bear the weight. It was necessary, in any event, to construct two buttresses to the West range of Second Court in 1691. The original clunch window surrounds had been used as shuttering to contain the rubble infill of the external wall (clunch is a soft limestone) and a reed and plastered wall built on a new line thus reducing substantially the size of the room.

The void is to the western elevation of K7 and K8 Second Court. In K7 there is a semi-circular cupboard – which has been built into the void – the works would have probably been undertaken when Third Court was constructed commencing in 1669.



The void discovered in Second Court

The last of the clunch windows were changed during the major rebuilding works commenced during the late 1950s (they were in an extremely poor condition and had been much repaired). The pieces discovered would only have been in place for around 60 years and then buried for a further 330 years making them almost new. Several have been saved to show what the original window surrounds would have looked like.

Going down into the void it was therefore possible to see three phases of the building's history in the one place. Firstly the original late sixteenth-century outline of the room (complete with plastered walls into the window reveal) then – approximately 450mm from the outer wall – the late seventeenth-century reed, lath and plastered wall and then the rear of an oak panelled wall inserted inside the latter by some 300mm. Interestingly the lath and plastered wall still carried several layers of wallpaper. The panelling to K7 is thought to have been constructed during the late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries. There is a particularly fine painted door on the cupboard mentioned above which appears to bear the heraldry of the Appleyards – who were a prominent Norwich family – although it has not been possible to trace any mention of them in the College Archives.

Neither, surprisingly, do the archives appear to contain any previous record of this void. No detailed building accounts for the Third Court construction works have survived. A complete photographic record was made of the void and the City Council Conservation Planners undertook a similar exercise. The roof gutter was replaced and the area sealed during the refurbishment of the sets in this staircase.

Stan Moorhouse
Superintendent of Buildings

THE OSPREYS

St John's College is, among other things, famed for its excellence in sports. Our traditional dominance in college sports breeds a spirit that is distinguishably 'Johnian'. Many female 'sporting legends' have passed through the Great Gate since 1982, and College women take great pride in upholding and maintaining the standards set us by our predecessors. Currently there are more than twenty Johnian women with Full or Half Blues, in a wide range of sports from Football (now a Full Blue sport), to Skiing, who are eligible to become members of the Ospreys.

In 1985, the Ospreys Committee formed to provide a social and sporting focus for Cambridge Women athletes. Back then there was no financial support or clubhouse, and very limited recognition. Things have changed quite recently thanks to the establishment of, and support from, the newly appointed Senior Committee, set up in 1998. Their overall goal is 'to raise the profile of women's sports in Cambridge' and establish a clear identity for the Ospreys within Cambridge's sporting community.

So far positive steps have been made toward these goals. Caroline Hamilton, Polar Explorer and former Cambridge Triple Blue, opened a temporary clubhouse in the grounds of Magdalene College on 18th June 1999. A constitution modelled on that of the Hawks was drafted in conjunction with the Directors of the Hawks' Company. The Senior Committee has initiated contact with the business community and has established an impressive array of patrons (of which our Master is one).

The Ospreys comprise nearly 400 current and 'old' members, who have been awarded Blues, Half-Blues or Second Team Colours. The committee are keen to forge links with alumnae, so if you meet the criteria and are interested in establishing links with the Ospreys then you are invited to get in touch with Anya Tremlett, President (email ast23@cam.ac.uk), or write to the Ospreys Committee, Magdalene College, Cambridge.

Megan Jeffries (BA 2000)

THE NIGHTMARE XI

The Nightmare XI was founded in the mid-1980s when a group of Old Johnian footballers who had graced the College 3rd and 4th XIs decided they were having too much fun to retire. So the Nightmare XI came into being, initially returning to St John's to play the worst college team they could find, but soon evolving into a wandering London-based outfit prepared to play anyone who had a pitch and different coloured shirts. In our more energetic years, we played 2 or 3 times a season, but for a time in the early 1990s, the matches petered out entirely while members focused their attentions on finding a wife and getting out of negative equity (two unconnected events). More recently, however, the Nightmare XI season has been firmly re-established as a single fixture per year against the Old Pauline 3rd XI, at their luxurious ground in Thames Ditton. This year's 9-5 reversal on a blistering May morning was the highest-scoring Nightmare game ever, beating the previous year's 8-4 (which, for the record, included a hat-trick by Pete "brainspill" Johnstone of which we will never hear the last). Weakened by the lack of a goalkeeper, the team rallied strongly after falling carelessly 9-2 behind and could undoubtedly have gone on to win the game had the referee, and expert medical advice, allowed us to continue.

Nightmare XI 6th May 2000
Back row; Rob Houghton, John Lisle, Ian Hall, Chris Mills, Julian Legg, Roger Hindin
Front row: Roger Llewellyn, Paul Haines, Dick Coates, Ed Naylor, Huw Willims, Olly Paish
Absent: Martin Greenslade, Mike Shaw

Challenge!

The Nightmare's driving force has been the tall, loud and sub-optimally talented Ed Naylor, who achieved footballing fame when, against all the odds, he led the College 3rd XI to the final of the Plate in 1985, beating en route several 2nd XIs from loftier divisions of the League. Although we lost the final 3-1 (in a blizzard, I recall) the spirit and comradeship of that season has been the basis for what has followed. The exact results, and against which opposition, have rapidly passed into the mists of time. Most people think that we have won one game (a thrashing of some Physios on Wormwood Scrubs) and drawn one. But buoyed up by the ceaseless loud-hailing boom of "challenge!" from the lanky Captain, the team of thirty-somethings never fails to compete tenaciously. We have never had much talent, so retiring at the top of our game is not an option. The Nightmare XI will continue until the next generation takes over, which is at least 15 years off. So if any former Johnians from those halcyon mid-80s seasons, who are still not particularly good, would like a game next year, please contact Ed on egnaylor@naylor.co.uk. Next year's game is scheduled for 12 May 2001.

Olly Paish (BA 1987)

COLONEL RICHARD ROBINSON

On 30 April 2000 Richard Robinson retired after thirteen triumphant years in the office of Domestic Bursar, shoring up the Chapel, getting loos and bollards up and running in a timely manner, and generally attending to the mundaneries of the place on a day-to-day basis, and all with such enormous good humour, all with such fulsome attention to the torturous complexities of the task, that the huge turn-out of Fellows and their consorts at the party in Hall for him and Elizabeth on 19 May came as no surprise to anyone. For Richard himself, as he said in his reply, printed here, to speeches by the Senior Bursar and the President, it 'has all been the greatest fun'. So also has it been for the College, and in that regard The Eagle *is delighted to have the opportunity of wishing the gallant Colonel a long and happy retirement.*

Master, thank you on behalf of Elizabeth and myself for this splendid occasion – we are deeply grateful – and thank you to you all for coming along and making it such a special evening.

George and Jane, very many thanks for your kind remarks, I cannot express how very much I have enjoyed our working relationships.

As I said at an earlier retirement party, and there seem to have been so many of them, it has been a time of change, which has brought with it demands and anxious moments, but it has been the greatest fun and especially made so by the tremendous support, understanding and friendship that we have received from everyone, and for which we are especially grateful.

When I came for my first interview for the job of Domestic Bursar in October 1986, the interview panel, chaired by Sir Harry Hinsley, included a rather attractive young lady, blonde I recall, who sat on my right flank of the panel – I subsequently found out that her expertise was in psychology and that she had been hired to suss out the shortlisted candidates. I recall that she asked me only one question which was towards the end of the interview and was simply: 'What difficulties do you see in moving from a regimental environment to an academic environment?' I recall responding to the effect that I did not foresee any difficulties at all, since it seemed to me to be a move from one family environment to another and that is just how it has been – warmth, friendship and understanding abound and I believe that to be the true and rather special nature of the College, and this has been particularly brought home to me over the last three months during which time I have wined and dined around other colleges more so than in the past – all part of the retirement and resettlement package (!) – I have of course on all occasions had an enjoyable time, but the warmth of the welcome has in my view at no time competed with that shown by the College. As I say, I believe we have something rather special in that regard – especially, the Green Room atmosphere is unique.

Back to my final interview for a moment if I may – Sir Harry's last words to me were: 'When can you start?' I replied to the effect that since I was Chairman of the Army Retirements Board the decision was mine so the call was his and I have always maintained that it was that response that got me the job.

COLLEGE OFFICE

Colonel Richard Robinson (right) hands over a symbol of office to Commodore John Harris, and welcomes him as the new Domestic Bursar.

Staying with the theme of interviews for the moment, but digressing somewhat – shortly before I was shortlisted for this appointment I was shortlisted for an appointment as General Manager of a private hospital not a million miles from here – I was interviewed by a panel of six, three doctors and three administrators – the interview lasted for about 45 minutes and was a most serious affair, not a spark of humour, in fact there was clearly some tension within the panel. The last item for discussion was salary, which had not previously been referred to – I thought this was the moment to introduce some humour into the conversation so when asked the question (and remember that this is some 14 years ago) I said that I was prepared to accept £35,000 per year providing they supplied me with a new Porsche motor car – my humour was not appreciated, clearly I had overplayed my hand and I was simply told I would not be required further.

So back to the College – anxious moments – a few stories from the ranch.

I had been in post about a week when the telephone rang late one night to be told by a Porter that the Chapel was falling down – I shot into the College to find that a very large piece of stone had fallen from the top of the Chapel, struck the roof of Chapel Court above the Cloisters, some stone falling into Chapel Court and some into the Forecourt – fortunately no one was hurt, although the Porter tells the story of finding three young ladies clasped together in fear in the Forecourt, a stone having fallen very close to them – I won't bore you with the details other than to say that three years later the repair was completed.

Shortly after the Chapel had started to fall down I undertook to re-roof the Cripps Building which had been leaking for the previous twenty years – the pattern of the repair was agreed upon and put into operation, which meant the scaffolding of the whole building and the removal of the entire cement roof, would could only be achieved by the use of pneumatic drills – as usual we were up against the time factor. The activity underway I walked into Upper River Court one morning, drills going the length and breadth of the roof, to glance over at A Staircase. I was horrified at what I had put into operation, but more horrified when I noticed that the top cement crossmembers of

A Staircase appeared to be out of line. My immediate reaction was 'Oh my God the building is collapsing'. I stopped the drills immediately and blew for the Structural Engineers. Anxious moments indeed. However, all was well and the Structural Engineers assured me that whilst the cross beams at the top of A Staircase were indeed out of line (still to be seen) it was due to settlement that must have happened shortly after the building was built – it was safe to complete the repair – I breathed again.

In 1997 the College decided to introduce a card access control system – the equipment was installed and the cards issued and I decided that the system would go live at 10.30 am on a Monday morning in late April – all went well until around 6.30 p.m. when the entire system locked up – no one could get in or out of the Fellows' Lobby – I had not chosen my moment at all well as it was a Domus Evening – we eventually removed the doors, but my flack jacket was rather holed. A week later I received a splendid postcard from Peter Linehan who was visiting Spain – the face of the card was a photograph of a large and rather splendid old key – the rear of the card read as follows: 'Richard – The firm which produced this beautiful and practical object is, I believe, still in business not far from Granada. Would you like me to ask them to send you a quote? Peter.'

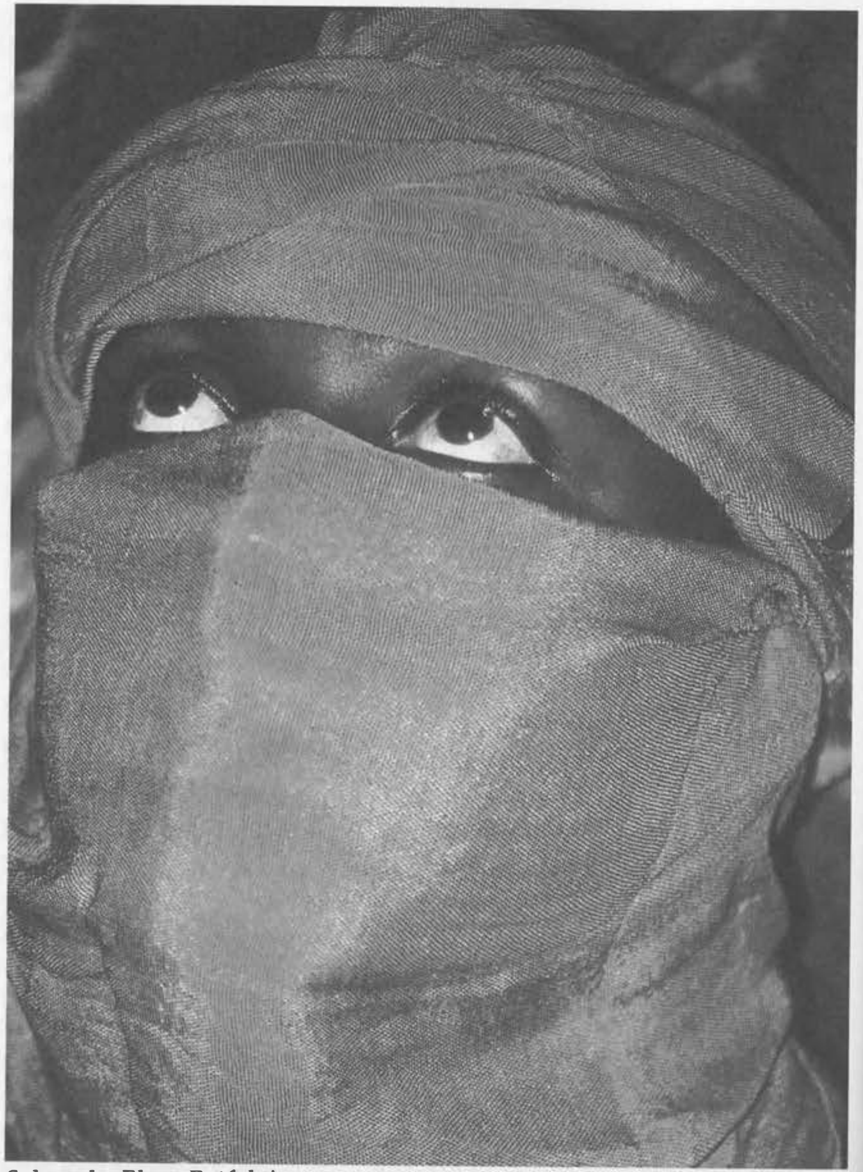
Finally, my marquee on the Backs last year. I had sought Council approval for a large marquee for conference purposes, but I sense that I had not fully appreciated how large it would be, clearly for a moment I had forgotten my military training, i.e. time spent in reconnaissance is seldom wasted. The marquee just kept going up and up and up until the entire Paddock was covered – definitely Robinson's folly.

A couple of interesting moments – at the time of the Business Expansion Scheme, a little tax avoidance scheme designed by George, we were required to declare vacant possession for at least 24 hours on all our outside properties in order that we could sell them into the scheme – this meant moving out all the residents and we are talking about a 100 plus properties – I designed a method of doing that and met with all those concerned in order to explain what I intended, which entailed the delivery of packing boxes to all properties, assistance with packing, movement of boxes into store, provision of and movement to transit accommodation and finally declaration of vacant possession and then of course followed by the entire process in reverse. I sense I spent about 45 minutes explaining all that and then took questions. All went well until the last question, whereupon a young lady said that she was happy with all that I had explained except that she felt that I had no real perception of what it meant to move house. I was able to explain to her that in the course of my service career Elizabeth and I had moved house on 27 occasions – she seemed satisfied. I should perhaps have added that Elizabeth did the moving and I did the following.

It was the same young lady who at a student dinner some weeks previously had asked me which World War I had fought in.

I think time to close – as I have already said it has all been the greatest fun and we feel most privileged to have been part of it – thank you again for your tremendous support, friendship and a very very happy time and may I take this opportunity to thank Elizabeth for supporting me in such a splendid way – finally, a special thank you from Elizabeth and myself for this marvellous evening.

Richard Robinson
Domestic Bursar 1987-2000



***Sahara* by Elena Retfalvi**
Elena was awarded a Johnian Society Travel Exhibition in 1999 to retrace the Well-Mitchell journey through religious and historical sites in Tunisia and to create a photo portfolio of her travels. 'Sahara' was submitted for the 2000 College Photographic Competition and won the prize for best colour photograph.

SIR HARRY HINSLEY: A FOOTNOTE

It must often be true that historical research is the result of a chance remark by someone, rather than painstaking attempts by a student to find a 'much needed gap' in the secondary literature. Sir Harry Hinsley was expert at such remarks, but one above all stands out in my memory. I was visiting Cambridge a few years ago, and dined at St John's where, by coincidence, Harry was also present. In his usual kind way he asked after my recent work, and I mentioned that I was trying to understand the functioning of the Operational Intelligence Centre (OIC), a section of the Second World War Admiralty Naval Intelligence Division. Harry replied that he had known the place well, often visiting it as part of his job at Bletchley Park. He then went on to flabbergast me. Apparently, the first wartime Director of Naval Intelligence, a senior flag officer, was disliked in the OIC, and some of the leading workers (themselves naval officers, though relatively junior ones) made their feelings plain to him, despite his being their chief, with the result that subsequently he hardly ever came through their door. To someone with the usual image of how senior naval officers react to even a hint of opposition, this story of passive retreat was a shock. The consequence was that a passing interest in the OIC was transformed into fascination, and I turned to delving in the archives.

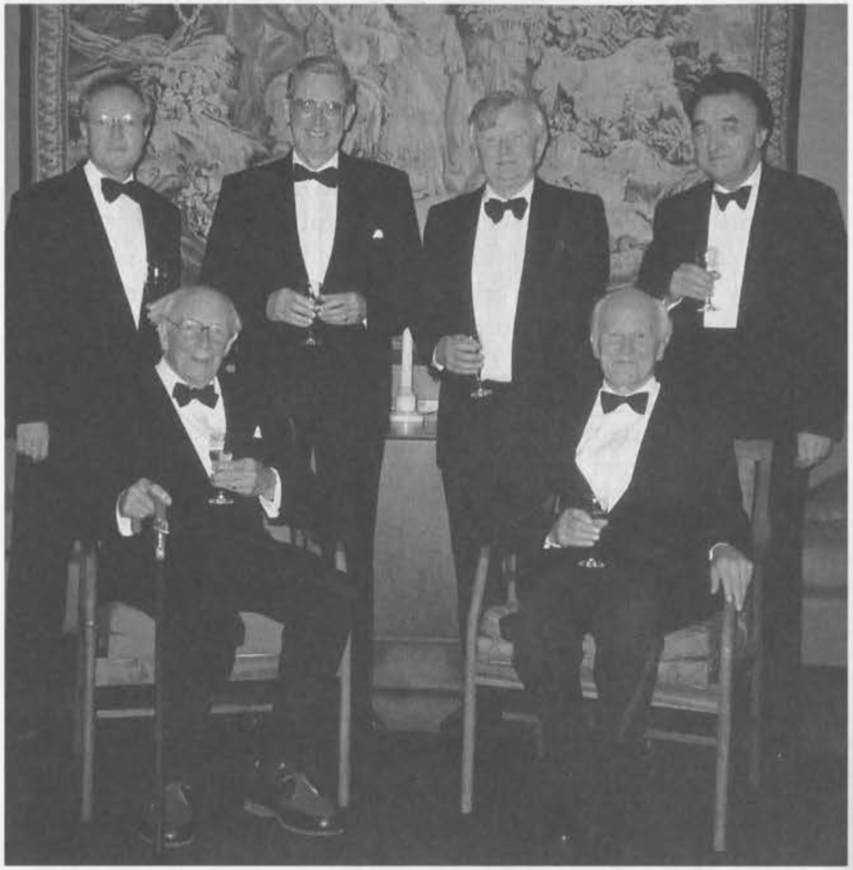
It is useful simply to recall a typical example of Harry's ability to stimulate; exactly the kind of personal detail that can easily escape the historical net. But I should like also to report a discovery in the OIC records. More details did emerge about the Admiral who was sent to Coventry; since the man was at Sidney Sussex, though, they are of little relevance to *The Eagle*. Rather, we can turn to an aspect of the Hinsley contribution to the war effort that appears not to have reached the previous secondary literature. To look at it one must first return to the story of the loss of *HMS Glorious*. As is well-known, from his analysis of German wireless traffic Harry warned the OIC in June 1940 that enemy heavy units were leaving the Baltic; the warnings were disregarded, with the result that the *Glorious* was caught by the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*. The disaster not only established Harry's reputation in official circles, but also brought close co-operation between Bletchley Park and the OIC, replacing earlier coolness. Furthermore – and this is what has not been stressed – it also tipped the balance of function between the two organisations.

Back in 1939 there had been those who argued that there ought not to be a sharp administrative division between, on the one hand, the gathering and interpretation of naval intelligence from cryptanalysis, and, on the other, the operational employment of such intelligence. Thus it was decided, at the very time when Bletchley Park was being set up to house the Government Code and Cypher School, that a part of the latter's German naval section should be attached to the OIC, with only the remnant going to BP. The two sundered parts of the naval section were supposed to liaise with one another but, surely unavoidably, given they had much the same function, they became rivals. At first 8G'G', the part at the OIC, took the lead. Not only was it larger, but also had an early success in breaking German codes. It came to see itself as more effective than its rival due to being in daily touch with naval realities, regarding the other as living in an over-rarefied academic atmosphere.

The 'ivory tower' accusation was largely unjust, but there were some warranted grounds for disparagement. The rump section inherited by Bletchley Park was both small and unprepossessing. Its later head, Frank Birch, said it comprised 'two supposed nincompoops'. Even if this was at least a half-truth, it was soon rendered unimportant by the large recruitment of late 1939, which included the young F.H. Hinsley. Though breaks in the Enigma codes were as yet partial and limited, Harry was able to begin the work on the analysis of German wireless traffic – studying what he called 'linkage' – that was to bear fruit the following year.

In the aftermath of the sinking of *Glorious* the whole balance of authority between the sundered naval sections altered greatly. Now 8G'G' appeared far the weaker, and was made to suffer. In November 1940 it was firmly subordinated to Frank Birch, and he forced a concentration on liaison duties, such activities as cryptanalysis to be left to Bletchley Park. Ultimately, 8G'G' found there was insufficient work to do. Its best people were drawn to Bletchley Park, where, despite their initial reluctance, they soon realised they had found their true home. (Incidentally, their coming added yet more force to the title, only partly fanciful, of 'Bletchley College, Cambridge'.) 8G'G' went into a slow decline. By March 1943 it had been transformed into section 12A, still with a liaison role, but one maintained not so much through intellectual dominance as by being so socially successful in the OIC that it could glean all the gossip that Bletchley Park called for. 8G'G' thus moved a long way down in the world; but this was part of an essential simplification and specialisation of function; it would surely have come in any case. In a competition, the naval section at Bletchley Park had the enormous advantage of being closer to the source of intelligence. In the event, the important part of the change came sooner, and more suddenly, than might have been expected. It was another consequence of the *Glorious* disaster and, of course, of the early and brilliant work of F.H. Hinsley.

C I Hamilton (Fellow 1973-8)



The Organists
This picture was taken at a dinner at King's College in September 1999 to mark the 90th birthday of Professor Robin Orr, the 80th birtuday of Sir David Willcocks, the 75th birthday of Dr George Guest and the year in which Philip Ledger was knighted. It shows the six living Organists from St John's and King's.

(Standing: left to right – Stephen Cleobury (BA 1970, Director of Music at King's 1982–), Sir Philip Ledger (Director of Music at King's 1974–82), George Guest (BA 1949, Organist and Director of Music at St John's 1956–91), Christopher Robinson (Organist and Director of Music at St John's 1991–); Seated: left to right – Robin Orr (Organist and Director of Music at St John's 1938, 1948–56), Sir David Willcocks (Director of Music at King's 1957-73))

(photograph by Penny Cleobury)

THE POOR'S SOUP

A full account of the tradition of the College Bread and Broth Charity, more informally known as The Poor's Soup, was written by W. T. Thurbon and published in the 1984 edition of The Eagle. *The origin of the Bread and Broth Charity is obscure but tradition has long associated it with the Hospital of St John which was formerly on the College site. It was the custom to give a four pound loaf of bread and a gallon of soup each to fifty people. Before the Second World War, as can be seen from the recipe below, each gallon of soup contained two pounds of meat. Due to the food restrictions imposed by the War, the expenditure on meat for the soup was reduced to £2.20d per week which meant that the soup contained only half a pound of meat. This continued even after the War as did the substitution of a two pound loaf for the four pound loaf.*

The recipe (as served before the 1939-45 War)

40lbs yellow split peas
1 peck of prepared carrots
1 peck of prepared onions
1/2 peck of prepared celery or celeriac
1/2 peck of prepared swede

50 x 1lb joints of beef
50 x 1lb joints of mutton
50 x 2lb loaves of white bread

The Soup

The Soup was made in a very large boiler (50 gallons) which was fed by steam. The vegetables were put through a coarse mincer and put into the boiler with the peas and roughly three-parts of water and stirred frequently. The joints of meat were added at 2.30pm and simmered until after 5.00pm, they were then taken out and water was added to the soup if it had reduced too much. It was seasoned with salt and pepper and dried mint was also added. At 5.30pm this was tasted by one of the College dons and then served to the poor people of Castle End parish, who received 1 gallon of soup, 2 x 1lb joints of meat, 1 x 2lb white loaf.

Memories

Peter Wordie (BA 1955), son of the former Master, Sir James Wordie, writes that 'a recent television programme brought back to me a vignette from the winter of 1940-41.

'Late one afternoon my father, who was then Senior Tutor at the College, asked my younger sister and myself if we wanted to go down with him to the College Kitchens to see the distribution of soup to 20 poor families of Chesterton.

'Both my sister and I knew a little about this already since a crisis had arisen because of food rationing and not being able to get enough meat to put in the Soup. This problem had been overcome since venison was not included in rationing and my father had arranged with Elliott, the stalker at Glen Coe, to send down several haunches of venison which could then be used in the making of the Soup.

'A little later all three of us set off down to the College and there in the kitchens, under the supervision of somebody who I think was called Day, large cauldrons of soup were boiling, including the large pieces of venison. Outside in Kitchen Lane, there was a column of recipients queuing up, all of them carrying the most wonderful collection of jugs and pails.

'Before the soup could be distributed a Senior Fellow of the College, in this case my father, had to taste the Soup. I am not sure whether this was to ensure that it was not poisoned or just good enough quality. At any rate my father performed the ceremonial tasting after which the Soup was distributed.'

Peter Linehan adds: 'It was made on 13 successive Thursdays over the winter months. It was served to the Fellows at dinner and was very much appreciated. I recall in about 1967 or 8 attending in cap and gown in the Kitchens at 5.30pm and tasting the brew before approving it. It quite took the edge off the first G and T of the evening.'

The Red Cross took over the distribution of the soup and bread in 1958 and continued until 1976 when the Director of the Red Cross reported difficulties finding candidates for the Soup, following the introduction of Meals on Wheels and Day Centres for the elderly. The Salvation Army became involved, accepting the Soup for its regular Wednesday lunches, which meant that the Soup began to be made on Wednesdays instead of Thursdays. The Red Cross continued to take sufficient soup for 20 people and the Salvation Army took the rest in bulk. In 1983, the Church Army took over responsibility for the distribution but in 1989 said they had insufficient storage and had transport difficulties and so could not continue the tradition. In 1990, the College Council agreed to substitute a money grant of £500 for five years in the first instance, in either cash or the purchase of non-perishable food commodities, to Wintercomfort for the Homeless. This support was renewed in 1995 and again in 2000.

LIFE AT ST JOHN'S DURING THE WAR

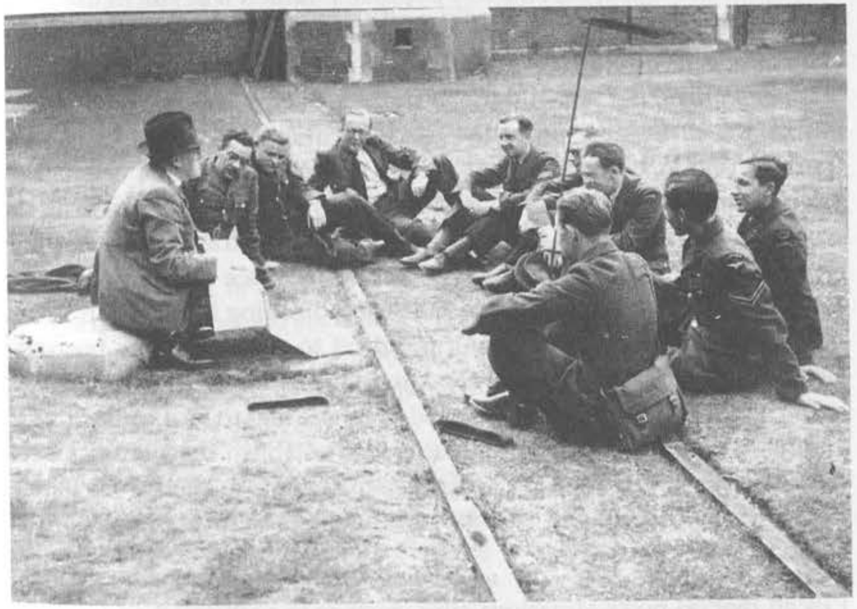
Sixty years ago

This last Summer, as I looked across Second Court from the Combination Room, I could watch the re-roofing of the opposite side of the court: this reminded me how sixty years ago I had climbed along the ridge of the roof, and hoped that I would not slip, for we had no safety precautions. I was an undergraduate reading medicine, and had been summoned back to College to begin my third year very shortly after the start of the second World War. With surprising farsightedness the University had instructed colleges to recall their medical undergraduates before the start of the Michaelmas Term, and had arranged for an extra 2nd M.B. exam to be held in December, so that those who passed would then be eligible to go on to clinical work in a London Hospital or elsewhere; thus they could become fully qualified earlier than they would otherwise be allowed to do. During the previous Long Vacation Period of Residence I had taken the special course in Pharmacology and had been fortunate enough to pass the appropriate exam. I had spent my first two years in 'digs' but in July I had been allotted a set of rooms on 'I' staircase in New Court. When I came back in September I found that the whole of New Court had been taken over by the RAF, and my set on the ground floor had become the quartermaster's store.

At first I was put into some other rooms in First Court, but when the rightful owner came up to claim them I was put into a set above the old Kitchens, where I used to throw darts at the mice running up and down the wainscot, and once would have hit one if he had not dodged when the dart was coming.

In September 1939 the Government had issued instructions about possible Air Raids which might occur in Cambridge, although very fortunately Cambridge was very little affected, and the only bomb that I heard of, dropped long after I had gone down, was on the Chinese Restaurant near the 'Union', about 100 yards north-west of the new Chapel Court. We had used to find this relatively cheap eating place most useful if for some reason we had not been able to dine in Hall. I believe that there was only one casualty from the bomb – the Chinese Cook. It was said that Hitler had given instructions to his air force not to bomb us, but I believe that Oxford was not so fortunate.

During most of the year before the War had started, there had been much building activity in what is now Chapel Court which was extended with the Court newly designed by (Sir) Edward Maufe, but this building had not yet been finished.*



M.P. Charlesworth addressing troops in First Court.

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* *[See Alec C. Crook,* Penrose to Cripps, *(1978) p. 109 '. . . Maufe wrote to Coulsons [builder] on 2 September 1939 that "the College is most anxious that the building should be completed as quickly as possible as the Air Ministry has taken over half our existing buildings. The College is prepared to pay any reasonable addition in prices in order to get this done".]*

I cannot remember when the builders finally removed their scaffolding from around these new buildings in Chapel Court. All I recall is that during 1938-39 this was the standard illegal route of entry into the College after 10pm when the gates were locked. But the mud beneath the scaffolding was so tenacious that men choosing this mode of entry brought so much into the undergraduate rooms in use in Chapel Court that their bedmakers complained of the extra work in having to clean it all up next morning. So 'Cecil', the porter, was instructed to wait one evening to take the names of the intruders as they entered, in the hope that this route would become less popular. I think it was still in use until September 1939 when the 'gate' restrictions were lifted. It was not exactly a 'safe' route into the College for I recall that after a party a 'Sapper' officer, not actually living in the College, and not quite sober, fell off the scaffolding on to the muddy ground, in which, of course, there were odd bits of builders' metal debris. He had not seemed to have injured himself, and staggered off to his 'digs' outside the College, where he put himself to bed. Very fortunately his friend, who had his rooms elsewhere in these lodgings, looked in to see the engineer later that night, and found him unconscious and bleeding in his bed from an injury to his perineum. He was rushed off to Addenbrookes hospital, where eventually he made a good recovery, without any permanent injury. On the morning after the incident, there had to be a court martial enquiry, according to Army regulations, to establish the circumstances how a lieutenant in the Royal Engineers had come to sustain his injury. It was with difficulty that his brother officers could give any account of the evening.

I recall that on posts at various sites, such as in each court and around University buildings, one-foot square horizontal boards were displayed, which were painted with some green paint which was supposed to change colour in the presence of mustard gas. They also changed colour with almost any organic compound, which enabled those who wished to write topical or rude messages on these boards, for the general entertainment. Also, the various gates around the College, ordinarily locked by the porters at 10pm, were either left unlocked or the key was hung on the nearby wall, so that in the event of fire no one would be trapped.

In theory, the black-out regulations had been introduced, but as the manufacturers had not had sufficient warning to make all the material that was needed, no blackout cloth was available. Some bright scientist reasoned that if all rooms were fitted with yellow lamps, and the windows coated with a blue distemper, no light should be seen from outside: of course this did not work.

We also had a Coventry Climax petrol motor-powered portable fire pump. Those of us who were more heavily built were encouraged to form a team to manhandle this around to wherever it might be needed. Being only a lightweight myself, I was not a member of the 'Fire Brigade'. Instead I was one of those who were encouraged to explore the roofs of the College in case a fire bomb should be dropped. It was possible to get out of a Third Court top floor window and then on to the ridges of the roofs of all three courts on that side of the river: in this way I was able to climb on all the accessible roofs, but the Chapel was thought too dangerous.

For some reason I never fully learned, a challenge came from Trinity College next door, which also had a Climax pump. The two pumps were to be installed each in its own punt on the river, and a duel arranged. Unfortunately for Trinity their punt was sunk, and they had great difficulty getting it up again! Wisely the challenge was not repeated.

I believe that later in the War the College instituted less amateur Air Raid Precautions, which was probably as well. But of course 'Fire Watch Duty' became invariable over the whole country. I was no longer in Cambridge, and others may remember how this was developed. Certainly I took my turn at the various hospitals to which I was later assigned, and I recall that we had a competition with a 'stirrup pump' to knock over a target set up on the ground – and we won.

Xander Monro (BA 1940, Fellow 1966-86)

THE BURSARY SCHEME

The Senior Tutor's view

It is part of the historic mission of the College to provide for the education of young people of whatever background and means, who seem to be, by their intellectual abilities, motivation and character, capable of benefiting from what we have to offer. In recent years we have redoubled our efforts to attract applications for undergraduate admission from the widest range of schools and colleges throughout the country. For example, more than ten years ago we led the way in reaching out to state schools in the North of England and Inner London. We then took an active part in an inter-collegiate admissions initiative, which focused more widely upon schools without any tradition of sending applicants to Cambridge. It was in this context that the College began to work closely with the Group to Encourage Ethnic Minority Applications to Cambridge (GEEMA).

More recently, with the benefit of a generous benefaction from a Johnian, we embarked upon a close relationship with schools in the London Borough of Lambeth in the EAGLE scheme. This has been widely acclaimed as innovative and distinctive, most notably in seeking to make contact with youngsters as young as fourteen or fifteen years of age, in an effort to awaken an early interest in the prospects opened up by higher education. EAGLE has placed great emphasis, too, upon the active involvement of current undergraduate and graduate students of the College in contacts with the pupils drawn into the scheme. Finally, EAGLE is not geared solely to applications to St John's, nor indeed only to Cambridge. It is concerned with the encouragement of ambition and the development of skills, with a view to admission to advanced and higher education, wherever suits the needs of the individuals concerned. Other Colleges in Cambridge have shown interest in using the EAGLE model in building relationships with a number of different Local Education Authorities and communities.

Our experience, not only in EAGLE but also more generally in admissions contacts, has been that concern about finances and debt can

deter some young people and their families from thinking of a university education. This is most acute among those with no prior history of involvement in higher education – precisely indeed those who are the focus of attention in the debate about 'access'. Sadly, there is a false impression that a Cambridge education is quite exceptionally expensive, and therefore beyond the reach of 'ordinary' families. We have been working hard to dispel that myth by providing accurate and up-to-date factual information concerning the costs of studying at Cambridge and the College in particular. However, recent Government policy has shifted away from an overwhelming reliance upon state payment of fees and grants towards maintenance costs in favour of family contributions towards fees, and loans. This has undoubtedly raised doubts and questions in many households. The affordability of higher education and the risks associated with 'debt', have once again begun to affect families who feel themselves to be financially vulnerable.

It is in recognition of all this that the College has agreed to introduce a 'bursary' scheme. Some will perhaps recognise in it echoes of the scholarship and exhibitioner provision of an earlier era. The scheme will provide for financial grants from the College to undergraduates on the basis of the assessment of means which is conducted by the Local Education Authorities and the Student Loans Company. Where an undergraduate is entitled to apply for a discretionary loan under the Government's provision, he or she will be able to apply for a grant under the College's scheme. The maximum entitlement to a Government discretionary loan is currently around £900, and there is a scale providing for lesser sums depending upon the residual income of the parents (i.e. after allowance for certain deductions). The College's grants will mirror that entitlement. It will be up to the individual student as to whether to take up both the Student Loan and the College grant, or to substitute the latter wholly or in part for the loan. All applicants for admission will therefore be secure in the knowledge that, subject to the standard assessment outlined, they will be entitled to a 'bursary'. Grants will be awarded for each of the student's undergraduate years, i.e. they will continue throughout the undergraduate career. This should go some way towards alleviating anxiety about finances both before and after admission. The introduction by the College of a general bursary scheme will not be accompanied by any retreat from our commitment to provide emergency assistance from the Tutors' 'Praeter Fund' for undergraduates who find themselves in a financial crisis during their course. Nor shall we drop or reduce book grants and assistance towards the costs of additional courses or conferences.

The College continues to be firmly committed to ensuring equal access to all those who are seen to have academic ability, irrespective of their families financial circumstances. The new bursary scheme is further evidence of that undertaking.

Ray Jobling

The student's view

The cost of living has always been a source of concern for students; however, in the last few years this has been magnified enormously. First the reduction and finally abolition of the maintenance grant reduced students' incomes, particularly for those from less well-off backgrounds, and then the level of rents began to rise across the university. Although the justification for increasing rents has been the subject of much debate – leading to a series of rent strikes in many colleges over the last year – the net effect of rent increases has been to make it harder for poorer students to live at College. At St John's many students are very concerned about the effect that the proposed increase in rents might have on the College.

The Access issue, which in essence describes the accessibility of Cambridge University to students from all backgrounds irrespective of finance, has also become a major issue among students. Cambridge is perceived as elitist and expensive, and many students are put off applying due to their preconceptions of the cost. Often they have little knowledge of the financial assistance available to them. All these problems remain in spite of the excellent efforts of many Cambridge initiatives, such as Target Schools and the EAGLE Scheme.

The bursary scheme, which has been explained by the Senior Tutor in the previous article, represents a big step to helping the many people who find university too expensive, and who cannot rely on affluent parents to support them. £900 per year represents a significant sum that will help those that need it enormously. Just as importantly, it is applied on a sliding scale, which will avoid the income traps that could occur with a banded scheme.

Many students in college have also been concerned that no one would be aware of the scheme. To have a positive effect, those applying to St John's must be aware of its existence. The College have said that in all future information about St John's will include information both about this bursary and the many other hardship funds available to those who need them.

One of the most important aspects for many students is the automatic nature of this bursary, in that you do not have to make a special application to receive it. Few people enjoy living on handouts, and often find it embarrassing to have to do so – the stigma of accepting 'charity'. Hence it will ensure it is not regarded as a handout for those who haven't enough, but rather as an incentive to study at Cambridge as a whole – and St John's in particular.

There will always be students who are missed out in any scheme such as this. One of the concerns raised by many people is that they fall just above the cut-off line, and hence will receive little or nothing from this scheme, despite a relatively low parental income. However, the bursary is a significant step in the right direction to encourage applications from those who would normally be unwilling to apply.

As a result the student body of St John's has given its full backing to support this proposal. Although it does not solve all of the problems associated with Access, it does represent a huge step forward which, I am sure, will benefit those who need it most and encourage access to Cambridge for all.

David Cox (matriculation 1997)

SWEDEN – SUN, SAND, SAUNAS AND . . . SINGING

Each year the College sends a student to Uppsala University in Sweden for a week as part of an exchange programme. Noel Rutter, a graduate student at St John's, visited Uppsala in May this year.

Monday 15th May
Walking through College at 6am on a damp Cambridge Monday morning was hardly the perfect start to the week, but it was about to get a whole lot better. I was bound for Uppsala, 60 km north of Stockholm, as the College's representative on the annual exchange visit with Södermanlands-Nerikes nation. Several hours later, upon landing at Arlanda airport, I wondered if I might actually be in Southern Europe rather than Sweden, as the hot sun beat down on the runway. Having confirmed that I had taken the correct flight, I then realised my ignorance of the value of the local currency as the cash machine asked how many Kroner I required. Then, in possession of sensible amount of money, it was time to take the bus to Uppsala, a pleasant 45 minute journey. Upon arrival, the first mission was to hire a tailcoat in advance of the weekend's ball, which left little time to unpack before dinner. Dinner in Sweden is an experience quite unlike anything I'd encountered before. I would never have thought that it could take over two hours to get through two courses, but then I hadn't taken into consideration the pause every second mouthful for another rendition of a well-known Swedish drinking song. When I say well-known, what I actually mean is well-known to everyone except myself and the two German visitors, who sat somewhat bemused. After dinner, the evening was rounded off with a disco which we left (despite protestations) at around 2am. This first evening was to set the standard for the week to come.

Tuesday 16th
Another early start was required to pack up in order to leave on our three day bus tour of the local regions. That this was quite a lengthy task was mainly due to the fact that it involved loading over 20 crates of beer into the back of our 'vintage' bus. We knew it would be difficult for the 12 of us to get through it, but we were prepared to give it a go. Once on the road, the first stop was Grythyttan, home of Sweden's premier restaurant, where we were treated to lunch and a guided tour of the restaurant school. I was particularly impressed by the lecture theatre which had sinks at each desk and at the front a kitchen that could be raised up out of the floor. In the afternoon it was on to Karlstad, stopping en route to spend an hour sunbathing on the beach by one of Sweden's many magnificent lakes. The Karlstad University Student Union building was to provide probably the least comfortable floor I've ever slept on, but the evening's entertainment involving a sauna and 80s night more than made up for this.

Wednesday 17th
A set of complimentary bright yellow t-shirts from the university became the uniform for the day, replacing the pale blue costumes of the previous day, though it was decided to jettison these in favour of something a little smarter for lunch, at the residence of the County Governor of Värmland. The meal consisted of a very stylish chicken and chips, after which we proceeded to debate the pros and cons of European monetary union with our host who, it turned out, was a former government minister. In the afternoon, we moved on to Mårbacka, the home of Selma Lagerlöf, the Nobel prize-winning children's author. By the time we reached Rotnoros park, we were significantly behind schedule and the park had closed. This turned out to be a good thing though, as they let us in anyway, giving us the place to ourselves. Indeed as the play area was completely free of children, the slides, swings, sand pit and climbing frame were all ours – great fun. Upon arrival at what had been described as a 'youth hostel', we discovered that our accommodation for the evening was actually a collection of idyllic wooden cottages on the hillside overlooking a lake. The plan for dinner was a barbecue and right on cue, the first rain of the week hit us. This wasn't going to stop us though, and being extremely resourceful, we manufactured our third group uniform of the week, from black plastic bags. The basic bin liner garment consists of a sleeveless sweater, but more inventive outfits may include sleeves, skirts, trousers, shoes or indeed a hat. A designer logo may then be generated by removing the label from a beer bottle to add the finishing

touch – luckily I don't think anyone else saw how ridiculous we looked. After getting completely drenched, what better retreat than the sauna, this one being of the Finnish variety (heated by a real log fire). It was also ideally located, right on the shores of the lake, so as well as being able to dive in when things got a little hot, we were also able to keep the beer cool.

Thursday 18th
Another rainy day couldn't dampen our spirits as we set off on the road to Mariestad. We did have to make one unscheduled roadside stop however, when loud noises and a strange smell were detected coming from the bottom of our bus. It didn't take a trained mechanic to diagnose the problem – one of the rear tyres having been torn to shreds, but we were still able to drive (slowly) to Mariestad where the bus paid a trip to the local garage. While our tyre was being changed, we were taken on a guided tour of the Electrolux factory, where they produce every type of fridge freezer imaginable. The 'smart fridge' which has a screen in the door was a particular highlight – you can even e-mail it to ask what shopping you need. The evening's trip into the town was curtailed by torrential rain, though not before we'd seen the oldest mini-golf course in Sweden. Confined to the youth hostel by the inclement weather, there was no option but to make a further impression on the still quite large beer and crisp supplies. The downside was that someone had manged to find a CD containing about 10 different versions of 'Barbie Girl' by top Scandinavian band Aqua.

Friday 19th
The last day of the trip, and we returned to Uppsala, stopping off at the Hemglas ice-cream factory, where we were treated to two complimentary boxes of ice-lollies. Despite being back, there was no respite from the hectic schedule as we were forced to finish off the remaining supplies of food and drink at a picnic lunch. Then after what seemed like a very short interval, it was time for dinner at the nation. By now I was becoming more familiar with the tunes to the drinking songs, but the words were still unintelligible. After dinner, another disco and the upper bar rocked to the tunes of Abba well into the early hours.

Saturday 20th
A much appreciated lie-in meant rising just in time for brunch, which was followed by a guided tour of Uppsala. A brief visit to the shops was curtailed in mid-afternoon by the requirement to get changed in preparation for the Spring Ball. This was a white tie affair and began at the ridiculously early time of 4:30, at least it did for those of us invited to the pre- pre-dinner drinks drinks reception. This was a chance to thank the hosts and to present the nation with a gift, a silver framed print of the Bridge of Sighs. The perfect reciprocal gift then followed – my very own 'Södermanland-Nerikes Nation Sångbok' meant that during this dinner I would at last be able to associate some lyrics with these tunes that had been running around my head for the last week. The song on page 63 is of some interest as it is entitled 'The Lady Margaret Boat Song', although as it is in Latin, I didn't feel especially qualified to perform a rendition. I was assured that the five hour dinner was relatively short and as it was interspersed with speeches, comedy, drama and of course the usual singing, it did seem to pass very quickly. Then afterwards came the usual fare of drinking and dancing – a format with which I had now become very familiar.

Sunday 21st
My last day in Uppsala and there was just enough time to pack my bags before lunch at Värmlands nation, an opportunity to say goodbye to all the friends I'd made. It had been a great week and thanks must go to everyone from Södermanlands-Nerikes nation who helped to entertain me, especially the international secretaries Emma and Olivia.

Noel Rutter (BA 1997)

COMMEMORATION OF BENEFACTORS

6 May 2001

'Overlooking the Foundations'

This morning, on the Feast of St John ante Portam Latinam, we gather according to custom to remember our many Benefactors, and thereby our Foundation. Let us first recall what someone else wrote concerning foundations:

> 'He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it.'
>
> St Luke's Gospel 7:48 (A.V.)

'They departed from Cambridge towards Ely the 12th day of March at 4 of the clock at afternoon by water'[1]. So wrote Richard Henrison[2], the Bishop of Ely's Official, to our effective founder John Fisher, then Bishop of Rochester, now in the eyes of at least the Catholic Church one of her martyrs and also, since 1935, one of her saints.[3] Henrison's letter, written early in 1511, was to report the long-anticipated departure of the last three occupants of the Hospital of St John the Evangelist. In its terse phrases the letter marked the melancholy end of a House that had stood for more than three hundred years and was situated just a few yards from where I speak.

As those final inhabitants travelled along the sluggish River Cam they may well have looked across the fens as dusk fell, and felt a certain satisfaction: they had not been easy to dislodge. Certainly Henrison's letter exudes a palpable sense of relief: with as he said 'greate difficoltye and labor'[4] the last obstacle preventing the new Foundation was being borne away by boat to Ely. In earlier correspondence pressure from both Henry Hornby, who was one of the Lady Margaret's executors and formerly her Chancellor, and James Stanley, her stepson and Bishop of Ely, had been exerted in a very English manner; things would be, well, difficult for everybody and we wouldn't want that, would we? All other hurdles, raised by Bishops, Kings and Popes had been negotiated and our College, whose benefactors we remember and thank today, came into existence, arising from the desires of the Lady Margaret, who had died in 1509, and subsequently being brought to fruition by the energy and determination of her confessor and spiritual director John Fisher.

But even though it was a new Foundation, with its own statutes and identity, it still had memories. This was because as the College of St John the Evangelist it was in reality the successor to a Hospital named in honour of the same Apostle. This morning I want to suggest that not only should we recall the benefactors of our College, but also something of the history of the previous Foundation. This is for several reasons. One is that there are unappreciated continuities between the ancient Hospital and our College. Another is that in certain respects the real caesura occurred some 25 years after our Foundation, with the events that began with the King's 'grete matter', his divorce from Catherine of Aragon and his sexual obsession with Anne Boleyn, and blossomed – if that is the appropriate term - into the English Reformation. This, as is now widely acknowledged, led to the whole-scale despoliation of England's popular religion. To this upheaval most people, as ever, accommodated but by no means all. One of the victims was the 66 year old Cardinal Fisher[5] who went to the scaffold on Tower Hill on 22nd June 1535 carrying his conscience to the next world, and spurning the fury of the royal divorcee.

But what is there to remember of this Hospital? At first sight very little, at least materially. Most obvious is the old Chapel, or rather its outlines parallel to this edifice. With the Foundation of the College, however, the chapel had been altered extensively and at much cost, but writing only a few years after it had been reduced to rubble – that is in 1869 – its historian, Fellow and botanist Charles Cardale Babington was in no doubt that 'when altered to suit the College [the Chapel] was very much changed for the worse'[6]. Moreover, it is Babington who reminds us that the new Chapel, which we tend to regard as one of the great monuments of Victorian belief, although perhaps more often admired than loved, was in reality designed by George Gilbert Scott in deliberate and specific homage to the religious architecture of the late thirteenth century, and thereby much closer to the true origins of our Foundation. What Scott had not envisaged was this Chapel's immense tower: his designs had been true to the mediaeval spirit. How it was that St John's came to dominate the skyline of Cambridge, the story of a generous but perhaps unwisely worded benefaction, and death following a railway smash have their own topicality, and cause no doubt for some timely reflection. But to return to the old Chapel. Its west end was converted to form part of the then Master's Lodge, and until its demolition the rest of the Chapel underwent multifarious changes, some disgraceful as it was defiled by the iconoclasts, others designed to restore its beauty. Of the few gravestones, all but one mark the resting place of Fellows - one such located in the old ante-chapel is that of our benefactor and College historian Thomas Baker; as we have just heard in the list of Benefactors, ejected and, as a decanal voice also remarked in his commemoration sermon of 1997, not only an ejected, but also a 'dejected Fellow'[7]. There is only one grave dating from the time of the Hospital, but it is not without interest. Its brass[8], now headless, hangs in the vestry of the Chapel, but the body under the grass of First Court is of one Eudo de la Zouche, a significant figure in the University: twice Chancellor in the early 1380s. That he came to be buried here in 1414 suggests that whatever aspersions were to be cast on the Hospital – its poverty, its smallness and, as we shall see, in its final days, what was claimed to be dissolute living – in the early fifteenth century the Hospital was of some significance.

Adjacent to the old Chapel was another building of the Hospital, referred to as the Infirmary, and probably dating to the earliest years of this first Foundation. It too was reduced to rubble, again to make way for this Chapel, but during its demolition a previously covered piscina was revealed, and this the most beautiful remnant of the old Hospital is now embedded in the south wall of this Chapel. Otherwise, almost nothing survives – some mediaeval glass[9], some fragments of manuscript in the library and a wall separating us from Trinity College, built amicably between King's Hall (part predecessor of Trinity) and the Hospital, but today neither high enough nor thick enough to drown the sound of the dozens of empty bottles cascading into the receptacles of Kitchen Lane, and so reaching the ears of those absorbed in the

Wednesday evening concerts within Trinity Chapel. Otherwise, of the old Hospital practically nothing else remains.

I said that the Hospital[10] had stood for more than 300 years, but its early history is obscure. Where it was built had been waste-land, chosen for a very modest building, a rudimentary hospital. It may have existed from before 1200, but the first reliable record is from 1207. A secure future, however, depended on ecclesiastical interest and within a few years it was under the patronage of successive Bishops of Ely, with an establishment of a Master and Brethren, living under the Augustinian rule. Although never wealthy, of the Hospitals in Cambridge it was the largest and most important, receiving endowments of land and livings. So it was that between 1208 and 1215 it gained the rectory of Horningsea[11], a benefice which is still in the possession of the College. So too the Hospital acquired land to the west of Cambridge, becoming the most significant owner in this area[12], and here too the College inherited land from which we have, and with which we still hope to gain profit.

As founded the Hospital may have cared for the sick, but there is very little evidence of any intervention by doctors. Sickness, it was widely regarded, was the result of sin and as such the Hospital, to quote the historian Miri Ruben, 'offered shelter, food, spiritual comfort and a disciplined environment'[13]. For those injured in the mishaps of life, and the not-infrequent riots, recourse lay elsewhere – to surgeon-barbers, apothecaries, wise-women and quacks. Neither was the door open to other categories of despair, such as lepers or the insane. The Hospital was effectively a religious foundation, devoted to charity, yet so far as the brethren were concerned pursuing a life also of poverty and chastity.

Yet the tenor of the Hospital changed over the years. In 1280 another Bishop of Ely, the renowned Hugh Balsham, introduced into the presumably calm world of the Brethren a number of secular scholars – are we completely surprised to learn that the experiment was not a success? Within four, if not three, years they had decamped, to St Peter's House. Unwittingly the brethren of the Hospital had set in motion a migration that led to the collegiate structure of Cambridge; as Cambridge's earliest surviving College Peterhouse prospered so the Hospital lost control of a valuable asset, the Church of St Peter's, that became the Chapel of the new College and ultimately the church we know as Little St Mary's. Still as the University grew, so the Hospital itself became increasingly involved in its activities, being allowed to join processions from an early date[14], and with effectively a formal affiliation by about 1470.

So enduring does the Collegiate system seem to be, although the locked note-books of some of the denizens of the Old Schools might reveal other plans, that it is perhaps forgotten that one of their principal functions of the early Colleges was to offer a continuous flow of prayer, most especially for their founders or foundresses and principal benefactors. As the Hospital entered the ambit of the University, so even if it did not become specifically more academic, again to quote Mira Rubin, it 'drifted more and more into the sphere of clerical, liturgical preoccupation'[15], and thus came ever-closer to one of the principal reasons for the existence of the mediaeval Colleges: in some senses they were little more than academic chantries.

This loss of original purpose, from a Hospital in principle to a sort of oratory in practice, made its transformation into a College far less problematic, especially when the mother of the Tudors had expressed an interest. To be sure the College was a new Foundation. What was small and relatively poor was to be made large and wealthy, but despite the expulsion of the few remaining brethren to Ely there was perhaps more continuity than we realize. Of minor note, perhaps, is that one of the Hospital's three brethren, one Christopher Wright, does not vanish but re-enters the sphere of the College as the curate of the church at Horningsea[16]. More significant is that the first statutes, set out by John Fisher in 1516, specifically remember the benefactors of the previous Hospital, and that fact alone seems sufficient to recall them also this morning. The Statutes also retained other good customs of the ancient Hospital, such as the ringing of the bell at four o'clock – four o'clock in the morning, that is, to rouse those scholars of the University minded to begin their work[17].

The historian of the College, Thomas Baker, paints a picture of dissolute living amongst the last of the brethren in the Hospital, writing that they were 'prodigal in their expences, not in charity and hospitality, which they were obliged to by their rule and order, but in excess and riot, and in gratifying their own sinful lusts'[18]. A lurid scene, yet Baker was writing almost two hundred years later and perhaps some consciences were eased by such reports of lubricity as they prepared the documents for the Hospital's dissolution. In reality the world-picture of those three Brethren leaving by water for Ely – were they really pining for the flesh-pots of Petty Cury? – and Fisher would have been identical. And what strange beliefs they held: of the immortality of the soul, the inevitability of Judgement, the near-certainty of Purgatory, the absolute reality of Hell. The new College might be a secular foundation, but this did not mean an interruption in that continuous flow of prayer.

In its earliest years the College Chapel saw the addition of four chantries, one of which was for Fisher. Its building is a clear enough sign of his devotion to St John's, and his expectation of being buried here. The story, of course, ended differently, with his body desecrated, his head placed on a spike on London Bridge, and then thrown into the Thames[19]. His tomb, surprisingly ornate for a man well-known for his austere view of life, was never completely assembled, and much later, neglected, in 1773 it was moved from the chantry, placed outside the Chapel and before long had disintegrated in the rain[20]. At the demolition of the old Chapel the archways of Fisher's chantry were preserved, to be restored and re-embedded in the south wall of the ante-chapel[21]: seen often enough but remembered with Fisher in mind, I suspect, less often.

The judicial murder of Fisher was a small part of the real discontinuity that sundered us for ever from the world not only of the Hospital but also the earliest years of the College; a time of turmoil and desecration, driven as much by greed as any anxiety to make God's word clearer, a Reformation that in the short term denied that the prayers of the living could act as intercessors of the dead – yet here this morning, quaintly some may think, we remember them – a Reformation that it can be argued led inevitably to the long term destruction of first religion and ultimately meaning.

And perhaps the English Reformation has parallels relevant to today. Then, as now, we are informed – relentlessly – that the old order is stagnant, history itself is an irrelevance, and entrenched interests must be swept away. Then, as now, visitations, commissioners, scrutineers, panels and oxymoronically 'action forces' are imposed, and even incredibly welcomed, sniffing out inefficiencies – which exist, idleness – yes, even here, yet for all that these armies of inspectors are, to all intents and purposes, as marionettes, purposeless ciphers, traversing a landscape drained of meaning. Yes, that the world should be a better and fairer place is incontestable, but how it is to be achieved in reality and why our efforts are dogged with failure is no doubt the task of yet some other commission, some other enquiry.

Look again at the English Reformation. How horribly familiar is the figure of the odious Thomas Cromwell, Henry VIII's enforcer. Such talents, such intelligence and a flair for administration, whose only sense of loyalty was to a prince who, of course, destroyed him after he, Cromwell had destroyed so much. Not only John Fisher, but a world that for all its grievous faults, also assumed that prayer is valid, that its benefactors were more than a list of increasingly remote worthies, people not only worthy of remembrance, but people with whom we might have a tangible connection, people to whom death was not a blank extinguishment, but a door at least potentially to eternity, and a people with whom incredibly on our own deaths we might meet not as names on a list but as faces.

Simon Conway Morris

My special thanks to the College Archivist, Malcolm Underwood, for advice and guidance; also to the College Library and finally to my wife Zoë for successive typings of this Commemoration sermon.

Footnotes

1 This extract is modernized; Henrison's original is as follows: 'They depted fro Camb'ge towarde Ely the xij day of March at iiij of y^e^ Clokke at aft^r^ noone by wat^r^'. Printed in *The Eagle,* vol. 16, p. 345: 1891, and reprinted in R.F. Scott's *Notes from the records of St John's College, Cambridge,* series 1, letter 6, p. 5 (1889-1899)

2 Richard Henrison was also Rector of Milton, Cambs. See *Collegium Divi Johannis Evangelistae*, 1511—1911 (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1911).

3 From the day of his execution John Fisher was widely regarded as a martyr; he was eventually canonized in 1935 by Pope Pius XI; see R.L. Smith's *John Fisher and Thomas More: two English saints* (London, Sheed & Ward, 1935)

4 From the same letter as note 1

5 Fisher's date of birth has been the subject of controversy, but I am taking it as 1469

6 See p. 23 of his *History of the Infirmary and Chapel of the Hospital and College of St John the Evangelist at Cambridge* (Cambridge, Deighton Bell, 1874)

7 Peter Linehan's Commemoration of Benefactors, 4 May 1997, reported in *The Eagle* 1997, pp. 10-19

8 See Plate 60, fig. 5 of M. Clayton's *Catalogue of rubbings of brasses and incised slabs. Victoria and Albert Museum* (London, H.M.S.O, 1968)

9 So far as I am aware the extent to which glass survives from the time of the Hospital is unclear; some was evidently saved from the old Chapel (see footnote 11 of Underwood (1993, citation in note 12)); most seem to be commissioned when the Chapel was rebuilt at the time of the College's Foundation; see G.G. Chainey's article on 'The lost stained glass of Cambridge' in *Proceeding of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society*, vol. 79, pp. 70-81 (1992). The glass was largely destroyed in 1559-1560, but remnants are still visible in the windows of the present Chapel's tower and the Hall

10 Of great value and interest is the history of the Hospital given in M. Rubin's *Charity and community in Medieval Cambridge* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987). Also of considerable interest is the article in *The Eagle* by M.H.A. Newman, vol. 48, pp. 20-33, 1935.

11 Rubin, op. cit., p. 198

12 See the paper 'The impact of St John's College as landowner in the West Fields of Cambridge in the early sixteenth century' by M. Underwood, in *Medieval Cambridge: essays on the pre-Reformation University*, pp. 167-188 (P. Zutshi, ed.) (Woodbridge, Boydell, 1993)

13 Rubin, op. cit., p. 153

14 At least 1379; see p. 118 of vol. 1, *Annals of Cambridge* by C.H. Cooper (Cambridge, Warwick, 1842)

15 Rubin, op. cit., p. 183

16 See p. 243 (footnote 38) of M.K. Jones & M.G. Underwood's *The King's mother: Lady Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and Derby* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992)

17 *Early statues of the College of St John the Evangelist in the University of Cambridge*, edited by J.E.B. Mayor (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1859)

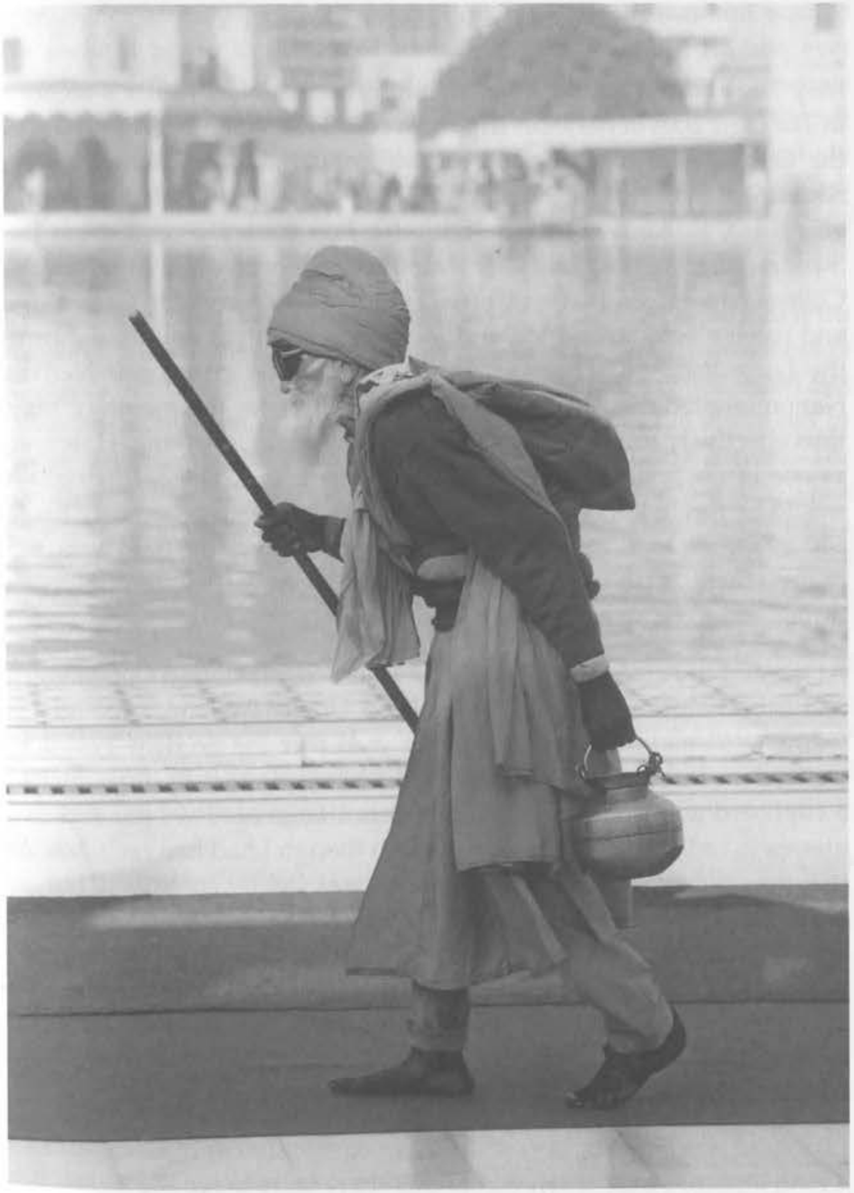
18 See p. 60 of Thomas Baker's *History of the College of St John the Evangelist, Cambridge* (edited by J.E.B. Mayor) (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1869)

19 See D.H. Farmer's *The Oxford dictionary of Saints* (Oxford, Clarendon, 1978), pp. 152-154. There is also a story that despite its abuse the impaled head became the more beautiful as the days passed; see Smith's book cited in note 3

20 The tomb is illustrated in Fig. 17 of vol. II of *The architectural history of the University of Cambridge and of the colleges of Cambridge and Eton* by R. Willis and J.W. Clark (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1886), and a description of its fate on pp. 285-286.

21 Concerning their removal to the new Chapel see p. 112 of A.C. Crook's *From the Foundation to Gilbert Scott: a history of the buildings of St John's College, Cambridge 1511 to 1885* (Cambridge, St John's College, 1980)

'Hot' by Rachel Paniagua
(Highly Commended in the colour photographic print section of the College Art Competition, 2001)



Study of a pilgrim at the Golden Temple, Amritsar, by Tim Rayner
(Joint First Prize in the colour photographic print section of the College Art Competition, 2001)

SWEDISH HOSPITALITY

May I be allowed to add a few reminiscences to Noel Rutter's account in *The Eagle* 2000 of his short trip to Sweden? If I remember rightly I was the first Johnian to participate in this annual student exchange with Södermanlands-Nerikes Nation (College), going to Uppsala nearly fifty years ago, in April 1954. The initiative had certainly come from the Swedes, offering hospitality for a month to a Johnian, and in return the College had agreed that an Uppsala student could come to Cambridge and receive accommodation and food for a month at any time during the Long Vacation. The only snag was that Södermanlands-Nerikes Nation insisted that their guest should be there for the month of May, thus effectively ruling out any undergraduate from applying. However, as one of the relatively few graduate students in College, I thought it would be fun to apply, all the more since the College generously made £40 available as a travel scholarship. Since travel by train was £25 return, there wasn't much left over, and even at that time Sweden turned out to be an expensive place.

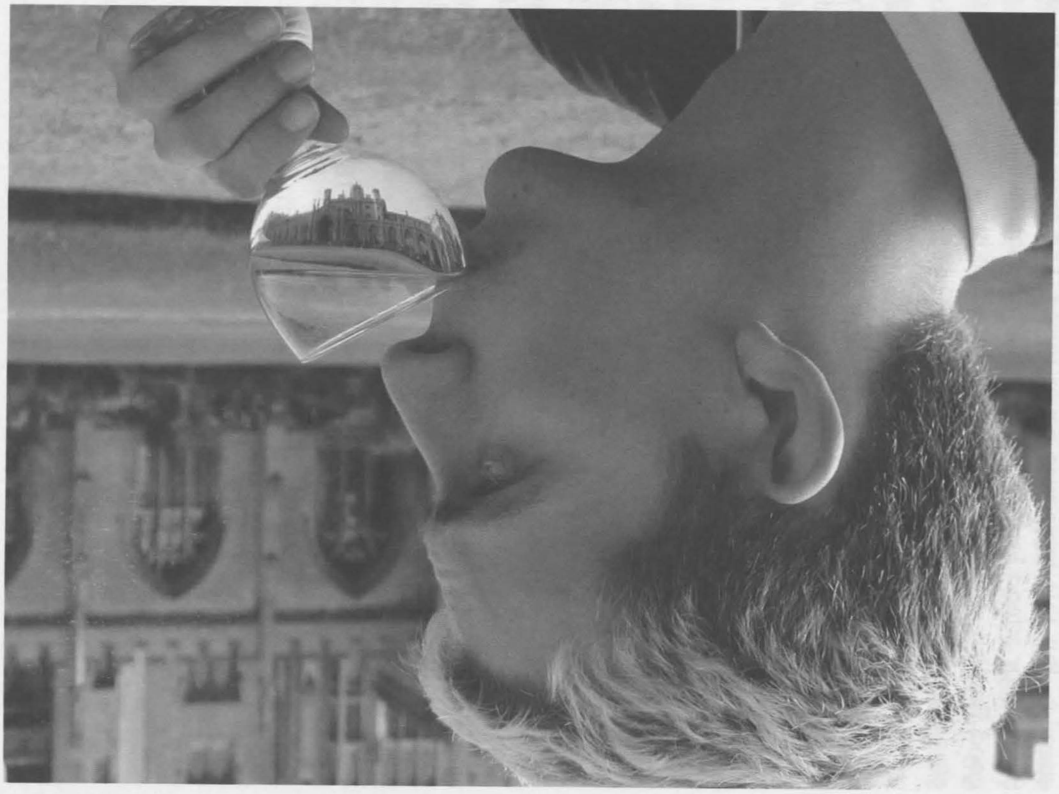
At the end of April I duly set out via Harwich, Hamburg, Copenhagen and Stockholm and eventually reached Uppsala where I received a warm welcome. In fact I recall very well that the Student President showed me into his office, closed the door conspiratorially, then opened a cupboard and drew from a dark recess a large bottle of gin and two glasses in order to toast my arrival, even though I had had no lunch. At that time public consumption of alcohol was strictly controlled, but, as Noel rightly noted, the Swedish student's readiness to take a drink continues to have a high priority. In fact, at the hotel where we took two meals a day, there was a regulation that alcohol could only be served if a meal was also consumed. The minimum order was a dish of green peas, even though in fact this never appeared, but was nonetheless added to the bill in order to conform to the law.

Like Noel, we – that is, several Brits, an equal number of Germans and a Finn or two – were taken on various short tours to see the sights. But I had to wonder why we had been asked to come all this way at such an odd time. At first I thought it was because the Swedes had a bad

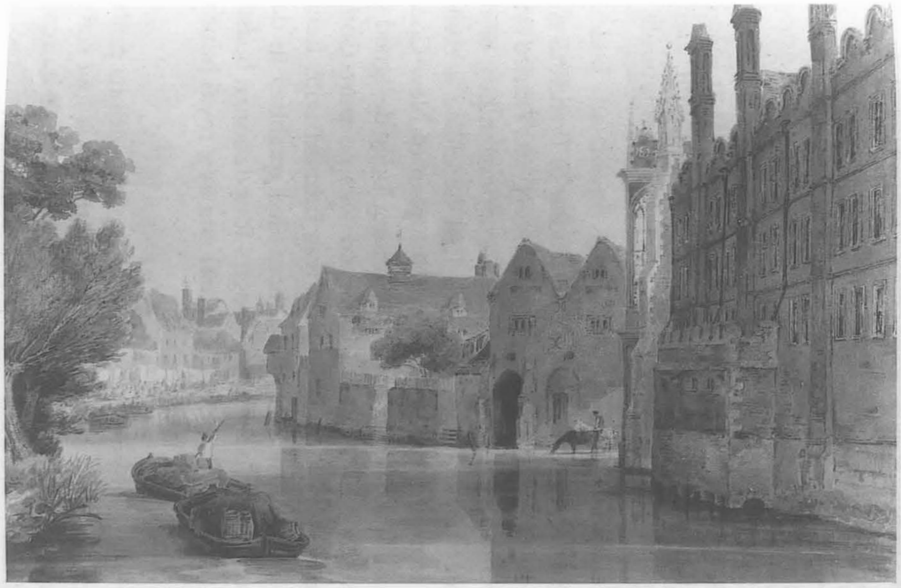
conscience about their non-participation in the recent war and wanted to make it up to those who had luckily survived. But no one ever mentioned the war. Then I wondered if they were trying to promote international friendship between us and the Germans as former enemies. But this topic was never raised. Did they want us to study Swedish or attend lectures? Well, evidently not, as they all spoke such good English anyway, and were so busy having a good time that any academic pursuit was obviously secondary.

It was only several years later, after I had emigrated to Canada, that the reason for our invitation was made clear. Like the prairie provinces of Canada, northern Sweden suffers from grim winters – usually cold and grey for months on end. Social life is curtailed, and the effect can be most depressing. But then at the end of April, spring arrives. The occasion is marked by a change of student caps to the summer white headgear, and by a frenzy of festivities culminating in the Spring Ball, a highly formal event, which then as now began early and continued all night. I remember very well that, after hours of exhausting dancing, we all took a boat down the river and across Lake Malaran to have breakfast at a picturesque but chilly castle. The invitation to a bunch of foreigners to share in the fun was the Swedish way of showing their joy that at last spring had arrived. And no doubt this is still the main motive for the now curtailed but enjoyable week of festivities which some lucky Johnian can enjoy. Long may it continue.

John S Conway (BA 1952, PhD 1956)



This photograph by Lizzy Mace won the First Prize in the College photography section of the College Art Competition, 2001



This splendid watercolour of the Cam behind Third Court was painted by Thomas Girtin at the end of the eighteenth century. It shows the College before the construction of New Court and the Bridge of Sighs, and also offers us a glimpse of the ancient buildings, alleys and riverside stairs cleared some sixty years later to make way for the Master's Lodge and Garden.

A talented artist, held in high regard by his rival J M W Turner, Girtin is best known for his watercolours painted in the course of several tours round England, Scotland and Wales between 1794 and 1801. He died of tuberculosis, aged twenty seven, in November 1802. Two centuries on, a photograph of the St John's painting has been generously presented to the College by its owner, Mrs Susan Elias, and is now on display in the Johnian Office.

A FRENCH MODEL FOR NEW COURT

For the design of New Court, the first Cambridge college building on the far side of the Cam, St John's turned to an architect with impeccable credentials as a scholar of English mediaeval Gothic (Figures 1-2). Indeed, the architect Thomas Rickman was himself the originator of the categories so familiar to today's users of Pevsner's county guides. These terms – Norman, Early English, Decorated and Perpendicular – were first proposed in his scholarly, though modestly titled work, *An Attempt to discriminate the Styles of English Architecture from the Conquest to the Reformation*, published in 1817. Rickman erected New Court in 1826-31, in collaboration with his young partner and former pupil Henry Hutchinson, designer of the Bridge of Sighs, who died prematurely in the year of the Court's completion.

What is often forgotten is that Rickman was a scholar of French as well as English architecture. He travelled extensively in France and published articles on the subject. Such was his understanding of the history of the architecture of both countries that he chose a French Renaissance model from the Loire valley for the plan of New Court, namely the Château de Chambord, the royal hunting lodge designed for the French King Francis I in 1518/9. Chambord was no pure Gothic building; by this time French court culture was infused with Italian Renaissance elements. Nevertheless, it had three ideal qualities: its date was nearly perfect for the period of the College's foundation, it boasted a royal patron, and it lay on flat, moated, rural site in a royal hunting park.

It was Chambord which suggested the classical E-plan, with its central *donjon* at the back of a rectangular courtyard fronted by a low screen (Figure 3). As at Chambord, the central spiral staircase (our E staircase) rises up the core of the *donjon* block to sprout a flamboyant rooftop lantern. (At St John's, however, there is no space – or need – for the celebrated double staircase of Chambord, supposedly proposed by Leonardo shortly before his death in Amboise in 1519.) The idea of the cloister walk on the entrance front may derive from another French Renaissance model, the Château de Bury near Blois, begun about 1513 but since destroyed (Figure 4). Like Chambord, New Court turns its main facade towards the south, rather than towards the college, to enjoy the parkland setting as well as to catch the sun. Significantly, it also faces Trinity College, as if hoping to impress its neighbour by the references to these courtly French models, familiar to scholars from the third volume of du Cerceau's *Les plus excellents bastiments de France* (1572).

The French plan was, of course, translated by Rickman and Hutchinson into the scholarly Perpendicular Gothic style appropriate to the College's Tudor foundation and English royal patron. This was a point in the history of the Gothic Revival when the public was peculiarly well-educated in the nuances of historical styles. The philosophy of association that underlined the theory of the Picturesque encouraged the viewer's response to such allusions. The French courtly model imbued the design with classical discipline and rural connotations. Meanwhile, in the detailing, the choice of Gothic rather than classical, English rather than French, Perpendicular rather than Early English, established the intellectual and genealogical parameters of the new building with poignancy and precision.

Deborah Howard

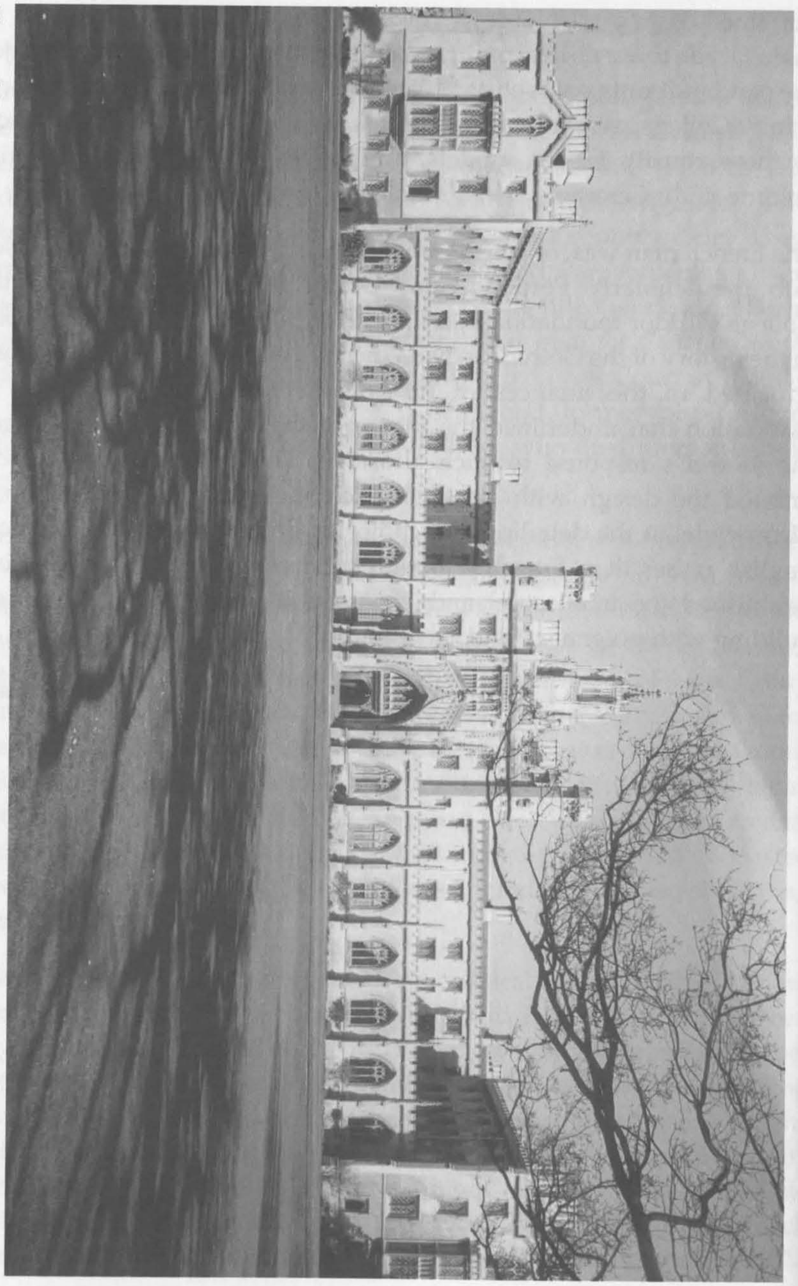


Figure 1: New Court from the south, erected in 1826-31 to designs by Rickman and Hutchinson

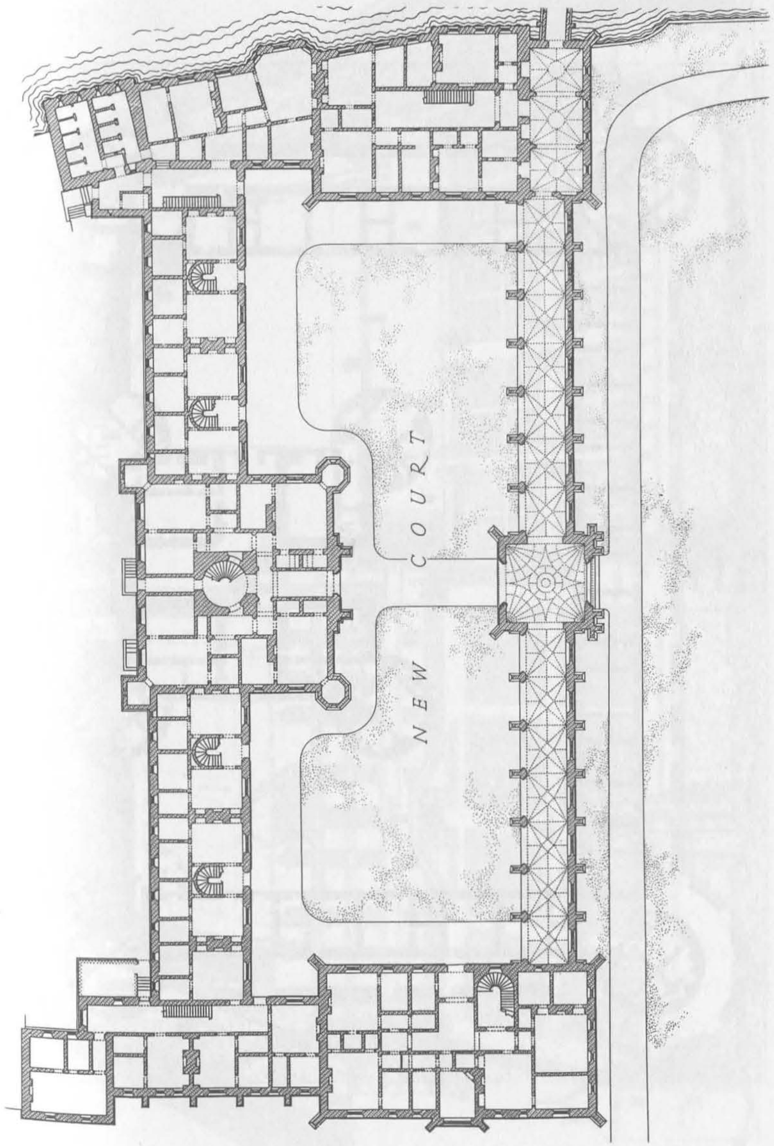


Figure 2: New Court plan (RCHME)

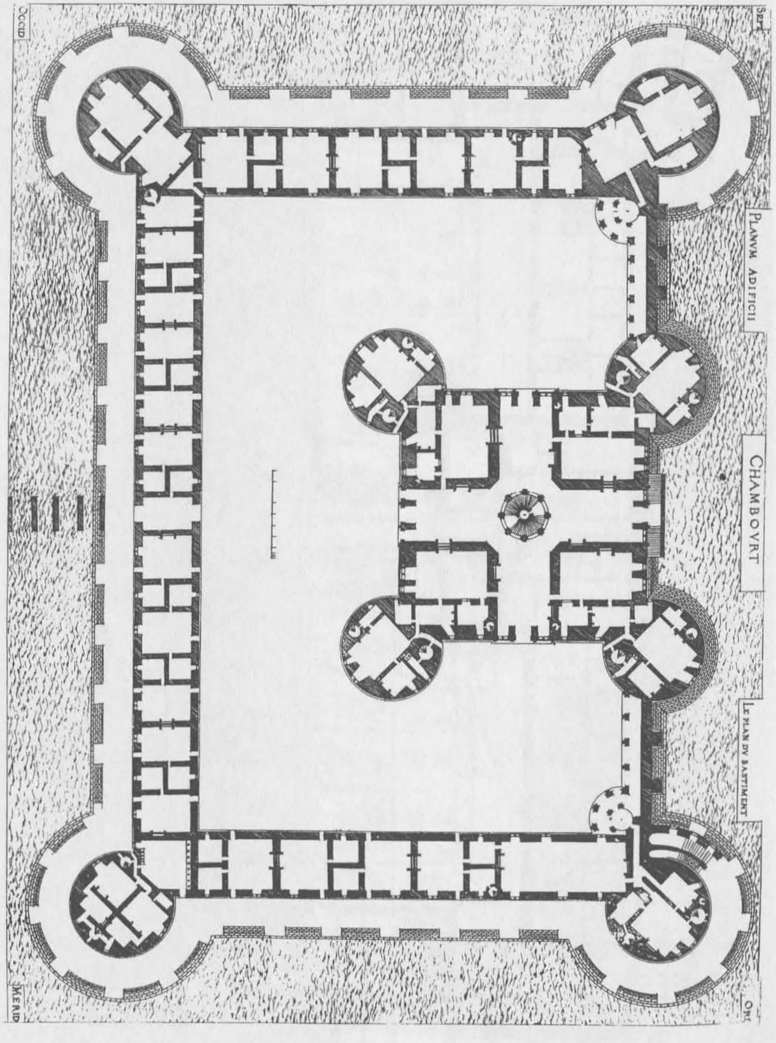

PLANVM ÆDIFICII
CHAMBOVRT
LE PLAN DV BASTIMENT
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Figure 3: Plan of the Château de Chambord, from Jacques Androuet du Cerceau, Les plus excellents bastiments de France, *vol, III, 1572*

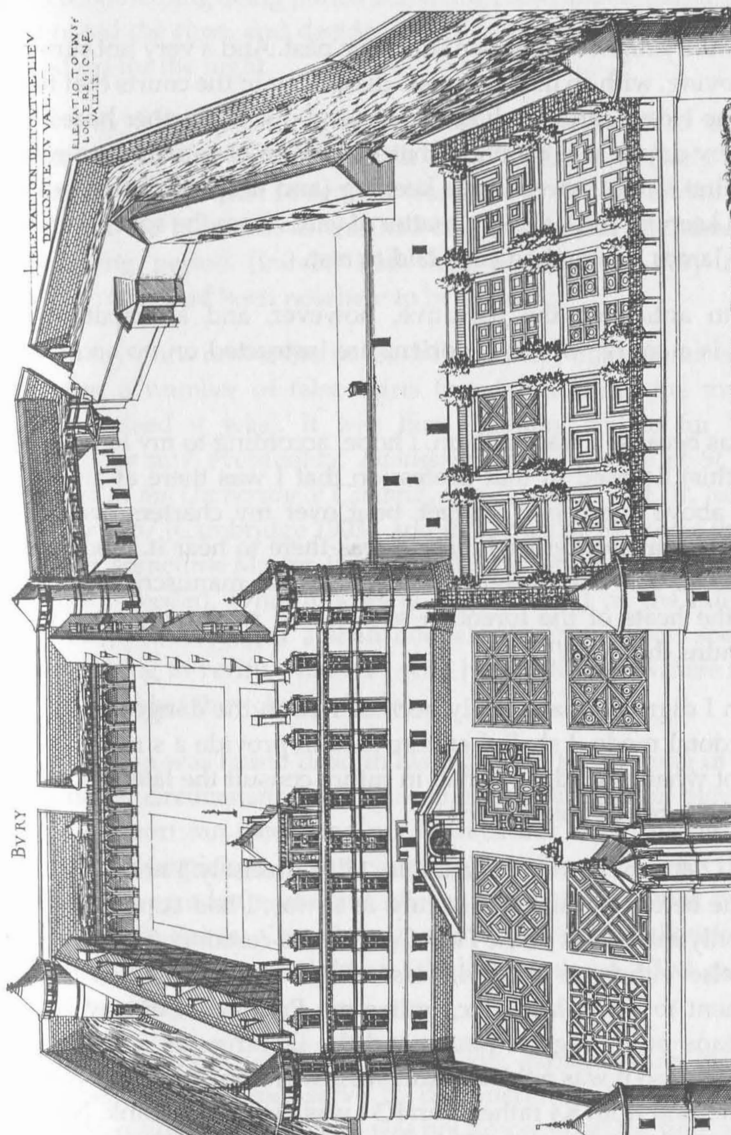
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Figure 4: Bird's eye view of the Château de Bury, from the rear, from du Cerceau, Les plus excellents bastiments de France, *vol, III, 1572*

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

'TWAS a sultry night all of seven summers past. And a very hot summer it was proving, with so many tourists dissolving in the courts that twice already the Head Gardener had had to send out for further hoses. But that was by day. It was by night that I began to have reason to reflect that K2 First Court where I was keeping (and despite all that was to ensue am keeping still) is only a matter of yards from the spot where the corpse of James Ashton had been laid to rest.

That is to anticipate the narrative, however, and anticipating the narrative is a course which historians are instructed on no account to pursue.

And it was because I was (still am, I hope, according to my lights, even after all this) licensed in that profession that I was there at all in my chamber above Saint John's Street, bent over my charters even after midnight in that sweltering July and was there to hear it. God, how I have lived to rue that design, of finishing that manuscript by night because the heats of the forenoon so disabled me from giving those Spanish nuns their due![1]

But again I digress. I have lately been alerted to the danger of lapsing into anecdotal mode. I shall therefore seek to provide a strictly factual account of what ensued, and shall in future consult the late M R James only on the subject of old libraries.

It was at 12.40 am. that it was audible, 12.40 precisely. I noted the time *at* the time because at the end of July, as it was, I had supposed that I was the only inhabitant of the First Court – and certainly that there was no one else either on K or I, least of all above me. (For all his commitment to the palaeolithic, unlike me Professor Conway Morris always leads pretty regular hours, and the Librarian as was led very regular hours, so it was not she.) And yet it was from above me that the noise came, and from K4 rather than K3 I was inclined to think. Not that it was a particularly remarkable noise *as such* (as you sometimes hear things described in queues in shops: *not as such*). Bump, drag, drag, bump. Had I heard this during any of the daylight hours I would hardly

have given it a second thought. An ordinary college noise, it would have seemed, something being pulled across the room above, perhaps a table. But I noted the time, and decided that I had had enough of nuns, and packed up for the night.

It was only when about four weeks later, and for the third time a few days after that, that again I heard it – and again at precisely the same hour of the night – that I began to wonder. For neither Simon Conway Morris nor the Librarian as was had been acting out of character over the ensuing period (indeed both had been acting very much *in* character; they had been nowhere to be seen).

So, with my nuns now more or less behind me, I made some enquiries, and, after a number of false starts found out about the murder (if murder indeed it was). It was that unfailing source for Master's speeches for any eventuality, *Admissions to the College of St John the Evangelist in the University of Cambridge*, in this case Part III, *July 1715 – November 1767* (Cambridge 1903), and in particular the notes thereto by R. F. Scott, sometime Master, that provided me, at pp. 546 *&sqq*., with the lead that I needed. What follows is largely based on the information provided in those pages. I shall not refer to them again specifically. Those wishing to verify what they read here will know where to look – if to look is what they choose to do.

'James Ashton was found dead in his rooms on the evening of 9 March 174[6] under circumstances which seemed to point to foul play', Scott's judicious report ran (Scott had not been Senior Bursar in his time for nothing) – 'suspicion', Scott continued, 'falling on John Brinkley, another undergraduate of the College. James Ashton was buried 14 March in All Saints Churchyard, the entry in the *Parish Register* describing him as "James Ashton, Scholar, murdered." The case was a mysterious one . . .'

Indeed it was, as the details related by Scott, garnered from the London newspapers of the time, serve to demonstrate. The murder of one Johnian in residence by another, was not described at the time as having precedent, and certainly since 1961 there has been no case of the sort reported to the Council, at least not in Full Term. Though again I anticipate, and in this case also beg the question. For that *was* the question. *Was* it murder? For, unless it was just one of those things that can so easily happen in College after the bar closes of a Sunday night,[2] then there could be only one murderer. And that was John Brinkley, son of William Brinkley, attorney at law of Bury St Edmunds,[3] who only comes into view in the newspaper accounts of his trial, which, for reasons to be explained below, are the only accounts we have of the matter.

According to the Cambridge correspondent of the *General Evening Post*, when the case *Rex vs Brinkley* was heard at the Cambridge Assizes early i~~n the~~ Michaelmas Term of 1746, the court was informed as follows: 'On the 9th of March, after twelve at night, Mr Brinkley knocked at the door of the chamber next to Mr Ashton's, and having awaken'd Mr C ——, the young gentleman who liv'd there, desired him to come to the assistance of Mr Ashton, who, he said, was either dead or dying.' A porter and candles having been assembled, Ashton's room was entered and Ashton was found 'dead, his cheeks warm, lying upon the bed without coat, waistcoat, or shoes.' It was further noted that Brinkley 'was as much undressed, and that his hands and shirt were bloody.' 'The two young gentlemen' (namely Brinkley and Mr C.) then knocked up 'Dr H——, a physician of the same College' (the celebrated William Heberden, the discoverer of *angina pectoris*, recently elected FRCP),[4] and Heberden recorded that Ashton had had his throat cut.

So far so bad. Bad now turned to worse.

'The account which Mr B[rinkley] immediately gave of this affair was as follows:— That while he and Mr A[shton] were in bed together, the latter either reaching for the chamber-pot, or having taken it into his hands, fell from the bed, and not rising again, he (Mr B[rinkley]) called to him, but received no answer; that soon after, hearing Mr A[shton] groan, he got out of bed and lifted him up, and perceiving that he did not move, ran, without knowing what had happened, to call assistance.'

The rest was history – though not for the unfortunate Ashton, son of Aaron Ashton wig-maker of London.[5] The history of the matter provided the case for the prosecution. Yet the prosecution failed. According to expert evidence, so deep a wound could not have been inflicted by a piece of pot. At the Cambridge assizes in August 1754 Heberden testified to the contrary, however, and the court preferred Heberden's view, doubtless in the knowledge that 'it was always his custom to take careful written notes of all the noteworthy cases under his care'.[6] As to the blood all over the place and the various indications in the room of something other than an accident, these had been caused by careless members of the coroner's jury, it was argued. The two young men had been the closest of friends, and Brinkley was a model citizen – or so his old headmaster assured the court in a testimonial of a type familiar to admissions tutors down the ages. The pride of Bury St Edmund's School, and plainly a Larmor Award winner *avant la lettre*, he was incapable of any mean action, *a fortiori* of any violent act. The jury were persuaded, Brinkley was acquitted, and in the view of the correspondent of the *General Evening Post* rightly so. Justice had been done.

But that was not everyone's view. It was not the view of Ashton's family who had his tombstone inscribed 'James Ashton, Scholar, murdered'. Nor was it that of the correspondent writing in the *Daily Advertiser* of 16 September 1746. The jury had got it completely wrong, he stated bluntly. Brinkley (whose father was an attorney at law)[7] was guilty of murder most foul, the murder of 'a youth, whose public and private character raised in all his friends the greatest expectation'. Brinkley's evidence was a pack of lies, a tissue of inconsistencies containing no fewer than four contradictory accounts of what had ensued after the doomed pair had come into College together and parted 'in the middle of the first court', whereafter, as Brinkley was *en route* for the 'boghouse', Ashton had allegedly called to him from the window of his room to come and lie with him.[8] No satisfactory explanation had been provided of the evidence that the door to Ashton's room had been forced. It was impossible, as Brinkley claimed, that he could have passed Ashton the pot from the floor since by his own admission the pot was on the floor on Ashton's side of the bed. Heberden's testimony at the trial was not to be credited; on the night itself he had been of the contrary view. Then he had been of opinion that it could not have been a pot-shard, that it must have been 'some sharp instrument' that had caused the fatal wound. The court had only a college bedmaker's word for it that it was the coroner's jurymen who had bloodied the clothes of both parties. As was apparent from those (regrettably unspecified) 'instances at *Clare Hall* and the castle', the twenty-year-old Brinkley was a thoroughly bad lot, from whose 'licentious acquaintance' his companion (who was younger than him by three years, and whose father was not a lawyer) had been heard on the very day of his death to say that he was resolved to free himself.

In short, it would appear that the jury had been less assiduous in their consideration of the matter than even an averagely observant Dean of College ought to have been on such an occasion. As to the explanation of the noises in the night two and a half centuries later, however, neither of these accounts of the matter serves much purpose. For in neither of them is the location of Ashton's room specified, the only topographical information supplied being that it was in First Court and was 'three story high' – that is, was on the top, the *second* floor. But in which range of the court did Ashton keep? The College archives possess no information of the sort for this period. All that the printed record provides by way of indication is the passage quoted in the footnote above, and on the strength of that alone it might appear likely that Ashton breathed his last not in the east but in the south range, and more particularly probably in either G5 or G6, as they are now, which (as I have ascertained) are at an elevation of 42 steps from ground level, and where on the floor of the landing between the two rooms there are traces of what might as easily be twentieth-century undergraduate excess of some sort as of eighteenth-century gore.[9]

However, the value of such calculations must ultimately depend on the assumption that the information on which they are based (information provided by Brinkley of course) was correct. (Incidentally, if correct, then Ashton cannot have kept in the west range either, since, had he done so, the pair would not have parted in the *middle* of First Court, as Brinkley deposed, but at the entrance to the screens towards Second Court.) But was it correct? In this, the fourth version of the sequence of events offered by him (be it remembered), and 'which he confess'd to the coroner and his inquest', is Brinkley to be supposed to have had more regard for the truth of the matter than in any of the alternative three accounts which he had previously volunteered? The correspondent in the *Daily Advertiser* thought not. For all that it had been 'fully prov'd on the trial', it was, he insisted, in fact 'by the by . . . impossible'.

Thus, on the strength of contemporary reports of the court proceedings, it appeared equally impossible to determine in which of the three occupied parts of First Court James Ashton perished. There were (I concluded at this stage) just two places in which the precise location of his unhappy end might be certified: in the record of the court proceedings itself, and in the local newspaper, the *Cambridge Journal and Weekly Flying Post*. I therefore prevailed upon the kindness of two friends and pupils currently working in the Public Record Office and the British Library Newspaper Library respectively, John McCafferty and Gerald Montagu, to take a break from their legitimate business there and check these sources for me.

And what did they find? What they found in both places was the same thing. But it was not the answer to my question that they found. What they found was more intriguing still. What they found in both places was a gap. Although otherwise complete before March 1746 as well as after the September of that year, in both places the record of the six-month period between the death and the trial was missing.

'My boy, sometimes, you know, *no* evidence is more significant than *any* evidence', the late F.H. Hinsley once replied to a supervision pupil's innocent enquiry as to what evidence there was for the old master's most recently advanced and even more than usually imaginative proposition. And perhaps this, Hinsley's third dictum (or axiom), may assist us in the present case. May the explanation perhaps be that at some stage (presumably sooner after the events described here than later) a cover-up was mounted, a concerted Johnian cover-up to match that implied by the *Daily Advertiser* correspondent in his dismissal of Heberden's change of mind and Heberden's acceptance on oath of the chamber-pot defence? Possibly. (Certainly, laundering of the College record is not unknown in the College's history – even in its very recent history, though that is another story.)

But only possibly. The file remains open therefore. Whereas in the case of other notable College spooks (the shades of James Wood on O Second Court, for example),[10] or of the retaliatory Kitchen Clock some ten years ago,[11] we know where we are, the case of the bumps in the night is more akin to that of the properly attired ghost occasionally espied in the Old Library[12] or the various other phantasms from time to time encountered in F and G First Court.[13] Its origins are unidentified. A search amongst the tombstones across the road, on a day when for once what used to be All Saints Churchyard was not occupied by vendors of ethnic rugs and gimcrack mirrors proved inconclusive. Not only was there no broken tomb stone visible. There was not so much as a legible inscription to assist towards resolution of the question whether, supposing the noises in the night from K4 (or K3) to have had something to do with the Ashton case, being prompted perhaps by the building having been nudged by the scaffolding with which the east range was then clad, what I heard on those three occasions was the lawyer's boy dragging a body (rather than someone else the shifting a table, as at first I had assumed) or, alternatively, the anguished appeal of the wig-maker's son for vengeance and his cry to heaven for the eventual righting of an ancient and dreadful wrong.

Peter Linehan

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1 Cf. my *The Ladies of Zamora*, Manchester 1996.

2 As in the year 1746 the 9th of March was. The significance of the fact that it was also the fourth Sunday of Lent I have been unable to determine.

3 *Admissions*, cit., 117.9

4 Fellow 1731-52. Cf. DNB, 25. 359-60; E. Heberden, *William Heberden: physician of the Age of Reason*, London 1989.

5 *Admissions*, cit., 114.5

6 *DNB*, loc. cit.

7 *Admissions*, cit., 117.9.

8 '. . . (which by the by was impossible; for the deceas'd had three story high to go, besides his distance from the middle of the court to the stair-case, and the other not above twelve or fourteen yards before he got out of hearing into another court)': ibid, 548. For the situation of the 'boghouse', by the river, see A. C. Crook, *From the Foundation to Gilbert Scott. A history of the buildings of St John's College, Cambridge 1511 to 1885*, Cambridge 1980, 62 and Plate VI (Loggan's print of 1690).

9 'It appeared that the chamber-pot was found broken into several pieces, and bloody near the bedside, and that there was a stream of blood, which began to run beyond the place where the pieces of the pot lay, and so on to them, and *that from the place where the blood had begun to the side of the room there was a continual declivity*': *Admissions*, 548-9 (emphasis mine). In 2001, there is indeed a 'continual declivity' of the floor in both G5 and G6, in each case running downhill from the staircase sides of the room. By contrast, the floors of K First Court lie more nearly horizontal. (Given the particularity of the present investigation, the state of those in I, H and F is neither here nor there). While remaining willing to defer to those very senior Fellows indeed who have enjoyed the opportunity of observing the First Court floors moving this way or that over time, therefore, or to other competent authorities in such matters, on balance I am of opinion that the 'declivity' in 1746 ran in the direction that it runs now – and further, that the fact reported at the trial that 'the bow and handle of the coal-hole door-key [adjacent to Ashton's room] was very bloody' (*Admissions*, 549) cannot assist us in our enquiries, since the coal-hole on the top landing of staircase G, between G5 and G6, is no longer in *situ*.

10 Regularly sighted down the years, the ghost of James Wood (Master 1815-39 and major benefactor of the new chapel) appears seated on the staircase with his legs in a bale of straw, a reference to the only means of keeping warm affordable by the Lancashire weaver's son during his years of residence at O as an impecunious sizar.

11 Which on being shifted from the Kitchens to the Library made a horrible smell, as reportedly clocks regularly do when moved. The recommended cure, a dose of frankincense mixed with myrrh and inserted into the clockly entrails in small pinches, had the desired effect and immediately the smell stopped. So also of course did the clock, which is now back in the Kitchens, though a shadow of its former self.

12 *Testibus* Mr Malcolm Pratt, sometime Sub-Librarian, and a library cleaner now with God.

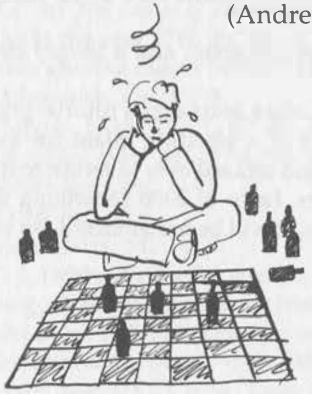
13 While fixing her face in F4 one day about eight years ago, a tutorial pupil of mine noticed in the mirror the reflection of a bleeding infant (or foetus) suspended in mid-air. She fled the room and refused ever to return to it. Her effects had to be removed by her friends. Early in 2000 something floaty caused similar distress in G5 (the staircase, it will be remembered, on which Ashton perhaps kept: n. 9, above).

NOTES FROM THE MARGINS OF AN UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE

The notes which follow were submitted for the record by Mike Andrews, and not with a view to publication. Readers will be pleased to hear that the Editorial Committee persuaded him to change his mind . . .

Lady Margaret Boat Club, undistinguished cox in my first year. During the Bumps I succeeded in steering a dud eight into a blackberry bush while trying to 'wash off' a boat which was easily going to bump us.

I was considerably more successful sailing for the College – winning the inter-College 'Cuppers' Cup in, I think, 1959, which has also been won by my father in the 1920s. This was thanks to drifting round the very cramped river at St Ives in a Firefly (a racing dinghy, then considered high-tech, of moulded diagonal ply with an aluminium mast). I had light nylon 'tell-tales' on the shrouds, which gave me a better idea of the light breeze than my competitors had.


a game of chess played with miniature bottles

I also have a vivid memory of the only time I sailed for the University, presumably with the Cambridge Cruising Club team. I had given an appallingly alcoholic party the night before, during which I was stupid enough to challenge a friend from Christ's (Andrew Bacon) to a game of chess played with miniature bottles. The only ones I could buy were whisky and cherry brandy. I lost the toss and had to drink the cherry brandy each time I took a piece. I seem to remember winning before I passed out. Somebody collected me the following day and drove me in the open back of a vintage 1920s Humber to an East Coast estuary. I wanted to die and may have been lucky that I did not. I froze and nursed a monumental hangover. To everybody's astonishment, including mine, I then won the race. But I must have appeared to be too much of a reprobate, because I was never asked to sail for the University again, despite also having won the Cuppers. Not surprisingly, I don't remember who we were sailing against or even where it was!

Extra-curricular

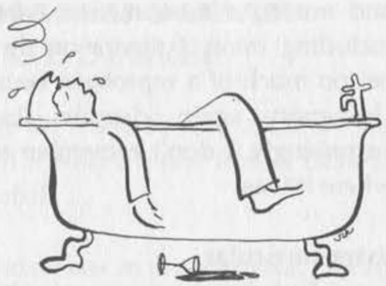
In my first year my rooms were in D6 Third Court. The bedroom had ill-fitting iron windows on three sides and no form of heating. The wind off the fens froze the glass of water at my bedside at night. My first purchase at Cambridge was a hot-water bottle and I slept in socks, a sweater, and a woolly hat. The nearest tap was two floors down and the nearest washbasin across the court in a basement. After that my second year in G6 New Court seemed positively luxurious, although with no central heating and still no heating in the bedroom, it had a basin with taps. I no longer had to cross the Bridge of Sighs to have a bath in the bathhouse behind New Court. I shared with an Indian, Kamal Mangaldas, with whom I remained good friends.

In my first year I took photographs for the weekly student newspaper *Varsity*. This led to my contributing photos to national newspapers from Cambridge; these I would put on a steam train for collection by a motorbike from Fleet Street. My efforts were pretty awful but I got paid. To my chagrin I missed the photo scoop of the decade when night climbers put an Austin Seven car on the roof of the Senate House.

In my first year I was 'gated' after accidentally having a woman in my rooms after 10pm. This meant I had to be back in College before the gates were shut at 10pm for a month. In my second year, when I spent long night hours in the darkroom developing photos at the Varsity office, I frequently had to climb over the North Court gates to get back into College after midnight when the gates were locked.

After another party above my studio in Park Street, where in some mysterious fashion I acquired a five-piece Hungarian band up from

London, I found Anthony Haden Guest asleep in my bath the following morning. Someone told me he later became the model for the less than sober English journalist in *Bonfire of the Vanities.*

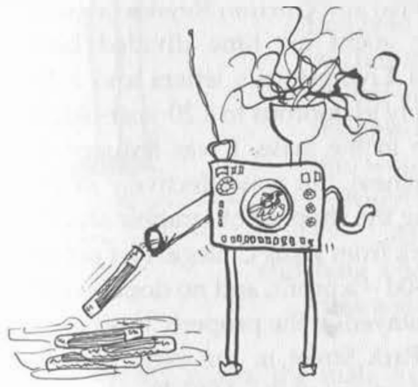


Anthony Haden Guest asleep in my bath

For my first long vac. I managed to get the offer of a job in America in a small engineering design company in West Concord, Massachusetts. The only way I could get a work permit was to take out full immigration papers. This meant I had to sign a document saying that it was not my intention to overthrow the President of the USA, to raise my right hand and swear my allegiance, and to have a syphilis test and lung x-ray. I also had to list all the organisations or clubs I belonged to. Being considered to be medically and morally acceptable, I boarded a DC6 four-engined propeller-driven aircraft for Idlewild, New York. This was one of the first chartered passenger plane trips ever organised – they even repainted the side of the plane with a Cambridge-blue stripe and the name, something like the Cambridge Arts Club, of the organisers of the trip. We had to refuel in Shannon and Gander, Newfoundland, on the way.

At that time I used to take £2 a week out of my account to pay for the week's day to day expenses – I used to eat dinner in Hall which went on the College bill, as did my Buttery bill. The plane tickets cost £50-0-0. The only reason I could even think of going was that I had been offered, to the incredulity of my parents, the princely wage of $90.00 a week. At that time a dollar was worth about seven shillings. The wage, of about £30, was four times the amount I could have earned in a job in the UK. I borrowed the fare from my family and took £40 out of my post office savings book – saved up from childhood birthday presents.

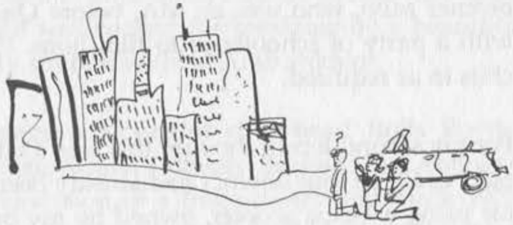
I worked for six weeks in the West Concord machine shop on the prototype of the Xerox machine, the automatic pin-spotting machine for bowling alleys, and a machine that packed spaghetti. Thus, unknowingly, I participated in the beginnings of the information and automation revolutions. The partner of the engineering firm, Tom Flint, who had kindly given me the hospitality of his house as well as employing me, remained a firm friend for the rest of his life. I thought of them as my American family. I also worked briefly in the office of the Harvard *Crimson* student newspaper – an interesting contrast to *Varsity*.



a machine for packing spaghetti

I then got a ride out to the West Coast helping to drive an old Oldsmobile saloon. We travelled to Chicago and then along the famous Route 66. On the way through Texas the differential disintegrated and we were left with neither viable transport nor cash. My companions swapped the car for an even older Chevrolet. As we crossed the desert at night I wound up the window and it fell out onto the sand. The lid of the 'trunk' was tied down with string. When we arrived at the house of the owners of the Oldsmobile, in Canyon Drive, one of the poshest streets in Beverly Hills our 'jalopy' looked distinctly out of place. Fortunately for us, it was treated with amusement.

Subsequently I hitchhiked from Los Angeles to Vancouver, took the Canadian Pacific Railroad to Calgary, and then hitched to Winnipeg, Chicago, and down to Washington, and finally back to New York. I was given a lift by some



I knelt with them to pray before I entered the wicked city

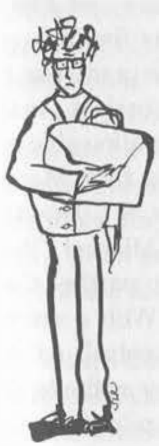
Christian missionaries into Chicago, and they insisted that I knelt down with them to pray by the side of the road before I entered the wicked city. I thought it was worth the lift. A highlight of the trip was seeing West Side Story, which had just opened on Broadway. I was able to repay my parents with what was left of my six-week earnings.

In my second year at John's I became an unofficial partner in a photographic business in a shop opposite the ADC Theatre called *How & Key*, with Anthony Howarth (Caths) and Quentin Keynes (a grandson of Maynard Keynes). The latter spent his time divided between exploring Africa, collecting David Livingstone's letters and a flat in New York – which seemed incredibly glamorous to a 20-year-old. Being under 21 and too young to share in the lease, I was reduced to the ampersand in the name of the business, but was effectively in charge. We rented the tiny house, including the shop, photographic studio and four rooms, for three pounds a week from Jesus College. I let out rooms for two pounds a week and £1-10s-0d – a profit, and no doubt would be a lot richer than I am now if I had stayed in the property business. (The shop was demolished to widen Park Street in the early 60s.) I also photographed undergraduate productions at the ADC Theatre – I have still got the negatives of such luminaries as John Barton and Ian McKellan, to whom I sold prints.

As an undergraduate I was required to live in licensed lodgings – ie with an approved landlady or with a graduate of the University *in loco parentis*. They had to sign weekly 'gate chits' which said that I had been in by midnight every night, and had to be presented weekly at the Porters' Lodge. Now I wanted to live rent-free over my studio and shop. The first term of my final year I got all the gate chits signed by Quentin's brother Milo, who was an MA, before Quentin disappeared to Africa with a party of schoolboys to film lions. I then filled and handed the chits in as required.

For my second term I thought this was a bit dangerous – if I was found out I could be sent down. I had already been hauled up before the Dean for using a Vespa scooter, owned by my brother, kept in North Court

against College rules. So I moved, in theory, or as far as the College was concerned, to 9 Adams Road. This was the celebrated, not to say notorious, menage run by the redoubtable Dr Roughton, who visited her patients in a boiler suit driving a jeep. Her husband, a Professor specialising in colloid chemistry, had, I believe, invented the glues that held the famous Mosquito light bomber aircraft together during the war. He was the living image of the absent-minded boffin, a straggle-haired recluse in a grubby cardigan who would sidle through the kitchen, where everybody gathered by the warmth of the Aga, averting his eyes in shyness and clutching a battered leather briefcase to his chest like a shield. Otherwise we never saw him.



the image of the absent-minded boffin

In a university where the male to female ratio was ten to one, this household had the huge advantage of being full of female foreign English language students who shared the unenviable task of communicating with a shy gawky lad who had been almost totally without female company, except for his mother, since birth. The house was freezing cold except for the kitchen, where bread was kneaded on the huge wooden table every night. Stores were bought by the sack or barrel and milk came frothing and warm straight from the vet-school cows. We were supposed to take it in turns to cook. My first meal there I found to be almost completely inedible. Even the bread had been made with sour yeast and tasted awful. After that I viewed dinner time with great suspicion, but porridge was cooked for breakfast by a beautiful Swedish blonde, alas already smitten with an Arab student.

The Roughtons had a vintage red-radiator drop-head Rolls Royce, standing unused in the garage, which I deeply desired. But Anthony Howarth came into part possession of a huge cream and black 1927 Phantom 1. He was a year ahead of me, and went off for a year to drive a couple of Land Rovers round Africa, photographing and filming. I inherited the use of his Rolls. I remember to this day the look on the Motor Proctor's face and the titters of the other undergraduates in the queue for the undergraduate car license, when he barked "make of vehicle", and I said "Rolls Royce". You had to have an allowable reason to possess a car. I had two, sailing at St Ives and flying from Marshall's Airport with the University Air Squadron. My tutor, R L Howland, I confess, had already given me the sobriquet of Michael 'Wangle' Andrews. The Rolls was an excellent transport for parties. On one occasion I got twenty-three people into and onto it. With a seven-litre engine, it only drove eight miles on a gallon of petrol, so it was convenient to be able to have a whip-round, especially as the tank held twenty gallons. By my last year I had also got a private pilot's license and was able to take girlfriends up for flights in an Auster. These expensive habits were mostly paid for by selling photos.

It was fairly predictable that I only scraped a Third in my Mechanical Sciences finals.

In my last year 1959-60 I had been taken on as a prospective member of The Cambridge Trans-American Expedition, set up by two vets, Martin Hugh Jones (Caths) and Andrew Bacon (Jesus) to carry out an epidemiological study of animal husbandry from Cape Horn to Alaska. My role was to be co-mechanic and photographer. I also had to raise support for the trip, by ship to Buenos Aires, and then by Land Rover. I managed to persuade Sir David Attenborough, then a glamorous young presenter/producer to give me film stock, a decision which led to my subsequent career – but that is the beginning of another story which began in the Tilbury docks in September 1960, and ended with Martin discovering the aerosol mode of transmission of foot and mouth disease.

During the preparations, I stayed on in Cambridge. The Pye radio company then had a factory in the city and I somehow got the job of designing the press launch of a new family of coloured televisions. They were coloured in the sense that the boxes were in colour to match the Festival of Britain style that was being adopted in living rooms across the nation. The screens were still black and white. I had to provide a backdrop to fit in with the camp décor of the Oliver Messel room in the Dorchester Hotel in Park Lane. The launch went off OK. I was rewarded with a splendid meal and room on expenses, but of far more consequence for me was that I subsequently lost my virginity in the bed of the sales promotion man's attractive secretary – not long before my 21st birthday. The next day, as it happened, I took my parents up for the first time in an aeroplane as pilot; my mind was not on that job and I had to make a second landing approach!

On my return from South America in 1962 I succeeded in selling to the BBC a film which I had shot largely in Tierra del Fuego from the back of a horse, for their series called Adventure. I sold another documentary to TWW, the Welsh ITV company, about the Welsh colony in Trelew, Argentina. I was 23. I joined forces with Anthony Howarth and Colin Bell in an agency in Fleet Street, bringing my photographs from South America, where they launched an ill-fated show-biz magazine called Scene. We also did the PR for *The Establishment*, the club set up by Peter Cook and others of the *Beyond the Fringe* satire team in Greek Street. I photographed for the magazine and the club, including great entertainers like Frankie Howard and Lenny Bruce.

After two and a half years I went my own way into the up and coming profession of photo-journalism, as a freelance, mostly working for London publications abroad. I gradually learned what made a story and improved my writing. Many of my commissions came from the new web-offset colour supplements for the Observer and Daily Telegraph. Some of my travels were challenging and fascinating. I went to the interior of Brazil on a thousand-mile journey by water with the 'explorer' Sebastian Snow, during which I panned and bartered (for Polaroid photos) enough gold for two wedding rings, delivered a baby and caught malaria.

Becoming frustrated with having so little control over how my work was used, and believing, wrongly, that electronics and television were going to triumph over print and paper, I then applied to work in the Documentary Department of BBC Television, where I got a job, for a considerable drop in income, as a researcher for Richard Cawston, Head of Documentaries. Within three months I was with the Horizon science documentary series on BBC2 where my career began to take off rapidly under the guidance of the editor, Peter Goodchild.

Mike Andrews (BA 1960, MA 1964)

Mike Andrews subsequently won numerous awards for his TV documentaries, including 'The Flight of the Condor'. Recently he worked as a volunteer, training Ethiopian street children to make videos on key social issues, as well as developing storylines for the Millennium Dome and, currently, the Eden Project.

(Cartoons by Sophie Lunn-Rockliffe (Matric. 1998))

AN EARLY COLLEGE DEBATING SOCIETY

The interesting minutes that follow form the earliest record of a debating society at St John's. They are to be found in the commonplace book of George Downing Whittington, now St John's College MS 0.73. Purchased by the College in 1947, the notebook contains a mixture of witticisms, epigrams, signatures, speeches, and verse parodies, many composed by Whittington and his contemporaries at Eton during the 1790s.

The Debating Society concerned itself with a range of weighty and not so weighty questions. The record of debate is thin, but at times tantalising: what, for example, were the telling arguments which first dissuaded, then re-persuaded John Tower that drama tended to the corruption of morals? So far as we can tell the Society survived for little more than a month during the Easter Term, its brief life terminated by that ancient nemesis of College Societies, the onset of examinations. It was also very small, indeed, decidedly select. Nevertheless, the members were without question an interesting bunch. How many other College Societies – in any period – could boast two future prime ministers, let alone the future owner of vast tracts in the Hebrides, and a prominent West Indian planter?

George Whittington achieved a good deal in his short life. He was born in 1781, the eldest son of Jacob John Downing Whittington, of Theberton Hall, Saxmundham, and Harriet, daughter of the Reverend William Smythies, Vicar of St Peter's, Colchester. Leaving Eton, Whittington was admitted a Fellow Commoner at St John's on 17 April 1799, coming up on 20 October that year, two days after his admission to Lincoln's Inn. Despite an aversion to mathematics he did well at Cambridge, winning the Hulsean Prize in 1804 for a still very readable essay on The external evidences of Christianity, and graduating LLB in 1805. He was ordained deacon in the Diocese of Norwich on 23 September 1804, and priest at Winchester on 10 March 1805. At the threshold of a promising career, however, Whittington died of peritonitis at his lodgings in Trumpington Street on 24 July 1807, and was buried at St Michael's Church five days later. His brother Henry Downing also matriculated at St John's in 1809, while another brother, William, was admitted to Pembroke College in 1802.

Mark Nicholls

Debating Society [SJC 0.73, fos 20r-23r]

Instituted in May 1801. St John's

Lords Haddo[1] and Grantham[2] – Messrs Ryder[3] Robinson[4] Foster[5] Gordon[6] Grant[7] Tower[8] and Whittington
At the first meeting (when I was absent) Lord Grantham was president and after having opened and explained the intentions and advantages of the institution proposed a question –

'Whether Botany according to sexual system of Linnaeus was a proper study for females?'

Mr Robinson contended that it was improper, but was in the end convinced by the arguments of Mr Ryder and Lord Haddo.

Sunday May 10 Gordon's Room. Lord Haddo pres. Resigned the chair to Mr Gordon –

'Whether dramatic exhibitions from the earliest period to the present time had tended to the increase or decrease of morality?' –

Mr Robinson and Lord Grantham contended that they had injured morality. Whittington, Lord Haddo and Ryder opposed – Grant professed himself convinced by W.'s arguments. So did Tower but was reconvinced. Division 4 to 3 in favour of Dram.

Thursday May 14 – Lord Grantham left Cambridge.

Sunday 17 May. Ryder's Room

Ryder Pres. proposed –

Whether agriculture or commerce had been most useful to Mankind?

Whittington, Foster, Ryder and Grant supported commerce – Haddo and Robinson agriculture, but the subject was so ill defined that tho much good argument was urged – it was some times whether it were best for a particular nation etc. etc.
Div. 5 to 3 in favour of commerce.

Sunday May 24, Robinson's Room

Whittington proposed 'Whether we are to consider Monastic institutions in the Dark Ages as an advantage or disadvantage to the cause of Learning? – the Dark Ages to be defined from the dest. of Rome to dest. of Constantinople. Ryder and Whittington supported the advantage of monastries [sic] but were opposed by Robinson, Haddo and Foster –
Div. 5 to 3 against monastries.

Tuesday the 26. Whittington's Rooms.

The club met and supped here tonight on account of Lord Grantham's passing thro Camb. and who wished to be present at another debate. Robinson proposed – whether climate has any influence on the manners of nations. The debate which lasted till 1/2 past one was opened by Mr Robinson who was answered [by] Lord Haddo who supported the idea that laws and governments alone formed the manners of a people. Whittington and Foster spoke several times in opposition to each other, the former declaring his decided opinion that climate had a very considerable and in some instances an irremediable effect – in which he was supported by Mr Ryder and Lord Grantham at the conclusion of the debate – votes for the inf. of climate – 6 ag. 2.

Monday June 1. Foster's Rooms

The debate was deferred on account of Mr Ryders going to be ordained on the Sunday at Buckden. Mr Foster proposed, which of the Epic poets (priority etc. being out of the question) are we to consider as having produced the best poem to interest the feelings and excite the passions of the reader. Lord Haddo opened with a very able survey of all the epic writers ancient and modern, and sat down without declaring his opinion concerning the superiority of any one. Messrs Foster and

Whittington supported Milton – Messrs Robinson and Ryder Homer and Lord Haddo Virgil, but the principal arguments being directed against the machinery of the Pagan epics Lord H to simplify the question joined his voice to those who supported Homer –
Votes for Milton 4. for Homer 3

The debate was given up on Sunday the 7th on account of the examinations.

Footnotes

1 George Gordon, later Hamilton-Gordon, from 1801 fourth earl of Aberdeen (1784-1860), Prime Minister 1852-5

2 Thomas Philip Robinson, third Baron Grantham (1781-1859). Admitted St John's May 1798, MA 1801

3 The Hon Henry Ryder (1777-1836), youngest son of Nathaniel Ryder, Lord Harrowby. Admitted St John's May 1795, MA 1798, DD 1813

4 The Hon Frederick John Robinson (1782-1859), second son of Thomas, second Baron Grantham. Subsequently Viscount Goderich and Earl of Ripon. Prime Minister 1827-8. Admitted St John's June 1799, MA 1802

5 John Foster (1780-1863), Rector of Wickersley, Yorkshire, from 1804 to his death. Admitted St John's May 1797, BA 1801, MA 1804, Fellow 1802-10

6 Presumably John Gordon (d. 1858). Later MP for Weymouth and Melcombe Regis, and the owner of extensive estates in the Hebrides. Admitted St John's November 1797, BA 1808

7 Alexander Cray Grant (1782-1854), later Sir Alexander Grant Bt, a planter in the West Indies and MP for Cambridge 1840-3

8 Charles Tower (1782-1825), subsequently Headmaster of Brentwood Grammar School

Note on the Records of College Debating Societies in the College Archives

The Librarian's article illustrates how tenuous can be the survival of evidence about early College societies, many of which mushroomed according to the motivations and interests of different groups of students for very short periods of time. Despite this, some activities, for example boating, have since the beginning of the nineteenth century thrown up a stream of clubs and associations, differing in structure and longevity but devoted to the same pursuits.

Debating was one of these. The early nineteenth century saw the growth of the Union Societies of Oxford and Cambridge, and the University debates prepared at least some of the then youthful governing class for a future parliamentary role. The Colleges also developed associations for debating a variety of concerns. The archives of St John's at present contain records of four such clubs: the St John's and Trinity College ODS Debating Society (records 1849-1851); the St John's College Debating Society (records 1870-1922); the St John's College Skeletons Debating and Smoking Club (records 1892-1897); the St John's College Apostles Debating Society (records 1934-1937).

What were the nature of the debates of each of these, and what do they tell us about the social, political and other concerns of undergraduates?

By far the largest corpus of records has been left by the St John's College Debating Society. The first minute book 1870-72, which begins 3 March 1870 but had a predecessor, is a formal record of topics debated, speakers' names, and votes recorded: there is no detail of discussion. Motions proposed included disestablishment of the Church of England (8 to 3 against); opening the liberal professions to women (12 to 3 against). On 25 March the Society debated whether 'the present influence of the drama is pernicious'. This was defeated by a higher margin (7 to 4) in 1870 than in 1801, when a similar topic was debated by the Club recorded in the Whittington manuscript. On the other hand, a motion to support the opening of the British Museum and similar institutions on Sundays on 24 November was narrowly defeated by one vote. The membership and conduct of the Society is also discoverable through the minutes of business meetings, copies of rules and other administrative papers.

The ODS was a society which, in the words of one former member, 'brought the undergraduates of Trinity and St John's into pleasant social intercourse'. The meaning of the 'O' was lost as early as 1904, when it was put to a number of old members of the two Colleges for explanation. The form of the records of debates are the same as that of the St John's College Society, and cover as wide a social field. Monasteries were debated here in 1849 as by the society in the

Whittington MS, but with a more subtle emphasis: an original motion 'that the suppression of the monasteries by Henry 8th was sacrilege' was carried by 5 to 3; but an amendment 'that the secularization of the revenues of the monasteries by Henry 8th was sacrilege' was lost. Apparently the members gathered held that while the monastic life was holy, the monastic revenues were not, or were not a fit subject for debate! An amendment on dramatic issues, that 'theatrical representations, conducted under proper principles, are beneficial' was similarly lost, and the original motion 'that theatrical representations are prejudicial in their effects' was carried. Capital punishment was retained by 6 to 2, while the proposition that the game laws as they stood in 1850 were not oppressive and should not be repealed divided the house equally.

The Skeletons' Club, definitely inaugurated on 11 November 1892, left a book recording minutes until 1897, and petering out with a list of addresses in 1904. It was of an altogether lighter character. Of the few moderately serious reports one example, 23 November 1892, may suffice: 'That the Rugby game of football is in every way superior to the Association game'. Details of the debate are given: 'Mr. Allan [Walter Beattie Allan, adm. 1892] then addressed the club. He divided his remarks on the superiority of Rugger into two parts, its intellectual superiority and its physical superiority . . . Mr. Hudson [Charles Edward Hudson, adm. 1892] criticized Mr. Allan's remarks, and contended that he had no eye for beauty'. Individual Skeletons, however, did throw up the occasional weightier offering: an undated paper by Allan on the development of Trade Unions exists among their few miscellaneous papers. The Skeletons kept in contact and as late as 1944 deliberated by correspondence whether their minutes should be deposited in the College Library. These fairly short-lived societies were often an expression of personal links as much as institutional affiliation.

The Apostles Debating Society, formed by twelve members whose names are inscribed at the beginning of the surviving minute book, began its meetings on 13 November 1934. The last entry in the unfinished book records a meeting on 25 February 1937.

Its pages contain long and detailed descriptions of debates, some of an iconoclastic flavour associated with the period. In the changing world commemorated in Betjeman's poem on the death of George V, with its lines about the blue eyes closing which beheld the world from a horse, and a young man landing, hatless, from the air, Mr Miall [Rowland Leonard Miall, adm. 1933, President of the Union and Editor of the *Cambridge Review* in 1936] proposed 'That this house would not attend the Royal Funeral'. That meeting, on 14 February 1936, advanced views ranging from the ludicrous – George V had died at Bognor in 1928, and the newly-interred monarch was his double, the exiled Tsar Nicholas – to the outrageous: the funeral of two Nazi policemen with a three mile cortege was far more worth seeing than the King's. In November the society debated whether it would welcome the establishment of state brothels, and, on a tamer but still moral note on 11 February 1937, whether it would welcome the final success of the Oxford Group, a movement founded by Frank Buchman in 1921 and subsequently known as Moral Re-Armament.

All these records provide interesting insights into the problems which preoccupied Johnian students at different times, and a few of them actually show them in discussion. Comparison with the records of other Colleges might give us an interesting cross-section of Cambridge student opinion. It is a creditable practice for modern College societies to retain their records systematically, and imitate the action of the Skeletons in depositing those kept by former secretaries in the safe-keeping of the College Achives.

Malcolm Underwood
Archivist

Postscript

It would be worth mentioning that College debating had a brief resurgence at the start of this millennium. Jo Eastwood and Claire Brooksby started another St John's College Debating Society with an inaugural hard-fought verbal duel on whether it would be better to be born a woman or a man. The debates continued on a similar note with discussions on the promiscuity of Little Red Riding Hood and the validity of the North-South divide. Sadly, it seems that these issues were not enough to excite interest and, like its predecessors, the Society is no more. However, just as in the past, I am sure that the fine art of debating will not be lost forever.

Navin Sivanandam (Matric. 1999)

NOTE ON THE APPLEYARDS AT ST JOHN'S

In the article 'A Void in Second Court' in last year's *Eagle* it was stated (p.20) that it had not been possible to trace the Appleyards, described as a Norwich family, in the College Archives. It has now been discovered, however, that there were three members called Appleyard in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, who belonged to a family of that name from Burstwick, Yorkshire. Christopher (admitted 1674) and Matthew (admitted 1677) were Fellow-Commoners of the College, having the right to dine at the Fellows' Table, and Matthew (admitted 1701) was a 'pensioner', the old name for an undergraduate not maintained from College sources, but paying all his own fees and board. The two Fellow-Commoners were sons of Sir Matthew, knighted in 1645, MP for Hedon Yorks, 1661, who had attended Trinity College in 1626, and obtained a BA in 1630. The pensioner was son of Matthew, esquire, also of Burstwick. None of the three are recorded as having taken degrees. There is no clue in the records to tie the residence of the Appleyards specifically to room K7, but the arms of the Appleyards of Yorkshire were similar to those of the Appleyards of Norfolk, having a chevron placed between three owls, as on the cupboard door in K7. As was customary, both the Fellow-Commoners donated pieces of plate to the College, but only one now survives among the College silver. It is a tankard engraved: 'Ex dono Christophori Appleyard Armigeri de Burstwick apud Holderness in Comitatu Eboracensi, Coll. John. Cant.' (The gift of Christopher Appleyard, Esquire, of Burstwick in Holderness in the county of Yorkshire, St John's College Cambridge.)

Malcolm Underwood
Archivist

COMMEMORATION OF BENEFACTORS

30 April 2002

Standing on the Shoulders of Giants: Commemorating the Past

It is impossible to take part in a service such as this without feeling the weight of the past. As a long list of benefactors is read out, we find ourselves wondering who these people were, and what moved them to support this College. Some are names that need no introduction – the Lady Margaret Beaufort, mother of Henry VII, and John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester. Thomas Baker, who we learn was an 'ejected Fellow' and 'historian of the College', might cause some puzzlement, although his gift of books to the College Library and his history of the origins of the College are significant in their own right. But who was John Buck, the cutler of London, who contributed to the College's endowment?

To hear this long list of names read is to create a mental picture of drapers and schoolmasters, Dukes and Earls, Bishops and Archdeacons, barristers and physicians, who have all in some way contributed to this College, and whose memorial lies to hand. St Paul's Cathedral, London, is one of the greatest works of the architect Sir Christopher Wren. There is no memorial to Wren in that Cathedral – just an inscription over its north door: 'If you are looking for a memorial, look around you'. Perhaps the same might be said of many of these names. They will be remembered for what we see around us. We have all benefited in some way from their legacy. My particular debt is to Thomas Naden, who founded a studentship in divinity in the late eighteenth century, which allowed me to begin a career of theological research and writing during the years 1978-1980. Whether we benefit from the buildings, facilities, endowments or scholarships of this College, we are relying on the generosity of the past.

But we have also benefited from the past in another way – a way I propose to illustrate from the history of this College. In January 1604, King James I convened the Hampton Court Conference, to settle certain awkwardnesses which had developed at the beginning of his reign. The Conference achieved little in the way of consensus, apart from buying time for the new King to achieve some semblance of stability. Yet it had one positive outcome – the decision to create a new English translation of the Bible. Roughly fifty scholars were assembled in teams at Cambridge, Oxford and Westminster to begin this mammoth task, which was completed only in 1611 with the publication of what we now know as the Authorized Version of the Bible, widely cited – along with the works of Shakespeare – as one of the most significant influences on the shaping of the English language.

This College played no small part as a midwife to this new translation. We possess a charming contemporary account of how one John Boys (sometimes 'Bois'), rector of the nearby parish of Boxworth, spent each Sunday in his parish, before rushing back to John's with almost indecent haste to get on with the work of translation, apparently enjoying the munificent hospitality of this College as much as the translation process itself.

> When it pleased God to move King James to that excellent work, the translation of the Bible; when the translators were to be chosen for Cambridge, he was sent for thither by those therein employed, and was chosen one . . . . All the time he was about his own part, his commons were given him at St John's; where he abode all the week until Saturday night; then went home to discharge his cure, returning thence on Monday morning.

As Boys' translation work took more than four years, it is not difficult to see how significantly the College's hospitality contributed to this important project.

But my point is not merely that this College was midwife to one of the classics of English literature and arguably the most important and influential English religious writing ever to have been produced. It is that the philosophy of Boys and his fifty-odd colleagues has something to say to us concerning the benefaction of the past as *wisdom*, and not simply financial endowment. Let me explain.

The translators appointed by King James did not begin to translate with blank sheets of paper in front of them. They stood in a long line of translators, and were conscious that their task would be influenced considerably – perhaps more than they cared to admit – by the English translations already in circulation. The set of rules, drawn up by Richard Bancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, by which their translation would be governed, specifically directed them to base themselves on earlier English translations, such as the 1526 translation of William Tyndale, and the Geneva Bible of 1560.

Lying behind this is an attitude to wisdom which has largely been lost in the modern period. Writers of the Renaissance were conscious of standing within a stream of culture and intellectual achievement, from which they benefited and to which they were called to contribute. The wisdom of the past was to be appropriated in the present. One of the images most frequently used to illustrate this understanding of the human cultural endeavor was that of 'standing on the shoulders of giants.' The image is set out particularly clearly in the twelfth-century writer John of Salisbury, who once commented:

> We are like dwarves sitting on the shoulders of giants. We see more, and things that are more distant, than they did, not because our sight is superior or because we are taller than they, but because they raise us up, and by their great stature add to ours.

The 'Englishing' of the Bible was thus understood to be a corporate effort, in which the achievements of earlier generations could be valued and used by their successors. As the preface 'The Translators to the Reader' – a somewhat flowery piece of prose which is so long that it is invariably omitted from modern printings of the Authorized Version – sets out this point:

> Truly (good Christian Reader) we never thought from the beginning, that we should need to make a new Translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one . . . but to make a good one better.

King James' translators saw themselves as standing on the shoulders of giants, those who had translated before them and blazed a trail in which they were proud to follow. Certainly alterations had to be made – but the translators believed that their predecessors would have approved of those alterations, seeing them as part of the ascent into wisdom which resulted from passing the quest for truth from one generation to another.

The Authorized Version of the Bible is therefore not to be dismissed as a mere tinkering with earlier versions – the verdict of our modern era, in which originality and novelty often seem to be prized above all other virtues. This Bible is an outstanding example and embodiment of the ideals of its own period, by which it must be judged. It is to be seen in the light of the Renaissance approach to human wisdom, in which one generation is nourished and sustained by the intellectual achievements of its predecessors. Each era draws on the wisdom of the past, and builds upon it, before handing a greater wisdom on to its successors. The Authorized Version can be seen as one of the most outstanding representatives of this corporate approach to cultural advance and the enterprise of gaining wisdom.

But is this not an attitude to wisdom which we can share? To see ourselves as building upon the legacy of the past, continuing the work of those who have travelled this road before us, and shared our passion for truth and learning? In Christian theology – the field in which I work – the most interesting and creative work is being done by those who see themselves as consciously and purposefully engaging with the legacy of the past, at one and the same time valuing those who have gone before us, while seeking to exceed them in excellence, believing that this is what they would have wanted us to do. To commemorate benefactors is not merely to study the College's balance sheets and ledgers; it is to celebrate and continue the community of learning which they sought to create and encourage by their munificence. It is to see their academic careers and concerns as building stones, upon which we may in turn build in our own generation.

So we remember and recall our benefactors, and the difference that they have made to this College, and all who call themselves Johnians. Yet for the founders of this College – and the hospital which preceded it, the outlines of whose original chapel can still be seen – the act of remembering benefactors was a sign, a symbol of something still greater. It is no accident that, before the Reformation, such acts of remembrance would have been set within the context of a mass – the central service of the catholic church, recalling the benefits which Christ is understood to have brought his people. After the Reformation, the same basic ideas were now expressed in the 'General Thanksgiving', which sounds the double theme of identifying and celebrating the benefits we have received from the past – in this case, supremely from the death of Christ. The prayer (which is an integral part of the College's 'Commemoration of Benefactors') invites the congregation to pray as follows:

> We bless thee for our creation, preservation,
> and all the blessings of this life;
> but above all for thine inestimable love
> in the redemption of the world
> by our Lord Jesus Christ,
> for the means of grace and for the hope of glory.

It is an old prayer, less familiar than it deserves to be. But its themes resound today. It reminds us that the present has not created or endowed itself; it has benefited – more than that, it has *been shaped* – by the actions, visions and giving of past generations.

The future has always depended upon the past, whether academically or spiritually. We are always surrounded by a 'great cloud of witnesses' (Hebrews 12.1) who have run this race before us, and inspire, encourage and challenge us today. The challenge of the past to the present is to equal, if not exceed, the heritage they have left us, and which we must pass on to those who will come after us.

Alister McGrath

Alister McGrath is Professor of Historical Theology at Oxford University, and is a former Naden Student of Divinity at this College.

THE ORGAN STUDENTS OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE, 1946 TO DATE

If one's aim in life is to become a cathedral organist, there is no better training than by way of an organ scholarship (or organ studentship, as it is still perversely described in one of the major Cambridge Colleges). It is by being involved daily with choir rehearsals, by coming to grips with a wide repertoire of choral pieces (the St John's repertoire currently consists of over 1,500 items, and new works continue to be added regularly), and by observing and listening to other choirmasters that one, almost unconsciously, learns the job. It is impossible to 'teach' choir training and the *sine qua non* is the particular type of personality that one happens to be born with or not. It is all-important to be able to imagine and aim for the perfect performance, perfect in technique and with an interpretation which moves the listener by its illumination of the inner meaning of the text.

The ability to play the organ to the highest standard is, of course, a prime requisite, but it is a paradox that brilliant young organists are thick on the ground, whereas choir trainers of equal quality are much harder to come by, largely, I suppose, because of a lack of opportunity in their schools to develop those particular skills.

Over the years there have been many assistant organists at St John's, but it was not until 1946 that the College Council decided formally to establish the position of Organ Student. At the Council meeting on 29 November 1946, 'the draft regulations for an Organ Studentship prepared by the Committee appointed on 18 October 1946 were amended and approved', and at the Council meeting on 24 January 1947 it was 'agreed to elect J C Brown Organ Student with tenure during the Lent and Easter terms 1947. He will cease to hold a Choral Studentship.'

The list of holders of the Organ Studentship to date is as follows:

1. *James Brown* (Lent and Easter Terms 1947). He became University Lecturer in Music at the University of Leeds, later becoming Senior Lecturer. He was also Organist to the University.

2. *George Guest* (1947-1951). He was a Chorister at Bangor Cathedral, Wales, and later at Chester Cathedral, where he subsequently became Sub-Organist. At the end of his period as Organ Student he was offered, and accepted, the position of Organist (and Choirmaster) of the College on the retirement of Robin Orr. He remained as Organist until 1991. He served in the RAF from 1942 to 1946.

3. *James Bennett* (1951). It was unfortunate that Bennett failed to reach the standard required by the College in his Latin, in spite of being sent for special coaching in that subject by Dean Bezzant. He was obliged to leave the College after only two days as Organ Student.

4. *David Lumsden* (1951-1953). In our extremity we turned to Selwyn College for help, and were indeed fortunate to have the services of David (now Sir David) Lumsden. He subsequently became Organist of St Mary's Church, Nottingham, Southwell Minster and New College, Oxford. He was later appointed Principal of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music before moving to London as Principal of the Royal Academy of Music. David Lumsden held the title of Assistant Organist at St John's.

5. *Alan Hemmings* (1953-1956). A somewhat introverted character, he taught for a while at Clifton College, but has since lapsed into a degree of obscurity and has not kept in touch with the College.

6. *Peter White* (1956-1960). He became Assistant Organist at Chester Cathedral on leaving St John's, later becoming Choirmaster of the Royal School of Church Music. He subsequently became Director of Music at Merchant Taylors School, before his appointment as Organist of Leicester Cathedral, where he stayed until his retirement.

7. *Brian Runnett* (1960-1963). Although he was not able to offer Latin to the College he was judged to be eligible on the strength of a MusB degree at Durham University. On leaving St John's he was quickly appointed Lecturer in Music at Manchester University, before accepting an appointment as Organist of Norwich Cathedral. He

was tragically killed in a car accident near Lichfield in the summer of 1970, on returning from giving an organ recital at Westminster Abbey.

8. *Jonathan Bielby* (1963-1967). He served for a time as Assistant Organist at Manchester Cathedral, before being appointed to Wakefield Cathedral, where he still directs the music.

9. *Stephen Cleobury* (1967-1971). He was a Chorister at Worcester Cathedral. His first appointment on leaving St John's was at the prestigious church of St Matthew, Northampton. He later became Sub-Organist of Westminster Abbey, then Director of Music at Westminster Cathedral, before being appointed to direct the music at King's College, Cambridge. He also directs the BBC Singers.

10. *Jonathan Rennert* (1971-1974). After a spell as Organist of St Jude's Church, Courtfield Gardens, London, and at St Matthew's Church, Ottawa, Canada, he was appointed to succeed Harold Darke at St Michael's, Cornhill, London.

11. *John Scott* (1974-1978). He has become an internationally famous organ virtuoso, as well as an extremely successful choir trainer. He was an assistant at both St Paul's and Southwark Cathedrals, later becoming Sub-Organist at St Paul's. He was subsequently appointed Director of Music at St Paul's Cathedral.

12. *David Hill* (1976-1979). On leaving St John's he became Sub-Organist at Durham Cathedral, before following Stephen Cleobury at Westminster Cathedral. He combined this with his appointment as Conductor of the Alexandra Choir, London. David Hill later became Organist of Winchester Cathedral, retiring from that position in 2002. He has recently been appointed to succeed Christopher Robinson as Organist of St John's College on the latter's retirement in 2003. He continues to direct the London Bach Choir.

13. *Ian Shaw* (1978-1981). He was appointed Sub-Organist of Durham Cathedral, but has since left the cathedral world.

14. *Adrian Lucas* (1980-1983). The whole of his professional life has been spent in cathedral music, having been Assistant at Norwich Cathedral, before first being appointed to Portsmouth Cathedral and then to Worcester Cathedral. He will succeed Christopher Robinson as Conductor of the City of Birmingham Choir.

15. *Andrew Lumsden* (1981-1984). He was a Chorister at New College, Oxford, under the direction of his father, Sir David Lumsden. On leaving St John's he became Assistant Organist at Southwark Cathedral, moving subsequently to Westminster Abbey as Sub-Organist. He was later appointed Organist of Lichfield Cathedral, before his recent appointment to succeed David Hill at Winchester Cathedral.

16. *James Cryer* (1983-January 1985). Unfortunately he suffered from ill-health and was unable to complete his degree, and to take up a career which his many gifts promised.

17. *Philip Kenyon* (1984-1987). He became Assistant Master at Charterhouse, and later Assistant Director of Music at Radley College, before leaving the profession to enter the world of commerce.

18. *Robert Morgan* (1985-1988). A Chorister at St Woolos Cathedral, Newport, Wales, he subsequently became Organist of Oakham School, before moving to a similar position at Oundle School. He has since moved to the United States.

19. *Andrew Nethsingha* (1987-1990). He was a Chorister at Exeter Cathedral under the direction of his father, Lucien Nethsingha. On leaving St John's he became Assistant at Wells Cathedral, before moving as Director of Music to Truro Cathedral. He has recently been appointed to a similar position in Gloucester Cathedral.

20. *Alexander Martin* (1988-1991). After study in the Royal College of Music he became Chef de Chant/Repetiteur at the Opera de Lyon, France. He later became Pianist/Conductor in Wiesbaden, Germany, before taking up the post of pianist at the Hamburg State

Opera. He is now a freelance pianist and conductor and conducted two productions for Opéra National du Rhin in 2001.

21. *Philip Scriven* (1990-1993). He was Sub-Organist at Winchester Cathedral under David Hill, before following Andrew Lumsden as Director of Music at Lichfield Cathedral in 2002.

22. *James Martin* (1991-1994). He took his BA in 1994 and stayed at St John's for a PhD in Mathematics. From 1998-2000 he was a researcher at the Ecole Normale Superieure in Paris. He returned to Cambridge in November 2000, where he is a researcher in the Maths Department and the Computer Laboratory and is Lector in Statistics at Jesus College. These days he is much more active as a piano accompanist than as an organist, having recently given recitals in Cambridge, Oxford, London and Paris, and toured Scotland with the violinist Nicola Davis in summer 2001.

23. *Allan Walker* (1993-1996). A former Head Chorister of St John's, he worked as a freelance musician in Kenya from 1996 to 1998 before returning to England and working as Operations Manager for Harrow School Enterprises Ltd. He is also Organist of St Mary-on-Paddington Green Church and of St Mary Magdalene Church, London.

24. *Peter Davis* (1994-1997). He became Assistant Music Master at Haberdashers' Aske's School, Elstree, and was subsequently appointed Director of Music at Haileybury College.

25. *Iain Farrington* (1996-1999). On leaving St John's he studied piano accompaniment for two years at the Royal Academy of Music, gaining a Dip RAM. In 2001, he won the Megan Foster Prize for Accompanists at the Royal Opera House, and he now regularly works with Lesley Garrett, the BBC Singers and the London Symphony Chorus.

26. *Robert Houssart* (1997-2000). He was Organ Scholar at Westminster Cathedral and has recently been appointed Assistant Organist at Gloucester Cathedral.

27. *Christopher Whitton* (1999-2002). He has been awarded a Kennedy Scholarship at Harvard University, USA, to study Classics.

28. *Jonathan Vaughn* (2000-)

29. *John Robinson* (2002-)

Organists of St John's College 1946 to date
Robin Orr (1938-1951)
George Guest (1951-1991)
Christopher Robinson (1991-2003)
David Hill (2003-)

NB The term 'Organist' always implies 'Organist and Choirmaster', as does the term 'Director of Music'.

George Guest

THE 1945 CLUB

An article about the 1945 Club and its first fifty years was written by Colin Bertram for The Eagle *1996. It was printed in the College Societies section. The surviving members have now agreed that the time has come to wind up the Club and this brief report marks its eventual demise.*

According to Colin Bertram, the 1945 Club 'had shared circumstances and interests, personal friendship and the well-being of the College, as its total aim, although never defined'. It grew out of the association of those lunching in College together in 1945-6 and consisted of those Fellows who returned into residence after the war, or took up their Fellowship for the first time straight after the war.

The Club's first dinner was held in 1946, but there is no list of those present. The first list still in the records was for the dinner in 1947. It consists of the following:

Present

Colin Bertram (Middle East Supply Centre), Ken Budden, Noel Duckworth ('Desert Rat'), Glyn Daniel (RAF Aerial Interpretation), Jim Davidson, Alec Deer, Clifford Evans (Navy), Harry Hinsley (Bletchley), R L Howland (RAF), Ken Le Couteur, Guy Lee (Army), Ted Miller (Army), Robin Orr (RAF Aerial Interpretation), Ken Scott (Army), Frank Thistlethwaite (RAF and War Cabinet Office), Roland Winfield (RAF Medical Officer), Andrew Robertson and Paddy Willmore.

Absent

D V Davies, H S Davies, Fred Hoyle, David Lang, Martin Hynes and Frank Smithies.

Other members of the Club not listed as present or absent: Alexis Brookes, Benny Farmer, Ray Lyttleton and Maurice Wilkes.

The Club continued to function for many years, settling down to an annual dinner in December, and then reduced to sherry before Hall, dinner at High Table, and dessert in the Wilberforce Room. In early times, members who had then left Cambridge made a point of coming back for it, and the 40th anniversary dinner in 1985 was particularly well attended.

However, by 1996 the Club was waning. A number of members had died (Noel Duckworth, Glyn Daniel, Jim Davidson, R L Howland, Ken Scott, Roland Winfield, Andrew Robertson, Paddy Willmore, D V Davies, Hugh Sykes Davies, David Lang and Ray Lyttleton), and others had moved away from Cambridge. Consequently, at a meeting of the Club in December 1997 it was agreed 'that membership should be enlarged to include others who returned into residence in 1945 but not as Fellows'. As a result Frank Thistlethwaite put forward the following names: John Crook, Jack Goody, George Guest and Robert Hinde. They all accepted membership except John Crook.

At either the 1998 or 1999 dinner, Frank Thistlethwaite recalls the following exchange with the Master, Peter Goddard:

Frank Thistlethwaite: 'Master, welcome to this Old Codgers Club!'

Peter Goddard: '1945 means something to me too, you know.'

Frank Thistlethwaite: 'What is that, Master?'

Peter Goddard: 'It's the year I was born.'

For the annual meeting in December 2000 only three members were able to come and again only three accepted for the meeting in 2001. At the suggestion of Maurice Wilkes, the Secretary approached the seven surviving original members (Deer, Evans, Le Couteur, Lee, Orr, Smithies and Thistlethwaite) and all (with the exception of Le Couteur in Australia, who did not reply) were of the opinion that the Club should now be wound up. *Finis*.

Frank Thistlethwaite and Catherine Twilley

POETRY

The following poems are reproduced from The Age of Cardboard and String *by Charles Boyle (BA 1972) by kind permission of Faber & Faber.*

Railway Porters

Their sad, all-weather composure, subdued
livery, their intimate knowledge of weights
and Yorkshire cricket – as you unlocked the car
and ruffled my hair
and fumbled in your pocket for loose change.

Inside the boot of every Riley,
inside a leather case inside a leather case
is my father's monogrammed set of ivory brushes.

Theories of the Leisure Class

The office of the leisure class in social evolution is to retard the movement, and to conserve what is obsolescent.
Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899)

That standing to attention for the national anthem never did us any harm.
That nor did boiled cabbage and burnt toast, despite its being carcinogenic.
That food wrapped in clingfilm lowers your sperm count.

That men under average height are more agressive.
That it's something in the brake fluid that causes it.
That science can explain everything.

That what goes up must trickle down.
That we have come a long way since semiology.

That where would we be now but for the nuclear deterrent and the fear of God.

That we all know what married men are like.
That divorce counsellors with beards come from broken homes.
That sleeping with the light on makes you go blind.

That getting and spending is good for the thighs and lower back.
That profits from the sale under licence of the gene for happiness will transform the marketplace.
That the welfare state is all very well.

That in the future, we will live for ever.
That irony is a finite resource.
That looters should be shot on sight.

Unexamined Life

A fine dust drifts down from the sky,
visible only against dark walls, dark foliage.

Did I remember to cancel the newspaper?
To lock the back door? To wipe off the blood?

The exchange rate alters fractionally.
The telephone flexes its death wish.

THE CONTINUING IMPORTANCE OF THE WORK OF P A M DIRAC

On 8th August 2002, we are celebrating the centenary of the birth of Paul Dirac, one of the most eminent theoretical physicists this country has produced. Dirac was a Research Student and then Fellow of St John's College from 1923 until his death in 1984. He was Lucasian Professor of Mathematics from 1932 until his retirement in 1969. Cambridge has not forgotten Dirac. The course on quantum mechanics that he introduced remains a key part of the Mathematical Tripos. There is an annual lecture in his name, given since 1986, and many of the most distinguished theoretical physicists of our time have spoken on their work, and often on its relationship to ideas pioneered by Dirac. This year, in conjunction with a major conference in Cambridge, Strings 2002, there will be an afternoon of lectures on Dirac's work and influence, with speakers Sir Michael Atiyah, Professor Peter Goddard, Master of the College, Professor Stephen Hawking, current Lucasian Professor, Monica Dirac and Professor Edward Witten. In addition, the College library is mounting an exhibition commemorating Dirac.

I belong to a generation of mathematicians and physicists who hardly knew Dirac. When I became an undergraduate at St. John's in 1971, Dirac had already retired to Florida. Fortunately, I once heard him give a lecture, in Paris in 1979 as I recall. Many current Fellows of the College, and also the Master, knew him much better, and there are many stories about his precise but minimalist way of conversing.

For me, Dirac's legacy was his scientific work and its continuing influence on theoretical physics. What were his main achievements, and how are they seen today? His first breakthrough was to understand the structure underlying Heisenberg's matrix mechanics, the original version of quantum mechanics. Heisenberg constructed infinite matrices representing the position of a particle x, and its momentum p. In Schrödinger's quantum mechanics, x and p appear quite differently, but Dirac realized that in both versions

$$xp - px = i\hbar$$

where $\hbar$ is Planck's constant. For Dirac, this algebraic relation, reminiscent of the Poisson bracket relation between x and p in classical mechanics, was the essence of quantum mechanics, a point of view that remains standard today.

Curiously, Dirac's insight gave the impression that Hamiltonian classical mechanics was the one most closely related to quantum mechanics. Hamiltonian mechanics is a beautiful generalization of Newtonian dynamics, treating position and momentum in a very symmetric way. In fact, a whole discipline called geometric quantization has developed, whose aim is to understand the quantization of general Hamiltonian systems. However, only a few systems can be dealt with using this technique. The reason appears to be that quantum mechanics does crucially depend on separating off a set of position variables from a set of momentum variables.

Dirac himself recognized this at an early stage, because one of his most prescient papers concerns the relationship of quantum mechanics to Lagrangian classical mechanics. The position variables are fundamental in Lagrangian mechanics, and one must consider a whole trajectory carrying a particle from a given initial position to a final position. Of all the possible trajectories, the classical particle actually follows the one that minimizes a certain quantity, called the action. This is similar to Fermat's idea in optics that a light ray follows the path of minimal length between two points, a straight line. The action for a particle involves more than just a geometrical property of the path; it can depend, for example, on the gravitational field experienced by the particle. The path of minimal action is then curved, and agrees with what one would obtain from Newton's law of motion for a particle in a gravitational field.

Dirac proposed that in quantum mechanics, particles could take many possible paths between the initial and final points, with each path's action contributing to the amplitude. Amplitude is a basic quantity in quantum mechanics. It is a complex number, whose magnitude squared represents the probability that the particle will end up at the specified final point. Dirac did not fully develop this analogy between Lagrangian and quantum mechanics. That was done primarily by Feynman, who stated that in quantum mechanics the particle in some sense takes all possible paths. The complete amplitude is an integral over the infinite dimensional space of all paths, which has to be defined by a limiting process, involving subspaces of paths of ever increasing dimension.

The remarkable feature of the Dirac-Feynman path integral is that it can be generalized to dynamical fields like the electromagnetic field, whose quantum states are photon and multi-photon states. Going further, one can quantize more complicated fields, like the Yang-Mills and Higgs fields that appear to be required to understand elementary particles discovered in recent decades, like the W- and Z-bosons. In these more complicated field theories, the mathematical foundation of the path integral is not so secure.

Undoubtedly the most famous discovery that Dirac made was the Dirac equation. This is a fully relativistic, quantum mechanical equation that replaces Schrödinger's equation when the particle moves at speeds arbitrarily close to the speed of light. The Dirac equation, for a particle of mass m free from external forces, is

$$i\hbar\gamma\cdot\partial\psi = m\psi.$$

This appears on Dirac's memorial stone on the floor of Westminster Abbey. ψ is the wavefunction of the particle, analogous to the wavefunction in Schrödinger's equation, but here it has four components. It depends on the spatial variables x_1, x_2 and x_3, and also the time t [1].

Because ψ has four components, the solutions of the Dirac equation yield four independent states for a particle with momentum p, all satisfying Einstein's energy-momentum relation

$$E^2 = p^2 + m^2.$$

Two of these states have energy $E^2 = \sqrt{p^2 + m^2}$. (In our units the speed of light c is 1, so Einstein's formula $E=mc^2$ for a particle at rest simplifies to $E=m$.) They represent a particle with a spin aligned in two alternative directions, and because there are no more independent states, the particle has spin $\frac{1}{2}\hbar$. The electron has exactly this spin, and this shows the essential correctness of using Dirac's equation to describe the states of relativistic electrons.

However, there are two more states with energy $E = -\sqrt{p^2 + m^2}$. These negative energy states were unexpected, and Dirac proposed that the correct interpretation of his equation was a multi-particle one. In the vacuum, each negative energy state is occupied by one electron, and the positive energy states are empty. In total, there are infinitely many of these negative energy electrons, because there are infinitely many possible values of p. If sufficient energy is fed into the system (for example, by an energetic photon) a negative energy electron can be excited to a positive energy state. Physically, what is seen is a pair of particles; one is a positive energy electron, the other is the absent negative energy electron (a hole) which behaves like a positive energy particle too, of opposite electric charge to the electron. This positively-charged particle has exactly the same mass as an electron, and is called a positron. Shortly after the experimental discovery of the positron, Dirac was awarded the Nobel prize for his contributions to quantum mechanics.

Experiments with particle accelerators have revealed a number of elementary particles, each described by the Dirac equation. In addition to the electron there is a similar, heavier particle, the muon, and one heavier still; there are also six different types of quark, with a wide range of masses. The light quarks, bound permanently together by Yang-Mills (gluon) fields, are constituents of protons and neutrons. The heavier ones are very short-lived; they may be pair-produced in the way outlined above for electron-positron pairs, but they then decay into lighter quarks and further particles that carry away their energy.

Neutrinos are also described by the Dirac equation. For about four decades they were believed to be massless particles (m=0), and therefore to move at the speed of light. For such particles it is consistent to retain just two solutions of the equation for each value of p (one of positive energy and one of negative energy). The experimental evidence supports this, as neutrinos appear to have only one allowed spin state, in which the spin is aligned oppositely to the direction of motion.

Recently, there has been much excitement in the world of neutrino physics. Large detectors have carefully measured the flux of neutrinos from the sun over a range of energies, and the flux is found to be about half of what solar models predict. It seems as though the neutrinos can decay during their journey here. Current theories actually propose that the neutrinos oscillate into another species of neutrino that the detectors do not notice. Neutrino oscillations are compatible with a more complicated version of the Dirac equation, but the neutrinos must have a non-zero mass, and hence four states rather than two. Terrestrial experiments with neutrino sources at various distances from detectors are now testing the neutrino oscillation theory.

Dirac wrote two very remarkable papers reviving the idea that magnetic monopoles might exist. Normally, a magnet's north and south pole are regarded as a mathematical fiction. The source of the magnetic field is really a circulating electric current. Despite the absence of any experimental evidence for pure magnetic charges, Dirac uncovered a very elegant mathematical structure in the magnetic field of a monopole. The magnetic charge g cannot just take any value. The product of g and the electric charge q of any other particle has to obey

$$gq = 2\pi\hbar n$$

where n is some integer. It follows that if a monopole exists somewhere in the universe, then all electric charges must be integer multiples of $2\pi\hbar/g$. This is just about the only currently available explanation of why the electric charges of observed particles are integer multiples of a basic charge (the electron charge), a very accurately verified fact.

Dirac's work on monopoles has developed in a remarkable way. It has been found that many of the theories proposed to describe elementary particles have classical, finite energy solutions that are either magnetic monopoles, or similarly exotic objects like kinks, instantons, or sphalerons. These solutions are better behaved than the point-like monopoles that Dirac was thinking of, which might have infinite mass. If one looks at the Dirac equation for a spin $\frac{1}{2}\hbar$ charged particle interacting with such a monopole, then there are solutions as for a free particle, where the energy is either greater than m or less than $-m$. But in addition there can be solutions whose energy is exactly zero. This means the charged particle can bind to the monopole, producing a composite particle with exactly the same mass as the monopole. There is a beautiful mathematical result, the Atiyah-Singer index theorem, which allows one to predict how many zero energy solutions there are. The number does not depend on the detailed form of the field, but only on its qualitative structure.

Despite the great success of Dirac's theory of electrons, later extended to quarks, neutrinos, etc., Dirac was uneasy about the theory. The basic problem is that calculations of physical quantities sometimes lead to infinite results. For example, the 'sea' of negative energy electrons appears to have infinite total energy. These days we are not seriously disturbed by this. There is a beautiful symmetry between occupied negative energy states and empty positive energy states, so we just assert that the vacuum has zero energy. In any case an overall energy constant has no physical effect if gravity is ignored. Further infinities turn up in calculations of particle scattering amplitudes. These are dealt with by the technique of renormalization, which has been refined over 50 years, and there is even a physical understanding of why the infinities occur. For example, from far away, an electron appears to have a finite electric charge, but if it is probed closer and closer up, by scattering higher and higher energy photons off it, then the charge appears to increase, and the extrapolation to a point-like electron yields an infinite bare charge. We do not worry unduly about this. The point-like electron is not physical, as it is always surrounded by a cloud of electron-positron pairs. At extremely short distances we in any case expect a new kind of physics, perhaps related to a quantized space-time.

Nevertheless, Dirac worried about these infinities, and he believed that a final, fundamental theory should not have any. From about 1935 onwards he frequently wrote or spoke about this difficulty, and he spoke about it at the lecture I heard him give. He would perhaps have been interested in one of the theoretical ideas that has been much explored since the early 1970s, the idea of supersymmetry. Here, spin $\frac{1}{2}\hbar$ particles like electrons and spin $\hbar$ particles like photons (or spin zero particles) are paired symmetrically in the theory, and their infinite effects cancel. There is much enthusiasm about supersymmetry, and it can be extended to string theories, which are consistent theories of elementary particles and gravity in a ten-dimensional space-time.

Experimenters are actively seeking the new, very massive particles expected in supersymmetric theories, but so far without success. Dirac might have liked supersymmetric theories because of their finiteness, but he would surely have worried why the photon-like particle paired with the electron has such a different mass. (For technical reasons, no two of the currently known particles can be regarded as a supersymmetric pair.) The situation is reminiscent of the one that Dirac himself faced with his hole states. He originally attempted to interpret these in terms of known particles, protons, which are more massive than electrons. Later he had a more profound and symmetrical vision, involving positrons. Perhaps the superpartners of the known particles, like the positrons in Dirac's day, are just around the corner. Maybe supersymmetry is correct but has a different interpretation.

Alternatively, perhaps a new mathematical formalism can be developed for doing calculations in quantum field theory, which avoids the infinities. One of the Millennium Prize Problems posed by the Clay Mathematics Institute is to find a rigorous mathematical foundation for the quantum theory of quarks interacting with Yang-Mills fields. Dirac would have found it a good challenge, I believe.

Nicholas Manton

Notes:

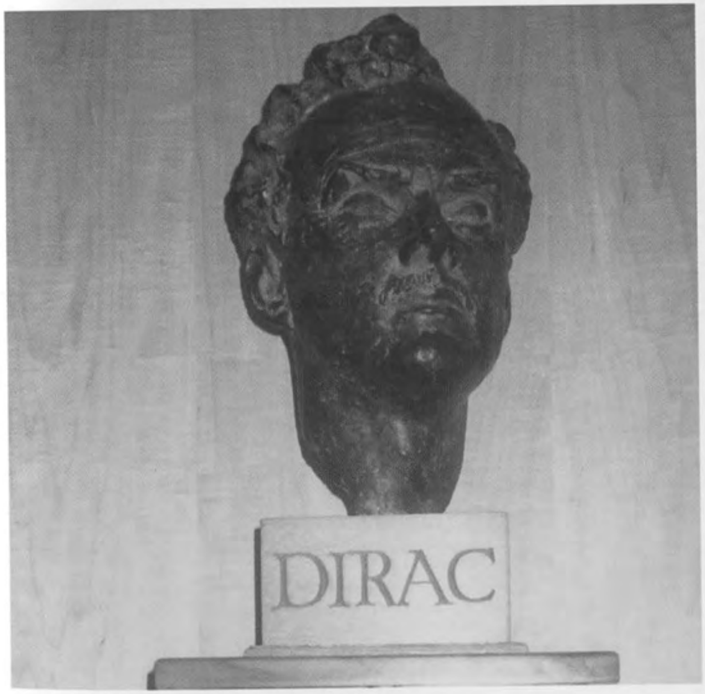
1 In Westminster Abbey, unlike here, units are chosen so that $\hbar = 1$. $\gamma\cdot\partial\psi$ is shorthand for $\gamma^0 \frac{\partial\psi}{\partial t} + \gamma^1 \frac{\partial\psi}{\partial x_1} + \gamma^2 \frac{\partial\psi}{\partial x_2} + \gamma^3 \frac{\partial\psi}{\partial x_3}$, where γ^0, γ^1, γ^2 and γ^3 are a set of special 4 x 4 matrices. Dirac argued these have to satisfy the algebraic relations $(\gamma^0)^2 = 1$, $(\gamma^1)^2 = (\gamma^2)^2 = (\gamma^3)^2 = -1$ and also $\gamma^0\gamma^1 = -\gamma^1\gamma^0$ and similarly for each distinct pair of these matrices.

For more on Dirac's life and work, see:

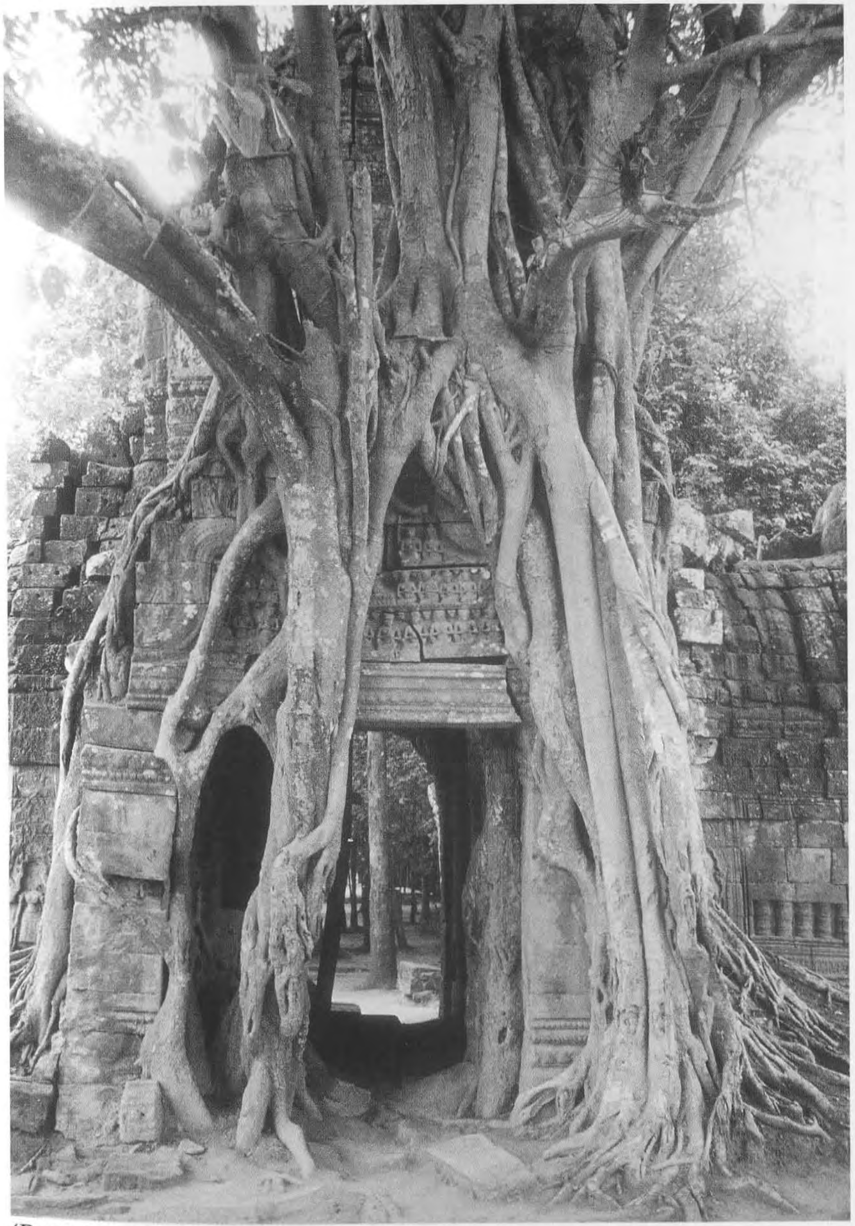
Biographical Memoirs of Fellows of the Royal Society, Vol. 32, 137-185, 1986 (Memoir by RH Dalitz and R Peierls).

HS Kragh, *Dirac: A Scientific Biography*, Cambridge University Press, 1990.

University of St. Andrews' MacTutor History of Mathematics archive, http://www-groups.dcs.st-andrews.ac.uk/~history/Mathematicians/Dirac.html.



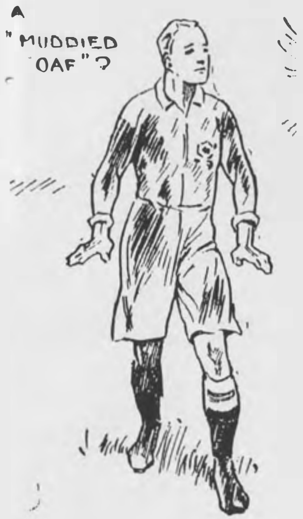
'Early morning' by Kiyotaka Tanaka



'Roots' by Edward Green
(Highly Commended in the College Art Competition, 2002)

FLANNELLED AND MUDDIED

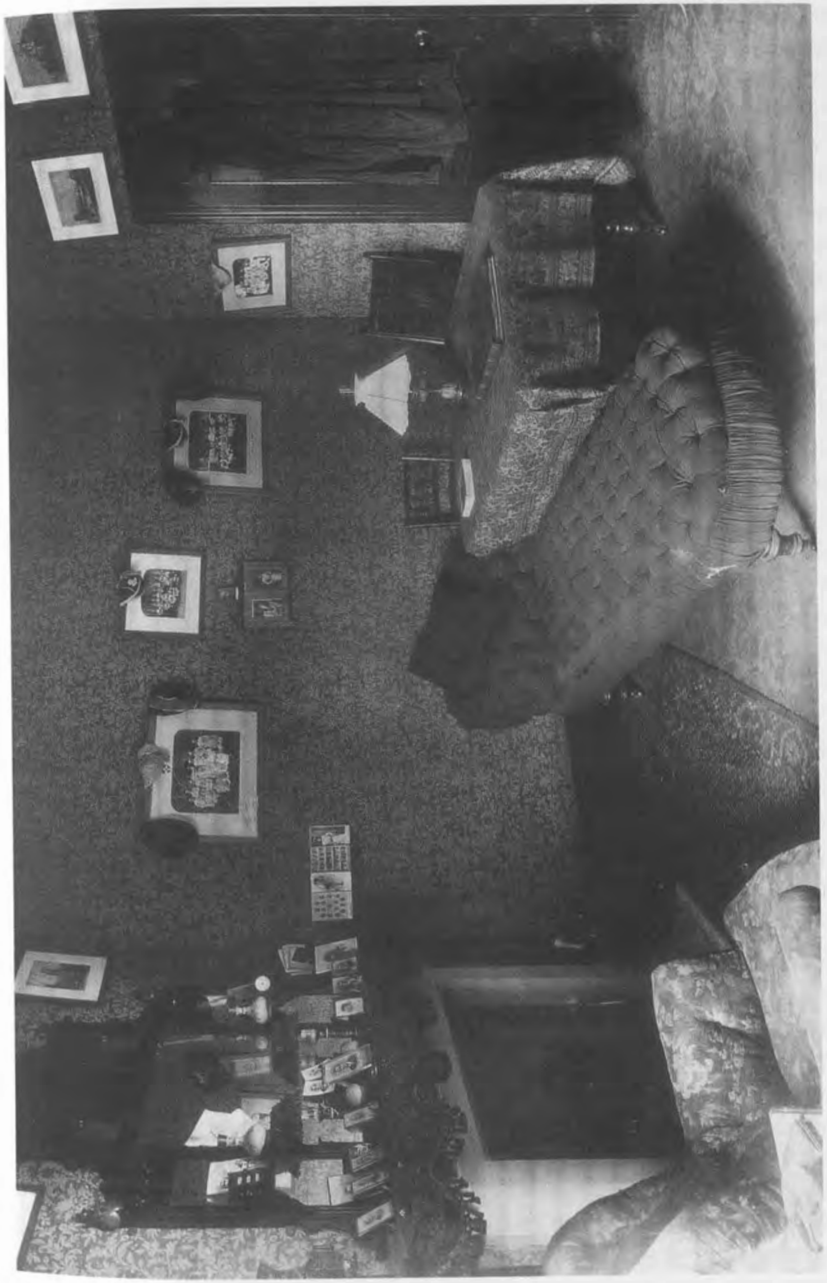
J J Robinson: St John's 1890–1894


A "MUDDIED OAF"?

My father played Rugby football for England when he was at St John's in 1893, and again in 1902. He kept this newspaper sketch in his album, and I believe it is an artist's impression of him in 1902. Certainly the caption, 'A muddied oaf?', links it with that year in which Kipling condemned the nation, unprepared and struggling in the recent Boer War, for its cult of 'flannelled fools at the wickets and muddied oafs at the goals'.

A photograph shows the room at St John's – 17 Chapel Court – which my father occupied from 1890 to 1894. There is an 1890s atmosphere: heavily patterned wallpaper and carpet; a buttoned velvet sofa; oil lamp on the table; and a crocheted cloth on the mantelpiece. More personal objects include his tobacco jar, which I still possess, eight photographs on the mantelpiece of sedate relatives, and two of smiling ladies who may hail from the stage. His gown hangs on the back of the door. A matching photograph, not shown here, includes his desk, with Harris's *Principles of the Criminal Law* to guide his legal studies. Two fans hang on the wall; trophies of a College Ball, perhaps, or tributes to 'The Mikado', which was still quite a recent success.

I can date the picture of the room more precisely, thanks to the clarity of the photographers, Stearns of Cambridge. I know it is after summer 1891, because the St John's 1891 cricket XI is there on the wall, with my father's St John's cricket cap above it. It is after December 1892, when he got his Rugby Blue, because the Cambridge XV photograph is there, with his Blue cap tucked behind it. It is after March 1893, when he first played Rugby for England, because his International cap is on the wall.



17 Chapel Court

But it is before May 1894, when he got his Cricket Blue, because there is no cricket Blue cap on the wall; though I have it beside me as I write.

Most members of College and University teams, as records confirm, had learned their sports at public schools. My father had gone as 'Robinson quintus', the youngest of five sons of a Burton-on-Trent brewer, to Appleby Grammar School, a less well known establishment which took fee-paying boarders, including the brothers Robinson, and poor boys from the locality. 'He is', as his headmaster put it in 1893, 'the first known instance of an Appleby boy getting his Blue'.

The Eagle, which came out three times a year, recorded his progress at St John's. In November 1890 he had 'improved' as a freshman Rugby player. By March 1891 he was a 'sterling forward', and in June 1891 'a very successful bat and moderate bowler' on the cricket field. M A R Tuker, in his book *Cambridge* (1907), noting how quickly the three University terms went by, observed that 'the long vacation term has become the reading man's time'. My father used his 1891 long vacation term to score 416 runs, and to take 28 wickets, in 11 matches.

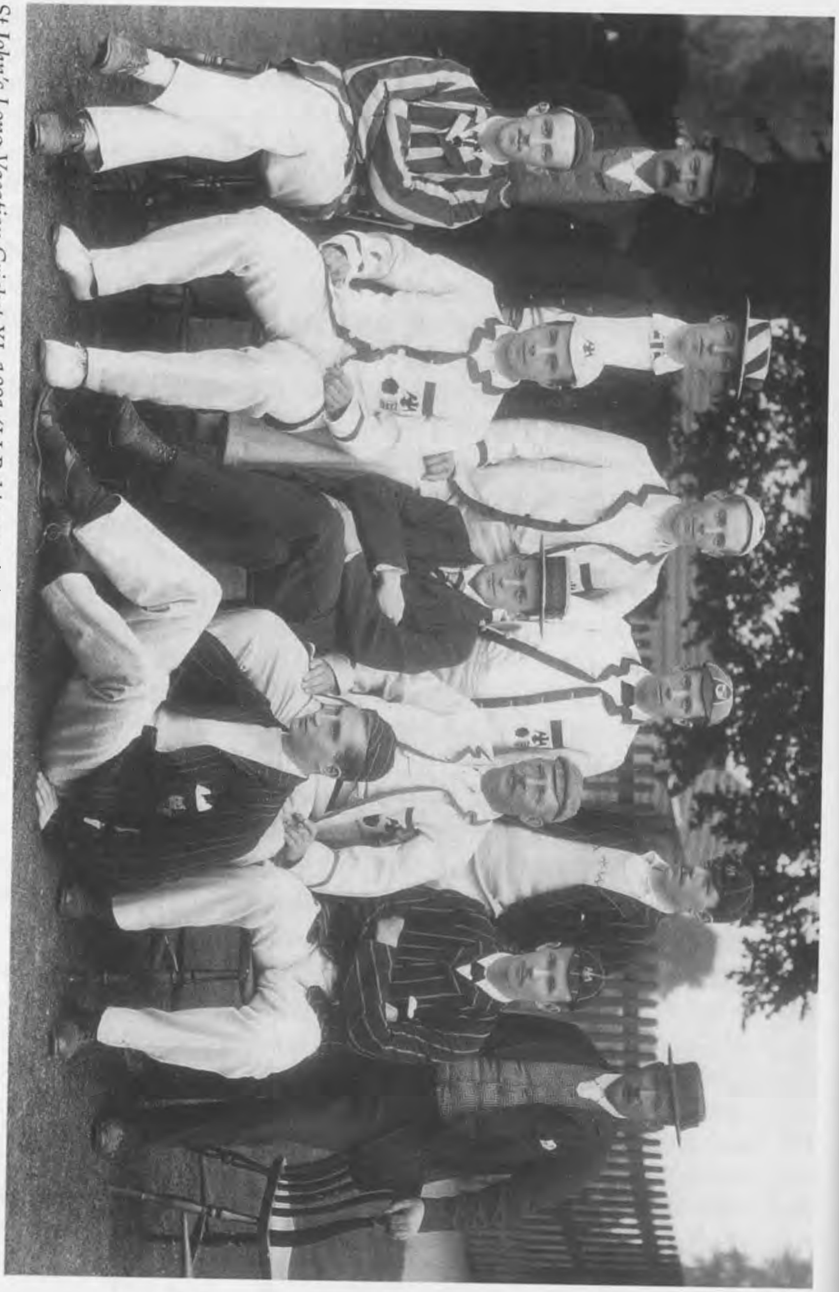
In March 1892 he 'dribbled well' at Rugby, but 'must pass sooner'. That June he was 'our most reliable bowler and bat, and a good fielder, but cannot throw'. In December 1892 he gained his Rugby Blue (Cambridge nil: Oxford nil). He also played for the University, at various times, against Lancashire, Cumberland, London Scottish, Harlequins, and Blackheath. In March 1893, wrote *The Eagle*, 'we most heartily congratulate J J Robinson on the great honour he has brought on the College and on himself by gaining an International cap'. The match, England v Scotland, at Leeds, was won by Scotland by two dropped goals (8 points) to nil. 'A particularly filthy ground', my father noted, referring to the mud, not to the industrial pollution of the city where he later spent most of his life. After the match the English Rugby Union gave a dinner 'In Honour of the Scotch Team'. Eight courses were available, and the Queen, both teams, and the referee, were toasted.

The June 1893 *Eagle* showed my father as Captain of St John's cricket: 'a most consistent scorer, but frequently gets lbw'. He missed that winter's University Rugby Match against Oxford through illness. The tripos exams kept him from some cricket in 1894, but 'it is only to be hoped that he may gain his cricket Blue', wrote *The Eagle* in June. He had already done so when the magazine came out, playing Oxford at Lord's. In the return match in July he took three Oxford wickets. Sadly, his father died three weeks later.

How did cricket and Rugby players dress in those days? Smartly, according to the official team photographs in my father's album, although the St John's long vacation cricket XI of 1891, shown here, sports a variety of headgear which includes the straw boater of the umpire and the bowler hat of the scorer, and a wide selection of high-buttoned blazers. Rugby teams seem more consistently dressed, and always looked jaunty in their tasselled caps. My father's International jersey is of heavy flannel. Shorts were long, and boots were adapted as required. (I still remember my dismay when, during the clothes rationing of the 1940s, I needed football boots for school, and my father assured me that ordinary outdoor boots with strips of leather nailed to the soles had been quite sufficient in *his* day.)

Because he was sixty when I was born, and I am now nearly seventy, I am only a generation away from his birth in 1872. I admit, however, that eyebrows are sometimes raised when I say that my father bowled out W G Grace. Playing for Cambridge against MCC in May 1894, at Cambridge, he caught out Grace and was himself caught by Grace. In a return match in June, at Lord's, he bowled out Grace (and his son 'Grace junior', Lord Hawke and Ranjitsinhji). 'W G' himself was forty-six years old by then, but still in fine form. 'The MCC total of 595 in the second innings [of that match at Lord's] is the greatest ever made at Lord's', wrote Grace in his *History of a Hundred Centuries*, 'and my score of 196 is the biggest innings that I ever scored at Lord's. I do not know that there is much to be proud of in this gigantic scoring, for the Cambridge bowling was lamentably weak'. At least my father put an end to that 'biggest innings'!

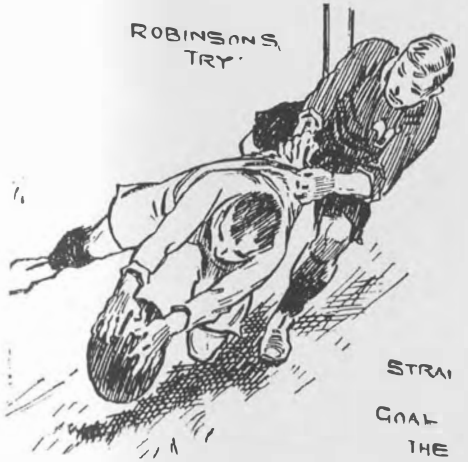
He was a modest man, but made a note in his album, years later, which may interest cricket historians. (I have added the player's county after each name). 'In a very short career I seem to have got the wickets of the following great players: W G Grace (Glos), *Ranjitsinhji* (Sussex), F S Jackson (Yorks), Shrewsbury (Notts), Gunn (Notts), Hirst (Yorks), Ferris



St John's Long Vacation Cricket XI, 1891 (J J Robinson sitting second from left)

(Glos), Chatterton (Derbys), Peel (Yorks), Wainwright (Yorks) and Davidson (Derbys). What a fine eleven they would have made, with a wicket keeper in place of one of them!' It was still, of course, the era of 'Gentlemen' and 'Players'. Match cards would have listed the amateurs as 'Mr', but the rest by their surnames only.

My father was admitted a solicitor in 1898. He moved to Leeds, and practised law until he was eighty-six. In his early years in Leeds he played Rugby for Headingley, for Yorkshire and for the North of England v the South (having played for the South v the North when at St John's). It caught the newspapers' attention, however, when he was selected again as an International in 1902, and played against Wales, Ireland and Scotland that season. 'J J Robinson is the veteran of the side', wrote one paper. 'It is now nearly ten years since he first wore the English jersey, [but] he still plays in a style worthy of his best Cambridge days'. His interval of nine years between International appearances stood as a record for sixty-three years, until 1965, when it was equalled by another England player. More recently, a New Zealander beat them both.



This year, then, is the centenary of my father's re-appearance as the International he became at St John's in 1893. At his re-appearance he scored a try against Wales. 'Dobson [Devon & Oxford University] made a dash for the line. Being brought down by Morgan [London Welsh] he passed to Robinson [Headingley], who, though half-tackled by Strand-Jones [Llanelli & Oxford University], forced his way over the line and scored a really fine try'. 'Robinson's try', another newspaper drawing of 1902, is my final illustration.

A R B Robinson

This photograph of New Court at night was taken by Michael Shuter and won First Prize in the College Life section of the College Art Competition, 2002.

'Reflection' by William Lo
(Highly Commended in the College Art Competition, 2002)

A REVIEW OF COMMISSIONS GIVEN TO SILVERSMITHS BY THE COLLEGE AND BY VARIOUS BENEFACTORS

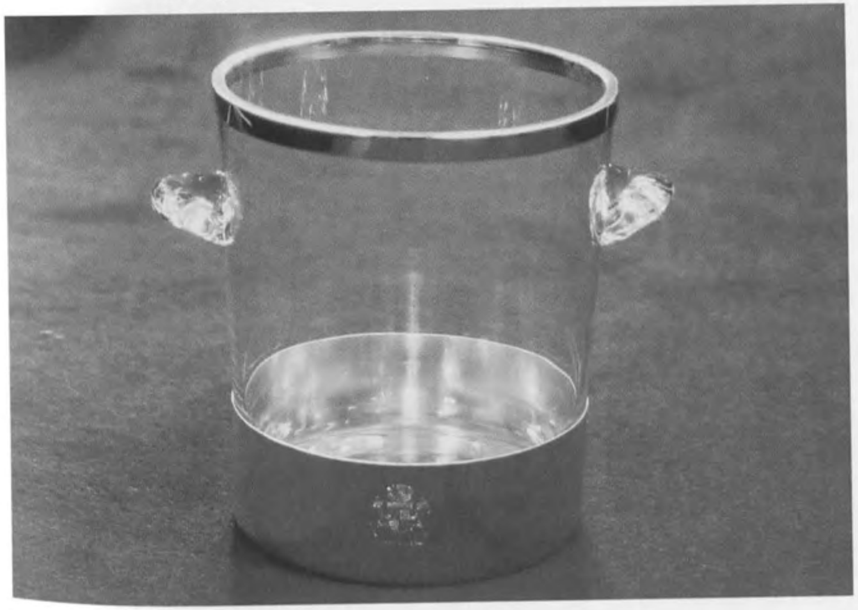
For many years the College or benefactors to the College have commissioned plate from various silversmiths. It is possible that members of the College may not be aware of the Larmor Plate, and this brief review is only intended to refer to the Larmor Plate.

Sir Joseph Larmor was a Fellow of the College and also Secretary of the Royal Society. He was elected to the Lucasian Chair (following in the footsteps of Sir Isaac Newton). At one time he was MP for the University and was awarded the freedom of the City of Belfast where he had grown up. He was knighted in 1909. By his Will (1938) he bequeathed a sum of money to the College to 'be employed to provide annually suitable rewards which may include pieces of plate together with or alternatively grants of money'.

In 1943 the College Council adopted the following regulations for the Fund: the awards shall be made by the Council in the Easter Term each year on the recommendation of a Committee which shall consist of the Tutors and Dean, not less than three junior members of the College appointed by the Council, and such other persons as the Council may from time to time appoint. In making their recommendations the Committee shall take account of intellectual qualifications estimated on a wide basis, of moral conduct and practical activities and shall select those undergraduate members of the College, in number not fewer than four annually, whom they deem most worthy on any or all of these grounds. The award shall be a piece of plate engraved with the arms of the College and inscribed 'Sir Joseph Larmor's Plate and the year of the award' together with a cheque.

Awards were first made in 1944 but in consequence of the war and later the imposition of purchase tax it was not initially possible to present pieces of plate. However with the help of the Goldsmith Company, and with the benefit of regulations whereby relief from purchase tax on silver specially designed and of approved quality could be granted,

1. *Chalice made by Christopher Bowen, the gift of Ruth and Glyn Daniel*



2. *A piece of Larmor plate designed by Clive Burr*
Photographs by Professor Malcolm Clarke

pieces of plate were obtained in 1954 for presentation to all those to whom awards had been made from 1943 onwards.

It has become traditional for designs of plate to be specially commissioned from young silversmiths who are starting on their own. Each recipient normally receives a different piece of silver, the particular piece being drawn by lot. The College therefore requires to maintain a stock of appropriate pieces of plate and usually commissions three copies of any particular design chosen, although the silversmith selected can submit as many designs as he or she wishes.

Since 1943 over 60 silversmiths have received commissions from the College for Larmor Plate. This includes Gerald Benney, Christopher Bowen, Frances Loyen, D Clem Murphy, Keith Redfern and Robert Welch, all of whom have later made plate for the College or for benefactors of plate to the College. Photograph number 1 shows a Chalice made by Christopher Bowen, the gift of Ruth and Glyn Daniel. Photograph number 2 is of a more recent piece of Larmor Plate designed by Clive Burr.

Denys Armstrong

MARRIED TO A MATHEMATICIAN: LYN NEWMAN'S LIFE IN LETTERS

Lyn Newman in 1955

In 1934 Lyn Irvine, aged 33 and daughter of a Scots presbyterian minister, married Max Newman, Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge. She was a writer and journalist, at that time editing her own literary journal, *The Monologue*. He was a rising star in the world of pure mathematics, breaking new ground in both research and teaching. To both of them the future offered the promise of brilliant careers. For Max this promise was fulfilled, for he went on establish himself as a pioneering topologist, to lead one of the key wartime codebreaking groups at Bletchley Park, and to build up a world-class mathematics department in Manchester. Lyn, however, soon found that she had unwittingly taken on a new, unsought-after 'career': she had become a mathematician's wife.

For the next twenty years Lyn set her writing aside to make a home for Max and to bring up their two sons Edward and William. Only in the 1950s did she find a way to return slowly to writing, and even then her family commitments still often took first place, right up to her death in 1973. Throughout her life, however, Lyn wrote copiously to her friends and family. The letters she left behind cover a fifty-year span and now, together with Max's papers, have been donated to St John's College Library.[1] The two sets of papers help piece together not only the progression of Max's distinguished career, but also the impact of this career on those close to him, and especially on Lyn.

In several respects Lyn Newman's papers offer more to the researcher than Max's. As a letter writer Lyn wanted increasingly, as she got to know her correspondents, to share with them her

Max Newman ca 1930

feelings and her life's intimate details. Max, on the other hand, avoided personal matters in his letters just as he did in conversation, spicing them with jokes and anecdotes but writing much the same kind of letter to all his friends and family. Also there is simply more material on Lyn's side: she kept her correspondence, as did many of the people she wrote to. Max's letters, perhaps because they revealed less, were kept less.

Lyn's papers thus offer us a unique and vivid picture of a writer's life with a great mathematician and her constant struggle to balance the demands of family and career. They begin ten years before her marriage, documenting her life at Girton and her subsequent entry into journalism and Bloomsbury life. She left Cambridge in 1927 with a letter of introduction to Leonard Woolf, who got her a job reviewing fiction for the New Statesman, and later commissioned and published her first book, *Ten Letter Writers*. Woolf – 'a man in a million' Lyn would later call him – also introduced her to his wife Virginia[2], and through the Woolfs she met and started corresponding with others in the Bloomsbury Group, including E M Forster, Clive Bell, David Garnett, John Hayward, Frances Partridge and Vita Sackville-West. Lyn's letters of this period are scattered amongst several collections of Bloomsbury Group papers, including the archives at King's College, Cambridge, where we find Lyn writing plaintively to Clive Bell in August 1931, 'It looks as though we should never meet again – unless we both arrive in Heaven one day, you through the entrails of a Javan alligator and I through the prayers of my parents;'[3] to which Bell responds, 'But at latest we shall meet in October Lyn, in London; so don't talk to me of Heaven.'

By 1937 Lyn, Max and their infant son Edward were in Princeton, where Max had been invited to spend six months. Lyn marvelled at his idyllic lifestyle, writing in November to her parents,

> Max has no job here. He simply sits at home doing anything he likes. That is what the Institute of Advanced Studies exists for. They know Mathematicians can be trusted to like doing Mathematics better than anything else. He has taken a little rest from his book and is doing some pet problem at the moment.

The nature of the 'pet problem' is revealed in a later letter, just before their return to Cambridge:

> On Friday night I had the first real news of the sensation made in Princeton by Max's proof of the Poincaré Hypothesis, a classical obstacle in Topology which has defied proof for more than 30 years. Of course M may not have proved it yet but an audience made up almost entirely of professors listened to him for 5 hours (on 4 different days) and failed to find a flaw.

There was, alas, a fatal flaw in Max's proof, and Lyn thus learned that mathematics could bring not only bliss but its own special kind of misery. Her diary for July 27 1938, records 'This was the day M's theorem went wrong', and a few days later she notes, 'Day I discovered about M's theorem'. Max hid the flawed manuscript away in his files and for the rest of his life never spoke of this painful setback.

Lyn was back in the United States in 1940, this time a refugee with Edward and William from the Nazi menace; for Max was the son of an immigrant Polish Jew, Hermann Neumann, and his own sons' lives were therefore at risk. Her letters home now mostly reported the trials of a hand-to-mouth existence and the pain of separation from family and friends. Her life was brightened, however, by a brief visit from Maynard and Lydia Keynes to Princeton in June 1941, and she wrote to Max,

> I ran into [Maynard] and his aide-de-camp, Thompson, in Jack Honore's. I had just got E's hair cut and failed to get W's cut (William was clinging to the hammer of his new hammer peg, and Johnnie von N[eumann] who was getting a shave told Hermann [Weyl] he looked terribly dangerous and he didn't wonder none of the men would tackle him). Maynard rushed out of the shop to see E. and W. and talked with his most silvery persuasive voice to W. about the delights of having one's hair cut. His accent or something must have awakened far off memories for William stopped weeping and gazed at him with great interest . . . Maynard asked me himself if I felt it a great hardship that he and Thompson wouldn't let sterling out of England and he seemed quite impressed when I said that even 10 pounds a month would make all the difference to life.[4] They thought I ought to start the *Monologue* again over here. Maynard had been greatly impressed by the President, had talked 2 and 1/2 hours with him about everything.[5]

In 1943 Lyn and the boys returned to a changed England, now in the depths of the war. Max had started working at Bletchley Park, and was spearheading the effort to mechanize the decrypting of the German high command's 'Fish' cypher. This effort was to lead to the construction of the first electronic computer, Colossus, and the formation of a large codebreaking group known as the Newmanry[6] – exploits that Max was never permitted to share with Lyn during her lifetime. The only papers Max kept from this period, relating to his recruitment by Bletchley Park, include letters from Patrick Blackett, F L Lucas and others encouraging him to accept this vital wartime role. Meanwhile Lyn, now in a small rented house twenty miles from Bletchley, could still find much of interest to report to her friend Hella Weyl in Princeton:

> Apart from the awfulness of having the children in their seventh month without school and the isolation and all that, life goes very smoothly. Everything is extraordinarily well organized and people behave and speak as though the war had been going on for twenty years and would scarcely end under another twenty. Half the time I feel as though the clock had gone back to my childhood. Gigs and pony traps and women on horseback pass us almost as often as cars and it has once more become possible to get almost anything mended.

In 1944 the Newmans returned to Cross Farm, the family home five miles from Cambridge in the small village of Comberton. Lyn was ecstatic, writing to Hella, 'It is even more delightful to live in than I imagined in my sharpest pangs of homesickness'. But in the same letter she mentions worries about the family's domestic arrangements, which were to become a source of unending friction between her and Max: 'I do hope Max is steeling himself to the idea of living here more or less permanently.' Her hopes were soon to be dashed, for Patrick Blackett had new plans for Max: there was a vacancy at Manchester University for head of the department of mathematics. This was exactly the opportunity Max had been craving, a chance to escape from the hidebound attitudes he found in Cambridge and create a centre of excellence of his very own. Lyn was horrified by the prospect, writing to Hella in March 1945:

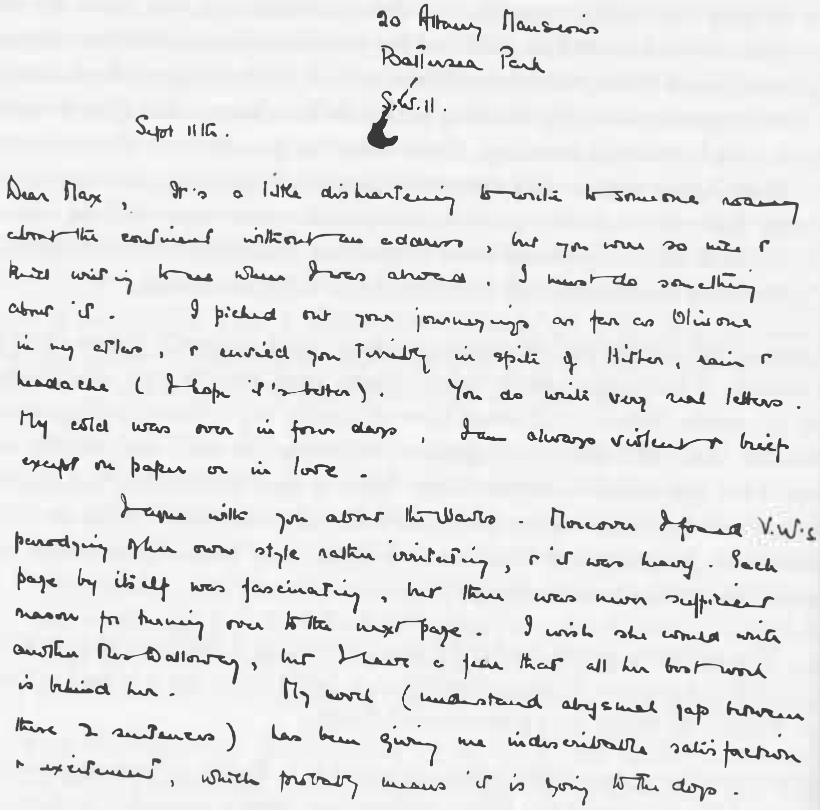
> At first I felt utterly appalled to think of leaving Cross Farm & our cold but wide & bright skies for the perpetual gloom of Manchester, but I have come round to thinking of it with resignation & even anticipations of compensating points in the change. For Max the job is much more interesting than what he has here & the staff at Manchester will be very congenial (Patrick Blackett is there too) and for both of us in our post war hopes & plans there will be more scope & encouragement there than there could be in Cambridge . . . We hope very much not to be forced to sell Cross Farm.

Postwar life in Britain of course dashed most people's hopes, Lyn's included. A year later she writes to Hella from Manchester, describing her unending domestic chores: 'Max of course is profoundly disgusted it is like this with me but incapable of altering his own way of life an iota.' Max was indeed unable ever to learn to look after himself, a legacy perhaps of the cosseted existence he enjoyed at St John's until he was nearly 40. In 1950 Lyn, when seriously ill with mumps, was able to report one minor breakthrough:

> Max resigned himself after 15 years standing out to learning how to cook the potato. It was a revelation to him that every mashed potato begins its career as a plain boiled potato.

Here she is writing to Antoinette, Viscountess Esher, whose inquiry to Leonard Woolf about *Ten Letter Writers* had been forwarded to Lyn in 1944. Their correspondence began slowly, Lyn clearly somewhat overawed by Antoinette's evident affluence and social status; not until 1947 did she gain the courage to begin her letters 'Dear Antoinette'. They discovered a common passion for English literature, and Lyn responded to Antoinette's evident enjoyment of the correspondence by writing passages that themselves stand as tiny literary gems, such as this on the subject of her hens:

> It's the unpredictable things in housekeeping (like the kitchen sink getting blocked with the mud off the potatoes) that spoil one's plans. I've been blissfully free of hens since August, when we went off for our Cambridge holiday, but I see I shall have to start them again. At Cross Farm it was so easy. In the morning I used to see



20 Albany Mansions
Battersea Park
S.W.11.

Sept 11th.

Dear Max, It's a little disheartening to write to someone roaming about the continent without an address, but you were so nice & kind writing to me when I was abroad. I must do something about it. I picked out your journeyings as far as Olivone in my atlas, & envied you terribly in spite of Hitler, rain & headache (I hope it's better). You do write very real letters. My cold was over in four days, I am always violent & brief except on paper or in love.

I agree with you about the Waves. Moreover I found V.W's parodying of her own style rather irritating, & it was heavy. Each page by itself was fascinating, but there was never sufficient reason for turning over to the next page. I wish she would write another Mrs Dalloway, but I have a fear that all her best work is behind her. My novel (understand abysmal gap between these 2 sentences) has been giving me indescribable satisfaction & excitement", which probably means it is going to the dogs.

Part of a letter written by Lyn Irvine to Max Newman in September 1933 while he was holidaying in Italy. The novel to which she refers was never published.

Dear Max,

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> them away down the meadow like brown & white sails on a very green sea, & only about the middle of the afternoon did they send a delegation to knock with their beaks on the back door & remind me that even country hens like their tea. But here every time I looked out of the windows at the back of the house there they were gazing reproachfully up at me from their muddy little run.

By 1948 Lyn was gaining confidence, sharing with Antoinette her hopes of Max's return to a chair at Cambridge in 1950:

> You say, what a long time, but if I could believe I had only 2 more years here, I can't tell you how happy I should be. Max knew I hated leaving Cross Farm because I fought like mad to stay, but he thought there would be compensations here, interesting people popping in & out & lots of friends for the children. The Blacketts were determined he should come & Patrick got at that always sensitive place, pride in a husband's career – he said if Max chose to take a back seat in Cambridge still, another would very gladly step in. I think Max would have done just as well in most ways if he had stayed in Cambridge . . .

With one notable exception, the mathematicians who visited the Newmans in Manchester did little to compensate for Lyn's homesickness and domestic drudgery; mathematics held no interest for her and she was mystified how Max, with such a lively and versatile mind, could find it appealing. The exception was Alan Turing. Alan had attended Max's lectures at Cambridge in 1934, and had been encouraged then by Max to explore mechanical approaches to theorem proving. This led to Alan's celebrated work on computing machines, which Max was instrumental in getting published. In 1948 Alan moved to Manchester to join in the computer work that Max had helped get started, and Lyn found herself drawn by his 'very simple, humble, gentle personality'. Alan was a frequent and welcome visitor to the Newman household, even though his overheard conversations with Max about the computer sometimes made Lyn uncomfortable:

> When I heard Alan say of further possibilities 'Wh – wh – what will happen at that stage is that we shan't understand how it does it, we'll have lost track' – I did find it a most disturbing prospect.[7]

For Lyn, Alan's death by poisoning in 1954 was, she told Antoinette, 'the most shattering thing that has ever happened to me.' Neither she nor Max could accept the coroner's verdict of suicide. Several years afterwards, Lyn was able to express some of her feelings for Alan in a foreword she wrote to his mother Sara's biography, *Alan M Turing*. Sara could not permit herself or Lyn to mention Alan's homosexuality, about which he had been quite open with Lyn: 'Dear Alan', she writes to Antoinette at that time, 'I remember his saying to me so simply & sadly 'I just can't believe it's as nice to go to bed with a girl as with a boy' and all I could say was 'I entirely agree with you – I also much prefer boys."

By this time Lyn was at last back permanently in Cambridge, her seven-year Manchester exile at an end. She and Max had at first planned this move as a short break, with Max moving into rooms in St John's to prepare a new course of lectures. But Lyn got him to agree that he would move into a flat when he returned to Manchester, and Lyn and the boys would remain at Cross Farm; he would join them there during vacations. At last Lyn was able to revive her writing. In 1957 she published her first postwar book, a charming account of her childhood entitled *So Much Love, So Little Money*.

Max and Lyn maintained this partial separation until he retired from Manchester in 1964. As this juncture approached, fresh disagreements arose about their future domestic arrangements, and there were times when things were close to breaking point. Writing to her great friend Nancy Blackburn in 1960 she describes her correspondence with Max as 'two express trains roaring away into space at tangents and yet by some fourth dimensional trick perpetually colliding'. Eventually Lyn was able with financial help from Antoinette to create a one-bedroom cottage for herself out of a dove-house in Cross Farm's adjoining meadow. Cross Farm itself was divided in two, one half was let, and Max moved into to the other half. In 1967 Lyn could write to another friend, Molly Harrower:

> The present chapter in our ever-changing and never-changing relationship is more agreeable than some. He no longer wishes to sell Cross Farm. My having a little house of my own in the meadow and showing no signs of giving it up has brought him to the advisability of being close to his cook-housekeeper . . . He enjoys talking to me at meal times and I usually find his talk profitable and entertaining, and I think that he probably tells me a good deal of what goes through his mind. But I cannot tell him what goes through mine . . .

Meanwhile from her dove-house refuge Lyn produced two more books, *Field With Geese* and *Alison Cairns and Her Family*. Inspired perhaps by her memories of the Woolfs' Hogarth Press, she set up a publishing and mail-order business of her own, Monologue Books. Under this imprint she published *Alison Cairns*, and she had plans for several other books when she fell ill with cancer. She died in May 1973. Later that year Max married Margaret, widow of his lifelong friend Lionel Penrose. They lived at Cross Farm until Max's death in 1984.

William Newman (BA 1961)

1 An index to the papers can be found at http://www.joh.cam.ac.uk/library/msbox.html

2 Virginia Woolf records her impressions of Lyn in her diary entry for September 2nd, 1929, see *The Diaries of Virginia Woolf*.

3 Charleston Papers, King's College Archives, L(1) CB 2.

4 At the end of 1941 the British government relaxed the regulations, and Max was able to send Lyn a monthly allowance of £16.

5 Keynes had been negotiating the Lend-lease agreement with President Roosevelt's government.

6 See Copeland, B J (to appear, 2002). *Colossus: The First Electronic Computer*, Oxford University Press.

7 Lyn Newman to Antoinette Esher, 24 June 1949.

THE 'JOHNIAN CONNECTION'

An international group of 30 Johnian archaeologists (and anthropologists) gathered on March 1 2002 for an afternoon of lectures, a glass of wine, discussion, and then, in the evening, a little sherry (in the Small Combination Room), gossip, dinner (in the Combination Room), more wine, further discussion/gossip, café et desert, after-dinner speeches, and more wine that went into the wee hours of March 2 (now in Chapel Court D2A) . . . I think you get the picture!

Without a doubt St John's has the longest and strongest tradition in Archaeology of all the Cambridge Colleges. Going back over 150 years, the first two Disney Chairs were held by Johnians, a tradition carried into the present by the most recent occupants of the Disney Chair – Professor Glyn Daniel and Professor Lord Renfrew. The current strength and diversity of Arch & Anth at St John's owes a great deal to Glyn Daniel (Fellow 1938-1986, Disney Professor 1974-1981), who came up in 1932 to read Geography, but quickly saw the light and switched to Arch & Anth, earning a starred first on his exams in 1935. The 'Johnian Connection' was started by Glyn as an occasion for Johnian archaeologists and Arch & Anth students to get together in an informal setting to catch up with old friends and make new ones.

In addition to a long and distinguished career in archaeology, publishing (editing the journal *Antiquity* for 30 years, 100 volumes of the series 'Ancient People and Places'), broadcasting ('Television Personality of the Year' in 1955), and teaching, Glyn made widely appreciated contributions to the College as Steward from 1946 to 1955. Among other things he established the College Bar in 1946 for thirsty 'returning warriors', started the tradition of serving wine at High Table, and created the 'Pig Club' to get around the post-war rationing of meat. The academic, social , and culinary traditions embodied in the 'Johnian Connection' were clearly worth continuing, and thus I was very happy, at the suggestion of Matthew Spriggs (BA 1976 and Visiting Fellow 2001-2002) and Colin Renfrew (BA 1961, MA 1965, PhD 1966, ScD 1976 and Fellow 1965-1968 and 1981-1986) to revive the 'Johnian Connection'.

The response from Johnians worldwide was fantastic – we had responses from over 60% of the 100+ invitations sent out, and those in attendance came from lands as distant as Australia, America, and New Court. The afternoon lectures were given by Dr Chantal Conneller (BA 1994, PhD 2000) on 'Starr Carr in Context: recent work in the Vale of Pickering' and Professor Lord Renfrew on 'The Indo European Problem Revisited', while after dinner Sir David Wilson (BA 1953, LittD 1976) reflected on his years at St John's. The evening was much enjoyed by all, and plans are already in motion for the next 'Johnian Connection' to be held in the academic year 2003-2004. If you would like further information about the next event or matters archaeological at St John's, please don't hesitate to contact me by post, electronic (ptm21@cam.ac.uk) or otherwise.

Preston Miracle

Further change will occur in the College as Jane Heal takes a well-earned spell of leave, providing more time for research in Philosophy, after her four-year term of office as President, during which all of us have benefited from her wisdom, impartiality of mind and concern for the welfare of others. The Fellows have elected John Leake, familiar to generations of Johnians as Tutor for medical students as well as College Lecturer in Materials Science to succeed her as President. But yet more change is on the way when on 5 January next, in a sort of curious symmetry, I shall leave office as Master to return to the Institute in Princeton, from whence I came 29 years earlier, as its Director.

The Institute for Advanced Study was founded in 1930 with the objective of advancing knowledge across a broad range of academic disciplines in the humanities and theoretical sciences. It has 24 permanent faculty members and about 190 visiting members each year drawn from universities all over the world. The Institute has much in common with the College, in terms of its commitment to recruit as its members scholars and scientists of the highest quality whatever their backgrounds and to enable them to pursue long-term objectives rather than short-term performance indicators. In other ways, independent of Princeton University and with no undergraduates or graduate students, it is very different. Each of the members of the Institute is free to pursue his or her own goals and, as Director, I too hope to be able to find time for my own research.

But Helen and I are not really leaving; we aim to have the best of both worlds, coming and going across the Atlantic. The friendships we have formed with Johnians in the USA made the prospect of the move to Princeton more inviting. I am equally looking forward to rejoining the Fellowship on 5 January and we plan to spend some of each year back in Cambridge, where we have bought a house close to the College, just across the road from the house in Portugal Place to which we first came in 1995.

Peter Goddard

COMMEMORATION OF BENEFACTORS

Sunday 4 May 2003

Doing the Right Deed for the Wrong Reason?

"Let us now praise famous men" begins today's reading. "These were honoured in their generations and were the glory of their times. There be of them, that have left a name behind them, that their praises might be reported." And we are today engaged in respecting its opening injunction by reporting the praises of some particular men and women, our Benefactors. By thus commemorating them we manifest our conviction that, in supporting and strengthening the College, they acted well. Why that is so is something we shall touch on again. But for the moment let us consider something else.

We are all familiar with the idea that a good deed may be done for the wrong reason. And it is another familiar idea that altruistic and public-spirited reasons are good, while seeking something pleasant for oneself is at best morally neutral and at worst culpably selfish. So a stock example of doing a good deed for the wrong reason is acting in a way which, as it happens, benefits others, but doing so with an eye to its having a desirable outcome for oneself.

Suppose now that our Benefactors had known that both their generations and later generations would honour and praise them. Suppose also that this knowledge had in some way cheered them on and encouraged them in doing what they did. Does this mean that they acted for the wrong reason? "What an ungenerous, mean-minded and inappropriate speculation!" you may be thinking. "This is not the occasion to be prying into the motives of our Benefactors, or pursuing lines of thought which might redound to their discredit."

But it is important to reflect on the motives from which actions spring. We would like to think that we are capable of being moved by generous concern for the common good. But the view that we are stirred to action only by less creditable and more self-regarding motives has a long history and remains as lively as ever today. Such cynicism is a corrosive force and the suggestion it brings, that humans cannot be expected to behave well, has self-fulfilling tendencies. To refuse to engage with these suspicions may do no service to our Benefactors. It may give too much credence to the thought that reflection will reveal only unpalatable truths. So let us probe at least some of the tangled worries about motives and the self.

One response to the dispiriting suggestion of universal selfishness is what we might call 'the genial self-interest view'. It points out that different people take satisfaction in different things. Let us allow, it says, that we act always to secure what we consider desirable for ourselves. This should not be depressing since some selfish concerns are, contrary to general supposition, positively good. This is because some self-involved concerns lead reliably to behaviour which benefits others. Some of us, regrettably, get our kicks from making others envious or from inspiring fear in them. If we are individuals of this kind our actions will not benefit others. But some of us get our pleasure from a sense of our power to contribute to the happiness of those around us, or from knowing that we appear, in our own and others' eyes, to be honest or kindly, wise or conscientious. If we get our satisfactions in these latter ways we shall find that we cannot make ourselves happy except by promoting the common good. So our Benefactors were indeed selfish, says the genial self-interest view. They aimed to secure for themselves praise and honour for their beneficent actions. But since it was the right kind of selfishness which moved them, they acted for the right reasons.

There are important insights embodied in this way of looking at things. But there is also, perhaps, something distorted. One insight is that individual interests often do not conflict. It is a hopeful fact about human life that people are capable of living at peace with each other and, more than that, they are capable of working together and thereby creating wonderful things which they can all enjoy. Our reading points us in the direction of a fine example by reminding us of those who found out musical tunes. In a musical performance many people are involved – the composer, the conductor, the singers, the instrumentalists and the audience. Together they bring into being something of much greater richness and interest than any of them could achieve alone. If you and I are fellow participants in such an enterprise, it is not your good against my good. Rather your good and my good are inseparable aspects of a whole which can be realised only by and for all of us together. And the same is true of innumerable other human activities, in which as family members, friends, colleagues and fellow citizens we carry forward the intertwined strands of our shared life.

The genial self-interest view is illuminating also in reminding us (if we need reminding) that shared enterprises offer rewards of many kinds. These include, for example, the pleasing sense of one's own abilities and the satisfaction of being well thought of. They may not figure much in our open talk with each other, where we stress rather our delight in the rewards common to us all. But they certainly figure in the private thoughts of many. It would be absurd to deny this or to deny the importance and usefulness of such thoughts in helping us to behave as we should. The set of motivations that keeps us on the right path is more diverse and ramshackle than some official rhetoric suggests.

So we can learn from the genial self-interest view. Where then might it misrepresent matters? As a way of approaching this, let us return to the topic of why our Benefactors did right when they supported and strengthened the College.

The starting point for reflection here is that the College is a place where many shared projects are pursued and enabled, centrally, of course, that of seeking knowledge. The value of that project has many dimensions, of which I mention only some relevant to our particular theme. First seeking knowledge is, like music, another prime example of a co-operative endeavour. We build on the thoughts and discoveries of our predecessors; we pool our insights and perplexities, thereby coming to a better understanding than any of us could achieve alone; the full interest and richness of ideas emerge only as they are communicated and discussed.

A second dimension of the value of knowledge is that it brings further benefits as it is diffused and applied. Let me mention just one example here. Although human beings are capable of living together in peace and channelling their energies creatively, for many this possibility is not realised and we see instead violence and brutality, squalor and destruction. In the face of this misery, indignant moralising or expressions of fine aspirations are of limited effect. More useful is the kind of understanding of human beings on which we may base realistic, practical policies by which decent social stability can be created and maintained. Many academic disciplines have contributed and will continue to contribute to this.

A third dimension of the value of the College's commitment to knowledge takes us even closer to our key concern, the self and right reason. We are committed to achieving knowledge and understanding, of ourselves and of the world, as extensive and as deep as we can make it. In being committed to this we are committed also to objectivity, intellectual integrity, not in the sense of something which makes us cold or detached but in the sense of something which makes us capable of seeing things as they are, even if that is not as we would like them to be.

Why is this of importance? Consider again a musical performance. Suppose there is a solo to be sung and hence praise and recognition to be garnered. Suppose further that I could sing it reasonably well but you could sing it sublimely. What will I do? One thing that may happen is that I delude myself into thinking that I am better than you. Then I can, in good conscience, seek for myself the role and the plaudits that go with it. Frequently people deceive themselves into views of their own capacities and views about what is really good for the whole, which allow them to think that their good and the common good coincide very exactly. Here is evidence that at least part of many people's motives for contributing to the common good is that they thereby achieve certain rewards for themselves.

So the good self-interested motivations, which the genial self-interest view relies on to keep us on the straight and narrow, are not guaranteed to do so. The maximum individual good for me (even if I have these kinds of motivations) and the general good will not necessarily coincide. Even the desire to be thought of as one who does right, although it will generally move us in the same direction as the simple desire to do right, may pull apart from it. The genial self-interest view assumes that, for each of us, our interest in the rich shared good derives wholly from our interest in the part we can play in it. It predicts therefore than when individual good and common good diverge then, either baldly or under the cloak of self-deception, a person will pursue individual good.

But is this so? Must it be so? One thing that can help us here is integrity and our shared commitment to it. A capacity for honest thinking may enable us to distinguish individual good from the general good. If we care about integrity we may be willing to develop the habit of such thinking and to put in place those institutional practices of open discussion which will support and solidify those habits.

Another response to awareness of the risk of conflict between individual satisfaction and the general good is to seek to do good in ways which cannot be distorted by self-concern. For example, some give to good causes anonymously and so hope to keep themselves out of the way of the temptation to self-glorification. This is an honourable impulse. But not every good result can be achieved this way. One cannot comfort the bereaved anonymously; one cannot inspire a pupil anonymously; one cannot transfuse courage into the fainthearted anonymously.

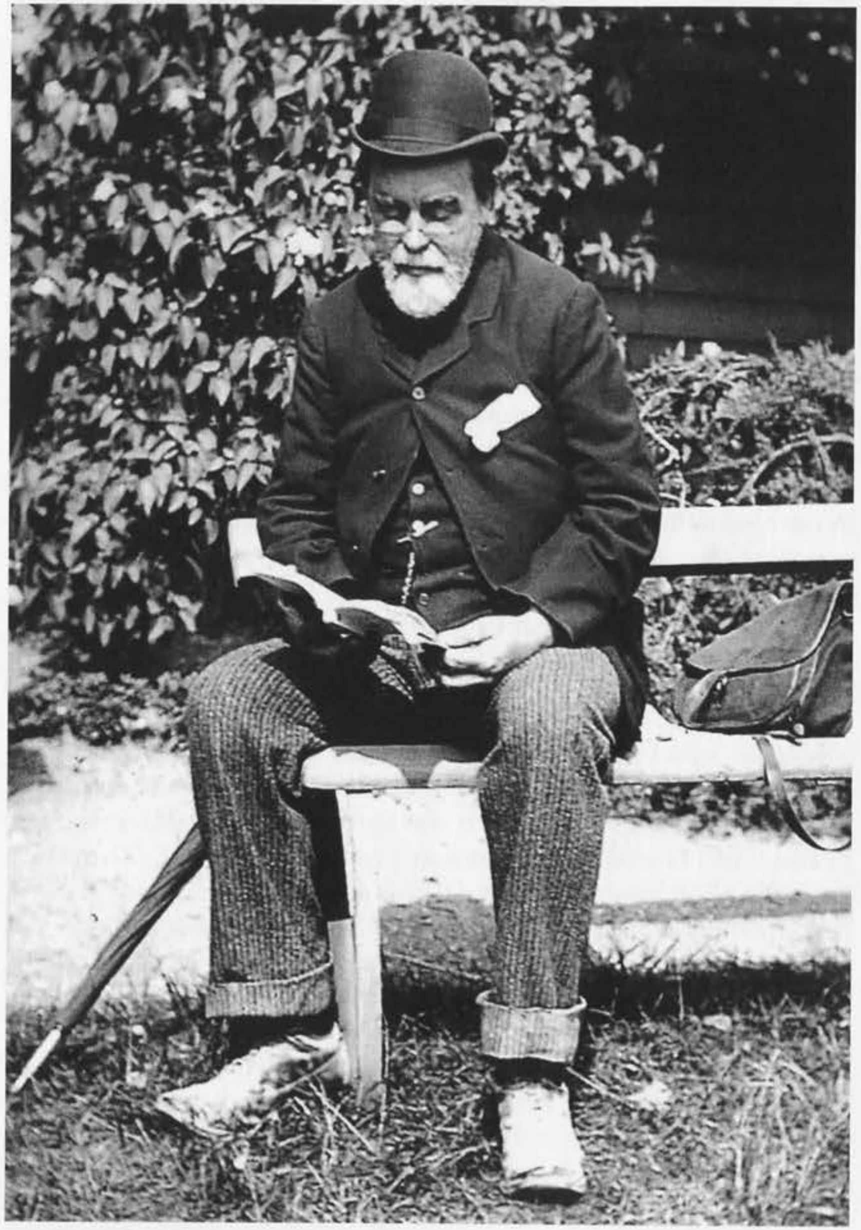
How closely our various motives link! There's a mere hair's breadth between admirable willingness to stand up and be counted and those other thoughts 'How do I look? Am I making a good impression?' that do indeed tend to creep in. That's how it is with us. These are risks we shall have to take. To wish to efface oneself, not to be there, not to be recognised in what one does, is to wish to deny the importance of communication, of the presence of human beings to one another. Our Benefactors took the risks and hoped, surely rightly, that we would respond by recognising their good will and honouring their vision. The question is not whether we or they are as pure as driven snow. The question is whether we have ever been seized and moved by the vision of a shared and rich and generous world and whether, if so, we are willing to make the effort of integrity to unify the motley crew of our other impulses and to harness them to serve towards its realisation. Each of us has been encouraged and inspired by many others, who have stood up to be counted for the good, who have said what they care about and have shown in their actions that they mean what they say. Must we not be willing to do the same?

Jane Heal

THE WAY OF ALL FLESH: SAMUEL BUTLER, 1835-1902

No one can claim that the very first issue of *The Eagle*, published in 1859, lacks variety. Reflections on Paley's *Moral Philosophy*, on Alcester ('by an Old Alcestrian'), and some decently anonymous poetry ('Death-Songs – Uhland') stand alongside an interesting account of 'Grappling' (trout-tickling to the uninitiated) and stern 'Advice to a Modern Historian'. In such company, a modest little article 'On English Composition, and other matters', by 'Cellarius', is easily overlooked. Appearances, though, can be deceptive, for the work has both interest and significance for the future. Here is the first published work of Samuel Butler, later well known as an artist, a photographer, and as the author of those two enduring classics, *Erewhon* and *The Way of All Flesh*. In later years Butler contributed regularly to the pages of his College magazine, but this short essay, written at the age of twenty-four, contains the seeds of much that remained important to the life and career of an interesting Victorian polymath.

'On English Composition' was also Butler's Johnian swansong. After coxing the Lady Margaret boat to the head of the river in 1858 he concluded a pact with his clergyman father, who had long hoped that the boy might follow him into the Church. Butler, however, rejected a future in Holy Orders. Instead, it was agreed that he would go to New Zealand, and farm sheep in a remote part of South Island. Thereafter, he would be allowed to strike out on his own. Accordingly, in the same year that his *Eagle* article was published, Butler set sail for the Antipodes. He did not return to England until 1864, one year short of his thirtieth birthday. New Zealand gave Butler the inspiration for *Erewhon*, his thoroughly engaging satire on Victorian society. Features in the Canterbury hinterland are still readily recognisable in the book. However, these years, in Butler's own opinion, were wasted. Worse, by cutting him off from the influence and instruction of contemporaries at a crucial moment, they forever denied him the chance of real success as an artist. He came home desperate to 'catch up', nourishing a lifelong bitterness towards his father memorably expressed in *The Way of All*



Samuel Butler

Flesh. The frustration of cherished ambitions festered, sharpening his adopted role as the detached outsider, who looked amusedly - or bemusedly - upon a society intent on rejecting him and much that he claimed to hold dear.

Cellarius's contribution to *The Eagle* is typical of the man; Butler went on writing curious little pieces all his life. He was notorious among contemporaries for, among other heresies, suggesting that the author of *The Odyssey* was a woman, dating many of Shakespeare's sonnets to the mid 1580s, questioning certain fundamentals of Christianity and arguing with Charles Darwin, not out of any particular religious scruple, but because he considered Darwin's scientific arguments essentially flawed. The gadfly in his nature appealed to some, but - just as predictably - outlandish opinions, outlandishly expressed, went rather too far for most of his contemporaries. Though talented, and able, Butler spread those talents too thinly; his scholarship was in places decidedly threadbare, and he made far too many enemies. Of course, there is a fascination in the unconventional, and Butler remained an intriguing, curious figure, at once typical of and at odds with the age in which he lived. Intensely Victorian in many ways, he was nevertheless able to transcend many constraints of his time; certainly, his lasting reputation is founded squarely upon his appeal to what we would now term post-Victorian values. Though Butler never secured a professional or academic post, his two fine novels have remained in print for a century, widely translated and still selling well to new audiences. His witticisms and opinions continue in everyday use. A hundred years after his death, his name remains remarkably well known.

Many, however, believe that not *enough* is known; the man himself still stands in shadow, and few have as yet really got to grips with the intriguing, indeed perplexing contradictions in Butler's character. With the approach of his centenary year, St John's decided to set out a more rounded picture of the artist and his work, drawing on the College Library's unique and splendid Samuel Butler Collection. After Butler's death in June 1902 the College acquired - thanks to his devoted friend and executor, Henry Festing Jones - a large accumulation of Butler's papers, photographs, music and paintings, together with numerous printed editions of his various works. It has been adding to that core collection ever since, and the decision to stage a major exhibition of his work in the School of Pythagoras during June 2002 offered an opportunity to gather a wide variety of these items together in a series of stimulating and varied displays. A remarkable array of Butler's photographs, described and analysed in a specially-printed accompanying booklet by Dr Elinor Shaffer of the School of Advanced Study, University of London, stood alongside more than thirty paintings, ranging from the naïve and charming *Family Prayers* of 1865 to the accomplished late watercolours of mountain scenery in Italy and the Alps. Editions of Butler's books were complemented by his own copy of Darwin's *Origin of Species* in the first edition, complete with Butler's critical annotations. Many College Library collections, of course, include memorabilia, and the Butler Collection is no exception. The branding iron that he used on his sheep in New Zealand, and Butler's somewhat idiosyncratic portable medicine chest, greatly enhanced the displays.

Amid so many treasures, Butler's extraordinary, evocative photographs attracted particular attention. Expertly printed from the original glass negatives by Dudley Simons, Photographer in the Department of Earth Sciences, they amply illustrate the photographer's eye for the quirky, the curiosities of religious custom, and, especially, for the 'literature that is in life'. Sleeping passengers on a Sicilian ferry are modern-day lotus eaters; an unsuspecting woman is identified as the Wife of Bath, the actor Johnston Forbes-Robertson, in costume armour, steps from the pages of medieval romance. Grotesque, even disturbing images challenge preconceptions, or tease, albeit rather gently. Butler's fascination for the work of the Renaissance sculptor and painter Gaudenzio Ferrari, and in particular for Ferrari's remarkable sanctuaries and frescos at Varallo and several other pilgrimage sites in northern Italy, emphasises the point.

Another extraordinary photograph, shot in the streets of Greenwich in 1892, shows a deaf and blind bookseller, seated, reading from a vast Braille Bible. By his side stand children, dressed in their Sunday best and staring at the camera, their backs turned on an array of those posters so characteristic of London street-scenes in this period. Who, here, is really gaining an understanding of, or even an insight into, superior, essential knowledge? Readers will be cheered to note that precious images from these fragile, sometimes deteriorating, negatives are now being captured digitally as part of a major Library conservation project. It is also pleasant to record that a large number of photographs from the Samuel Butler Collection formed the main ingredient in a very successful exhibition at the Tate Britain, which ran from the late autumn of 2002 until the spring of 2003.

Designed to accompany and complement the exhibition, a one-day colloquium in June 2002, organised by Dr Rublack, sought to stimulate new research by engaging in a conversation about Butler's multi-disciplinary approach to knowing and imagining the past, present and future. From the University, Dame Gillian Beer discussed Butler and Memory, and Dr Mary Beard considered Butler's case for the alleged 'Homeress'. Dr Shaffer looked at the writer-photographer in nineteenth-century Europe; Dr Elizabeth Edwards (Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford) considered Butler's approach to photographic observation; Dr Thomas Röske (Frankfurt) discussed Butler's concept of the 'natural artist'; while Professor James Paradis (MIT) rounded the day off by reflecting on Butler's legacy. Continuing its commitment to so worthy a cause, the College is now supporting the publication of these talks, supplemented by specially-commissioned contributions from other experts on Butler's work and thought in a volume edited by Professor Paradis. The twentieth century, as has been noted, found Butler more to its taste than the nineteenth. George Bernard Shaw and James Joyce, among many others, commended his stylish, challenging irreverence, his demolition of Victorian shibboleths, while generations of angry young people, grievously misunderstood by the old and grey, have seized upon the elegant denunciation of uncaring parents in *The Way of All Flesh*. On the evidence of last year's centenary celebrations, it would seem that the allure remains, and that Butler has a message, or messages, for many living in the twenty-first century as well.

Mark Nicholls

PUNCTATOR

When I came up to St John's in 1947 we were required to dine in Hall on five evenings in the week. Our presence was checked by the Head Porter against a printed list of undergraduates. The list was supported by a sheet of sackcloth stretched across a wooden frame about the size of a foolscap sheet. The names were marked with a prick made with a steel stylus. If a mistake was made the prick was cancelled by a second prick placed alongside it. On one occasion I saw the porter sharpening his stylus on the stonework of the buttery doorpost, but no trace of this activity remains on the stone.

I was aware that this was an ancient method of marking a list, since the Queen, when appointing new sheriffs, pricks them off from her list. The ceremony takes place at a Privy Council meeting held in March when a long roll of paper, originally vellum, is unrolled before the Queen by the Clerk of the Privy Council. On it are the names of those nominated for the office of High Sheriff by the Great Officers of State. The person to be selected is usually at the top of the list and the Queen pierces his name with a brass-handled bodkin.

Tradition has it that Elizabeth I was sitting sewing in the garden when the Sheriff's Roll was brought to her for marking. Having no pen to hand, she pricked it with her bodkin. The legend gains likelihood from the fact that earlier rolls are marked with a small black dot, whereas all subsequent ones are marked by pricking.

The procedure is mentioned by Shakespeare in *Henry IV Part I* where Falstaff is assembling his motley array of recruits for the King's army. He turns to his sergeant with the instruction to 'prick him'. There must be many in a modern audience who think that it is the unfortunate recruit who is to be pricked and not the list.

I have recently discovered that the method of marking a list by pricking is much older than I had thought. In the life of St Bogumil, a Bulgarian heretic of the tenth century, there is a monastic official described as the *punctator* whose job it was to note those absent from divine service, 'Qui absentes a choro et officinis divinis notat'.

So it seems that marking a list by pricking has an ancient history.

Punctator, du Cange 'Glossarium . . .'

I am very grateful to Michele Edwards, Press Officer to Buckingham Palace, for detailed information about the ceremony of pricking off the sheriffs.

Roger Morgan

Roger died on 1 March 2003;
see obituary on pp.76-78

NEW DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Dr David Hill matriculated at St John's in 1976 and now returns as Director of Music

I feel extremely privileged to be returning to St John's to become Director of Music. The retirement of Dr Christopher Robinson marks the end of a remarkable era in which the Choir has continued to attract the critical praise of musicians, critics and public alike. The obvious strategy for any new Director is to apply change to the working processes and, as a natural consequence, create a new sound: but the sensitive conductor stands back, listens, learns and inwardly digests what makes a particular group interact so effectively and then applies those areas of change which feel appropriate.

The Guest legacy lives on in the sound which the Choir presently produces - warm, resonant, vibrant and, above all, expressive. These are just some of the words that can describe this remarkable group whether under George Guest or from the last decade, under Christopher Robinson. The problem I confront is succeeding Christopher who has been so successful in understanding the legacy and yet making it his own. I see this as perhaps my greatest professional challenge to date, such is my admiration. So will it change? Any group will reflect the musical personality of its Director, and yes, there will be differences but I hope they will evolve steadily and as naturally as possible. As to future plans; the 'Opus Dei' will continue to be the centre of the Choir's activity alongside a greater focus on concert work in the UK. Foreign tours, particularly to the USA are being planned and recording will continue to be an important element of the Choir's work. There are exciting times ahead and I am greatly looking forward to the many challenges and opportunities which face us.

David Hill

KEPPLEWRAY

For many years a group of Johnians have travelled with the Chaplain to a place of retreat during the Easter vacation, to escape from the trials of Cambridge, recover from the rigours of a busy term and spend time enjoying the Lakeland scenery familiar to Wordsworth and indulge in some spiritual refreshment. Up to 1993 groups would travel to Rydal Mount, a retreat centre in a somewhat genteel old house clinging to the hillside, but a stone's throw from Wordsworth's birthplace. The arrival of Nick Moir as Chaplain in 1995 saw a change of venue to a Victorian mansion in the small town of Broughton-in-Furness in South Cumbria, which, as the regulars from previous retreats were to find out very quickly as we drew up the pot-holed drive, was a somewhat different establishment. And so began a surprisingly strong and personally rewarding relationship between St John's College and the Kepplewray foundation.

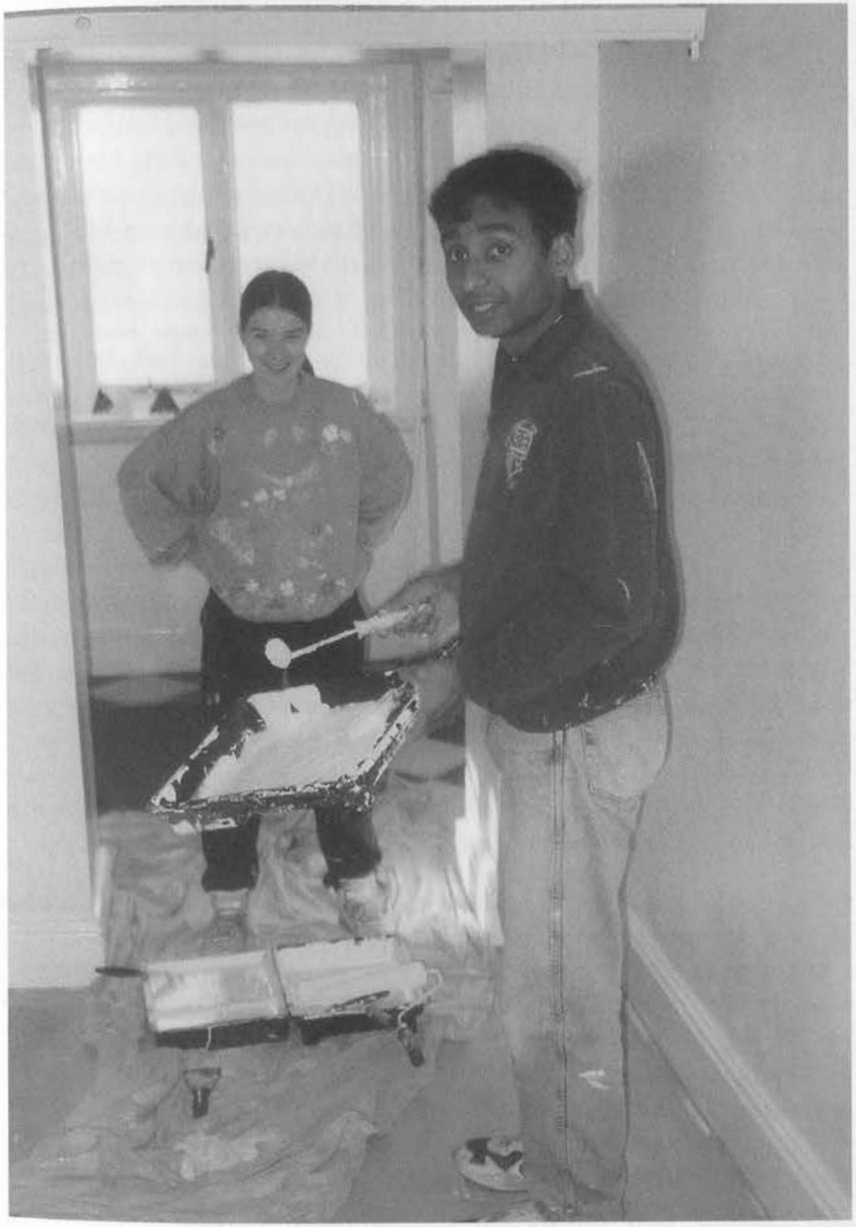
The Kepplewray Trust was founded in the late 1980s to establish an activity, holiday, education and retreat centre specially equipped to welcome people of all abilities. The brainchild of The Revd John Libby, the Kepplewray Trust bought the rambling Victorian mansion and set about the daunting task of updating it. Set in extensive, if overgrown, grounds on a steep hill, the somewhat gloomy looking three-storey building was constructed in 1899 for a wealthy industrialist, but had been empty for several decades after serving as a boarding school for disabled children. It was, as estate agents might point out, an ultimate 'modernisation opportunity'. With limited funds and a vast amount of work to do, the Kepplewray foundation turned to volunteer work parties to help in the enormous tasks of clearing the grounds and making the interiors inhabitable. And so, with the promise of free accommodation in return for a few days of labour, a group of a dozen or so Johnians and the Chaplain set off on what would be the first of seven weeks spent at Kepplewray.

The Kepplewray formula was a simple yet successful one, which was to remain unchanged, like the best Johnian traditions, throughout our visits there. We would arrive in a convoy of cars obtained from the aptly named 'hire-a-heap', and spend three days working inside and outside the building, interlaced with three days exploring the surrounding countryside. For some, the latter would entail vigorous death-marches across the high ridges and steep hills of the Lake District, whereas for others it would involve a more leisurely tour of tea shops and perhaps even the Beatrix Potter Museum, followed by a boat tour of Lake Windermere.

Of course, over the years Kepplewray changed as the mansion was gradually restored and refurbished. In our first visit, as the first group of Johnian pioneers would never forget to point out to later students accustomed to more commodious accommodation, we almost literally camped out in the building. There was no heating, and we slept in two drafty dormitories. We shared a single bath in the bleak bathroom, complete with rows of door-less lavatory cubicles, and we cooked our food in the original kitchen in a crumbling outbuilding. But what food! Despite, and perhaps because of, these dilapidated surroundings, we would, under the guidance of James Manning, cook up dinners rivalled only by the Cripps Feast, eaten from a row of low paint-encrusted primary school tables and seated on cracked plastic chairs, stretching the cutlery supplies to the limit.

As the years moved on things gradually got warmer, cleaner, and more comfortable. New bathrooms and bedrooms were built, a new kitchen was installed and manned by permanent staff. New carpets sprang up on what were once bare boards, and magnolia paint blossomed where startling 1960s wallpapers had once festered. To the hardcore pioneers, things were never quite the same as that first visit. However, no one would deny the pleasure at seeing some of the first guests enjoying their stays alongside us in later years.

Far from being a means to an end, the work was, for most Johnians, the highlight of the week. The huge feeling of satisfaction at standing back and looking at a freshly painted wall which had been untouched for decades. The exhilaration of hacking a path through years of unmanaged woodland. The sense of playing a significant if small part, in such an important and worthwhile project. Of course not all jobs



Baylon Kamalarajan and Jenny Hunter redecorating the entrance hall at Kepplewray were so satisfying. There was a strange circularity about some of the jobs. One year we would empty the rambling attics from the old bunk beds, donated furniture and other artifacts and pile the contents carefully in a downstairs room. The next year we would move them back up the long flights of stairs to the upper floors, and so the annual cycle would continue, with the regularity of the seasons. The challenge was always to convince Peter Fox, the wonderfully warm and welcoming resident staff member responsible for the work parties, to burn as much as possible on the bonfires, which became a trademark of our weeks there, to avoid being faced with the same recalcitrant wardrobe or mattress a year later.

Not all jobs were so destructive. We would fill gaping holes with plaster, paint walls, ceilings and doors, and even hang wallpaper. Nick Moir and his future wife Ros laboured for many days installing a beautifully mitred and perfectly level skirting board one year, only to find a year later that the floor level had been raised by a foot to enable easier wheelchair access, requiring their masterpiece to be removed. In the first year we completed the mammoth task of clearing the grounds, removing and burning vast amounts of ivy, saplings and brambles. We attacked the dense mass of undergrowth with two teams working in opposite directions, and great celebrations were held when we finally met up and shook hands, through the brambles. As the years progressed we even built adventure playgrounds designed by some of the best Johnian engineering brains.

Far from collapsing into bed after a hard days work, walking or tea shop visiting, we would entertain ourselves well into the early hours with rumbustuous singing around the piano, led over the years by Baylon Kamalarajan, Helen Pattinson and Ivan Guevara. In fact musical history was made at Kepplewray when Ivan composed a piece which later became immortalised on his CD of Latin American music, recorded with Graham Walker. It must be said that much of the rest of our enthusiastically produced music, which the resident staff were no doubt unwittingly exposed to in their upstairs rooms, was of a somewhat lower quality. We also regularly played various party games, the most popular of which being the 'Animal Game', the rules of which would sustain an entire article of their own. Suffice it to say it involved impersonation of the more characterful members of the animal kingdom (the moose and seal always bringing out some of the more spirited and impressive displays) to usurp more senior animals in the animal kingdom. As with all good Johnian traditions, the Animal Game was an essential ingredient of every Kepplewray week, and was kept alive with numerous new and inventive rules, including the ferociously complicated 'dynamic seat reallocation' which brought a whole new level of intellectual challenge to the game.

Alongside this packed schedule of working, walking, eating, drinking and entertainment there was always an optional, though very popular, spiritual element at the heart of our week. The days would start with a simple act of morning worship, and the evenings would conclude (or indeed begin, depending on the extent of the revelry that would often follow) with Compline. There was usually a critical mass of theologians (both armchair and professional) to ensure that deep and at times impenetrable discussions on diverse technicalities of Christian doctrine would continue into the early hours, fuelled by the seemingly endless bottles of wine. Never the greatest supporter of the *Alternative Service Book*, James Manning, in one of our first visits, held competing *Book of Common Prayer* Matins in the sacred surroundings of the kitchen while frying bacon and stirring cream into our less-than-puritan porridge. This schism apart, our visits were in the main characterised by a very tangible spirit of unity and understanding.

No account of our visits to Kepplewray would be complete without a mention of Roddy Vann's beloved Land Rover. Like me, Roddy was fortunate enough to have been a part of every visit to Kepplewray, and in early years he would lust after the Fox's Land Rover, taking every opportunity to drive it while working in the grounds. Eventually Roddy bought his own Land Rover, which was to become an integral part of future visits. This ancient yet endearing vehicle, with its bone-shaking suspension, primitive heating and ear-piercing roar would carry the braver students and much of our luggage from St Johns, always arriving last, and discharging its frozen and exhausted passengers at Kepplewray with a feeling of real satisfaction. The Land Rover was put to work in the grounds, and in the final year, as if in some valedictory act, shifted a rock that must have weighed in at well over a ton. Even its temporary demise through a gearbox failure was portrayed in a most surreal way by Jenny Hunter in a game of Charades.

When Nick Moir's time at St John's came to an end, we feared that our visits to Kepplewray might cease. Fortunately though, Duncan Dormor threw himself wholeheartedly into the Kepplewray experience, donning his trademark paint-daubed tracksuit trousers and leading the decorating with the evangelical enthusiasm of a television makeover show presenter. His well-practiced skills in 'bonfire supervision' were equally impressive, and he was even known to miss meals in his diligent vigil of the smouldering pyres of garden waste and discarded furniture.

The Christian vision of those who dreamed up and managed the project was always reflected in the warm welcome they extended to us throughout the years. Peter Fox, who lived with his family in the house in the early Kepplewray years, would direct our work and supply us with the tools we needed. His wife, Pat, later cooked for us when the smart new kitchens were completed, while their teenage son, Paul, entertained us with chainsaw antics and displays of petrol-fuelled pyrotechnics in the grounds. The staff team would grow over the years, with Taff Bowles and his family taking their turn to endure our late night activities, and Jane Petch taking over the running of the kitchen. Finally, Sarah, Simmonis and Johan and Emma were to replace Taff's family as the resident staff.

Every year we half-joked, and half-feared, that our relationship with Kepplewray would soon come to an end, with the work finished and the transformation of the house complete. Yet, thankfully for us, we somehow managed a total of seven weeks over seven years at Kepplewray. Early this year, however, we discovered that Kepplewray had now reached a stage when it no longer needed work parties, marking an end in this chapter of Johnian life. It was truly the end of a very happy era, although in many other ways it is the beginning of a new phase in Kepplewray's mission. It would be good to think that we were a victim of our own success, but in reality we played a small part in the huge task that converting Kepplewray into a successful inclusive activity and retreat centre was to be.

I wonder how many Johnians, like me, will look back fondly at the Kepplewray experience each time they lift a paintbrush or dig their garden? I am sure I am not alone in learning so many of my DIY skills from my weeks spent there. As someone who was privileged enough to be a part of every visit to Kepplewray, I would like to thank all those Johnians who have taken part in the annual Kepplewray visits, and for those at Kepplewray who have made us feel so welcome.

Jonathan Halls

The Kepplewray group in 1999

OVERSEAS VISITING SCHOLARS

The origins of the College's current arrangements for welcoming overseas scholars go back to 1969, the last year of the Mastership of John Boys Smith, when the Educational Needs Committee recommended a major expansion of the College's activities in fostering contacts with scholars overseas. In 1946 the College had agreed to establish the Dominion Fellowship. This (in 1959 renamed the Commonwealth Fellowship) brought to the College each year an overseas academic to pursue his own research and to make contacts here. Those who came were predominantly from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa and were already established scholars.

The object of the 1969 initiative, made possible by increased availability of funds, was to extend invitations to three new classes of visitors, namely distinguished non-Commonwealth academics, scholars from Europe (particularly Eastern Europe), and promising young scholars from developing countries. The arrangements envisaged the College playing host to several overseas scholars at one time, each staying for one, two or three terms, and representing a wide range, both geographically and in terms of career stage.

The broad framework laid out in 1969 is still in place. One subsequent development strengthened the commitment to visitors from less advantaged countries by reserving places for them, and another encouraged visitors from the Far East. In 1993 the strand of activity represented by the Dominion Fellowship (in 1986 again renamed as the Benians Fellowship) was finally subsumed into the more general arrangements for overseas visitors. The Fellowship, as a named role, was discontinued, together with the (potentially divisive and unhappy) custom of electing some visitors (those who were here for three terms) to Fellowships. The current scheme, now in operation for ten years, allows for up to six overseas visitors to be in residence at any one time, except in the Michaelmas Term when only three can be accommodated. All visitors are sponsored by a Fellow, who takes particular responsibility for introducing them to the College. Most are housed on the north west edge of the College, in Merton Cottage, on the Madingley Road or in Benians Court.

The first overseas scholars under the 1969 proposals arrived in 1971 and since then more than one hundred and seventy scholars have visited the College. It has been my privilege as President over the past three and a half years to welcome thirty-three of them, from at least seventeen different countries and all five continents. There have been historians of Chinese Court music and of medieval Spanish kingship, researchers on the depths of the Indian Ocean and on the structure of quasi-crystals, experts on the economy of Brazil and the archaeology of the Sudan. We hope that they find their stay in Cambridge productive, from the point of view of pursuing their own research. We are certain that they have brought to the College a remarkable and valuable range of contacts with the wider world.

Jane Heal

Emma Falque

Emma Falque is Professor at the University of Seville. She is Specialist in Medieval Latin and has devoted a large part of her work to the Medieval Latin chronicles, of which she has edited the Historia Compostellana and the Historia Roderici in the Corpus Christianorum (CC CM, 70 and 71). In this field she has relied on the support of Dr Linehan and Cambridge University itself, as since 1995 she has come every summer to work in the University Library.

The possibility of being at St John's College during the year 2002-2003 is something that offers more than just an academic opportunity. A medievalist can certainly find here the resources to finish the critical edition of a medieval chronicle, in which she has been involved for some years, the Chronicon Mundi of Lucas of Tuy, an author of the XIII century, and start the edition of another text of the same author , De altera uita, of which we only have a XVII century edition. The resources are an extraordinary library, Cambridge University Library, and the advice of the doyen of History and Historians of Medieval Spain, Peter Linehan.

A Latinist finds here the resources to accomplish a task that would, otherwise, last for many years; but finds something more: the suitable conditions for investigation. Something which may seem just aesthetic or just the respect for traditions, but which turns the green landscapes, the river, the not always clear sky, into a true paradise. Walking through the College on the way to my room, turning my steps towards the College Library, or going just a bit further to the University Library, which are nothing but necessary acts to work, develop into valuable acts in themselves, that, in addition to having lunch or dinner with the Fellows, create the right ambience that makes work possible. And this is possible thanks to the relationship with the Senior Members as well as the young scholars that come here for a few days. Another feature that helps is the possibility of meeting so many specialists in different subjects, so that when we are away from Cambridge we realise that our work is nothing but a small part of other tasks that the scientific community carries out. Everything facilitates and leads to well done work.

Only a short time here is enough to start understanding the traditions of this University in their real sense: being up to date doesn’t mean that the links with an illustrious past have to be broken. The liturgy of the celebrations of the College, of the Chapel, of the High Table, does not put off those who come to St John’s from other universities of the world, but welcomes us in a generous and open manner. St John’s Fellows are truly hospitable and friendly to the Visiting Scholars.

But there is a bit of nostalgia at the moment of writing these lines, which are in a certain sense a summing up of my stay in St John’s College, a productive research time. At this moment in which, as I have seen happen to other scholars, one feels the need of coming back to Cambridge and even setting up home here one day when my teaching duties at the University of Seville are finished, to divide my hours of work between the severe serenity of Cambridge and the light Mediterranean weather. There is some time yet, but I am already dreaming of spending my years of retirement between Cambridge and some place in the south of Spain.

The labyrinth of the University Library has directed me to so many *disiecta membra* contained in it, that the concern that strikes all researchers is starting to worry me: How to walk through all the paths that lie in my way? But before that comes the need to thank St John’s for giving me the chance to perceive all those possibilities.

Emma Falque

During this period in St John’s College in the academic year of 2002-2003 she has finished the edition of the Chronicon Mundi for the same collection (CC CM, 74). This chronicle begins with the origins of the world to the conquest of Cordoba in 1236 by Fernando III. It starts with a general perspective, following the inspiration of San Isidoro, but becomes a national chronicle later on. This edition that has just been published is the first edition of the text, based on the nineteen known manuscripts. She is now starting the edition of another work of Lucas of Tuy, De altera uita, that will be published, Deo uolente, also in Corpus Christianorum.

Sazi Dlamini

Sazi Dlamini came to St John’s College as an Overseas Visiting Scholar in the Easter term of 2003. He is studying for a PhD and also lectures in the Music Department at the University of Natal. He is also a freelance jazz musician, a guitarist with his own township jazz ensemble, and a freelance composer.

It is difficult to put a finger on any one impression that St John’s College, or Cambridge, has made on me since my arrival on the morning of

15 April 2003. I arrived just after midnight by train via London's Kings Cross Station. I left Durban, South Africa on the afternoon of Sunday the 13th. The 50 minute flight to Johannesburg was uneventful, which is quite normal, except I had a leisurely glass of wine without having to bother about a reprimanding slap on the wrist from my dear partner whom I had just left behind. Even now I realise as I'm writing that I had forgotten how she had wept at the airport's departure lounge, while our twelve-year old daughter stared, her big sweet eyes glistening with suppressed tears as she delicately spooned the vanilla ice cream. That's another story altogether. I'm here now, and I'd better explain myself.

Cambridge is a very pretty place, old but peopled by youth. Of course there are people of all ages to be seen out and about and within its buildings – but the essence of its public atmosphere is young people. This curious combination of ancient architecture with youth easily kindles intriguing, perhaps vaguely surreal, experiences in a lonely stranger's soul.

I am essentially a freelance jazz musician, a guitarist leading my own township jazz ensemble 'Skokiana' for nearly ten years now. I compose freelance for documentary film productions and short film. One such short film, loosely based on the experiences of a girl-child orphaned by AIDS, was at this year's Cannes Film Festival. I am a specialist in Zulu children's music performance, for which I compose, make indigenous instruments – flutes, various musical bows and percussion – and conduct occasional workshops in schools and other community-based projects in KwaZulu-Natal province.

I was born nearly four decades ago in the town of Umzinto, just inland from the coast of southern Natal – now called KwaZulu-Natal - in South Africa. My mother was born fifteen miles from the town, inland where the Amahlongwa river springs up from among the rush reeds and dark *umdoni* berry trees. My father, who passed away in May 2002, was born in the Umzimkulu district of Cabhane, bordering the Transkei – in one of the lesser houses of a long line of wandering Swazi princes. His great-grandfather was Fodo kaNombewu, chief of the Nhlangwini clans of the Upper Umzimkulu, who roamed the length and breadth of the fertile Umkhomazi river valley, killing elephants to trade ivory with British settler adventurers such as Francis Farewell.

I am registered as a full-time PhD candidate at the University of Natal's School of Music, under the supervision of Professor Christopher Ballantine (1966). While resident at St John's for the 2003 Easter Term, my sponsor is Professor Roger Parker, head of the Music Faculty at the University of Cambridge. The Overseas Visiting Scholar programme has afforded me an opportunity to conduct fieldwork, library and archival research on a topic concerning South African jazz in exile, entitled –

Blue notes in exile: musical performance syncretism, jazz improvisation and disjunctures in the global cultural economy.

'Blue Notes' was the name of a group of South African musicians who left South Africa to perform at the 1964 Juan les Pins (Antibes) Jazz Festival and ended up in exile in the UK (London) and other parts of continental Europe. The Blue Notes were a contingent of jazz musicians from black townships of the Cape Province who joined up with pianist Chris McGregor, whose father taught for the Scottish Missionary Society at Healdtown and later among the Fingo tribe in the Transkei. The musical careers of the Blue Notes were forged in a crucible of the destructive social ramifications of apartheid, which had an adverse impact on the development of an integrated urban musical performance culture in South Africa.

Their arrival in London is credited with infusing the UK jazz and new music scene with fresh creative energies and expressive jazz performance alternatives, whose reverberations continue to be celebrated to this day. Their original take on the international jazz expressive idiom – coupled with the strength of their mentoring African cultural experiences, both urban and indigenous – has exerted in various ways a strong influence on the present crop of British jazz musicians and improvised music practitioners (among whose ranks have emerged some of today's world-renowned performers). My study is essentially focussed on this legacy, and in view of its celebration away from social and cultural processes which nurtured its birth, its tenuous links with pertinent processes in the development of a popular, black South African musical performance culture.

Of the original six members of the Blue Notes who left South Africa in 1964, only the drummer - Louis Tebogo Moholo - survives. Four of the members – Dudu Pukwana, Johnny Mbizo Dyani, Mongezi Feza, and Chris McGregor – have all died in exile in the years between 1975 and 1990. A sixth member - an influential tenor saxophonist Nikele Moyake - died of a brain tumour soon after returning to his New Brighton township home in Port Elizabeth, in 1965.

Although some of the members of the Blue Notes finally settled and made their homes permanently elsewhere - Johnny Dyani's family in Copenhagen, Mongezi Feza's only daughter in Sweden and Chris McGregor's wife in the south of France – London was their 'cultural home' in exile. London is also where most of their musical activity is largely documented, in the clubs and university halls they performed, the record companies, the several publications and journalistic interest garnered by their presence.

By being at St John's College for the term, I am enabled to commute to London to conduct interviews with the Blue Notes' family members, musicians and promoters who shared a part of the Blue Notes' experiences, as well as to visit libraries and access other UK based institutional resources on the subject of my interest.

At the end of the PhD? I may teach perhaps...but I would certainly be more happy working among the various South African communities, teaching musical performance, instrument making, supporting community cultural performance formations, composing and performing on indigenous musical instruments, especially with children.

Sazi Dlamini

Party in Hall
Antony James (Commended in the College life section of the College art competition)

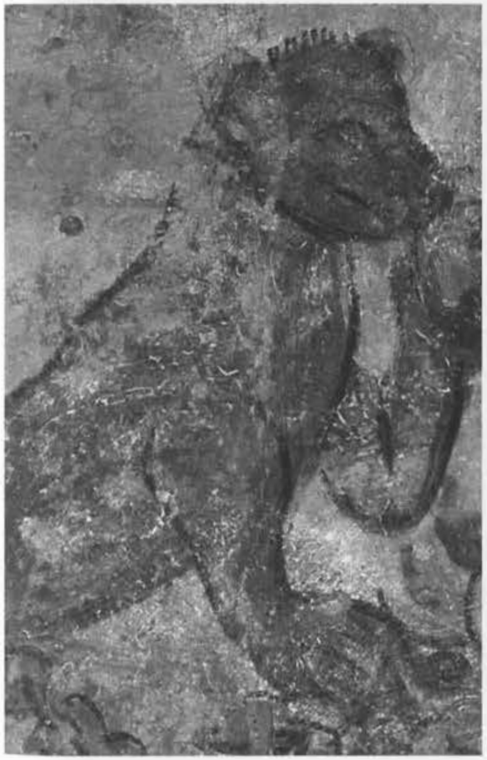
WALL PAINTINGS

Four centuries ago there was something of a fashion for adorning one's bedchamber with elaborate wall paintings, drawing on allegory or on classical mythology. That indifferent, if rather interesting, Oxford poet William Percy, brother to the ninth Earl of Northumberland, described in one of his Epigrams of 1610 an incredible selection of fabulous beasts, Gods and Heroes, lately added by 'Pigmus' to the walls of Percy's bedroom or, as the poet chose to term it, his 'sleeping hold'. Pigmus, it seems, set to work in Sleeping Holds across Cambridge too. Eighty years have now passed since a series of wall paintings was uncovered during the removal of old wallpaper from one of the smaller rooms at the south-western corner of Second Court, in what is now part of K4. Though damaged by the stripping of paper these pictures remained distinct, and the discovery at once sparked a keen, imaginative debate among members of the College and prominent art historians from both London and Cambridge.

It was long supposed, on the basis of few facts and much creative speculation, that the paintings dated from the late seventeenth century, and that they were based on John Dryden's *Fable of The Hind and the Panther*. The possibility that our College's second greatest poet, Matthew Prior, *may* have occupied K4 in the late 1680s, and the fact that Prior attempted a parody of Dryden's *Fable,* lent weight to theories that, in this progressive corner of College at least, the latest fashions in poetry were not only read, but absorbed as an inspiration to a moderately talented artist. In the face of so attractive a tale, flaws in the theory - the deer in the painting is obviously a buck, for example - were quietly set aside.[1]

Even in the 1920s, however, there were those who doubted. One of the foremost experts of the day, Professor E W Tristram of the Royal College of Art, dated the paintings to the first decades of the seventeenth century; to the very period in which Second Court was built, instantly ruling out the Dryden theory. It now seems much more likely that the paintings represent, not some Drydenesque verse, but an allegory of the five senses, of a type commonly found in many forms of art through the later 1500s and the early 1600s. As in the much finer paintings on the Great Staircase at Knole, to take but one example, animals are deployed to illustrate the essence of each individual sense. The characteristic beasts are often the same: a chained ape - in her St John's incarnation she looks more like a hyena - guzzles from a basket of fruit; a stag, alert to the slightest sound, reclines in a pastoral landscape surrounded by drum, viol and, perhaps, pipes. Taste and Hearing are thus accounted for. The perched eagle, a nice if rather obvious Johnian association, represents Sight, the lean dog, Smell, and its close companion, in K4, a startled-looking tortoise, stands in as Touch. The tortoise in particular clearly presented the artist with a challenge beyond his powers.

Other significant features in the K4 composition are the sun in the top-left corner, smiling enigmatically at the observer, the all but obliterated townscape near the stag, and the green church among trees. The church does not quite fit into any discernible theme. It may have been included as part of some further representation below the line of the central timber beam, a composition destroyed in the course of subsequent decoration. This is perhaps unlikely. All that we know of such paintings suggests that they were usually confined to the upper parts of walls, and that they commonly stood over panelling, offering a striking contrast to the regular formality of the wood. There probably never was any panelling in this chamber, but even so it is likely that the conventions were observed: the paintings



are framed by the original timbers, here painted green. Another school of thought suggests that the church may once have accompanied a series of paintings running onto the eastern wall of the room, and, again, long since lost through the changing fashions of interior décor. However, like its neighbour the ape, the church stands within a distinct part border; the two seem intended to complement one another, in a way not yet fully understood. It is equally possible that the church, like the sun, is pure embellishment; given the rather strange grouping of senses this simple theory has its attractions. One might even suspect an attempt to set the church apart from everyday earthly dynamics: to let it stand, in particular, as a complete antithesis to our gluttonous ape!

The ravages of time, discovery, and early twentieth-century preservation techniques are now being addressed in a new and extensive programme of conservation, based on detailed advice from Tobit Curteis Associates, of Cambridge. This short account, indeed, owes a great debt to Tobit Curteis' thorough *Technical Survey and proposals for the Conservation of the Wallpaintings in K4* (2002). Conservation work this summer aims to repair and stabilise the painting, while removing unsuitable, even detrimental, historic repairs. A protective beeswax coating added long ago will be removed, taking advantage of some new, less heavy-handed preservation techniques, and so permitting a closer and more detailed appreciation of the work as a whole. We may never establish the identity of our own College 'Pigmus', or even know if he was a member of St John's, but it is reassuring to know that, exactly four hundred years after the completion of Second Court, this rare survival of an original interior is being preserved for the benefit of future generations.

Mark Nicholls

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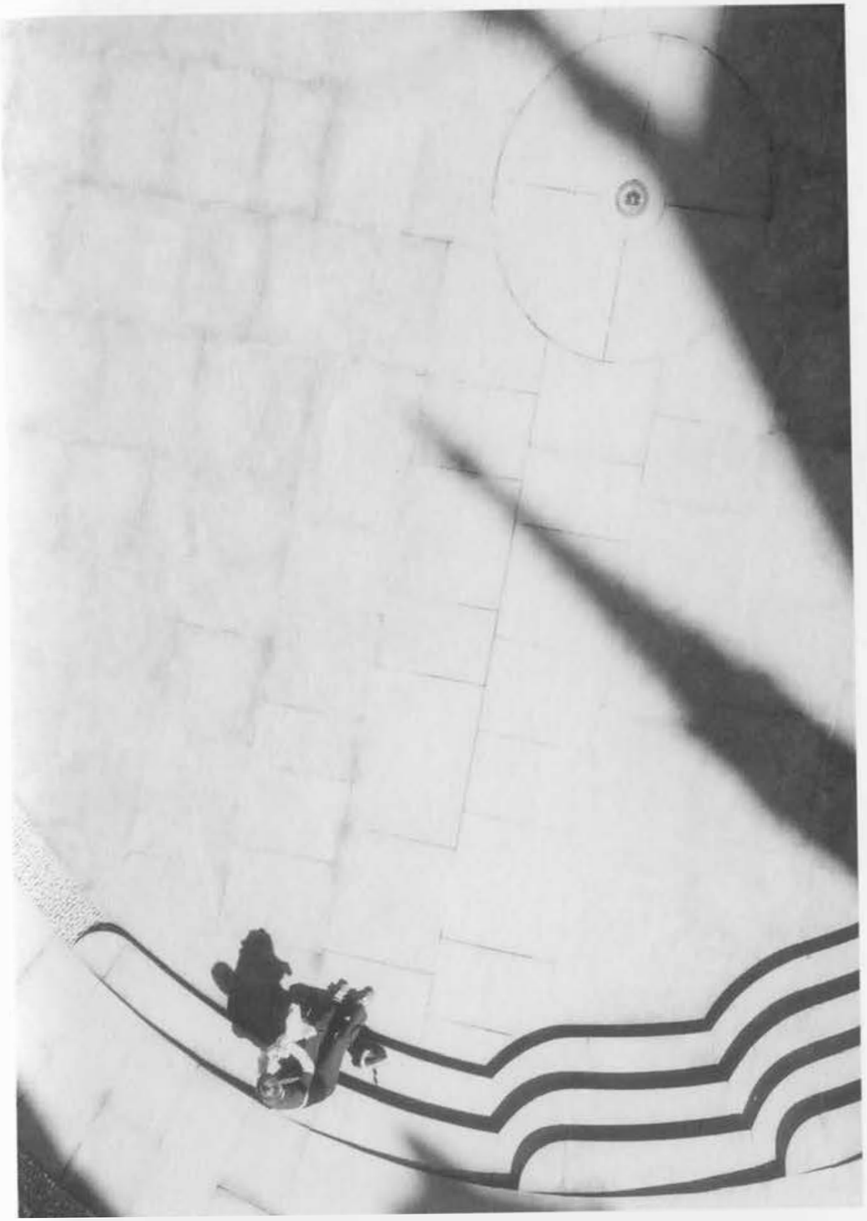
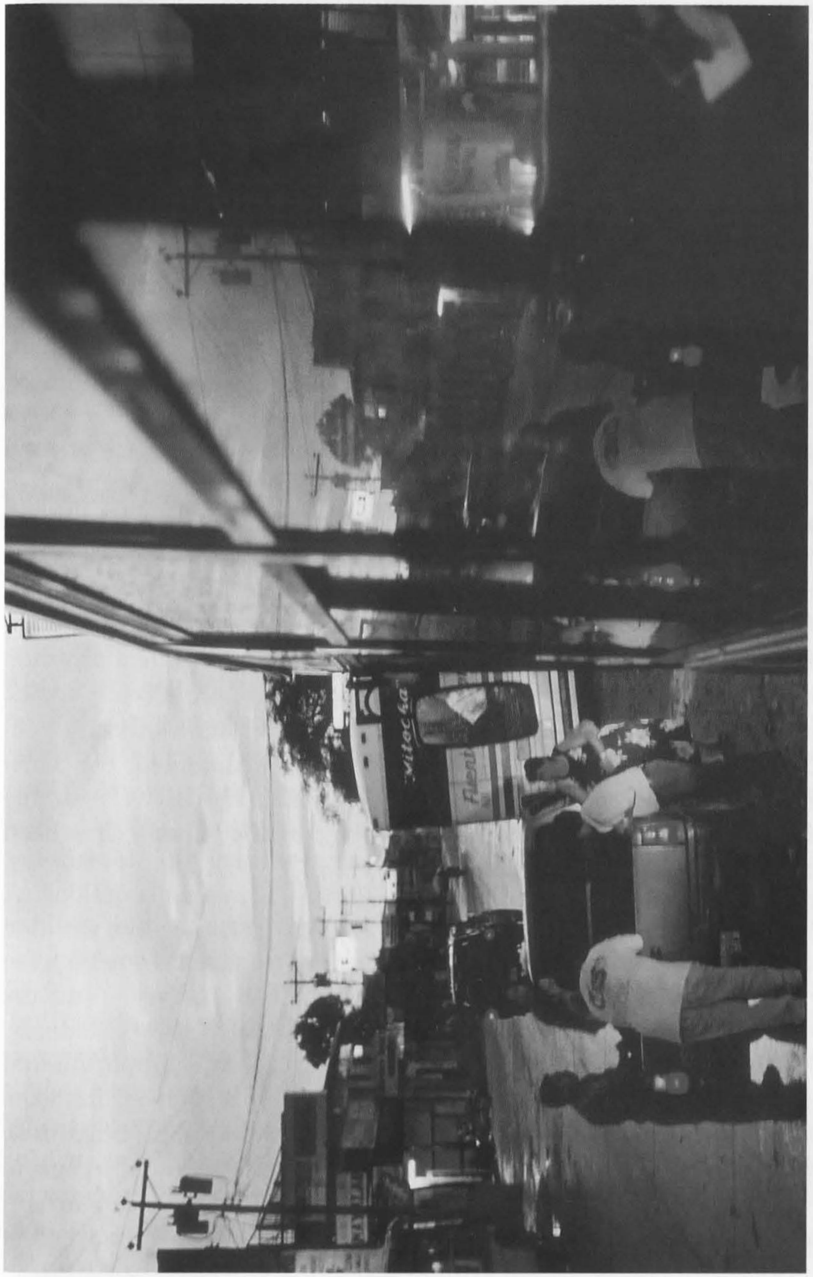
1 'The Wall Paintings in K, Second Court', *The Eagle* 44, No. 193 (Dec. 1925), 1-9.



Chapel Court from above
Piera Beretta (Winner of the College life section of the College art competition)

View over mud flats
Felix Ho (Winner of the colour photography section of the College art competition)



Sunrise in Guatemala
Adam Jackson (Commended in the colour photography section of the College art competition)

THE UPPER LIBRARY CATALOGUING PROJECT

After listing various items of plate and two richly jeweled volumes, probably given by Lady Margaret Beaufort, the first extant inventory of the College Library records (in Latin):

> "The names of the books received by me Robert Shorton for the library of the said College. Firstly I received from the . . . Bishop of Rochester on the last day of September of the third year of the reign of Henry VIII . . . two missals . . . , Symon de Cassia de gestis Christi . . . a work by Floretus in two volumes . . . three volumes of Alexander of Hales . . . a missal printed on paper."

Compiled in about 1516, the year in which St John's College first opened its doors, this early glance at the embryonic library records that, five years earlier, John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, was already giving books to the new foundation. As a first listing of the Library's holdings this Inventory is perhaps the very earliest precursor of the current Upper Library Cataloguing Project, launched in the summer of 2001. Though separated by almost five centuries, the two initiatives share a common goal, the improvement of access to the many wonderful books, manuscripts and other artefacts held in our College Library. On occasion, reassuringly, both initiatives have encountered the same volumes. Recently a record for Simon de Cassia's *De Gestis Christi*, the first identifiable acquisition still remaining in the Library, has been added to the new on-line database.

The two full-time members of staff on the Project have as their goal the creation of high-quality bibliographic records for every book in the Upper Library – the first floor of the Old College Library – and the addition of these records to the Cambridge University Union Catalogue. Covering records from most College, Faculty and Departmental Libraries in Cambridge, the Union Catalogue can be viewed from the University Library's website (www.lib.cam.ac.uk/public_info.html). Most of the books thus recorded date from before 1800, and the capture of essential detail in this way represents a huge step forward in cataloguing terms. Before the Upper Library Project was launched, a reader wishing to locate a text was obliged to consult a unique, annotated copy of the nineteenth century catalogue of the Advocate's Library in Edinburgh, held in the Library's Rare Books Reading Room! There was no external access to the catalogue.

On completion of the Project, at the end of 2005, this important collection will be searchable from any PC linked to the World Wide Web, anywhere in the world. Cataloguing is performed to commonly-accepted standards, permitting some highly-flexible ways of searching for and accessing records. The types of information available have also been enhanced, as the Library is anxious that its early printed books should be considered as unique artefacts as well as bibliographic resources. In many cases it is as important to know who has owned a book, or who has scribbled in it, as it is to know the title, or the author's name. This means that the Project has had to develop formats for the description of provenance, bindings and other copy-specific information, such as imperfections or illuminations.

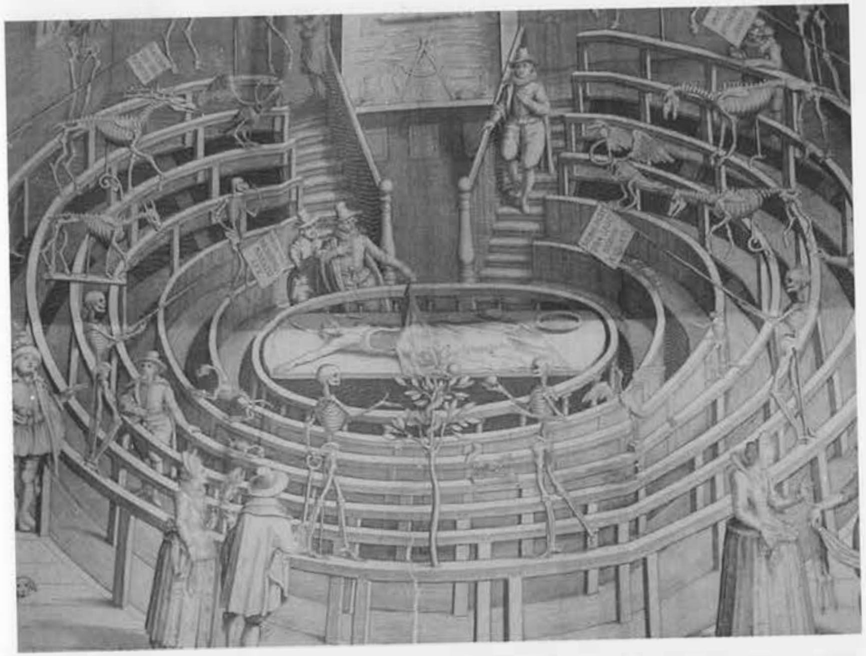
In progress now for about a year and a half, the Project is roughly one-third of the way through its task of cataloguing some 35,000 items. Work commenced initially on continental and nineteenth century volumes, in anticipation of a download of bibliographic records for early English material from the English Short Title Catalogue. These records have now been received, and will soon be edited, supplemented, and made available for public use. In the meantime, considerable progress has been made on records for European works particularly in classics, history, theology, law, and geography; as yet only the collections of science and medicine - the latter a particular strength of the College Library - remain relatively untouched.

De Cassia's volume is not, in fact, particularly unusual amongst the thousands of volumes encountered by the Project so far. It is not our oldest printed work; that distinction belongs to an edition of Cicero's *De Officiis* printed in 1466 by Fust and Schoffer, Gutenberg's successors. Printed *circa* 1484, the *De Gestis Christi* precedes the turbulence of the Reformation, so vividly illustrated in many books on the Library shelves, dripping with emphasis and passion. Take a 1564 edition of

Martin Luther's works, for example, where Luther's vitriolic comments on those popes he most reviled are printed upside down. It also predates the renaissance of geographical studies in the early-modern period, that era of fine printed plates, charts, and improbable illustrations of a world that is wondrous large. Sebastian Munster's magnificent *Cosmographia*, for example, where Durer's armour-plated rhino rubs shoulders with sea-monsters and anthropophagi, or the *Pilgimes* of the indefatigable Samuel Purchas, an alumnus of St John's. It also predates those later attempts, so plentiful in books on the Upper Library shelves, to engage with other cultures. Hiob Ludolf's *Historia Aethiopica* (1681) and Reelant's, *De religione Mohammedica* (1717) are two examples among many, this latter including the first accurate illustration of Mecca. Sometimes the paths of religious intolerance and geographical discovery cross in a volume such as the 1535 edition of Ptolemy's *Geography*, published by Michael Servetus. Servetus re-used the first map to bear the name 'America', whilst later achieving the unfortunate distinction of being burnt twice for heresy.

Some volumes in the Upper Library bear striking images, even if they are merely proclaiming the modernity of a University's facilities. The *Icones, elogia ac vitae professorum Lugdunensium apud Batavos* (1617), which proudly displays the lecture theatres, library, dueling courts and botanical gardens of the University of Leiden, serves as a prototype for many a modern University prospectus, though the twenty-first century equivalent would probably spare us all the gushing lives of professors. Other volumes have their own place in the development of printing, whether they be works printed by Caxton, the Euclid with the first printed mathematical diagrams, the first printings of Modern Greek and Anglo-Saxon, the first printed Bible in Icelandic, the first New Testament in Malayan, or early American printings in Algonquin, the language of the Virginian littoral.

Nor is de Cassia's book particularly beautiful. Whereas the spaces for hand-coloured initials in the *De Gestis Christi* are empty, many of the College's 250 incunables are finely illuminated, sometimes for identifiable patrons such as Lorenzo de Medici. Its binding is relatively plain compared to those volumes which boast gilt decoration for the likes of Louis XIII and Charles I, or embroidery for Elizabeth I. Other books in the Upper Library have blind-stamped contemporary bindings, whether produced in calf by a Cambridge binder such as Nicholas Spierinck, or in German pigskin for Julius Echter von Mespelbrunn, Prince Bishop Of Wurzburg. The *De Gestis Christi* has also been stripped of any inscriptions indicating provenance, possibly because of Fisher's fall from grace for refusing to recognize Henry VIII as head of the Church, whereas there are still volumes that bear the inscriptions of Roger Ascham, John Dee, William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Sir Walter Ralegh, and William Wilberforce, among many other figures of national distinction. The scribbles do not end there. Other books boast necromantic spells, or pronouncements of anathema on anyone tempted to steal them. All these elements of information are duly incorporated by the Upper Library Project cataloguers into their records, so building up a detailed bibliographical survey of the collections.



An anatomy lecture in Leyden. From Johannes van Meurs's Icones, elogia ac vitae professorum Lugdunensium apud Batavos. *Leiden, 1617.*

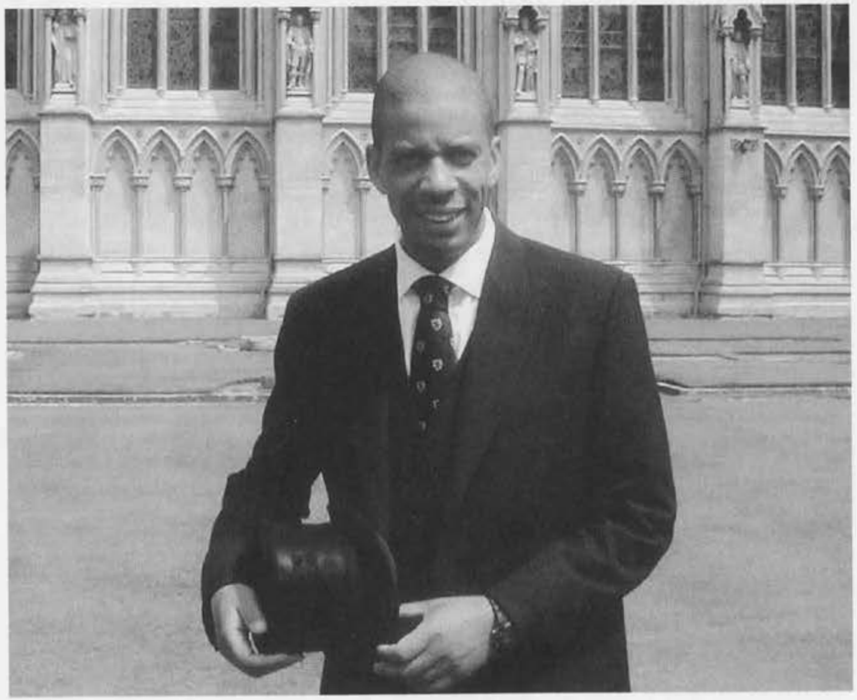
The work of the Project has of necessity extended beyond cataloguing. Its intimate contact with the Upper Library's holdings means that the cataloguers are well placed to highlight items of interest, deploying this expertise to select items for display via the Library's website, and so promoting the collections as a College resource. Selection of this kind draws on several criteria, including bibliographical interest, historical significance, provenance, relevance to the College and Cambridge, and visual impact. Other activities have included the launch of a committee for College librarians to discuss rare books' cataloguing practice, and the offering of support and guidance to the Library's Graduate Trainee as she takes on the task of cataloguing the books of Hugh Gatty, a former College Librarian. Future work will include the development of a thorough survey of the conservation needs of the collections, to ensure that Simon de Cassia's book, and the other treasures housed in the Upper Library, remain in lists of the Library's collections for many centuries to come.

Stewart Tiley

NEW HEAD PORTER

Mr Dennis Hay took over the post of Head Porter from Mr Colin Shepherd on 1 May 2003, having previously been Deputy Head Porter of King's College. Before that, he had served for 23 years in the Royal Air Force in the Royal Air Force Regiment, seeing operational service in Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Bosnia and the Gulf. He served on the Queen's Colour Squadron as a drill Sergeant for three years, taking him to places such as Hong Kong, Gibraltar, and America performing drill shows, including the high profile events at home, such as Buckingham Palace, Earls Court and the Tower of London.

Members of the College will still see Mr Colin Shepherd around as he has assumed the new role of Head Custodian, responsible primarily for control of the tourism aspects of the College.



Mr Dennis Hay

THE ACCESS EXHIBITION SCHEME

The introduction of Access Exhibitions offering financial support to undergraduates received attention in *The Eagle* 2000. They were offered for the first time in the Academic Year 2001/2002. All new undergraduates since that year who are "Home" students, and therefore entitled to apply for support from Local Education Authorities in the form of loans, have been awarded College Bursaries. In each case the grant has been of an amount equivalent to their annual means-tested student loan entitlement. Undergraduates have been able to choose either to limit or completely avoid indebtedness to the Student Loan Company and simply rely upon the College's grant, or to accept both the loan and the Exhibition.

During the Academic Year 2002/2003 some eighty undergraduates have benefited from the Access Exhibition Scheme, receiving sums of up to £975 in many cases. In offering these awards the College has relied upon the generosity of the Johnian community. The Johnian Society itself has made financial gifts in support of the scheme, for example. Individual Johnian donors have also come forward in great numbers to make it a significant success.

Graduate students are now also benefiting from a related scheme. This year fifteen Access Studentships have been awarded to graduates. Once again the Johnian Society have offered their support for two Studentships.

The College continues to be prominent in the efforts being made in Cambridge to ensure that no one is deterred from seeking admission to study here by financial considerations. We have been determined that everyone with the ability to benefit academically from what the College and the University have to offer should feel able to embark upon a course without the fear of unmanageable debt or difficulty. The Exhibitions and Studentships are crucial to our efforts in this respect. The College's Tutors also of course have the ability to offer emergency financial assistance to see any student through a crisis.

The College, and in particular the current generation of Junior Members, are fortunate in the loyalty and generosity being shown by those who benefited from studying here in earlier years. There can be no doubt that the Exhibitions and Studentships are making a genuine difference.

Ray Jobling

COMMEMORATION OF BENEFACTORS SERMON

2 May 2004

Coming as I do from Newcastle I do not often participate in the great rivalry between this University and the other place, nor, since I am not resident here, between this College and the place next door. What I do experience however is the rivalry between Newcastle and Sunderland, and it is about Sunderland that I want to tell you a story.

Some ten years ago Sunderland became a City. Milton Keynes had been hoping for the honour, which is a gift of the Queen, but no, it went to Sunderland. A few months later the Councillors, flexing their muscles as newly created City Fathers, said to themselves, 'if we are a City what we really need is a Cathedral'. So they wrote to the Bishop of Durham, 'please, Bishop, may we have a Cathedral?' The Bishop wrote back, 'I am very sorry, but we have a very fine Cathedral at Durham already'. Not being put off, so the story goes, the Councillors then wrote to the Catholic Bishop, 'please may we have a Cathedral?' The reply was even more hurtful – 'I am very sorry, but we already have a Cathedral in Newcastle!'

It was at this point that the Bishop of Durham thought to himself that something had to be done and the suggestion was put to him, 'why not create a Minster?' Great idea! But no Minster had been created since the Reformation, so no-one knew what was required or how one could be created. Historians got to work and the reply came back. 'Three things are required of a Minster; that it should be a place of worship, of learning and of hospitality, and, Bishop, if *you* say it's a Minster, it's a Minster!' Local people in Sunderland began exploring as well and soon realised that the church at the City's heart – St Michael's, Bishopwearmouth – had all three requirements. It was of course a place of worship and had been so since Saxon times; some years previously a restaurant had been set up in the side aisle for city centre shoppers, and the final plans were in preparation for a small training centre for unemployed people to acquire computer skills in an upper room. Some months later to the delight of the people of Sunderland, St Michael's, Bishopwearmouth, was created a Minster by the Bishop of Durham in a splendid service. The story had a happy ending, Sunderland Minster is now a model for inner city churches, but for our purposes today the fascinating discovery of the three requirements of a mediaeval minster – worship, learning and hospitality – is the lesson to be drawn.

Surely these are the requirements for the life of this College and they are implicit in the College prayer when we pray 'that love of the brethren and all sound learning may ever grow and prosper here', for hospitality is the form that love should take in the context of an institution. Hospitality is not primarily about food and drink but the giving of time and attentiveness. It is not dependent on any luxury but rather upon thoughtfulness. By such a definition it has always been at the heart of our life here, and as we commemorate our benefactors we do well to recall hospitality as the virtue which has held our College together.

St John's College was founded by taking over the premises of St John's Hospital. Sadly we cannot claim a real continuity of hospitality on this site; it seems that the mediaeval, monastic institution, which was more like what we call a residential care home, had fallen upon bad times and both discipline and care had declined. In the records we read that on 12 March 1511 the remaining brethren 'departed from Cambridge towards Ely at four o'clock at the afternoon by water'. Their departure appears overdue but it is still good to know that before this College was founded here this site had been a place of hospitality.

Hardly a generation had passed in the history of the College before the role of the tutor began to emerge and within that role are perhaps the most obvious examples of hospitality. I have recently been reading Rowan Williams' fascinating account of the fourth-century desert fathers, *Silence and Honeycakes.* The story which gives the book its title tells of a monk who visited Abba Arsenius, famous for his silence, and finding the experience difficult went on to visit Abba Moses, well known for the warmth of his welcome. The monk felt confused – where was true revelation? – and so prayed to God for guidance. In a vision Arsenius was shown to him sitting with the Holy Spirit of God in complete silence and Abba Moses sitting with the angels of God all eating honeycakes. Maybe a tutor is a person given to silence or maybe one who entertains with the Johnian equivalent of honeycakes. Hospitality is as varied as human personality.

Reading College history does not easily give insight into the relationships within the College at any one time as, of course, conflicts emerge. What is of value for our purposes is that the character of each era in College history can teach us lessons about the practice of hospitality. After the first generation had passed the College faced one hundred and fifty years of ecclesiastical and political conflict. Early Protestantism and then early Puritanism centred on this University and on St John's in particular. Love of the brethren, hospitality, must surely have been strained to the uttermost. Academic study by its very nature produces controversy, and that can be very fierce, but controversy must not be allowed to inhibit love of the brethren within the academic community. There must be no malice for any brother or sister. Hospitality must cross the barriers between all differences. The College seems to have survived those tumultuous years remarkably intact.

In his book, *Portrait of a College*, Edward Miller has two chapters on College history entitled 'The Unreformed College' and 'The Age of Reform', covering two periods from the middle of the 17th century to the end of the 19th. Thomas Frampton, a tutor from 1764 to 1771, speaks for an element in College life for the first period. Rather fat and much of a gentleman, he married Mrs Arbuthnott's daughter who kept the Hoop tavern. It was said of him that he was 'fonder of sporting and Newmarket than of books and his College'. The same indulgences appear a century later from the pen of a much more famous Johnian, William Wordsworth. In that part of *The Prelude* entitled 'Residence at Cambridge' we read:

Companionships,
Friendships, acquaintances were welcome all.
We sauntered, played or rioted, we talked
Unprofitable talk at morning hours;
Drifted about along the streets and walks,

Read lazily in trivial books, went forth
To gallop through the country in blind zeal
Of senseless horsemanship, or on the breast
Of Cam sailed boisterously, and let the stars
Come forth, perhaps without one quiet thought.
Such was the tenor of the second act
In this new life. Imagination slept,
And yet not utterly.

It is the word 'boisterous' which I take from that passage. In a few weeks time when exams are over we shall enter the season of boisterousness and it will doubtless be full of delightful hospitality. But hospitality has another face, more serious, deeper, more thoughtful, present throughout the whole year and concerned with the growth of knowledge and wisdom and the giving of our minds one to another. Boisterousness and seriousness each have their own style of hospitality, but whereas boisterousness is optional, seriousness is not.

Looking back on the 20th century it is extraordinary how long we took to recognise the fact of globalisation. The process has been at work for centuries. In economic terms that process is very contentious, creating much wealth but not distributing it at all fairly. In academic life we are now on a global stage. Two months ago I was in Costa Rica studying the tropical rain forest and stayed at a Research Station supported by sixty-four universities worldwide. The process of globalisation in academia can be enormously beneficial, but we must recognise that much research can have a sharp commercial edge. We cannot escape the ambiguities but we do now have the duty to exercise hospitality in a global context. The contribution which this College can make to the worldwide growth of knowledge and wisdom is not just sound learning but also love of the brethren.

At the heart of all this talk of hospitality are the servants of this College; they are after all the providers of the outer symbols of hospitality – food, drink, accommodation. In a very real sense they have been benefactors throughout the history of the College. In his delightful reminiscences of life here in the first half of the 20th century Boys Smith tells the story of

Professor Rapson who one evening told Bailey, the Head Waiter, that he would prefer apple pie to the other sweets on offer, and from then on was given apple pie each night! Bailey was so attentive to the Professor's needs that Professor Rapson did not have the heart to tell him that he might on occasion have preferred another pudding! Such mutual respect and courtesy is at the heart of hospitality. We are also told of the gyp, W S Matthews, who looked after R R Webb, the mathematician, taking him to his own home when he became infirm, where he and his wife cared for him until he died. Of such is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Himself taught and practised hospitality, both giving and receiving it. He rebuked those who gave it for ulterior motives, or who were insensitive to their guests, but it was in the giving of Himself that He taught His disciples the most. It was deeply significant that it was a supper party for His friends that was the occasion when He identified Himself with the bread and the wine, making those symbols of hospitality also symbols of His presence. Whenever we extend true hospitality in giving ourselves to one another, both within this College and beyond it, the grace of God is touching us. This is the true love of the brethren for which we pray.

In speaking of hospitality this morning I am aware that preaching and praxis, word and action, come wonderfully together. We are all invited, those of us here in the congregation this morning, to the Master's Lodge as soon as this service is over, to enjoy the traditional seed cake and Madeira; hospitality in word, hospitality in deed!

The many benefactors whom we commemorate at this time have by their generosity, and by the grace of God, given us everything we have in our life together here. At the heart of that life must surely be love of the brethren, hospitality in thought, word and deed. This is the true and continuing response which we must make in every generation to their foresight, and the faith which they have placed in us.

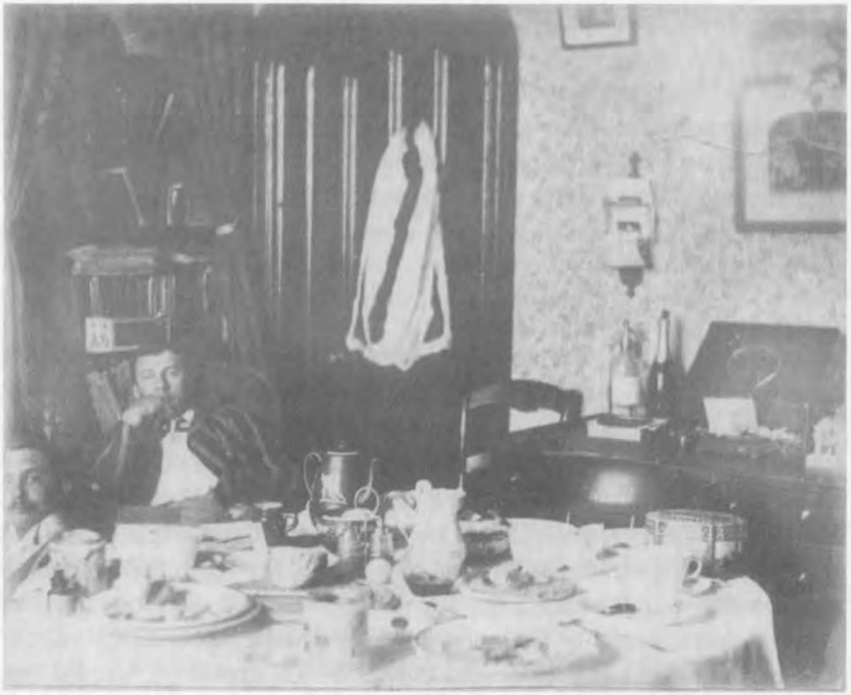
Canon Peter Dodd (BA 1957, MA 1961)

COLLEGE ROOMS

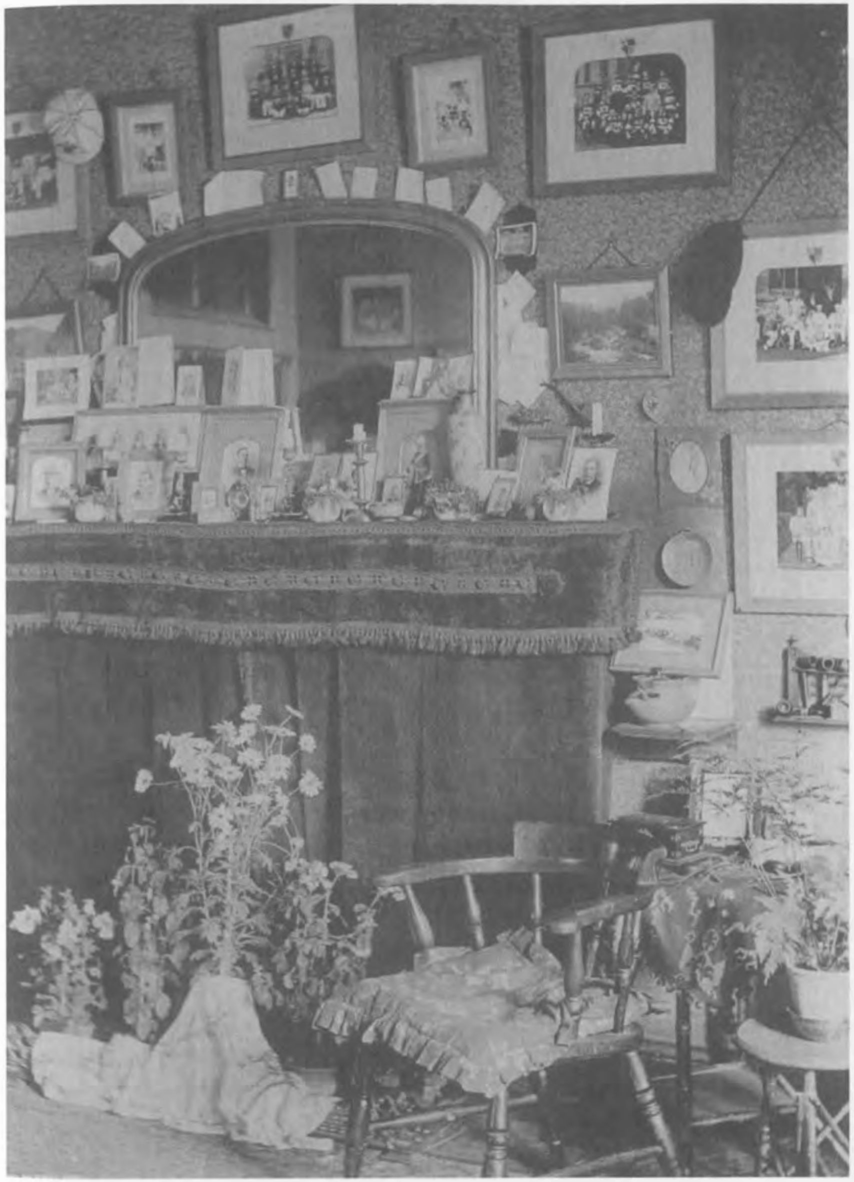
During Michaelmas Term 2003, the College Library provided a display of photographs and other items detailing the history of undergraduate accommodation in St John's over the past five centuries, as part of its ongoing and popular exhibition programme. The accompanying images were among the many particularly evocative pictures selected for this purpose.

The Library, of course, houses a particularly rich collection of photographs with a College theme. Among these are matriculation photographs from 1910 onwards, photographs of vanished buildings, including the old Chapel, old Chemistry Laboratory and Bathhouse, and several albums full of dinners, balls and other notable events in the College and University Calendars. The earliest of many hundreds of sporting groups are two splendid photographs of the football XI and the rugby XV of 1876. Even in the best collections, however, there are gaps and omissions. We do not, for example, hold photographs of matriculations between 1911 and 1918, or photographs of the rugger XVs between 1914 and 1935, and between 1939 and 1960. Graduation photographs are few and far between, before the 1990s. With the passage of time it is all too likely that Johnians alone can help fill these and other gaps, through copies or donations of items from their own photographic collections. The College would be extremely grateful for generous assistance of this kind. Members of the College seeking a permanent home for interesting photographs relating to the history and traditions of our College are always welcome to contact the Librarian.

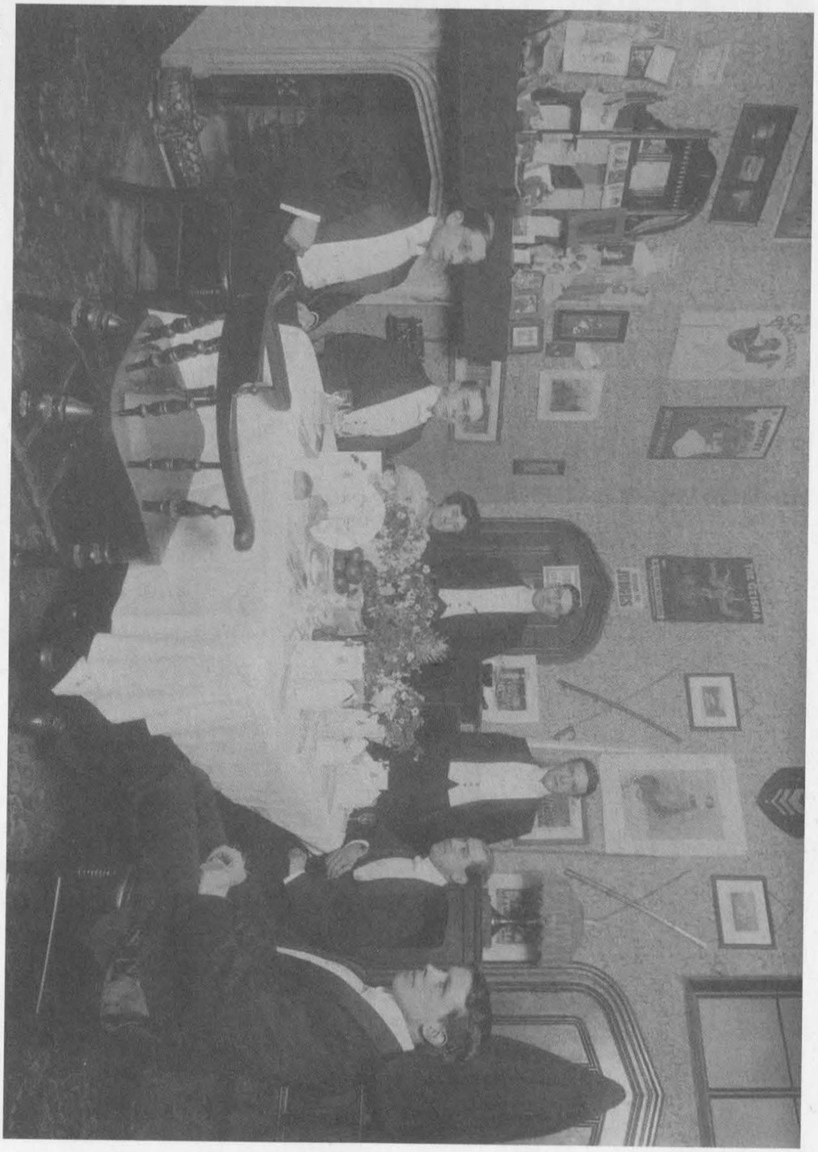
Mark Nicholls



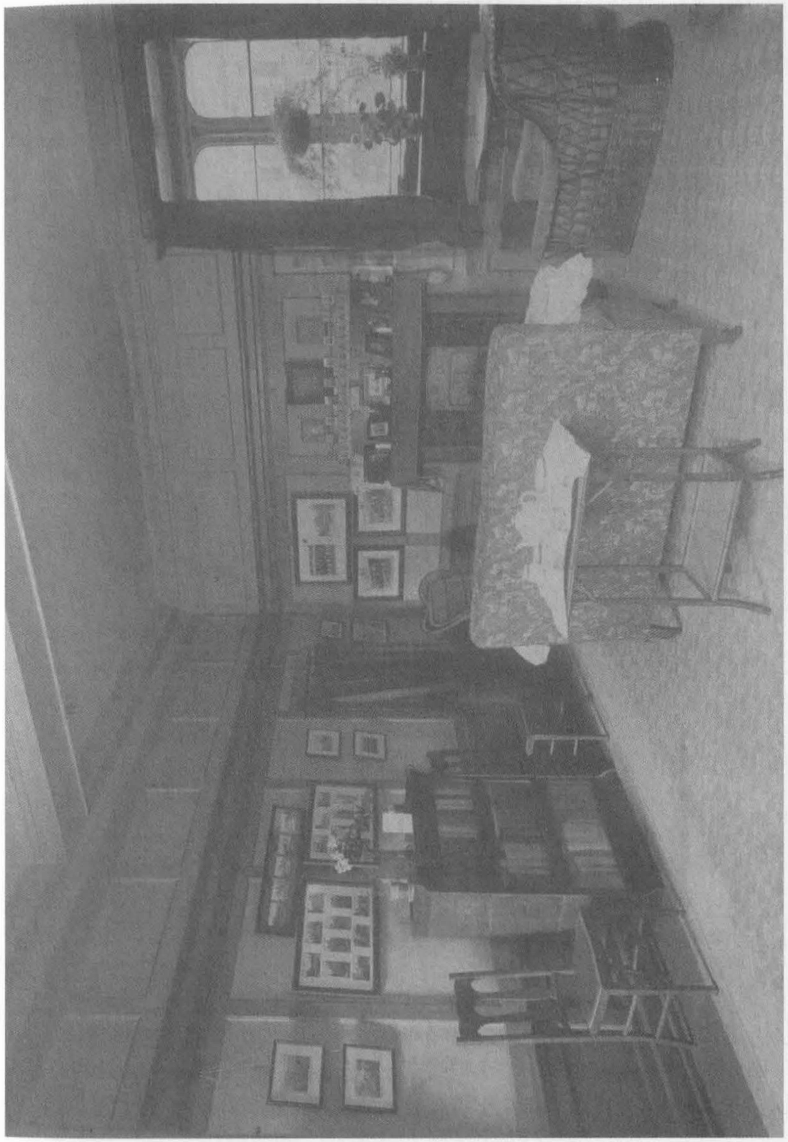
A8 New Court in 1889. E P Gatty resided in these rooms for all three years of his undergraduate career, and took this photograph on 16 June after graduating the day before.



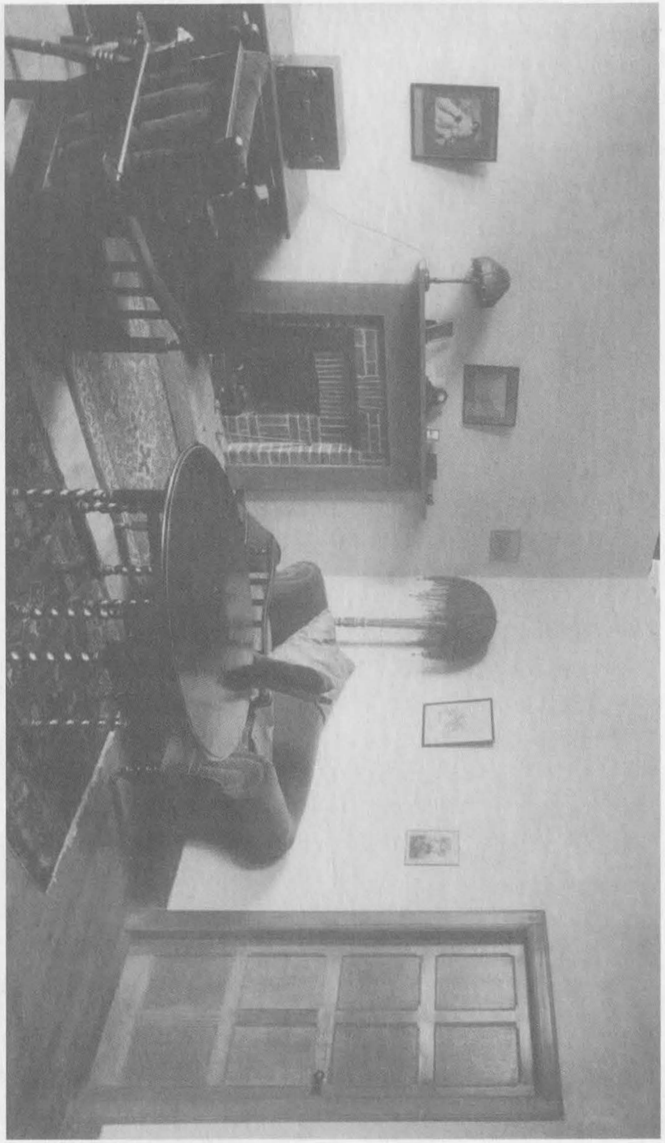
E6 New Court in 1898 under the occupancy of A R Ingram (BA 1899).



A New Court set c1905.



F1 Second Court in 1911. E Davies occupied these rooms from 1908 until his graduation in 1911. Davies fought at Gallipoli, Gaza and Jerusalem in the First World War, before pursuing a legal career.



A1 First Court in 1929 under the occupancy of B O'Connor (BA 1931). In 1974, when he donated this photograph, Mr O'Connor remembered his rooms as follows: 'The set had the two turret rooms annexed. I used the left one merely as a boxroom (there were no fitments), and the right as a gyp-room; there was a rough sink (cold water only of course) and gas laid on ... In the photograph note the early portable wireless on the desk, and the fringed floor-lamp ... The other furniture was all college-owned, including the oak stool (left of fireplace – coal naturally, see coal-box at right) with the college arms embossed on seat.'

A student's room in the Cripps Building, taken shortly after its opening in 1967.

SOME ENCHANTED EVENING

It might have been 1947, or it could have been 1948 – the exact date will be in the annals of the Musical Society – but I have a distinct recollection of a warm, late-summer evening with the windows of the Music Room in Chapel Court wide open to catch the slightest breeze. The occasion was a piano recital by a pianist I had never heard of, playing a new work by a composer whose name meant nothing to me. The Music Room was crowded and I find it hard to explain why I was there, but the scene has remained etched in my memory ever since. The pianist was Yvonne Loriod, the work was 'Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus', and the composer, Olivier Messiaen, was also present. Mlle Loriod was wearing a blue silk dress which perfectly set off her flawless complexion, increasingly so as dusk fell and the gentle lights of the Music Room became ever more flattering. Olivier Messiaen, looking not unlike the popular idea of the mad scientist – bushy hair, balding, short of stature, wearing 'pebble' glasses – was standing about three feet away from me on my right.

From the first note the audience was deeply engrossed as the music wove its mystical spell, drifting out through the open windows into Chapel Court and beyond. One 'Regard' followed another until all twenty had been played – a not inconsiderable feat by the pianist and an emotional and quasi-religious experience for the audience. Many of us, perhaps all, realised we had been privileged to participate in a rather special occasion and one unlikely to be repeated in our lifetime; namely, the playing by a sensitive and consummate artist of a haunting new work in the presence of the composer, from whom even greater devotional music was to flow in the future (Turganalîla symphonie, Reveil des oiseaux, *et al.*).

Later I learned that Olivier Messiaen was at that time a lecturer at the Paris Conservatoire, having among his students Boulez, Stockhausen, Barraqué and, of course, Yvonne Loriod. In fact, she was to become central to his life and the focus of his love and musical inspiration. When his first wife died in 1959, they married and remained together until Messiaen's death in Paris on 28 April 1992. She premiered all his works in which there was a pianoforte content, and such was her virtuosity and flawless technique that when others came to play the pieces he had written for her, many were to fall by the wayside.

The memory of that evening lay dormant until one afternoon a few years ago when my wife and I happened to be in Hereford Cathedral. The Cathedral School Choir was packing up and the organist was practising for a concert to be given by members of the Hereford Cathedral School that evening; he was playing 'Dieu parmi nous' by Olivier Messiaen. I asked the Music Master if I might meet the organist to thank him and perhaps touch on the story outlined above. I did both – he was incredibly young and listened to this 'old fart' with a courtesy and attention I did not deserve. Coincidentally, it turned out that the Music Master was also a Johnian who, though too young to have been present on that magical evening, was very familiar with the Music Room and the general setting of this story. It seemed a fitting coda to a uniquely Johnian musical experience, which today, more than fifty years later, still occupies a special place in my memory.

Raymond Hilton (BA 1948, MA 1970)

FOR JULIA HUTCHISON

Two years ago, Dr John Hutchison (Fellow 1967-) and his wife Rose's elder daughter, Julia, was suffering from an illness and was not expected to survive. As though by a miracle, she survived, and John Hutchison together with Mr Guy Lee (Fellow 1945-) composed the following Latin hymn to celebrate her recovery.

Salve, Iulia nostra! O salue, reddita uitae;
Semianimem uidi te, puto paene furens.
Hic tamen es regressa. Canamus quisque 'Triumphe',
Multa voce simul quisque canamus 'Io'.
Nam superauisti, mihi formosissima nata;
Iam procul horrendo carcere Ditis abes.

Welcome, our Julia! O welcome, restored to life;
I saw you half-dead, almost I believe out of my mind.
But here you are back again. Let us each sing 'Triumph',
Each sing 'Io' with many a voice joining in.
For you, my most beautiful daughter, have overcome;
Far are you now from the grim prison of Dis.

YET ANOTHER SOCIETY

Ere thousand lines we shall not yield
A resolution not repealed
Till all our tale has been unreeled . . .

The peculiar difficulties encountered when trying to 'unreel' the tales that shroud and mystify the history of Yet Another Society (YAS) can be summed up succinctly: 1) what little existing documentation we have concerning the society mostly appears in verse, and 2) what little existing documentation we have concerning the society is very little indeed; hardly anything at all was recorded! The society appeared and disappeared in a flash, leaving little to remember it by, and it was with an ironical smirk that a brief summation of the society's activities in 1945 was concluded, 'Certain peculiarities of the Society seem to have caused some mystification in the College; we trust that this account of our activities has gone some way towards solving the mystery'. Yet what was recorded? The bare facts reveal that YAS was set up to avenge the demise of the Classical and History Societies, with the first meeting taking place in January 1945. Dr J W Davidson (1938) is reported to have founded the group, with The Revd M P Charlesworth (1922) at the helm as President, Mr R H Williams (1944) as Recorder, and Mr A H Brind (1944) as Keeper of the Archives (which, on the basis of surviving records, can hardly have been the most taxing of roles). It was devised by Jim Davidson as a place where Fellows, young and old, could meet undergraduates in an informal atmosphere, something that was new to St John's at the time. Initially YAS consisted of 18 members who were interested in various branches of the Arts, and who were invited to join by Jim Davidson, and was set up, in the words of *A Brace of Major Yasifiers*, because:

. . . John's through war was void of fun
When arty boys were nearly none
For most were toting round a gun . . .

This verse seems to be characteristic of the society: playful in the extreme. Of a talk given at the meeting of 21 April by W H Godwin (1941), 'a penetrating paper' on 'Tragedy without reference to Aristotle' we are told, 'much discussion followed, some of it to the point.' The society existed on the face of it to promote dialogue regarding the Arts and Humanities. However, this was not all.

Not all is paper. Do not stress
Our academic weightiness
We have appeared in fancy dress . . .
. . . And in the summer we confess
We cricket play, a sporting mess . . .

YAS seems to have been interested in having fun. When Martin Charlesworth decreed that cider, not beer, should be the chosen YAS drink, Michael Wolff (1945), one time Secretary of YAS, responded with the following poem:

CIDER AND SANITY

By Gerard Malty Hop-pickings.

Whither, world? Atomwards, cry you; why you
Toe-nail torturer!
Lip-stick lashings of lost lounge-lizards,
Comfort yourselves with cold cohesion,
Save yourselves with sapless security.
Moon-madness, malt-mocking misery,
Broken-bottle blackness, beer-blatancy.

Simpletons . . . . CIDER

Word of a worm-woken world,
Call of a cry-cracked cavern.

Burn your books, smash your cinemas,
Batter your bedlam-breweries.

Mild, say you, merciless metastasis
Bitter, say you, barbaric bullet-bed of barley
Mild and bitter, say you, mixture of blood-brooding bastardy.

Sing, sane ones, song of sweetness,
Kissing kingdoms with lovely lips,
Sing the blessing of apple-orchard bloom.

There was a young lady of Ryde,
Sing for her soul
Who was eating sour apples and died,
Pray for her perfection
The apples fermented,
Miracle-making metamorphosis
Inside the lamented,
Last lingering libation
And made cider inside her inside.
Casual crescendo, heaven hope,
Shattering sanction.

CIDER, and you strengthen your
CIDER, and you summon your sky-solidarity,
March to millennium
Sanity, stricken, screams CIDER.

Gerard Manley Hopkins, although an Oxford man, would surely have been proud of this verse.

Many distinguished Johnians were members of YAS, including Mr R N Simeone (1944), Professor G A Holmes (1945), Mr J R Bambrough (1945), Mr K G Wilden-Hart (1945), Mr G H Briggs (1943), Mr G H B Tregear (1944), Professor J R Wilkie (1943), Mr W H Godwin (1941), Mr H Sykes Davies (1928), and Professor F Thistlethwaite (1934). The group was eclectic, engaging themselves in jovial, but rigorously academic debate. John Margetson (1945) remembers in particular two meetings. At one he recalls a 'superb paper on the Renaissance' read by Hugh Sykes Davies, an 'eccentric and brilliant Don', in Jim Davidson's rooms. Jim was duly honoured with the title of 'Arbiter Elegantiarum' following the excellence of this collation. At another, Ian Watt, who had been captured at Singapore, read a 'fascinating and very analytical paper on life in a Japanese POW camp'. He also recalls an exchange with Jim Davidson, who said he was going off to write the constitution of Samoa and would return to YAS to give a talk entitled 'Constitutions I Have Written'.

But the society was not to last. John Margetson reports that soon after the setting up of YAS he left the College to do National Service, and when he returned in 1949 the Society no longer existed. Jim Davidson had left to fill a Chair at the National University, Canberra, and seemingly, without his guidance and inspiration, YAS crumbled, leaving little to remember it by. It seems fitting that the most complete surviving account of the society is an intriguing poem. So it is with this that we are left to uncover the mysterious goings-on of Yet Another Society.

A MINOR YASIFICATION BY A BRACE OF MAJOR YASIFIERS*

Behold us duple in the field
Twin bards the Muses' wand we wield
Be silent let your lips be sealed
With iron bands your hearts be steeled
Ere thousand lines we shall not yield
A resolution not repealed
Till all our tale has been unreeled
Nor protest from it shall you shield
Your chagrin therefore keep concealed
In vain are squeals. Dead who hath squealed
Till YAS's mysteries revealed
Shall leave your rude impatience healed.

---

* The brace of Yasifiers was Michael Wolff and George Holmes

We then two bards of purpose one
Our tale of YAS have now begun
How John's through war was void of fun
When arty boys were nearly none
For most were toting round a gun
October 'twas. The ancient sun
Had in the ewe his wholé course yrun
Then YAS the mazéd world did shun
With jestful joke and painful pun
These last from Dr Davidson
Such did befit him who'd undone
The web of woes that war had spun.

Know YAS would meet some weekday eve
Charlesworthian blessings to receive
Which done the witty hours we'd thieve
From witless time and none would grieve
The loss, such by-ways we would weave
Such cunning culture we'd retrieve
That none till early morn durst leave
This institution we believe
Us all from stupor did reprieve
And Science of her prey bereave
Thus YAS has essayed to allev-
Iate our pains. We don't deceive.

Remember we. We congregate
To hear Jim Davidson relate
Brazilian history. No less our fate
To hear Ben, Reggie, Raymond state
Their views diffuse and separate
Their labour do not underrate
Nor, either, overestimate
The jazz-fed brain of Thistlethwaite
Expounds a rag-time postulate
George, Renford, Ian swell the spate

The list completed up to date
Your fresher efforts we await.

Not all is paper. Do not stress
Our academic weightiness
We have appeared in fancy dress
St Paul, Miss Stein, Dean Swift did bless
Us all and miming did impress
At dinner always There's now guess—
A guest who's learned—more or less.
And in the summer we confess
We cricket play, a sporting mess
Though all the same a grand success.
Our varied powers you query? Yes
But varied talents we possess.

You've seen us duple in the field
Then bards the Muses' wand who wield
Not silent be, your lips unsealed
Not iron be, your hearts unsteeled
Ere thousand lines indeed we yield
A resolution now repealed
For all our tale has been unreeled
From more your protests will you shield
Your chagrin need not be concealed
Squeal now and live whoe'er has squealed
Now YAS's mysteries revealed
Have left your rude impatience healed.

DEBRIEFING STAN MOORHOUSE

Before Stan Moorhouse retired from the College as Superintendent of Buildings in December 2003, he and Professor Patrick Boyde (BA 1956, Fellow 1966-) walked around College together on a number of occasions. They went from one staircase or vantage point to the next using the buildings as an aide-mémoire, so that Stan could recall what works he had supervised or what problems he had encountered during his time here. The following notes are selected highlights from these perambulations. A fuller account has been deposited in the College Library and in the Archives.

The development of 'in-house' work during the re-roofing of First Court

The original description of Stan's job was very different from what it has since become. Colonel Robinson (Domestic Bursar 1986-2000) had had some bad experiences with architects and contractors and wanted to set up an 'in-house team' capable of taking on ambitious projects. From Stan's point of view the story began with the decision to re-roof First Court.

Early on they called in Jane Kennedy, the surveyor responsible for the fabric of Ely Cathedral, and asked her to survey the whole court and come up with a 'guide-price' for the works necessary to re-roof. She quoted a figure of £150,000-160,000 but when they went out to tender the cheapest quotation was £190,000-200,000. Stan asked the firms for a detailed breakdown of all the elements in their quotations. From this it emerged that, if you took the cheapest quotation for each item from each breakdown, the job could be done for around £150,000.

So it was decided to approach sub-contractors and get them to carry out each specialised task (eg the scaffolding, the lead-work and the slating) for the lowest price, while the College work force would take on all that lay in its power (eg the stripping down and the preparation of the beams, some of which had to be replaced and some to be strengthened with metal braces). In the end they did the job for around £130,000, and gained a lot of experience and confidence for the future. They would go on to re-roof Third Court and then Second Court (this alone took two summers).

The Wordsworth Room

Another of the earliest tasks under Stan's leadership was the refurbishment of the Wordsworth Room. The Maintenance Department stripped out the original panelling (which was light in colour and came up almost to the level of the windows), and replaced it with the darker, lower panelling one now sees (the dado is real oak, the panels simulated). New windows were commissioned, for which Mr (now Professor) Kerrigan chose texts from Wordsworth's poems. The fireplace was cleaned out, exposing a herringbone pattern in the brickwork, which is thought to be original. Ventilation for the room was improved by installing a fan in the chimney. The fire must therefore never be lit; the logs that stand in the fireplace have all been fire-proofed in case some guest should put a match to them!

A story about a cable

In days gone by there used to be an electric cable running from a sub-station near Kitchen Lane, along St John's Street and then through Forecourt to the sub-station near the Forecourt Lodge. Stan realised that it was an old cloth-covered cable from pre-nationalisation days and would have to be replaced. So the Maintenance Department laid a new cable on a new route, starting from the same point of departure, going through the cellar below the Kitchen, running along the length of the Hall underneath the flags and continuing under the cloisters in Chapel Court until it was brought out at the original point of arrival. The new cable went into service, the old one was left in the ground, and no one thought about it any more, assuming it to be 'dead'. Some time later the City Council installed rising bollards in St John's Street and these went into operation for a couple of years before a fault developed. During the repairs someone realised that the bollards had been working from current in the old cloth-covered cable, and that the College had in effect been paying for the working of the bollards for the previous two years!

The Chapel

The huge operation to repair, clean and conserve the exterior of the Chapel (work which began when a lump of the parapet of the tower crashed into Forecourt) was in its last two months when Stan Moorhouse arrived at St John's. There was therefore very little to do, except to send men up from time to time to remove the graffiti disfiguring the lead of the new roof on the tower – especially those casting aspersions on the Bursars!

The tradition of the Choir singing from the top of the tower at noon on Ascension Day was well established, and previous Superintendents had assumed responsibility for things like amplification. Nevertheless, it was still not possible to hear the music properly. Since he was not footing the bill (the money came out of a budget elsewhere in College), Stan was able to improve the equipment and the quality year by year. He has been delighted to see that the court is now packed for the ceremony, and that you can hear the music perfectly from the ground.

The Combination Room

Stan did nothing to the Combination Room — but not for want of trying! What he wanted to do was to install efficient smoke detectors, permanently wired and linked to a centralised system, without spoiling the appearance of the room. The existing solution consists of four white plastic boxes, hung in pairs at each end, which are removed every time the room is used (for meals or meetings), so that Fellows are never aware of them. They work with radio transmitters. Stan came up with various projects over the past four or five years, one of which involved making a copy of the carved wooden panel, about eighteen inches wide by nine inches high, over the east door. The original panel would have been put in store, and in the space behind the new panel he wanted to put a device, wired in, which would transmit a beam down the length of the room and detect whatever should not be there. But no Bursar was brave enough to take any of his schemes to the Governing Body.

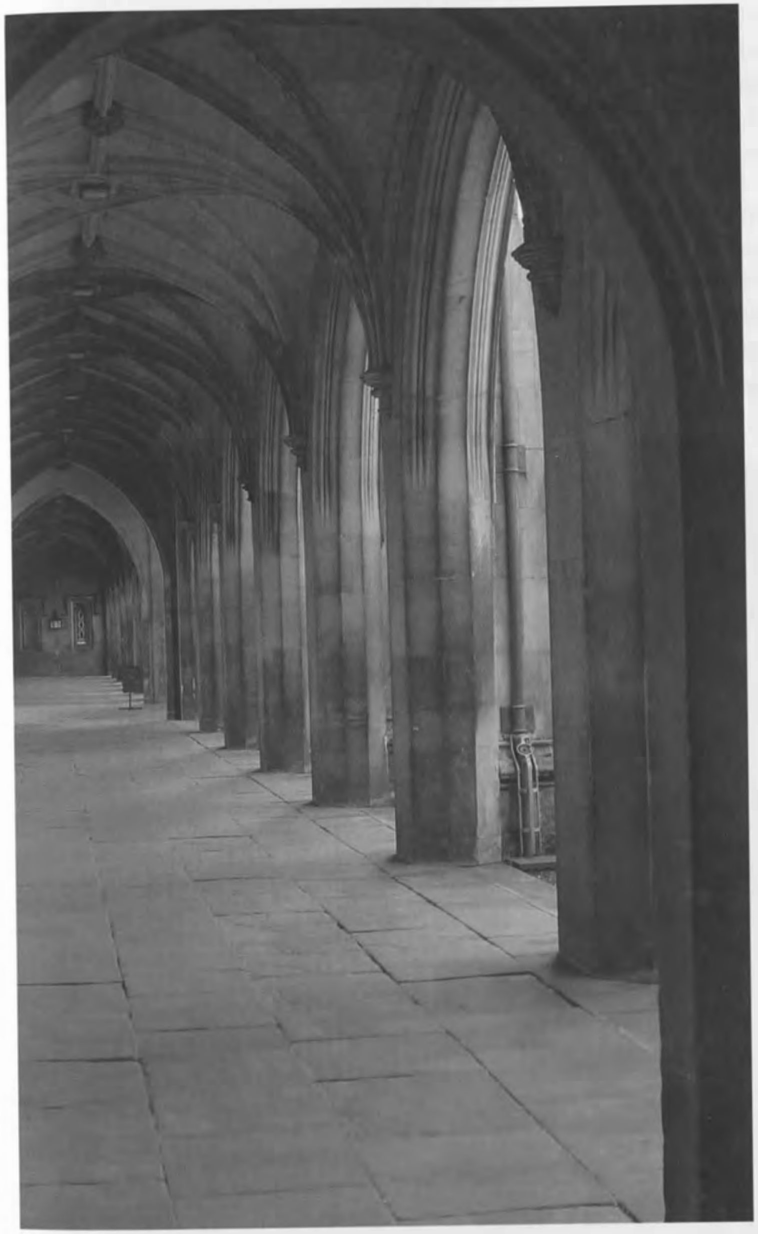
Second and Third Courts

One of the perambulations took Professor Boyde and Stan Moorhouse up a spiral staircase on the North side of the Shrewsbury Tower as far as the second floor. Stan knelt down, pressed a magic button (or so it seemed, because all that followed was worthy of a Harry Potter film) and the 'fireplace' swung open, revealing the roof void above the court. They squeezed through and crept between the steep, narrow arches of the rafters, ducking underneath the collar beams (less than three feet high), picking their way on narrow planks surrounded by debris and insulation material, until they came to the north-west corner of the court, where they scrambled up a small ladder and out onto the roof of the Old Library. A plate on the roof recalls that it was reconstructed in 1928. The date is repeated on the brickwork over the entrance to the ladder.

This was the vantage point from which to look at the roofs of Second and Third Courts and the massive works that were carried out in Stan's time. As in First Court, the slating and leadwork were done by contractors, but all the preparation and carpentry was done 'in-house'. Stan pointed out the tiny ventilation ducts above the windows in the West range of Third Court and the bigger vents (for the bathrooms) which are concealed from view by the battlements; and this was a good moment for him to recall the very good relationship the College enjoys with the Planning Department, who have to approve every change to Grade 1 Listed Buildings. When Second Court was re-roofed a waterproof but pervious membrane was used underneath the slates and there is therefore no need for vents.

New Court

Stan and his craftsmen carried out a lot of skilled and tasteful work to create three Senior Guest Rooms on the ground floor of B staircase New Court, and to transform the former bathroom and toilet block (which sticks out behind the main building) on B staircase into a most attractive double set for junior members. In the guest rooms he was justly proud of the new doors (narrow, but still respecting the Gothic contours of all



A view of New Court cloisters

the doors in the court) and the very pleasing effect of the common room that has been left in the corner, with its original window seats, between rooms 1 and 2.

Maintenance of the Cripps Building

Stan's style in dealing with junior members is illustrated by the following anecdote. Some years ago 'raiders' (presumably students who had lived in the building in earlier years or who were on a neighbouring staircase) were continually lifting the shower doors in the Cripps Building off their hinges and hiding them. It became a time-consuming nuisance to send men out to find the doors and put them back. So for a time Stan resolved to do nothing when a missing door was reported. The showers stood open, complaints were made to tutors, the tutors intervened, and in so doing learned about the scale of the problem. Only then were all the missing doors put back. The lesson was learned, attitudes changed, and the problem ceased.

Pat Boyde (left) and Stan Moorhouse (right) during their perambulations

The only visible change made to the Cripps Building in Stan's time was the chimney close to the Fisher Building. (It is visible, but usually passes unnoticed because of its position, and because it is painted in battleship grey.) It was put in three years ago when six new boilers were installed (under the eagle eye of Steve Beeby, now Superintendent of Buildings) to provide all the heating and the domestic hot water in Cripps and, surprisingly, in New Court as well. It is because of the amazing efficiency of these new boilers that the original boiler rooms in New Court are currently being transformed into a ground floor set.

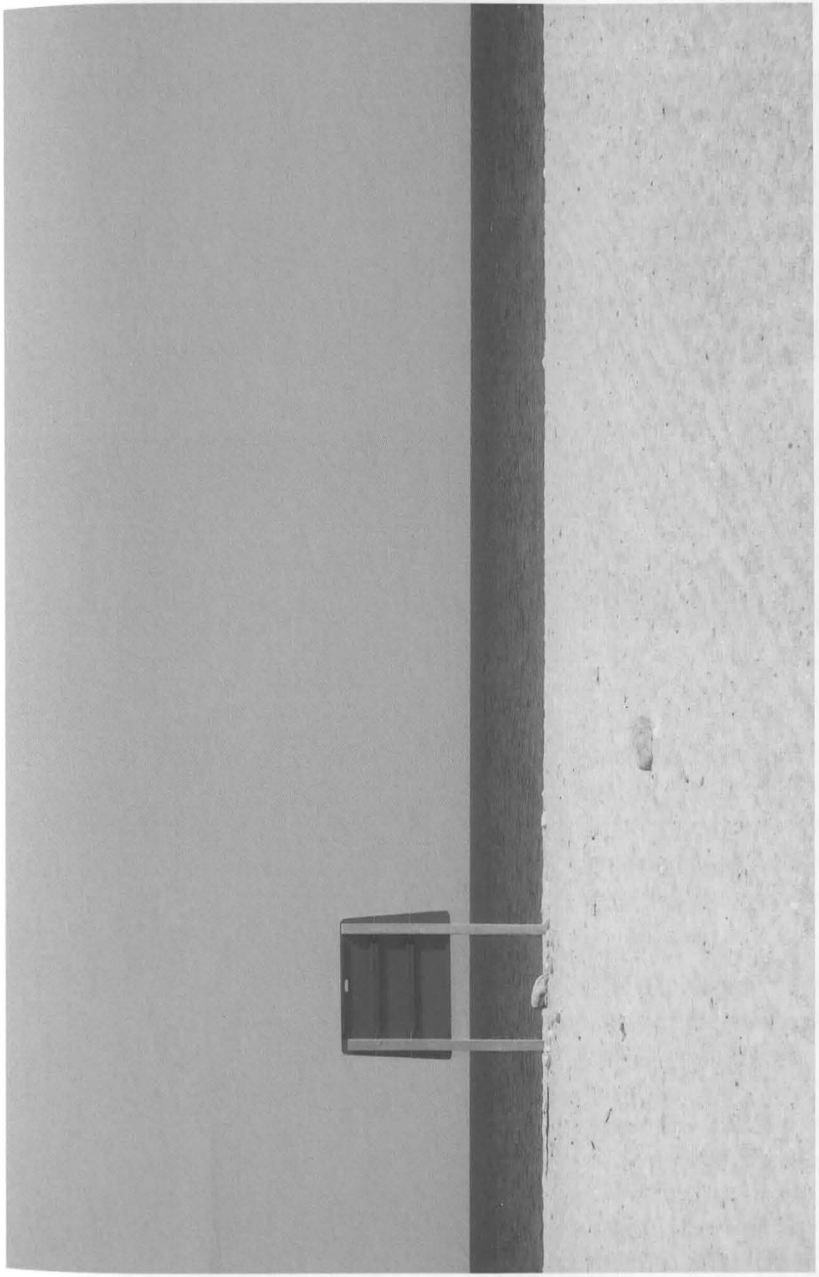
A permanent invitation

Stan was asked to transform one vast underfloor space in Cripps into a disco, complete with a bar, suitable lights, extractors, and – the details that matter – skid-proof paint on the floor and a 'chill-out' room at one end. The President of the JCR was so grateful that he gave Stan a pass to allow him to enter the disco without charge on any occasion and to order free drinks in perpetuity!

On that note, it only remains to add that Stan can be sure of a free pint of beer at any time he returns to St John's bearing tales of his adventures in Newark and Normandy during his well-earned retirement.

Pat Boyde

'Young female wild orang-utan' by Nancy Priston



'Beach and red sign' by Edward Green (Highly Commended in the College Art Competition, 2004)

This panorama of New Court and the Bridge of Sighs was taken by Sean McHugh and won First Prize in the College Life section of the College Art Competition, 2004

CELEBRATING A CENTENARY

Richard Eberhart at St John's c1927

I knew the name of poet Richard Eberhart from various poetry anthologies, where his poems were included with others of an earlier generation, including Frost, Eliot and Auden. Until 1996 I had no idea that Eberhart was still alive, that he lived close to my Vermont home, and that he was a Johnian. In the fall of that year, I read in our local paper that nearby Dartmouth College was hosting a 'Celebration of Richard Eberhart', where nine of America's leading poets would appear to honour Eberhart, including Allen Ginsberg, Donald Hall, Maxime Kumin, and Galway Kinnel, many of whom had won the nation's best-known literary prize, the Pulitzer, as had Eberhart himself over thirty years earlier. Eberhart, then 92 and visibly frail, attended this grand event, where he read some of his best-known poems and listened to the testimonials of the distinguished poets who had gathered to honour him. One of these poets stated that Eberhart would be remembered because 'he has given us a few great poems which we can't get rid of'.

Richard Eberhart was born in Minnesota in 1904 and attended Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, one of the colleges in the Ivy League. Leaving his Minnesota home for Dartmouth was an example of Eberhart's seeking a larger world, and in this spirit he entered St John's College, Cambridge in 1927, where he studied with F R Leavis and I A Richards. Eberhart adored his Cambridge years and what he called 'the civility of the English people'. He began publishing poems at Dartmouth, as he did also at Cambridge. The first of his fourteen published books of poetry appeared in 1930. Returning to

America Eberhart taught in the 1930s at St Mark's School in Massachusetts, an elite boys boarding school, equivalent to a school such as Harrow in England in size and prestige. It was at St Mark's that Eberhart was introduced to the Butchers, a prominent family of Boston manufacturers, resulting in a long and happy marriage with Betty Butcher and, in one period between teaching jobs, working for the Butcher Company. As an interesting footnote, Eberhart was responsible for bringing W H Auden, who he had met during his Cambridge days, to America by arranging for Auden's first job in the US as a teacher at St Mark's.

During World War II Eberhart served in the Navy as a gunnery instructor, an experience which led to one of his most anthologized poems, *The Fury of Aerial Bombardment*. In this stunning sixteen-line poem, the speaker begins with a cosmic view, imagining that the 'fury of the aerial bombardment/ Would rouse God to relent' and ending in the quotidian with the names of men 'whose faces I do not recall' who he had taught in his gunnery class and who had 'gone to an early death'.

After the War Eberhart established himself as one of the nation's leading poets. An image from this period is a now famous photograph showing the leading literati assembled at New York's Gotham Book Mart in 1948; a confident-looking Eberhart is shown flanked by Tennessee Williams and Gore Vidal, with W H Auden, Elizabeth Bishop, Stephen Spender, Sir Osbert and Dame Edith Sitwell, Marianna Moore, William Rose Benet, Delmore Schwartz, Randall Jarrell and half a dozen other luminaries of the period close by. In the early 1950s Eberhart began his university teaching career, returning in 1956 to his Alma Mater, Dartmouth, where he taught until his retirement.

In 1959 Eberhart was honoured as America's national poet in his appointment as Poetry Consultant to the Library of Congress, a position which has been renamed Poet Laureate of the United States. Eberhart held two consecutive terms in this position (first in the Eisenhower and then in the Kennedy administration), the only person to do so. I was shown a photo dating from this time (by Eberhart's daughter Gretchen, who lives near her father in New Hampshire) of Eberhart with Robert Frost and Carl Sandberg, who had come to Washington for the Kennedy Inauguration where Frost read a poem on a very frosty day. Eberhart describes how he went up to Frost afterwards and asked eagerly what the president had had to say. Frost quipped, 'I did all the talking'. In 1966 Eberhart was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his *Selected Poems*.

In the spring of 2004 I read that there would be another celebration for Richard Eberhart, in honour of his 100th birthday. I contacted the new Master, Professor Richard Perham, who had been my Tutor during my days at St John's, to inform him of the event; Eberhart, has for some years been an Honorary Fellow of the College. I attended the celebration and had the pleasure of reading to Professor Eberhart, and to the many guests, the birthday wishes that the Master had forwarded to me, stated on his behalf and on behalf of the entire College. Professor Eberhart is now very frail and has his moments of heightened lucidity. When he realized that my message was delivered from St John's, he became very animated, raised his arms, and said 'Hurray!' During his tenure at Dartmouth, Eberhart had acted as an unofficial ambassador of poetry

John Mears (left) reads a letter of congratulations to Richard Eberhart (right) written by Richard Perham, Master, at Professor Eberhart's 100th birthday celebration and had invited just about every major poet writing in the English language to Dartmouth, many of whom he entertained at his home. One former neighbour mentioned how she had seen Eberhart walking into his house with T S Eliot, who 'looked so sad'. I felt honoured to be a small part of Professor Eberhart's century celebration and mentioned how St John's had been augmented in its association with at least two superb poets, William Wordsworth and Richard Eberhart.

John Mears III (BA 1974, MA 1982)

Two poems by Richard Eberhart are reproduced below.

The Fury of the Aerial Bombardment

You would think the fury of the aerial bombardment
Would rouse God to relent; the infinite spaces
Are still silent. He looks on shock-pried faces.
History, even, does not know what is meant.

You would feel that after so many centuries
God would give man to repent; yet he can kill
As Cain could, but with multitudinous will,
No farther advanced than in his ancient furies.

Was man made stupid to see his own stupidity?
Is God by definition indifferent, beyond us all?
Is the eternal truth man's fighting soul
Wherein the Beast ravens in its own avidity?

Of Van Wettering I speak, and Averill,
Names on a list, whose faces I do not recall
But they are gone to early death, who late in school
Distinguished the belt feed lever from the belt holding pawl.

Seals, Terns, Time

The seals at play off Western Isle
In the loose flowing of the summer tide
And burden of our strange estate-

Resting on the oar and lolling on the sea,
I saw their curious images,
Hypnotic, sympathetic eyes

As the deep elapses of the soul.
O ancient blood, O blurred kind forms
That rise and peer from elemental water:

I loll upon the oar, I think upon the day,
Drawn by strong, by the animal soft bonds
Back to a dim pre-history;

While off the point of Jagged Light
In hundreds, gracefully, the fork-tailed terns
Draw swift esprits across the sky.

Their aspirations dip in mine,
The quick order of their changing spirit,
More freedom than the eye can see.

Resting lightly on the oarlocks,
Pondering, and balanced on the sea,
A gauze and spindrift of the world,

I am in compulsion hid and thwarted,
Pulled back in the mammal water,
Enticed to the release of the sky.

BOOK REVIEWS

Nick Webb, *Wish You Were Here: The official biography of Douglas Adams.* Pp. 370. Headline, 2003. ISBN 0-7553-1155-8, and **M J Simpson**, *Hitchhiker: A biography of Douglas Adams.* Pp. xviii + 393. Hodder & Stoughton, 2003. ISBN 0-340-82488-3

A funny thing happened to Douglas Adams following his death at the preposterously early age of forty-nine in May 2001. He was transmogrified from the writer of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* – which in its original radio version remains one of the enduring masterpieces of British comedy – to the status where the front flap of M J Simpson's biography can describe him as 'one of the most influential thinkers of the late twentieth century'. Even allowing for the licence of publishers' blurb-writers and for the rash of websites which Adams's work has spawned, that judgement is a tad far-fetched, and in the long term it will surely serve his memory better to avoid such inflated claims and remember him for what he was: a writer of quite extraordinary wit, whose far-reaching imagination and fascination with technology created an inimitable body of work.

Born in Cambridge in 1952, Douglas Adams read English at St John's from 1971 to 1974, but the real attraction of his home-town university had nothing to do with academic pursuits. 'I wanted to be a writer or performer in the same way the Pythons are and therefore desperately wanted to get into the Footlights', he said. 'I did have something of a guilt thing about reading English. I thought I should have done something useful and challenging. But while I was whingeing I also relished the chance to do not very much.' Nick Webb's biography catches well the mood of Cambridge in that period: 'At the time the university was not strenuously political. The economy was not as forgiving as in the previous decade, and the students of the Seventies were by and large getting their heads down and working. They were no longer angry, only a bit miffed.'

Having cut his Cambridge comic teeth with CULES – the Cambridge University Light Entertainment Society, for whom his only recorded

performance was in a show for the inmates of Chelmsford Prison – Douglas eventually achieved his aim of getting into Footlights towards the end of his first year, and spent the next two years pouring out material and performing in 'smokers'. After graduating in 1974 he got to know the right people. He became peripherally involved in his beloved *Monty Python's Flying Circus* and worked on various projects with Graham Chapman, but aspirations did not pay the rent, so the famously large-framed Adams took a job with the security staff of an Arab sheikh. Sitting guard outside a swish London hotel room, he observed the regular comings and goings along the corridor of various young ladies: 'At least you can read on the job', one of them observed to him as she passed.

After occasional comedy-writing for radio, a meeting with producer Simon Brett early in 1977 resulted in a commission to write the script for 'a science fiction comedy adventure' to be called *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. The true genesis of the idea is the cause of much vexation for M J Simpson. Adams always claimed that the notion of the series came to him while he lay drunk in a field in Innsbruck, during a hitch-hiking holiday round Europe in the pre-SJC summer of 1971. Nick Webb writes that Adams 'confessed that he had told the story . . . so often that he could no longer recall whether it happened the way he said it did, or whether he was just remembering his many retellings', and adds in a footnote that documentary film-makers have identified the actual field. Don't tell those film-makers, but Simpson has pretty good evidence that it was not in a field in Innsbruck in 1971 at all, but on a rock on Santorini in 1973. Adams was with a Dutch girlfriend on that Greek island, and Simpson speculates: 'Perhaps he changed the story out of courtesy to his unknown Dutch companion', before adding, chillingly: 'That's something for future biographers to discover.'

First broadcast in March 1978 in the graveyard 10.30 pm slot on Radio 4, *HHGG* soon acquired a cult following. The first novel came out in 1979, a second series was broadcast in 1980 (the same year which saw publication of *The Restaurant at the End of the Universe*), the television series began in January 1981 – and a quarter of a century later there are still people who will collapse to the ground writhing with uncontrollable mirth at the very mention of the number 42.

There were several other books – including *Last Chance to See*, that wonderful tour of endangered species published in 1990 – but nothing to match *HHGG*, which in the sweep of its imagination (exemplified not least in its novel use of sound effects) was unlike anything before or since.

Whether any future biographers might add to what we learn about Douglas from these two books is doubtful. Nick Webb, whose long friendship with his subject began when he acquired the novelised version of *HHGG* for the publishers Pan after being captivated by the radio series, is much the more relaxing chronicler, happy to wander off the immediate point to indulge in his own musings, in a manner of which Douglas would have approved. Understandably, he is particularly good on the publishing stories, including the fabled episode when Pan boss Sonny Mehta had to incarcerate Douglas in the Berkeley Hotel in London in order to get him to complete *So Long, and Thanks for all The Fish*. M J Simpson's book is much more earnest: the result of dogged research and diligent interviewing, it is crammed with more information than we probably need to know (though we have it to thank for the nugget that in 1979 St John's declined to be used for a location shoot of the fictitious Cambridge college St Cedd's in a *Doctor Who* episode scripted by Douglas, but never transmitted due to a strike at the BBC).

For all the zeal of his biographers, official and unofficial, the essence of Douglas Adams is most tellingly caught in a short but affectionate piece in the Winter 2004 issue of the *Michigan Quarterly Review* by George Watson, who supervised him at St John's and remained a friend. A perfect epitaph for the most celebrated and most imaginative Johnian of recent years would be George's observation: 'His mind was a lumber room, wholly disorganised and richly stocked.'

Sean Magee

Garth Bardsley, *Stop the World, the Biography of Anthony Newley*. Pp. 247. Oberon Books, 2003. ISBN 1-84002-274-4

Garth Bardsley has made a difficult choice for his first foray into biography. Anthony Newley was not, to the outsider, a very sympathetic man. Extremely self-centred – he said that he continually watched himself as he entered rooms – self-important, believing himself to be more of a genius than he was, and capable of being both callous and thoughtless to his several wives and his many lovers, he is not easy for the reader to like, except perhaps when he is being patronised and insulted by the infinitely less likeable Rex Harrison.

Nevertheless, I found him a fascinating study, because he embodied so many of the illusions, fantasies, conceits, evasions and insecurities of that industry of illusion, Showbiz.

His story reads like a Showbiz cliché – rags to riches and back to . . . well, not to rags, but to struggles and relative poverty and obscurity. It is the story of a huge ego, a huge talent and a huge capacity for self-destruction. It is also a search for stability and for the father he never knew as a child. Newley was illegitimate and did not meet his father until a private detective tracked him down when Newley was forty-one and his father eighty-two.

Garth Bardsley tells the story of this turbulent life in rather a plain, unadorned, though thoroughly professional style, which seemed a little dull and swamped in detail at first. I found the first few pages hard going, the people dwarfed by the East End background. I would not have thought, then, that by the last chapters I would be so gripped that I couldn't decide whether to stay up late and finish it, or leave myself the treat of a couple of chapters next morning!

There are two difficulties frequently encountered by biographers of actors, and both of them faced Bardsley. One is the problem of name-dropping, of avoiding vast lists of names of shows, performers, agents, directors and writers. In autobiographies this can be the result of vanity. In biographies it is simply the nature of the beast; it comes with the territory. In the middle of the book there is a plateau in Newley's career.

He's a big success, he's leading a very social life, particularly when married to Joan Collins, and some pages do read rather like a Who's Who of the Theatre. The narrative drive does force its way through, but only just. I urge you to stick with it. The book begins to go uphill as Newley's career begins to go downhill. It became, for me at least, a most addictive read.

The second problem is that the famous person almost always behaves badly, but is redeemed by his or her personality, charm, and humour. Newley, however badly he behaved, was liked because of his enormous charm and charisma. He certainly charmed almost every woman he met and was usually popular with his fellow performers, always excluding Rex Harrison. He was clearly a great host and an entertaining guest. We are told all this, but how on earth can you demonstrate that charm and charisma on the printed page? Charm and wit are butterflies. I have myself been known to make witty remarks on occasion at dinner parties, but if I'm asked 'Tell them that thing you said last night', the repetition goes down like a lead balloon. The butterfly is dead.

Well, in the end, through persistence, generosity and truthfulness, Bardsley does make this butterfly live. I found myself understanding Newley, caring for him, rooting for him, almost weeping for him. Bardsley quotes Newley as saying, 'I'm beginning to feel more and more, that the only things I really enjoy, are things that emanate directly from inside my small cockney head'. The sad truth is that the best things in his work were those that did not emanate from his small cockney head.

The truth is that all his greatest successes, both as writer and performer, came when he shared his head with Leslie Bricusse's rather wiser head. 'Stop the World, I Want to Get Off', 'The Roar of the Greasepaint, The Smell of the Crowd', and 'The Good Old Bad Old Days' were all penned in partnership with Bricusse.

Newley was a brilliant cabaret performer and a very fine straight actor. Some people felt that his Artful Dodger in David Lean's magnificent film of 'Oliver Twist', at the age of seventeen, was the best thing he ever did. Great cabaret artiste, great singer, and great actor. He could have been a British Sinatra if he hadn't had this urge to make sense of his life through his art, if he hadn't had this burning ambition to write a great musical, an ambition that, since he fell so far short of it, one must describe as pretension.

The culmination of his ambition and pretension, his most personal work, his story of his life as the most important event in world history – which to him of course it was – was probably the worst thing he ever did. It was entitled 'Can Hieronymus Merkin Ever Forget Mercy Humppe and Find True Happiness?' Can we ever forget the title and face going to see it?

I once said, 'I hate Showbiz'. My first wife commented, tartly, 'No you don't. You love it. *That's* what you hate.' I think there was something of that feeling in Newley too. He was addicted, utterly addicted, but his addiction didn't make him happy. He earned and spent several fortunes, and he never really found peace of mind. He was insecure to the last, a hypochondriac, a dreadful traveller, and a professional neurotic.

His decline and his last illness are simply but movingly told, and the affection shown by his children and his wronged wives tells of his charm and charisma more eloquently than any writer can.

This book seemed to me to gain confidence as it progressed. From an uncertain start it grew to a very moving conclusion. It's a very promising debut from a writer who seems quicker at learning than was his subject. I await Garth Bardsley's next book with interest.

David Nobbs

Duncan Dormor, *Just Cohabiting: The Church, Sex and Getting Married.* Pp viii + 136. Darton Longman & Todd, 2004. ISBN 0-232-52484-X

This is an important and most welcome contribution to a debate which now exercises many, both within and outside the Church. It would be an oversimplification to say this whole matter could be summed up in Larkin's famous lines, 'Sexual intercourse began in 1963 (which was rather too late for me)'.* Duncan Dormor's probing examination of the Church's attitude to cohabitation and to marriage reveals both the complexity and variety of contemporary attitudes.

Like every account of the contemporary state of marriage and committed partnerships, Dormor's traces the modern period back to the advent of widespread access to reliable contraception in the early 1960s. With this development came 'the unravelling of the intimate connection between marriage, childbearing and sexuality' (p79) which had hitherto largely governed the decision of couples to marry, and which had given the Church a considerable measure of control over the official inauguration of long-term partnerships.

It would be all too easy to see this as confirming the general view that marriage is in decline, and the Church's interest in this rite is waning. By contrast, Dormor indicates ways in which the Church should reaffirm its commitment to this central aspect of human life, and should recapture its 'market share' (p116). But this can only happen if it is prepared to re-examine its understanding of marriage, and to see it as a process rather than an event.

Such a shift would be not so much an innovation, but the recovery of an earlier tradition, as the book's impressive survey of biblical, historical and sociological evidence demonstrates. It is in the relatively recent history of the Church that the decree of the Council of Trent in 1563 made marriage before a priest the only legitimate route in Catholic Europe, and the Hardwicke Act of 1753 required the public registration of marriages in England. For the Jewish and Mediterranean cultures in which Christianity was born, and whose marriage customs the local Church tended, with some exceptions, to follow (p53), the marriage ceremony came at the end of a sequence of agreement, exchange of gifts, and formal betrothal that frequently included cohabitation. The sexual relationship of the couple did not necessarily begin with marriage.

Yet Dormor is doing a great deal more than defending cohabitation by appealing to earlier precedents in the history of the Church and society. Nor does he suggest that it is an undesirable situation to which the Church must turn a blind eye if it wishes to retain a stake in marriage.

Cohabitation itself has come a long way since the early 1960s, when it was the radical choice of couples who were rejecting a raft of conventional assumptions. The high divorce rate among couples of this generation who proceeded to marriage is not surprising, since these marriages entailed a move towards acceptance by the very structures which the partners had resisted. In the last twenty years, however, there has been a rapid alteration in attitudes towards cohabiting couples. They are no longer seen in depreciatory terms such as 'living in sin', but as 'morally serious' people who, thanks to sophisticated methods of contraception and the economic independence of women, have a considerable degree of control in determining a suitable time for marriage. Divorce rates among couples who have previously cohabited have shown a steady downward trend, consistent with the internal commitment and external acceptance of the cohabiting relationship.

Dormor's hope is that the Church will 'look more imaginatively to ways of meeting and accompanying couples who are seeking to build lives together' (p62). This is no mean task, for, as one pair of sociologists whose work is quoted point out, the contemporary quest for romantic love has become a form of secular religion. It will be the Church's task to confront the high degree of expectation placed on relationships, moderating it healthily to a view of marriage as 'the art of the possible' (p120).

Dormor believes that much of this can be achieved by a new understanding of committed relationships as process or journey. This relates closely to much current theological thinking, not least in the area of liturgy. Thus, he argues, the Church should think in terms of marriage not wedding; of sexual integrity rather than the initiation of sexual practice. There can be no doubt that enhancing the value placed on commitment and fidelity and the journey of mutual discovery would be to the great benefit of many relationships. But it is clear that there remains a wide diversity of views in the contemporary Church.

It is unfortunate that this excellent survey should leave the development of its potentially most original proposal for the last few pages. Drawing on the analogy of other ecclesiastical rites of passage, like baptism and confirmation, the book identifies a vocation for the Church in advocating a 'marital spirituality' capable of taking on the 'brute stubbornness' of married life and creating an environment in which adults and children will flourish. 1963 may have been 'rather too late' for Philip Larkin. Forty years on, it is by no means too late for the Church to commit itself to finding a 'marital spirituality' through a different appreciation of the journey of marital sexuality. But we will need another book to tell us how this aspiration might become reality.

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* Philip Larkin, 'Annus Mirabilis'

The Rt Revd Dr Anthony Russell
Bishop of Ely

Isaac ibn Sahula, *Meshal Haqadmoni: Fables from the Distant Past.* A Parallel Hebrew-English text, edited and translated by Raphael Loewe. Two volumes. Pp cxiii + 816. 160 woodcuts and illuminations. The Littman Library of Jewish Civilisation: Oxford & Portland, Oreg., 2004. ISBN 1-874774-56-0

The employment of animal figures, which are invested with the power of speech, to convey essential truths, moral guidance or even simpler messages, is a phenomenon known from the literary cultures of ancient Asia, classical antiquity, and medieval Europe, and is today still familiar to us in a wide range of epic tales (popular with adults no less than children), cartoons and advertisements. In the late thirteenth century the Spanish Jewish physician, Isaac ibn Solomon Abi Sahula, concluded, after a visit to Cairo, that it was time for him, as he approached his forties, to adopt a more spiritually impressive lifestyle. Like many of such a frame of mind before and since, he felt constrained to share with his contemporaries the principles responsible for his religious regeneration.

Ibn Sahula, as he was generally known, therefore compiled, in rhymed Hebrew prose and featuring a host of animals, five cycles of fables in which a moralist and a cynic engage in a series of debates – wherein naturally the former invariably prevailed – on the subject of wisdom, penitence, sound counsel, humility and reverence. Making use of the language, literature and ideology of the major Jewish sources (Bible, Talmud and Midrash), as well as the broader philosophical, medical and scientific culture of his environment, he succeeded in adding something of a classic to medieval Hebrew literature.

And more. For although it was in Egypt that in 1281 Isaac came to his senses, it was in Spain, and more particularly at and around Guadalajara in the kingdom of Castile, that his formative years had been spent. Aged thirty-seven when he completed his masterpiece, he had therefore lived through the reign of Alfonso X, *el Sabio*, and it was his experience of the rule of that learned rather than wise (and, alas, really not terribly sensible) monarch that provided the context of his tales and the whetstone for his wit. Variously represented by the author as the Lion or the Eagle, by 1281 Alfonso was discredited and in terminal decline, and, for all that the conventions of the genre prevent the identification of particular animals and tales with specific individuals and occasions, allusions to many of the causes of the sorry state of that sometime cynosure of his age can regularly be descried in the author's fables from an (in fact) not at all distant past. For those with a nose for such things, now as much as then, Isaac's tales are replete with coded commentaries on the monarch's mismanagement of his kingdom's political establishment and its economy and his obsession with astrological and astronomical speculation, as well as providing a rich source for scholars interested in the complexities both of the impact of non-Christian influences on its literary culture and of the inter-confessional realities of the 'land of the three religions'. In short, Raphael Loewe has placed students of many disciplines permanently and deeply in his debt.

The work, first printed by Gershom Soncino in Brescia *c*1491, and also transmitted in numerous manuscripts, attracted the attention of illustrators and became popular enough in Ashkenazi circles to ensure the creation of a number of Yiddish translations. Alas, however, no English translation was ever completed. This state of affairs has now been rectified. Raphael Loewe (BA 1942, MA 1946) stands in a long line of distinguished Johnian hebraists, including Bishop Fisher in the sixteenth century and Peter Mason and Charles Taylor in the nineteenth. He has devoted a dozen arduous years to providing, with the assistance of the publishers and of a number of generous donors, a sound and carefully vocalised Hebrew text, and detailed annotations concerning variants, sources and interpretation, together with a complete English translation, brilliantly rendered in rhymed couplets in a mildly archaic style based on English models of similar genre, in a manner worthy of the winner of the University's Seatonian Prize for Sacred Poetry in 2000. He has prefaced the translation with some hundred pages of carefully and helpfully reconstructed background concerning Ibn Sahula, his work and his age (including a synopsis 'for philistines . . . and . . . others . . . in a hurry'!) and has concluded the edition with almost another hundred pages of appendices, bibliography and indices. The text is illustrated with the woodcuts from the second edition (Venice, *c*1547) and vignettes from a fifteenth-century Italian manuscript at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, thereby providing bibliophiles with two sumptuously produced volumes, and medievalists, hebraists and cultural historians at large with a veritable feast of learning and literature. In acknowledgement and admiration of his remarkable intellectual achievement, we can do no better than quote (in Loewe's own felicitous translation, vol 1, p151) the words of Ibn Sahula, commending knowledge to his readers and urging honour for the one who best represents it:

> *To reason open thou thy mind:*
> *Her parable with favour read*
> *And close attention, giving heed*
> *To honour animals assigned*
> *Unto that beast who, of his kind,*
> *In counsel did the rest exceed;*
> *Thus shalt thou, too, in grace succeed*
> *Good sense, respect, and knowledge find.*

Peter Linehan and Stefan Reif

Robert Hinde and Joseph Rotblat, *War No More: Eliminating Conflict in the Nuclear Age.* Pp 228. Pluto Press, 2003. ISBN 0-7453-2191-7

This is a remarkable book by a remarkable duo. Its origins and the pulses which run throughout its pages can be traced back sixty years to a young Robert Hinde in an RAF flying-boat pilot over the Atlantic, and a young Joe Rotblat, part of the British scientific team in America in the New Mexico desert, helping to design and build the first atomic weapons. In 1945, once allied intelligence showed the Germans were nowhere near to making a fission bomb, Rotblat resigned from the Manhattan Project. As his colleague Leo Szilard put it: 'in 1945, when we ceased worrying about what the Germans would do to us, we began to worry about what the . . . United States might do to other countries'.

Rotblat and Hinde have been worrying ever since the first nuclear weapons were dropped on Japan in August of that year – and the width of their six-decade concern is as huge as it is justified. For their anxieties range way beyond nuclear-tipped nations whether in the hyper power bracket or in North Korea or the Indian sub-continent. For them the spectrum of violence, and the human, political and economic impulses which fill it, are their target, from machete-driven genocide in Rwanda to the coming generation of 'sophisticated' precision nuclear weapons with conventional arms and nerve gases in between.

It has always been historically true that the armourer has outrun the ethicist, but the gap has never been so wide. This can lead to despair or various forms of denial – one of which is to concentrate on the most likely or immediate peril and to forget the rest. For example, I share with the authors amazement tinged with regret that the near miraculous ending of the Cold War without a nuclear exchange or a Third World War has led to a decade of relative insouciance about nuclear weapons.

I am currently writing a general history of Britain in the 1950s and this morning, before picking up my pen to write this review, I was re-reading the Strath Report of 1955, Whitehall's immensely secret appraisal (of which a personal copy went to every Cabinet Minister) describing what ten 10-megaton hydrogen bombs would do to the UK. This was declassified for my students by the Cabinet Office two years ago.

It is chilling and, quite rightly, it was written in a way matched by no other Cabinet paper I have seen. If it happened, the report said, within an hour or two, 12 million (then a quarter of the population) would be dead and a further 4 million very seriously injured even before fall-out crept across the country doing its vile work. 'Hydrogen bomb war', ministers were told, 'would be total war in a sense not hitherto conceived. The entire nation would be in the front line.' It is comforting (if only a little) that recently declassified UK material of this sort – and files showing how long it took to create tight command and control systems for the British nuclear weapons capability – have recently been drawn to the attention of key figures in the atomic circles of India and Pakistan.

But this has to do with the more dramatic and most intrinsically powerful pieces on what President Carter's National Security Adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, called 'The Grand Chessboard' of global geopolitics. Among the most sobering of Hinde's and Rotblat's pages are those that simply enumerate the deaths involved in so-called 'limited wars' since Hinde was demobilised from the RAF and Rotblat came home from Los Alamos. The lives foreshortened and the long shadow of trauma, bereavement as well as the social and economic dislocation even the smallest wars bequeath they rightly see as an affront to 'the miraculous products of billions of years of evolution' which our 'allegiance to humanity' leaves us with a 'duty to pass on' to future generations.

They risk accusations of 'mushy idealism' and press on to analyse and depict the 'hard pragmatic reasons for avoiding war'. The fronts on which they argue society must operate to improve the chances of peace stretch from the Security Council of the United Nations, through cabinet rooms and parliaments, the assessments staff of intelligence agencies whose duty it is to warn of coming strife, the R & D laboratories of governments and private companies, to the teaching in schoolrooms and the conduct of religious affairs.

Optimism keeps breaking through the pessimism that the hard road from 1945 could so easily induce among the knowledgeable and the sensitive who have trodden it. They may think this a strange observation to make, but they remind me of the very last sentence Winston Churchill uttered in the House of Commons in his final speech as Prime Minister. It was a performance full of paradox. After announcing in March 1955 that Britain was to make its own H-bomb he launched into an impassioned survey of the horrors thermonuclear war would inflict upon the world, concluding with the words: 'meanwhile, never flinch, never weary, never despair'. Hinde and Rotblat are like that and will remain so as long as they draw breath.

Peter Hennessy (BA 1969, PhD 1990)

COMMEMORATION OF BENEFACTORS SERMON

1 May 2005

'And some there be which have no memorial'

There is a magic in lists. Some years ago, Irving Wallace and his son David Wallechinsky had a surprise best-seller with *The Book of Lists*, a hefty volume which contained exactly what its title said - lists of people, places and facts having some common feature. More recently, a large part of the success (again, unpredicted by the publishing trade) of Ben Schott's *Miscellany* books has surely been due to this apparently deep-seated human response to the listing of related things. It doesn't matter what the things are: if they fit into a list, we want to know about them. So it may be that you have been drawn to the College Chapel this morning not by the prospect of hearing what I have to say, but simply for the pleasure of hearing the List of Benefactors read out by the two Deans.

It is certainly a list worth coming to hear. For it is not simply a list of names; it tells us a great deal about what this College is and what it stands for. Having been compiled and re-compiled over nearly five centuries of the College's history, it is inevitably uneven in style; but in that unevenness we can see something of the changes that have taken place to the College's position in society, to its expectations of its members, and indeed to the College's - and the public's - perception of the whole nature of benefaction. However, several of my recent predecessors as Commemoration preachers have explored the theme of how the nature of benefaction, and indeed of our benefactors, has evolved over the course of the College's history. I do not wish to revisit that theme; instead, I should like to consider how we, the present-day hearers of the list, should respond to it.

It is inevitable, given the length of the list, that not all the names on it will register in our consciousness with equal force. There are bound to be occasional high points, names which we greet with a special sense of recognition, interspersed with longer stretches of names about which we know little or nothing.

Where those high points come will inevitably vary from one hearer to another. But there are some names that surely 'ring a bell' for all of us, because of the central roles they played in the College's history: the Foundress herself of course, and John Fisher her Confessor and Executor; Bishop Williams, whose generosity paid for our seventeenth-century Library; and James Wood, perhaps the most remarkable Master in the history of the College, who was born the son of a poor weaver in Lancashire, but who by a combination of pluralism and thrift amassed such a great fortune that he was able to contribute the sum of £15,000 towards the building of New Court, and the residue of his estate formed the nucleus of the Building Fund that paid for this Chapel. We do not need to be reminded who these people are. And, from a more recent generation, the name of Cyril Thomas Cripps, who paid for the College's largest expansion of the twentieth century, is surely one that will carry a similar resonance, for as long as the list continues to be read.

In addition, for most of us, there will be some names that stand out because of their association with particular aspects of the College's activity which are of special importance to us. Thus, for example, the name of Philip Baylis of Parkend, Gloucestershire, is one that I greet with special recognition when it is read out (it was not heard today, but is still included once every three years), because I was a Baylis Scholar as an undergraduate, nearly forty years ago. Although by that time the privileges of a Baylis Scholar no longer included the right to reside in the set of rooms in E Third Court which had been Baylis's own, as they had done in my father's day, it was still the case that as a Baylis Scholar one had the sense of having been specially singled out from amongst the general run of Mathematics scholars (with the continuing decline in the real value of scholarships, and the consequent increase in the number of scholars supported by Mr Baylis's bequest, I suspect that no longer applies). Again, having served for a decade as the College's representative on the Governing Body of Sedbergh School, I have come to recognize the special importance of Roger Lupton, Provost of Eton and founder of Sedbergh, whose determination to create an 'Eton of the

North' in the remote Yorkshire village that had been his birthplace, led him to link it by way of endowed scholarships and Fellowships with this College, less than two decades after our own foundation, so that it might enjoy the advantages which Eton gained from its co-foundation with King's (once again, I have to report that the link is not as strong as it was - during my time as a Governor, only one Sedberghian succeeded in gaining an undergraduate place at St John's - but it has had a remarkable impact on both institutions over the course of our history).

Thirdly, for those of us who have been associated with the College for some years, there are names towards the end of the list that stand out because we remember them as individuals. This particularly applies to former Fellows, such as Louis Joel Mordell (again, sadly not on this year's list), who was one of the most distinguished mathematicians of the mid-twentieth century, and whose acquaintance I first made in my first term here, when with characteristic generosity he celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of his own election to a scholarship by throwing a party for all the then current Mathematics scholars; or Norman Fordyce McKerron Henry, Fellow and Steward, who did so much to educate the students and younger Fellows of my generation in the proper appreciation of good food and wine.

But, apart from names in the categories I have mentioned, and a few others that stand out by reason of their sheer oddity (such as the opium agent, or the splendidly-named Mary Wilhelmina Bourdoff Gerrard, whose fame was evidently such that 'of the United States' was considered a sufficient address for her), the great majority of the names on the list are just that - names. We hear them read out each year, but (unless we have made a special study of this aspect of the College's history) we do not know who they were, or the nature of their gifts and bequests to the College, or even why they should have chosen to bestow their munificence on this College rather than another.

And in any case the names we hear are only the tip of the iceberg. The list has been ruthlessly pruned of the less generous benefactors, in order to keep it down to a length that can be accommodated within this service (incidentally, at one time there were three Commemoration Services every year, a different portion of the list being read at each; when these were combined into one in 1860, it was necessary to be selective). Of the 137 names from the Foundress down to James Wood, listed in Alfred Torry's book *Founders and Benefactors of St John's College* (1888), roughly half have never been read out in recent years. And many other names now occur on a three-year rota, as I mentioned earlier.

What criteria are used to decide which names are read out every year, or every three years, or not at all, is a subject on which I do not wish to speculate - though I should like to point out that we have a warning from Christ Himself, in the parable of the labourers in the vineyard, against the construction of a rigid hierarchy of excellence based on service. And it does seem that the names we hear are not always those most deserving of commemoration. Let me illustrate this with three examples, drawn from Torry's book.

William Wright of the Inner Temple is one benefactor whose surname, at least, remains familiar to us from the Wright Prizes which are awarded each year for outstanding performance in the Tripos, and which were endowed from his bequest. But I suspect that most of us know as little about his life as I did until recently, when I looked him up in Torry's book. The brief account given there certainly dispels any impression that all of our benefactors were paragons of virtue. He was the younger of two Johnian brothers - sons of a distinguished judge - and was admitted to the College in 1750. After leaving College without taking a degree, he went to the Bar. For some years he lived in straitened circumstances. His elder brother, with whom he was at variance, had determined to leave the family property to a stranger, but when out riding one day he was seized with a fit, fell from his horse, and died, having the draft of the unexecuted will in his pocket. After succeeding to the estates, William Wright lived much abroad, but eventually returned to London, and died in 1814 in an obscure lodging in Pimlico, where he did not even keep a servant. He left the family estates to Lady Wilson, daughter of the first Earl of Aylesbury, whom he had admired 20 years previously but to whom he had never spoken. When Lady Wilson was told of her legacy, she at first refused to believe the news, as she had never heard of Mr Wright. Afterwards she recognized in the deceased a gentleman who used to gaze at her in the opera so persistently that she changed her box in order to avoid him. Among other legacies, besides £3,000 to St John's, were £7,000 to Mr Abbott, speaker of the House of Commons, and £1,000 to Archdeacon Pott, in recognition of the impression produced on Mr Wright by one of the Archdeacon's sermons.

Not one of the legatees had any knowledge of their benefactor. For more than 60 years the College commemorated him erroneously as 'John Wright', and bookplates with this incorrect name were inserted in the books given as Wright Prizes (incidentally, there is no evidence that Wright wished to found prizes; in his Will, he directed that his bequest should be used 'to assist the education of poor but ingenious youth of any county or country'). To cap it all, Torry records a rumour that he was misinformed about the identity of the lady whom he admired.

Richard Smith, Professor of Physic, was on the list of Benefactors for many years, but disappeared from it in the 1860 reorganization. He was elected a Fellow in 1558, rose to become President of the College of Physicians, and by his Will dated 1599 he left one third part of his estate 'to his son Paul Smith for life and if he died without heirs to ye College of St John's in Cambridge'. Torry wryly records that the son did die without heirs but the College 'never received one farthing of the Estate'.

The Reverend Roger Kay has apparently never been included in the official list of Benefactors; his name appears only in an appendix to Torry's book. And yet the College has good reason to be grateful to him. Having been a Fellow of the College from 1688 to 1691, and afterwards Rector of Fittleton, Wiltshire, and Prebendary of Sarum, he devoted his fortune to re-founding the Grammar School at Bury in Lancashire, his birthplace, which had been founded in 1625 but had fallen into a badly decayed state in the early 18th century. He initially sought to involve St John's College in the re-endowed school, by giving it the right to nominate the Headmaster, but afterwards changed his mind and vested the appointment in a body of Trustees. He did, however, found two exhibitions for pupils of the school, tenable at either St John's or Brasenose College, Oxford; and in his will he bequeathed £100 to the College library. So far, he sounds like a minor version of Roger Lupton, doing for Bury in a small way what Lupton had done on a grand scale for Sedbergh two centuries earlier. But the clue to his significance for St John's is one that I suspect some of you will already have picked up: Bury was also the birthplace of James Wood, who was a pupil at the school which Roger Kay re-endowed, and who was enabled to come to St John's solely by the support of one of Mr Kay's Exhibitions. One of Wood's many charitable bequests was given to increase the value of those Exhibitions.

The conclusion which one seems bound to draw from these few examples is that, in order to obtain the synthetic immortality of a place on our list of Benefactors, mere generosity is not enough: one needs also a fairly substantial slice of luck. And, quite apart from the inadequacies and inconsistencies of the list as we now know it, we have to bear in mind its one fundamental shortcoming: by its nature, it can only record benefactions of a material kind, and it cannot begin to provide a record of those who have enriched the College through a lifetime of service (unless, as happens surprisingly often, they have also given generously in material terms). To take but one example: Alfred Freer Torry, who was Fellow and Dean for many years, and who compiled the volume on the Founders and Benefactors from which I have quoted, is not on the list (although he sneaks in as an appendage of his daughter, who gave money to the College in memory of her father as recently as the 1970s).

Does this matter? I suspect that Jeshua ben Eleazar ben Sira knew the answer, and that it can be found in the passage from his writings (commonly known as the book of *Ecclesiasticus*), which is traditionally read as part of this service. After inviting his readers to 'praise famous men, and our fathers that begat us', he begins with a list of 'the great and the good' - statesmen, composers, writers and the like - who can be expected to be represented in a list such as ours, and to be remembered for their good deeds even without its assistance. But then he suddenly changes tack, and talks of those 'who have no memorial, who are become as if they had never been born', even though they were merciful men, and just as deserving of our approbation as those who 'found out musical tunes, or recited verses in writing'. At first sight this change of direction seems rather strange: why, when we are in the midst of 'praising famous men', should we suddenly divert our attention to those who have left no memory behind them? But Jeshua ben Sira understood a fundamental truth about lists, which is part of the magic that I mentioned earlier: namely, that they are apt to seduce us into ascribing to them a completeness that they do not in fact possess.

Of course, some lists can be and are complete: if Messrs Stanley Gibbons tell you that they have catalogued every postage stamp ever issued in this country, then you can take that at face value. But any list of 'famous men' is bound to be incomplete: as Jeshua ben Sira knew, we cannot properly respond to it unless we keep in mind the names that are not on it, as well as those that are.

It is necessary, therefore, that we do not regard our list of benefactors as something complete, or even completable. We must rather view it as a kind of parable, a simplification of the truth for didactic purposes. It contains only a small sample of those whose good works have contributed to the establishment and enrichment of the College which we love, and whom we are bound to honour on that account. But in that sample, if we perceive it correctly, we can see the truth of what this College has meant to the great 'cloud of witnesses' who for nearly half a millennium have enriched it with their gifts and their service, in the hope that (as the College Prayer puts it) 'love of the brethren and all sound learning shall ever grow and prosper here'. And it is no accident that the College Prayer includes the word 'grow' as well as 'prosper'. The College has perpetually renewed and enlarged itself through the generosity of its benefactors - it needs to do so still, if it is not to decline into irrelevance - and we, the current generation of Johnians, must recognize that we all have roles to play in that process of constant renewal. That, I believe, is the true message that we ought to take away from this Commemoration service.

Peter Johnstone

CRIMES AND PUNISHMENTS: A JOHNIAN UNDERWORLD

Despite the best endeavours of vigilant Tutors and demanding Directors of Studies, the odd rotten apple is occasionally found in the Johnian barrel. To mark the tercentenary of the death of that notorious St John's miscreant, Titus Oates, fabricator of the Popish Plot, the College Library staged during the Lent Term 2005 an exhibition focusing on Johnians who have found a place in history for all the wrong reasons. Our exhibition set Oates in the company of murderers, a traitor, a usurer, and lesser 'bad boys' who, long ago, got drunk, broke windows, cheated in exams, kept lewd company or melted College spoons. Thanks to the efforts of the Special Collections Librarian, Jonathan Harrison, and the Archivist, Malcolm Underwood, research for the exhibition uncovered in the College collections some particularly interesting material relating to these miscreants, and provided the basis for a popular and unusual display.

Crimes do, of course, come in all shapes and sizes. Oates' offences were particularly gross. The story of the Popish Plot is complex, and prolonged, but in essence his false testimony, his conjuration of a non-existent Roman Catholic conspiracy against King Charles II, provoked widespread hysteria, a protracted reign of terror in London, and the deaths of thirty-five innocent men. James Hackman's crime was more straightforward, if still more immediately violent. An Army officer turned beneficed clergyman, whose undergraduate career at St John's is particularly obscure, Hackman fell under the spell of the pretty and accomplished Martha Ray, mistress of the Earl of Sandwich. Ray at first rather took to the young man, but when she eventually rejected him Hackman's devotion turned into obsession. In April 1779, having stalked her across London, he shot his former lover in the head, outside the Covent Garden Theatre, then attempted suicide using a second pistol. Ray died on the spot, but Hackman managed merely to graze his own temple, and his subsequent desperate efforts to batter himself to death with the butt of the firearm proved equally futile. Tried and sentenced to death by hanging, Hackman met his end with great fortitude and repentance, and amid widespread publicity; clergymen who have gone to the bad are always newsworthy. This *cause célèbre* inspired several contemporary ballads, poems and plays, including Sir Herbert Croft's *Love and Madness* (1780). The *Gentleman's Magazine* marked the end of the sorry tale with a poem in its June 1779 number:

When Hackman rais'd the instrument of fate,
The stroke he felt, and pity wept too late;
Rest happy both! – whose heavy doom was such,
One dy'd too early, and one lov'd too much!

Hackman's motives on that fatal day are still disputed – he argued at his trial that, until the very last moment, a dramatic suicide was all that had been on his mind – but few would disagree with James Boswell's conclusion that the case demonstrated too graphically 'the dreadful effects that the passion of Love may produce'.

To an early-modern mind, the worst crime of all was high treason, an open act of disloyalty, or rebellion, against the Crown itself. High treason was, by its nature, an essentially political offence. As every Johnian knows, it was conviction on a charge of treason that led to the death of John Fisher, a pious theologian, yet also an obdurate opponent of King Henry VIII's divorce from Katherine of Aragon, the principal issue in English politics during the early 1530s. Two centuries later, another Johnian, James Dawson, son of a Salford apothecary, found himself charged with the same crime. Dawson had 'adhered to the king's enemies' by taking a commission in the Young Pretender's Manchester Regiment, the only substantial group of English recruits that Bonnie Prince Charlie ever secured. An enthusiastic soldier in the Stuart cause he had risen to the rank of Captain, before being taken prisoner at Carlisle, in December 1745. After the defeat of the Forty-five rebellion, the shaken government of George II was disinclined to show mercy, and quite credible pleas of youthful folly could not save Dawson from the consequences of his actions. He was one of eight rebel officers hanged, drawn and quartered on Kennington Common in July 1746.

Not all crimes are violent. Another Johnian, William Ewin, earned himself the hard-won title of 'the most unpopular man in Cambridge', in part through involvement in local politics, and in part through the entirely peaceful processes of usury spiced with peculation. Ewin was born in Cambridge, son of a local brewer. He entered St John's in 1749, graduating BA in 1753 and LLD in 1766. When his father died, Ewin inherited a share of the brewing business and a considerable fortune, which he developed through private money-lending. As a Justice of the Peace, Ewin obstructed the implementation of an act for better paving, lighting and public order in Cambridge, and was consequently loathed by most of the townspeople. His friend William Cole, the antiquary, understood very well his prying, intrusive nature:

> Dr Ewin, by being…busy and meddling in other people's concerns, got the ill-will of most persons in the Town and University…The gownsmen bore him a particular grudge for interfering much in their affairs…They often broke the Doctor's windows, as they said he had been caught listening on their staircases and doors.

By 1777 Ewin's money-lending had landed him in trouble. He had advanced William Bird, a young scholar of Trinity College, £750 at so high a rate of interest that Bird was required to repay Ewin a total of £1090. Bird's failure to do so landed him in a debtors' prison. This 'usurious affair' came to light in January 1777 but it took the methodical University eighteen months to bring charges. Ewin was eventually tried before the Vice-Chancellor's Court in October 1778 and was sentenced to be suspended from all degrees and to be expelled from the University. While Ewin's expulsion was eventually revoked and his degrees restored, since after all no University statute expressly forbade usury or the lending of money to minors, he was denounced by the judge Lord Mansfield as 'a corrupter of youth and an usurer'. Although his fortune continued to grow in the years that followed, Ewin's reputation never really recovered.

Johnians who turn to crime usually have the grace to commit their offences far beyond the Great Gate, but as Peter Linehan showed in these pages four years ago, the College has dark secrets of its own. The mysterious death of James Ashton in his First Court rooms, early in 1746, and the problematic acquittal of his fellow Johnian undergraduate John Brinkley on a charge of murder some months later, stands at one end of a broad spectrum of crimes and misdemeanours in a young, boisterous and until very recently all-male society. The Admonition Book and Junior Dean's books from the College Archives, covering the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, provide plentiful evidence of offences still occasionally encountered today: drunkenness, rowdiness, swearing, fighting, disobedience, and neglect of studies. Here too can be found misdemeanours very much of their time: leaving College without permission, non-attendance at Chapel, smuggling girls into College (on at least one occasion a girl dressed as a man), and fornication, which in those far-off days merited expulsion. One or two very unwise offences are also recorded, such as breaking the Master's windows. The names of some who should know better are also found in these volumes: a graduate is discovered at Stourbridge Fair by a Proctor 'in a booth at an unseasonable time of the night in lewd company', while a Fellow is rightly reproached for 'contemptuous language and scoffs to the Master'.

There is another, sadder side to many of these tales – criminal behaviour is seldom without its contradictions and ambiguities. Oates's actions have usually been explained as a psychotic's revenge, yet he saw himself as the saviour of the nation, and for a while was honoured as such. When, to quote from the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 'the sordid reality of his life in which there were no great secrets to uncover, only back alley meetings, stealing, begging, and poverty, vice, fear, and hatred, and above all failure...caught up with him', the story of his miserable final years – years of destitution, imprisonment and public humiliation – now evokes only pity. William Ewin was publicly mocked for his squint, and it is hardly surprising that he chose his own, often quite ingenious methods of taking revenge on the people who indulged in those thoughtless humiliations. As for young James Dawson, his loyalty to a cause, and his resolution in the presence of a ghastly death, demonstrate that the traitor's crime was all too often simply that of favouring the losing side. The day before execution, Dawson's father came to see him, for the last time. Overwhelmed by catastrophe, the poor man could hardly speak. At length, falling on his son's neck, he was just able to say, 'O my dear child, what would I give were it in my power to save thee.' Dawson was engaged to be married to 'a young lady of good family and handsome fortune'. She is said to have attended his execution and to have died of grief at the scene, an incident commemorated in William Shenstone's popular ballad *Jemmy Dawson*.

Mark Nicholls

'GONE TO THE WARS': ST JOHN'S COLLEGE AND THE WORLD CONFLICTS 1914-1945

During the Michaelmas and Lent Terms, the Library Exhibition Area and Antechapel hosted an exhibition on Johnians and the World Wars, to mark the 90th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War. From the many individuals who might have been featured, the exhibition focused upon a few for whom the Library is fortunate enough to hold material.

Some 723,000 British soldiers died in the Great War. Communities throughout the land paid a heavy price and the College was no exception. The College War List for 1914-1918 lists over 750 of its members who served in the war, in all branches of the forces and on all fronts. Of these, 156 lost their lives and are commemorated on the War Memorial in the Chapel, together with two Choristers and five servants of the College who also fell.

The Library exhibition focused upon three individuals. Alan Menzies Hiller came up to St John's in 1913 to study for the Mechanical Sciences Tripos, but after only three terms residence volunteered for active service. An infantry officer, he arrived at the Front in January 1915 and was killed at the battle of Festubert in May while leading his men in a charge. The Library is fortunate to have a small collection of Hiller's wartime letters and artefacts. The shift from initial excitement to a realisation of the horrors of war can be traced in Hiller's letters. These include a letter written the day before Hiller was killed, which ends poignantly 'I never was so fit in all my life', another from his father found in his pocket after his death, and a letter from a fellow officer to his parents bearing the news they must have dreaded, and ending with words that concluded so many thousand such letters, 'We all mourn with you in the loss of your son, but it will be a relief to know that his end was as painless as it was noble'.

Hugh Francis Russell Smith came to St John's in 1906 and enjoyed academic and sporting success. A lectureship in History and a Fellowship followed in 1912. Having taken the first steps towards a successful academic career and family life, the war intervened. In October 1915 Russell Smith was placed in charge of a company in France. On the first day of the Battle of the Somme, his son's first birthday, he was hit by shrapnel, and died four days later of his wounds. His frequent appearances in various College photographs testify to the full part he played in College life, and a number of surviving letters in the Library reveal how keenly the College felt his loss. E A Benians, later Master of the College, wrote 'It seems strange that he should fall in war – the gentlest, the most delightful of men'.

The pioneering psychologist and anthropologist, William Halse Rivers Rivers, became a Fellow of St John's in 1902. Upon the outbreak of war, Rivers joined the staff of the Maghull Military Hospital, Lancashire, and began to work on the treatment of severe emotional disturbance due to war trauma. In 1916 came a commission in the Royal Army Medical Corps and a posting to Craiglockhart Hospital for Officers, near Edinburgh. Here Rivers played a key role in the development of techniques to heal shell-shocked soldiers and helped many shattered young men along the path to recovery. He was greatly respected, even loved, by the officers under his care, who included Siegfried Sassoon. Sassoon became deeply attached to Rivers, and presented him with copies of a number of his works, now in the Library. These include Sassoon's *Picture Show* (1919) with the inscription 'W H R Rivers from SS July 1919 – a very wise man'. Rivers and Sassoon are portrayed in Pat Barker's award-winning *Regeneration* trilogy.

The Second World War lasted longer and resulted in the deaths of many more people worldwide than its predecessor. While total British casualties were lower, during the final 18 months of the war losses were running at rates equivalent to those experienced in the mud of Flanders in 1917. Once again Johnians served on all fronts, in the Navy, Army and RAF, and in various Government Ministries, research establishments, and in intelligence. The names of 120 members of the College, one Chorister and one servant who lost their lives appear on the College War Memorial. This was once again a heavy toll.

The Library's exhibition drew upon the papers of Max Newman and Glyn Daniel, and upon the memoirs of various Johnians who served in the Second World War. Newman came to St John's in 1915 to study Mathematics and won a Fellowship in 1923. In August 1942 he joined the Government Code and Cypher School at Bletchley Park and began work on decrypting 'Tunny' messages, a code used by the German high command. With Alan Turing, Newman designed code-breaking machinery, culminating in the Colossus, the world's first large-scale electronic computer, and headed a code-breaking team known as the 'Newmanry'. By the end of the war, ten Colossus machines were in operation, cutting the time required to break 'Tunny' codes from weeks to just hours, which proved vital for D-Day preparations in 1944.

The archaeologist Glyn Daniel was awarded a PhD and a Fellowship at St John's in 1938. At the start of the war Daniel was put in charge of the

Glyn Daniel

College fire-engine and helped man an observation post at the University Library. In 1941 he appeared in the Central Office of Information film *Target for Tonight*, and the following year was posted to Karachi to set up a training school for Army and RAF officers in air photographic interpretation. From here he moved to Delhi to set up and head the Central Photographic Interpretation Section, which by 1945 employed several hundred personnel.

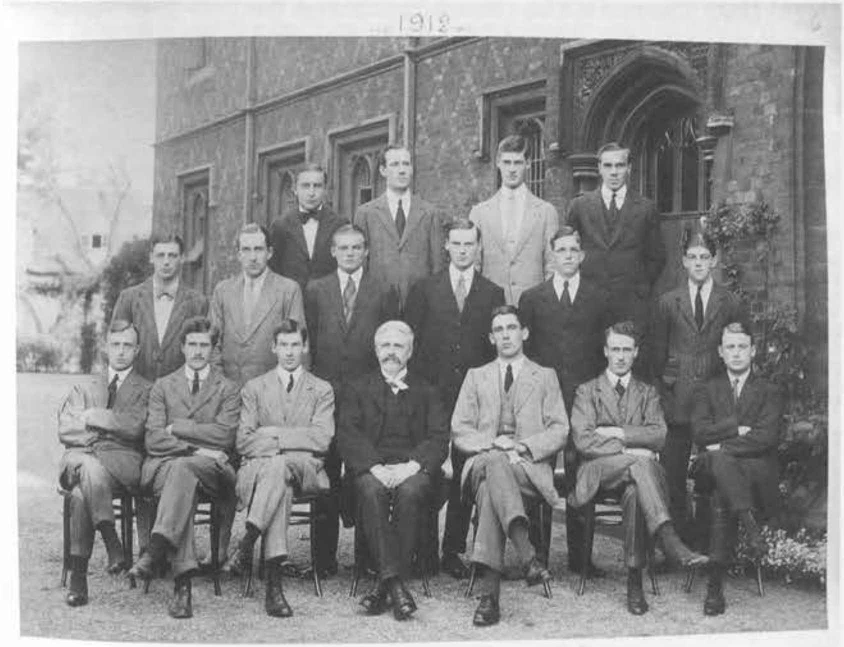
The Library has a number of typescript and printed memoirs by Johnians who served in the Second World War. Professor Jack Goody was captured at Tobruk in 1942 and was subsequently a POW in Italy and Germany. *Beyond the Walls* is an account of his escape from captivity and subsequent recapture, and has in recent years been published in Italian and French. George Scurfield's typescript memoirs, *The Bitter Mangoes*, cover both his Cambridge years and war service. In 1943, Scurfield joined V Force, a jungle intelligence unit attached to the 14th Army in Burma, and spent months operating behind Japanese lines. He was awarded the MC and later published two novels loosely based upon his wartime experiences. Ralph Ince's typescript *Reminiscences of a POW in Siam* is a harrowing account of three and a half years of captivity, during which time he worked on the infamous Burma-Siam railway.

By way of published memoirs, the exhibition included *Private Army* (1950) by Vladimir Peniakoff, better known as 'Popski', who spent four terms at St John's studying Mathematics. In 1942 he formed his own élite fighting force in the North African desert, known as 'Popski's Private Army', which operated behind German lines and landed in Italy with the first allied troops. *The Jungle is Neutral* (1949) is an account of the wartime experiences of Frederick Spencer Chapman (BA 1929). For three years Chapman operated behind Japanese lines, organising and leading reconnaissance and operational parties. He rose to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel and earned a DSO and bar.

Complementing the Library exhibition, Frank Bowles (Librarian's Assistant) mounted an excellent display in the Antechapel on the College War Memorial. The 1914-1919 Memorial was designed by Dr Henry D L Fletcher and comprised three dark marble panels set in a limestone and marble frame. The Memorial was unveiled in February 1923 and dedicated by the Bishop of Colchester, T A Chapman, two of whose sons are commemorated on it. The 1939-1945 Memorial, comprising two side panels adjoining the earlier structure, was designed by Sir Edward Maufe and was completed in November 1954.

The Antechapel display featured a 1912 photograph of the Eagles Club, six of whose members lost their lives in the First World War. They included D I Day who rowed in the 1914 Boat Race and whose brother, M J G Day, a promising poet, is also commemorated on the Memorial.

The original inscription on the 1914-1919 Memorial left spaces between the names of members of the College and those of the College Choristers and servants. These two spaces were filled with the names of J B Shaw, in 1934, and T E Hulme, the philosopher and poet. Hulme was twice sent down from St John's, in 1904 and again in 1912. He enlisted



Eagles Club, 1912

in 1914 and was killed in Flanders three years later. His omission from the Memorial was no doubt due to his troubled College career, and his name was only added in 1971.

Eight of those who appear on the College matriculation photograph for 1936 lost their lives in the Second World War. I W MacRobert graduated in 1939 and at the outbreak of war joined the RAF. He died in action in June 1941, a month after the death of his brother R A MacRobert, who is also commemorated on the Memorial. Their mother purchased a Stirling Bomber, named 'MacRobert's Reply', in memory of her sons, and one aircraft in Bomber Command has continued to bear the name ever since. The 1936 photograph also features P J Hume, a conscientious objector who became Secretary of the Friends' Ambulance Unit and organised their operations in Finland and in London during the Blitz. He lost his life in 1942 when the ship in which he was travelling was torpedoed.

David Haig Thomas is also commemorated on the 1939-1945 Memorial. A great rower and explorer, he rowed in the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics and discovered a new island off the Canadian coast, now named after him. At the outbreak of war Haig Thomas joined the Parachute Regiment. He died on the first day of the Normandy landings in June 1944.

'I take the War List and I run my finger down it. Here is name after name which I cannot read and which my elder hearers cannot hear without emotion'. When one reads about or hears of Johnians who served in the World Wars, the Revd H F Stewart's words ring as true today as they did in 1919.

Jonathan Harrison
Special Collections Librarian

The Librarian would be most interested and grateful to receive any wartime memoirs that Johnians may be willing to deposit among the Library's collections.

THE EX-SERVICE GENERATIONS

The interesting display in the Library illustrating the lives of some of the Johnians who were involved in the two World Wars managed a laudable degree of objectivity without glorifying war. For a member of the post-World War 2 generation of undergraduates, it prompted many thoughts.

To what extent were we a strange generation? I came to the College in January 1946. Only a few ex-Servicemen were lucky enough to make that academic year; most came in October 1946. At first I hated Cambridge. While we tended to treat the petty restrictions that were in force then for undergraduates as a joke, I think we all resented them – we were supposed to be in by 10.00pm, to wear gowns after dark, to request an *exeat* from our tutor if we wanted to be away for a night and an *absit* if we stayed out after 10.00pm. It was all a strange contrast to service life where we had at least imagined ourselves, though in many ways falsely, to be adults. Certainly, it was tough on the dons, who at that time were supposed to be *in loco parentis:* one felt they did not know quite how to handle us. Looking back we must have been granted quite a lot of extra licence: once Stan the porter came and helped me down from the North Court railings on a night when I had been to too good a party.

It must have been some compensation for the dons that on the whole we tended to work pretty hard – too hard, some of us felt in retrospect. The hard work was due in part to a feeling that we did not have the need to prove we were grown-up men, as did many undergraduates coming straight from school. But more, I think, from wanting to get on with life coupled with a deep sense of intellectual inferiority resulting from several years away from academic work. I remember my chagrin when someone who had been four or five years behind me at school used to sit in front of me in Norrish's Physical Chemistry lectures - which I found completely incomprehensible - taking notes with one hand and doing *The Times* crossword with the other. I hated him.

What especially surprises me, looking back, is how little we talked about the war. We tended to mix with other ex-Servicemen, but not to discuss our experiences. For my part the long and mostly uneventful trips over the sea that I had been making as a flying boat pilot did not give me much to talk about, but that sort of reason did not apply to others. I used to go bird-watching with Jack Foster, whose obituary appears in this issue, and we shared a room for a year. I knew he had had a distinguished career as a night-fighter pilot, but it was only at his memorial service that I learned that he had *two* DFCs and that his post-war AFC was for test-flying German jets and for seeing how near Mach 1 Second World War planes would go in a dive without breaking up. He reached Mach 0.88 in a Spitfire, but in a Tempest the hood shattered as he reached maximum speed.

John Perret had been a Japanese POW working on the railway: I remember that he bought large numbers of beautifully bound books, I believe as some sort of compensation for what he had been through, but he never talked about it. Ron Curtis had been much decorated as a Pathfinder in Bomber Command (DSO, DFC and bar), but I have no memory of his talking about it. Then there was the man with no legs. He made a joke of it and we called him Peg-leg Pete, but I never knew how he had lost his legs. I have a vivid memory of calling out 'Come on Peg-legs' as he stumped along grinning broadly. John Bray, ex-RAF and a POW for most of the war, and another, grossly disfigured from burns: all I knew was that he had been a Wellington pilot. Roland Winfield, a returning don who taught me physiology, was responsible for my sticking to the Cambridge course instead of succumbing to the temptation of being an airline pilot. I knew he had had a career as a medical doctor flying on operations to study their effects on the aircrew, but he never talked about it. Only years later, when his wife published his posthumous autobiography, did I learn quite how distinguished his RAF career had been. His sense of fun was too much for the College and he had to leave a few years later – in my view a very great loss.

It was a bit like that in ex-Serviceman's CND, which I joined in the late seventies. We all felt strongly that war was not a good way to solve conflicts, and used to go on marches in our best (or only) suits, wearing our medals, to try to counteract the hippy image that CND was given in the media. A small group of us used to meet sometimes in the evenings in Christopher Cornford's house in Conduit Head Road. But what did we talk about? Comradeship, outwitting the Military Police, fun times, but never about experiences in action.

And when I was a boy, my father used to tell me stories about his experiences as Medical Officer on Gallipoli and in the Allenby Campaign in Palestine in the First World War, but they never included the suffering and beastliness of war. The nearest, told as humour, concerned his difficulty in going to the latrines on Gallipoli because a Turkish sniper had them covered. Even his diary was mostly about the flowers and insects that he saw, occasionally about being cold in his bivouac, with the odd entry that so-and-so many casualties came through the Advanced Dressing Station yesterday.

Why was this? Probably there were a number of reasons. Reticence, and fear of being seen to be shooting a line was certainly one, but what else? Genuinely, whether consciously or unconsciously, wanting to forget? Survivor's guilt? Probably all of these. But also, I think, and probably in the case of Jack Foster, who was one of the gentlest of men, wishing that they had not had to kill. Anyway, such reticence is a pity. The horrors should be talked about, so that people will be less willing to go to war in the future.

Now, when I give public lectures on war, I sometimes read the letter my parents received, after months of anxious waiting. It came from a survivor from the lifeboat in which my brother died, describing how he had suffered, dying slowly, in great pain, from wounds and exposure a fortnight after the sinking of the troopship on which he had been the Medical Officer. We must not forget what war can be like.

Robert A Hinde

ALEXANDRIAN PILGRIMAGE

I am not sure whether it was Greece's triumph at Euro 2004, or the Olympic games in Athens, or indeed my daughter's Olympic adventures that sparked off questions from some Fellows about my origins. Their show of bewilderment when I reply that Greece is as alien to me as it might be to them is graphic. I do, however, have a lot of Greek in me, so let me elucidate.

I was born in Cairo and spent over half of my adolescence in Alexandria. My parents were born in Egypt too, my father's father being Cypriot and mother Italian and, on my mother's side her father was Greek and mother Swiss. When I was young I was always known as 'Our little Swiss connection' because of my reserve and aloofness, untypical of a Greek. As my parents did not have a common language when they married (my mother attended the Deutsche Schule Der Borromaerinnen in Cairo) I was brought up listening to French and English at home and speaking Greek at school and with my pals. My Swiss grandmother coming to live in Egypt was no coincidence because of the long-standing Swiss-Egyptian cotton cooperation. In fact my uncle, a geology graduate of the Université de Nancy, used to manage a cotton farm. During my summer visits there I spent many halcyon days watching the activity of cotton-picking by myriads of low-paid workers. Incidentally, on one occasion in the eighties when my wife and I visited the district of Lamia in Central Greece with some friends, upon coming across a vast field of rows of waist-high shrubs with rich green foliage, I immediately recognized these to be species of the Gossypium plant. This astonished my wife and fellow travellers particularly as my horticultural knowledge is well known to be scant at the best of times.

After eight years the family moved to Alexandria in 1950, the capital of the Ptolemies, which was still basking in the glory days of the poet *Κωνσταντίνος Καβάφης* who was immortalized in Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet*. Incidentally, my favourite birthday present is a pen drawing by my sister-in-law, commissioned by my wife, depicting Durrell's quartet and featuring a large central face of Justine surrounded by smaller figures of Justine's daughter, Balthazar and Mountolive, amidst a Nile scene

including minarets and feluccas. Generations of immigrants from Greece, Italy and the Levant made this very much a European city then. The Greeks, with a population of over 200,000, had their own primary and secondary schools as well as the prestigious Averoff Gymnasium (named after the Foreign Minister of Greece under General Metaxas - no family connection) where entrance exams were a prerequisite. The Europeans had their own social and sailing clubs, and sporting activities linked most of the foreign communities, which also included Armenians, Jews, French and British. Other notable schools were the Lycée Français and St Mark for the French along with the British Boys' School (Christopher Hampton the playwright is an alumnus), which was opposite the Synagogue at the quartier Camp de César and Victoria College for the British. I remember Alexandria as a cosmopolitan city, bristling with commercial activities and enjoying a bohemian atmosphere, which attracted many writers such as Durrell, E M Forster and others.

The rise to power of Gamal Abdel Nasser and the Suez war a couple of years later sealed the fate of the European communities in Alexandria where it was made clear that the years of exploitation were coming to an end and we were no longer welcome. Because of the special relationship between the Arabs and the Greeks over the centuries the latter suffered the least in such uncertain times. The exodus began shortly after Nasser came to power and my family left Alexandria in 1960 after I matriculated from the Averoff, myself arriving in London to study and my parents eventually settling in Athens. A vivid recollection just before we left Alexandria for good is that of accompanying my mother, carrying two large suitcases of old books belonging to the Swiss part of the family, and donating these to the Deutsche Katholische Schule in Alexandria, while retaining an old Bible and one or two other books that my mother could not let go. Now there are fewer than 1,000 Greeks in Alexandria among five million inhabitants - the community, and particularly its Orthodox Church, still being heavily supported by the Greek government.

Never returning to my place of birth left a huge gap in my life, which was filled in the spring of 2003, when three Averoff pals and myself, accompanied by our wives, visited Egypt after 44 years of absence. It was a worthwhile pilgrimage filled with emotions and memories. We went to the apartments where we used to live, the Averoff school (classes of 40 pupils each have been reduced to 3 or 4) and the New Library (alas, no UK money towards its construction) housing over two million books. We stayed at the Palestine Hotel in the grounds of King Farouk's El-Muntazah Palace, adorned with palm trees and gazelles. Rumour has it that, after the revolution in 1952 when Colonel Nagib took over, King Farouk, the last monarch whose philandering and gambling were legendary, escaped from his palace, with the aid of a yacht owned by Mr Zotos, a wealthy Greek resident whose son was a year above me at Averoff.

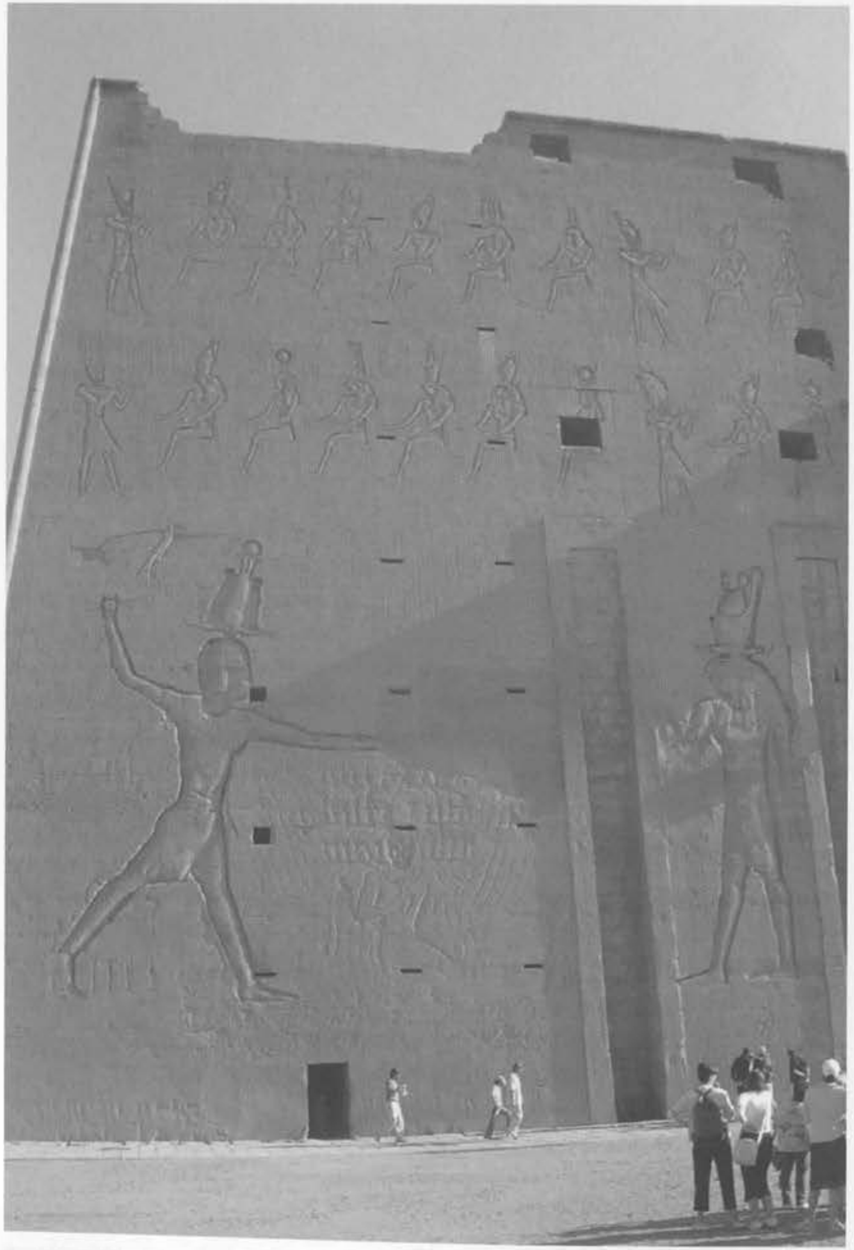
El-Muntazah Palace lies at the end of the Corniche, the winding coastal road spanning all of Alexandria's beaches starting near the Eastern Harbour not far from the city centre. There we strolled among the celebrated coffee houses, such as the Athenaeum, Delice (a *millefeuille* to die for) and the Trianon, frequented by many Europeans in the forties and fifties. I recollect with fondness the times during the summer my mother and I spent at the Trianon having high tea and mingling with fellow literary Alexandrians, my mother being a prolific reader of major literary works, as well as often finding solace in less known writers such as Panait Istrati. Our group lunched at the Cecil Hotel, which shows little sign of its past grandeur (Winston Churchill and Somerset Maugham stayed there) and where the British Secret Service occupied the top floor during World War II using it as their base.

After the Cecil lunch we passed by the still operating tram system starting from Ramleh station and going all the way to Victoria station. The system was inaugurated in 1860, initially horse-drawn then steam-hauled and finally being electrified in 1902. When we lived in Alexandria this was our main mode of transport to and from school, and from where we gazed at the giggling girls from our neighbouring school. One of our most memorable visits this time was to *Καβάφη's* house, preserved as a museum and where, given the power of imagination, one can still sense the poetic atmosphere which pervaded his spacious apartment. Many scholars have debated why *Γεώργιος Σεφέρης*, the Greek poet from Smyrna in Asia Minor and Greek Ambassador to London in the early sixties, was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature and not *Καβάφη*. Our school Headmaster was very excited when *Σεφέρης* visited the Averoff school in the early fifties when he stopped briefly in Alexandria on his way to his new diplomatic post in South Africa. Round the corner from *Καβάφη's* house brought our group to Pastroudis, the infamous coffee house in Durrell's writings, which alas was boarded up.

Festive dinner on the Nile boat (Ricky Metaxas is front right)

Another unique experience was my wife Margaret's scuba diving expedition just off the Eastern Harbour where she visited the remains of Cleopatra's Palace, numerous sphynxes and the Pharos (the legendary lighthouse) ruins below Alexandria's choppy waters and a stone's throw from the Fort Qaitbey, built by Sultan Qaitbey around 1480 AC. I stayed on the boat enjoying a panoramic view of Alexandria's Corniche stretching all the way from the Fort to El-Muntazah Palace at the far end, the view fading amidst the sun's haze, and reminiscing about *temps perdus* and misspent youth.

Apart from Alexandria, Cairo's *son et lumière* at the Pyramids and Sphynx were highlights, as were the tombs at the Valley of the Kings near Karnak. We cruised the Nile from Aswan to Luxor in a luxury boat (300 already, soon to increase to 500 boats, each holding hundreds of



Temple of Horus at Edfu in Upper Egypt

passengers) and saw the numerous archeological sites, which adorn the Nile valley. The dam was an awe-inspiring project, alas built and partially financed by Russia because the west refused Nasser's plea for funds and technical expertise. It was his decision to nationalize the Suez Canal to fund the project that sparked off the ill-conceived 1956 conflict. Of course to us youngsters the war gave us great excitement particularly when we took it upon ourselves to police the streets in Alexandria to warn the occupants of inadequate camouflaged windows following the air raid sirens. In one such raid a British fighter plane, after being hit, lost control and crash landed near the Cecil Hotel demolishing a small church.

Following Nasser's accession he was portrayed as an 'adventurer' by the western press; however, what is indisputable is that his rise to power coincided with an enormous increase in the welfare of the ordinary Egyptian. Schools sprung out of derelict sites for Arab children who, prior to Nasser, would roam the streets envious of us, the Levantine kids. Shortly after the 1956 war an Arab boy confronted me in a small alley behind the much-frequented Boy-Scout grounds at Camp de César, drew a cross on the sandy lane and stamped on it, the aggression clearly visible on his face. My instinctive reaction was to grab a stick and in turn draw a book, depicting the Koran, and to duly stamp on it. We stared defiantly at each other for what seemed at the time an eternity, only for the situation to be defused by his mother calling him back indoors. We were fourteen years of age at the time; however, by the time I was to leave Alexandria for good around the age of eighteen we were on quite friendly terms, our prejudices somewhat mellowed by the passage of time and by the proximity of our coexistence.

The trip served to rekindle what memories and reflections we school pals had of the place and let us re-experience Alexandria's fading cosmopolitan air that has been mesmerizing visitors over the centuries. It also served to crystallize the image that our wives formed of our birthplace. So, I hope I have answered the riddle of my Greekness; however, as for the other interesting conundrum of why I was never part of Cambridge University's payroll - that will have to wait for another edition!

Ricky Metaxas

A JOHNIAN CARICATURIST AMONG ICEBERGS

Professor G E (Tony) Fogg, whose obituary notice appears elsewhere in this edition of The Eagle, *died on 30 January 2005. In December 2004, he had submitted an article for publication in* The Eagle *about Denis Gascoigne Lillie, whom he described as likely to be the 'first Johnian to set foot on the Antarctic continent' and as someone who is perhaps now forgotten. We are pleased to reproduce it here, illuminating an early contribution to the College's distinguished history in Antarctic science, a field in which Tony Fogg himself had played an important part.*

A book entitled *Eagle over the Ice* deals with the politics, administrative and military activities controlling Antarctic affairs under the auspices of the Bald-Headed Eagle. Our own eagle, of St John the Evangelist, doubtless kept an eye on our own men - Wordie, Bertram and Fuchs – who did outstanding work on the ice itself. Other Johnians have also been involved with Antarctica including one who did excellent biological work, took his part in the hard labour, brightened life down south and then faded into oblivion. He too should be remembered at this time when the centenary of the Heroic Age is being celebrated.

Denis Gascoigne Lillie, born on 27 August 1884 into a family from New Zealand, was admitted to John's in 1906 to read for the Natural Sciences Tripos. He obtained second class in Part I, 1908, third class in Part II, 1909, BA 1909, and MA 1914. Not too good, but at the same time he gained a reputation as an extraordinarily gifted caricaturist. Information about this was recorded by Professor G E Hutchison, an eminent limnologist but then a small boy in Cambridge whose uncle, Sir Arthur Shipley, FRS, a zoologist and Master of Christ's College, collected a few of Lillie's drawings. These were eventually passed on to the National Portrait Gallery in London. Among them was one of the Johnian William Bateson, an outstanding pioneer of genetics, painted holding up two dark chickens labelled F1 with a white F2 emerging from his pocket. Elsewhere there is a caricature of three members of The Cambridge Natural History Society, showing Shipley, the President, a rotund figure with a large cigar, together with the secretary, another member, and a small stuffed bird.

Lillie continued biological work after graduating. Some information of this is given by the *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philosophical Society*, volume XV, part IV, in which he had a paper headed 'Notes on the Larger Cetacea, by D G Lillie, BA, Hutchinson Research Student of St John's College. (Communicated by Mr A E Shipley); Read 22 November 1909.' After a substantial historical introduction this records observations on the distribution and significance of the scanty hairs of whales, which he made on a visit to an Irish whaling station for seven weeks in the summer of 1908. Around this time Dr Edward Wilson, himself of Gonville and Caius, was scouring Cambridge for scientists to join Captain Robert Scott on his second expedition to the Antarctic. Besides Lillie he roped in Charles Wright, a physicist also from Gonville and Caius, E W Nelson, biologist from Christ's, and also F Debenham, R E Priestley and T Griffith Taylor from Australia. The two biologists went for a short time to get experience in the Marine Biological Association's laboratory at Plymouth. Lillie sailed as an officer in the *Terra Nova* from Cardiff on 15 June 1910. The diary, which Wilson kept aboard the ship, published as *Diary of the Terra Nova Expedition 1910-1912* (1972), contains several references to Lillie.

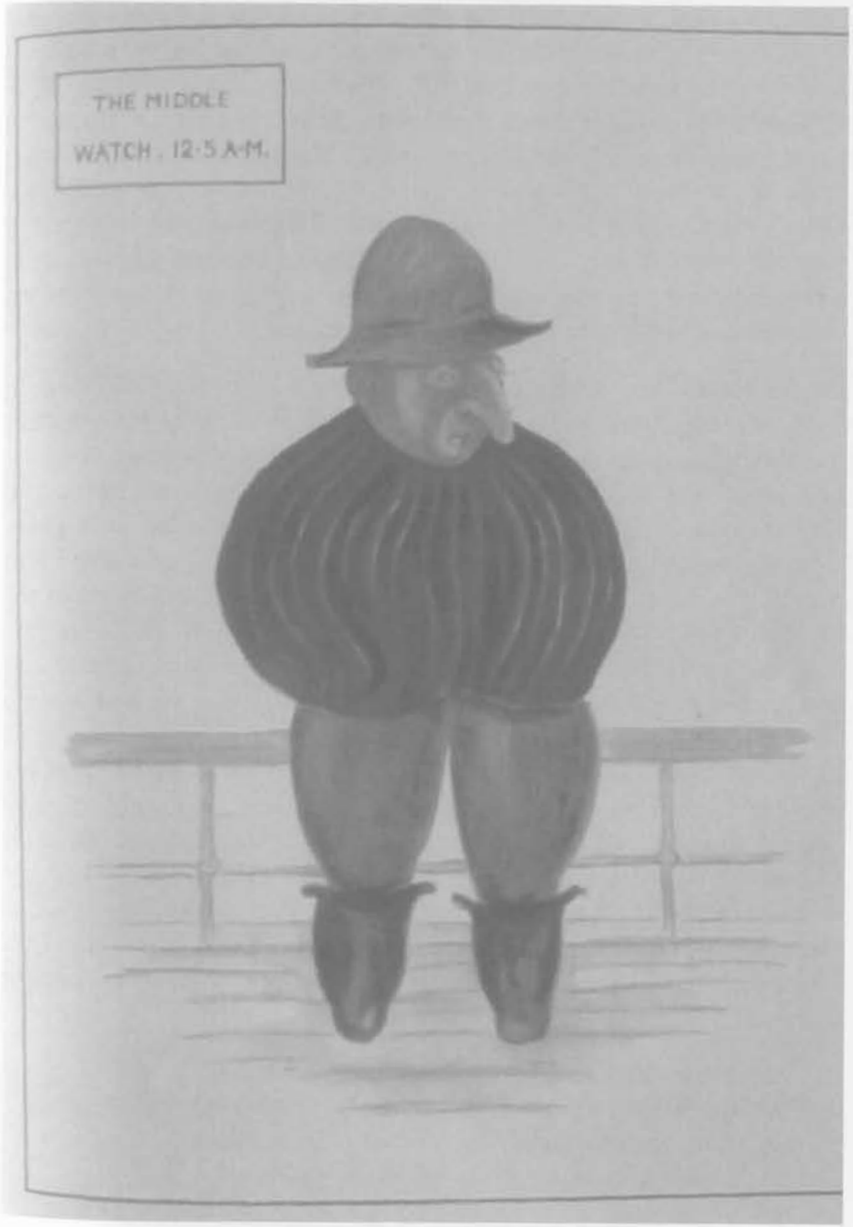
At the start Lillie was unwell – his eyes were sore from the dust acquired when coal trimming, and he unmistakeably had measles. He was a frail-looking 26 year old, whom Scott had doubted at the beginning, but nevertheless he always took a full part in the rough work of the expedition and was enthusiastic about his biological tasks. He was recorded as having several nicknames – 'Hercules', 'Ooze', and 'Lithley', but these do not seem to have been widely used. Wilson entered in his diary the following about Lillie's caricaturing: 'Today a very good one appeared of Nelson. Another appeared not long ago of Birdie Bowers, also one of Sunny Jim Simpson whose, I think, was the best of all. Lillie has a wonderful talent in this line and he does them all after a long observation from memory. He cannot do them with the person before him.' Griffith Taylor in *With Scott; the Silver Lining* (1916), in commenting on the leisure activities of the officers, wrote 'Secluded in his laboratory Lillie divides his attention between the microscope and a series of extremely clever caricatures of the afterguard, each of which arouses uproarious merriment in every member save one.' In due course Wilson copied several of these drawings into the *South Polar Times*. I particularly like a pair, one depicting Bowers saying 'That's the buntline you're pulling on! I said the CLEWLINE', and the other showing him doleful in the Middle Watch at 12.5am.

One of Wilson, 'Our Bill', is perhaps the general favourite.

This, together with some others, is now in the Scott Polar Research Institute. There may be many more Lillie caricatures extant but they do not seem to have been catalogued.

Lillie's tasks were to manage tow nets and water samplers and determine deep-sea temperatures. During the voyage down he went ashore on South Trinidad, off the coast of Brazil, and collected plants among which Kew was to find thirteen species not hitherto recorded from that island. On *Terra Nova*, after arrival in the Ross Sea, he seems to have been one of the first to sight the *Fram*, in which Amundsen had slyly sailed south, in the Bay of Whales. He did no work ashore in the Antarctic itself and remained on the *Terra Nova*, when she made her two difficult back and forth journeys between Cape Evans and New Zealand to winter. After a refit at Lyttleton she spent three months in 1911 carrying out extensive surveys around the Three Kings Islands and between this group and the North Cape of New Zealand. Besides routine soundings during the day, biological sampling was done in the night; some 80 plankton hauls were made together with seven trawl and dredge hauls between 28 and 548 metres. Afterwards, Lillie spent a month at Whangamumu, near the Bay of Islands, to collect biological material from the factory ships of the New Zealand Whaling Company. He worked there again, this time on the Norwegian vessels, for months during the second austral winter. While in the vicinity of the Bay of Islands he took the opportunity of examining pigment inheritance in several families of Maori-European half-casts, finding that Mendelian segregation was evidently taking place.

In the summer of 1913 the weather in the Ross Sea was on the whole very good and an extensive programme including tow netting, trawling, sounding and water sampling could be conducted. Much interesting material, as well as new species, was collected. The *Terra*



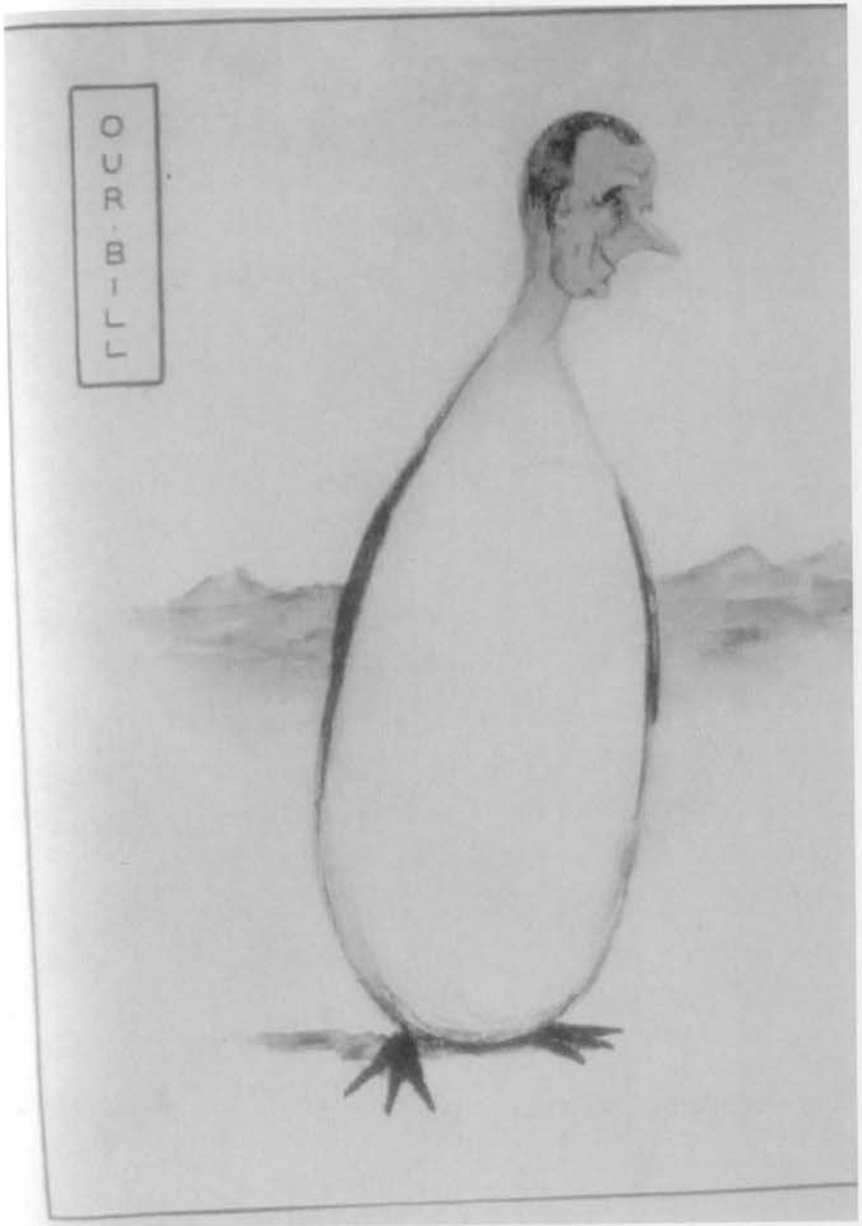
The Middle Watch

Nova then went on to Cape Evans and learnt the tragic news about the South Pole party. Scientific work was continued on the way back to Lyttelton and from there to England. A summary of this work by Lillie was included in *Scott's Last Expedition* (1913). He also contributed a substantial paper on 'Cetacea' and, with S F Harmer, a 'List of Collecting Stations' to the *British Antarctic (Terra Nova) Expedition, 1910. Natural History Report*, published by the British Museum, 1914-1964. In addition to these, of course, many of the numerous papers appearing in this large work and other publications were based on material that Lillie collected and which was deposited in the British Museum.

On his return, and with the outbreak of war, he became involved in medical research but had a mental breakdown in 1919. As far as I have been able to find out there had been no illness or fits of depression whilst he was in the south. He was taken to the Bethlehem Hospital at Kennington and died at Redhills Hospital, Exeter, on 13 May 1963. There were no mentions of him in *The Times* or in local papers. Notes about him collected by the polar historian A G E Jones have been deposited in the College Library. Scott's summing up of Lillie before sailing to the Antarctic seems to have been near the mark – he was thoughtful and imaginative but inclined to crankiness, believing that he had been a Persian and a Roman in previous existences. His contribution to Antarctic marine biology was considerable. He was quiet but well liked and the popular lectures on evolution he gave at Cape Evans aroused great interest fore and aft. He left vivid and inimitable pictures of some remarkable characters of the Heroic Age. Tribute to him remains in verse written by A Y Campbell, a Johnian, in May 1915. Titled 'Solus Hyperboreas, Ode to a pocket edition of Virgil in the possession of D G Lillie, biologist to the British Antarctic Expedition, 1910', the opening stanza is:

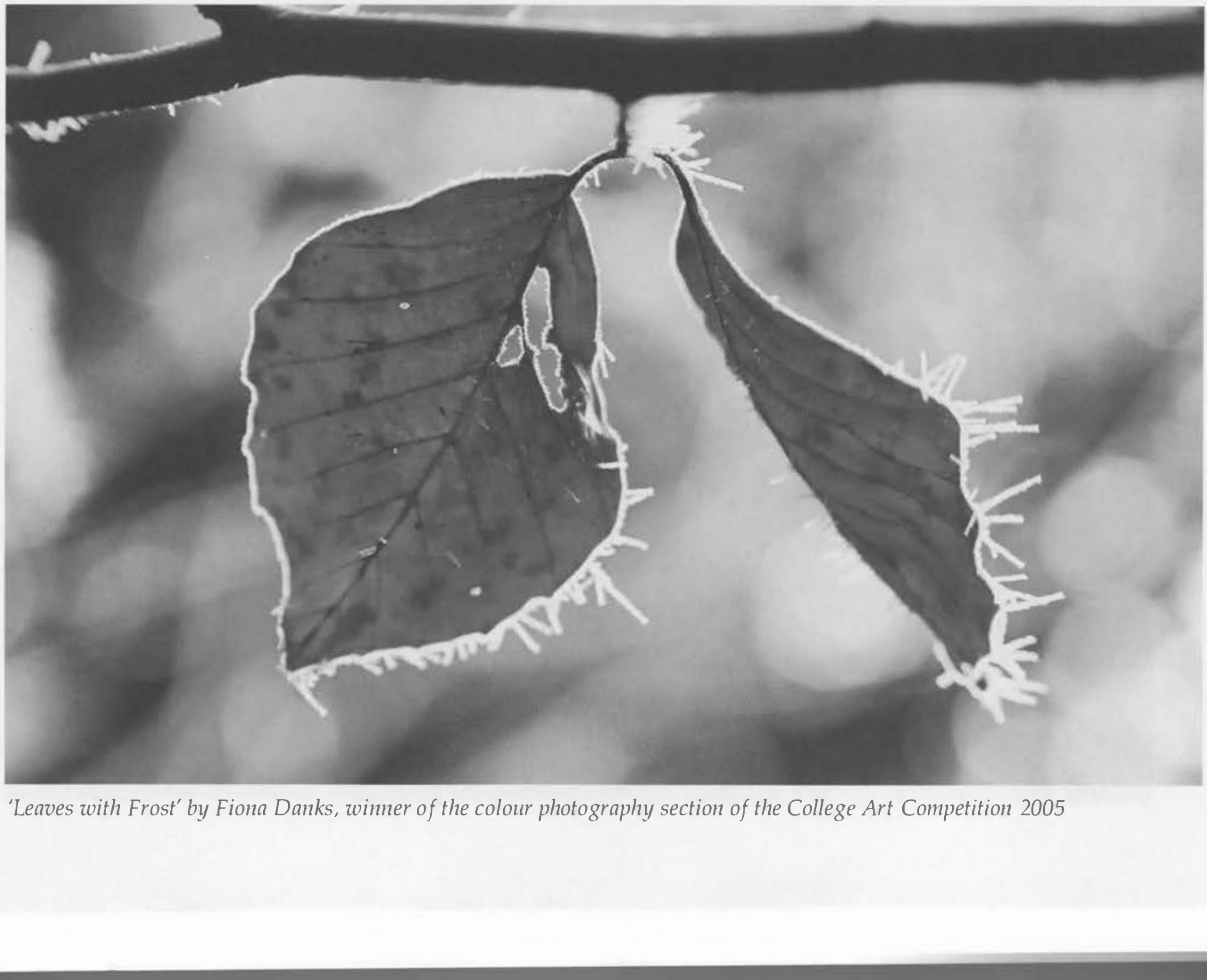
'Much-travelled, curious book, I write this reverent ode
    To celebrate thy fame, and praise thy loving carrier;
That thou wast Virgil, always a most precious load,
    Now doubly wonderful, secure in safe abode,
First of all Virgils to have reached the Great Ice Barrier.'

G E Fogg
(PhD 1943, ScD 1966)

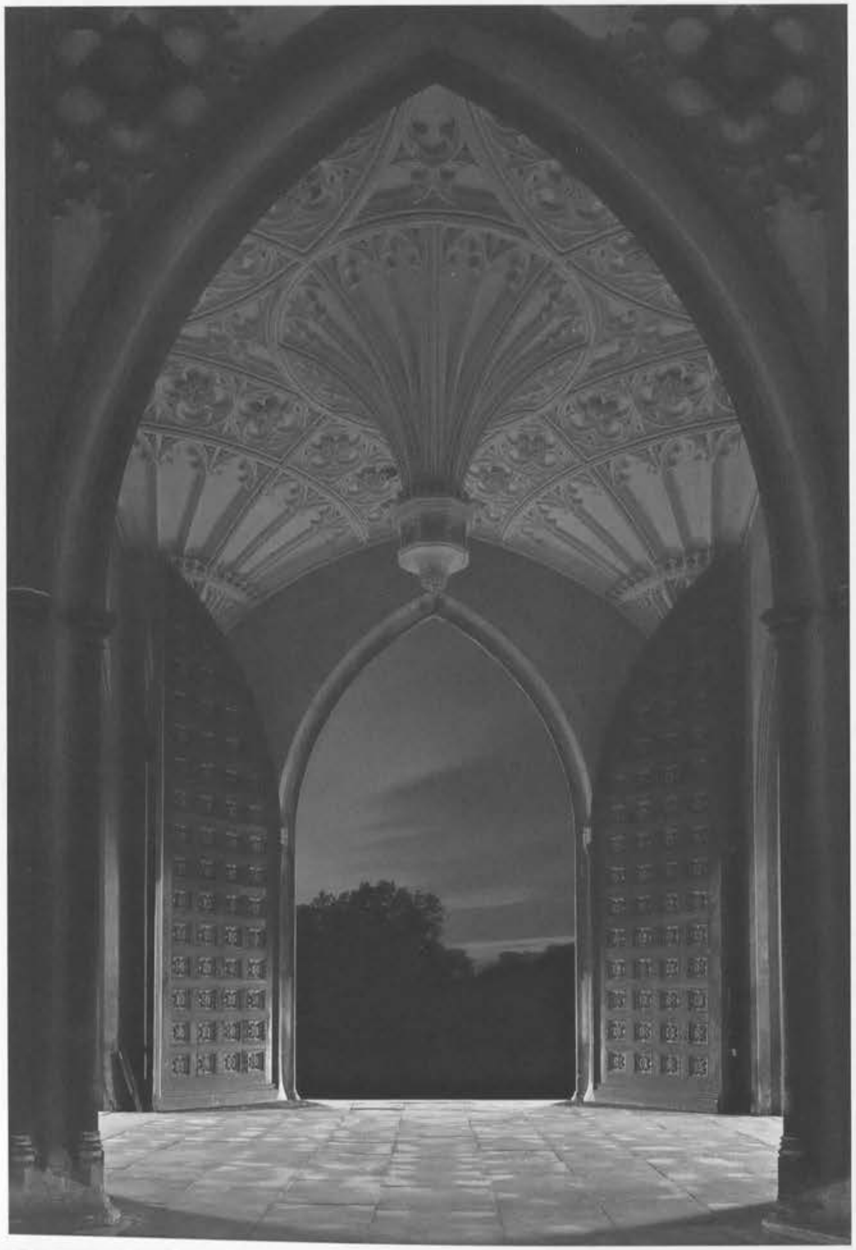


Our Bill

'Chicago dusk' by Alex Groot



'Leaves with Frost' by Fiona Danks, winner of the colour photography section of the College Art Competition 2005



This back elevation of New Court was taken by Sean McHugh and won first prize in the College life section of the College Art Competition 2005

A HIDDEN TREASURE IN THE COLLEGE LIBRARY

Among the many varied treasures of the College Library is a wonderful and hitherto largely unnoticed sixteenth-century Persian manuscript. At first glance, the manuscript seems ordinary enough: it is one of probably thousands of copies in the world of one of the great classics of the Persian tradition, the *Khamsah* or *Five Poems* of the twelfth-century central Asian poet Jamal ud-Din Nizami Ganjavi. The manuscript is dated Safar 947 by the Islamic calendar, which corresponds to June 1540.

The text includes three love stories, a mystical treatise and a fantastical account of an early Persian king, and the St John's manuscript is illustrated with thirty miniatures in a popular commercial style characteristic of the Iranian town of Shiraz – now more famous in Europe for its legendary connection to the grapes of the same name, supposedly brought to Europe by a crusading French knight in the thirteenth century.

But the notations and seals present in the manuscript make it a very special artefact indeed, one that tells an important story about pre-modern relations between Iran, India and England.

The Nizami *Khamsah* manuscript is not the only important non-European manuscript in the Library. The Library's collection of manuscripts from the Islamicate world is as diverse in its geographical origins as in its linguistic range: the collection includes texts from Africa, the Middle East and India in Arabic, Turkish, Persian, Urdu and Amharic. The manuscripts cover a wide range of subjects, from religious commentary to poetry, works of history, animal fables and extracts from the Arabic version of *The Thousand and One Nights*.

The manuscripts range in date from the early years of the sixteenth century to the end of the nineteenth, including some texts which are finely illuminated and illustrated. The collection includes two other special treasures: a manuscript of the Qur'an presented to the Library in 1639, a decade before the publication of the first English translation of the text; and a rare and perhaps unique Urdu account of the fifteenth-century Indian religious leader Sayyid Muhammad Jaunpuri, who declared himself to be the messianic guide whose arrival on earth marks the end of time.

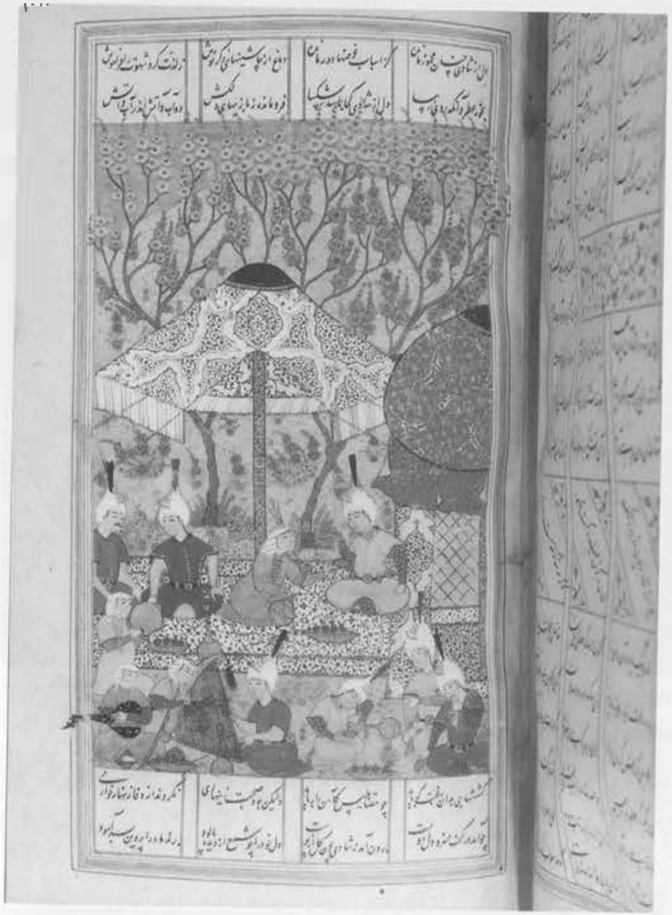
Unlike many of the other Islamicete manuscripts in the Library, we can learn a fair amount about the Nizami *Khamsah*. The manuscript itself consists of 786 folios of Persian script and is in a fine European binding featuring gilded decoration consisting of Oriental scenes of pagodas and palanquin processions. The manuscript was presented to the Library in a box that also contains a reed pen of the variety used to write in pre-modern Iran and India.

A notation in Persian in a rough eighteenth-century Indian hand on the opening flyleaf of the manuscript, originally blank, tells us about the manuscript and some of its history:

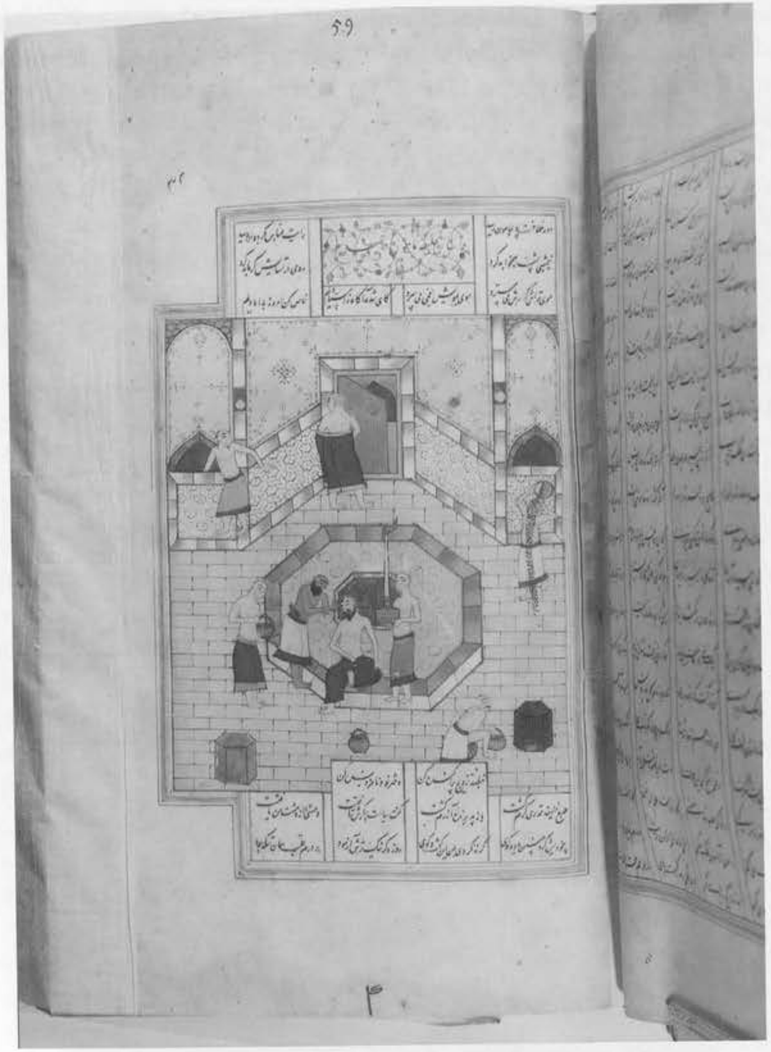
> 'The book of the *Khamsah* of Nizami with pictures, in large format on white paper in the *nasta'liq* script; a work from *vilayat*. Of the first three folios, the first is illustrated and two have golden headings with ultramarine [decoration] and rectangular crenellations with colourful floral patterns and white writing in golden cartouches. For the rest, there are nineteen lines [of writing] in four columns with headings on a ground of colourful floral work written in ultramarine, the outlining of the borders [of the headings] in black. The covering on the outer surface of the binding, which is of cardboard, is of black goatskin, with the upper part stamped in gold with silver decoration. The inner surface is stamped with golden corner-pieces and centrepiece, the head of the leaf [?] golden and [lined with] blue paper. Bought from Sayyid Ahmad Ali Bukhari through Lala Nekchand on the first day of the month of Ziqadah, regnal year 22 [20 January 1740]. Transferred through the efforts of Shaikh Yar Ali to Hafiz Asadullah, custodian [of the library], and entered the library. Price 150.'

The word *vilayat* used in the inscription text is a term used in India for foreign lands, originally the central Asian lands beyond the Oxus river and later Europe and Great Britain – whence we get the English term 'Blighty'.

Sadly, none of the figures mentioned in the text of the inscription is currently known to scholarship. It appears though that the manuscript was bought from an individual with central Asian ancestry through an Indian agent, Lala Nekchand, in the reign of the Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah (reigned 1719-1748). It is not clear whether the library that Hafiz Asadullah has custody of is that of the imperial Mughal court or of a rich noble or provincial governor. The manuscript contains the seals of Shaikh Yar Ali (regnal year 5, possibly 1722-1723), presumably the same individual named in the note, and of Fakhr ud-Din Mir Husain Khan (regnal year 27 of Muhammad Shah, presumably 1744), again still unidentified. Seals were often used for many years after they were cut, so it is not unusual to have a very early date on Shaikh Yar Ali's seal.



Khosro and Shirin, from the poem bearing their name, which forms the second part of Nizami's Khamsah



The Caliph Al-Ma'mun and the surgeon, from the first part of Nizami's Khamsah, *The Treasury of Mysteries*

A number of earlier seals in the text have been scraped out, as has the colophon at the end of the manuscript. Faint traces do survive that indicate that the colophon originally named both the scribe and patron of the text. The information was most likely effaced by an Iranian or Indian dealer who wished to hide the provenance of the manuscript.

The opening note in the manuscript makes it clear that the text was part of the vast movement of people and texts from Iran to India that was so important a part of the region's history in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Iranian scholars, holy men and warriors had long been a presence in medieval India, but the migration picked up pace with the meteoric rise in the fortunes of the Mughal court at the end of the sixteenth century. Through to the end of the seventeenth century many major Mughal nobles and poets were Iranian immigrants fleeing religious persecution or simply seeking greener pastures in a fabled land of riches. So important was India as a source of patronage and refuge to seventeenth-century Iranians that one Iranian poet remarked:

'Great is India, the Mecca of all in need,
    particularly of those who seek safety.
A journey to India is incumbent upon any man
    who has acquired adequate knowledge and skill.'

At the same time, since Persian was the language of court and culture in Mughal India, vast numbers of manuscript books were making the same journey. Fine manuscripts of the Persian classics, particularly those that were well written, were prized by the Mughals as cultural artefacts and marks of connoisseurship - and were often purchased at high prices to form the core of the imperial library. Lesser nobles and regional courts acquired less accomplished copies of these texts, and commercially produced sixteenth-century texts from Shiraz became the visual exemplars for later painted manuscripts produced in the Deccan courts of south India. A seventeenth-century manuscript currently in the British Library contains paintings that bear a striking similarity to those in the Nizami *Khamsah*, and it may well be that the manuscript or a close cousin spent some time in southern India.

The letter that accompanied the donation of the manuscript to the College in 1770 notes that it was the gift of James Bate, then Rector of St Paul's in Deptford, Kent. Bate was a Bishop of Ely's Fellow at St John's from 1726 to 1733 and was presented to the living of St Paul's in 1731. Bate tells us that he received the manuscript from his son, Richard, a Bombay merchant who purchased it for ten guineas while visiting Bengal and Calcutta after the loot of the property of the princely state of Benares following the battle of Buxar in 1764. Ignoring the pleas of local Muslim merchants who wished to buy the manuscript from him, Richard Bate kept the manuscript and cut it out of its earlier binding in order to be able to transport it more easily. Bate impressed his own Persian seal (dated 1178 AH/1764-1765 CE) onto the manuscript and sent it to his father from the southern Indian town of Tellichery in 1770. After its arrival in England, James Bate had the manuscript rebound by his second son, a stationer.

At this point, the manuscript's story took an intriguing twist. James Bate learnt from an acquaintance in London, a Colonel Graham, that he had with him an educated Brahman visitor from Delhi, one Ghun Siam Das (Ghanshyam Das). Aged about thirty, Das was the son of a minor grandee who was educated in Benares and was conversant with Persian, Arabic and Hindustani, as well as Sanskrit and spoken English. Bate suggests that Das 'was probably the first learned man of his country and religion, that ever came to Europe' - and he is not far off the truth. Although there are records of Indian servants and seamen in England in the eighteenth century, we only have records of five literate Indian travellers in England before the year 1770. As far as we know, the letter of donation that accompanies the Nizami *Khamsah* is the only surviving record of Ghanshyam Das. Das was able to identify and date the manuscript for Bate, who did not trust him enough to leave the text with him for further inspection. Bate did, however, take a sample reed pen from Ghanshyam Das, presumably the same pen that is now boxed with the manuscript. The duty of fully identifying the manuscript fell to the famed Orientalist William Jones the following year.

The Nizami *Khamsah* has yet to become a part of scholarship on Persian painting or eighteenth-century India, but the story that it has to tell is a fascinating one of the vast movement of books and people between Iran and India during the heyday of a Persianate culture that stretched from the Ottoman lands to Java. That this treasured artefact of a prestigious high culture should subsequently have passed to England, and to the College, is a very fitting end to the story.

Jeevan Deol
Former Fellow

HAIKU & TANKA

the intense
moment
of the rose

Wast Water
with rock: the wild reality
of light

what is the nature of silence?
faraway love
mist on green water

a diamond…divided…into dreams

the impulse of snowdrops in the silent light

unexpected sunlight on wild water

morning – somehow,
& the quiet
of tea

my mind
open as a Japanese fan
to the eternal breeze
of mystery

she plays her violin with…a rainbow

the snow of thinking
covers the earth
with a white thought

dawn
is existential
ragged
wonderful
& live

she danced
into the stars,
& found –
the universe itself
was dancing

silent old couple
no more words
touch

blindman
passing a broken wall
at dusk

the dark horizon
in a poem of becoming:
& the rouge dawn
shapes the horses
into statues of breath

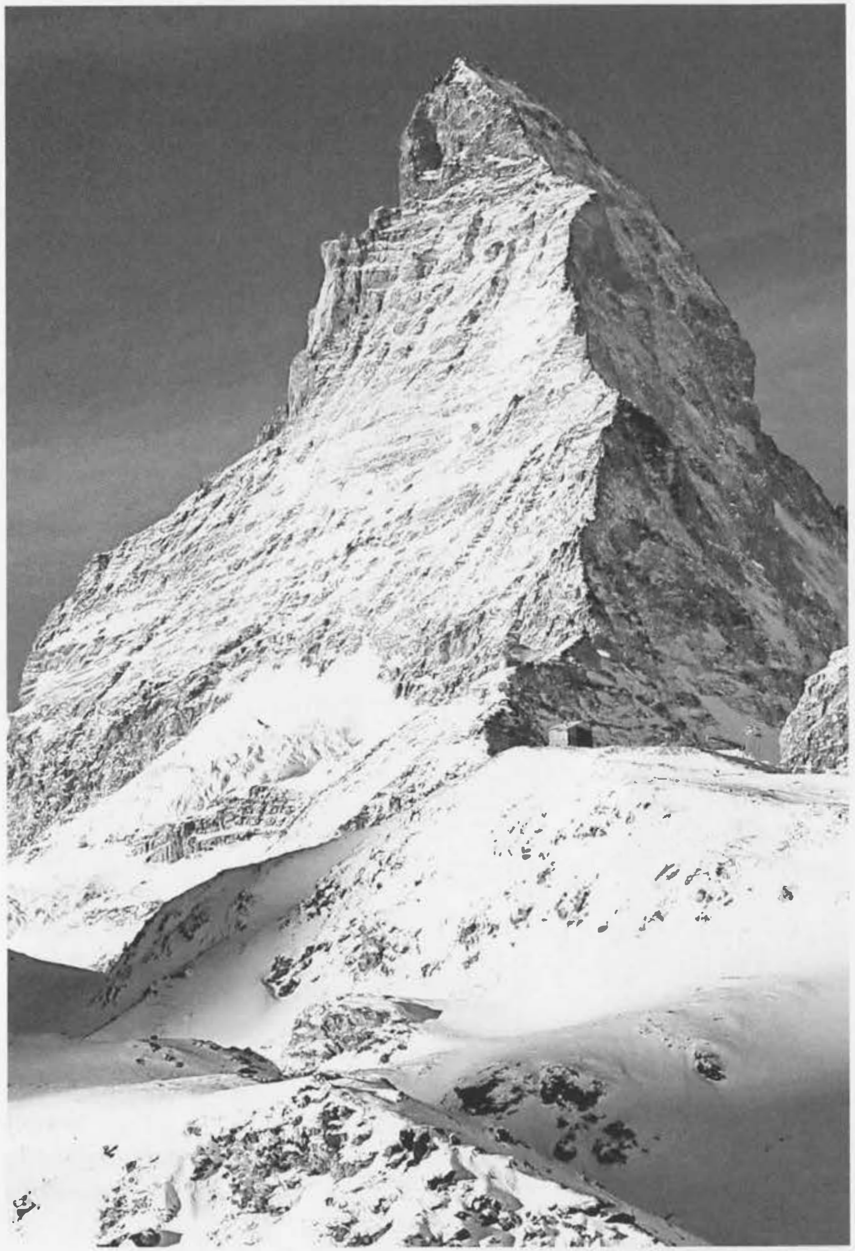
simple
watercolour
dawn
so
gentle

come
into the stars:
listen to the light,
& let the sky itself
be wild

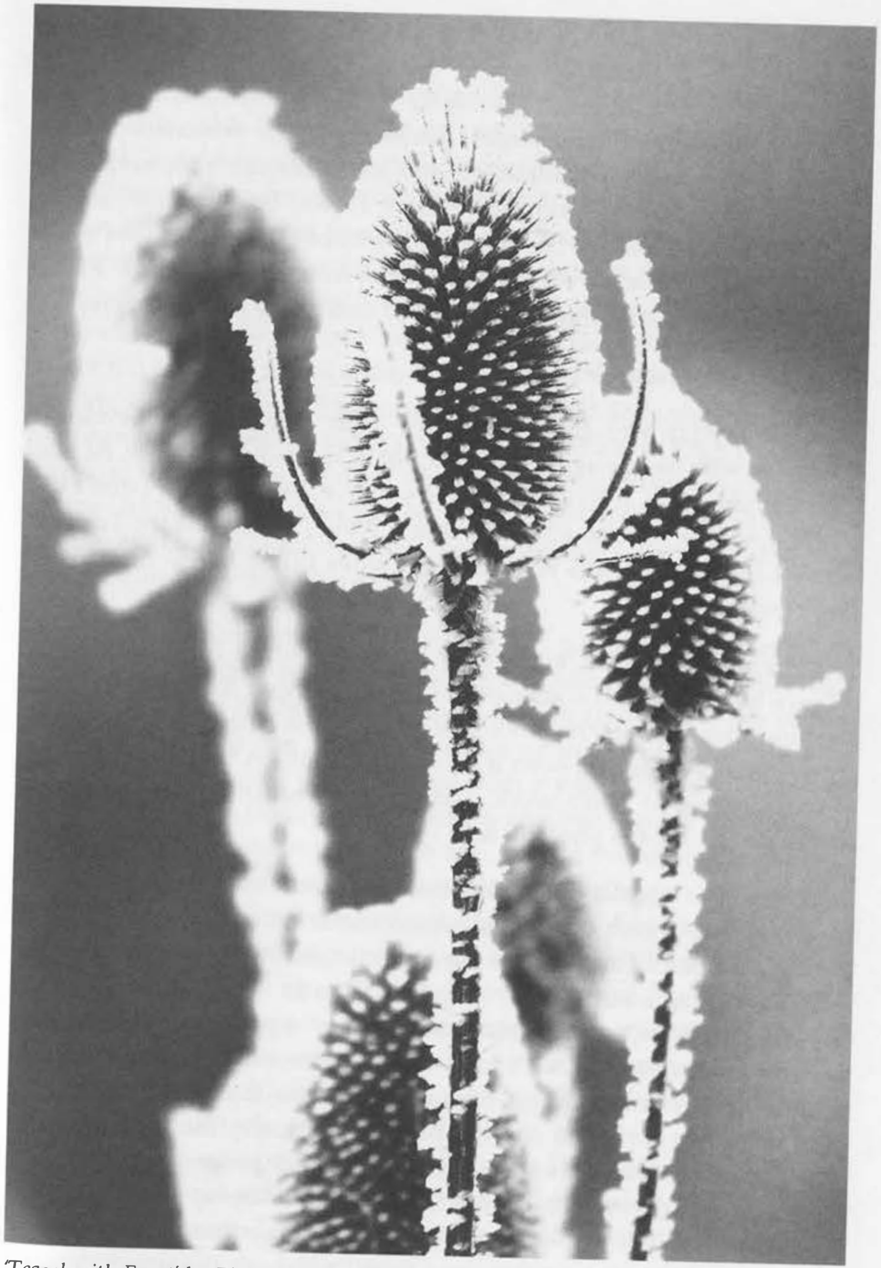
down-river,
collecting memories,
I think
of consciousncess & light,
endlessly

A A Marcoff (BA 1978)

Anthony Alexei Marcoff read English at St John's (1975-1978), and has lived and worked in Africa, Iran, France and Japan, where he studied Zen, kendo and Okinawan karate. Since 1988 he has worked in the field of mental health and has successfully used poetry and creative writing as therapies for people with a variety of psychiatric disorders. He is a regular contributor to the growing number of haiku magazines in Britain, and has given many readings of his poems in London, Surrey and France.



This photo of the Matterhorn was taken by Chris Taylor and won first prize in the black and white photography section of the College Art Competition 2005



'Teasel with Frost' by Fiona Danks

'TRIMMINGS'

Oliver Robinson (Matric 2002) is studying Natural Sciences; earlier this year he was awarded the first Douglas Adams Prize for humorous writing. The award was set up by Douglas's friends and colleagues in memory of the world-famous author who sadly died in 2001. He was best known for writing The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy *and studied English at St John's from 1971 to 1974. Here we reproduce Oliver's prize-winning essay in full.* ***Please be warned that it contains language that some may find offensive.***

'You fookin slag am gonna kill yer'

It isn't everyday you get woke up by your neighbour, gone raggie, telling his wife hes going to cut her up with his hedge trimmer. At least it isn't where I live. It might be where you live. I cannut say, I don't live where you live. Unless you live where I live. Which means you live where I live. And means you don't get woke up by raggie neighbours every morning.

To be fair, I don't even know how hes going to do it. Assuming she follows his orders and comes out to have her 'heed fookin slashed yer cheating piece a twat' he's not going to be able to cos a) he isnt near any plug sockets and b) even if he was, the plug on the hedge trimmer is knacked and it don't work. I know cos I broke it. Last weekend. Just before I took the photo in fact.

Its canny, or at least its canny odd, how them little coincidences just add up one on top of each other. And how, somehow, the little uns just kinda get bigger on top. Theres a fella says summit about it in that film *Jurassic Park*, about how a butterfly in one place flaps its wings, which makes a coin fall over here, which makes summit else happen there. Eventually you get a hurricane. I don't know if thats the exact example, but its summit like that and you get the picture. I guess it just means that one little thing can turn into summit massive. Actually thinking about it, perhaps that's not the best example. Mebeys that song by that band Stereophonics (who actually started off quality before they got shit) where he says 'It only takes one tree to make a thousand matches, only takes one match to burn a thousand trees'. Although the singer (hes got

a lasses name, which I cannut remember. Karen or summit) obviously hasn't seen matchboxes recently. I dinnah if you've seen them but they say summit like 'fire kills children' on them. Not trees. Don't you think that's canny odd; like its ignoring summit? I mean, though fire does indeed kill children, surely people know that? Unless of course they've been living in the trees (or up in Sunderland, where me nanna says they cannut afford owt apart from sky telly. I think that's a bit odd though cos surely you would pay for heating and food and that over paying for telly, but then she tells us to shut up). But if they have been living somewhere odd, they wont know what fire does at all. If thats true then surely it'd be better telling them that fire burns 'whole cities' or 'forests' - killing lots of children. And adults. And babies. They might not realise how dangerous it would be to, say, make a little fire to keep their hands warm on a cold day in a petrol station. They might even use it to clean off the drips of petrol they get on the side of the car after pulling the nozzle out. Unless of course, they had bairns in the back, in which case they wouldn't cos 'fire kills children', see?

But im talking rubbish now. Mam says ive got some disorder which means I cannut pay attention. I haven't. I just get bored really easy. Anyways, what I really mean to say is that its funny how lots of little things, or even just one little thing, scales up into loads. Like really Big Shit. So if I was to give you examples from my life (cos I obviously cant give you examples from your life, unless you live where I live and have the same parents, and are the same age, and do the same things as me. In which case you are me, and then I can give examples from your life cos you are me…We've been through this before). Anyways, mebeys an example is like when I forgot to put the spare key back outside, and me mam also forgot hers. She couldn't get back into the house and had to wait till me father got back. Which meant she missed her doctors appointment, which meant she forgot to get some more cat food. Which meant my nannas cat, who we were feeding whilst she was in menorca, didn't get fed, which meant it died. Which meant I was in Big Shit. Or another example might be when I took a photo of my neighbour shagging some random bloke. Which meant her husband found out she was sleeping around. Which meant he went mental, and started to threaten her with a hedge trimmer.

You know how in films or in shitty American comedy series like *Friends* (I think im the only person in the world who sees that programme for the utter crap that it is) Anyways, when they get into Big Shit, its always really annoying cos you think, if you just stop telling stupid lies and just sit down with the person and go 'look I know I look like im trying to steal your wallet, but actually its cos you took mine by accident and I was trying to swap yours for mine because inside mine is the ticket for your birthday surprise which ive now ruined and im quite pleased I did cos you are so goddam stupid'. If they did that theyd be out of Big Shit automatically, and it wouldn't be as irritating to watch. Id be fookin great if I was in films! But anyways, you know how that's how it happens on telly? Its not like that in real life. When you get in Big Shit in real life, it isn't just someones birthday surprise that's ruined. Its someones cat. Or someones wife.

* * *

It was just starting to spit with rain when I finished trimming Mr and Mrs Baxendale Over the Road's hedge. I say 'finished', I actually mean 'stopped'. When I say 'stopped' I actually mean 'cant continue cos ive buggered the plug by accidentally cutting though the wire, and nearly electrocuting myself to death'. To be honest, I was canny pleased cos although Mr Baxendale would probably whack us one, id been paid in advance so I had the money already (that would please my mam) and I could go inside and avoid the rain (that would please me). Id finish the hedge (after fixing the trimmer) later. I quickly rolled the surviving bit of wire around my arm and placed it over the handle of the trimmer. It remained tight and coiled for less than a second before coming lose and tangley. Its really annoying that isn't it? Apparently theres some special technique or summit that means that wires roll up proper; but im fooked if I know how to. I shoved the trimmer and the severed plug back into the garage. The Baxendales Over the Road never leave their garage locked - mainly cos the lock is buggered. Neybody on the street locks their garages. Theyve all got buggered locks. Must have been some fault in the garage factory in 1980 when this estate was made. Though for all I know all the garage locks in the world are fooked, but I cant say cos ive not tested them all. Ive only actually tested ours and the Baxendales Over the Road, which, to be honest, probably isn't a very

large proportion of all garages in the world. It would take fookin forever to check all the garages in the world. I suppose I could check all of them in my street, but knowing me id probably get into Big Shit. Im good at that. Anyways im talking crap again. Will you stop us next time?

So Im dashing across the road to our house as the rain turns from little spits to full on piss streaks. We live opposite to the Baxendales Over the Road, as you may or may not know, so its not much of a dash to get there. Our front garden has been turned into one of them brick drive thingies which mam says she wanted cos they 'look proper posh', but really wanted cos everyone else has got them and if theres one thing mam hates it's being different. By the way, just cos everyone has brick drives and everyone has broken garages doesn't mean that brick drives break garages. They don't cos I know for a fact that our garage was broken before they did the drive. So, anyways, I get to our house and ring the bell and Im waiting for me mam to appear all blurry behind the kinda leaf effect frosty window (we've double-glazing - had that for about 4 years. In fact probably one of the first houses on the street so you cannut accuse us of copying that one). Behind us, I think I notice the curtains at the Baxendales Over the Road sorta twitch, like when them old ladies watch us playing footie in the park (you know theys just waiting for the ball to go on their grass so they can nick it and bollock us). Anyways I assume a Baxendale is also gonna come down and bollock us for not finishing the hedge - but nowt happens, and anyway, my mam appears at the door and lets us in. Before she gets chance to start ranting at us I peg it up the stairs into my room. Shes a fookin drag sometimes is my mam. Anyways I get back to my room and close the door. I wont bore you with all the crap I got up to. Even though some of it probably wouldn't bore you, but that stuffs personal and you dint have to share that kinda stuff. Anyways I end up picking up my camera and I notice theres only two photos left on it. Like anyone, I love it when you get films you've had fer ages developed. Mainly cos you dinnah what kinda crazy pictures they've got on them. So anyways I use them up in the same way you must have done a couple of times (though obviously I don't know if you have cos im not you, and you aren't me - I wont go into it). I point the camera out my window and take a picture of The View from My Room. You never know when a picture like that might come in handy (you never know probably cos they never do).

But, anyways, on my camera Ive got a picture of the house over the road. And that's just one of them little coincidences. Them child killing matches. Them cat/wife killing matches.

My mam must have found it canny odd when she got her camera developed and it just had pictures of my drunken mates on it. In the same way that I found it odd that my camera had pictures of my mam and dad on their short weekend in the dales visiting me gran (not me nanna whos cat died, the other one). Its not too hard to see why though, both the cameras were the same crappy disposable type, bought on a two for one at the new tescos. Its also not too hard to solve the problem - we just swap them round.

That's another of them matches.

Me mam and dad get on canny well with the Baxendales Over the Road, so its not that strange that they get invited over for dinner. Its also not that odd that they would show each other holiday photos after dinner. Gives em summit to talk about I suppose. After they've finished skitting me and having a go at us for not finishing the hedge. Its just a pity that my mam had only just got her photos so she hadn't had a chance to look at them before getting ready to go over for dinner. It's also a pity that I didn't take them pictures of the View from My Room out.

That's another match.

So Im in bed and its about 2 or 3 in the morning an my mam and dad have been back a while. I sensed summit was a bit wrong when they get back early and didn't say owt before going to bed. I can hear voices shouting at each other outside, but that's not too unusual on our street, no one talks about it and its fine the next day. I fall back to sleep. Its only when I get woke up at about six in the morning and Mr Baxendale is in the street cussing and shouting like ive never heard, that I finally click that summit is wrong. And I look out my window and theres Mr Baxendale, pissed and irate off his face, waving the hedge trimmer around in the air. And people are starting to wake now and I can see the curtains twitching behind their double-glazing. Im sure even the old ladies at the park can hear it cos they don't have double-glazing. My dad then appears on our bricked drive in his dressing gown and calls to Mr Baxendale who doesn't notice him. Next he's trying to wrestle the hedge trimmer off Mr Baxendale and telling him to calm down. But Mr Baxendale is too pissed and angry. And the wire on the trimmer seems to be badly rolled up and seems to have trapped Mr Baxendales hand. Which is why, when he tries to drop the trimmer onto the ground as suggested by my dad, it doesn't fall but swings down from his arm and catches my dad in the face.

Its canny odd, don't you think, that sometimes the Biggest Shit you do, like maiming your own father, is completely accidental. Yet when you try to give someone who deserves it the Biggest Shit in the world, you never get around to it, or it doesn't work. Ive got this idea that that's what fate is. That we can do anything we want without any of that 'path of life' crap - unless we try to do anything big. That's when someone with a deep, black, deep south USA accent picks us up and says 'nope sonny you aint gonna do that, and just to show you im boss im gonna do something just as bad to someone else and you gonna watch'. Or perhaps Im just talking crap.

At least my dad didn't get any scars and he was only in hospital for a few stitches. Mr Baxendale didn't get too badly done by the cops. Mrs Baxendale got to go off and live with Keith, who's even relocated his brick drive making company to where they now live. Which is fine for him cos hed pretty much finished all the drives around here. Apparently he's thinking of expanding to making garages (and their doors).

Somehow I didn't get into Big Shit, not like when I starved nana's cat. Perhaps that's cos no one worked out the connections. That's another thing about coincidences. If theres enough of them, people don't notice the connections. I didn't even have to finish the hedge. I think the hedge trimmer is still broken.

Oliver Robinson (BA 2005)

SUMMERTIME IN THE WINTER MOUNTAINS

Leaving Moscow for Archangel on the overnight train and realising this would be my last experience of darkness for over a fortnight, it was hard to imagine that I'd been at John's May Ball scarcely a week ago. Once off the train a bus took us into the city that I'd been eager to see since reading *The House By The Dvina*, but it wasn't as I'd imagined: more concrete, ugly and slightly eerie. Once at our hotel I was greeted by Dr Dima Grazhdankin, whose research into the earliest animal life (half a billion years before Stalinist architecture graced the shores of the White Sea) would soon be taking us further north to Zimny Gorie – the Winter Mountains. With two days to go before our helicopter flight, Dima suggested we set out for a local adventure immediately. Speeding out of the city along the cracked motorway I suspected lack of sleep was taking its toll, as we passed an old man in pink rollerblades making haste in the opposite direction. An hour later the road ended, we decamped onto a logging track and were immediately surrounded by clouds of mosquitoes.

It was a bright two in the morning as we trotted down the rutted track, setting a pace just fast enough to leave our hungry clouds a foot or so behind. Stopping at a village to draw a refreshing cup of icy green water from a well at 'dawn', we continued through the woods until, tasting salt on the air, we reached the coast of the White Sea. After a brief paddle to relieve steaming feet, and framed by distant missile launching towers, we set out west, heading further down the Summer Coast of the Onega Peninsula. Seventeen hours after starting our walk we arrived at our destination, a small fishing village called Suzma.

The shingle bar previously connecting the beach to the village was no longer there, washed away in a recent storm along with a row of boathouses, leaving us marooned until some villagers rowed out to ferry us across. Arriving at the shore a friend chided the ferryman 'he speaks English, you should have asked for a dollar'. Attracting bemused expressions from a scattering of locals, I followed Dima up a grassy path and into the dense tangle of wooden cottages and vegetable gardens to the home of an elderly couple that seemed unsurprised at his visit. He'd been returning in this season (the window between the ices allowing excavation) for years, never announcing his arrival in advance and always being greeted with warmth (and the occasional offer of wives). The cottage was built around the stone oven, complete with slot for baking bread and slot for sleeping in when things got chilly.

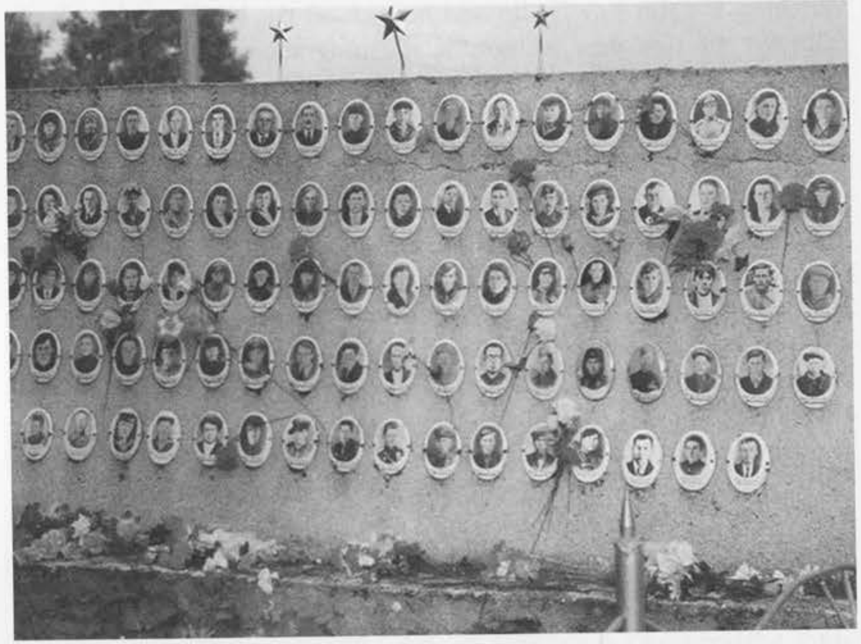
Upon arrival the samovar was fired up and a seemingly endless succession of sugared breads, jams and tea thrust at us along with interrogations concerning the outside world and which of us were married. Thoroughly bloated, we stripped off and headed for the banya (sauna) where we washed away the grime of the forest track and beat each other with wet birch branches. Emerging glowing and refreshed we walked through town to a small barbecue that the locals had set up for us. Despite my being the first Englishman on the coast since the troops of the Second World War passed through, I felt the glory of our Empire as one of the fishermen proudly donned his Michael Owen football shirt.

Watching the sun slowly dip and bounce off the horizon I felt totally calm for the first time in months. Sleeping soundly for over twelve hours thanks to a combination of the forced march, banya, shashlik (small kebabs) and wine, and eventually waking thanks to the amount of tea I'd consumed, it was unfortunately already time to go.

Our return journey would be more adventurous: Dima made a satellite call and an old military troop transporter rocked up. Perched atop this amazing piece of kit, we made light work of tidal flats, swamp, forest and logging track in a thunderous confusion of trying to remain attached to the vehicle whilst not getting too attached to the sizzling engine cover. After a shopping trip for essentials (including 13 tubes of chilli sauce) and a quick breakfast in the hotel restaurant (a 'Stringfellows' styled room which by night became the scene of gun battles between the local pimps) we drove to the airport. Having persuaded the officials that we didn't want to hijack our own helicopter we loaded our equipment aboard and set off down the runway. This was my first time on a helicopter and I was astonished by how suddenly it was aloft. Not quite as astonished, however, as a seagull sitting in the grass beside the airfield; the bird was blasted sideways upon taking to the sky, resuming its vertical trajectory with the same air of embarrassment that my cat assumes when it falls off the side of our sofa.

The flight was very exciting, especially as no one seemed to mind me sticking my head out of the window for most of it. Flying through dense mist we caught occasional glimpses of swamp and taiga (forest) whenever we lost enough height. We also passed over the skeletal ruins of a Gulag work-camp for British prisoners of the Soviet regime, a grim reminder that we were going to live in a region thought fit only for political prisoners and where the thick and continuous taiga makes prison walls unnecessary.

Flying low over the cliffs of the Winter Mountains we landed on a landslide and got out as fast as possible, as on a previous occasion the helicopter had become stuck in the mud. As it zoomed back to Archangel the engine noise was replaced by the hum of mosquitoes and we set about carrying our luggage down to the sea where we set up our motorboat, and sped to the cove where we'd make our base. Having fortified our tents with wood and shingle storm barriers, we made a fire (to remain lit for the duration to put off bears) and drank tea, and I settled down to sleep. With the perpetual light there was no need for a torch to get through my copy of Dickens' *Our Mutual Friend*, and I soon got used to judging the time of night by the sounds of birds and insects.



World War II Memorial in the village en route to Suzma (fresh flowers are placed regularly by surviving relatives)

Tom Mustill (left) and Dima Grazhdankin in front of helicopter

Over the next fortnight we spent most of the time climbing and excavating the crumbling cliffs for fossils. These were preserved as bizarre imprints, some still coloured brown by their half billion year-old organic remains. No one is quite sure what these organisms (known by palaeontologists as the 'Ediacara') were. Attempts to place them within modern categories have relied upon slight resemblances and some believe they represent a kingdom of life long extinct - an early doomed attempt at multicellularity. In our fortnight of excavation we uncovered over half of the global biodiversity known from this time. It is hard to imagine any place or system where this would be possible and the affinities and dynamics of these long dead creatures remain enigmatic.

Enormous 'meat' and rice meals interrupted this work twice a day, along with chocolate bars and great quantities of tea. Depending on the direction of the wind we wore thick layers of clothes or stripped down to work in boxers. Sometimes even these felt too hot and I would cool off by running into the Arctic Sea, the calm surface of which was heated by the sun just enough to remind me how much warmer the land was, without loss of limbs. One day I foolishly attempted to bodysurf in a big storm, not thinking that with the water churned up it would be mixed with that from icy depths. I just about made it out on wobbly senseless legs and lay panting on the beach like the marine iguana that, having grazed algae off the Galapagos coast, must lie in the sun for over an hour before digesting its meal. This adventure greatly amused the Russians.

I was not the only white mammal to float along our coast; huge pods of Beluga whales passed yards from the shore a number of times. Once, excavating from the cliff-top, I spotted a group and watched transfixed for hours as they passed by, numbering well over a hundred. Their passing seemed to annoy an extremely fat seal, which lumbered up the beach beneath us; I was able to creep very close before it noticed me and undulated back into the surf. Bears often prowl these shores, our tracks covered with sets of clawed paws and the cliff-tops with bear dung where they watched us (salivating?) from the trees. Back at camp that evening another pod of whales swam past; I threw the tiny motorboat into the water and sped out to sea. Overtaking them at a distance I turned back to the coast and turned the engine off allowing them to swim towards me if they wished. Their deceptive pace only became apparent as they charged, apparently straight for the little boat, only to dive underneath and surface a few yards behind, the whistles and chirps of these white whales adding to the distinct sensation that they were playing with me.

One morning a dead seal pup washed up near our camp; as this would draw the attention of bears and wolves we decided to move our base further north. After hitting the shallow reef of our bay and having to fix the propeller twice, amidst sudden swarms of biting beasts, knee deep in the freezing water, it was a relief finally to drag our last load of supplies up the beach at Zimnie Gorie Lighthouse. We'd visited this remote cliff-top meteorological station before to drop off provisions. Having climbed the rickety wooden cliff steps and braved their goats and bear-hunting dog, we were greeted by one of the three men

(we never met the third - whenever we visited he skulked around the outbuildings), amazingly drunk and able only to repeat 'Michael Owen, beautiful goal', as they'd tuned their Heath Robinson television (only capable of receiving either sound or snowy pictures with the insufficient power from their tiny nuclear generator) to England's European Cup match against Portugal. It turned out that their only vodka ration for the season had arrived a day before and they'd been making light work of it. Of our provisions they were most excited by the beer (which most Russians do not class as alcohol) and books. This was an isolated incident and on the next visit, shaven and hung-over, they turned out to be kind, articulate and very amusing.

My favourite parts of the trip were sitting in their kitchen after a scorching banya, eating one vast blini - with their homemade jam - after another, drinking tea, and listening to their stories of life in this amazing place to a background of Bible verses being read on their old radio. They also supplied us with fresh raw salmon, which we happily devoured after so many meals where it was best not to examine the meat too closely. When the helicopter finally arrived to collect us, our finds and two huge tubs of strawberry jam (ostensibly for my parents) from the Winter Mountains, it was from the beach beneath the lighthouse. As we soared up and over the cliffs back towards Archangel (and from there, onwards to Siberia) I felt a deep admiration and a hint of envy for this tough but free life, a day's walk from the permafrost.

Tom Mustill (BA 2005)

THE JOHNIAN OFFICE

One of the highlights for us this year has been the publishing of Volume I of the *Register of Twentieth-Century Johnians*, which was finally completed in December 2004. It was a mammoth undertaking – no one realised quite how large a job it would be at the outset – and congratulations go to Fiona Colbert, the Biographical Assistant, for never wavering in her belief that she would finish it. A great deal of support was provided by all Johnian Office staff and we are all proud of what has been achieved. The book is on sale at a cost of £30, plus postage and packing and Fiona will be delighted to sell further copies to Johnians.

The College has long benefited from the foresight and generosity of many benefactors, who recognise the importance of the College and want to see it develop as a great College in a world-class University, and this year has been no exception. A list of donations received between June 2004 and May 2005 is included elsewhere in *The Eagle*. It gives a good overview of the breadth of support from Johnians (and others) across the generations, and for a variety of purposes. Perhaps the most heart-warming donations are those by the students who graduated in 2004, who have given funds to support a 'Graduates of 2004' Bursary, and the overwhelming response of the Fellows to a request for support for a 'Fellows' Bursary'. At the time of writing the Fellows have contributed well over £31,000. To each and every benefactor we are grateful and we hope that many more Johnians will wish to support their College over the coming years.

A number of people have notified us that they intend to leave a bequest to the College. We will be producing a brochure with information about including a bequest in your will, and intend to try to encourage Johnians to consider making provision for this type of gift to St John's. We will also be launching an annual mailing for support this year so please look out for the leaflet and reply form and do support us if you can.

Our regional events programme continues to develop, with a dinner at Loretto School near Edinburgh last September, a concert by the Choir in London in November, and a dinner in Birmingham in June 2005. We are putting the final touches to a reunion in Oxford in September this year and will have our, by now traditional, London event before Christmas. 2006 sees the turn of the Manchester area, the South-West and Cardiff. We hope to see many of you there!

We also provide support for Johnians wishing to organise reunions in College and elsewhere. On 16 July 2005, we welcome back both those who matriculated in 1952 and also (for a separate dinner) those who took Part III Maths in 1945. We are already assisting with bookings for the autumn and for 2006.

There were also the usual opportunities to return to St John's for the events in connection with the University Alumni Weekend, the Johnian Society Dinner, the MA Dinner and the Johnian Dinners. By the time *The Eagle* is published, the Open Weekend for Johnians will have taken place. It promises to be a very enjoyable occasion, with tours, displays, an exhibition by Johnian artist, Paul Wuensche (BA 1995), wine tasting, dinners in Hall and teaparties in the Master's Lodge.

In the USA, the JSUSA has continued to provide the College with inspiration and support, through its Organizing Committee. A number of events have taken place, including a Holiday Drinks Party at the home of Richard Thompson (BA 1957) in New York, and a dinner at Le Pot au Feu restaurant in Menlo Park (facilitated by Kevin Tierney (BA 1964, LLB 1965)). The highlight, though, especially for members of the Committee, was the weekend at Princeton at the very end of April. Peter and Helen Goddard welcomed members of the Committee and their partners into their beautiful home for a wonderful dinner and a private recital. The next day, after a Committee meeting, around 100 Johnians and their guests (together with alumnae of Newnham College) came to the Goddards' home for a family BBQ. We are extremely grateful to the Goddards for their generous hospitality.

Clare Laight, the Associate Development Officer, was again able to spend time in the USA this year, enabling her to meet with more Johnians and to seek support for the College's activities. We are grateful to Marc Feigen, Chairman of the JSUSA, for again providing office space in New York.

The first edition of our new JSUSA Newsletter was published in April and our aim is to produce the newsletter twice a year, to keep Johnians in the USA in touch with our activities and to provide updates on the College's fundraising efforts.

Back at home, the Johnian Office is located in F2A Chapel Court and you are welcome to call in when you are visiting Cambridge to find out about events and news in College. The Office is generally open on weekdays from 9.00am to 5.30pm (except between 1.00pm and 2.15pm) and we can be contacted by telephone on 01223 338700 and by fax on 01223 338727.

Remember to look at our website (www.joh.cam.ac.uk) for more information about the College's activities and please do not hesitate to contact us - we look forward to hearing from you.

Catherine Twilley (BA 1992)
Development Officer

The Johnian Office can be contacted as follows:

Tel: 01223 338700
Fax: 01223 338727
Email: Development-Officer@joh.cam.ac.uk

Other members of the Johnian Office are Clare Laight (Associate Development Officer), Fiona Colbert (Biographical Assistant), Amanda George (Development Officer's Assistant), Pam Lee (Data Entry Clerk) and Kim Townsend (BA 2004) (Johnian Office Intern 2004-2005).

Information that you may find useful is given below.

Dining Privileges

You are reminded that Johnians of at least six years' standing have the privilege of dining up to three times a year at the Fellows' Table at College expense. The College is also happy to provide accommodation in College free of charge for the night that you dine, if there is a guest room available. It is worth noting that there may be very few diners in the depths of the Long Vacation. You may find dining at other times of year more convivial. Please note that your dining privileges do not entitle you to bring a guest to dinner and that there are some evenings when dinner is not available.

If you would like to exercise your dining privilege, please contact the Steward's Secretary, Mrs Mansfield, on 01223 338686 (email: s.m.mansfield@joh.cam.ac.uk) and to book accommodation please call the Accommodation Officer, Mrs Stratton, on 01223 339381 (email: s.m.stratton@joh.cam.ac.uk).

Please note that Johnians admitted as Affiliated Students must be of five years' standing before they are entitled to dining privileges, and those admitted as Graduate Students must be of three years' standing.

Johnian Dinners

The Johnian Dinners for 2006 will take place in April and July. The first Dinner will take place on 1 April 2006 for matriculation years 1980, 1981, 1982, and invitations will be sent out in the autumn.

The second Dinner will be held on 1 July 2006 and matriculation years up to and including 1946, and 1954, 1955, 1959, 1960 will be invited. Invitations will be sent out in January 2006.

It is expected that the pattern of invitations to Dinners in the future will be as follows:

Spring 2007	1967, 1968, 1983, 1984
Summer 2007	up to and including 1947, 1974, 1975, 1976

Please note that these are matriculation dates (ie the year you first came up to St John's) and are provisional.

Chapel Services

Johnians visiting Cambridge are reminded that they are most welcome at the College Chapel Services. During Full Term, Choral Evensong takes place at 6.30pm every day except Monday and there is also a sung service at 10.30am on Sunday. The dates for Full Term for 2005-2006 are as follows:

Michaelmas Term	4 October to 2 December

Lent Term	17 January to 17 March
Easter Term	25 April to 16 June

Information about the Services can be found on the College website, which also includes notice of forthcoming concerts and tours.

Biographical Information

We continue to send print-outs of the information that we hold on you on our database with invitations to Johnian Dinners. This has given you the opportunity to request that any inaccuracies be amended and also to update us on any new family or career information, and we are pleased to have received so many responses so far.

In between these mailings, please continue to update us with biographical information on the record sheet sent with this year's edition of *The Eagle*. We are also happy to receive information by fax or email, and it should be sent to:

Fax: 01223 338727 or Email: Biographical-Assistant@joh.cam.ac.uk.

We are quite often asked for addresses by Johnians who have lost contact with their contemporaries, but we can only do this with your permission. If you are happy for us to release your address for this purpose, please make sure you give your consent on the enclosed Biographical Record Sheet. If you have already given permission you do not need to do so again.

Punts

Non-resident members of College may use the College punts at a cost of £4.00 per hour during the summer vacation (ie during July, August and September). The punts are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Those wishing to hire punts should go to the Cripps Porters' Lodge to see if any are available.

College Merchandise

We are pleased to be able to offer a selection of College merchandise at preferential rates for Johnians. Items include Christmas cards, brooches, baseball caps, umbrellas and compact discs featuring the College Choir. Please contact Amanda George for further information. Goods can be purchased by cheque, cash or credit card.

College Facilities

Johnians are welcome to visit College at any time. If you would like help in arranging a reunion dinner or advice about exercising your dining privileges, Catherine Twilley, the Development Officer, will be pleased to help. If you would like to find out about arranging a private dinner or a conference, please contact the Catering and Conference Department on (01223) 338615. There are also a limited number of College Guest Rooms available for Johnians (booked through the Accommodation Officer, as above). A charge is made for the use of such rooms, except on the nights you exercise your dining privileges.

Gifts to the College

We are grateful to all those who have made gifts to the College. Recent donations are listed elsewhere in *The Eagle*. If you are considering making a gift to the College, please contact Catherine Twilley, the Development Officer, or Clare Laight, the Associate Development Officer. Further information about ways of giving can also be found on the website at www.joh.cam.ac.uk/Johnian/support.html.

COMMEMORATION OF BENEFACTORS SERMON

30 April 2006

We gather this morning to do something that members of this community have done for centuries, indeed for as long as there has been an identifiable community on this site. People have gathered for nearly five centuries as members of a college and as residents of the Hospital of St John before that. We have come here to remember with thankfulness those who by their generosity over those centuries have provided the resources to make the community what it is. We do that in the context of an act of worship, of Christian worship. You might view that as an historical accident, or as quaint tradition or as an acknowledgement that the Church does these things better than anybody else. All those things would, I think, miss something very significant. Far from being a relic of a past age, what we are doing here this morning provides a very appropriate response to a very contemporary situation.

Before the Reformation, benefactors of the College and of the Hospital were remembered in masses offered for them. As in the case of Hugh Ashton, whose tomb stands in the Antechapel, these were often connected to the distribution of not inconsiderable sums of money to members of the community, conditional upon their attendance (a practice that could usefully be revived, I feel). The statutes of John Fisher and of Henry VIII lay a duty on all Fellows and scholars to recite each day Psalm 130 and to pray for the souls of the benefactors as well as providing, among other things, for a quarterly requiem for the Foundress. In 1570 the post-Reformation Elizabethan statutes of the University prescribed a commemorative service in colleges three times a year. This was reduced here at St John's to the current yearly commemoration after 1860.

The community here has changed out of all recognition in those centuries, as has the world in which we are set. Yet one thing that has remained constant is the presence of acts of thanksgiving and worship.

It is on the significance of worship in a community such as this that I would like to concentrate this morning. Now clearly the College Chapel is a place set aside explicitly for worship. However, we should strenuously resist the temptation to think of worship as something that goes on only in places like this one or that it is something that is only, or even mainly, done by people who think of themselves as religious. Worship is something that we all do, and, significantly, we do it most overtly when we gather together in the company of others. This morning's service is a good example of that.

The root of the English word 'worship' means 'ascribing worth'. That clearly is what we are doing when we worship in a religious context, but it is equally clearly something that goes on much more widely. Almost any human activity involves, explicitly or implicitly, ascribing worth. We reveal what we think of as good and worthwhile by the way that we act; because our actions have goals, they are directed towards something. We ascribe worth by what we do each and every day of our lives. So, as one writer has put it, 'Every human life is an act of worship'[1]. And we learn what is worthwhile, what to ascribe worth to and what to discard or to avoid, from other people. That is why gatherings are so important, and gatherings such as this one especially so since here we articulate what this community thinks is worthwhile.

Colleges and universities are communities that are built around people learning and finding things out, either things that they did not know before or that nobody knew before. One of the things you have to learn here is how to learn. By example in lectures, and by trying for ourselves in supervisions and seminars and publications, we learn what counts as good work or sound reasoning or useful inquiry. By participating in the business of a university we learn what the values of an academic community are, and to what sort of things worth is ascribed. In the processes of learning our hearts are lifted, our vision is enlarged and our understanding is deepened. Inquiry and worship are activities that are intimately linked. More specifically we learn from our interaction with other people what are the values of this particular academic community. So it is that we heard earlier on in the service, the list of (some of) the College's benefactors. Through it we are telling the story of the College.

It is no accident that one of the clearest ways of communicating a community's values is by telling its story.

So then we gather together for worship. We are being quite explicit about that this morning, but we do it less explicitly at many other times and in many other places in our learning from others. What is it that we learn here, apart from the specific content of our areas of study? With any luck we learn in the striving for intellectual excellence and in the give and take of life together, that there is more to life than the accumulation of wealth, there is more to success than the exercise of power, there is more to goodness than promotion. If our hearts have been lifted and we really have got the point of academic inquiry, then we will realize that such activities are valuable in themselves and not just for what they can gain us. Education is about much more than training for the job market and about the acquisition of transferable skills, even if that is the language that we have to learn to speak to function in the world as it is.

The specific theme of what we are doing here this morning is giving thanks, thanks for those who by their example and their generosity have made the College what it is today. Being thankful is also intimately woven in to all acts of worship. The medieval mystic, Master Eckhart said, 'If the only prayer you say in your whole life is "Thank You", that would suffice.' The thing about being thankful is that we are taken out of the 'me-centred' self sufficiency that we are so prone to. In thanking someone, we acknowledge that we lack something and that they have supplied what we were missing. We are acknowledging a connection, a bond. We are admitting to our dependence on others. However stunning our exam results are and however long our publication list gets, that is always a thought that will lead us closer to fulfilment and closer to God.

So worship and the cultivation of an attitude of thankfulness contribute to the health of an academic community. How does it help us to address the challenges of our contemporary world, a world in which worship and religion play a perhaps unexpectedly large role?

We find ourselves in an odd position with respect to religious belief at the moment. A generation ago a confident secularism was in the ascendant. The commonly accepted orthodoxy was that religious belief was something that belonged to a past age. Religion could confidently be expected to wither away into quaint irrelevance before too long. Issues of belief however have forced their way back into secular consciousness in new and disturbing ways. September 11 was not the first example of that but it remains the most obvious and the most jarring. What makes people, in the name of their religion, do such terrible things? Religion and belief are back on the agenda, however uncomfortable that is for the secular mindset, and one of the things that is obvious from the varied reactions to this is just how much modern secularists misunderstand religious belief. However, having forced religion into a box where it was thought it could safely be forgotten, its unexpected escape serves to make religion something that is perceived as not only mysterious but suspect and potentially dangerous as well. That is why occasions such as this one are necessary if we are to address the challenges that face us. We need to practice worship and to understand it, to acknowledge that it is a part of all of our existences and not just a pastime of the religious minority.

Jonathan Sacks, the Chief Rabbi, in his 1990 Reith Lectures, *The Persistence of Faith*, spoke of the paradoxical way that increasing secularisation does not make questions of religion go away, but rather emphasises the urgency of our need to understand the resources and the wisdom that the great faith traditions contain. More than a decade later the truth of this has become even clearer. As we try to make sense of the terrorism that has forced itself to the front of our political consciousness since September 11, one would have to be very blinkered indeed to think that we can negotiate our way through the uncertainties and hazards of this new world without understanding what religion is and why it matters, even if it does not personally matter to us. In such a context the resources of humane religious belief especially need to be available, and they are best made available by having worshipping communities that practice such humane belief accessible to us.

The post-Enlightenment mind is accustomed to viewing religious belief, and the 'worth-ascribing' that goes with it, as a personal thing and as divorced from the exercise of political, economic and cultural power. Hence, to some extent the western bafflement and rage at the events of 9/11. If religion is a personal thing then how can religious belief mandate violent action against others? This is simply not playing by the rules. The classification of terrorists as either fundamentalists or fanatics, though accurate, also serves to indicate that their motivation is simply beyond us. We cannot comprehend how people could act in such a fashion and so we put them in a separate enclosure labelled 'lunatics'. However, when put in the context of political and economic power relations, resurgent Islam makes more sense as a reaction to the literally imperial reach of western political, economic and cultural power. Disillusionment with what the West offers but then fails to deliver provides the backdrop for the rise of Islamist political parties in many parts of the world and thus forms the context for the growth of terrorism. This is why what we are doing here this morning not only underpins the intellectual life of an academic community, it also provides a perspective and resources for living in an increasingly alarming world.

In short the College is a healthier place for having religious worship, humane religious worship, practised at its centre. It is healthier academically as the honest search for God naturally supports the honest search for truth. It is healthier personally and socially, as a community that is open to a range of human experience that does not exclude the religious is better placed to welcome a variety of humans and their varied experience, religious or otherwise. It is healthier politically because it remembers a tradition that is older than the individualist secularism that prevails at the moment.

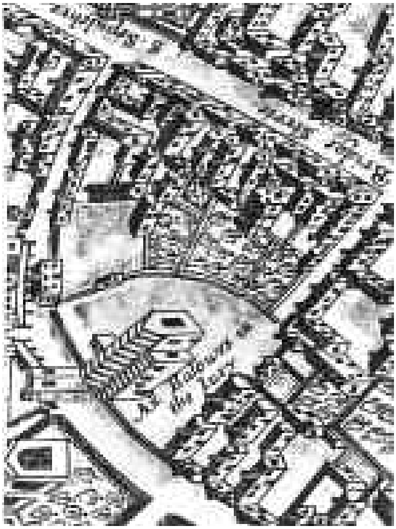
Jeremy Caddick
Dean of Emmanuel College

I am grateful to Malcolm Underwood, the College Archivist, for his help in providing information about the history of the Commemoration service.

[1] Kenneson, P, 'Worship, Imagination and Formation' in Hauerwas, S and Wells, S (eds), *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2004, p54.

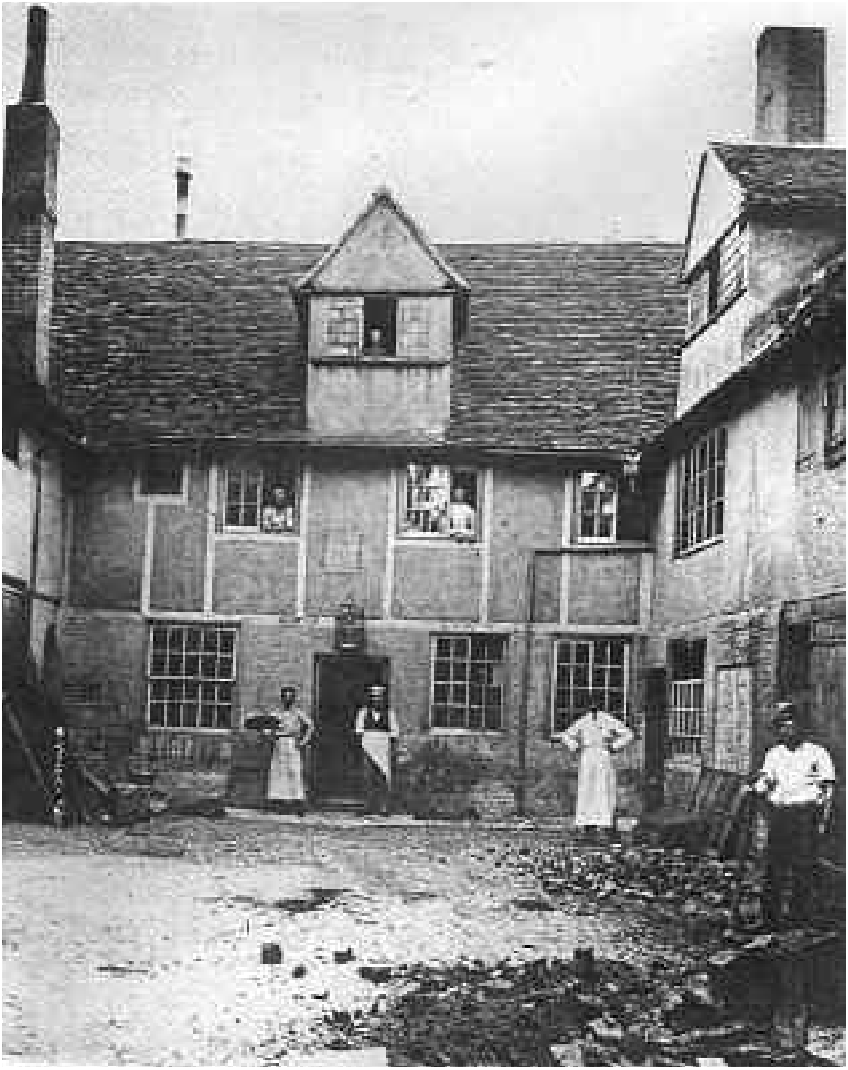
THE TRIANGLE SITE

An appreciation by the College Archivist and the Master


The Triangle Area, 1592

The area now known as 'The Triangle Site', a cluster of buildings in front of the Great Gate and bounded by Bridge Street, St John's Street and All Saints' Passage, is clearly identifiable on the earliest reliably-detailed map of Cambridge, that produced by William Hammond in 1592. These buildings have housed a wide variety of trades and occupations over four centuries and, as St John's prepares a comprehensive redevelopment of the site for Collegiate and commercial use, the opportunity arises to wander round an ancient corner of Cambridge in the mind's eye, looking both backwards and forwards in time, and highlighting some interesting aspects of a complex, ongoing story.

In Hammond's map, orchards lie north of the churchyard of All Saints', a church that stood across the street from Trinity College Chapel until 1865. South-west of these orchards, and separated by a wall from the main churchyard, is an 'empty' space, formerly, perhaps, the cemetery of the Hospital of St John the Evangelist. This site was later occupied by College buildings, the whole complex coming to be known as 'The Pensionary'. Swept away in the 1870s to make room for a University Divinity School, the Pensionary consisted of two stables - one for the College, the other originally reserved for the Bursar - a bakehouse, a coach house, and the houses of Mr Peach the butler and Owen Jones, College cook. Bakehouse and yard are shown evocatively in the accompanying photograph.



The Old Bakehouse, 1876

Next to the cook's house was a dwelling occupied by Miss Mutton, a milliner. At that time, Peach's house was numbered 1 All Saints' Passage, while those of the cook and Miss Mutton were, respectively, 8 and 9 St John's Street. The Divinity School was reconveyed to the College on 21 April 1966, but remained under lease to the University until the Faculty of Divinity moved to the Sidgwick site in 2001.

The College did not secure another permanent estate in the Triangle until the nineteenth century. Comprising numbers 67 to 70 Bridge Street, this was acquired in 1818 through the benefaction of James Wood, then Master of the College. Wood's gift was in fact a union of two estates. One centered on the home of the Ewin family, the south part of the large Georgian block, now number 69. The other, from number 70 Bridge Street round the corner to 2 All Saints' Passage, comprised properties belonging to a Cambridge brewer whose daughter married a Cambridge Doctor of Divinity. William Howell Ewin, owner of the family property in the later eighteenth century, was a graduate of St John's; his unhappy story is told in *The Eagle* 2005. A deeply unpopular man, Ewin prudently resolved to leave the city after his house was ransacked in a riot during 1790, selling the property to Dr Isaac Pennington, President of St John's. By his Will in 1817 Pennington bequeathed the whole estate to James Wood, and so it came to the College at his death later that year, along with the Royal Oak public house, number 70. The block was afterwards broken up into different tenancies. Wine merchants occupied number 68 from 1847 until 1905, when an antiques dealer moved in, but some rooms were let to a doctor, Arthur Cooke of the Royal College of Surgeons, already the tenant at number 69. There, drink had also given place to medicine: at one point the residence of Ekins, a brewer, number 69 was a medical practice by 1892. Doctors occupied the whole of both premises from 1946 to 1962, when they were converted to a single College hostel.

The medical colony developed another limb at number 67, where a doctors' practice has continued down to the present day. Number 67 was an inn during the eighteenth and for most of the nineteenth centuries, but when demolition of the Pensionary displaced the College baker in 1877 it became the baker's residence, a new bakehouse being built at the same time in the yard by a local builder, James Tompkins. The baker was succeeded as tenant in 1894 by the College cook, one Mr Parsley. After 1903, number 67 was used for University lodgings. In 1917 the house was let to a doctor, Charles Searle, but College bread was still baked in the yard until the early 1940s. From 1921, an upper-floor room was let to Frank Edgar Stoakley, bookbinder, and Stoakley's has shared the yard building with other tenants since 1947, binding, among other books, thousands of scholarly dissertations.

Number 70, known in the seventeenth century as the Wildman, in the eighteenth as the Royal Oak and recently as the Flying Stag, forms part of the third large estate in the Triangle, running round to number 2 All Saints' Passage, and also including number 1 All Saints' Passage until the late seventeenth century. The Flying Stag was one in a series of buildings along Bridge Street, owned from 1733 by Thomas Day, a Cambridge brewer. By his Will in 1749 Day left his Bridge Street properties to his son-in-law Henry Waterland, a Fellow of Magdalene. Waterland in turn divided his Cambridge property between his daughters and grandchildren, and eventually the Royal Oak passed with numbers 67-69 to Dr Wood and, finally, to St John's.

In 1873 the College, whose choristers had hitherto been educated with those of Trinity, sought premises for a new Choir school. It was decided to give the Choir schoolmaster, George Edmund Lister, the former Royal Oak as a house and to build a new schoolroom in the yard. The builder, in 1874, was James Tompkins, but it is clear that Henry Russell (Fellow 1849-1886) had a hand in the design. Lister's successor was the Reverend Sam Senior, who held his post from 1912 until 1955, when the school relocated to 73 Grange Road.

The tenancy was soon filled, and with distinction. Glyn Daniel, Fellow and noted archaeologist, took a lease of the old school, which was converted into two rooms on the ground floor and a single room above. Henceforth this was known as the Studio. Eventually, Glyn Daniel and his wife Ruth moved into the house, and a garden took shape in the playground. Elements of the former pub were incorporated in this new Flying Stag, notably the curved window on the ground floor. The bucolic atmosphere was enhanced by a timber balcony, installed in 1974 on the house's south elevation. When Professor Daniel died in 1986, his widow, a notable benefactor to the College Chapel, continued as tenant until her death in 2000.

From the interior of the estate we continue our tour of the perimeter, numbers 71 Bridge Street to 2 All Saints' Passage. Number 71 was known by 1782 as the Union Coffee House. In 1814 it had a coffee room, parlour, sitting rooms, bedrooms and offices. Later in the century the Moore family, and their successor Clifton Cox, ran hairdressing and sports outfitting businesses. From 1937, shortly after the College bought the property, to 1984, the shop housed a pharmacy, thereafter providing premises for a clothing store and, more recently, a photographic shop. Part of number 72 was occupied by Thomas Stearn, photographer, whose studio was 'newly-erected' according to auction particulars of 1865. Stearn & Sons remained until 1971 when the ground floor became a hairdressing salon.

The properties, now numbered 73 Bridge Street to 2 All Saints' Passage, were sold by Waterland in 1769. Number 73 became the shop of a wine merchant and then a bookseller until the 1930s, when occupied by Piggots the cutler. Numbers 73 and 7 All Saints' Passage were conveyed by Trinity College to St John's in 1938, along with number 6. Confectionery, clothing and hairdressing trades have maintained a strong presence in this range. In number 5, on the eve of the First World War, an exotic touch was briefly added by an Indian restaurant, a use associated in the minds of many later Johnians with number 1A. Newman the hairdresser took a lease of number 6 in 1959, and moved to his present premises in number 5 – bought by the College in 1941 – in 1967. Upper floors in the latter property were for many years occupied by William Thomas Thurbon, and his wife Alice. Bill Thurbon began working in the College in 1920 and was Bursar's Clerk from 1955 to 1970. For another twenty years Bill assisted in organizing the records of the College.

On the site of 2-4 All Saints' Passage, three properties were sold to the College in 1820. In 1833 the Cambridge Philosophical Society moved into the present imposing block, erected for it by C Humfrey, a local builder. The Society was eventually unable to meet continuing expenses and sold up in 1865. After alterations that added one storey, the building was let to Ralph Carpenter, tailor and robe-maker, and parts were occupied by a number of sub-tenants including private tutors and the University Church Missionary Society. Perhaps the most famous tenant of number 2, the Hawks (sporting) Club, succeeded the Missionary Society as sub-tenants in 1886, taking over the whole tenancy in 1919. After 1963 it retained a lease of certain chambers, including a beer room and a billiard room, finally quitting the property in 1966.

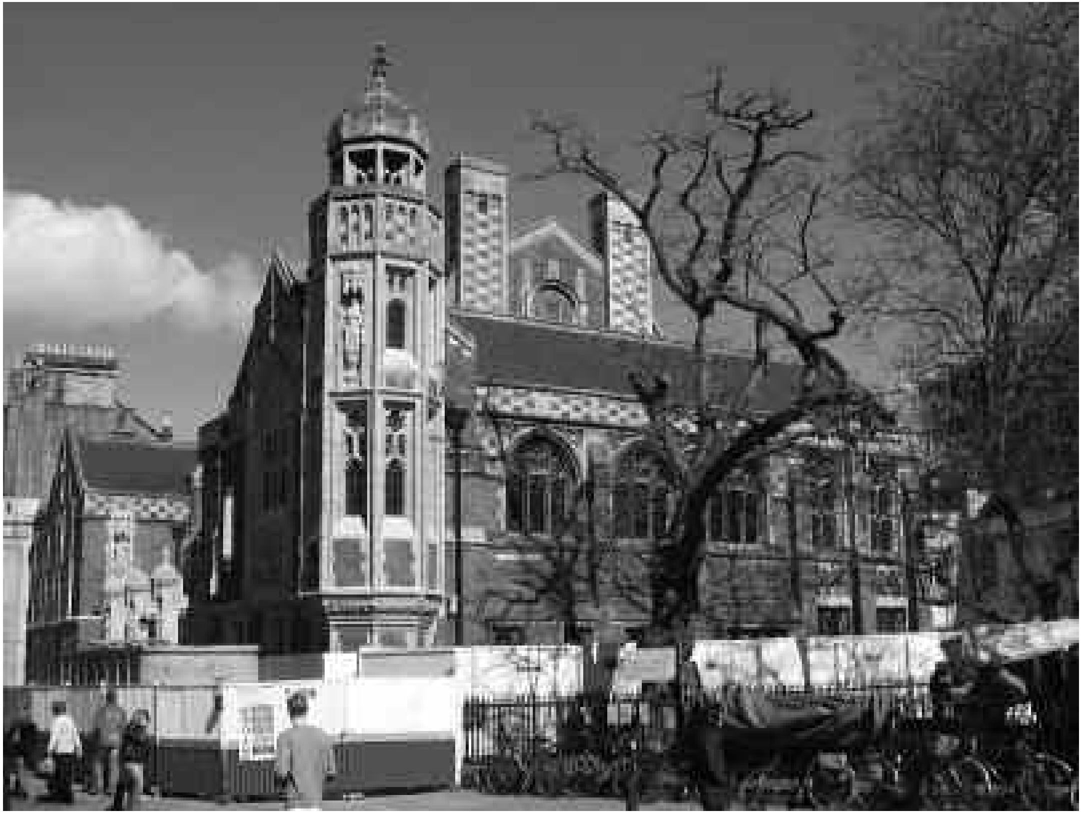
The property adjoining the former Divinity School is now numbered 1 and 1A. This was sold away from the rest of the Bridge Street/All Saints' Passage range before the estate passed to Thomas Day, and before any rebuilding of the frontages, so preserving more of its original, timber-framed, gable-ended construction than any other house in the Triangle. In 1810 Edward Litchfield, fruiterer, acquired the house and gave it his name. Litchfield House continued in private occupation, but 1A, the recently demolished nineteenth-century building, saw many commercial uses: in the 1890s a hairdresser was in occupation, in Edwardian days it was the All Saints' Varsity Toilet Club, and in the 1940s the Peacock Buffet. By 1952 it was occupied by the Taj Mahal Indian Restaurant. The whole property was sold to the College only in 1956. Shortly afterwards, art galleries were established in number 1, while the Taj Mahal, trading in the late 1960s as the Shahi restaurant in 1A, endured until 1973. The Cambridge Music Shop succeeded the galleries in 1964, and a decade later occupied the whole site. After it reduced its operations to 1A in 1984, the restaurant aspect was revived in the former Litchfield House, where Perfect Setting combined a tea-room with a linen and gift-shop until the late 1990s.

Our tour has now brought us back to the former Divinity School. Beyond it, the western side of the Triangle runs from 11 St John's Street round to 66 Bridge Street. Number 11 is the site of the Merry Boys Inn, which adjoined the stables of the College before 1877. It remained an inn until 1911, when it was let to a fruiterer and florist. From the 1920s number 11 was successively the Goldfish Café, a tobacconist, and a tailor. The College acquired it in 1940. Since the 1960s the shop premises have been used by bakers, latterly specializing in the provision of lunchtime rolls and cakes. The tailoring trade in numbers 14 and 15 (owned by the College since 1947) can be traced from Reuben Buttress in the mid-nineteenth century to Moss Bros today.

We are now almost back to where we began this tour. William Gallyon, the gunmaker, whose family business had traded at number 66 Bridge Street from the mid-nineteenth century to 1982, sold to the College in 1942 numbers 16 and 17 St John's Street and 63-65 Bridge Street, and the firm sold it number 66 in 1983. The pipes and smoking materials now on display in this curved frontage reflect a long tradition. Number 65 was occupied as a tobacconist until 1960, when the corner was taken over by electrical retailers. In the mid-1980s we find a foretaste of the present plan to redevelop the Triangle in the extensive alterations to upper floors on the corner site: numbers 63, 64 and 65 were reallocated to these upper floors, and provision was made for Junior Guest Rooms and other College rooms and commercial accommodation.

Malcolm Underwood

With the impending move of the Divinity Faculty to its new building on the Sidgwick Avenue site, the College began a searching consideration of the future of the Divinity School and indeed of the whole Triangle Site. Much of it was by now in need of extensive refurbishment. It was soon apparent that the Divinity School itself would be difficult, if not impossible, to take into sensible College use. Numerous ideas were canvassed and explored: a tourist centre for the University and City; a home for a new research centre for the Arts and Humanities; a hotel. None proved sustainable but the idea of an Arts and Humanities Research Centre, promoted by two Fellows of the College, Dr Robert Tombs and Dr Ulinka Rüblack, captured the imagination of the University. The Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities (CRASSH) was ultimately opened in 2001, with financial help from the College among others, in buildings on the Old Press site formerly occupied by the Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics, which had moved out to its new premises on Wilberforce Road. The most promising prospect currently being



Work in progress, Divinity School and 2 All Saints' Passage, February 2006 pursued by St John's is to turn the former Divinity School into a restaurant and perhaps piano bar, a proposal for which planning permission has been sought and gained. The outside was cleaned and essential roof repairs were carried out in the autumn of 2005 and work continues.

Meanwhile, ideas for redeveloping the rest of the Triangle Site for a mixed College and commercial use were fermenting. The architects van Heyningen and Hayward came up with an interesting design, which was much modified in detail during what turned out to be protracted discussions over two to three years with the City planning authorities but which has been essentially retained in its major elements. The plan now is for the doctors' practice to move from 67 Bridge Street to a renovated 2 All Saints' Passage, a move which is scheduled for early 2007.

67 Bridge Street and neighbouring buildings, looking south, July 2005

When that phase is complete, work will begin elsewhere. The intention is to create new premises for income-generating commercial activity on the ground floor facing outwards all round the site; at the same time the upper floors will be converted to provide forty-four new or refurbished units of accommodation for junior members and Fellows, with the emphasis there on looking inward into the site and away from the pedestrian and vehicular traffic outside. An entrance to what is effectively a new Court of the College will be fashioned from All Saints' Passage, made possible by the demolition of number 1 (the former Cambridge Music Shop).

The overall importance of this development to the long-term future of the College is hard to overstate. The Triangle Site will provide St John's with accommodation similar in effect to that of Whewell's Court in Trinity. Not least it will enable us to offer rooms, immediately opposite the Great Gate of St John's and effectively within the College walls, to junior members currently housed in various hostels scattered around Cambridge. Our surveys indicate that this will be particularly attractive to graduate students, especially those from overseas. The commercial implications also deserve mention. Relocation of junior members from hostels to the Triangle Site will make it possible for the College to look at redeveloping its current hostel accommodation in ways that better reflect its true capital value. Thus the high cost that cannot be avoided in the intrinsically difficult redevelopment of the Triangle Site will, we hope, be offset by a better income from the College's investment portfolio.

As we approach the 500th anniversary of the College's foundation, we can take pleasure in this latest and most auspicious turn in the long and fascinating history of the College's connection with this important plot of land and the buildings thereon.

Richard Perham

THE FIRST NORMANDY LANDING IN JUNE 1944

In his book *Most Secret War*, R V Jones begins the chapter on 'D-Day' by writing…

> another problem was approaching its climax: this was the coming operation to land in force in Normandy. Ever since 1940 I had known what my part must be, whether or not it was formally assigned to me: to see that everything possible was done to knock out, by jamming, deception, or direct action, the chain of coastal radar stations that the Germans would inevitably build up. This had been my answer in 1941 to A P Rowe when he asked me what good it was my collecting detailed intelligence on all German radar stations: some time, I had replied, we were going back and those stations might stand between our success and failure.

And the following pages deal with this 'knockout', mainly by 'direct action', in other words, air attack. The 'direct actions' developed into a series of very heavy air attacks on the known German radar stations not only in the intended landing area itself but also roundabout so as not to draw attention to the specific area of the intended landing. The efficiency of the 'knockout' process was of course continuously monitored in the usual way by aerial reconnaissance and checking the radar transmissions.

But quite independent of this process, each of the three services, the RN, the RAF and SIS (Secret Intelligence Service) had had throughout the war a continuous need for information on German radio transmissions, be they communications, radar, or navigational aids. Therefore each had its own chain of small listening stations scattered along the south and east coasts of Great Britain.

It seemed to those in overall charge of planning the invasion that there was one small area – that of the landing itself, including all radar sets that could conceivably overlook it – and one short time – the night of the actual invasion – for which it would be well worth while to have a more detailed back-up to the normal surveillance process. They therefore asked the three services to provide special facilities for this purpose from their normal chains of listening stations.

The scheme was that there should be a small committee of representatives of the three services meeting daily at Stanmore, the Headquarters of the AEAF (Allied Expeditionary Air Force). They would receive current information about radar transmissions from the three radio monitoring services and they would produce regular digests for the information of the AOC (Air Officer Commanding) in planning current operations. This was the ERF Committee (the initials of Lieutenant Commander Evans for the RN, Squadron Leader Ricketts for the RAF, and Mr Fereday for the SIS), the order being that of the seniority of the service itself. It was intended that this Committee would begin to operate about three weeks before D-Day, so that there was plenty of time beforehand for an efficient system to be set up at leisure.

During a preparatory month the three of us visited the most relevant of our own intercept stations, explaining the scheme to Commanding Officers and making convenient arrangements for teleprinted digests of each night's interceptions to be transmitted to Stanmore by 6.00am each day.

We were assigned our own room at Stanmore, amply provided with telephone and teleprinter communications. We first met at 6.00am twenty-two days before D-Day to prepare a common digest of German radar transmissions during the previous night. Of course most of these were from major radar stations that had not been attacked so far. As already mentioned it was not part of the planning to reveal the actual area where the landings were to take place by clearing the major radar stations away too soon. Particular attention was paid to transmissions from stations already more or less completely destroyed, to see how successful the Germans had been in restoring them to serviceability. I was of course very familiar with this aspect of running radar stations, having been posted to the Naval Staff direct from being in charge of maintaining efficiency and serviceability in the six small radar stations of the Orkney and Shetland Command. There, where communication difficulties during winter weather often cut off isolated stations, they were all fully equipped to deal with storm damage as well as breakdowns in the electronic equipment.

We were all on the lookout for the possibility that the Germans might have developed a small inconspicuous readily transportable radar that could easily be moved into gaps in their radar chain produced by the bombing of the major stations. So far there had been no sign of such development and the Germans were not known to have such equipment in normal production, but it always remained a possibility. Although a great many reports had had to be consulted in compiling it, the full list was quite simple and straightforward.

At 10.00am all three of us took the list to the office of the AOC, in time for him to take it into account in finalising his plan of action for the day. Should any queries arise each of us could have answered from the reports from our own service's chain if necessary, clearing up any minor queries by telephone. This was soon done and then we were all free for the rest of the day.

Luckily by this time my normal work had expanded so much that I had two permanent officer assistants who were accustomed to keeping the pot merrily boiling on occasions when I was absent from the office. For example in the ordinary course of business, every two or three weeks I would need to go down to Bletchley Park to sort out some technical problem arising from a decoded German signal, which would take up to the best part of a day.

Of course the affairs of the ERF Committee took precedence over these other reasons for absence, and during the weeks before D-Day, either someone else looked after them, or they had to wait.

It had been planned from the first that the ERF Committee would open up contact with the naval people actually organising the landings, as soon as they thought it would be useful. For that purpose, on the last Saturday before D-Day as soon as we had presented our usual list to the AOC, I had been advised that I was to take it down to Haslemere to present it to the naval organisers of the landings themselves, and answer questions. This I duly did and, as a result, an agreement was made for the ERF Committee to send regular reports to them, but by teleprinter rather than in person. They knew who we were and for day to day queries had only to lift up a scrambled telephone.

This meant returning to London by train in the middle of the Saturday afternoon. Not only were the corridors jam-packed, but I had to share a First Class compartment with sixteen other people. In those days on the Southern Railway the compartments were all the same size, but in the First Class ones the seats were more comfortable and much deeper, restricting the floor space. There was no room on the floor for thirty-four feet, and little spare space with seventeen. So we all had to travel from Haslemere to London standing on one foot, and a good deal of shuffling about was needed when one got tired and wanted to change feet.

Arriving at Waterloo, obviously the Military Police were expecting a lot of passes to check, because there were a lot of them on the platform. The train came in. All the doors opened. A wall of people emerged, sweeping the Police away and nearly off the other edge of the platform. Altogether a remarkable experience. Luckily everyone was very good humoured. Not only were they having leave on the eve of battle, but a long period of uncertainty and anxiety was about to end.

Day by day the list of functioning radar stations got shorter in the most gratifying way. There were minimal signs of repair of damaged stations and no sign at all of the dreaded inconspicuous mobile unit that we were so carefully trying to detect. Finally on the night of D-1 only a single continuous signal from a radar transmitter was detected and on the night of the invasion itself, none at all.

How much the work of all those connected with the ERF Committee had been appreciated at AEAF headquarters was shown by the fact that a letter was sent to Evans's Commanding Officer, extracts of which are printed below, and corresponding ones to the Commanding Officers of the other two:

> 14 June 1944
>
> …I wish to express my sincere appreciation of your generosity in loaning to me the very valuable services of Lieutenant Commander Evans, during the period when we were attacking enemy Radar installations.
>
> I found that Evans was a complete master of his subject and gave me the most valuable advice, as a result of which we were able to direct destructive effort in the most economical manner that could be expected in war and achieved results beyond our fondest hopes…

It is notable that the letter is dated 14 June, only eight days after the landings themselves had taken place, and although the landings had been successful and footholds had been secured, fierce fighting was still raging to extend and secure them further.

Although the members of the ERF Committee themselves had been little more than errand boys it is always a pleasure to know that one's work has been appreciated. However, Captain Layman also commended the naval chain of small listening stations, whose members, together with those of the other two chains, had done all the actual work, and he could be relied upon to pass on the SHAEF (Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force) commendation to the Commanding Officers of the relevant stations involved.

But membership of the ERF Committee itself carried with it more substantial pleasures – pleasures of the flesh, which more than compensated for the inconveniences associated with the ERF Committee changes in daily timetables. Never during the whole of the war would I be so well fed.

Naturally the American Servicemen stationed in Britain did not use up any of the limited food available to the British, but were fed from the United States: in the case of the AEAF Headquarters, which had its own airfield, direct by air.

There was ample time for a substantial cooked breakfast between the preparation of the list and its presentation to the AOC. When we were free after presenting the list there was even more time for a substantial cold buffet lunch with no meat rationing. My lodgings in Holland Park lay between Stanmore and Whitehall so that I could conveniently call in and have a two or three hour sound after-lunch sleep, a convenience I had got accustomed to when studying German at Giessen in 1933. After my sleep I would then return to the office in the middle of the afternoon to pick up the threads of the normal day's work.

This making up of sleep seemed wise to avoid accumulated tiredness, as I had to get up at 4.30am in order to be sure to be at Stanmore by 6.00am. The Board of Admiralty had made very plain the importance that they attached to the avoidance of tiredness by their insistence throughout the war on every member of the Naval Staff taking a regular compulsory day off a week irrespective of the current state of the conduct of the war. This was not a problem during the twenty-two consecutive days of the life of the ERF Committee, as for the duration of the assignment I had been on temporary loan from the Naval Staff to the staff of SHAEF, where the rules were different.

Autobiographical Addendum:

During the Long Vacation of 1933, as a scientist learning German to help with my work, I was staying for eight weeks with Professor Eger and his family at Giessen, on the suggestion of one of the tutors at St John's. It was while staying with them that I first discovered the merits of a sound afternoon's sleep when the nights were necessarily short. At first my working day began at 5.30am, with breakfast at 6.00am, followed (as trams were not yet running) by a walk to the University in time for Professor Küster's lecture at 7.00am and a morning in the Department of Botany. Then home, lunch, sleep through the heat of a Central European summer afternoon, a swim in the river and there I was, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, ready for a highly educational evening in a beer garden chatting and singing songs with my fellow students. Non-working days were spent of course with the Eger family, but the weather being consistently fine, both Professor Eger and his wife usually retired for a rest during the heat of the afternoon.

Thus it was usually convenient for me to go on having a sleep and a swim in the River Lahn. After about four weeks Professor Küster's lectures came to an end, and the University vacation began. My work was then reduced to the occasional botanical excursion, and I could spend almost all my time with the Eger family. As my stay with them extended to eight weeks in all, there was plenty of time, and ample opportunity, to form lasting friendships. After seventy years and a war, the old Professor's granddaughter, who now lives in England, still comes to call on me several times a year.

George Clifford Evans

ON THE RIVER AND IN THE FIELD

During Lent Term 2006, the College Library hosted an exhibition of photographs and other items, providing a glimpse into the history of organised sport at St John's from the nineteenth century onwards. The accompanying photographs were among those featured.

Football has a long history at St John's. Sir Simonds D'Ewes (1618) took part in a rough form of the game, more an excuse for fighting undergraduates from Trinity than a sport. John Charles Thring (BA 1848) published the *Rules of football* in 1862, stipulating that 'Kicks must be aimed only at the ball'. St John's AFC was formed in 1876, and by 1879 the College could boast its first Blue: E J Wild, who played in the victorious Cambridge sides of 1879-1881. Since then the College has consistently provided members of the University team.

Johnians have been involved in rugby from its earliest days. Four St John's men played in the first Varsity match against Oxford in 1872, and the College's Rugby Football Club was formed in 1876. Several Johnians have played at international level, from J M Batten (BA 1875) in 1874, to Rob Andrew (BA 1985), who played for England seventy-one times between 1985 and 1997.

Cambridge University Cricket Club was founded in 1820, and Johnians played in some of the earliest Varsity matches, beginning with Stephen Winthrop (BA 1830) in 1829. The date of the foundation of the College Cricket Club is uncertain, although first mention of it is made in *The Eagle* for 1861. A number of Johnians have achieved international success, notably C Aubrey Smith (BA 1884), also a successful stage and film actor, Freddie Brown (1929), Norman Yardley (BA 1937), Trevor Bailey (BA 1948), and Mike Brearley (BA 1963), who led England to their famous 1981 victory over Australia at Headingley.

'The Johnian Boat Club' was founded in 1825 and soon took the name of its boat 'The Lady Margaret'. The Club was Head of the River for four consecutive years in the 1850s, again in 1872 with the help of the great J H D Goldie (BA 1873), and again in 1926. 1949-1954 was a golden age: LMBC achieved five consecutive Headships at the Mays, and six Club members rowed for Great Britain at the 1952 Helsinki Olympics. More success has followed. The first LMBC Women's boat appeared on the river in 1983.

It is not clear when competitive athletics began at St John's but the *Cambridge Chronicle* for 24 November 1855 includes a report on the 'St John's College Foot Races'. The College has produced some world-class athletes, notably the shot-putter R L Howland (BA 1928, Fellow and Lecturer in Classics) and Chris Brasher (BA 1951), who won Gold in the 3000 metres steeplechase at the 1956 Melbourne Olympics.

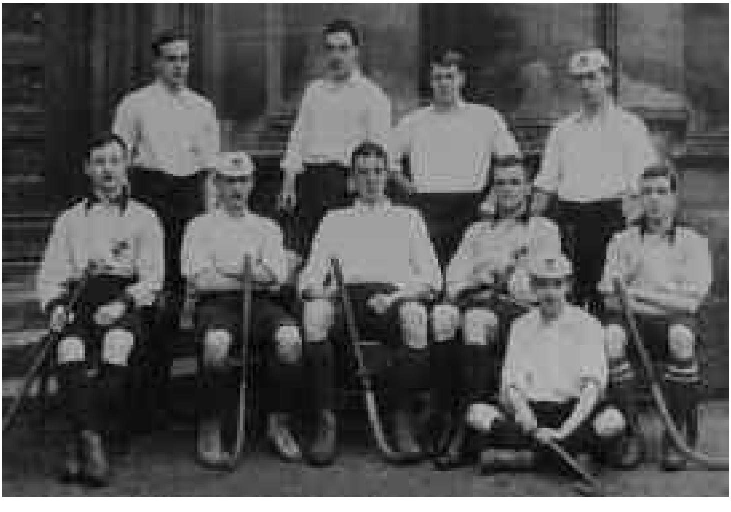
While the Library has hundreds of fine photographs documenting the sporting history of the College, there are many gaps, and members of College seeking a permanent home for sporting photographs are most welcome to contact the Librarian.

The 1961-1962 College Rugby team, including 'The voice of darts' Sid Waddell (BA 1962) (seated, far left) and Prof P F Clarke (BA 1963) (back row, far right), a former Fellow of the College, and former Master of Trinity Hall.

The College Cricket team in 1886. This photograph features Charles Toppin (BA 1886) (seated, second from right), who played for the University in the 1885-1887 Varsity matches.

LMBC First Boat bumping First Trinity at the Willows in the May races of 1905.

Tennis courts on the Paddock in front of New Court c1920.



The College Hockey Club was founded in Lent Term 1899. This photograph of the 1901 team features R P Gregory (BA 1901, Fellow) (seated second from right) who played in the Varsity matches of 1901 and 1902, scoring twice in Cambridge's 1901 win.

Jonathan Harrison
Special Collections Librarian

DIRAC AND PROJECTIVE GEOMETRY

An article[1] in the 15 September issue of the science journal *Nature* has posed some interesting questions concerning the mathematical methodology of Paul Dirac (1902-1984). In the present note I would like to respond to these questions. It is my hope that it might be of interest to Johnians.

The origins of Dirac's mathematical methodology in quantum theory, which he called the 'symbolic method', remained obscure during much of his lifetime. Some people have likened it to mathematical wizardry. Dirac – especially in his younger years – was laconic, letting his work speak for itself. It was masterfully set forth in the successive editions of his book, *The Principles of Quantum Mechanics* (1930, 1935, 1947, 1958), which remains required reading for quantum theorists. Einstein, who was notably cool to quantum mechanics, nevertheless praised the first edition – which is admittedly difficult reading – as 'the most logically perfect presentation of quantum mechanics'. Over the years the abstract, almost austere, style of the early editions moderated and, in the third edition, Dirac employed the 'bra and ket-vector' notation that is now commonly used by mathematical and theoretical physicists.

In his own reminiscences[2] and interviews[3,4], Dirac made the surprising admission that his approach was deeply influenced by projective geometry, although it is never mentioned in any of his scientific publications. In the *Nature* article, Farmelo called this Dirac's 'hidden geometry', and recounts a lecture he gave at Boston University on 30 October 1972. It was reported that in the discussion following his talk, when asked to explain the relationship between quantum theory and projective geometry, Dirac was unresponsive.

The explanation involves several issues: the nature of projective geometry, the use that Dirac made of it, how he came to have this knowledge, and why he was silent in Boston. The algebraic apparatus of projective geometry permits one to visualize geometrically the notions of linear independence/dependence, and mappings between various geometric configurations. The latter are represented by matrices whose products need not commute, and there is also a notion of duality which is analogous to the relation between bra and ket-vectors in quantum theory. The visualization does not necessarily mean drawing explicit pictures, but rather 'sorting out' various relationships between points, lines, planes, and more generally subspaces of a projective space. In other words, to anyone familiar with 'both' projective geometry and quantum mechanics, there is a certain resemblance. Today, one would more likely think of a relationship between linear spaces rather than projective geometry, but in Dirac's student days projective geometry was more commonly taught.

However, the influence of projective geometry was conceptual, rather than substantive, and it did not necessarily lead to the derivation, or solution, of a particular equation. The primary mathematical tool of theoretical physicists before the creation of modern quantum theory was differential equations. Projective geometry – even the use of matrices – was essentially unknown to physicists. It was exclusively the province of pure mathematicians where it was widely regarded as a paragon of abstraction and elegance. However, since it lacked any immediate physical application, it was virtually unknown to physicists unless they had a formal training in pure mathematics, which Dirac had.

Dirac's knowledge of projective geometry was essentially a fluke. He entered Bristol University in 1918 as a student of electrical engineering, and after receiving his BSc, First Class with Honours, he was unable to find a job as an engineer. The Mathematics Department at Bristol had been very impressed with his ability, and offered him the opportunity to informally attend – without paying any fees – its Honours courses in mathematics. He accepted, and spent the next two years studying mathematics. During this time he came into contact with Peter Fraser (1880-1968), whom he later described as 'a wonderful teacher'. One of Fraser's favourite subjects was projective geometry.

On a personal note, I might add that many years ago, as a post-doctoral researcher, I came to Cambridge specifically to learn projective geometry from Sir William Hodge. When Dirac entered St John's

College, Cambridge, in 1923, he became acquainted with Henry Baker (1866-1956), who was a Fellow of his College, and Lowndean Professor of Astronomy and Geometry. Baker was the author of an encyclopaedic set of volumes on geometry, and Fraser had been one of his pupils. On Saturday afternoons during term time in Cambridge, Baker held informal 'tea parties' at his home, which included presentations of recent geometric results. Dirac regularly attended these tea parties, and he gave his first lecture on projective geometry at one of them[2]!

The symbolic ideas and abstract geometry in the first volume of Baker's treatise[5] served as 'guides' for Dirac's mathematical thinking, and was probably his most extensive introduction to abstract mathematics. Today, upon reading Baker's discussion, there is little doubt that it served as a mathematical precursor to Dirac's formulation of quantum mechanics.

As Dirac told Kuhn[4], 'A great deal of my work is just playing with equations and seeing what they give ... I don't suppose that applies so much to other physicists. I think it is a peculiarity of myself that I like to play about with equations, just looking for beautiful mathematical relations which maybe don't have any physical meaning. Sometimes they do!' Three years before his death, he repeated this view in an essay6 which bore the provocative title, 'Pretty Mathematics'.

Dirac's fondness for 'thinking geometrically', as he called it, should not be over emphasized: he simply used it since he knew and liked it! This is probably why he chose not to mention it in his published work.

An unpublished set of notes[7] for Dirac's lecture at the Boston meeting is preserved in his archives at Florida State University. It was handwritten in pencil on a ruled tablet, and consisted of 'talking points' rather than complete sentences (with obvious abbreviations). I quote only from the first page:

> There are basically two kinds of math. thinking, algebraic and geometric.
> A good mathematician needs to be a master of both.
> But still he will have a preference for one or the other.

> I prefer the geometric method. Not mentioned in published work because it is not easy to print diagrams.
> With the geometric method one deals with equations between algebraic quantities.
> Even tho I see the consistency and logical connections of the eqns., they do not mean very much to me.
> I prefer relationships I can visualize in geometric terms.
> Of course with complicated equations one may not be able to visualize the relationship, e.g. it may need too many dimensions.
> But with the simpler relationships one can often get help in understanding them by geometric pictures.
> It is usually better to use the methods of proj. geometry rather than Euclidean geometry.
> Why?
> Proj. geometry has more power.
> One can get more general theorems, usually with less work.

The likely reason for Dirac's unresponsiveness, as described by Farmelo, is that during the Summer School (31 July-12 August 1972) at Varenna, he had presented his detailed recollections[2], which he knew would be published. Probably he saw no reason to repeat them in Boston, and perhaps he felt an obligation not to recount this material in deference to his Italian hosts, since it is likely that the sale of this volume contributed to the funding of the Summer School. As it turned out, these recollections appeared in print five years later, and remain Dirac's most extensive account of his early life and times.

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[1] Farmelo, G, 'Dirac's Hidden Geometry', *Nature* 475, 323, 2005.

[2] Dirac, P A M (edited by C Weiner), 'Recollections of an Exciting Era', in *History of Twentieth Century Physics*, New York, Academic Press, 1977. See in particular pages 113-114 (for Fraser); pages 115-116 (for Baker).

3. Mehra, J & Rechenberg, H, *The Historical Development of Quantum Theory*, Volume 4, Berlin, Springer-Verlag, 1982. See pages 10-15, (studying in Bristol); pages 45-47, (early study in Cambridge, and Baker's 'tea parties'); pages 161-175 (motivation for the calculus of q-numbers).

4. Kuhn, T S, 'Interview with P A M Dirac, 7 May 1963', Niels Bohr Library, American Institute of Physics.

5. Baker, H F, *Principles of Geometry*, Volumes I-VI, Cambridge University Press, 1922-1925. See in particular, Volume I: *Foundations*, Chapter I: Section III – 'Introduction of Algebraic Symbols', pages 62-69.

6. Dirac, P A M, 'Pretty Mathematics', *International Journal of Theoretical Physics* 21, 603-605.

7. Dirac, P A M, 'Use of Projective Geometry in Physical Theory', unpublished manuscript, Box 2-28-35, The Dirac Collection, Archives of Florida State University.

IN DREAMS BEGIN RESPONSIBILITY

I have become, in the last two years, that curiously European phenomenon: an Intendant. To English ears the word has a particularly German resonance to it so I was delighted to discover Sir John Evelyn referring to Sir Christopher Wren as His Majesty's Surveyor and Intendant of his Buildings. But the word must have come to the Germans from the French who used it frequently as an administrative function. It derives, like our word 'intend', from the Latin 'intendere', meaning to extend, direct, intend, and promote – no doubt its administrative interpretation is to be taken in the sense of someone who typically intends a great deal but achieves little – giving rise to the well known proverb: 'The road to hell is paved with Intendants.'

'Intendere' itself contains 'tendere' – to stretch – which is a connotation I find particularly useful. Intendants do a lot of stretching – rarely in the gym I'm afraid – but particularly of budgets, other people's talent and, often, patience, and above all of the tolerance level of audiences. Where and what, in my case, is this audience? Well, hopefully very large numbers of them will be sitting on the bank of Lake Constance this summer, as I am Intendant of the Bregenz Festival in Austria.

The Festival, like so many artistic initiatives in Europe, began in the immediate aftermath of the war in 1946 as an open-air performance on pontoons moored in the harbour. Later, a permanent open-air auditorium was constructed on the bank with a stage facility based round a core built in the lake. This auditorium has been gradually extended over the years, so that it now seats 7,000 people, which means that *Il Trovatore*, which plays there this summer over twenty-five times, will achieve an audience of almost 200,000 people.

Most open-air venues assume that their function is to offer a product carefully decaffeinated so as to remove anything as noxious as challenging cultural content. But if my primary administrative responsibility in Bregenz is to sell 200,000 seats, then my primary artistic responsibility is to treat this massive audience as a gathering of sentient human beings.

Bregenz is however by no means only this *Volksfest* on the lake: on the shore there is also a full-size indoor theatre which presents opera and a concert series, a magnificent modern studio space featuring a programme of contemporary work, a charming small theatre in the town, and a very spectacular modern art gallery in which the Festival presents a contemporary chamber music series. This variety of performing spaces enables the festival to pursue its ideal of bridging the cultural divide between the commercial and the popular on the one hand and the contemporary and innovative on the other. In other words, Bregenz refuses and stands contrary to the ghettoisation of modern culture, where what is popular is stripped of all challenging content and presented as if a mass public were unable to comprehend anything other than the obvious, and where the new is presented exclusively for small groups of *cognoscenti*.

In German-speaking countries it is particularly difficult to stand against the trend for compartmentalisation in the arts because of the malevolent force of the expressions 'E' and 'U' music – in the 'E' corner 'Ernstes' music: serious, and, when it is modern, frequently extremely unpleasant, worthy and academic, and in the right corner the 'U' stands for 'Unterhaltung' – entertainment – a dread slur in the German language somehow expressing a visceral fear that anyone in the process of 'taking' culture might do anything so tasteless as to enjoy themselves. But to confuse culture with the bogus solemnity of a cult is to play into the hands of that particular priesthood that would always try to isolate culture as the plaything of the few, something requiring special understanding, which rapidly translates of course to special amounts of money and special social status.

The particularly democratic quality of our Festival comes from the Lake Stage – the Seebühne – because there can clearly be no social snobbery about an audience of 7,000 people a night, particularly when they are equipped to resist all eventualities from heat to rain, and wind to mosquitoes. But 7,000 people on the banks of the lake as the sun sets have the power to suggest something else, something that goes back to the oldest origins of theatre, of festival, perhaps of tourism itself, something that suggests ritual and pilgrimage.

There is clearly so much that is tawdry and pointless about most modern tourism with its cheap superficiality, its disposable uniforms and accumulated bric à brac of souvenirs and sun products, its dreary queues and endless traffic jams and its malicious ability to destroy precisely that which people set out to see, that it requires a big leap of faith to use the words ritual, let alone pilgrimage, in reference to a mass-public summer festival. But a leap of faith is precisely what is required of those who manage our cultural assets, for only when that leap is taken does culture begin to perform the vital personal, social and political role that makes it an essential part of civilised life.

If we wish then to be idealistic about the function of our Festival, what can give it the right to touch on such concepts as ritual and pilgrimage? Surely it is its role in the communal regeneration of our imaginative faculties, those faculties which lie at the very heart of our existence as civilised social beings.

Of all the human attributes that are dulled by the long annual grind of work and personal survival surely it is the imagination that suffers the worst, whose room for manoeuvre is the most cramped by the stress of modern existence. A festival welcoming its guests in the summer ritual of renewal must be like a cool spring of the imagination ready to reinvigorate and massage back to alertness that most essential human function.

Of course it is true that every cultural artefact possesses the power to refresh our ability to imagine. A book or a poem or a picture can be contemplated alone and on their own with the same effect. Every work of imagination is in a sense an attempt to embody the imagination that created it in that work itself, and thereby to preserve in crystalline form its power so that others may draw on it later. A work of art embodies a particular perception made by the artist, which by definition goes beyond the mundane and which records that perception in some unique form for posterity. This perception, an original way of seeing, hearing, or thinking, typically portrays some aspect of our real world through the sharpened awareness of the subconscious that is the artist's particular tool. These are the 'dreams' to which Yeats refers in the title of my lecture.

The difference with the public art forms, such as theatre, concert music, opera and so on is that the act of renewal is no longer strictly private, but communal. The world of the imagination is an intensely private one, yet the fact is that in the theatre we allow ourselves to experience, be swayed by and overtly express all kinds of highly intense emotions, notwithstanding the fact that we are sitting among strangers. Indeed, the emotional experience is possibly intensified precisely because we are among strangers, or certainly by the emotional charge released by several thousand people identifying simultaneously with the same experience. And this communal experience I believe to have important social and political aspects. That is to say that the exercise of the imagination is one of the most fundamental prerequisites for a civilised society, that one of the primary functions of the arts is as a stimulus for our imaginative faculties, and that the communal exercise of the imagination is a vital social and political act, reinforcing the proper role of imagination in our communal life.

This is what I take to be the heart of Yeats' quotation: 'In dreams begin responsibility'. If as a society we only take responsibility for what we know, then we are a narrow, unworthy and fundamentally uncivilised body. Only the imagination can inform our awareness of what we do not know, and thus arouse our genuine compassion and understanding for the 'stranger'. And dreams are typically the door into the world of imagination, a world of alternative reality that opens our minds to other areas in which the exercise of the duty of responsibility is no less important than in the mundane world that surrounds us. The reason why one may perhaps dare to use the words ritual and pilgrimage about a summer arts festival lies in the possibility that the communal experience of the renewal of the imaginative faculties does indeed have such essential health-giving properties, not only for the body politic but for the mind politic as well.

If this is indeed all true, then it places considerable burdens of responsibility on us, the custodians of this mental health farm. The responsibility to be democratic is a powerful one: how can one allow any kind of social exclusivity to ration the availability of a stimulus to the imagination? And yet the contest over the ownership of culture is a perennial social and political battle: indeed whenever people in the arts begin to feel depressed by the feeling that they have become marginalized and irrelevant they only need look at the fervour and vituperation with which people fight over the ‘possession’ of the cultural idea. This is because the function of the artist is constantly torn between the palliative and the provocative, and those who would like to ‘own’ culture often find it hard to accept the provocative along with the palliative.

The palliative – a word that many artists today will find extremely provocative – comes from the element of the decorative, which is the means of presentation. In music, for example, one might distinguish between the musical idea and its structural, architectural development, and the orchestration of that idea, which is what transports the idea to the listener. Since the word beauty is so tendentious, I prefer perhaps to think of the concept of delight as being that emotion which draws us towards a work of art: delight in the sounds that we hear, delight in the sheer pleasure of colour and form, delight in a magical touch of virtuoso performance.

Art begins with superfluity: despite all the romantic myths of artists starving in garrets, a society that cannot produce enough to eat will produce little art. Art begins at the moment human society transcends bare necessity. But when we speak in a modern context of delight, and of things beyond the necessary, we are quickly close to something called luxury, and hence the perennial struggle of art to be at the same time luxurious in its superfluity, whilst resisting being classed merely as a luxury commodity. The rich quite naturally seek to surround themselves with delight, to build delightful homes and to fill them with delightful objects. I notice that this probably applies to Cambridge colleges too! This not only makes life more pleasant but it also constantly reassures them that they really are rich. Many of these delights with which they surround themselves are exquisitely made and may employ many of the same techniques as a work of art, but they are not works of art because they are the delight without the perception, the orchestration without the idea, and there is of course nothing wrong with that – no one wants to sit for long on an idea: a beautiful chair has another purpose.

But of course the rich man also buys real works of art, and displays them among his other delights, so that the two become confused, and the work of art that was supposed to act as a challenge to the imagination becomes instead a means of comfort and reassurance, confirming the owner in his perhaps complacent sense of well being. And when this rich man goes out to be entertained, he may well wish his entertainment to perform a similar function. He believes that he 'owns' the art for which he has bought a ticket, and therefore the theatre may well in its décor and ambience also seek to reassure him and his friends that all is well and that the world is ordered as they would wish. It is in these circumstances all too possible that the work of art displayed will become entirely palliative, a super luxury object that suggests to its audience that they own not only the material goodies of the world, but also the ideas and the spirit of the world too.

But the act of creating a work of art remains fundamentally provocative since its basic purpose is to reveal the alternative reality that exists beyond the material, and this can ultimately only threaten the absolute security of the material world by suggesting a hidden but vital alternative. The history of opera itself quite specifically embodies this conflict, reflecting in its basic subject matter the transference of power from the aristocrat to the bourgeois and the migration of the opera house from the court to the city.

The architecture of the opera houses in Vienna, Paris, London and Milan all bear the subtext that the upper middle classes are now the kings irrespective of whether an actual king existed in any of those cities at the time. These gilded and ostentatious buildings were clearly designed to reassure the new masters of their hold on power. But the subject matter of the works they went there to see constantly contrasts on the one hand self-satisfying images of authority and grandeur with, on the other, the suggestion of the fragility of such power. The typical nineteenth-century opera plot continually questions the permanence of the power it simultaneously displays and celebrates through its insistence on the conflict between the reason that supports power and the instinct that defies it, between duty and love, between the masculine and the feminine.

This very exclusive and masculine world of the nineteenth-century opera audience for example liked to allow itself to be titillated with the idea that its hold on power might easily be threatened by the unbridled and irresistible sexuality of a lower-class woman such as Violetta in *La Traviata*. The haut-bourgeois husband and father naturally visited such women himself after dinner, and so enjoyed seeing himself as a member of the gay and ebullient social life depicted on stage. But for the benefit of his wife and daughter who accompanied him to the theatre he needed Papa Germont to turn up in the third act and reassert a conventional moral order, and indeed it was absolutely essential that the sensually explicit Violetta who had beguiled him throughout the evening should die at the end so that his daughter could leave the theatre with an appropriate moral message in her mind.

Politically as well as sexually, the nineteenth-century opera offered its audience the titillation of danger. Revolutionary mobs storm across the stage in *Simon Boccanegra* and *Don Carlos*, a reminder that the nineteenth century was marked by an approximately twenty-year cycle of revolutions – 1830, 1848, 1870 – and the other perennial theme of nineteenth-century opera is that of national independence. Rugged national heroes such as William Tell, Amonasro or Dalibor could on the one hand be seen as the independent enemies of aristocratic power and privilege, someone with whom the *nouveau riche* might identify, but ultimately all such pieces imply the seizure of power by the people, all too easily identified as the social strata immediately and impatiently just below that which 'owned' the opera house.

The nineteenth-century audience then accepted and perhaps even revelled in the titillation provided by a considerable degree of ambivalence in the opera house: the social ambience was clearly reassuring, but the content of the works created for them embody a quite radical level of artistic questioning of the status quo, politically, socially and even sexually. This suggests a considerable degree of self-confidence – a ruling class that was comfortable with the danger and questioning functions of art. In the far more democratic context of our own times however, the audience that likes to believe that its social class owns culture as displayed in these traditional emporiums of high bourgeois art is not nearly so comfortable with the provocative element of art.

Carmen is a good example. The mere fact that opera had descended to the squalid social milieu of a sexually explicit gypsy was for the nineteenth-century audience a visceral shock. One hundred and fifty years later, *Carmen* has been transformed into a picturesque picture postcard from an idealised Spain, and vociferous sections of the audience are happy with that and absolutely do not want to be reminded of its originally revolutionary and shocking intent. And the element of delight in Bizet's music is so beguiling that it can permit the work to be taken purely decoratively, something which is a complete betrayal of its original intentions.

In the same context, it is instructive to see how the totalitarian robber barons of the twentieth century displayed extreme nervousness about artistic meaning, and sought to establish their new ownership of ideas by the ruthless control of all cultural output. The issue of 'possession' of the means of cultural expression is well demonstrated by the infamous poster produced as early as 1927 at the time of the premiere of Krenek's Jazz Opera *Johnny Spielt Auf* at the Vienna State Opera. Flanked by swastikas is the line: 'Unsere Staatsoper ist einer frechen jüdisch-negerischen Besudelung zum Opfer gefallen.' '"Our" State Opera has become the victim of a Jewish/nigger desecration ...etc.' This is the reaction of a section of society that goes to the theatre solely to see itself flatteringly reflected in the mirror, and is disgusted to find someone else looking out from the other side.

In precisely the same way, Stalin went to the opera to see himself as the Tsar – no matter that in *Boris*, his favourite opera, the Tsar dies tormented by guilt over one murdered child, perhaps proving Stalin's point that one murder is a crime but a million merely a statistic! The point was that the image of power and the stirring music that accompanied it combined to reassure him that he had truly acquired the trappings and attributes of his Royal predecessors. No wonder that when by pure chance he attended the already highly successful Shostakovitch opera *The Lady Macbeth of Mstensk* and found himself confronted with a mirror held up to the squalid reality of Russian provincial life he took it as a personal insult, not bothering to notice that this was theoretically a critique of the mercantile class under the Tsars. Even Stalin's apparently benign interest in culture invoked terror. One famous story starts with the charming fireside image of Stalin listening to a radio broadcast of a concert. At the end of the concert he telephoned the broadcasting company to congratulate them on the concert, and asked for a recording. Terror and consternation: no recording had been taken! After much arduous telephoning, the orchestra was finally reassembled by about three in the morning, the concert was repeated, recorded, and a pressing made available to Stalin, the story says by breakfast time.

Alongside the social and political forces that would like to capture the message of culture for their own ends, art is also by no means safe from the agendas of artists themselves. The first half of the twentieth century with its disastrous experiments in demagogic politics produced a visceral revulsion in the art world of post-war Europe against the whole notion of popular appeal. Similarly, the urge to distance art from its potentially debased status as a luxury consumer object led many artists to reject and despise the entire decorative element of delight that had always been the initial measure by which art attracted its audience. It would have seemed very odd indeed to Mozart or to Poussin deliberately to make their works ugly, and yet brutalism has been a recurring theme of post-war art in all branches.

Of course, to many in Europe it seemed after the war inconceivable that one could respond to Europe's immediate history with any element of delight. Delight, instead of being the necessary gloss, had become insultingly trivial. The bitter irony in that is that perhaps at precisely the moment when the public had most need of the consolation of delight, artists felt least able to provide it, and indeed ruthlessly sought to exterminate it, pouring intellectual and artistic contempt on anyone who dared to exhibit any element of this tawdry commodity. The retreat from the horrors of the mid-century into a kind of rigorous intellectual purity is understandable, but was the beginning of a catastrophic dislocation between modern art and its audience which has loosened somewhat in the past two decades but in other aspects persists to this day.

Il Trovatore (photograph taken by Bernd Hofmeister)

The element of ‘mystery’ contained in the 10% of art, which transcends its 90% element of craftsmanship, has always made it susceptible to being captured by an arcane priesthood who seek to control access by controlling the ability to comprehend it. This process has been quite beautifully illustrated by the operation of the Turner prize in this country. Entry to this high-profile event is ruthlessly controlled so that only art is accepted, which requires the priesthood at the Tate actually to explain why the object is a work of art at all, let alone to explain its meaning.

If, however, we believe that art has the universal ability to widen, develop and refresh the imaginative capacity of human beings, then it is clearly vital that those of us who are its custodians are continually alert to the danger that it might be possessed and subverted either as the decorative trophy of a social elite, or the tool of any particular political agenda, or indeed become the arcane Masonic language of an inner cult.

Our responsibility is ultimately not dissimilar to a doctor’s: to maintain this health-giving medium available for all and free of any narrow ulterior purpose. In Bregenz, we have the special responsibility to transport the full range of stimulation and complexity that culture has to offer to a large, non-specialised audience – a privilege that carries with it the duty to communicate – to be challenging yet comprehensible.

In the above paragraph I have let drop the dread English ‘e’ word – a word to set alongside the dread German concept of ‘Ernstes’ music: elite. If we are to speak about the democratic right of ordinary people to have access to art and culture then we cannot in the English context proceed without dealing with the negative force of this word. And the complication here is that when a word such as ‘Elitism’ is brandished as a thoughtless slogan, it is extremely difficult to get past the inevitable admission that we must, and indeed should, proudly make that, yes, art IS elitist. It is elitist in the sense that it represents the sum of a certain kind of human aspiration, an elevated plane of imaginative thinking allied to a superlative technical skill that yields perceptions beyond the thought of ordinary people and a level of technical execution that is unique.

That admission is already enough for some philistines to wish to vandalise it and every other indicator of superior quality, and they are always ready to obfuscate the debate by confusing the ownership of art by an elite social group, which we have discussed above, with the inherent elitism of an exclusively precious object or perception. The issue with which the lazy egalitarianism of recent times must be confronted is: do you really want to dilute what is unique and exceptional in art in order to avoid reminding the ordinary person that such achievement is beyond him? Or should you not rather concentrate on the access to this unique body of work that allows every person to come near and have their imaginative power stimulated and renewed? Not everyone can make art, but everyone who wishes can experience it: this should be the democratic and egalitarian cultural slogan, just as 'No compromise on standards, no compromise on accessibility' should be the educational one.

Some gainsayers may of course doubt that this rejuvenating power exists, so I would like for a moment to explore the mechanism whereby, in the context of an opera performance, the imagination of the audience is stirred. The answer lies I believe in the interaction of dimensions. Music clearly exists in its own dimension – a structure of sound in time which is capable of stirring feelings of considerable significance in its listener, but which is itself beyond meaning. Music is essentially an abstract language, albeit an incredibly precise one. Its meaning as music is made clear through the vast range of instructions that are embodied in its written form – a highly complex and detailed series of signs that determine exactly how each second of sound is defined in terms of pitch, speed, rhythm, articulation – almost everything one could conceive of in fact except for meaning!

The second dimension of an opera is the text – a dimension whose qualities are almost exactly opposite to music. The means by which text is written down is extremely simple and economical; these simple letters will usually convey a quite clear meaning, but no explicit instructions as to how it should be performed. In a play, this issue is left to the director and his actors to work out; in an opera, we must assume that the composer has predetermined most of the performing options of the text through his musical instructions, above all of course moving this text quite uncompromisingly through the medium of time which is music's specific domain. Text has no time: music without time is practically inconceivable. The relationship between the conceptual precision of the word and the abstract, self-obsessed world of the music is extremely important and one may perhaps even measure this relationship graphically: a page of music may contain over a thousand different signs conveying precise instructions – the text on the same page may amount to only thirty letters, but the meaning of these letters will nonetheless be relatively clear.

We can take a simple example: the melody of *La Ci da Rem La Mano* is well known to you all: Mozart has chosen a deliberately naïve, insouciant melody that could easily describe someone sitting under a tree admiring the flowers. But this is a scene of seduction and exploitation. The dramatic irony of Mozart's choice only becomes apparent through, initially, the text, further enhanced by the action. The music on its own would actually not be capable of conveying this irony – a fact rigorously exploited later by Shostakovitch who was able to hide his necessary irony under the mantle of music's innocence of meaning. The word is a small beacon of sense which gives a pinpoint of defined meaning to the great sea of music on which it floats.

The appropriate kind of word to employ in these circumstances is something quite specific and different from a word which has a purely literary function, and this has given rise to a lot of misunderstanding about the nature and quality of *opera libretti*. Verdi always asked for 'La Parola Scenica' – the theatrical word – by which he meant a concise and blindingly clear verbal image that could anchor in an instant the massive and turbulent musical forces he wished to deploy. To fulfil its function of providing a counterweight to the vast abstraction of musical force, the text in word and story must be simple, clear and concise; the apparent banality of an opera text or story when studied on its own is by no means always an indication of literary laziness – it represents an intelligent understanding of its true function in an opera, and a pragmatic calculation of what may in these circumstances be comprehended.

Bregenz Auditorium (photograph taken by Markus Tretter)

Because the opera has still a third dimension: that of action and image, which introduces an entirely different level of instruction and interpretation. This is of course where I as director come in, and I find myself at the bottom of the pile when it comes to the distribution of information. The conductor and his musicians, for example, have a massive overload of information, and the struggle of a musician's life is to get beyond the point of mere technical realisation of all the instructions he must fulfil so that he can actually reach the level of performance and, above all, of interpretation. The director and designer who are responsible for realising music and text in three dimensions must begin in the first instance with interpretation partly because their instructions are typically very minimal, and partly because these instructions, unlike those of the violin player, are from the start unrealisable on a one-to-one basis.

A typical scenic direction for example would be 'In the Hall of the Temple', or 'On a deserted mountainside'. Quite clearly neither of these locations can actually be realised, even on so large a stage as the Seebühne in Bregenz. Similarly, much operatic action revolves around things, particularly sex and death, which can in the end only be simulated rather than actually realised. Furthermore, in a world which is defined by the abstract language of music, an attempt at naturalism would seem in any case entirely out of place. Action and image – the third dimension – therefore represent an attempt at a three-dimensional realisation of the idea rather than the reality suggested by text and music.

This notion – the realisation of the abstract language of music in a three-dimensional image – is always a huge leap in the dark: no wonder that it is also often the subject of intense controversy. At the beginning of the last century, there was a huge investment of creative energy in various attempts to link music with specific colours, graphic patterns, and kinetic images. Wonderfully ingenious and complex machines were constructed to translate music into combinations of colour. In fact, whatever the relationship in physics between sound and colour may be, the representation of music in a visual medium remains above all a challenge to the artistic imagination.

And this challenge belongs as much to the audience as to its creators. This is the journey on which our 7,000 people are led each evening. A large part of this will be unconscious of course, and indeed should be so. But whilst they are hopefully being beguiled by the delight inherent in music, image and story, they are also participating in a highly complex exercise of the imagination, traversing planes of the abstract, the concrete, textual, visual, and aural, and even, in our case, with the added impact of a vast amphitheatre of the natural world in addition. This is the communal act that justifies the existence of subsidised culture and the central importance of the imagination in a civilised society. In 2005, we asserted this importance with a particular poignancy and also, alongside our idealism, with humility because we know that culture can fail, and fail utterly. The sixtieth anniversary of the end of the war was clearly the last significant occasion at which we could experience live testimony from this tragic time, and it carried a special resonance across Europe.

Art, as we have said, is beyond necessity, and so we must acknowledge that it always lies within the power of necessity to become dire enough to eradicate altogether a human being's free room for imagination. How else can we begin to describe the abdication of the imagination by the German nation – a nation of profound cultural sophistication? Having spent two of my years at St John's reading History there is still the vestige of an historian lurking in my consciousness, and I cherish the notion that the function and indeed duty of history is to make the past comprehensible to us. Despite the massive amount of scholarship over the intervening years, one cannot yet say that the collapse of a significant segment of European civilisation into barbarism has been rendered comprehensible. I was reminded of this as I flew back recently from Tokyo to Zürich. If this gruelling twelve-hour flight had taken place exactly sixty years before then only the last ten minutes would have been over territory not ruled by murderous madmen of one variety or other. Having passed Petersburg the clouds cleared long enough for me to look down and identify the Baltic coast and Königsberg, the capital of East Prussia, almost to the day when sixty years before the Red Army was about to unleash a terrifying onslaught of death, rape and perhaps justified revenge.

We flew on over Pomerania, the so-called Baltic Balcony, over provinces where three centuries of culture was about to be entirely razed from the map. How many copies of Goethe and Schubert would be incinerated in the following two months? One baronial family, having endured a decade of persecution by the Gestapo for their suspected resistance, calmly awaited liberation by the Russians. They were of course taken straight into the garden and shot. But far too many of these officers continued right to the end to fail to see their direct responsibility for the enormity of what had happened: how else to describe this other than as a grotesque failure of the imagination?

'In dreams begins responsibility.' This combination of the abstract with the concrete, of the unconscious with the conscious, implies to me everything that the arts have to offer as a social and political means, as a vital reminder that not everything can or should be determined by material necessity, and that not everything can or should be determined by what we know. What we do not know, and can only experience in the world of the imagination, is perhaps the most vital ingredient for our future - so that we can create a society that embraces the unknown, that is not afraid of the unfamiliar, and can generously exercise its imagination on the problems and needs of others. This is our dream of artistic purpose: this is our responsibility as insignificant and temporary custodians of a great European tradition that must never again be allowed to subside into impotence and abdication.

D W Pountney
(BA 1969, MA 1973)

COMMEMORATION OF BENEFACTORS: REMEMBRANCE AND REFLECTION

29 April 2007

Why are we gathered here today? All members of the College benefit in various ways from the generosity of our centuries-long succession of benefactors. Using any parts of the physical infrastructure (as Tripos examinations approach, the Library springs to mind as an example) or receiving support through Fellowships, Scholarships or Bursaries are just some items from a long list. Indeed one might argue that our benefactors deserve a wider mechanism of commemoration than a service in the Chapel once a year. As one of my colleagues remarked a few days ago, 'We should remember our benefactors each time we put the key in the door to our rooms'. I shall return in a little while to some of the ways in which we can and do commemorate our benefactors day by day. Firstly though, we should remember that commemoration through this Service is deeply rooted in the history of the College. That history was summarised with characteristic clarity by John Boys Smith, then Master, in the Commemoration Sermon in 1966.[1] After reference to the early Statutes drawn up by Bishop Fisher, in which the Master and Fellows were enjoined to remember in their prayers the Lady Margaret, our Foundress, and a number of other early benefactors, he went on to say: 'A generation later, in the reign of Elizabeth I, the Statutes of the University required that all Colleges should commemorate their benefactors. The form prescribed, confirmed by our own Statutes right down to the nineteenth century, differed little from that used this morning.' And what was true in 1966 remains so today.

There is an aspect to the traditional form of the list read out this morning that we should remember in case we wonder why the names of some generous benefactors were not heard. As Andrew Macintosh reminded us on this occasion in 1999: 'The benefactors whom we commemorate today are all dead.'[2] He then explained in some detail the religious significance of that fact; the key feature was that in the early days '...their benefactions were designed to pay for, to endow, Masses in their memory and for their benefit'. That original purpose may no longer apply but that is no reason for departing from the traditional clear rule. For the same reason, too, names recited are all those of people, not organisations, as illustrated by the listing of specific members of the Cripps family, rather than the Cripps Foundation.

Over time, benefactions have taken many forms: money, land, houses, but all have enhanced the College's endowment on which we depend for the income that is essential to discharging effectively the statutory objectives to promote education, religion, learning and research. As we approach the College's quincentenary and embark on a major campaign to increase the endowment substantially it is timely to reflect in this Commemoration Service on some aspects of the background to benefactions.

Why have our benefactors chosen to support St John's? While some benefactions have come to the College quite unexpectedly, it is clear that many, large and small, have come in response to personal approaches or general appeals and we should be no less grateful for that! Sometimes it is clear that the motive for a benefaction was gratitude on the part of an individual who had benefited from financial assistance or other support as a student here and, having gone on to a successful career, wished to repay what was felt to be a debt. Even in the case of benefactions of this sort, a little gentle persuasion by senior figures in and outside the College at the time may also have been involved! John Williams, who gave the major part of the funding for our seventeenth-century Library is a case in point.[3] In some other cases individuals without a close connection to the College have been persuaded, perhaps directly by the Master or Bursar of the day or perhaps indirectly through someone, possibly an old member of the College, occupying high office elsewhere, that supporting the activities of the College would be well worthwhile. The Countess of Shrewsbury appears to come into this category.[4] I shall return to John Williams and the Countess of Shrewsbury later. Writing about the construction of the south and west wings of Third Court in about 1670, Alec Crook records that well over eighty people responded to what must have been the first public appeal in the history of the College.[5]

Whether a benefactor has passed through the College as a student or has simply been persuaded that the College's activities are deserving of support, he or she will have expected that the benefaction would be carefully and effectively managed (if a fund) or maintained (if their gift were to lead to the erection of a College building) so as to ensure the continued availability of the benefaction to support the purposes of the College. Thus at any given time the resident members of the College have an obligation to help ensure that benefactors' wishes are respected and their aims achieved so far as is reasonably possible. Occasionally a donor's wishes have been so tightly defined as to become incompatible with changes in academic practice but, as a general rule, we should always seek to do our best to make full and proper use of the available funds. At the same time, it is important for us to act prudently in using our endowment, not simply because there is a legal framework in which educational charities operate, but because of two common-sense reasons of self-interest: one is to ensure that the College maintains the value of its endowment so as to be able to continue to achieve its objectives; the other is that, apart from frustrating the aims of those benefactors whom we commemorate today, failure to do so could also make it difficult to persuade prospective benefactors to provide support if they felt that we might not carry out their wishes in the future. In thinking about how we should best use our endowment, we might well reflect on the parable of the talents in St Matthew's Gospel.[6]

Clearly then, we must not let down our benefactors but I now turn to an awkward point, perhaps one that should not be mentioned on this occasion! If we are to commemorate our benefactors, can we be sure they deserve commemoration? In short, was what they gave the College legally acquired by them? If it were to turn out that it had been illegally acquired, then by accepting the benefaction there would be a real risk of damage to the College's reputation. I have no reason to suppose that we do have any such skeletons in the Bursary cupboards. However, hearing the list makes one realise how the legality of activities changes with time; what was legal in one century may become illegal by the next. We cannot predict the future but we can aim to understand the past. One item in the list read out this morning illustrates the point. Towards the end we were asked to remember 'William Gaskell – opium agent'. Those hearing that for the first time may well have been puzzled. On investigation it turns out that William Gaskell was a member of the Indian Civil Service at a time when 'opium agent' was one of the established posts in that Service (and his position as 'opium agent' was just one in a succession of offices he held in India).[7] In those days the production, distribution and sale of opium were both legal and profitable, particularly so for the British Government. Even then, though, opinion was changing and now, as we well know, with narrowly defined exceptions the production, distribution and sale of opium, while still regrettably profitable, are certainly illegal. So it turns out that William Gaskell was a respectable civil servant involved in legal activities; we can feel reassured about his benefaction when it is set in its historical context.

However, are there not interesting parallels between what happened a hundred years or so ago in connection with opium and what is now happening in connection with tobacco? How should we react if a major tobacco producer were to offer the College a substantial endowment? The production, distribution and sale of tobacco are still legal, albeit set around with ever-increasing restrictions as to use, but there are several recent examples, one involving our own University, of uproar when institutions of higher education have moved to accept substantial benefactions from tobacco companies. Thus the need for vigilance when accepting benefactions (for looking into the mouth of a proffered gift horse) is clear if we are to avoid public opprobrium at the time and potential embarrassment to ourselves when we commemorate the benefactor subsequently. We may note that, in the light of experience, the University now has a published policy covering this delicate aspect.[8]

At the start I mentioned briefly the historical context of this Service, which continues to play an important role in the College's annual cycle of events. Unlike the other forms of commemoration to which I shall turn in a moment, this Service ensures that we systematically recognise and appreciate the long list of our benefactors and their impressively diverse nature. But there are other ways in which some, at least, of our benefactors are commemorated outside this Service. I shall mention just a few examples; hopefully each of us will then be prompted to think of others. Rightly the Lady Margaret is represented in many highly visible ways around the College and I trust I need not mention them; more subtle, however, is the reference to her name represented by the marguerites (the white flowers) in several places, for example in the ironwork of the Forecourt gates. We are reminded of some others by three- or two-dimensional likenesses: for example, the statue of the Countess of Shrewsbury overlooking Second Court from the Shrewsbury Tower, and the picture of James Wood, substantial benefactor of New Court, gazing down directly on his successors as Master from the ceiling of this Chapel.

Others are commemorated on our buildings not by their likeness but by symbols associated with them: these may be arms as with those of Lord Courtney of Penwith on the end of North Court overlooking the drive to the Master's Lodge or, in the case of John Williams, the prominent letters ILCS[9] on the river frontage of what we think of as the old Library, but which was of course the new Library when it was built with his benefaction to replace the original one in First Court. Thus 'Donor recognition', to use the current phrase, is far from new. Naming of buildings can be another way of commemorating a benefactor but in our College additional knowledge is needed to distinguish a benefactor (Cripps) from an architect (Maufe) or an inexplicable link (Pythagoras).[10] Such uncertainty is not a problem when we turn to various academic awards and forms of student support. Here one may hope that the holders regularly remember their benefactors, Rolleston and McMahon to name but two, although some of our academically most distinguished graduate students are simply reminded of a gathered field of 'Benefactors'. Whenever we are reminded of a particular benefactor by whatever means (statue, portrait, arms, named award...) let us also remember that he or she was just one of many and let us be grateful to them all.

In conclusion, as we come towards the end of this Commemoration Service, let us look back with gratitude on the long line of benefactors whom we commemorate today and look forward with hope!

John Leake

[1] *The Sermons of John Boys Smith: a Theologian of Integrity*, ed. Malcolm Torry, St John's College, Cambridge, 2003, p. 247.

[2] *The Eagle* 1999, pp. 9–14

[3] Crook, A C, *From the Foundation to Gilbert Scott*, Cambridge, 1980, p. 44.

[4] ibid. p. 30.

[5] ibid. pp. 55–56.

[6] Gospel according to St Matthew, ch. 25, vv. 14–30.

[7] Malcolm Underwood, Archivist, and Fiona Colbert, Biographical Librarian, kindly provided information about William Gaskell.

[8] *Reporter*, 2001–2002, pp. 70–71.

[9] Iohannes Lincolniensis Custos Sigili; at the time of his benefaction John Williams was Bishop of Lincoln and Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England.

[10] Following the Service, Malcolm Schofield kindly drew my attention to the preface to his book, *An Essay on Anaxagoras*, CUP, 1980, in which he notes that the building was recorded as 'Mertonhall' in 1375. It seems probable that the building was the one known to have existed in Cambridge which, by the sixteenth century, had come to be linked to the name of Anaxagoras (like Pythagoras, a Presocratic). The name had changed to 'School of Pythagoras' by 1574.

REMEMBERING HUGH SYKES DAVIES

Hugh Sykes Davies was one of the most memorable people I have ever known. How he managed it I have no idea, but I not only remember many of his observations as if he had made them an hour ago, but also the exact tone of voice in which he made them.

Knowing him came about through my application to John's to read English during the last years of the war. I had been very impressed by my school English Master, who had graduated from Cambridge in the twenties with First Class Honours in French and English. For a young man of that time, poetry meant mainly the Georgian poets, and that was where his taste was mainly formed. From his French studies he acquired an admirable literary fastidiousness, while in English he became one of the first to be exposed to the phenomenon of I A Richards and his *Practical Criticism*, by which students were offered unseen passages of prose and poetry and invited to comment on them. The hope was that they would come to see how far their responses had been constructed out of second-hand attitudes acquired from elsewhere, rather than genuine feelings expressed in the poem and traceable in their own minds.

When the time came to think of moving on from school I was encouraged to think about applying to university, and since the English Master I liked so much had been at John's that seemed the obvious place to set my sights. Grants were then a thing of the future, of course: one had to try for an award, and I duly applied for one in English. The kind of poetic analysis I had been learning was by now becoming slightly old-fashioned, in spite of my vicarious exposure to Richards's breath of fresh air. I remember going back to tell my Master proudly how I had been presented with a piece of poor free verse containing what to me was the ghastly phrase 'silken girls bringing sherbet', and how I had duly slated it for all I was worth, hoping for some endorsement from him. He simply sighed, saying, 'Oh dear, and T S Eliot is so fashionable these days.' Although there was no award for me on this occasion an encouraging note from the College raised my spirits.

The second time round I was elated to find that things went better and I was elected to an exhibition. I was still due to be called up, however, and so it was to be nearly four years before I arrived in Cambridge. In the meantime, I dutifully purchased a Penguin copy of *The Poets and their Critics*, knowing it to be the work of my future supervisor, and inspected the photograph of him on the back, which made him look for all the world like 'Wee Georgie Wood', a diminutive comedian whose photo was often to be found in magazines such as the *Radio Times*.

Shortly after my arrival I went to see him as my Director of Studies in the rooms that he then occupied in Chapel Court, which had an astonishing appearance in those days of austerity: they had been constructed to the level of workmanship common in the 1930s and still breathed a welcome smell and quality of newness. The rooms were also uncommon in incorporating their own bathroom where Hugh, who was a keen fisherman, indulged his pursuit by keeping his bait swimming around. On this first call, having been accustomed as a member of the lower ranks in the Air Force to accept orders and obey them unquestioningly, I was surprised by his concern when he proposed a time for our first supervision that nothing should upset my existing arrangements. 'If that's the time you normally go shooting, or anything like that,' he remarked, 'do please say.'

Being ex-servicemen, some of us were anxious and ready to work hard in the environment we had been deprived of for several long years, but Hugh's attitude was unexpectedly relaxed: he urged us to 'let some moss grow' on us. He was not an energetic supervisor, yet he had a gift for making suggestions about what we were studying that stimulated further work. One of his favourite themes concerned his belief that much provincialism owed its nature to 'the belief that there was a metropolis' – a belief for which, he argued, there was steadily less supporting evidence. But it went along with his theory that Hamlet was best understood as an undergraduate: he found it a telling fact that when we first get to know him he has just returned from university at Wittenberg, 'and as we all know, when a student gets home for his first vacation, he's liable to find the place rather provincial. There he is, just having heard all about the new learning, and he finds all these strange things going on at home, along with talk of the need for revenge and so on: and when the ghost of his father greets him he's even expected not only to believe in his existence but to give credence to what he's saying!'.

Hugh had a genuine feeling for the quirky in the everyday. He tried to dissuade us from supposing that we would know everything we needed to know about the eighteenth-century novel if we read Richardson and Fielding, drawing attention to the work of one of their eccentric contemporaries, Thomas Amory, and particularly his novel, *The Life and Opinions of John Buncle, Esquire* – a volume to be recommended to anyone who enjoys what is out of the way. His Yorkshire background was reminiscent of Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, another novel to which he was devoted.

He was also to us something of a mystery man and this was assisted by some of his anecdotes. He told us on one occasion, for instance, that the stipendiary magistrate at Bow Street was an Old Johnian, and that he had once been able to turn this knowledge to advantage when he and some of his friends had been summoned there on a charge involving some shady financial dealings of which they had been guilty. Knowing how some of their number had been treated the previous week, they had made their plans carefully, the chief of which was to give prominence to two things: the innocent-looking blonde in their company and Hugh's Johnian tie. He recalled with satisfaction that they had received only half the sentence of their predecessors. I still do not know how much credence to give to this and other tales, particularly because Hugh much enjoyed opportunities for plotting and intrigue. He professed himself to be devoted to the work of Macchiavelli, though I note that he lacked one important feature of the cult in that he derived delight from expounding his latest plot to a large number of people – something that the true Macchiavellian would be much too artful to do.

He was also an excellent lecturer, urbane and conversational at one and the same time. He disliked having to give a full course of lectures, and by half-term would do his best to persuade his audience that they had heard enough. I was present on one such occasion when he called for a vote, which to my disappointment was successful. Later, I was told, he became bolder. 'Some of you may have felt that there was a note of finality in certain of my statements this morning,' he would announce at the conclusion of the fifth lecture. 'You will not have been mistaken. I shall not be lecturing at this time next week.'

After completing Part One with a supervisor who stimulated me rather less than Hugh had done and finding the examination a demanding but very stressful experience, I decided that I could not face a Part Two at the same level of pressure and after a period of indecision changed to Psychology. When it came to the question of postgraduate work, however, I realized that research in psychology would not suit my kind of mind and that for these purposes my heart was still in English. Hugh did his best to dissuade me, giving me a lecture on academic unemployment. 'It is not a career open to talent,' he said gloomily, and one recalled that he had been in his first maturity during and after the Depression. I stood firm that this was what I wanted to do, however, and he eventually agreed. He asked me what I was thinking of researching that might square with my study of psychology, and I gave him some confused thoughts about the possibility of working on Henry James. Hugh's Machiavellianism came to the fore. He pointed out that my case was not going to be altogether straightforward since I had not taken Part Two of the English Tripos, and that the Committee might have some doubts as to my aptitude. Since he was going to be on the Committees concerned, he said, he would prefer to argue the case on a statement of his own making rather than of mine. He proceeded to produce a beautifully-crafted statement, giving an account of Coleridge's reading in psychological treatises and so on, with apposite quotations, and explaining how I would like to explore this further, using materials I had derived from both my Triposes. 'That should do the trick,' he said, 'and of course once you're in, you can work on anything you like.' Sure enough it 'did the trick' and he was able to tell me with mild but glinting satisfaction that at the equivalent College meeting the Professor of Psychology had expressed great interest in the project.

Towards the end of my studentship my research, which till then had been proceeding steadily if rather indifferently, suddenly took fire as I made a series of discoveries convincing me how Coleridge, whom people tended to regard as a man who was at his poetic best when not thinking, had in fact developed an intellectual study that underpinned his poetic achievements. At considerable speed I completed a dissertation which I submitted for the annual Research Fellowship competition, while at the same time applying for one or two Fellowships elsewhere. One college invited me for interview on the very afternoon when the meeting of John's Council to decide their elections would be taking place. What should I do if they were to offer me a Fellowship? I put my dilemma to Hugh, explaining that I would rather be a Fellow of my own College than any other, and he agreed that it was a teaser. Since he was going to be present at the John's meeting, his love of benevolent plotting was once again aroused, and he arranged that if I were to be lucky in the Johnian contest he would make an excuse to leave the meeting, and try to intercept me with the news before I could enter the other college. I still remember the great pleasure with which I turned the corner into that other college to see Hugh's diminutive and smiling figure waiting for me. At that moment he seemed like my good fairy.

In the course of time, now that I saw him as a fellow, I learned more about his background. His father was a Wesleyan minister in Prescot in Lancashire, and I suppose there was always a touch of the naughty young boy in the Manse about him. His Methodist family was proud of its temperance tradition (an aunt, he claimed, had been named Abstemia). To that regime one exception, and one only, was recognized: on one's deathbed one might be allowed a little brandy. However it was recognized that even then a better way existed: one might refuse, saying, 'I do not wish to meet my Saviour with the smell of that stuff on my lips.'

It was no doubt this background made the strong northern connections still to be found in the College fascinating to him. It had not only helped to bring a man such as Wordsworth from Hawkshead Grammar School to Cambridge, but had left its impress on Roger Ascham, another Yorkshireman who had been a Johnian scholar in the sixteenth century and in his book, *The Schoolmaster*, had advocated the cultivation of a plain English style. He was also fascinated by another Johnian, Thomas

Nashe, and took some pleasure in the fact that the main literary society in the College had been named after him, rather than Wordsworth. He helped us to resuscitate the Nashe Society, urging that we should drink wine not beer and recalling how for a meeting in his time one of the members had acquired some turf and laid out his room as a lawn, so that everyone could sit and drink for the evening in a pleasing rural setting.

The concern for a plain style of English which Ascham had urged, was also a particular concern of Hugh's, leading him to give Cambridge lectures on the Use of English, including some during the summer addressed particularly to scientists. These came to be closely associated with radio work which he was also engaged in, some of it a part of the Forces Educational Broadcasting that made up a substantial part of the BBC's output during the immediate post-war years. He even ran a campaign, which was for a time very successful, to make the Use of English a compulsory subject for any students anywhere who were applying for a university education. It is an issue that may well return if the need to develop a full and accurate education returns to disturb administrators.

Like many people he found Cambridge, with its ability to cater for wide intellectual interests, more congenial than school. He was fascinated by the reputation of Wittgenstein, and began attending some of his seminars. After a week or two Wittgenstein saw him in the street, crossed over to him, and said to him quietly, 'I suffer from a certain kind of stomach ache. It is evident to me that you do not suffer from this stomach ache. I think it would be better if you did not come to my seminars.' From that time onwards he desisted.

He was very much a child of the Twenties and Thirties, living through the latter 'low, dishonest decade', as Auden was to describe it, amid the inter-war tensions and timidities, the temper of which is well indicated by the fact that the College Council felt itself impelled to send a telegram of congratulation to Neville Chamberlain after the Munich agreement. In these years Hugh was indeed thought of as a member of the *avant-garde*, experimenting with surrealism and producing one or two poems of his own. When the Tate Modern ran an exhibition on the Movement recently, I was intrigued to see among the exhibits a photograph (taken in Paris, I think) which included in the group a young Hugh Sykes Davies. I suspect that he was in addition a member of the closed intellectual society known as the Apostles. He was also for a time a Marxist, though I know nothing of any contribution he may have made, nor of his interest in the Spanish Civil war. It was knowledge of this aspect of his repute, also, that may have led, at the time of the Anthony Blunt exposure, to the media theory that he had been the mysterious 'fourth man'. For a time press interest was strong. One reporter found such difficulty in tracking him down in his College that it seemed to confirm his suspicions of being on the right track; those of us, on the other hand, who were familiar with his customary elusiveness, thought that he was simply running true to form. On the only occasion when I heard him mention the affair it was simply to remark that he thought Blunt to have been far too vague a person to have made a very effective spy. As to the 'fourth man', the story later moved on.

He himself undertook National Service during the war, being appointed, he claimed, to become a Deputy Director of Dehydration. By the time that I knew him, certainly, the war had passed and he was displaying a conservative attitude such as his devotion to the College's past traditions, some of which survived. The College was then still old-fashioned enough, for example, to appoint its Research Fellows on the day of the 'Port Feast', and to begin paying them for exactly three years from that date. This was pleasant enough, except for the fact that it meant that one's stipend ceased also in mid-year, leaving one to live on nothing but a substantial evening meal and a free room for the remaining four months. Hugh told me, however, that when he was elected the regime had been still more draconian. Then, one was not paid until the end of the year audit, when the cheques for everyone (including the College Officers) were openly laid out on a table in the Bursar's rooms, where everyone could inspect them. On these occasions, he recalled, it was a severe test of patience and politeness to judge when it would be decent to pick up one's own previous year's stipend and dash off to placate one's creditors…

One of the effects of his somewhat wayward marital career was that he had to earn a fair amount of money to keep up with the demands of the alimony he had to pay. To help with this he spent much of the summer marking scripts at A-Level, for which he eventually became a Chief Awarder. On one occasion, when a colleague asked whether he didn't share his disgust at having to mark examinations in which one was paid for each script three and sixpence (about 17 pence in modern notation), he replied blandly, 'Oh no, I have no difficulty with that at all. If they pay me three and sixpence, I give them my three-and-sixpenny opinion.' He also claimed that on one occasion he had had to mark eighty A-Level scripts in one day and that though he could not claim to have read every word on every page, he had found it possible to write what he thought to be a sensible and useful comment on every one of them.

Hugh was constantly revealing new sides to his personality. From a story he had told us of a private sweep-stake he and some of his fellows had run, guessing in advance the likely length of certain pieces in the College concert, I had concluded that he had little taste for music. He was surprised when I told him this, asserting that the very opposite was true: he had been set to play the piano as soon as his mother had found him able to raise his tiny fingers to the keyboard. Later he insisted on my visiting his rooms one lunch-time, where he made me some excellent coffee and asked whether I had ever realized what an excellent composer Haydn was. I made a non-committal reply, Haydn being one of my musical blind spots, and he then sat down at the piano to play a piece by Haydn so beautifully as to convince me that I had always been mistaken. The conversion, though genuine, lasted only for ten minutes of his playing, I am sorry to say.

My last extended encounter with Hugh came when I was Chairman of the Faculty – a position which, as it happened, he had occupied some years before. It was an inopportune time to undertake this, since a certain amount of tension around was just then coming to a head as a result of the failure of an Assistant Lecturer to be appointed to the establishment of a permanent post in English Language – though it was not one for which he could be thought to be fully qualified, at least in conventional terms. A full publicity campaign in the media organized by his supporters ensued. Hugh, intrigued by it all, asked me to call on him and for full details, rather quixotically offering to take over the

Chairmanship of the Faculty (though by now, having passed the age of seventy, he would almost certainly have been debarred) so that he might help resolve the situation. His behaviour at this time followed his usual pattern of eccentricity, contributing to the crowded debate in the Senate House a speech in which he deplored the agitation itself, but used the occasion to press his own long-standing view that the Faculty had too many undergraduates, many of poor quality. (The evidence he presented was rather suspect, being based on the statistic that other faculties awarded more First Class degrees. The possibility that the English Faculty might be more discriminating in its judgements did not seem to strike him.) The University Committee that later looked into this tortuous affair found nothing amiss, and even praised the Faculty members involved for the extreme fairness and scrupulousness with which they had carried out their duties. I do not know how many people in the University followed all the ins and outs involved, or even wanted to. I suspect, however, looking back, that Hugh's speech was the one that many found the most enjoyable part of the afternoon.

A little later I met him in Trumpington Street, on his way to the old Addenbrooke's Hospital to visit one of the College waitresses who was being detained among their patients. It was a good example of his essential kindness. I was even more impressed, however, by another occasion he told me about when, visiting that same hospital for a consultation concerning a stomach problem, he had encountered a Johnian colleague, an expert on cancer who had recently developed the disease in precisely that organ, and how on comparing notes they found they had both been struck to discover what an important part the stomach seemed to play in *remembering*. That appetite for the quirky fact, and the sense that something might possibly be made of it, was for me Hugh – and for that matter the College itself – at their very best.

Professor J B Beer
(BA 1950, MA 1955, PhD 1957, LittD 1995)

AFTER-DINNER SPEECH BY CLIFFORD EVANS, 27 DECEMBER 1993

It is convenient to begin these rambling reminiscences at the Old Johnian dinner at the end of June, 1938, where I was seated next to an elderly gentleman who opened the conversation by saying, 'They tell me you have baths in College nowadays.' I agreed; it was quite true. He paused, shook his head, and then went on: 'You know, I think the modern generation of undergraduates are very tough. I shouldn't have dreamt of going through the Courts in my dressing-gown for a bath. I never got up until me bedder had lit the fire, put on a big kettle and put my saucer bath on the hearthrug.' Another pause and head-shake, and finally, 'I think the modern undergraduates are very tough.'

This was a very superior bathhouse. It had some of the best showers I have ever encountered, owing largely to the high pressure hot water. Alas, in College terms it had a very short life of less than forty years and is already fading from the collective memory. The Junior Bursar who superintended its erection was Shore, the physiologist, known to generations of medical students as 'Daddy Shore'; but he has several other claims on the memory. He began the modern phase of thoroughgoing restoration of our old buildings with the roof of the Upper Library. His wife Agatha was a painter who left us, amongst other things, our only vivid record of the distribution of the ancient 'Bread and Broth Charity', 'The Poor's Soup', which the infant College had inherited from the ancient hospital of St John. Its quality was guaranteed by the regular appearance of the genuine article at High Table on Thursdays in winter – as good a soup as we ever had. It then lingered for a while with the occasional appearance of 'The Poor's Soup', an exact description, and is now long gone.

His wife's expertise had odd consequences. For many years one of our numerous bad old pictures used to hang over the fireplace of the Guest Room, in New Court. Once, more than sixty years ago, a guest asked Shore whose portrait it was. 'I don't know.' 'Well, who painted it?' 'I've no idea.' Assuming that some of his wife's artistic knowledge ought to have rubbed off on Shore, the guest then said, 'I think it's jolly bad: here are you, supposed to know something about art, and you can't answer a couple of simple questions.' Shore went to Austin, our first Clerk-of-Works, superintending the newly-formed College Maintenance Department, who told me the story, and said, 'Have a gilt slip lettered "Sir Isaac Pennington by Sir Joshua Reynolds" and stick it on that picture in the Guest Room.' It stayed happily there for at least fifty years, and for all I know it is still there. [A Fellow, 'It still is.'] I have often wondered what subsequent generations of guests made of it, but I have never heard any comments.

Sir Isaac was an eminent Johnian physician who is credited with having built what is now No 69 Bridge Street as his house and surgery. It passed from one physician to another for two centuries, and the last incumbent was a distinguished local character, highly respected and well-known to town and gown as 'Jimmy Simpson'. At the Simpsons, my wife and I ate genuine swan for the first and only time. It was a fine Christmas morning, and Jimmy had gone for a walk in the almost deserted streets when he met Bill Clee, the Borough Pindar, carrying a dead swan that had flown into some electrical cables. He readily parted with it, and after being plucked, cleaned and well hung it was delicious. After Simpson's death the practice became non-residential and moved two doors to the north, while No 69 became a College hostel.

This root and branch restoration of an old College building, once begun by Shore, was carried vigorously forward in the 1930s by Cockroft, who had become Junior Bursar. (He should have succeeded to the Jacksonian Professorship of Natural Philosophy in October 1939, but this never happened. By then he had left the University to take up a wartime post in the Ministry of Supply.) His main works were a complete restoration of the Great Gate, whose turrets had started to open at the top like tulips, and the ceiling of the Hall.

Another of Shore's appointments was Ralph Thoday, as College Gardener. Thoday was one of the outstanding plant cultivators of his day, long remembered as an ornament of the Royal Horticultural Society. It was his habit to decorate the Library staircase to greet those attending the reception in the Upper Library on 6 May, when the College commemorated Benefactors, by standing on each corner a potted laburnum tree about five feet high in the perfection of full flower, and also to have enough new potatoes of his own growing just ready to eat for the main course of the dinner that evening. He once won eleven Gold Medals at an RHS Autumn Show. When I rang up to congratulate him he gave a characteristic reply, saying gloomily, 'It's an awfully high standard to keep up.'

Another of Austin's stories also involved Cockcroft who, as already mentioned, succeeded Shore as Junior Bursar in 1932. In those days the College was locked up at ten, and supposedly totally enclosed. The ingenious inhabitant of a ground floor set in New Court had loosened the bars in one of the windows so that they could be removed from the outside. Cockroft, Austin and the Head Porter met to consider what to do. At that time the Head Porter was Captain Palmer. He had been a Captain of the Military Police during the war – always so-called without qualification at that time. Cockroft, ever direct, was all for cementing them in again, but Palmer's comment was, 'It's no use, Sir. They're like rats. Stop up one hole and they'll make another.' He preferred to know where the rat-hole was. His view was accepted and no action was taken.

During the 1930s Cockcroft shared rooms with Oliphant at K Staircase, First Court, immediately above what was the JCR. One bright spark had noticed that it was only necessary to paste black paper over three letters of these names, and supply four others, for the inscription at the foot of the staircase to read:

> 'Dr Cockroach
> Dr Eliphant'.

Cockcroft made major contributions with urgent repairs in First and Second Courts, and in the planning and construction of the Maufe buildings. When the Town Council forced the demolition of the west side of Bridge Street by imposing a sixteen-foot building line in the interests of street widening, his forethought extended to salving what was worth saving from the wreckage. The College Maintenance staff stripped off and stored all the old local clay tiles from the roofs, which were invaluable for later restoration, notably for the repair of the First

Court side of the Hall and Kitchen range. Thoday asked for all the heaps of old mortar and plaster rubble to be carted and spread on the College Kitchen Garden, as there is nothing better for lightening a heavy clay soil. This had the unexpected result that for the whole of the following summer the garden was hopping with fleas.

Now we are back in 1938, when the habits of the other junior Fellows resulted in the two most junior at the Wine Circles on Sundays for the next year being usually myself and Jopson. He was not only a great linguist but also a keen student of human behaviour, and his kindness saved me from many an old-fashioned look.

The Wine Circle was in those days well attended, indeed a considerable social event. He had noticed that the elderly Fellows belonged by conviction to one of two categories: those who held that there should be a gap of half an inch or so at the top of the glass ‘to let the wine breathe’; and those who thought they were being cheated if the glass were not filled to the brim with a convex meniscus. No inspection would tell you to which category a given old gentleman belonged, but Jopson knew. He went first with the port, and I followed with the claret, being put wise by a code of discreet nudges that he had devised, and thus avoiding being looked on either as an ignoramus or a meanie.

Another prominent Fellow in those days was H A Harris, Professor of Anatomy, who came with the reputation of having examined more children, sick and well, than any other physician in the country. He was imported from University College, London, where amongst other things he had pioneered a locally famous clinic for mothers and children from the slums (now demolished) on the other side of Euston Road. He immediately constituted himself as Physician-in-Ordinary to the Fellows.

I am tempted to conclude with a war-time anecdote, not because it has anything to do with the war, but because it illustrates the care that Harris took of the health of the Fellows, and at the same time gives a glimpse of medicine before the NHS. I was on leave from my wartime job of masquerading as a Naval Officer and had come into Hall just before returning to duty. Harris looked hard at a small growth beside my nose. ‘That’s skin cancer. It must be removed.’ ‘Alright’, ‘How long are you here for?’ ‘I’m going to Aberdeen tomorrow.’ ‘How long will you be there?’ ‘About a week’, ‘As soon as you arrive, ring Professor Forbes at the hospital, and tell him I say he’s to take it off’, which I duly did in somewhat more tactful terms. ‘You say you’ll be here about a week. I can fit you in on Tuesday morning. Go to the hospital about twelve and tell them they’re to get you ready for an operation under a general anaesthetic at the end of my morning list.’

In the middle of Tuesday afternoon, when I was just recovering from the anaesthetic and exuding ether from every pore, the Professor appeared, ‘I’ve cleaned that up and it’s sterile. You’re not to touch it. Don’t attempt to cover it up and particularly don’t let it get wet. Where do you expect to be in a week?’ ‘Thurso’, ‘A week today go to Dr MacDonald in the High Street and tell him I say he’s to take the stitches out.’ And so it was. It was a most beautiful cosmetic operation, leaving no scar.

Finally, there was a Greek poet of classical times, Simonides of Cos, who listed among the beneficent gifts of the Gods that no mortal can command ‘to pass one’s life among friends’. I regard myself as exceptionally fortunate in having been able to do so. Thank you all very much.

George Clifford Evans
(1913–2006)

A LEGAL EAGLE

'It is quite normal to be nervous at first.' Those were the words of cold comfort that greeted my inquisitive eye as I scanned the pages of my instruction manual. There I was, up at Cambridge to study Law, and there I was, learning to fly a glider – a legal eagle if ever there were one.

I must confess that I felt a little ill at ease when I inspected the curious contrivance which squatted before me. A glider is usually likened to a soaring seagull: this extraordinary creation had all the appearance of an ostrich. I could only hope that it possessed a little more capability of flight than that much maligned creature. 'God forbid!' I thought, 'I can't fly that!'. But God did not forbid and I did.

The budding pilot prepared himself for flight with a few preliminary scuttles across the airfield, towed by a cable attached to a winch sited at the far perimeter of the field, like an unwilling dog on a lead. After that perfunctory introduction the victim was pronounced fit to fly.

'Today', I was told, 'you will take your glider up until you see the winch below you, at which point you will release the cable, make a single circuit of the airfield, and follow that with a smooth landing.' It all sounded too good to be true, particularly when I was reminded of the Club's motto: 'What goes up must come down.'

The winch took the strain and I was off. I pulled the stick back and marvelled at the ease with which I was borne towards the heavens. I peered down and saw the winch, some seven or eight hundred feet below, no larger than a child's toy. I released the cable and watched it snake out of sight. Then I gingerly pushed the rudder bar with my left foot and was rewarded by an immediate response. This thing is too easy, I thought – a thought which, all too aptly, was soon to be dashed to the ground.

I remembered reading in my instruction manual that the pilot should aim at maintaining height, it being much more difficult to gain that commodity than to lose it. Bearing these sage words of advice in mind, I nursed my machine upwards. Having completed my circuit I looked down; the airfield seemed small and distant and remote. The height which I had so assiduously sought was now nothing but a handicap. An experienced pilot would have made a second circuit but that simple solution did not occur to this ill-prepared tiro. Instead, I did what any fool would have done: I pushed the stick forward and plunged headlong earthward at ever-increasing speed. The wind whistled through the struts and my heart throbbed in my mouth. Levelling off, I was left in no doubt that I was about to overshoot the airfield; the boundary hedge rushed towards me as though bent on engulfing me in its thorny embrace. I pulled the stick firmly back and hopped over the hedge with twenty feet to spare, or was it ten?

No sooner had I surmounted that obstacle than I was confronted with another. There lay before me a vast expanse of field under plough, furrow upon furrow stretching across my path like an army on the march. With foot on rudder and hand on stick I manoeuvred my machine along one of those furrows, and came gently (dare I say gracefully?) to rest, not a glider's length from a replica of that hedge which I had, seconds before, so narrowly avoided.

Freeing myself from my safety harness I reflected: ‘What goes up must come down.’ My reverie was rudely interrupted by the unmistakable voice of my instructor: ‘Who d'you think you are,’ he demanded, ‘Doing your best to ruin a perfectly good glider?’. He made a hasty inspection. ‘Seems all right,’ he reluctantly conceded. Not a word of enquiry, you will notice, about the well-being of the pilot. And then the final ignominy: ‘That'll be a penalty of three guineas – Rule 21.’

Not so much a legal eagle, more a forensic fledgling.

H Kirby
(BA 1940, MA 1944)

SPIRIT OF THE BRITS

The winner of the second Ben Pimlott Prize for Political Writing, Rowland Manthorpe, reflects on the power of historical narrative and its role in shaping, and distorting, national identities. This is an edited version of the winning essay published on 1 July 2006 in Guardian Unlimited.

History is inescapable. We carry our past with us: the burden of humanity. But our past does not own us: we own it. It is not history, but memory, reformed and remade in our own image. The nation owns its own memories. But it does not own them exclusively, because they are embodied in stories. And everybody loves a good story.

On July 7 2005, four suicide bombers detonated themselves and their deadly parcels into London's morning rush, killing fifty-two men and women. The response was raw and immediate. But it was also historical. Press, politicians and public looked to history, in particular, to the history of London's Blitz, in reacting to the fatal attacks on the capital's transport network.

In the next day's newspapers, the rhetoric of the Blitz was pervasive. 'We Britons will never be defeated,' declared the *Daily Express*. *The Sun*'s leader was equally unequivocal: 'Our spirit will never be broken: Adolf Hitler's Blitz and his doodlebug rockets never once broke London's spirit.' In the nation's historical imagination, the memory of the Blitz pressed itself to the fore.

A nation's identity is formed, first and foremost, in the national memory. Memory is historical, of course, but, transient and partial; it is not history. The mythology of the Blitz, like that surrounding Churchill, has survived numerous attempts at debunking. Historians have picked over the reports of Mass-Observation, the wartime government's polling agency, that show bombed Britain panicked and demoralised. But the myth persists. In part this is because it is largely historically accurate; to a much greater extent it is because it serves contemporary interests. In determining how the past impacts on contemporary forms of identity, there is very little use in trying to distinguish between invented and authentic forms of the national past and hence of national identity. It is more useful to consider what any version of the national past means for those who use it in the present. Myth may distort what has happened. But it affects what happens.

In the immediate aftermath of the London bombings, the capital was filled with small stories of sympathetic action, moments of community breaking out amidst metropolitan anonymity. Only minutes after the morning's events, the bars, restaurants and sandwich shops around Aldgate East station had set up stalls outside to offer refreshments free of charge. The next day, London went back to work. The predominant message was 'carrying on'. In part, of course, this was simply the response of necessity. But it was also a re-enactment of the spirit of the Blitz.

Historical memory acts as a prompt to action. When we summon up historical narratives, we place ourselves in their roles, reading from their scripts. We understand history performatively. We re-enact its stories.

Even within a single individual, memory is a contested zone. Within a nation, conflict over memory is endemic. A complex array of contending narratives of the national past is in operation within Britain at any given time. Following the London bombings, rival histories vied for space in the public consciousness.

One prominent historical memory of the recent past was seen by many at the time as a close analogy to the London bombings: the events of September 11, 2001. But Tony Blair and his ministers could not deploy the rhetoric of war after July 7 in the same way that George Bush had after September 11. The discovery that the London bombers were British meant that any characterisation of the attacks as part of a wider war raised the possibility that any war might become a civil one. In July 2005, this was a very real fear. Senior community figures and members of Muslim groups were called to urgent meetings with Scotland Yard. Massoud Shadjareh, Chairman of the Islamic Human Rights Commission, said he was 'very concerned about a backlash' and called on British Muslims to 'remain vigilant and stay indoors'. Martial rhetoric would have been a dangerous incitement to reprisals.

Muslim communities were exposed to greater hostility after the bombings. Within hours, 3,000 abusive and threatening emails were sent to the Muslim Council of Britain's website. Animosity was translated into action: the Metropolitan Police reported a sharp rise in faith-related attacks in London in July 2005 compared with the same period in the previous year.

Fortunately, the initial spike in faith-related crime soon dissipated. After the rise covering the period between July 7 and the beginning of August, hate-crime incidents returned to 2004 levels. In its report on 'The Impact of 7 July 2005 London Bomb Attacks On Muslim Communities in the EU', the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia praised the response of the British authorities: 'The lesson of 7 July is that strong, coordinated action by all stakeholders works effectively.' The historical narrative of the Blitz was an essential component of this action. The myth of the Blitz was a home-grown remedy to the divisive disease.

Britain's religious minorities have not always been so fortunate. As observers played the game of historical analogies in the weeks after July 7, one particularly relevant episode in British history was notable for its absence. The brutal anti-Catholicism that has marked Britishness for much of its history is still commemorated every year on November 5. Following the London bombings no one talked about Guy Fawkes and his grisly fate, nor dared to compare Muslims to Catholics. Beneath the scab of this repressed memory lies a potent warning of the power of historical narrative.

The Gordon riots of June 1780 were the most tumultuous and destructive of a violent century. In the wake of the Commons' refusal to repeal the Catholic Relief Act of 1778, rioting erupted across London. More than 200 people were killed in the city's streets.

Politics in the middle of the first decade of the twenty-first century shares many similarities with those of the late 1770s. The country was unsettled by a divisive foreign war: for Iraq 2003, read America 1775. It was far from universally supported: newspapers of the time excoriated the government's bungled imperialism. But it still cast its polarising shadow back into the domestic arena. Preparing for another bout of conflict with Catholic France, in which contest the engagement in America was a round of shadow-boxing, eighteenth-century Britons questioned the loyalty of Catholics in their midst. How could one be committed to the Pope and the global Catholic brotherhood and stay loyal to the King? The eighteenth-century version of the 'clash of civilisations' took on threatening internal aspects.

Eighteenth-century British society was consistently troubled by the difficulty of accommodating a faith it regarded as inimical to liberty within its constitution. It was a political commonplace of the time that Catholicism was anathema to political liberty. 'To tolerate Popery,' declared one tract, 'is to encourage by Toleration itself what we mean to destroy: a spirit of persecution and bigotry of the most notorious kind.' Popery, as Lord George Gordon put it, was 'synonymous with arbitrary power'. In other words, it was everything the nascent British nation defined itself against.

Fears of a 'fifth column' were largely unfounded. British Catholics were subject to a system of state loyalty oaths and registration. The Catholic Relief Act was actually intended as a gesture of amity to those loyalist Catholics whose only dissent from the constituted political order was one of religious conscience. Even staunch anti-Catholics such as the Duke of Richmond recognised it as such. But the London crowd, propelled by populist, national sentiments and Gordon's demagoguery, was in no mood for moderation.

British nationalism's dominant narrative in the second half of the eighteenth century pitted Catholic against Protestant. The Gordon riots preceded the flourishing of British nationalism that accompanied the American and, in particular, the French revolutions. Even so, the nation's historical memory already contained a mythology of Catholic wrongdoing, ritualised and reaffirmed by state and society not just on November 5, but throughout the year.

The 2005 formulation of the Blitz myth carried a dual message that acted to prevent violence. First, it emphasised an inclusive, all-embracing Britishness. Second, it carried a message of moral obligation for the white working classes, the group predominantly responsible for faith- and race-hate crime.

Although its effects could be seen throughout the country, the history of the Second World War did give the Blitz myth a distinct geographical identity, situating it in London, and in East London in particular. Speaking on a visit to Whitechapel's Royal London Hospital on July 8, the Queen talked of her own wartime experience: 'Members of my generation, especially at this end of London, know we have been here before.'

The East End, now populated by the largest community of Bangladeshi Muslims in the country, was a focus for the 'Muslim backlash' after the London bombings. Mosques were attacked in Tower Hamlets and Mile End.

The East End is also home to many white working-class families, as it was in the Second World War. Despite recent gentrification, it also continues to be a locus of considerable poverty. Involved in intense competition for resources, in particular housing, Bangladeshis and whites endure tense relations. Just as in the 1770s, the poorest sections of London society are the most explosive; racial and religious intolerance is only one factor in explaining that volatility.

The Gordon riots were an expression of long-standing and deep-rooted hostility towards Catholics. But if popular anti-Catholicism was a necessary cause of the disturbances, it was hardly a sufficient one. Within London itself, the Irish Catholic population of approximately 25,000 lived on reasonably amicable terms with their neighbours. Aside from the odd sectarian scuffle, the last major anti-Irish riot had occurred in 1736. The Gordon riots were more than an uncontrollable eruption of anti-Catholic feeling: they were the product of a historical national narrative aimed at the poorest sections of society.

In July 2005, the British National party attempted to mobilise support for an East London council election by using the language of nationalism in connection with the London bombings. Its election leaflet featured a picture of the Number 30 bus blown apart on July 7, with the headline: ‘Maybe it’s time to start listening to the BNP’. In the version distributed nationally, the party appealed more explicitly to the national past, claiming their ‘once all-white country’ had been turned into an ‘overcrowded multicultural slum’. White working-class voters in East London have increasingly been turning to the BNP. In 2004, the party scored a landslide victory in the Goresbrook ward of Barking and Dagenham council. It consolidated that gain in this year’s local elections, seizing eleven of the thirteen seats it contested and becoming the council’s second party. Yet in the Goresbrook by-election, only weeks after the London bombings, the Labour candidate, Indian-born Alok Agrawal, secured the ward with a comfortable majority. Just when it might have been expected to capitalise, the BNP failed.

The rhetoric of the 2005 Blitz produced an appeal to an inclusive, multicultural Britishness. In Parliament on July 11, the day after National Commemoration Day had evoked the spirit of wartime Britain, Tony Blair showed how old stories could be used for new purposes:

‘Yesterday we celebrated the heroism of World War II including the civilian heroes of London’s blitz. Today what a different city London is – a city of many cultures, faiths and races, hardly recognisable from the London of 1945. So different and yet, in the face of this attack, there is something wonderfully familiar in the confident spirit which moves through the city, enabling it to take the blow but still not flinch from reasserting its will to triumph over adversity. Britain may be different today but the coming together is still the same.’

The narrative of Britishness that emerged after 7/7 contained a powerful inclusive appeal. ‘If London could survive the Blitz, it can survive four miserable events like this,’ said Sir Ian Blair of the Metropolitan Police. On July 9, he talked of ‘this wonderful great diverse city’, calling London and Britain ‘one united community against atrocity’. The Blitz rhetoric combined the languages of diversity and nationality.

Insofar as it was national, such a narrative was necessarily British. British identity has long been seen as a broader umbrella than the national identities of the home nations. Hybrid identities of whatever description – Scottish, Asian, Caribbean – breathe more easily in a non-ethnic Britain than on the narrower ground of its constituent parts. In the Blitz discourse, the image of London often came to stand for this cosmopolitanism. On a national level, only Britain can interchange with it.

Britishness is not dead yet, then. Its demise has been frequently pronounced in recent years, but it still continues to serve important purposes for us. These purposes need not be dominant. It is a fundamental misunderstanding to assume that national identity must always be foremost in our minds, constantly shouting for attention. Rather, it is embodied in stories, stories that are important to us in specific circumstances, stories we can be encouraged to re-enact.

There are limits to the malleability of a nation's historical memory. Even had he been minded to act, Lord North, the Prime Minister at the time of the Gordon riots, would have found it difficult to evoke a national historical narrative of sufficient strength to counter Gordon's intolerant Protestantism. In the immediate aftermath of the London bombings British men and women, instinctively and unselfconsciously, pulled the Blitz from their store of historical memories. Crucially, though, they were told this was the right thing to do, an encouraging attitude that sustained the inclusive Blitz spirit in the days when shock turned to anger.

The Labour government's response to the bombings was covertly political. Blair and his cabinet had learned the political lessons of the Madrid bombings of March 2004. The attack was seen by many in Spain as a direct consequence of their country's involvement in the US war on terror. Blair was determined to challenge any link that might exist in the public mind between the carnage in London and the bloody engagement on the streets of Iraq. The London bombings were not to be seen as a consequence of the war in Iraq, even as they were understood to be a continuation of the wider struggle against terrorism that had prompted it. The Labour government was able to pass off an essentially domestic threat as a foreign one. Their manipulation of the Blitz myth was deeply self-conscious.

It may seem strange to celebrate this. If a nation's historical memories can be manipulated, they can be manipulated for the wrong ends. But it also means we aren't stuck with our past. It shapes us, of course, but the knowledge that it does this only in our heads is a powerful tool, and a profound affirmation of human possibility.

Stories are born of history, but they are not beholden to it. If they have to be told, then they can be told afresh. British identity, like individual identity, can be constructed anew from old material. The nations of Britain, like a generation of children from broken homes, can defy the statistics and deny the narrative power of their parents' mistakes.

R L Manthorpe
(BA 2005)

A LIGHT-HEARTED RECOLLECTION OF A FINAL NIGHT IN COLLEGE: GOING DOWN 1949

> ‘Awake! for Morning in the bowl of night
> Has flung the stone that puts the stars to flight.
> And Lo! the Hunter of the East has cast
> Upon a chamber-pot his spear of light.’

So might Edward Fitzgerald have written when he was at Trinity, for the perching of pots on pinnacles is an ancient and honourable tradition. But one hundred and twenty years later this was not good enough for six Johnians on the eve of going down. One of them had noticed that an old door in New Court had no apparent purpose. Being enquiring of mind, deft of hand and strong of arm he had managed to get it open. Beyond it was a long-disused and tortuous passage leading to the water-gate beside the Bridge of Sighs. The ensuing spark of inspiration was as brilliant as it was sudden. With minds razor-sharpened by years on the sports fields, dancing at the Dorothy, perfecting the art of punting, researching in depth the whole range of Cambridge hostelries and climbing-in after hours, the six prepared a master plan.

On the fateful night the enterprise began. By light of moon and friendly star four shadowy figures, emboldened by beer and bravado, tip-toed through the court. The door swung silently open on freshly-oiled hinges. Torch in hand, they crept through the dark and dank passage to the water-gate. Awaiting them were the two others in a punt they had borrowed for the occasion. With muffled paddles they stole downstream to Magdalene. There they laid hands upon their chosen prize and brought it back to the water-gate. With no little difficulty and many a smothered oath, they manoeuvred it through the passage. Time and again it stuck at corners and refused to budge. Tempers began to fray, and there was mutinous talk of abandonment. But their leader was a strong-willed and well-built wing-forward whose word it was unwise to ignore. Self-preservation overcame reluctance and they persevered.

At last they reached the open air and spirits soared. Three of the group climbed to the top of the cloister. There they tied ropes to the stonework, and threw down the free ends to the others. All was soon ready and the lift began. Then without warning the prize struck the wall and a sound like thunder echoed around the court. Panic set in; lips trembled; grips loosened; ropes slipped; and the project almost foundered. But the College slept on; and, rallied once more by their leader, the collective nerve returned. As dawn was breaking the task was completed, and the first cock was heard to crow in triumphant applause.

And so it was that the College awoke one bright June morning in 1949 to find the skyline of New Court dramatically altered. Not only was there a chamber-pot gleaming like a jewelled crown on the Eagle over the gate, but a Magdalene canoe was proudly hanging between the pinnacles.

Much was the mirth of the tittering townies;
Awesome the ire of the Master and dons;
blue was the air round the porters perspiring;
stubborn the pendulous prisoner′s bonds.
Purple the proctors and baffled the bulldogs;
Hither and thither they frantically flew;
dignity dented; pomposity punctured;
gowns all a-flutter and toppers askew.

But ‘twas to no avail. The six had folded their tents like the Arabs and silently stolen away.

J A de M Greeves
(BA 1949, MA 1976)

SYMPOSIUM TO CELEBRATE TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF WOMEN AT ST JOHN'S

A celebration took place at St John's on Friday 20 April to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the admission of women to membership of the College. This took the form of a Symposium which looked back on the early days and subsequent success stories of Johnian women whilst also looking forward into the future and the promise it holds.

In 1981, the College Statutes were changed so that women could be admitted as students and Fellows, and the first female Fellow came in 1981, along with nine women graduate students. In 1982 the first group of women undergraduates arrived. Initially, female students were relatively few in number, with only forty-three matriculating in the first year; now, in 2007, women make up 41% of the undergraduate population of the College. Hence, twenty-five years on, life at St John's without females would be 'unthinkable', as the (male) President of the JCR remarked in the opening session.

The day was generously sponsored by Baillie Gifford, the Investment Management Partnership, whose CEO, Alex Callander, is a Johnian (BA 1982). He attended the event, as did a number of other men, but it was an occasion predominantly supported by Johnian women. Some 150 in all were present. Clare Laight in the Development Office did a fine job in orchestrating the day's activities. After a sandwich lunch in the Fisher Building foyer, the Symposium began in the Palmerston Room lecture theatre with welcoming remarks from the Master, who had originally prompted the Symposium, and the President of the JCR, second-year vet, Martin Kent. Both were clearly pleased that the twenty-fifth anniversary was being celebrated in a definitive manner.

The first session was chaired by Professor Jane Heal, FBA, Professorial Fellow of St John's in Philosophy and the first woman ever to serve as President of the College, which she did for four years from 1999 to 2003. Judith Slater, who matriculated in 1983 and graduated in Law at John's in 1987, was the first speaker. She was a triple rowing Blue, and now serves as British Consul-General in Houston, Texas, where she covers a number of US States for the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). She gave an engaging talk about her life in the various countries where she had worked, starting with Canberra in Australia, as a young FCO novice. Somehow she had managed to find time to marry and have two children whilst continuing unabated her very successful Foreign Office career.

The next speaker was Gemma Farrell who graduated with a degree in Geography in 2005. As an undergraduate she sailed with the Ladies First team and captained the Cambridge University Sailing team. She recounted fascinating tales of her life as a member of the British Olympic Sailing squad, as well as her time with the teams for the European and World Sailing Championships. She has since exchanged the tough life of full-time competitive sailing for a position in the City, which exercises her considerable skills as well, she finds.

There was animated discussion after each talk and then a break for refreshments and networking by the attendees. The second session was chaired by another Johnian, Professorial Fellow, Usha Goswami, who directs the Cambridge University Centre for Neuroscience in Education. The third speaker was Dr Louise Makin who took her PhD in Materials Science at John's (1986). She was also active in sports, serving as Ladies Captain of the LMBC in 1983 and subsequently became a light-weight international. She took the audience through aspects of her work at ICI, then Baxters, and now BTG, a company which develops drugs and other technologies, and of which she is currently the Chief Executive. Completing an MBA in mid-career was also part of her impressive life history. She has worked abroad over the years but has now settled back in the UK, where she juggles her two daughters and family life with the rough-and-tumble of the City.

The two final talks were presented by current SJC students, Mairi McLaughlin, working for a PhD in French linguistics, and former President of the Samuel Butler Room (the MCR) in 2004–05, and Elena Kazamia, currently doing her third year in Natural Sciences, specializing in Biochemistry. Elena now serves as Vice-President of the JCR Committee. These two presentations reflected on the life and status of women at St John's at present.

What emerged from all the talks was the positive impact the Johnian experience has had on these womens' lives, and what happy memories they all have of their time at the College.

A general debate followed, with questions for all the speakers on a variety of issues, ranging from the stresses of being an Olympic contender, to getting a place in the Foreign Office and the advantages, in their experience, of networking. Clearly all the speakers served as excellent role models for younger members of College, but the queries put from the floor indicated that the audience contained many remarkable Johnian women, whose life stories would have been equally interesting to hear about.

Following this discussion, attendees moved into the lobby of the Fisher Building and enjoyed drinks in the foyer, also spilling out onto the lawn as the weather was spectacularly sunny and warm for a mid-April day.

After a brief break, everyone assembled again at 7.00pm, for a wine reception in the garden of the Master's Lodge, followed by an excellent dinner in Hall. The staff performed magnificently and were applauded by all. The after-dinner speaker was Dr Sarah Houghton-Walker, a Johnian and now a Research Fellow of the College who works on English literature in the eighteenth century. She spoke of her interesting experiences as a Fellow of SJC and how her career had benefited in a variety of ways (not least, meeting her husband!). The Master concluded proceedings with some thoughts on the way women had successfully integrated into St John's over the past twenty-five years and thanked all those present for their contributions to a very interesting day of celebrations.

The bars were open following dinner, and some participants were thought not to have returned to their rooms until the small hours. Many old friendships were renewed and new contacts established. It seems the event had been very much the success everyone had hoped for.

Dr N J Lane Perham

BICENTENARY OF THE ACT OF 1807 WHICH ABOLISHED THE TRANS-ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

‘It was but one gloomy subject from morning to night. In the daytime I was uneasy. In the night I had little rest. I sometimes never closed my eyelids for grief…’

This was how Thomas Clarkson, an undergraduate at St John’s described his experience of research for his prize-winning essay on the evils of the slave trade written in 1785 in response to a question set by the then Vice-Chancellor, the Revd Peter Peckard: Is it lawful to make slaves of others against their will? Unlike most student essays, this one had a profound effect on Clarkson prompting a lifetime dedicated to campaigning for Abolitionism in Britain and across the world. To commemorate the bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act (1807), in which Clarkson and William Wilberforce played such a central part, the College held a weekend of activities in the Lent Term.

The weekend began on Friday 16 February when we were joined by the President of Brown University, Professor Ruth Simmons, whose lecture, entitled ‘Hidden in Plain Sight: Slavery and Justice in Rhode Island’, provided an account of a project she has initiated at Brown which aimed to uncover that institution’s historical involvement in the Slave Trade to which it owes much of its endowment. She spoke of the responsibility incumbent on academic institutions to uncover the past and to present it to current members and others, as part of the story of the institution. Professor Simmons also laid out the cultural and political ramifications of her initiative, deftly handling this sensitive subject with great wisdom.

In the spirit of Clarkson, a conference, *Campaigning – then and now*, was organised by students (Ben Wilson, Miranda Buckle, Susannah Clark, Yasmeen Arif, Rebecca Fisher and Abena Dlakavu) and Fellows for the Saturday. The day opened with a lively and very interesting lecture given by Boyd Hilton, a History Fellow of Trinity and author of a major study of the evangelical movement, *The Age of Atonement*. He explained how the moral urgency of evangelicalism was able to break through contemporary indifference about the slave trade and inspire the leading abolitionists to adopt the cause with such determination and drive. Following lunch in Hall, there were contributions from four speakers all involved in various forms of campaigning. Mike Kay, of Anti-slavery International (formed in 1837 with Thomas Clarkson as its first President), spoke of the variety of forms of slavery that still exist: forced labour, bonded labour, trafficking, forms of child labour and descent-based slavery. Sadly, he pointed out the work of the abolitionists was far from complete, with at least twelve million people still in bondage. The Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin, an Anglican priest, spoke more personally of her experiences growing up in Jamaica and of the challenges subsequently of living and working in the UK. She reminded the audience that in racism, and in the under-representation of black people in educational establishments and their over-representation in prisons, we were still dealing with the legacy of slavery today.

Kofi Mawuli Klu, a Pan-Afrikan community activist, took issue with a number of the speakers and provided a more radical assessment of the legacies of the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade or *Maagamizi* (Swahili: holocaust). He called for a deeper acknowledgement of the connections between the chattel enslavement of Africans and the subsequent patterns of global economic development, or mal-development. Finally, the Revd Dr Carrie Pemberton, Chief Executive of the anti-trafficking project CHASTE (Churches Alert to Sex Trafficking Across Europe) spoke of her work with women who had been trafficked into the United Kingdom for sexual exploitation.

Following a lively panel discussion, ably chaired by a third-year student, Rebecca Fisher, the conference ended with dance, poetry, drama and music presented by the CU Afro-Caribbean Society and CU Black and Asian Caucus.

On the Sunday morning, a congregation of nearly three hundred people came together for a specially designed Gospel Mass to mark the bicentenary. The College Choir was joined by one of the top UK gospel choirs, the London Adventist Chorale (LAC), for the service which opened with a haunting rendition of *Deep River*. One of the highlights in a very moving service was a musical commission *Let the Sound of Freedom echo through the Earth* from the Director of the LAC, the composer Ken Burton. Finally, a pre-recorded BBC Radio 4 service was broadcast on the 25 February as the first in a Lenten series on slavery, with a sermon from the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, readings from the work of Olaudah Equaino and Thomas Clarkson, and music from the College Choir and the London Adventist Chorale.

Much of the weekend's activities can be found on the College website, http://www.joh.cam.ac.uk/chapel_and_choir/bicentenary_2007/anti slavery_conference/.

Duncan Dormor

HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT: SLAVERY AND JUSTICE IN RHODE ISLAND

Vice-chancellor, honoured guests, and may I say a special hello to the friends and alumni of Brown University who have come to this event tonight: thank you so much for joining us.

I am very pleased to be here on the commemoration of the bicentenary of the first Act of 1807 to abolish the slave trade. It's amazing and certainly to be remarked on this occasion, that two full centuries following that Act we are still wrestling with the consequences of that troubled practice. It's also to be remarked that we are also mindful two centuries later, of the potential for misguided actions to have prolonged ramifications down through the centuries.

In 1835 the then-President of Brown University, Francis Wayland, speaking on practical ethics in a course on moral science, opined about slavery in the following way: 'The slaves were brought here without their own consent, they have been continued in their present state of degradation without their own consent, and they are not responsible for the consequences. If a man have done injustice to his neighbour, and have also placed impediments in the way of remedying that injustice, he is as much under obligation to remove the impediments in the way of justice, as he is to do justice.'

Wayland found himself at a perilous moment in American history, when the confrontation over slavery in the nation was building toward an inevitably violent conclusion. Wayland was teaching and publishing broadly his views that slavery was not only immoral and ungodly but also that those responsible for slavery owed a debt to those enslaved. In spite of this courageous and unambiguous engagement with the question of the immorality of slavery by Wayland and so many others, the story of slavery at Brown and other Rhode Island institutions faded into the landscape following the civil war and abolition. Whether this was due to discomfort with any association with the institution of slavery or to the wilful forgetting called for by so many following the civil war, mention of slavery all but disappeared from the University's official accounts. But evidence of this history could not be so easily erased. Indeed slavery in Rhode Island was in plain sight for those willing not to look away. Located in a richly historical setting where much has been preserved from the pre-colonial and colonial period, Brown, the seventh-oldest University in the United States, occupies a site on a hill overlooking Providence, Rhode Island, that abounds with poignant testimony to the enslavement of native Americans and Africans. While the Rhode Island General Court had in fact an active legislation barring African slavery in 1652, a century later about 10% of Rhode Islanders were still slaves. In fact at the time of Wayland's exhortation, following law in 1784 making the children of slaves born in the state of Rhode Island free, slavery in Rhode Island was coming to an end but not yet over. Yet anti-slavery activism still marked the discourse and study at Brown as elsewhere, for slavery as you know continued in force in other parts of the United States. In the very year that the College of Rhode Island was founded (the College of Rhode Island was the predecessor institution to Brown University) many of Brown's incorporators were fervent opponents of British tyranny, calling, for example, taxation without representation a kind of slavery.

At the same time in that year, 1764, relatives of the people advocating for overthrowing the tyranny of taxation without representation as a kind of slavery, were involved in the slave trade. For example Esek Hopkins, the brother of the very Rhode Island governor Steve Hopkins, who came to England to proclaim the rights of the colonies to be free of such oppression, was involved in the slave trade. James Manning himself, who journeyed to Rhode Island to found the Baptist College that became Brown University, brought with him a slave. It was unremarkable to society at the time that the founder and incorporators of a College created in the spirit of religious freedom after all, should be holders of/investors in/traffickers in slaves. Such was the founder's paradoxical vision of freedom.

The examination of the moral precepts on which a society's aims and actions, both legal and otherwise, are based, is one of the essential elements of organised society and one of the most consequential duties of education itself. The role of abolitionists like Thomas Clarkson and William Wilberforce reach out to us today as a guide to the solemn obligations that we hold to critically assess our actions and examine both the route and legitimacy of our moral claims. We at Brown began such an examination because some features of that history had been submerged or lost, like so many of the nameless slaves, during the triangle trade. At the time we started our examination of the past, we heard many recriminations from alumni and non-alumni concerned about the possibility that the commissioning of the study would be backward-looking, offensive and counter-productive. What could be gained, some asked, from looking at the past?

You know I am very intrigued by the fact that you can hold this celebration here. Right now in the United States I don't think it would be possible to celebrate the end of slavery on a national basis, even today. The process we commissioned at Brown was a means of re-discovering the meaning of the stones, the buildings, the monuments that we walked among every day, ignorant of the language that they spoke, and therefore of the lessons they might teach us. Objects in my very office, the Secretary of James Manning, his portrait and his tall-clock, are themselves a daily reminder to me that I am part of that continuum of leadership that seeks to develop and argue a broad and generous capacity for truth, empathetic behaviour and courageous action. They are also a reminder to me that the history we create today leaves a long trail by which we will inevitably be judged.

A recent trip to Gettysburg, the site of the monumental Civil War battle of that name, gave me the opportunity to reflect on what the scholar David Blight called 'The Emancipation Vision of Civil War Memory' and to connect that vision to the unfinished business of the war. Many people have of course written about the unfinished business of the Civil War, the incredible way in which the story of the Civil War and the repair following it was managed so as to bring the nation together. Isn't it a fascinating one? As a southerner I have always been especially intrigued. Some people don't consider Texas the south but I always say I'm a southerner! I've always been especially intrigued by the reconciliation between the north and south, a reunion after such a brutal conflict that was nothing short of miraculous. That reconciliation, I believe, offers lessons for every time.

Now of course as University President I worry about reconciliation all the time: reconciliation between our historical legacy and our aspirations for the future; reconciliation between our past and present make-up and identity; and, on a day-to-day basis at Brown, because there are so many activist groups, reconciliation between groups of all kinds.

After becoming President of Brown, I learned that some current students and graduates of the University expressed a feeling of discomfort with historical memory at Brown *vis-à-vis* the Rhode Island slave trade: in particular the involvement of eighteenth-century members of the Brown family of Providence in the trade led them to question whether the University had sufficiently and appropriately acknowledged that involvement. From time to time Brown has been asked to clarify this history, and to provide guidance on how those facts are to be reconciled with the current mission of the University and its aspirations for the future. Of course it is the tradition of US campuses to seek a kind of commonality of vision, mission and experience. In undertaking a rediscovery of the history of our founding, we sought not merely to recover the whole of our past but to use this process as a means of thoughtfully shaping our future. A campus conversation about that vision, we thought, was consonant with Brown's wilfully progressive tradition and its academic values. The work of reconciliation around the question of slavery would require recovery of the complete history but more importantly an acceptance of both claiming and moving beyond that history. The multi-year open examination of our past was a means of identifying and eliminating potential barriers to the full enjoyment and pride we want to feel in a place we all love.

Now what is that history? Well in 1764, four sons of Rhode Islander James Brown helped to found the College of Rhode Island. They donated funds, built the buildings, provided equipment and collections, served as officers and governors, devotedly nurturing the College through its earliest days. Since the founding, successive generations of the Brown family have attended, guided and been active in numerous dimensions of University life and they remain so today, and the University is grateful for their ongoing involvement. However one of the four sons of James Brown, more notorious than the rest, is frequently mentioned prominently in connection with the Rhode Island slave trade, and that is John Brown. The Brown brothers, following the lead of the previous generation, had a diversified commercial business that included mercantile trade. James and his brother, Obadiah, had actually launched the family involvement in the slave trade in 1736. Of course we all know that eventually one of the brothers, in particular Moses, became a Quaker, broke from the family involvement with slavery, freed his slaves and organised the Providence Society for promoting the abolition of slavery. And again Nicholas, another brother, also eventually supported abolition. But John Brown continued to advocate for slavery even after Rhode Island outlawed it and he in fact became the first Rhode Islander tried under the 1794 Slave Trade Act. His notoriety, I would say, rather than that of any other member of the family, including his nephew Nicholas Brown Junior for whom the University is actually named, is really responsible for the attention that the University received regarding its ties, or presumed ties, to slavery.

We turned our attention, then, to addressing concerns of some alumni that we were deliberately misrepresenting the history of the University and minimising the seriousness of its assumed ties to slavery. After consulting with the Deans of the University I agreed to their suggestion that it might be helpful to appoint an independent committee to look into Brown's history, because after all an official account by the administration was likely to be found suspect, we all agreed. So a committee of scholars, under the leadership of historian Professor James Campbell, began its work in the fall of 2003. And my charge to the committee was pretty straightforward. I wrote: 'A wide range of complicated legal questions, moral issues and historical controversies will need to be examined rigorously and in detail. These are problems about which informed men and women of good will may ultimately disagree. However the goal of the steering committee will not be to achieve a consensus but to provide factual information and critical perspectives that will deepen our understanding.'

Aware that its work could be controversial, the committee decided that it would be wise to take considerable time to organise that work. They developed a website and the biography; they made every attempt to be transparent. They offered a comprehensive schedule of lectures, workshops, colloquia and conferences, as well as provided information about how faculty and students not on the committee might become more involved in research on the topic. They identified leading scholars to lecture on slavery, justice and reconciliation, and after almost a year of planning the committee announced its project in the spring of 2004. That announcement in itself was a lesson in how unresolved issues of slavery and justice still invoke bitter division in the United States. The so-called purposeful forgetting that Horace Greeley advocated for the north and south left freed slaves without a means to participate in the shaping of that forgetting, a forgetting that needed to take place on their terms too. Many, having moved on, are impatient with any reference to slavery and reject the need for truth and reconciliation around this history.

Our alumni magazine had actually run a story back in July 2003 previewing the committee's work, but that article had inspired very little interest, in fact I would say almost no interest. However when the New York Times ran an article on the committee on March 13 2004, interest quickly came alive. Many from across the country interpreted the committee's investigation into our history as a bit of a witch-hunt. They asked reasonable questions: 'Why look into this history if not with the express purpose of seeking reparations for slavery?'; 'Of what relevance is this history to the University today?'; 'Will the discussion of this subject open old wounds, divide the community and embarrass the University?'; 'Will the project stall forward-momentum and affect…' and here's the most important thing, '…affect donations to the University?'.

After this flurry of questions eased, the committee went about its work, as I said inviting scholars, investigating historical documents, uncovering many of them that had not seen the light of day for generations, mounting exhibitions, and interviewing experts who have worked on reconciliation in different international human rights settings. The process of mourning, commemorating and memorialising abuses of human rights can, they said, be a healing one. They gave examples of ways in which this healing had been accomplished: through monuments, public apologies, reparation payments and educational programmes. They didn't all agree on what was appropriate in public rituals of forgetting, but they did agree that each community had to find its way to a conclusion relevant to its own history and culture. Through all of this, our efforts were to teach and enlighten: to teach our students not to fear the truth; to teach our students techniques for unearthing the truth, even when powerful forces oppose its disclosure; to teach our students the power of this truth to enable forgiveness and reconciliation; to provide a model for how society overcomes breaches and strengthens ties weakened by forced forgetting. Will the antithesis of W E B Deboyce's sealing of memory, the unsealing of memory, help or harm us?

Well since we began our work there have been numerous disclosures of ties to slavery: Wachovia Bank issued a one hundred and eleven page report detailing its ties to slavery; JP Morgan gave scholarships to acknowledge that predecessor banks accepted slaves as collateral; the University of North Carolina commissioned a monument honouring slaves and free blacks who helped to build the school, and mounted an exhibit exposing its slave-holding past; Emory University has a slavery project underway; the New York Historical Society mounted a multi-pronged interactive exhibit on slavery in New York that was supported by many of the leading commercial enterprises in the city. In fact, I recall, when I first learned about that exhibit it was quite something. Lloyd Blankfein who is currently the CEO of Goldman Sachs, came to me and said 'Ruth, there is something very important that I want you to see. And', he said, 'I want to take you to see it and I want to be with you and experience your reaction when you see it'. So I said 'well what is it?' He said 'the New York Historical Society has this incredible exhibition on slavery in New York; it's something you *must* see'.

So when I went to the exhibit I was really overwhelmed by it. It was quite an emotional experience. There, in this setting, were all of these New Yorkers learning, probably for the first time, that New York had had slaves and, furthermore, learning something about what the lives of those slaves had been like in New York City. It was wonderful to see them interacting around this exhibit. And, as you may know, the New York Historical Society conceived this exhibition as a three-part series. They completed the first part, they are now into the second part, and there is yet another one to come. This is wonderful, it's a wonderful direction, but there is so much more to do. One day people will come to our country and will see museums, monuments, courses of study, institutes and many other signs that the country has made a better effort to acknowledge the role of slavery in creating the nation. There is much more to do but this is a good start, the start of a long effort to set the record straight.

The committee issued its report in October of 2006. What did we learn from the report? And I believe that Molly Duramel, who is with me here from Brown, has actually brought a couple of copies of the report, and you can access the report itself on the website if you have an interest in doing so. Perhaps more interesting even than the report itself really, though the committee would be mortified to hear me say this, are all of the documents that have been photographed and made available on the web site. So you will see there correspondence between family members and slave traders, you will see the manifest of ships, you will see great detail about what happened in the crossing. It's an amazing, amazing collection of documents that actually reside in our University. The John Carter Brown Library itself is probably one of the best collections of information about slavery in the Americas, original documents which we continue, by the way, to collect because the John Carter Brown Library is very well-endowed as an institution and it continues. In fact I just went to a meeting this week and they have purchased additional materials and they have a wonderful exhibit ongoing about slavery.

So what did we learn? We learned that about thirty members of the Brown corporation owned or captained slave ships, and many of them were involved in the slave trade during their years of service to the University. So it's inescapable: many of our founders were actually involved in the trade. We also learned that the original building on the Brown campus was built in part with slave labour and with materials supplied by slave holders and slave-trading firms. In fact the title of this talk is taken from a section of the report that points out a facsimile prêt of the building's construction records that hangs in University Hall: long hidden in plain sight.

We also learned that the subscription campaign in 1760 raised money from slave holders and slave traders, some of whom were in the south. We also learned that the four Brown brothers who supported the building of the College were slave owners, and their joint commercial enterprise was involved in slave trading, as I said before. Indeed just a year before the founding of the College, three of the brothers, *three*, sent a schooner to Africa but it was captured by a privateer. They kept trying: in 1764 another ship dispatched by the brothers, *The Sally*, sailed under Hopkins, under orders to exchange goods for slaves. And records of *The Sally* are probably some of the best preserved records of a slave ship extant today. Sixteen Africans perished during the voyage from Africa to the West Indies, twenty died in the West Indies, and one died on the way back to Providence. And of course we know these details because of the scrupulous records that survived and that report in substantial detail of what occurred on the crossing.

We learned wonderful stories about abolitionists and the abolitionist movement. Not only Moses but many others involved with Brown at the time, questioned the morality of the trade and fought vigorously against its continuation, and that is a wonderful story to be told. We learned that following the example of the Cambridge University essay contest that resulted in Clarkson's famous essay in 1786, Moses Brown proposed a prize for the best student essay on the slave trade in the United States. The contest was never created by the University, however, probably for very good reasons. Most probably at the time favoured the trade and didn't want to see something like this created. But James Talmage, eventually to be elected to the House of Representatives, where he was to play a role in the abolition of slavery, and a Brown student, gave a speech at the University on the evils of slavery. There are many examples of students, of presidents and others who were engaged in this work.

Thus the committee's work revealed the highs and lows of that period, a period in our history in which some acted out of avarice and contempt for human dignity, and others out of courage and respect for the rights of all men. Our history includes the likes of John Brown and Esek Hopkins, but also the likes of Moses and James Talmage and Francis Wayland. Now our students can embrace the complexity of this history and discourse without doubt, fear or embarrassment. Where does that now lead us? I had asked the committee to comment on how this history instructs us in our present mission as a University, how should it inform our goals and aspirations? The committee therefore issued a series of recommendations reflecting their views on what this history requires of us today. Quite apart from their findings and their recommendations, we extended to our community the opportunity to comment further on this history and on the committee's work. And so for several months now we have received comments, questions and even recommendations as to how we might make use of the committee's work. Next week at a meeting of our incorporation at Brown University I will in fact present a proposed response to the committee's work and in that response I will suggest a course of action informed by the committee's report. I now share with you the thrust of what I am going to propose to them next week.

First that we acknowledge the ways in which Brown's history is in fact entangled with the slave trade of Rhode Island by revising official documents that omit that fact, and that we disseminate widely the committee's report, and that we make available the documents and objects that bring this story to light in all its complexity. That we commission, with the co-operation of the city and the state, a monument that acknowledges this history in Rhode Island and on our campus. That we make active use of the rich archives that we hold through the rare and complete records of the Brown family and others, by expanding access to these resources and by creating an initiative on slavery in the Americas. That we embrace our responsibility to those left behind by creating two community initiatives in education which we acknowledge to be a powerful mechanism for freeing individuals from current and past effects of oppression and discrimination. These actions and others, while informed by the work of the committee, can be truly said to reflect a robust enthusiasm for doing the right thing for our students, our alumni and our community. Universities hold an important public trust that requires them to model the best use of their resources while we rightly focus on advancing knowledge and on the success of the individual students whom we are privileged to teach; we are inevitably caught up in the failings of societies and states. History we know will not hold us harmless from engagement with these failings. Where there is moral offence we must comment. Where there is injustice we must cast light on it. Where there is ambiguity in public responsibility we must encourage debate. Where there is an opportunity to influence others to improve the conditions of society we must not turn away.

So I take the committee's work to be a summons. A summons to the best in University life. A summons to embrace fully the role of a great University to be involved in its time. A summons to do as Wilberforce and

Clarkson did in their time, in bringing light to those unfortunate souls whose liberty and basic rights were withheld from them. Would the world had changed enough in this century that there would no longer be a need for such actions, but as we see in every region of the world there is much work to be done. Honouring these men of courage is an act of engagement, for it keeps alive the need for human beings to look beyond their personal comfort and needs to concern themselves truly and deeply with the rights of others. What could we possibly teach in the University that would be more important than that?

So I congratulate you on your celebration and I say again it is a great honour for me to be with you. Thank you.

Professor Ruth J Simmons
President of Brown University

Professor Ruth Simmons with Richard and Nancy Perham

ST JOHN'S MOST HISTORICAL MOMENT? THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE

In the year 2007 it is right to honour two of St John's most famous alumni, Thomas Clarkson and William Wilberforce. Two hundred years ago, in February 1807, it was Wilberforce who, more than anyone, inspired the House of Commons to vote in favour of the second reading of a Bill to outlaw Britain's own very central role in the Atlantic slave trade. As the bicentenary of abolition approached, many a patriotic lip must have been licked in anticipation. Certainly some impressive plans were laid. An official service of remembrance was to be held in Westminster Abbey. Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott would call for an annual 'anti-slavery' day in honour of Wilberforce, his predecessor as MP for Hull. On Merseyside, a £12m International Slave Museum was commissioned to be built on docks that had once grown rich on slave-grown sugar. Across the country there were to be at least a hundred commemorative events – exhibitions, musicals, dances, plays – not to mention television documentaries, radio dramas, and a number of 'So Sorry' walks, one of which would trace Clarkson's campaigning footsteps over 470 miles. All these things duly came to pass, and in addition at least five books directly about Wilberforce were published during the calendar year with titles and subtitles like *God's politician*, *Statesman and saint*, *The man who freed the slaves*, *The Washington of humanity*, and *The millionaire child who gave up everything for the African slaves*. The biggest impact of all was made by Michael Apted's full-length feature film or biopic, *Amazing Grace*. According to its promotional website, 'a nation was blind until one man made them see'. Such concentrated glorification of Wilberforce's personality, and such belief in the power of human virtue generally, had not been seen in conventional history books for a very long time, if ever.

And yet... whereas books and films take years to project and complete, journalism blows with the wind of public mood. The anniversary of abolition certainly struck a chord in the media, but few within the ranks of officialdom, 'bumbledom', and general 'tweedledum' can have anticipated the extent to which their intended morality play would be hijacked by anti-establishment cynics. Most spectacularly, the service in Westminster Abbey faltered when Toyin Agbetu, an invited representative of the African pressure group Ligali, rushed up to within twenty feet of Queen and altar shouting, 'You should be ashamed. This is an insult to *us*. The Queen has to say sorry. There is no mention of the African freedom fighters. This is just a memorial for William Wilberforce.' Diane Abbott led a chorus of condemnation directed against *Amazing Grace*, partly on the grounds that the absence of irons, whips, weals, gore, raped women, and mutilated limbs 'prettified the slave trade'. Most of the public commentary, like most individual blogs and websites, concentrated not on abolition but on the trade itself; on its role in making Britain the richest and most powerful country in the world, and in laying the basis for its immense empire; on the likelihood that as many as one million of the eleven million Africans who were forcibly transported died on the 'middle passage' to the Caribbean; on the many unspeakable horrors and cruelties, such as stories of Africans being thrown overboard because they were sick, because the vessel they were in was overladen, or because (after 1807) their masters wished to avoid Royal Navy fines. Above all on the shameful fact that, despite abolition of the trade, the institution of slavery itself remained lawful and rife in British dominions until 1833. All this, and the relative silence of the triumphalist lobby, led Yasmin Alibhai Brown to hope that 'the national conscience is beginning to speak after two hundred years'.

However, another journalist (the *Guardian's* Martin Kettle) thought that the anniversary was 'almost as divisive and difficult as it was unifying and conciliatory', while Gillian Reynolds in the *Telegraph*, conscious of all the anger swirling around the subject, admitted that, as someone of native British stock, she found it impossible not to be angry too: 'I try. I listen, read, go to lectures and exhibitions. I still get angry, with myself for feeling both guilty and not guilty, with black friends for not giving me credit for trying.'

Undoubtedly the lash was on the other back, and it was only a matter of time before the question of an apology was raised. 'A British state that refuses to apologise for a crime on such a gigantic scale as the slave trade merely lowers our country in the opinion of the world', declared

Lord Mayor Livingstone. Temperamentally, Prime Minister Blair was more disposed to apologise for Acts of God (such as the Irish famine) than for human malfeasance, but he went so far as to render an 'historical expression of regret' for a 'shameful crime against humanity', while the Education Secretary (Alan Johnson) must also have had contrition in mind when he directed that the slave trade should figure on the national curriculum as 'a keystone of revamped citizenship education'. On hearing of that proposal, Mrs Thatcher's old Press Officer, Bernard Ingham, retorted that 'the only thing British kids needed to know about the slave trade was that *we* ended it'. Clearly, the bicentenary of abolition struck an enormous chord, but also a deeply ambiguous one.

It is interesting to contrast all this with the situation in 1907. Then there was no Abbey service and almost no official commemoration. Apart from the *Guardian*, the press was virtually silent. The *Times* carried three very brief facsimile paragraphs reprinted from the February 1807 edition, but there were no editorials and no commentaries. On 13 March 1907 a tiny advertisement in miniscule print informed readers that a committee had been formed for celebrating the centenary of abolition, and calling on anyone who was 'interested in Africa from an evangelical standpoint' to get in touch. The low-key tone adopted, and the fact that it shared a half-column with notices of two other less than portentous 'coming events' (an exhibition of gentlewomen's work in Marylebone, and a meeting of the fish trade to protest against the Billingsgate Market's proposed move to Shadwell), indicates beyond any doubt that the topic of slave trade abolition was not a hot one. As for Wilberforce personally, the only references to him in the *Times* of 1907 concerned his house at Battersea Rise, where the so-called Clapham Sect had once plotted slave trade abolition and where the British and Foreign Bible Society had been founded. On 20 May the house was reported to be up for sale. No buyers came forward, and on 10 July the local council called on either the LCC or a committee of local residents to come to the rescue. Twelve days later a public meeting at Battersea Town Hall resolved that the ratepayers should not be asked to shoulder the burden, especially as 'the purchase was not warranted by any sentimental considerations'. Finally, on 21 November it was announced that 'the owners of Battersea Rise House have decided upon the demolition of the building. The movement to secure the building as a memorial of Wilberforce and other leaders of the anti-slavery agitation has failed to secure public support... Two handsome chimney-pieces…have been sold for £160.' The point is not so much the loss of the house as the blanket of indifference.

Yet it is not the case that Edwardians were indifferent to anniversaries in general, as is clear from the outpouring of jubilation and junketing that greeted the centenary of the Battle of Trafalgar in October 1905. Quite apart from any number of anticipatory events, on 23 October alone there were services and demonstrations of thanksgiving in Trafalgar Square, the Albert Hall, the Royal Horticultural Hall, Earl's Court, and the City Temple. The *Times* devoted many thousand column inches to the occasion, hailing Lord Nelson as 'the greatest sailor since our world began'. 'His glorious victory and equally noble death, was celebrated…in a spirit of solemn gratitude in every corner of land and sea where the sound of the British bugle is heard. The centenary was honoured not in the spirit of triumph over fallen foes, but in that of recognition that freedom, not for Britons only, but for the civilised world, was won at Trafalgar.' It is evident then Nelson was regarded as an icon in the first decade of the twentieth century, whereas Wilberforce was not.

However, the latter's reputation soared during the second two decades of the nineteenth century, partly thanks to the historian Elie Halévy's 'discovery' that evangelicalism had been crucial in preventing revolution in industrialising Britain. In 1933, which was the centenary of Wilberforce's death as well as of the end of British colonial slavery, Reginald Coupland published his influential *The British Anti-Slavery Movement*, which cloaked the Abolition movement in a mantle of religious zeal and pious humanitarianism. This surely explains the very different way in which that centenary was recorded as compared with 1907. The *Times* of 1933 carried several editorials, and described the abolition of slavery as 'a stupendous and almost incredible achievement, the conquest, after a struggle lasting nearly fifty years, of selfishness, ignorance, and prejudice on a grand scale by sheer moral and spiritual energy. It was an achievement scarcely, if ever, rivalled in history.' According to the great Cambridge historian G M Trevelyan in the same paper, Wilberforce had done more than anyone to create the 'Victorian faith in a continuous progress of humanity to freedom, and to vindicate for politics some of the sublimity that it had possessed in the eyes of Plato'. There were reports of numerous public subscriptions, meetings, processions, and services (including one in the Abbey). In Wilberforce's home town of Hull, there was an exhibition in his honour at which a waxwork model of the great man, presented by Madame Tussaud's, was serenaded every night with negro spirituals. While in his adopted home of Battersea the Mayor laid a wreath beneath the tablet that commemorated the spot where Wilberforce's house had stood until 1907.

Perhaps this contrast between attitudes in 1907 and in 1933 is not so very surprising. Why should a great imperial nation, such as Britain felt itself to be in 1907, agonise about its part in slavery? Freedom, as the *Times* encomium on Nelson had pointed out two years earlier, was to be won by fighting tyrants, not by emancipatory legislation. And for that matter, what was the point of celebrating the virtue of abolition, given that the British empire was (as they believed) steeped in virtue from first to last? Abolition was merely a needle in a haystack of good deeds. However, by 1933, the year in which Hitler assumed power, Britain, though still an imperial nation, was a very troubled one, and the hullabaloo surrounding abolition almost certainly betokened a need for historical reassurance. In the case of the *Times*, there is also a more specific message. Under Geoffrey Dawson's editorship, that paper would soon become a leading mouthpiece of appeasement, and one reason why Wilberforce appealed so strongly (to Dawson, Trevelyan, and many correspondents) was as 'a warrior for peace', someone prepared to sacrifice the national interest to a higher good. One stirring editorial ended by calling for another Wilberforce to arise and broker peace between the snarling nations of Europe. And on the same principle that context is all, it seems likely that in 2007 the prevalence of breast-beating over drum-beating has been prompted by uneasiness over Britain's participation in the second Iraqi war, and by a consciousness that the country is currently pursuing a dubiously ethical foreign policy.

The fact that abolition of the slave trade occurred in 1807 was anyway largely fortuitous, the result of high political considerations. As will be seen, passionate and popular enthusiasm for anti-slavery had blown up very suddenly in 1787. In 1792 Parliament, egged on by Prime Minister Pitt and the leader of the opposition, Fox, resolved by an overwhelming majority that the trade should be abolished, but only gradually. From that point on the slave holders, working through their representatives at Westminster, fought like tigers to prevent abolition, and there were many procedural and legalistic loopholes for them to exploit. The slave owners were also helped by a new mood that set in after the French revolution went to the bad in 1793, with the reign of terror, the guillotining of thousands of aristocrats and their families, and the execution of Louis XVI. Suddenly 'liberty' did not seem so desirable as it had the year before, whether for slaves or anyone else. Soon afterwards violent slave revolts in Grenada and St Vincent sparked off an anti-black reaction, which was cleverly exploited by the West India lobby. (Those historians who emphasise the slaves' own agency in achieving abolition are right to say that the revolts made the long-term viability of the trade more doubtful, but in the short term they made abolition harder to push through Parliament.) And so the opposition rallied, years passed, public enthusiasm waned, and by 1804 Wilberforce and Clarkson were more pessimistic than ever.

Unquestionably, what brought about eventual abolition was not outside pressure but the accidental fact that in 1806 Fox's Whig Party returned to office (in a Ministry headed by Grenville) after twenty-three years in opposition. It is important to remember that in the Hanoverian period ministries were *never* installed as the result of a general election, but it was common for newly-appointed ministries to call an election soon after they had been installed, because it meant they could use the electoral influence available to all governments to strengthen their position in Parliament. Grenville duly called an election in November 2006, and the number of MPs sympathetic to abolition increased by about fifty. Moreover, although Pitt claimed to be for abolition, he did not give it top priority like Grenville, who at once undertook to push through a Bill for the suppression of the *foreign* slave trade (meaning the supply by British slave traders of foreign countries and colonies and of conquered islands), which according to

Clarkson's calculations had amounted to about two-thirds of the whole British trade in peacetime. This measure was carried in May 1806, largely because it appealed to many anti-abolitionists, not on moral grounds, but because it would serve to promote the war effort. Tactically it was a masterstroke, as the historian Roger Anstey has cleverly explained.

> With the supply of foreigners and conquered islands ended by the 1806 abolition bill, the West Indians were like shorn lambs to the wind of a humanity which now blew cold indeed. For in the situation that Grenville and the abolitionists had so ingeniously contrived (and which is perhaps the harder to discern because one is so conditioned to expect interest to masquerade as altruism that one may miss altruism when concealed beneath the cloak of interest), the mass of independent members of Parliament was ready, against all the evidence of the West Indies' importance to the nation, to act as the children of the later eighteenth century (with its manifest anti-slavery convictions) that they really were (Roger Anstey, *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760–1810*, 1975, pp. 407–8).

In the event, Wilberforce's 'great Bill' to outlaw the domestic slave trade passed its second reading in the Lords by one hundred votes to thirty-four on 5 February 1807, and similarly in the Commons by the wholly unexpected margin of 283 to sixteen on the 23rd. It had been a very small window of opportunity because, six days after the passage of the Abolition Act, the Pittites returned to government under the anti-abolitionist Portland, he too held an instant election, and the outcome was a Parliament that would have been much less sympathetic to the abolitionist cause. The famous Act, like Waterloo, was a damned close-run thing.

Most leading abolitionists hoped that the suppression of the slave trade would lead to the end of slavery itself, but they were in a bind, having in many cases only managed to persuade MPs to vote for the abolition of the trade by promising they would leave the wider question alone. That was why, on the eve of abolition, Clarkson objected to the circulation of a campaign medal with an engraving which implied a desire to go the whole hog. 'You will recollect', he wrote privately to a colleague, 'how often we have been charged with this by our opponents, how frequently we have been obliged to do away the impression by public advertisement.' The anti-slavery cause languished therefore, and did not take off again until the 1820s. Once again the timing of success owed almost everything to the fact that in 1830, after a further twenty-three years in opposition, a Whig government once more came to power. The outlawing of slavery in all British dominions in 1833 was practically the first thing Lord Grey's government did once it had got its Great Reform Act out of the way. It prompts the reflection that evangelicals like Wilberforce would have done more for their beloved cause if they had campaigned for an Opposition Whig government, but unfortunately they were too conservative (not to say reactionary) on most other issues for that to have been possible.

Still, although the timing might be fortuitous, it is unlikely that Parliament would have acted at all without a head of popular steam, and this was where Clarkson came in. He had matriculated at St John's in 1779, just three years after Wilberforce, and famously stumbled upon his life's work accidentally. Having entered for a prize essay on the subject of anti-slavery, mainly for the money or the glory, he became first hooked and then obsessed. In 1787 he began his career as the foot soldier of anti-slavery, deciding Daniel-like to begin by tackling the slaving port of Bristol. He described in his diary how he first saw that city in the distance and swallowed hard: 'The bells of some of the churches were then ringing; the sound...filled me...with a melancholy... I began now to tremble, for the first time, at the arduous task I had undertaken, of attempting to subvert one of the branches of the commerce of the great place which was then before me... I questioned whether I should even get out of it alive.' He did, but then when he went to the other great slaving port of Liverpool, he was attacked and almost drowned in the Mersey estuary. Immediately afterwards he went to Manchester where somehow he conjured up, apparently out of the blue, a petition signed by 11,000 people, nearly one-fifth of the local population. It was the first mass petition on any subject, and provoked what has been called a spiral of 'competitive philanthropy' in other towns, a spiral which reached a peak in 1792 with a 13,000-strong petition from Glasgow. In place after place, where anti-slavery protests were registered, Clarkson seems to have been involved, either by correspondence with his contacts in the localities, or else by personal visitation. He claimed to have interrogated 20,000 sailors and to have covered 35,000 miles on horseback in just seven hectic years.

For all Clarkson's heroics, he could only have lit the touch paper, in which case there must have been a powder keg waiting to explode. Historians such as Adam Hochschild have suggested that anti-slavery created what is now called the 'habit of voluntarism' or 'civil society', and certainly his campaign had a very different flavour from earlier petitioning movements to denounce corruption or bewail the loss of the American colonies. Those had been more raucous, old-fashioned, and largely gentry-led affairs; his was urban, polite, rational, and much more 'popular'. Only about thirty per cent of Clarkson's signatories in 1788, and only fifteen per cent in 1792, were members of what might be called the elite: nobles, corporators, freemen (whereas the normal figure in the eighteenth century would have been more like eighty to ninety per cent). Anti-slavery has therefore been seen as the first stirring of a middle-class consciousness, the start of a long (and halting) process which ended in the 1830s when the business middle-classes established a hegemony in local government and a foothold in national politics. It was also one of the first routes through which women were incorporated into public life. Between 1790 and 1810 about ten per cent of subscriptions to the cause were in a female name, and women were often physically active as well.

However, while anti-slavery seems to have created civil society, civil society was hardly in a position to abolish the slave trade. In the first place, there was a serious loss of momentum. Whereas in each year from 1787 to 1795 between twenty and fifty towns had sent in petitions signed by thousands, the only significant petition from a large town in 1806 was from Manchester, and even there the inhabitants were much less enthusiastic than in 1792. Clarkson laboured as tirelessly as ever to keep the issue on the boil, but now worked mainly behind the scenes, lobbying on committees, preparing legal injunctions, and organising mass boycotts of rum and sugar. In the second place, only parliamentarians could abolish the slave trade, and they responded negatively to large-scale demonstrations of public opinion, especially after the French revolution began to go bloody from September 1792 onwards. Indeed, many reformers blamed Fox's appeals to 'public opinion' for setting back the cause. This was where Wilberforce came in, the leader of the so-called Saints in Parliament and close friend of Prime Minister Pitt (whereas Clarkson himself was much closer to Fox), and with Wilberforce in comes religion.

There has been a long-standing debate over the impulses behind the campaign against the slave trade, and in particular a tension between those who would privilege moral and specifically religious considerations, and those who have supposed that self-interested motives must have operated. The most notorious of such cynics was the Marxist Eric Williams, who argued in *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944) that the religious and humanitarian language of abolition was hypocritical. In his view, Britain only abolished the slave trade and then slavery after they had become an economic impediment to a mother country that was rapidly industrialising, and increasingly attached to Adam Smith's doctrine that free market labour was cheaper, more efficient, and better motivated than slave labour. Williams's general line is still widely cited in public debate, despite its comprehensive rebuttal by many historians, most notably Seymour Drescher, who has established the following points. First, the British West Indies were far more valuable to Britain in the decade or so leading up to 1807 than they had been formerly. Second, the property value of the slave colonies doubled between 1789 and 1814. Third, Britain's share of this increasingly profitable slave trade peaked just before abolition, as did the share of British capital that went into the trade. Fourth, Britain's slave system had reached nowhere near its 'maximum economic potential'. Fifth, in the years leading up to 1807 Britain's trade with Europe was stymied by the Continental System (ie the attempts by Britain and France to destroy each other's commerce), while military disaster in Argentina had strangled hopes of opening up alternative markets in South America. According to Drescher, British slavery was 'a dynamic system' that was 'aborted in its prime'. Indeed, 'the trade pendulum was swinging slaveward' at the very time when Parliament decided to put a stop to it. 'Given Europe's growing need for sugar, coffee, and cotton, given the African coast with its social machinery in place for dealing up human beings, and given Britain with its capital, its fleet, and its new lands, there existed as devastating an economic combination (in favour of the slave trade) at the end of the eighteenth century as at the beginning!' Nor is Drescher's magisterial argument based only on statistical hindsight, since he also shows that contemporaries were aware of the true position, hence the title of one of his books, *Econocide*, implying that the abolition was a case of attempted economic suicide.

So it would appear that, as Simon Schama has more colourfully put it, slavery still represented 'a Klondike of money' in 1807, and that the Abolition Act was 'an absolutely spectacular act of irrationality'. A common mistake, however, is to suppose that because British abolitionists behaved in defiance of market profitability they must therefore have been moved by altruism. It is obvious *now* that the Atlantic trade underpinned the prosperity of huge swathes of eighteenth-century British society as well as that of the slavers themselves, but there was no such awareness at the time. And whereas the concept of 'econocide' presupposes a sense of shared national interest, contemporaries were all too aware of competing interests in a zero-sum economy, and operated with a Malthusian sense that one group's gain was another's loss. Super cynics might note that Wilberforce's family wealth was based on Baltic trade in the non-slaving port of Hull, and might reflect that up-and-coming 'Manchester men' would do anything to puncture the disdain of 'Liverpool gentlemen'. No doubt this argument should not be pushed too far, but it may not be so very surprising that a Parliament of landowners should have been persuaded to curb the enormous profits of the West Indian trade. Quite apart from the politics of envy, there was a concern that those profits were dangerously speculative, especially given the danger of slave revolts, and might precipitate a financial crash. Economic stability was more important to parliamentarians than profit, particularly at a time when Britain stood alone against Napoleon, whose dominance of Europe reached its peak in 1807.

Cynics have also argued that abolition was a cover for imperial control. The British empire is sometimes said to have been acquired in a fit of absence of mind. This was manifestly not the case with the eighteenth-century empire, which was gained in a series of upfront wars against the French, nor with the late nineteenth-century 'scramble for Africa', but it does apply to the second empire accumulated between 1790 and 1850, though 'state of denial' might be a better description than 'absence of mind'. Whereas foreigners saw brutal imperialism, the British saw only a liberating force and Protestant mission. The main avenues of this second empire were not territorial but maritime, and it was the mighty Royal Navy that serviced and protected its shipping lanes and trading stations, entrepôts and naval bases. Slave trade abolition gave the Navy a convenient excuse to stop and search other nations' vessels and to confiscate any that were guilty of what in 2007 was called 'extraordiary rendition'. (The Americans got so fed up by the tactic that they declared war on Britain in 1812.) In this way anti-slavery undoubtedly became a prop of imperial ambition. Nevertheless, it is hard to see it as a *motivating* force in the years leading up to 1807.

And so we are left with religion. Clarkson worked closely with Quakers, those mute inglorious accessories of abolition. He found them (as he told Hannah More) a bit 'cold, prudent, lukewarm, cautious, and worldly-wise', but they were also virtuous, they were indispensable, and he became (as he put it) 'nine parts in ten of their way of thinking'. Indeed, he eventually abandoned his Anglican orders. His religious beliefs could, like theirs, be described as humanitarian or *this*-worldly. He saw slavery as a blot on a loving God's creation, and as contradicting such Quaker imperatives as equality and non-violence. He was instinctively unsympathetic therefore to Wilberforce's Anglican evangelical *other*-worldly emphasis on sin and salvation, judgment, heaven, and hell.

Wilberforce's impulse (like Hannah More's and unlike Clarkson's) was missionary rather than humanitarian, and it had two foci. One was the need to redeem a British society that had become mired in luxury and corruption and religious indifference. This work of national redemption had to be attempted top down, starting with a re-formation of the manners of the rich. Self-evidently the slave trade stood between the slave owners and their personal salvation, but since all Britons potentially benefited from the wealth generated by sugar and slaves, the whole of society was in spiritual danger. Wilberforce's second focus was on the souls of the slaves themselves. He and the other Saints were not all that concerned about the material condition of the slaves. That statement needs to be qualified. Almost everyone who took the trouble to find out about the slave trade came away horrified, but the Saints were not fundamentally driven by humanitarian sensibilities. Life was a place of moral trial, a moral obstacle course standing between each soul and heaven, and slaves were no more born to be happy than anyone else. The fundamental problem with slavery was that its victims were not free to think, not free to choose Christ and reject Satan, and therefore not able to be saved. A significant factor here was the rapid rejection of high Calvinist views in the 1770s and 1780s. Many members of the Calvinist Countess of Huntingdon's Connection, for example, openly supported slavery, but the tendency of most religious thought was increasingly Arminian (meaning a belief that everyone is given the offer of salvation and that no one's spiritual fate is pre-ordained). Even those who clung to Calvinistic tenets in formal terms often modified their position, arguing that, although God might have pre-ordained to salvation, the choice was still open to sanctification. In which case, it was argued, slaves must be free to make that great choice.

Evangelicals were often criticised for the contrast between their bleeding-heart compassion for slaves and their indifference to the relief of poverty and misery at home, including that of workers or wage slaves in the new mechanised industries. Dickens famously satirised 'telescopic philanthropy' in his portrait of Mrs Jellyby in *Bleak House*. She was a philanthropist obsessed with the miseries of the natives of Borrioboola-Gha on the Niger, but scandalously neglectful of her own ragamuffin children. The extreme version of this charge is to say that evangelicals deliberately targeted an external abuse in order to divert attention away from British capitalism: that is from a system of domestic exploitation that benefited them directly. Wilberforce came from a merchant family, Henry Thornton was a banker, and many other evangelicals were in business of some sort. The less extreme version is to charge the Abolitionists with hypocrisy. Yet it seems likely that evangelicals genuinely (albeit mistakenly) believed that domestic wage slaves *were* free agents operating within a free capitalist market, a market which itself they thought reflected the divine economy, testing human beings and putting them on their everyday moral mettle. For them, instinctively, freedom and capitalism were compatible, whereas freedom and slavery were not.

From what has been said so far it might be supposed that Clarkson's humanitarian approach, based on the light and love of God, was joyful and generous in tone, and that Wilberforce's sin-obsessed missionary approach was repressive, tremulous, and penitential. In fact the opposite was the case. Clarkson was seriously earnest. Hugh Brogan writes in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* that 'he seems to have had no sense of humour at all, though he liked others to be merry'. Now Wilberforce *was* merry, jocund even. He was charismatic, outgoing, and altogether captivating, a loving and playful father to his six children. Evangelicalism got harder in the next generation, but at this point it was not all gloomy. Although it dwelt on sin and damnation, it did so only in order to accentuate positives like faith, salvation, and redemption. Clarkson's labours were vital to the cause, but his nagging approach would never have moved cynical MPs in Parliament, where Wilberforce was crucial in creating much needed vitality and enthusiasm.

The different approaches of Wilberforce and Clarkson were to some extent mirrored by those between Pitt and Fox. During 1792 to 1793 those two politicians each tried to claim the greater commitment to slave trade abolition. Fox's speeches were wonderfully humane, noble-hearted, and enlightened. The slave trade was an abominable traffic in human flesh, 'a system of rapine, robbery, and murder', and a violation of 'the principles of justice, humanity, truth, and honour', but he irritated many MPs, even some who shared his feelings on the slave trade, by his appeals to 'the principles of real liberty, the happiness of mankind, the rights of nature'. These words were spoken just twenty-five days after revolutionary France had declared war on England in the name of liberty, equality, and fraternity. Fox's appeals to public opinion as a reason for abolition didn't go down well either. Much more appealing in that climate was Pitt's counter-enlightenment rhetoric. According to him, the slave trade had infused a poison into British commerce which corrupted every participant, subverted the whole order of nature, and aggravated every natural barbarity:

'Thus, Sir, has the perversion of British commerce carried misery instead of happiness to one quarter of the globe... How shall we ever repair this mischief? How shall we hope to obtain, if it be possible, forgiveness from Heaven for these enormous evils we have committed, if we refuse to make use of those means which the mercy of Providence hath still reserved to us for wiping away the guilt and shame with which we are now covered? If we refuse even this degree of compensation, if, knowing the miseries we have caused, we refuse even now to put a stop to them, how greatly aggravated will be the guilt of Great Britain!'.

However, it was a tenet of evangelicalism that the greater one's spiritual danger, the more glorious was the deliverance therefrom. Thus Pitt proceeded to explain the mercy in the curse. Precisely because Britain had plunged more 'deeply into this guilt' than any other nation, there was no other nation that was so likely to be 'looked up to as an example, if she should have the manliness to be the first in decidedly renouncing it.' 'It is as an atonement for our long and cruel injustice towards Africa, that the measure...most forcibly recommends itself to my mind.'

This was the most blatant humbug. Pitt was no more an evangelical than he was Queen of the May. But he knew how to sound like one, and because he was a celibate and self-righteous workaholic the impersonation was convincing. The unkempt, womanising, casino-frequenting Fox would never have got away with it even if he had tried. Pitt's rhetoric struck a chord with the parliamentary classes, not necessarily outside the political classes, nor with the Manchester anti-slave signatories, but it struck a chord with the only people who could actually bring about abolition. It did so because of the extraordinary sense of national crisis at the time of the loss of the American colonies. That crisis was widely attributed not just to folly but to national sinfulness and to wholly justified divine chastisement. As Lord Camden said in 1783, 'This nation requires virtue as well as talents to save it'. Hence the moralistic evangelical wave of the 1780s, all those societies formed for improving morals and manners and rescuing fallen women. It was further reinforced in the 1790s by the prospects of revolution and invasion, and by the symbolism (which no one missed) of Nelson and Napoleon slogging it out in the Holy Land at the battle of the Nile (1798). Many apocalypse watchers in the later 1790s believed that Napoleon was the 'little horn on the head of the fourth beast' as foretold in the book of Daniel, and that his military victories presaged Armageddon, the imminent return of Christ, and the end of the world. Not many people in political circles shared a sense that the world was about to end, but very many thought that providence was about to punish Britain specifically. In this version Napoleon was not the beast from the abyss but the worldly instrument of divine chastisement.

Hence a strain of parliamentary rhetoric that historians have strangely neglected, one which oscillated between an introspective craving for atonement and a crusading humanitarian optimism. The slave trade was a 'foul iniquity' which would 'completely justify the avenging angel, in entirely extirpating [this nation] from the face of the earth', said James Adair in 1796, while according to Bishop Barrington in 1807, 'Without abolition Britain would look in vain hereafter for the glories of the Nile or of Trafalgar'. 'God has entered unto judgment with us', echoed James Stephen; 'we must, I repeat, look to Africa, and to the West Indies, for the causes of his wrath.' Again, George Canning (not someone who is often thought of as religiously motivated) said during a debate on a proposed sale of Crown lands in Trinidad in 1802, a sale which he feared would lead to increased slave labour: 'Providence has determined to put to the trial our boasts of speculative benevolence and intended humanity... This day is a day of tests. I trust we shall all abide the trial.' This was probably not humbug, but even if it was, the point is that it was a humbug that had resonance.

No doubt atonement was just one strand in a complex mentality, but it was one that was particularly resonant in Britain in February 1807 when, fourteen months after deliverance at Trafalgar, she yet stood alone against the whole of Europe. Far from being 'the most altruistic act since Christ's crucifixion', as one MP put it, abolition might be regarded as being more like a spiritual insurance policy. This would suggest that religion was indeed the driving force of anti-slavery, but it was a different and less eirenical type of religion from that which usually gets the credit. Indeed, the atmosphere in 1807 seems to have been closer in many ways to the ambivalent attitude taken towards anti-slavery in 2007 than it was to the gung-ho moralism of 1933.

To sum up, William Wilberforce and Thomas Clarkson had almost nothing in common in terms of politics and religion, yet they co-operated to bring about a most remarkable outcome. Their contributions to abolition were different but complementary. They were not the only agents of liberation, but without them it is hard to imagine that the British slave trade could have been shut down when it did, or indeed for many years afterwards. They deserve their honours.

Professor Boyd Hilton
Fellow of Trinity College

ARTICLES

ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Chris Dobson moved in 2001 from Oxford University, where he was a Professor of Chemistry, to become the John Humphrey Plummer Professor of Chemical and Structural Biology in Cambridge.

In the same year he became a Fellow of St John's, and in October 2007 he became Master. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society and of the Academy of Medical Sciences, and an Honorary Foreign Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. His research interests are directed at understanding the molecular origins of disorders such as Alzheimer's disease and diabetes. These activities are combined with his hectic schedule as Master of St John's, a glimpse of which is revealed here.

Message from the Master

I write this message just eight months after becoming Master of this great College. It seems only yesterday, however, that I was taking the oath of office in the Chapel, but when I think about all the events that have taken place since then it seems impossible that they could all have happened in so short a time. Regardless of the strange characteristics of time's arrow, I can say without hesitation that I have enjoyed every moment of these few months – or to echo that marvellous sentiment from *HMS Pinafore* – well, nearly every moment! And it is a particular pleasure to write my first message in *The Eagle* in the year when we mark the 150th anniversary of its birth. *The Eagle* is the oldest continuously published college magazine in Cambridge, and older than any in Oxford for that matter, showing once again the innovative and persistent nature of the Johnian community.

The academic year started for me with the Admission Ceremony on 1 October, the day that my wife and I moved into the Master's Lodge. One cannot claim with any credibility that the Admission Ceremony is one of the most gripping College events, and this time appeared to be mainly concerned with testing my ability to find a pen that worked well enough to sign my name in the historic book. But to me it was highly symbolic in that the doors of the Chapel had been 'thrown open' and the President had explicitly invited not just all Fellows and

Junior Members to attend, but also the College staff, and the Chapel was full. I believe very strongly that the College is a community of ALL its members – past and present – and it was a particular pleasure to see so many of our incomparable staff at this event. Indeed in preparation for taking up office, my wife Mary and I had visited, during September of last year, just about all of the Departments of the College, meeting a large number of members of staff, from those who keep our gardens looking so wonderful to those who make sure that all our Junior Members pay their bills more or less on time, and to the Lady Seamstress whose efforts are apparently in particular demand as May Week approaches for the task of taking in (never letting out, I'm told!) a whole series of ball gowns and the like. It gave us a remarkable insight into the magnitude and complexity of the day-to-day tasks of running the College, and the skill and dedication of the nearly 300 men and women whose efforts ensure that all those things we take for granted do, in fact, happen without us even noticing!

Once the formalities were over, the real work of being Master took over. My first event was the Admission of new Fellows, six in all, including four splendid new 'Title A' Research Fellows, and then the task of chairing the College Council and a range of other committees became a reality. These activities have all convinced me that we are extremely fortunate to have an exceptionally able and committed Fellowship that cares deeply about the College and its future. It has also been a great pleasure to entertain groups of students in the Lodge, to find out some of the reasons they love the College so much, and to meet their parents and friends at newly introduced events, such as the now public ceremony of the Admission of Scholars and a Tea Party at the end of Michaelmas Term for the freshers and their families.

A source of real and continuing pleasure throughout the year has been the chance to meet a very large number of Johnians, often with their families, at events in Cambridge and elsewhere. New and very successful innovations this year in College have included 'Matriculation Anniversary Dinners', the first of which was a twenty-fifth anniversary celebration that attracted a large number of Johnians (and their partners) and was hugely enjoyable – despite the fact that Cambridge failed to keep up its recent winning form in the Boat Race that afternoon. My own conversion to the lighter shade of blue was judged by our guests to be complete by my evident chagrin at the victory of my own Alma Mater! In addition to these Cambridge events I have been privileged to meet Johnians further afield at dinners and other functions organised by the Development Office, or in many cases by individual Johnians, and to hear a wide variety of views about the College and ideas for its future development. So far events of this type have taken place in London, Edinburgh and Manchester, and in New York, Houston and San Francisco, and in a few weeks my wife, Mary, and I shall be hosting one in Beijing. I have enjoyed enormously not just meeting a large number of interesting and delightful people, but also to see that these events bring Johnians together who live in near proximity but had not realised it. The exchange of email addresses and mobile phone numbers at the various functions is always fast and furious.

Undoubtedly the most remarkable Johnian get-together of the year, however, was in New Delhi, where Mary and I spent (at short notice) all of twenty-five hours last November, following the remarkably generous offer from the Johnian Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, not only to permit our new Graduate Scholarships (which will bring up to four Indian students each year to study at St John's) to be named after him but also to launch the programme from his Official Residence. We enjoyed a splendid lunch and the chance to meet a range of distinguished Indian scientists, industrialists and politicians who had been educated in Cambridge. At the launch itself, held in the Prime Minister's garden in the evening, Dr Singh gave a moving address in which he said how much he owed to St John's for accepting him on a scholarship and for being so welcoming and so encouraging, and he recalled by name those Fellows who had influenced him the most during his time in College. The event received enormous publicity in India, all of which was highly complimentary to St John's and Cambridge. It was a remarkable day!

The increasing pace of Johnian events reflects in large part the approaching Quincentenary of our Foundation in 2011.

The increasing pace of Johnian events reflects in large part the approaching Quincentenary of our Foundation in 2011. A variety of events is being planned to celebrate this anniversary in appropriate style, designed to look forward to our future ambitions as much as to celebrate our past achievements. In order to enable us to achieve our objectives in the immediate future, we are about to 'go public' with the launch of the St John's College Campaign to raise £50m in the next four years, a target that is extremely ambitious by Oxbridge College standards, but one that we are confident of achieving with the help of Johnians and friends across the world. Our primary motivation in launching such an appeal is simply put: we wish to ensure that Cambridge remains one of the very top universities in the world, that the collegiate nature of the University of Cambridge is strengthened, not eroded, with time, and that John's remains the leading College in this great university. There are many challenges that come from our traditional friendly rivals, particularly in North America, and our newer but no less friendly rivals, particularly in East Asia.

Professor Christopher Dobson

We believe that the collegiate nature of Cambridge enables us in this College to provide an intellectual environment that is second to none, and also to generate young men and women with the all-round skills that have brought Johnians such great success in the past, and that will undoubtedly be increasingly valuable in the future. As the finest College in the University, we wish to take the initiative in this enterprise and raise funds to enhance our ability to provide the best possible education in the world, and to build up our endowment to ensure that we can continue to do so in the future, come what may. And so we shall stress that this is the first step in a process that will provide us with the resources appropriate to our world-leading position, and hope to begin to change the nature of fundraising for educational institutions in this country. We are proud to be raising funds because, having looked after our previous endowments very carefully and responsibly, all new moneys that we receive will go directly to enhancing the provision of education for undergraduates, and to stimulating the vital discovery of new knowledge by graduates and Fellows.

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Johnians have enriched the lives of almost every person on this planet over half a millennium, through astonishing advances in science and medicine, through humanitarian acts almost without parallel in history, and through contributions at the highest levels to music, literature, sport and theatre. We are determined that we continue this tradition of producing not just a relatively small number of household names but whole generations of men and women who by their actions and examples make at least as great a contribution to the world as the familiar 'famous alumni'. There are exciting times ahead, and opportunities that I hope and believe will be embraced by the overwhelming majority of all members of the Johnian community.

I shall not attempt in this short message to catalogue the many other events of the year in College. Let me just say that it has been a particular pleasure to see our incomparable Choir flourishing under the guidance of our new Director of Music, Andrew Nethsingha, who succeeded David Hill, now Conductor of the BBC singers, a role that he combines with many other musical activities. It was a great pleasure for me recently to see David in action at the Royal Festival Hall, conducting the Bach Choir, in which our own Professor Peter Johnstone is a stalwart performer. A real highlight of the year, however, was the news of the award of the Nobel Prize in Economics to Professor Eric Maskin, Overseas Visiting Fellow, 1987-88, and Honorary Fellow since 2004. It was a truly Johnian event as his permanent base is at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, which is now headed by our former Master, Dr Peter Goddard!

In the midst of these happy occasions there have also been times of desperate sadness, notably the deaths of Professor John Crook, Fellow since 1951, Professor Norman Bleehen, Fellow since 1976, and Dr Jonathan (Joe) Spencer, Fellow since 1995, who died tragically, at the age of only forty-seven, in a car accident. Obituaries and tributes to the achievements of these three Fellows are printed later in this issue of *The Eagle*.

I would like to finish on a personal note by saying that I feel enormously privileged to have been given the opportunity to serve the College as Master. It has been extraordinarily rewarding to meet so many interesting Johnians, and to discover just how much our College is loved and respected around the world. This point was brought home to me at a dinner for Johnians in – of all places – Oxford, where the person sitting opposite me said, 'You know, I've just been thinking, and it might just be the people I know, but I've not met anyone in more than forty years who has been at John's who has ever said they wished they'd gone anywhere else.'

Well I've not met anybody either and I think that this remark encapsulates brilliantly the magic that is John's – and my ambition, and that of all of us here in the College, is to ensure that the magic goes on for at least the next 500 years.

Christopher Dobson
Master of St John's College

Stephen Teal joined St John's in February 2007 as Development Director, after a career spanning Oxford and Newcastle Universities, and Westminster School.

He is married with two sons, and a cat, and spends most of his spare time lamenting the trials and tribulations of Manchester City.

EVELOPMENT
OFFICE

Stephen Teal

Message from the Development Director

One of the many reasons I never excelled as an historian was a terrible memory for dates. Try as I might, I simply can't remember wedding anniversaries, birthdays and, to the cause of great domestic unrest, which day of the week to put out the bins. The year 2011 is, however, proving immune to the symptoms of my calendar-related amnesia. As one may gather from this, planning for the College's Quincentenary is gathering pace, and a varied and exciting alumni relations programme is starting to take shape. Ideas and suggestions from Johnians are, of course, most welcome.

Efforts to strengthen the College's relationship with its alumni are already well advanced, with a significant expansion in the number of events and publications. Particular importance has been placed on broadening the appeal of our activities for Johnians: the past year has seen such diverse events as lunches at the Boat Race and the Varsity Match at Twickenham, receptions in Edinburgh and New Delhi, and dinners for those who celebrated the twenty-fifth and fiftieth anniversaries of their matriculation. Johnians have returned to the College to talk to students about careers in the City, the Public Sector and in the Media, whilst alumni from as far afield as New Zealand brought their families to St John's for the Open Weekend last July.

One of the highlights of the year was undoubtedly the launch, in New Delhi, of the Dr Manmohan Singh Scholarship Programme. Named in honour of one of St John's most distinguished graduates, the current Prime Minister of India, this scheme will bring some of India's most talented research students to Cambridge. The warmth of the reception we received, coupled with the incredible amount of media coverage, demonstrated the strong ties that exist between India and the UK and the high regard in which the University is held. The first three students will arrive at the College in September 2008 and we are very grateful for the sponsorship from the BP Foundation, Rolls Royce and Tata Group for making this programme possible.

The autumn of 2008 will also see the launch of the College's £50m fundraising campaign. As has been reported in other publications some very large donations have already been received, and these give a significant boost to our efforts to raise what is an ambitious target. The hope is that these major gifts will stimulate many other Johnians to give to the College at a more modest level. The Campaign's aims and objectives will revolve around continuing academic excellence in a changing world. The early response from alumni has been very encouraging and we take great confidence from this. We are grateful to all those who have already participated and given us their time and guidance.

Stephen Teal
Development Director

With the help of hundreds of generous benefactors, St John's has been able over the centuries to grow and achieve great things.

Each May the long roll of benefactors, beginning with Lady Margaret and John Fisher, is commemorated in a service in the College Chapel, at which their names are recited by the Deans, and a commemoration sermon is preached. On 4 May 2008 the commemoration sermon was given by the Right Reverend Dr Michael Jackson, Bishop of Clogher, Ireland, who read Theological and Religious Studies at St John's (BA 1981, MA 1985, PhD 1986).

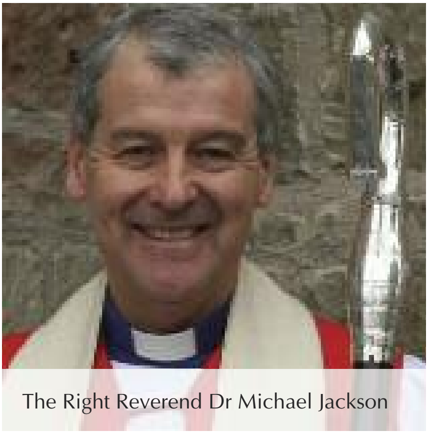
Commemoration of Benefactors: Tradition, Honour and Ethos

'Traditional' is a difficult word to handle because somewhere, in the dim and distant past, it was something recognisably radical – hard though it may be to believe as we contemplate it now. Our picture of what is traditional has been eroded, sentimentalised and idealised. Even ancient universities are not immune from this mirage, which can breed its own form of self-satisfaction. In a world oscillating culturally between the twin poles of heritage and innovation, we tend to think a number of things. One is that by conserving and polishing up the past we will somehow keep it alive. Another is that we can carry all of the past into the future with us if we brand it as traditional. A third is that we can do without the past altogether. These are mistakes. To my mind, none of these of itself tells a sufficient truth to be realistic about the role and nature of past, present and future abiding together critically. The tradition functions by being innovative. The tradition has a life by being open to fresh disclosures, different approaches and new applications in a variety of contexts unknown to our predecessors and still at this juncture unknown to us. My point is simply that so much of the world has not in fact yet happened and is yet to happen.

Not only is there a challenge of political correctness in preaching here this morning on a text that begins: 'Let us now praise famous men, the fathers of our people in their generations…' in a mixed College, but there is a further challenge in preaching on this text in a College that effectively owes its foundation to a woman, Lady Margaret Beaufort, in 1511. However, I think we can succeed in moving through and beyond this piece of apocryphal chauvinism to the substance of this morning's Reading (Ecclesiasticus 44:1-15). Many of us recoil today from the contractual, even mercenary, basis of so much of Wisdom Literature and we may even rush to accuse it of rank cynicism. But, as with any piece of literature, we need to understand it in its primary context before we press it into service for our own purpose. Wisdom Literature is something that ancient Judaism holds in common with other parts of the Ancient Near East including Egypt and Mesopotamia. A significant part of its function seems to have originated in scribal education and the training of civil servants. Appropriated by Ancient Israel, and made more specific in its application, it incorporated and accommodated the particular religious notions of Israel and became recognisably Israelite with, for example, its emphasis on prosperity, inheritance and its assurance of belonging within the covenant. Where it enters our equation this morning is that, in being read in a fresh context, it gives expression to our desire to remember and honour the benefaction of those who have put their trust in, and their generosity at the disposal of, this College of St John the Evangelist, to educate and prepare people over almost half a millennium for service and leadership of community, church and state beyond the College's Front Gate, which itself commemorates our first and greatest *famous woman*, Lady Margaret Beaufort. This is the tradition that carries us forward into both purity and application, through academic study and rigorous scholarship, from the Tripos to Fellowship of the British Academy or of the Royal Society.

I wish to speak this morning only of two things: 'honour' and 'ethos'. Neither of them is exclusively Christian nor exclusively academic but both have resonances into a world where, in the College Prayer, regularly we ask God that 'love of the brethren and sound learning may ever grow and prosper here' to the honour and glory of God and to the good of God's people. The word 'honour' itself has two basic meanings. The first is the repute or esteem in which a person or thing is held and the second, deriving from this, is a public honour, official dignity or post which someone holds by virtue of such repute or esteem. A further meaning is, of course, anything that is given as a gift, mark of honour or acknowledgement of such repute or esteem, whether during life itself or subsequently after death, in recognition of a life well lived for others. The point that stands out for us as we grapple with the responsibility embedded in our privilege is that it really is from respect for others, however different from them we might be or they from us, that there flows our entitlement to whatever office or dignity now or in the future any of us might hold. The same goes for whatever reward any of us might reap. And our holding of any such office or dignity or our gaining any such reward is always to be tested in the fire of generous integrity and liberty of thought.

In the world of today, the expectation that people might, as a matter of priority, honour one another probably sounds rather quaint and pious. The majority of people nowadays see themselves as having economic potential, transferable skills and career goals, which, given the correct opportunities and education, they



The Right Reverend Dr Michael Jackson

have the capacity to turn into cash. To talk of honour itself and of honouring other people sounds outmoded. It is exactly the sort of thing it is nice to know *other people* are doing because we know well that, were we to try it out for size ourselves, it is hard work. What is more, deep down, we sense that it will all too often get in the way of the really important things we have set ourselves to do and to achieve. And all the time the tradition around us is changing. With change comes the irreversible recognition of difference. Difference itself shapes the change and shapes also the value we place on the past that has preceded it. But difference and change are complicated concepts. They themselves alter our own pace and force us to accept the pace of others. Often we feel cornered and turn to insult, subterfuge or politicking. Very quickly, also, what begins by being shocking becomes everyday and, somehow, normal. Our own generation is porous to advertising and its capacity to manipulate our senses, our values, our relationships, our dissatisfaction with our lot and our plastic card.

I offer you but one example of what has changed radically in our own time: information. To all of us, the communications revolution is here to stay and it is an integral part of our lives. It brings us tremendous advantages, new intellectual possibilities and consumer conveniences, from the personal iPod to genetic mapping. From the perspective of education, it is perhaps one of the most glorious tools of the trade anyone could have wished for, in terms of accessing publicly available information, in presenting one's own use of such information and in making it available and attractive to others. Yet, viewed from a different perspective, it is as dangerous as it is convenient. I say this because no matter how we try to police it, it is intrinsically devoid of morality and therefore it can credibly be argued that, as well as being informative and liberating, it is every bit as much corrupt and corrupting. Virtual reality carries no responsibilities.

As an undergraduate, St John's taught me a number of things for which I remain grateful to this day. The first is that you learn best what you teach yourself. By this I do not mean that you ought to disregard or disrespect your tutors or the syllabus. Untutored geniuses are few and far between! But what I do mean is that throughout an undergraduate career you remain inquisitive about what you are taught; that however needy you are, you do not cut corners and bow down before the finality of information but recognise its limitations. Information is, after all, no more than a slip-road to comprehension. Much of it, in any case, is quickly superseded by new and more exciting discovery and interpretation. The second is never to fear being stuck for something to say. This may sound trite, 'twittish' or annoying. But I suggest that for every undergraduate here, as life opens up for you, there will be many opportunities for you to say something or to shy away from saying anything. You, the undergraduates and graduate students of today, can bury your treasure by seeing it as your own hard-won achievement or you can see it in itself as a benefaction to others. My advice is: Don't shy away from saying good things! Too many people assume that tolerance and respect are simply part of the air we breathe and, therefore, feel that there is no need to do anything about them. This I simply do not accept. The forces of intolerance, extremism and unthinking conservatism are indeed out there. They remain a potent force for perversion and distortion in the world we inhabit. They have a large following and are the very mirror-opposite of the *sound learning* that characterises the best possible response of Commemoration of Benefactors of this College called by the name of the beloved disciple.

It is important for all members of a college – Fellows, Scholars, staff, undergraduates – to have a clear grasp of that seemingly wispy word: 'ethos'.

It is important for all members of a college – Fellows, Scholars, staff, undergraduates – to have a clear grasp of that seemingly wispy word: 'ethos'. The primary meaning of the word 'ethos' is a habitat, a place where animals or humans regularly and instinctively go. It is used, for example, to describe the haunt of animals by Homer: 'the haunts and pasturage of horses…' (*Iliad* 6.511). From this physical meaning there develops the human usage of customs and characteristics, even to the point of facial expression. And again from this develops the moral dimension of what we refer to as ethics, the philosophy of human character and conduct. I have laboured this because place, people and values all together make up the ethos of a Cambridge College such as St John's. It has a glorious location with the Cam running through it. It has the enthusiasm, commitment and dedication, consistently, of wonderful people. It stands, like a well-ordered rugby scrum or the symmetrical equipoise of a rowing Eight, for the values of respect and honour of other people. Like Homer's horses, it has to be somewhere that undergraduates feel safe and are fed if they are to flourish. Like its secondary meaning of human characteristics, it has to have something to do with the way people are, and are shaped and moulded by the place in terms of character and attitude. Like its philosophical development in terms of ethics, it has to stand for something of value in the living out of human behaviour. And this brings me back to my request that we all, together and individually, need to continue to explore the word 'honour' with which I began.

Universities do their utmost to challenge and deflect crude popularisation – and this is entirely proper. But there is always a different type of danger, often unacknowledged, and it is that of becoming Gnostic enclaves. Their abiding gift, and the most enduring legacy of their benefactors, is that of teaching us the provisionality of the truth as we perceive and see it. The continuing quest for understanding and disclosure of truth is the essential challenge of rigorous scholarly humility to generations of undergraduates and out into a world too frequently impoverished by its self-confidence, arrogance and jingoism. Earlier this year, the Regius Professor of Divinity in this University, himself no stranger to St John's, outlined six main challenges for a contemporary university. The first is: Can it marry research with teaching across a wide range of disciplines? The second is: Can it offer an all-round education that forms students in ways that go beyond information, knowledge and know-how? The third is: Can it cultivate forms of collegiality that enable conversations and collaborations across specialities, generations and practical concerns? The fourth is: Can it contribute broadly to the common good of society, both national and international? The fifth is: Can it be well-endowed and well-governed, accountable to many stakeholders but also with appropriate independence? The sixth is: Can it be appropriately interdisciplinary in its academic life, its contributions to society and its discussions about its own purposes and policies? He did so in a volume celebrating the tortuous journey of the Irish School of Ecumenics towards integration in the University of Dublin. These questions may seem alien to what we are doing together this morning. But before we presume to dismiss them, let us at least appreciate the many ways in which in the University of Cambridge and St John's College they are already part of who we are.

To my mind these questions remain pertinent to the quest for wisdom today. The confidence to give away to others the best of oneself in a sharing that betokens an equivalence of respect is a mark of such contemporary wisdom. So also is the ability to put the best of one's own tradition at the service of understanding a totality beyond one's own particularity. So also is the patience to strive towards a fresh expression of inherited traditions in a synthesis of intention to be humble before the truth. None of this would be possible for us even to ruminate upon were it not for the benefaction of Benefactors of this College past, present and future. It is for their vision and their generosity, each in her and his own day, that we today give thanks to Almighty God. It is from their vision and their generosity that each member of this College benefits. It is to their vision and generosity that we all today look in admiration and appreciation.

Ecclesiasticus 44.11: 'Their prosperity is handed on to their descendants, their inheritance to future generations.'

Michael Jackson
(BA 1981, MA 1985, PhD 1986)

John Pocock, Honorary Fellow of St John's, is the Harry C Black Emeritus Professor of History at the Johns Hopkins University. His many seminal works on intellectual history include: *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law* (1957, second edition 1987); *Politics, Language and Time* (1971); *The Machiavellian Moment* (1975); and *Virtue, Commerce and History* (1985). He has edited *The Political Works of James Harrington* (1977) and Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1987), as well as the collaborative study, *The Varieties of British Political Thought* (1995).

Professor Pocock is a Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy and of the Royal Historical Society, and a member of both the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society. There follows an edited version of a talk he gave in the Combination Room on 6 June 2007.

Retrospect And Prospect

It's a deeply moving experience to find myself speaking in this room and under this ceiling, and at the same time a slightly terrifying one. I held a very junior fellowship in the 1950s, a very different era in Cambridge history, and there is a bevy of amiable but intimidating ghosts looking over my shoulder at this moment, or more probably getting on with their own ghostly conversations. I find their names – Hugh Sykes Davies, Edward Miller, Colin Bertram – on the jackets of books in Senior Guest Room 3.

My wife and I are revisiting Cambridge, not for the first time since we were married in the Round Church – it was a church then – in 1958, with John Crook as Best Man, and George Guest playing the organ; there was a reception in Chapel Court. But we are also celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the appearance of my first book,[1] and, with Richard Fisher of the Cambridge University Press, I'll be talking about two projected publications that may be of some interest to this audience. One is for a selection of essays on method, which have appeared since 1962 under two sectional headings, 'Political thought as history', and 'History as political thought'. The first of these, of course, denotes an enterprise for which Cambridge has become renowned as far away as Japan, and which will always be associated with the name of the present Regius Professor of Modern History, Quentin Skinner. The second denotes the direction that I think my work has taken as part of that enterprise, and I shall try to say something more about this in the course of these remarks.

The second projected publication is that of the fifth and sixth volumes of a series centred on Edward Gibbon. The first four were published by the Press between 1999 and 2005,[2] and we envisage two more. They will conclude the series, at least for the time being, at the fall of the Roman Empire in Western Europe (assuming that to have been what happened). This was the point Gibbon had reached by the end of the third volume of his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. He then let seven years go by, from 1781 to 1788, before publishing three further volumes, which took him to the fall of Constantinople and back again to Rome, where his enterprise had begun. It would be unwise for me to allow such a lapse of time. I should like to go on and consider the last, fascinating phase of Gibbon's work; but the existing series, *Barbarism and Religion*, seems to be outrunning the profession's capacity to find reviewers (I apologise to the exceptions); and I am now eighty-three years old – Gibbon in 1781 was only forty-four – and the two volumes planned will take several more years to research, write and publish. That seems hubristic enough, without looking further; but you never know.

All the volumes making up *Barbarism and Religion* are constructed on what Cambridge has made known as the 'contextualist' method. That's to say, I consider, by turns, historical topics or problems that Gibbon encountered in the course of writing the *Decline and Fall*, and I examine how these were dealt with by other historians, more or less contemporary, whom we know he read and responded to. Each of these incidents, or moments, in the history of historiography thus forms a 'context', as we call it, for some episode in Gibbon's writing of the *Decline and Fall*, in the history to which the *Decline and Fall* belongs, and in the history that the *Decline and Fall* narrates. Gibbon appears a historian in dialogue with other historians, of his own time or of the generations preceding it. There is a consequence of this; perhaps a price to be paid. The *Decline and Fall* does not emerge from this treatment as a grand classical narrative, a monumental work of neo-classical art, so much as a gigantic jigsaw puzzle in which the pieces are constantly fitting into other puzzles lying outside the framework. I think this is exactly what it is, though it is at the same time a grand neo-classical structure and can be viewed as such; there are different but equal ways of viewing it.

My approach, I want to say, enables us to see Gibbon's work as something he put together over time (about fifteen years of writing time), as his attention moved from one historical problem to another, and his history was written in the multi-contextual history we all live in. To see it as a monument it is better to wait till it was finished; I try to present it in the making. The costs do not end there, however. I am constantly writing about other historians, and circling back from them to this or that chapter of Gibbon's work; and there must be, and are, readers wanting to know when I am coming to grips with the *Decline and*

Fall as more than a series of incidents. I suspect that this is why my third and fourth volumes have been, as I see it, under-reviewed; such readers as I have are waiting until they can see my work as completed, and view it as I do not view Gibbon's.

This, if true, is a reason for bringing *Barbarism and Religion* to a halt with my sixth volume and Gibbon's third. The latter, and therefore the former, can be treated as chiefly narrative. There is less debate with other historians, and Gibbon moves along with the barbarians as they move west and establish in the Atlantic provinces of empire what will come to monopolise the name of Europe: the Latin-using civilisation of Roman church and Frankish empire, French, Spanish and English monarchies, eastward encounters with Orthodoxy and Islam, westward navigation to the Americas, Renaissance, Reformation and Enlightenment. All are visible in Gibbon's later narrative, and it should be possible to present his volumes of 1781 as grand narrative moving towards the birth of Europe in these senses of the term – thus satisfying my readers if I am right about their wishes. But there will remain a great deal about the *Decline and Fall* that has not yet been said, and to explain what this is I must go back, if you will bear with me, and talk about what is happening as I work on my fifth volume and the gap between Gibbon's first volume and his second, between 1776 and 1781.

In the process of writing the *Decline and Fall*, Gibbon arrived at two widely separate moments when the character of the book, and the meaning of its title, changed drastically.

In the process of writing the *Decline and Fall*, Gibbon arrived at two widely separate moments when the character of the book, and the meaning of its title, changed drastically. The second of these lies at the point I have just reached, and outside the limits I have set for myself. Having reached what he considered the end of empire in the west, he had to decide whether he would go on and narrate the thousand years that still separated him from the fall of Constantinople in 1453; a history not Latin but Orthodox and Islamic, distinct from that of the Europe whose foundations he had just laid. In the event he did, but it took him seven years and he was never sure he had found the right way of writing this history. He had always been aware of this problem. In the preface to his first volume, in 1776, he states that he may or may not attempt a history of the eastern empire, and says that if he ever reaches the fall of Constantinople, he will turn back to examine the state of the city of Rome during the western middle ages. In the last three chapters of the *Decline and Fall*, this last is what he does. But the preface of 1776 says nothing about the first of the transformative moments

Professor Pocock

I mentioned, though this is reached, and then partly postponed, in the volume published with this preface. At the end of Chapter 14, when Constantine has defeated his opponents, Gibbon says that 'this revolution' had 'two immediate and memorable consequences', 'the foundation of Constantinople and the establishment of the Christian religion'.

Instead of proceeding immediately to these consequences, however, Gibbon concluded his first volume with two chapters on the state of the Christian religion before Constantine, and did not arrive at the consequences until he published his second volume five years later. By that time a good deal had happened. Gibbon had begun to write a new kind of history: that of the church, and of the church in the empire; but he had introduced it in such a way that his readers' minds were, and have remained, made up about how he was doing it before he had really begun.

I'm in the middle of writing a book about this moment in the history of the *Decline and Fall*, and should be careful not to say too much about it. At this point our cultural biases operate in two ways. We are, even now, biased towards classical Rome, and equate *Decline and Fall* with its disappearance, while regarding Gibbon as writing an elegy for it. But this disappearance, which I've termed 'the first Decline and Fall' in my third volume, is over by the end of Chapter 14; and there are fifty-seven to come. Gibbon is a historian of late antiquity and the 'Middle Ages'. In the second place, we are biased in favour of Enlightenment and agnosticism, and do not look beyond the scepticism visible in Gibbon's Chapters 15 and 16. We fail to see that from these chapters on, he is writing a new kind of history, and says so. 'Modern' history, he more than once tells us, is differentiated from 'ancient' by the presence of the Church; that is, by the existence of a clergy, unknown in pre-Christian antiquity and claiming an authority that does not arise from civil society and competes with the authority that does. The underlying theme of Chapters 15 and 16 is how far that clergy and its authority had taken shape by the time of Constantine.

If this is a kind of history new to Gibbon – we know very little about when he became interested in it – writing its history was not new at all. Following the practice of reading the historians Gibbon says he read, we find that there existed a complex and sophisticated history of the early Church, from the apostles through the persecutions to the time of Constantine, dating from Eusebius himself and rewritten by authors of what we call the early Enlightenment, up to a hundred years before the *Decline and Fall*. Gibbon had read extensively in this literature, and does not dismiss it as ridiculous. A central theme of this history was the encounter between the Gospels and Greek philosophy, out of which had grown the debate over Christ's nature and the central structure of Christian theology. The process had begun as early as the Fourth Gospel, ascribed to the last and longest-lived of the apostles, from whom this College takes its name.

The critical authors of the early Enlightenment – Richard Simon, Jean Le Clerc, Pierre Bayle, the second more important to Gibbon than the third – had rewritten the history of theology to the point where it ceased to be (if it had ever been) a narrative of the transmission of a revealed truth, and became instead a history of authors struggling to express revelation within the limits of the language or languages they had; a kind of history recognisable enough to us in contemporary Cambridge. Christ's nature became the history of attempts to say what it was. Gibbon knew this history very well indeed, but the curious thing is that he did not employ it in Chapter 15 – Chapter 16 is a separate problem – but did employ it, in great detail, when writing Chapter 21 (1781) leading to the Council of Nicaea, and in Chapter 47 (1788) leading to the Council of Chalcedon. These chapters set out the history of Christian theology, and though Gibbon writes them as an unbeliever, he does so without the mockery that had offended readers of his chapters in 1776. He had a narrative that needed telling, and he told it by taking it seriously.

The effect of knowing this is to raise questions about the role of Chapter 15 in the *Decline and Fall*. This chapter aroused intense controversy in 1776 and after, and has remained important to our thinking about Gibbon, because he declared his intention of examining only secondary and secular causes for the growth of Christianity, and because he adopted an ironic and mocking tone towards Christian piety. It has never been very clear just what account of divine agency in spreading Christian belief his critics thought he should have adopted, and for this reason even modern readers have been content with generalised images of Enlightened scepticism on Gibbon's part and a simple-minded orthodoxy on the part of his enemies. But now we know that there was a complex history of the early Church available to both orthodox and heterodox interpretations, that Gibbon knew this well, used it in later chapters of the *Decline and Fall*, but did not make it the theme of the chapter that aroused so much controversy; and we have to re-examine our understandings of both the chapter and the controversy. Chapter 15 offers important clues to what Gibbon was doing and turned out to have done, but it is not by itself sufficient to our understanding of his history of the Church. The 'Enlightenment' to which he owed most was not that of Voltaire or the radical English deists, but the 'early Enlightenment' beginning in the 1680s, in which the history of theology had tended to substitute itself for theology as a means of knowing God; and he was capable of writing that history without making fun of it.

But the problem of Chapter 15 does not end here. Why did Gibbon feel the need to write it at all? If he had proceeded direct from Constantine's seizure of power to the state of the Church when Constantine adopted Christianity – an action about which there had always been a diversity of opinions – he might have evaded the controversy of 1776, still raging when he published his second volume five years later. As it was, however, his intentions in writing ecclesiastical history were dismissed as expressions of unbelief before his history of the Church in the Roman Empire had begun, and that prejudgement has lasted to the present day. I think Chapter 15 was a strategic mistake on Gibbon's part, and I know of at least one contemporary who thought so.

This is the kind of discovery that emerges when the history of historiography is written according to the principles for writing the history of political thought . . .

This is the kind of discovery that emerges when the history of historiography is written according to the principles for writing the history of political thought, which I learned from Peter Laslett, and which Quentin Skinner has magisterially developed. The question I should like to discuss in the remainder of this talk is why the history of historiography should be written, or at least why I am anxious to continue writing it. Here I shall say something about the second book project I mentioned at the beginning, and I will take up Sylvana Tomaselli's dangerously attractive invitation to venture into autobiography. I have in fact been engaging in this adventure for quite some time. In two or three recent essays[3] I have looked back as far as 1949, when I was a research student at Emmanuel working with Herbert Butterfield and J H Plumb, and had encountered Peter Laslett's pioneer studies of Filmer and Locke. What I found was that the publication of Filmer's works in 1679 led to controversial writing on two different levels: debate over the origins of rights and government in human societies – political theory and philosophy as we understand the terms – and debate over the antiquity of common law and parliament in English history, and how this kind of history should be written. On the first level there had long existed a sizeable modern literature, about to be upset by Laslett's revolutionary redating of Locke's *Treatises on Government*; on the second there was only a small book by Butterfield and part of a larger one by D C Douglas.[4] I made it my business to pursue the second, and my doctoral dissertation became *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law*.

I would say of my work since that time that it has moved steadily from the history of political thought tending towards political theory, in the direction of the history of historiography as a species of political thought. This seems to me relevant when some of us are said to constitute what, outside Cambridge for the most part, is called the 'Cambridge school' in the study of this branch of history. I am inclined to suggest that Quentin Skinner, and in another way Richard Tuck, have remained preoccupied with 'the state' and political philosophy, whereas I have been more strictly concerned with 'civil society' and its accompanying historiography. Their attention falls on Hobbes, Grotius and the growth of law; mine on James Harrington and the subsequent history of commerce and manners (important to Gibbon as a friend of Adam Smith). Here in Cambridge, however, I find Istvan Hont and Michael Sonenscher steaming far ahead of me,[5] and Professor Skinner shares my interest in republican theory in an age of commerce.[6] Theory of commerce in the eighteenth century anticipates theory of globalisation in the twenty-first. I remain interested, as I have been since 1949, in historiography as a political phenomenon, and have tried – as I hope to show by publishing a collection of essays – to construct a theory of how a political society may generate both a history and a historiography of itself. I am interested, to put it differently, in the ability of societies to develop histories that are both expressions of their autonomy and sovereignty, and narratives of how that autonomy is challenged from without and challenges itself from within. I expect the autonomy that generates histories to survive, but I am aware that it is under challenge from globalisation and post-modernism; we often speak a language which presupposes that it is about to disappear.

I therefore published (Cambridge, 2005) another collection of essays with a linking commentary called *The Discovery of Islands*; it too hasn't been much reviewed so far. Here I engaged, however rashly, in autobiography, presenting myself as a historical phenomenon about which something could be said: to be specific, as an Antipodean, which I am, with a view to history formed in and from an antipodean perspective, leading to something else that I had helped start, known as 'the new British history'. This I proposed as a means by which 'we' – whoever 'we' are; it's an extremely tendentious term – might continue to assert and debate 'our' own autonomy in the very rapidly changing circumstances of the last thirty years. (I am not, by the way, what is meant by a 'Eurosceptic'; I am merely sceptical about 'Europe'.) I wrote out of awareness that a possible outcome of globalisation is that 'we' may cease to have an autonomy, a history, or an identity. This threat is real enough to be worth taking seriously.

It's an implication of all this that histories are in the first place auto-centric, written in, for, and even by societies desiring to understand themselves and their relations with themselves. It's easy, and very true, to say that they should proceed to understand others and themselves in their relations with others; but this seems to call for some communication from the others, and the question arises of how the others may wish and need to express themselves. The grand schemes of history produced by the Enlightened historians and their successors were of course deeply Eurocentric, as Professor Goody has been reminding us;[7] but can we get away from this until other civilisations supply us with their histories of themselves and we can debate our auto-centricities together?

'Western' history as I see it is so much a product of 'Western' self-problematisation that I am far from sure that others will produce histories written on the same pattern, that we shall recognise as histories at all. As far as I know, the evidence is not in yet, and we must wait to hear from our equals.

John Pocock
Honorary Fellow

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7 Jack Goody, *The Theft of History* (Cambridge University Press, 2006). (Reviewed by the present writer in *The Eagle* 2007, pp. 80-83.)

Peter Wordie studied at St John's College, graduating with a BA in History. His father, the renowned Polar crusader Sir James Wordie (see book review of *Polar Crusader: A Life of Sir James Wordie* on Pages 157-60), studied Geology at St John's (BA 1912, MA 1919) and became Master in 1952, having held various positions both in the College and University.

Peter recently sent us some memories that he has been recording of life in the Master's Lodge.

Life in the Lodge 1952-59: Random Memories

My father was elected Master of St John's College in 1952, which meant moving into the Master's Lodge. Up until that point, my family had lived for nearly thirty years at a house in Grange Road, called Coton End. This house was rented from St John's, and is now part of St John's College School.

The move, like all moves, had its problems. These were largely caused by the need to modernise some of the facilities in the Lodge. Benians, the previous Master, had been there quite a considerable time, and had been unable to do any modernisation, firstly owing to the war and then to the austerities that came afterwards. In particular, there was no ladies' toilet on the ground floor. This lack probably reflected the position that ladies occupied in the University up to the end of the 1920s.

Further, the kitchens were from a past era, and were badly in need of modernisation. The opportunity was also taken at the same time to join the drawing room and dining room by large double doors, which meant that they both could be used together for entertaining.

My mother threw herself into these changes, but it was also necessary to put up new curtains, and I remember various swatches being sent down from Whytock & Reid in Edinburgh. Also, at the same time, mother and father bought a number of carpets (rugs). I cannot remember how long these alterations and decorations took, but the move was finally made and the Lodge became our family home. This really only affected my sister, Alison, and myself, as the rest of our brothers and sister had moved away.

The Lodge was a Victorian building with no particular architectural merit, although perhaps with time passing it will suit changing tastes. On entering, one went into a very large entrance hall that was hung with portraits and also a very fine set of Jacobean chairs. The only problem was that nobody could sit on these chairs, as they had little red chords across them. I think I am right in remembering they had fine tapestry coverings that had been done by the Countess of Powys.

From this large entrance hall, one entered the drawing room. This was a light spacious room looking out over the garden. Like the hall, it was hung with fine portrait pictures from the College collection. In particular, I remember two Stuart portraits at the end of the room where the faces were totally white owing to the colour being bleached out by the 'bitumen' undercoat.

Then there was a stunning female Tudor portrait, which was known as the 'unknown lady', since neither the subject nor the artist was known. However, Professor Rowse, of Oxford, had suggested three possibilities as to who it might be. Through the new double doors one went into the dining room, which was a lovely room overlooking the garden. In this room father hung his own pictures.

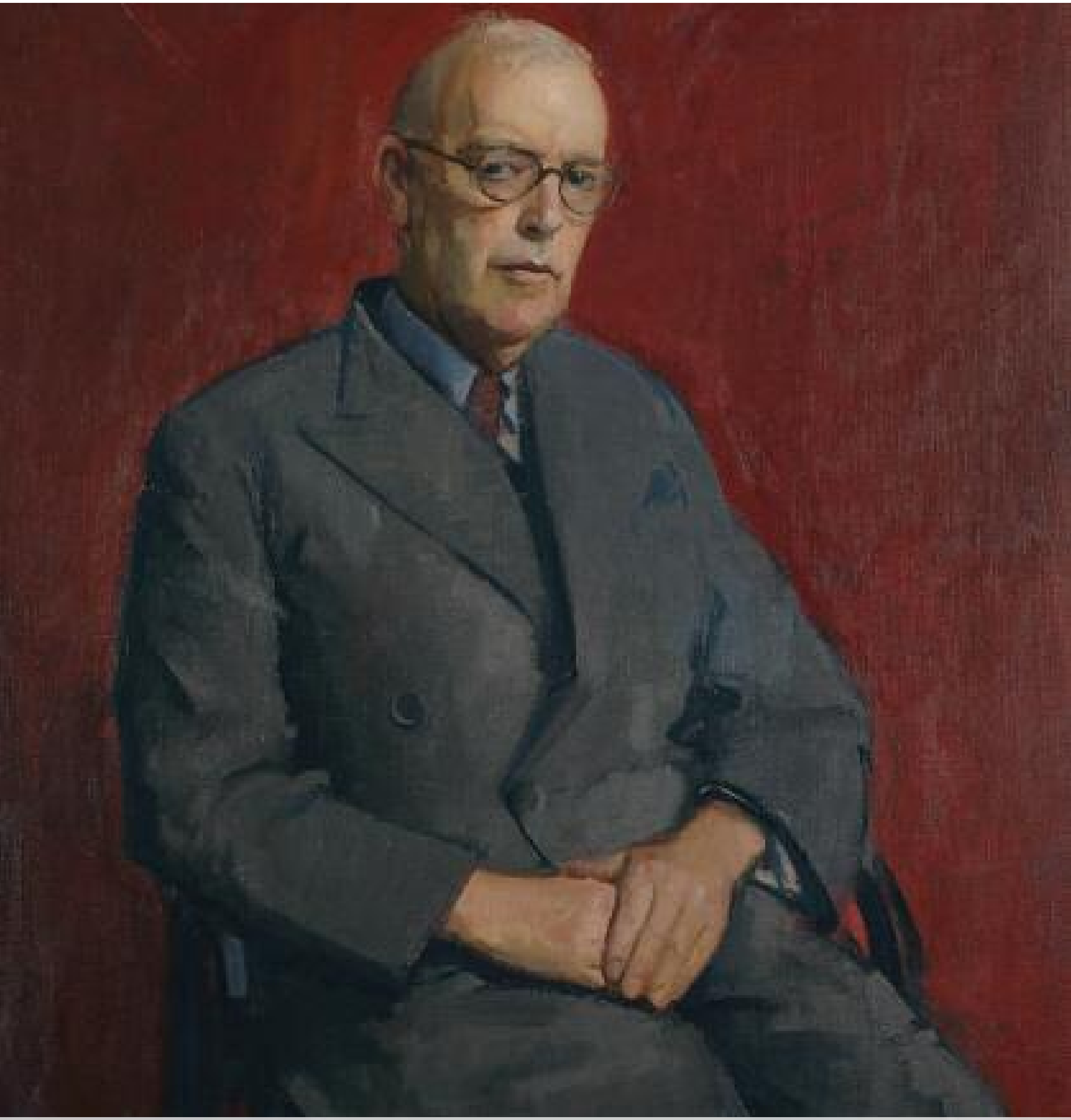
At the top of the staircase was a room which we called the 'oak room'. It was totally panelled in linen fold and had an oriel window. Again I think I remember it being said that this room had been moved from the old Master's Lodge. The panelling had just been cleaned and repolished, and the whole atmosphere was of warmth and friendliness. This became very much the room in which we lived.

Next to the oak room was the office of my father's secretary, Mrs Cousins. This was very much the centre of Lodge business. Mrs Cousins had been my father's secretary for a considerable amount of time, and perhaps she was the only person who could master father's eccentric filing system.

The next room down the passage was father's room/study. It was absolutely full of piles of papers, making it impossible to find a chair to sit on.

The next room down the passage was father's room/study. It was absolutely full of piles of papers, making it impossible to find a chair to sit on. At one end of the room there was a large table covered with a collection of polar maps and charts. These had been extensively used when planning Fuchs' Trans-Antarctic expedition (1957-58). Father's desk was facing the window looking out over the College Library and garden. The desk was littered with little objects and unusual nick-nacks including a matchbox which contained gold dust that father had panned himself in the Yukon in 1913.

In order to run the house and cope with the catering, it was necessary to have assistance. After some intensive interviewing, Mr and Mrs May were taken on as the butler and cook. Mr May had a naval background, and they were a delightful



Sir James Wordie

couple. I remember May teaching me how to carve, saying that besides a sharp knife you needed to be bold and attack the meat joint.

The job of Master entailed a considerable amount of entertaining. This entertaining covered a wide spectrum from new scholars (tea party) to accommodating Heads of State. I remember on one occasion when I asked father about the scholars' tea party, he remarked that there was one unusual scholar who was wearing jeans. This was (Sir) Jonathan Miller. Also on that occasion, Miller was able to name two out of the three likely ladies for the 'unknown lady'. Jonathan had not taken History and was studying Medicine.

At the other end, we were asked by the Foreign Office to put up the President of India for the weekend. He was the very distinguished Hindu philosopher, Radna Krishnan. Naturally the Indian students at Cambridge wanted to welcome him, and asked if a small delegation could come to the Lodge. He was slightly loathe to receive them but finally agreed. When they arrived, my father and mother were preparing to leave the drawing room but he signalled that they should stay. The delegation came in, announced by the butler, and then there was a stony silence for quite a considerable time. I presume that this was done on purpose but it certainly made the meeting slightly frosty.

The garden also received attention. Father selected a Fellow of Clare College, who had just completed a highly successful layout for the Fellows' Garden at Clare, to do this.

Perhaps the strangest occasion was when father was entertaining a Professor of Geography from Brazil. Besides being a Professor of Geography, he also led a political party about which not much was known by the Foreign Office, and they asked father if they could have a representative at the lunch. I remember father telling me this just before lunch so that I could watch the meal and find out more during the conversation.

The garden also received attention. Father selected a Fellow of Clare College, who had just completed a highly successful layout for the Fellows' Garden at Clare, to do this. The problem with the garden was that it was overlooked from the Bridge of Sighs and Magdalene College. The design tried to give some privacy by planting two weeping willows by the steps leading down to the river and also by making a sunken rose garden. The final touch was an iron gate that led from the garden into Chapel Court. Again mother and father had this specially designed, and it had a monogram of their initials JMW and GMW in the centre. The monogram was so successful that it was very hard to tell that it was their initials.

My memories of the Lodge were mainly of it as a home, and I remember departing from there in a jeep with another Johnian, Rodney Dodds, to drive all the way to Turkey. At that time this was not as easy as it sounds since there was absolutely no road map available of Turkey. Other memories include spending happy hours with father in the library, which was at the end of the upstairs passage. In particular I remember two beautiful bindings, which were Scottish, and which father later gave to the National Library of Scotland. During these times one began to learn a little about books and what to look for.

Again I remember when only my father and myself were in the Lodge and, just after I had gone to sleep, he came along to my room and woke me up as he wanted me to see someone trying to climb into College. The person concerned was not doing very well and I think my father leaned out of the bedroom window and gave him instructions. (Father himself had been a considerable night climber.)

On leaving Cambridge, I gave a farewell party in the Lodge. It was a particularly hot day and one offered only white wine or white ladies. The white ladies slipped down rather too easily, which created a jovial party but next day my father, after saying how much he had enjoyed the party, paused and said, ‘Peter, remember it doesn’t pay to make old men drunk’.

Perhaps my final memory is of father’s dress. He was not over-keen on changing too often and therefore always wore a short black mourning jacket and trousers. He reckoned that this ‘uniform’ would cover meetings in Cambridge or London, funerals and Chapel services.

Peter Wordie
(BA 1955, MA 1959)

Professor Norman Montague Bleehen, CBE, MA, BM, BCh (Oxford), Emeritus Cancer Research Campaign Professor of Clinical Oncology, and Fellow of the College since 1976, sadly died on 1 February 2008, aged seventy-seven. His obituary and a recollection appear on Pages 123-27.

Before Professor Bleehen's death, Valerie Collis, who worked as Secretary to various Chaplains at St John's College, and was a close friend of Norman, and his wife Tirza, through the Jewish community, wrote this piece about his remarkable experience of National Service.

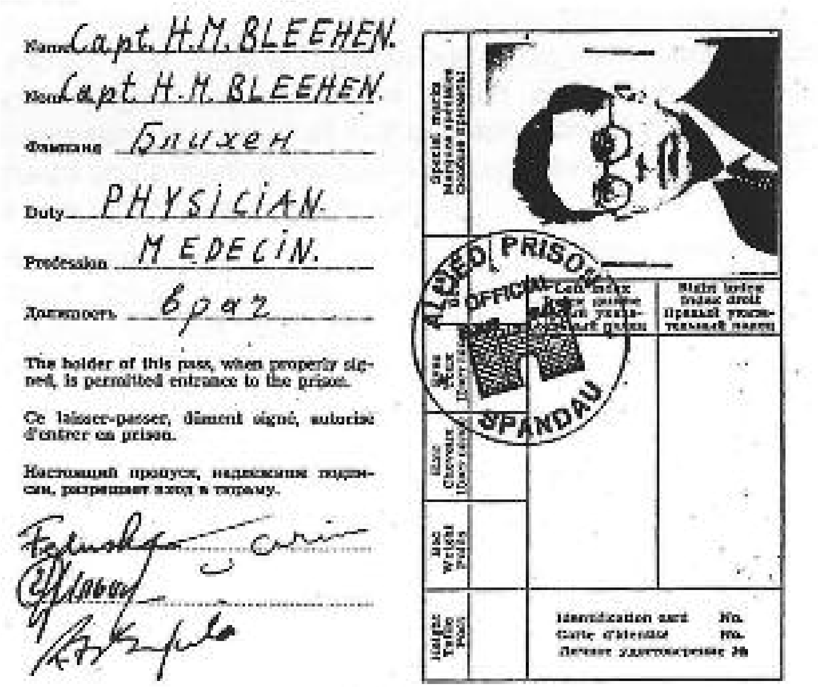
National Service with a Difference

Norman Bleehen retired as Professor of Clinical Oncology at Addenbrooke's Hospital in December 1995. But there was a very different beginning to his long career: one of his first appointments was with the Royal Army Medical Corps in Germany as Head of the Medical Team, supervising the health of three German war criminals in Spandau Prison in Berlin after the war.

Norman read Medicine at Oxford followed by clinical training at the Middlesex Hospital Medical School in London, graduating in 1955. He was called up for National Service in the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1957, and had the choice of a posting either in Germany or Nigeria. Nigeria was known as the 'White man's grave', so Norman opted for the former, and was sent as Medical Physician to the British Military Hospital (BMH) in Hanover. As assistant to the permanent army physician there, he became familiar with the general way of doing things, 'a good preparation for what was to come'.

After a year he was posted to be Consultant Physician at the BMH in Berlin, which, at that time, was occupied by the four Allied Powers: Britain, America, France and Russia. Each had a garrison located in their own sector, and a hospital for their troops and families. Norman was Physician at the BMH as well as at the Allied Military Prison in Spandau when it was the turn of the British to be in charge.

Spandau Prison, so called because it was situated in the western part of the city in the borough of Spandau, was built in 1876 as a penitentiary. It had a capacity for 600 prisoners, and a large number of professional civilians were running it when the Allies took over in November 1946. The Allies had expected over a



Name Capt. H.M. BLEEHEN.

Nom Capt. H.M. BLEEHEN.

Фамилия Блихен

Duty PHYSICIAN.

Profession MEDECIN.

Должность врач

The holder of this pass, when properly signed, is permitted entrance to the prison.

Ce laissez-passer, dûment signé, autorise d'entrer en prison.

Настоящий пропуск, надлежащие подписан, разрешает вход в тюрьму.

Right index
Index droit
Правый указательный палец

Identification card No.
Carte d'identité No.
Личное удостоверение №

Professor Bleehen's Spandau Prison pass

hundred war prisoners but in the event there were only seven. The complex, huge and expensive to run, had a library, a chapel, a garden for prisoners to grow their vegetables, and more prison cells than those in charge knew what to do with. Representatives from all four garrisons took it in turn to control the premises, including mounting the guard and providing medical services, having responsibility in rotation for one month at a time, a task that was jealously guarded.

By the time Norman arrived at Spandau there were only three prisoners left: Rudolph Hess, Albert Speer, and Baldur von Schirach. Norman discussed his role as physician to these German war criminals with his British Commanding Officer, asking whether it was appropriate that he, as a Jew, should be in this position. He was told 'this is the army and this is your job'. Norman's job was to examine each prisoner every week when Britain was mounting guard, and to write a monthly report. Communication was conducted through an interpreter, and conversation with the prisoners was limited strictly to health matters.

Albert Speer, an architect by profession who had been involved very much in setting up armaments, spoke English and was known as Prisoner Number 5.

Norman remembers him as being an aggressive man who imposed a harsh regime on himself, and 'whose intellect shone through'. Having a request to write his memoirs rejected, Speer managed to put them to paper and had them systematically smuggled out by sympathetic prison staff that were willing to open all sorts of illicit lines of communication for the prisoners.

Hess was a sad neurotic character, a hypochondriac, suspicious of any food given to him, and refused all visitors for more than twenty years. He served the longest time in prison and was the last to die. Von Schirach was generally regarded as not being very pleasant.

Monthly meetings would take place at lunchtime when representatives of each of the four powers were present. There would be a meal hosted by whichever nation was on 'guard' and the way in which the countries conducted these sessions was remarkably different. The American lunches were 'dry'. The British offered a selection of army rations with a fair amount of alcohol. The French concentrated on *haute cuisine* and good wines, and the Russians did their very best to get everyone drunk on vodka. So after an American lunch the chances were you got back to work immediately. After a British lunch you might manage to do at least something more during the day. With the French you ruled out anything in the afternoon, and with the Russians you were lucky to get back on the job the following morning.

When not on duty, Norman 'enjoyed' the environment of a divided Berlin. He found it 'pretty awful' being amongst all those Germans and wondering what they had been doing during the war. But the distractions of the city were enticing, and the music, in particular the opera, was of a very high standard. One could cross over to East Berlin, where the Russians made sure they brought over the best performers and where propaganda was rife. Professionally, one got on well with the Russians; they were competent physicians.

Spandau remained operational until 1987 when its last remaining inmate, Hess, died. It is thought that the Russians resisted the prison's closure because they wanted a foothold in West Berlin. After Hess' death, the building was demolished and all materials from it were ground to powder and dispersed into the North Sea to prevent the area from becoming a Neo-Nazi shrine. In 2006, a supermarket was built on its former premises.

Norman recounted all this to me as though it happened yesterday; it was obviously a period in his life that he will not forget. After all, being the personal physician to German war criminals is not something every Jew experiences – for good or bad. One wonders what he would have had to tell us had he decided to go to Nigeria.

Valerie Collis

This is the winning entry for the 2008 Douglas Adams Prize, written by Natalie Lawrence, who matriculated in 2007 and is studying Natural Sciences (Biology) at St John's.

Douglas Adams was a student of St John's 1971-74, gaining a BA in English. He is best known for writing *The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy* and *The Restaurant at the End of the Universe*. He died in 2001, and the Douglas Adams Prize was established by friends and colleagues in his memory. Candidates for the Prize are required to submit a piece of humorous writing on a subject of their own choosing, in prose or verse.

The Cretan Bull

It all started when the foaming waves on the shores of Crete parted in a swirling mass and a bull emerged, crocus white and docile as a dove, with horns like polished olive branches. The sea god Poseidon had been feeling a mite underappreciated by the Cretans, so he had decided to drop King Minos a pretty heavy hint, and send a worthy animal for a sacrifice. The bull strode majestically up to the royal palace, and when the king set eyes on it he could not bring himself to kill the wonderful beast. Surely Poseidon would be satisfied with the finest bull from his own herds? And admittedly his old black bull was getting slightly past it.

As Minos ordered the white bull to be penned in its own enclosure, he did not notice that his wife, Pasiphae, was making eyes at his new acquisition. Poseidon had clocked that Minos was playing the old switcheroo trick with his sacrifice, and to teach the king a lesson he had got Aphrodite to set Eros to work. Pasiphae now had a look on her face similar to that when the handsome young king had burst in to her apartments and swept her off to be Queen of Crete all those years ago. The bull played it cool; he didn't usually have to chase females, they came to him.

The great black bull from Minos' herds was brought forth and duly sacrificed, as soon as possible to prevent Poseidon from getting impatient. As the knife cut its throat the bull's flanks shone like a sheet of black velvet, running with the dark blood on the temple floor like a crimson sea. It was a solemn moment. This was followed by a great feast, with prime steak for all, as Poseidon had not seemed very hungry. All the gods were really interested in was the gesture; they were generally too full on nectar and ambrosia most of the time to bother with bloody haunches. So the matter seemed to be settled, and the beautiful white bull seemed content to be the alpha male in a herd of thousands of cows.

At night she lay dreaming of the glossy white flanks, which rippled in the sunlight as the beast walked, the horns which spanned a shield's width, and could have pierced armour.

However, Pasiphae could not forget the bull. At night she lay dreaming of the glossy white flanks, which rippled in the sunlight as the beast walked, the horns which spanned a shield's width, and could have pierced armour. Minos did not suspect the reason for his wife's unusual pet name for him. He also did not notice how Pasiphae would languish at the gate of the bull's enclosure, watching longingly as he chewed nonchalantly on his succulent fodder, or strolled across to the eager black cows, who could hardly get enough of him. That year the herd nearly tripled in size. Minos himself was the son of the god Zeus in bull-form, who had abducted the maiden Europa and swum across the Aegean to Crete with her on his back. A penchant for animals was a fatal flaw of the women in his family.

Eventually Pasiphae went to Daedalus, the chief craftsman, and had him build her a hollow wooden model of a cow. She had it placed in the centre of the enclosed field, and shut herself inside, to all intents and purposes a sprightly young heifer ready to mate. She even made a few provocative mooing sounds in the hope that she might entice the wondrous white bull closer. She could hardly contain her excitement.

He took his time. He knew by now that he was something special, and having had the run of over a thousand cows for several weeks now, Poseidon's bull was in no particular hurry to investigate the new arrival. He eventually sauntered closer, tossing his head excessively at the gathering flies to display his great muscular neck and shining horns, but the cow did not go weak at the knees as he had expected. She stood stock still, apparently more interested in the farmhouse in the distance than the sizeable hunk of beefcake approaching her, and this piqued his interest. Like all males, he enjoyed a challenge. He walked purposefully closer, expecting the cow to skip coquettishly away or at least turn her head, but she did neither. This was more than he could stand, and the bull bellowed in frustration, a sound which rolled over the olive groves like the battle cries of an approaching army. Then the cow made a strange sound, somewhat like a 'come hither', but also like a pigeon. This was where his manners ended, though a lesser bull might have found the mixed signals intimidating. He galloped towards her, snorting with indignation, and without any further posturing he got to business.

The experience was surprising. Pasiphae had failed to consider the logistics of inter-species relations, and found the reality quite a shock. She regretted giving in to her desires; it had been lust, nothing more. She avoided the bull, trying to pretend that nothing had happened. However, Pasiphae became pregnant, and was terrified that the secret of her illicit encounter would be known, for the offspring of such a union could hardly pass for that of Minos. Without the horns it might have done at a pinch, but as it was, no one was fooled.

In due course Pasiphae gave birth, with pains that rent her nearly in two. And the child was not cute by any standards: a small hairy boy with a calf's head. His only redeeming feature was that he had his mother's wide blue eyes. She could not bear to see him, since he reminded her of both the guilt and disgust she felt at herself, as well as the longing she had had for that virile white animal. And no baby that eats whole chickens by ripping them apart with its bare teeth is endearing, so he became known as the Minotaur: the bull of Minos. The king would not hear of keeping the boy, but neither could he kill his wife's son, the son of Poseidon's bull. So Minos had the craftsman Daedalus build a great labyrinth below the palace, a deep and twisting maze from which no man could escape, and plunged the bull-boy into the darkness, hiding the shame as deep as was humanly possible.

The Minotaur might have stayed in the maze for the rest of his life, awaiting the arrival of some intrepid young hero with a clew of golden thread looking for a spot of glory. He might have grown up to become a hideous and brutish cannibal. However, as it was, mother-love prevailed, and Pasiphae found herself touring the palace basement more than was strictly necessary, passing the door to the labyrinth several times a day with a look of longing on her face. After several months she gave up pretences, and spent all her time at an open panel in the door, hoping for a glimpse of her son. He was growing to become a strapping young man-beast. Evidently his godly heritage was causing the Minotaur to sprout extraordinarily quickly, aided by his high-protein diet of chickens. He had the beauty of his father, the bright shining horns, hide as white as milk, taller than any man and muscled like a titan. He also had his mother's stunning blue eyes, which could have melted a gaggle of teenage girls at twenty paces. He could not talk, but he could understand speech, and would come striding to the door whenever she called, allowing her to stroke his velvety nose and coo at him lovingly, staring at her deeply with his cornflower eyes. She even grew to find his carnivorous eating habits endearing, and took to strutting about the palace like a proud mother hen. But she could not forget the fact that he was a prisoner in the maze, kept always in the dark. Not to mention the highly unbalanced diet that no mother would be happy with.

Statue of the Minotaur

Minos was not too pleased about his wife continually visiting her son. He began to feel neglected, and he couldn't see why the Minotaur was so important to her. Now every time he passed the white bull's enclosure, he felt edgy, and if the animal looked at him, Minos felt it was with supreme contempt. He, the King of Crete, son of Zeus, felt threatened by an animal. But it was not just paranoia. Minos was right to feel threatened. Pasiphae could not forget her furry frolic, and she began to see numerous flaws in her husband, and could not believe she had never noticed them before. His hair was greying and lustreless, he drank far too much wine, and was a pitiful 5ft 7in tall. He also had nowhere near as much energy in bed. She despaired, since the bull only knew her as another cow in the field, another heifer in the herd. Would he ever want her as a woman, or would there forever be a wooden bovine model lacking in the relationship?

Pasiphae could not forget her furry frolic, and she began to see numerous flaws in her husband, and could not believe she had never noticed them before.

However, this did not appear to be a problem. As Pasiphae began to spend all of her time by the gate to the bull's enclosure, and by the door of her son's maze, Minos became worried about the situation, but tried to dismiss it in his mind as the idle passing fancy of a bored woman. The bull on the other hand, began to notice the beautiful young woman who watched him. Every time he went near her, the breeze brought a familiar smell: the scent of that cow, the one who had not fallen head over heels for him. All the herdsmen wondered why the bull was now sauntering around his fields with an even greater air of self-satisfaction. He lost his interest in the cows, who shot Pasiphae dirty looks every time she approached the bull. It was quite an experience, being death stared by several hundred jealous heifers at once. Pasiphae would walk with the bull in the dusty summer sun, her arms entwined around his neck, hanging garlands of pale cornflowers from his horns, lying against him in the golden hay fields, dreaming of what might be. Minos didn't like to admit to the inquisitive palace visitors that the reason for his wife's 'enthusiasm for agriculture' was that she was having a clandestine affair with his prime bull. He began to crave fillet steak for dinner.

Then one day Pasiphae came down to the labyrinth from gambolling in the fields with the white bull, and as she saw the difference between that magnificent free beast and the cold dark of the maze, she could not stand her son to be imprisoned any longer. She wrenched open the vast bronze bolts that kept the door shut and entered the maze, calling for her bull-boy, who had grown over the past few months in to a sizeable 7ft of sinewy muscle. He came striding out of the blackness, the white sheen of his fur glinting in the torch light, and stopped when he saw his mother standing before the open door. But there was no time for indulging in sentimentalities, and Pasiphae sprinted up through the palace, her son after her. They undid the gate to the cow's enclosure. Pasiphae called to her bull-lover, who galloped towards her, head held high and snorting vigorously. He did not usually have much to do with the calf-rearing end of matters, except for the occasional disciplining of unruly offspring, but the strange beast with Pasiphae was familiar to the bull, and the blue eyes transfixed him, just as hers did. The Minotaur knew this was his father, whom his mother had told him so much about. So the three ran together, out of the palace grounds, into the sunshine, out onto the stony seashore where the waves crashed and billowed to the piercing cries of gulls. Poseidon's Bull, his lover and their child, away from gates and mazes and palaces, free as the sea-god's swirling mass of water around them.

Natalie Lawrence

A few months ago 'Newman's Corner' was opened in the new English Faculty building; it is a section of the Library equipped by friends and relatives of Johnian, Harry Newman (MLitt 1949), who died in 2001.

In a speech made to mark the occasion, Professor John Kerrigan (then Chair of the English Faculty) made the following remarks.

Newman's Corner

Harry Newman's life was full and varied, his energy and intellect both formidable. Property developer, publisher, educationalist, he was also, as his poems show, a family man, devoted to his wife and five children, and a resourceful writer.

Harry Newman

He was born in St Louis in 1921, and educated at Harvard. His family background was urban – his father was in the automobile industry – but the MLitt that he wrote at St John's was on 'Agricultural Co-operation in Hampshire' (1949). England just after the war could be cold and forbidding; the ration book was a set text. But Cambridge was full of ex-servicemen, working and playing hard. Newman was one of them, and he threw himself into university life. High among his achievements was the setting up of *Varsity* (after a false start in 1931-32), a paper for which, then and since, almost everyone who would be someone wrote. It hit the streets on Saturday mornings, at 3*d* a copy. After submitting his dissertation, Newman, keen on England, settled in London and co-founded a publishing company. His father and America called, however, and once back home he built up a major presence in commercial and industrial real estate, especially shopping developments. Along with the cut and thrust of business went a more reflective, policy-generating side. As a leading figure in the International Council of Shopping Centers, he pushed for educational programmes in retail property. He also gave time to the arts, establishing the Long Beach Regional Arts Foundation.

His poetry is that of a man whose life had touched all these areas. Here he is, in typical mode, in a piece called 'VIP, A Conversation'. It is a dialogue between a property developer and his inner, philosophical, taxi-driver:

VIP, A Conversation

I have to be there at four thirty
For a business appointment
Before a dinner meeting;
So please step on it.

What do you do, if I may ask?
He asked.

I develop shopping centers
Small ones, big ones with malls.

Oh you must be really important.

Well, I don't know about that.
How long is your shift?

You're my last fare,
I started just before noon.

What do you do the rest of the time?

Oh, I go home; only a small place
Overlooking the river,
Work my vegetable garden,
Go fishing or sailing.
Sometimes I sit and read
Or look at the mountains.

I just make enough to get along.
That's why it's so nice
To meet a successful person
Like you.

You have to warm to the modest, idiomatic means that Newman uses to open up the big, familiar question of what is sacrificed by success.

He deserves a corner in the English Faculty Library because he understood how creativity and critical insight are parts of the same process, but how destructive criticism can be. As he puts it in another poem:

Criticism is a cutting tool
Razor-sharp and diabolically designed
For demolishing egos
Eviscerating gut reactions
Cutting the props of self-confidence
From others and oneself. . .

A lot of his writing has that alert, lived-in balance. Home-grown, shrewd, he reflects on the dangers of perfectionism, of being so busy that you don't know who you are – the sort of thing any CEO would feel when getting to bed late – of being governed by social constraints instead of making your own way.

One last poem, called 'Here and Now', touches on the value of living in the present, of not being so quick to anticipate the possibilities of tomorrow that you are constantly prey to disappointment. Everyday wisdom. But I'm touched by how his words have acquired new meaning since his death – in that sense they have entered more fully into the condition of literature. I mean that, as he explains how we should be *here* when it is *now*, beyond the fretfulness of change, he seems to be describing his presence here and now in Newman's Corner.

Here And Now
Today is yesterday's anticipation
Tomorrow is dissatisfaction
With today's anticipation

A painful process
Repeated endlessly
Until anticipation vanishes
And each day
Has its own identity

Then and only then
Can feeling have reality

Then and only then
Will I be here
When it is now

John Kerrigan
Fellow of St John's

ARTICLES

ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Professor Christopher Dobson is Master of St John's College and the John Humphrey Plummer Professor of Chemical and Structural Biology at the University of Cambridge.

Professor Dobson continues his wide-ranging research and lecturing activities alongside his role as Master of the College, and in recognition of his work in advancing our understanding of the molecular basis of neurodegenerative disorders he was this year awarded a Royal Medal by the Royal Society.

Message from the Master

One of the most moving events of 2009 took place on 29 June when a small group of members of St John's and Christ's, along with representatives of other institutions associated with Lady Margaret Beaufort, assembled in Henry VII's Chapel in Westminster Abbey. We were there to pay our respects at the tomb of our Foundress on the five hundredth anniversary of her death and to give thanks for her life. And what a life it was! Lady Margaret was betrothed at the age of six, though three years later the contract was revoked. At the age of twelve she was again married, and in 1457 at the age of thirteen she gave birth to her only child. At the time of the birth she was already a widow, as her husband Edmund Tudor had died of the plague three months earlier. Despite the dangers of the time, as the Wars of the Roses raged across the Kingdom, she survived to see her son crowned Henry VII after the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485, thus beginning the Tudor dynasty that was to reign over England and Wales for nearly 120 years and indeed she was to live long enough to see the coronation of her grandson, Henry VIII, almost a quarter of a century later. Lady Margaret married twice more after the death of Edmund Tudor, and her inherited wealth along with grants made to her by her son after his coronation made her a rich woman. In addition she was accorded by Parliament a legal status which allowed her to control her lands and all the patronage which that entailed. In 1509 she left her goods to be disposed of for the purposes of her will, which included the establishment of this College, and for the same purpose she left the income of certain of her estates to complete the foundation which she had begun before her death. The Crown eventually inherited these lands, but meanwhile her executors, and especially John Fisher, her confessor and Chancellor of the University, had succeeded in setting up St John's and providing for its endowment, laying the foundations for what we see around us in the College today.

Gazing at the wonderfully lifelike effigy that rests on the tomb it was impossible not to marvel at the achievements of this remarkable lady. In addition, after placing a bunch of lilies at her feet, I could not help wondering what she would think about the College that she had worked so hard to bring into existence but which she didn't live to see in action. Would she approve of the way it has turned out? Would she be proud of its standing in the world, of its achievements, of its ethos and of the people that it has educated? I have no doubt in my own mind that she would be absolutely delighted by the way that St John's has developed, though whether she would approve of the fact that she is best known to many people because the College boat club is named after her I would not like to speculate. These are perhaps topics that we can explore further when we celebrate our quincentenary in 2011! And on the subject of 2011, plans for a wide range of commemorative events are developing very well, and we hope that all Johnians and their families and friends in all parts of the world will find much to enjoy in the programme of celebrations throughout the anniversary year.

Returning to the present, I have found so many things to enjoy during the past year that I can only mention a few of my personal favourites. The Fellowship continues to flourish, and a real highlight of the year was a lunch in the Combination Room held to commemorate Sir Jack Goody's 90th birthday. Amongst the many memorable moments were Jack's admission in his speech that he was wearing a College tie for the first time in his life, having rushed out to buy one after deciding that it was the only neckwear suitable for the occasion, and also the news that at the age of 90 he has three books in press, and more in the pipeline. Jack is, however, still a youngster compared to our Senior Fellow, Sir Maurice Wilkes who celebrated his 96th birthday in June and who, like Sir Jack, is to be seen in College virtually every day. Continuing on the birthday theme, this year we have been celebrating the University reaching the age of 800 years, and it was particularly exciting to see that Sir Maurice, a pioneer in the development of modern computing, was one of four scientists whose work was selected by the University to illustrate 800 years of innovation in Cambridge.

The highest profile public event in the Cambridge 800 celebrations was undoubtedly the splendid 'Cambridge Prom', one of the 2009 BBC Promenade Concerts that was focused on Cambridge performers and composers and at which St John's stole the show. Early in the concert, at which HRH The Prince of Wales was the guest of honour, we were treated to *Five Mystical Songs* by Ralph Vaughan Williams, sung by Simon Keenlyside, who was both a chorister and a choral student at St John's, and since 2008 an Honorary Fellow of the College. Shortly after Simon's contribution, our Choir, now at such a peak of perfection that it takes one's breath away to hear them, joined with our friends from King's (where the Director of Music, Stephen Cleobury, was, like our own Andrew Nethsingha, an Organ Scholar at St John's under George Guest) to sing *Come, Holy Ghost*, composed by Sir Jonathan Harvey, Honorary Fellow of the College and conducted by Andrew

Nethsingha. This performance, rated by just about every critic as the highlight of the evening, was a splendid tribute to Sir Jonathan who is 70 this year; indeed, we had celebrated his birthday a few weeks earlier with a wonderful Sunday afternoon concert of his chamber music in the Master's Lodge, followed by Evensong in the College Chapel at which several of his choral works were sung.

On the morning of the Prom, another distinguished Johnian, Nick Corfield, received an accolade of a different sort, this time from HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, Chancellor of the University. Nick was presented with an 800 Anniversary Medal at Buckingham Palace in recognition of his remarkable generosity in giving more than £6 million to St John's; money that served both as matching funding to stimulate the extremely successful fund-raising programme for bursaries, and also to encourage the College to begin its renovation of the historic 'Triangle Site' opposite the Great Gate and adjoining All Saints' Garden. The day before the Prom, Fellows, staff and students gathered in the 'old schoolroom', where the choristers used to receive something of an education before the present College School in Grange Road was established, to see Nick Corfield unveil a plaque to mark the opening of what is now Corfield Court. This new court represents a marvellous restoration project that gives us some 40 rooms for graduate students along with several sets for resident Fellows and a series of new supervision rooms, all opening on to the interior of the court; on the outside of the court the dozen or so shops have been extended and improved. The character of the buildings, some of which date back to the sixteenth century, has been preserved and many of the rooms are splendidly individual, one even retaining part of the bar of the long-closed 'Flying Stag' Inn. After the opening, we enjoyed an excellent lunch in the Lodge where it was a particular pleasure to meet several members of Nick's family, including his delightful mother.

Corfield Court is not the only substantial Johnian building project to be completed this year. Major renovation of the whole of the Maufe Building, which makes up North Court and much of Chapel Court, carried out by our own Maintenance Department under the expert eye of Steve Beeby, the Superintendent of Buildings, has now been completed and is a real triumph – an elegant and graceful swan emerged as the scaffolding came down around what had often been perceived as an ugly duckling. And a lovingly restored Merton Hall, the Elizabethan timber-framed building attached to the School of Pythagoras, is due to be finished shortly and will provide much needed teaching rooms for non-resident Fellows. The programme of restoring our College buildings is, however, far from over. The scaffolding is already going up around Cripps, as we begin the first phase of a complete refurbishment of this, the largest of our buildings, again being carried out by our own Maintenance Department. Apart from the series of decantings that have been necessary to ensure none of our students (or Fellows) was left homeless, just as the final permissions were being obtained from the planning authorities, the building was listed as Grade II* on the recommendation of English Heritage. Apparently, if the single storey link that used to stand on the site of the present

The Master, Nick Corfield and the President, Dr Mark Nicholls

Fisher Building, and which housed the Cripps Bar, had not been demolished, the listing of the 'intact' original structure might well have been Grade I. The reputation of the Cripps Bar, however, suggests that its continued existence might have had consequences that were much more serious than those resulting from its demolition. Fortunately, the Governing Body had already agreed with the College Council that, love it or hate it, Cripps is a supreme example of 1960s architecture and should be restored as closely as possible to its original state. And after all, New Court was derided for a hundred years or so before being recognised as a magnificent addition to the architectural treasures of the College.

The cost of this essential and often remedial work is enormous. Cripps, for example, will cost some £27 million to restore. We are most fortunate, therefore, that significant elements of our expenditure on our historic buildings are being supported by contributions to our fundraising Campaign. In addition to the wonderful gift from Nick Corfield, the College has been the recipient of a second magnificent benefaction, worth £10 million in total, from an anonymous British charitable foundation, which has covered the cost of the restoration of Merton Hall and also pledged a major sum to another important project, the conversion of the old Divinity School into a multi-purpose building. This exciting development will provide the College with the space and appropriate environment for a range of initiatives that will enhance still further our ability to generate an educational experience second-to-none, to provide first class facilities for lectures and for musical and theatrical performances, and to enable us to demonstrate the value and excitement of a Johnian education to prospective applicants from all backgrounds. After much debate, over nearly a decade, about possible uses for this Grade II listed building, the Governing Body accepted *nem con* both the concept and the architectural designs for the conversion, and the latter have just been approved by the local planning and conservation bodies. We are now poised to move forward, and we are optimistic that we shall be successful in obtaining further donations towards carrying out this project that will, in addition to providing wonderful additional facilities for the College, serve to complete Corfield Court and the redevelopment of the area opposite the Great Gate.

> The cost of this essential and often remedial work is enormous. Cripps, for example, will cost some £27 million to restore.

The topic of fundraising has been very much in our minds over the past year. Indeed, the first major event of the academic year was the official launch of the St John's College Campaign at the Guildhall in London, at which Nick Corfield spoke compellingly of his views on the importance of supporting St John's at this time. The Choir was on magnificent form to inspire all of us present on that occasion, as indeed it was at a North American launch event at Gotham Hall in

New York City in the spring. At this latter occasion, Marc Feigen, Chairman of the Johnian Society of the USA, gave a wonderful address and emphasised the strong links between Johnians on both sides of the Atlantic. Both occasions were enormously enjoyable and they allowed Mary and me to meet a large number of enthusiastic Johnians, both renewing existing friendships and beginning new ones. Although we might not have chosen to launch the most ambitious fund-raising enterprise of any Cambridge or Oxford College in the midst of the most dramatic economic crisis of the last 75 years, in some ways the timing has served to emphasise that the College and University cannot rely on the largesse of any government at the present time, or indeed perhaps at any time in the forseeable future, and that we must with even greater urgency ensure that we strengthen our financial position very significantly to maintain our position in the world and indeed our independence of thought and action.

Johnians and other friends have risen magnificently to the challenge. With the two large donations mentioned above, and numerous smaller ones that are no less warmly appreciated, we have now raised in excess of £32 million in gifts and firm pledges towards our target of £50 million by 2012. As well as enabling us to refurbish buildings and award bursaries and scholarships to worthy and deserving undergraduates and graduates, the University's analysis of fundraising indicates that we are top of the collegiate success table, confirming my own view that Johnians have a unique relationship with the College and are the most generous of all Cambridge alumni. I am therefore extremely optimistic that we shall raise the remaining £18 million in the next two years. We are, however, already looking to the longer term as I believe that we must increase our endowment very substantially over the next 20 years to enable us to achieve our ambitions in an increasingly competitive world. To this end we have already established the Beaufort Society – and I am delighted that my good friend and predecessor Richard Perham has agreed to be its first President – to bring together those of you who are intending to leave a legacy to the College in your will, and to enable us to recognise and respond to your generosity during your lifetimes.

One of the particular pleasures for me as Master of this wonderful College is that I manage to meet and get to know, in addition to more senior Johnians, a large number of undergraduate and graduate students, and this year has been especially rewarding in this regard. The student body flourishes on all fronts, as you will read in later sections of *The Eagle*. It is particularly pleasing in this context that the College has moved up six places this year in the Tompkins Table, the annual ranking of Cambridge colleges based on performance in University examinatons, and we celebrated the achievements of some of our most outstanding young people with the presentation of Larmor Awards on the morning of General Admission. We hope that we can build on this success to ensure that everyone completes their time at the College feeling that they have realised their full potential and that they are very well prepared for their future careers.

Christopher Dobson
Master of St John's College

Stephen Teal joined St John's two and a half years ago.

During his time at the College we have held two Telethons and seen the launch of the St John's College Campaign. With preparations for 2011 underway, Stephen and the Development Office are busier than ever.

Stephen Teal

Message from the Development Director

A colleague recently likened the decision to launch the St John's Campaign in September 2008 to the College's support of the losing side in the English Civil War. 'Surely not that disastrous?' I gasped. 'No, I meant we were vindicated in the end,' he replied. I got the impression that the Fellow in question may have been an eyewitness to the Parliamentarians' plundering of the College silver.

As the official launch event at the London Guildhall grew closer we did fear the worst. We should have known better as the enthusiasm and loyalty that characterizes so many Johnians won the day, and we had a packed house for a performance from the Choir and speeches by the Master and our most significant modern benefactor, Nick Corfield (BA 1981). Nick's speech was particularly effective as he talked of his desire to provide today's generation of students with the same opportunities he had enjoyed.

To date the Campaign has already raised over £30 million towards the target of £50 million. This is already quite an achievement and the whole Johnian community can take great credit and pleasure from it. There is much hard work to do, and there is no masking the fact that our task has become more difficult in the light of the global economic situation. However, the College's continued commitment to excellence and equality of opportunity, combined with the generosity of alumni, should see us home.

One of the most pleasing aspects of the Campaign in the past year was the reaction to the College's first telephone fundraising programme. Some 55% of Johnians our student callers spoke to made a gift and the total raised was (with matching funding from Nick Corfield) nearly £600,000. The value of having lots of smaller donors was never more clearly demonstrated. Some 7% of Johnians have made a gift to the Campaign to date, compared with an average of 16% giving amongst other Cambridge Colleges. We hope to get that figure up above 20% by December 2012.

The Alumni Relations team has had a busy year. Another Campaign launch event in New York presented unusual logistical problems but the team, the Johnian Society of the USA and the Choir Administrator rose to the occasion, and what an occasion it was in the splendour of Gotham Hall. The Johnian net spreads ever further and more often, with one of the highlights being the now traditional Varsity Match lunch at Twickenham, which attracted nearly two hundred people. We are aiming for three hundred next year but, as in so many areas, our invitation list is only as good as the information we hold, so please do let us know if there are events to which you would like to be invited.

Another notable event was a dinner for Johnians in Singapore (and a number came over from Malaysia) in September. Sixty or so people attended and heard a delightful speech from Professor Walter Woon (LLM 1983), Singapore's Attorney General, following a performance by the Gentlemen of St John's. There were other dinners in Toronto and Manchester, Sir Richard Aikens (BA 1970) gave the Winfield Society lecture in London, and Christmas drinks parties were held in London and New York. In Cambridge, as an adjunct to the Johnian Dinners, we held the first twenty-fifth and fiftieth anniversary of Matriculation Dinners, to which partners were also invited; these dinners will now become a fixture in the College calendar.

2009 sees the launch of the Beaufort Society, through which the College will seek to thank and acknowledge all those who have remembered St John's in their Wills. All rather fitting in the year that marks the five hundredth anniversary of the death of our foundress, Lady Margaret.

Stephen Teal
Development Director

Tissa Devendra has had a career of over forty years in Sri Lanka's public service and UN agencies.

Tissa came to Cambridge in 1968 to read for a Diploma in Development Administration. Here he looks back with fondness at his year at St John's.

A Year at 'The Knott' 1968-1969

Cambridge was but a distant dream when I entered the University of Ceylon in 1948 to read for a degree in English under Cambridge alumnus, Professor E F C Ludowyk. Graduating with a 'gentleman's degree' ended all hopes of a career in the vales of academia and I embarked instead on a career in district administration. Little did I imagine fifteen years later, in 1968, that this very career would win me a Colombo Plan Fellowship to Cambridge to read for a Diploma in Development Administration. Ceylon, as Sri Lanka was then called, was undergoing a period of severe austerity. Our foreign exchange reserves were perilously low. Nine pounds sterling was the only money my wife and I were legally entitled to carry to Britain and we drew on it only for our direst needs till we were met and looked after by our 'minders' at the halfway house of the British Council in London. Then we went by train to Cambridge, wide-eyed at the rolling countryside we had only seen in illustrations and films.

At our welcome reception at Queens', we met our cohort of postgraduate civil servants and the dons who were to be our mentors. Our group came from far and wide: India, Pakistan, Grenada, Jamaica, Ethiopia, Sudan, Zambia, Lesotho, Uganda, Ghana, Nigeria and Malaysia. We were to follow a course of studies, originally designed for British Colonial administrators destined to rule the far corners of the Empire 'on which the sun never set', but since revised for those who took over their burden.

Those of us accompanied by our wives were allocated houses or flats belonging to our colleges. I was assigned to St John's – thanks to the late Dr B H Farmer, with whom I had worked in the Land Commission in Ceylon. Our home for the next year was 'The Knott' on Lady Margaret Road, a large old house in an overgrown garden that reminded me of those in which Richmal Compton's William Brown rampaged. The other flats there were occupied by the families of an American palaeontologist, an Australian theologian, an English economist and a Canadian geologist. We grew to be friends and some of us kept in touch for many years.

At St John's I was happy to be rubbing shoulders with the shadow of Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy (father of famed Orientalist Ananda Coomaraswamy), the first student from Ceylon to enter Cambridge a century earlier. The Wordsworth Room gave me some kinship with the poet whose works I had studied two decades before. Our lectures were held in a variety of locations, depending on the department from which our don came. Walking to lectures was, initially, an invigorating exercise. Undergraduates whisked past us on narrow streets as occasionally did weighty dons in cloaks. Shop fronts fascinated us with their quaint variety – butchers with saw dust floors and huge haunches of beef, antique shops crammed with strange objects, art shops with minimalist décor and bookshops that had me enthralled.

Our group was nursemaided by Mr McCleery, an old African hand who showed us the ropes around Cambridge and the colleges and saw to our logistical and financial needs. We even had our own clubhouse up a wooden stairway in a genteel decaying building in Petty Cury. Here was a library of sorts, old couches to relax on and even a little bar. My reading of historical novels made me look forward to quaffing the mead it stocked, but my one regret was that I put it off for far too long. Fortunately we had access to the Graduate Centre with its excellent restaurant, reading room to doze in over the plentiful newspapers and that rarity in 1968 – colour TV, on which we viewed the Mexico Olympics and President Nixon's inauguration. Indians, Pakistanis and Ceylonese had another refuge, the Centre of South Asian Studies, where we could read familiar newspapers from back home. Adjoining it was a pub that was famed for its shepherd's pie and cider.

The cobbled courtyards (familiar from costume films) and quaint dons' rooms of St John's, tucked away up narrow stairways, breathed an air of past centuries.

As graduate students we were slightly remote from undergraduate life but we did get to know a few in the College common room, where I rummaged in the 'D' – labelled cubbyhole of an ancient cupboard for air letters from home, in that dim and distant pre-IT era. It was also an exotic experience to attend dinners whose cloaked diners, medieval formality, long benches and scarred tables were redolent of age-old traditions. The cobbled courtyards (familiar from costume films) and quaint dons' rooms of St John's, tucked away up narrow stairways, breathed an air of past centuries. Strolling along the magical Backs or punting nervously along the River Cam became a memory we still savour many decades later. On narrow streets we would occasionally encounter Cambridge legends, an open-shirted F R Leavis striding vigorously or a stooped and clerkly E M Forster ambling along in his white raincoat.

Tissa at The Knott

I believe it was during the revival of springtime May festivities when we saw, with fascination and some horror, a huge ox being roasted on a spit while platters of roast beef and potatoes were being passed around and morris dancers cavorted to a reedy flute. Another memory is of the fair in front of the Town Hall, authorised in the Middle Ages by Royal Charter. Its tarp-roofed stalls, trays of gewgaws, colourful sweetmeats, strange utensils and raucous stallholders in garish clothes brought us a welcome whiff of our own village fairs. We also had the Arts Theatre for intellectual stimulation and once had the pleasure of seeing Sir Ralph Richardson in a Pinter play.

Waves from the Students Revolt of May 1968 inspired a civilised ripple in Cambridge. Some University buildings were 'decorated' with Mao-ish graffiti such as 'Better the horse of discontent than the sheep of conformity'. This was, apparently, felt not to be enough of a revolutionary statement. One afternoon, a loudly chanting group of students pushed their way into the Senate House and briefly 'occupied' it. When I wormed my way in, it became clear they had no idea what further to do. I remember Professor Joan Robinson walking in and speaking about China. After some time revolutionary enthusiasm peaked and the crowd melted away in dribs and drabs. I had just witnessed the Cambridge Revolution of 1968!

Forty years have gone by since that unforgettable year. The young civil servant who once walked Cambridge's cobbled streets, its ancient halls and cloisters, is now a retired pensioner savouring the memories of a wondrous year, kept alive by the University journal, *CAM*, and *The Eagle* of St John's.

Tissa Devendra (1968)

Edmund Potter matriculated in 1961. Originally studying Natural Sciences, he later moved on to study Chemical Engineering and in 1971 set up his own company, Delta-T Devices.

Edmund still lives and works in the Cambridgeshire area.

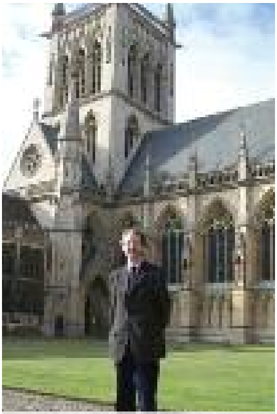
Journey of an ethical Johnian: reflections of a questing atheist

Attending Evensong in the St John's College Chapel may seem an incongruous activity for an avowed atheist; nevertheless it is an occasional delight for one such Johnian fortunate enough to live near Cambridge. For a blessed hour one can indulge in uninterrupted reflection whilst the Choir create their divine harmonies. Last November in this inspirational setting, the muse descended, transporting me back in time to my arrival at St John's.

I came up to Cambridge to read Natural Sciences in 1961 aged just 19, clutching my school prize book *Two Cheers for Democracy* by E M Forster. Already, despite a kindly Methodist upbringing, I knew that I was atheistic – but not without ethics. Numerous religions claimed to be the one true faith, ergo they were all untrue! Hardly the most rigorous of intellectual positions, it was nevertheless a launching platform for further exploration. E M Forster's essay on 'What I believe' began provocatively: 'I do not believe in Belief'.

The Heretics' discussion group paralysed me completely with abstruse intellectual (all male) argument and I left without uttering a word.

Immediately eager to participate, I sampled The Heretics (former luminaries included Bertrand Russell, the inspirational logical philosopher and humanitarian) and The Cambridge Humanists (whose President was E M Forster). The Heretics' discussion group paralysed me completely with abstruse intellectual (all male) argument and I left without uttering a word. By contrast the humanist discussion groups were 'town-and-gown', with dons, townspeople – *and women*! This was intimidating company for a diffident Fresher, but the humanist credo, 'Human problems can and must be faced in terms of human moral and intellectual resources without recourse to divine authority', confirmed my choice of territory.



Edmund Potter

By my fourth year at St John's I, now a Chemical Engineer, had acquired BA status and was on the Cambridge Humanist committee. Membership rose to unheard-of levels of 500 or more. The unlikely catalyst for this growth was a forty-year-old townsperson on the committee. Joan Harvey lived with her three children in a caravan in a nearby village; rode a motorbike; handwrote long letters to eminent scientists, and – amazingly – persuaded them to give humanist lectures in Cambridge. The list included Francis Crick, Hermann Bondi, and Fred Hoyle (a Fellow of St John's). Non-scientific and spiritual subjects were not neglected either: atheism and religious needs; and anarchism as a theory of organization were covered too. These were stirring times, perhaps containing portents of later social turmoil.

At the end of my fourth year I was ready to seek my destiny elsewhere. A youthful obsession with model aircraft helped secure a job with Hawker Siddeley Aviation in the wind tunnels at Hatfield. This was heady experience of big industry, but I sensed that awkward social choices would eventually lie ahead. By now I was living with Joan in her caravan. Then came an offer to join a small company near Cambridge, so I transferred to hi-tech cottage industry. The next six years were spent making electronic thermometers. The boss (and owner) of the business worked alongside us; it was a very efficient set-up. If I had reservations, they were more a complaint against society than against the boss. Society entitled the owner of a business to retain the profits created by the *whole* business. This seemed to me a disproportionately large reward; society was paying too high a price.

During these years part of society decided to turn itself upside down. It was the late sixties. Arts labs, poetry workshops and anti-universities sprang up. Free concerts and Diggers' conferences were held. The Beatles flew to America. Flower Power floated back, and the Commune Movement was born. In this epoch I was happy to be called an anarcho-syndicalist: definitely anti authority, and *for* coordinated, collaborative, meaningful work. It was an individualist but not isolationist position – and nothing to do with bombs or chaos. My humanist interests were engulfed by the cultural tsunami of this astonishing era.

Our caravan-dwelling existence had to come to an end. Joan's eldest daughter had paired up with a Cambridge architecture dropout. He had private means and they had already started a vegetarian restaurant with a group of people in

Cambridge. We joined them in the search for a place big enough for all of us to share. When a large mediaeval farmhouse with barns and garden near Cambridge came on the market we put our individual savings together and bought it. The villagers – bemused – immediately called it the Commune.

Even before we left the caravan my thoughts for a (non-capitalist!) business were taking tangible shape. In a shed beside the caravan, model aeroplanes gave way to newly purchased machine tools. I started making a batch of ten 'temperature difference meters' for medical use, and registered the business name 'Delta-T Devices'. If this sounds remarkably confident, it was not. I had no clear idea of the way ahead apart from wanting it to be 'profit and decision sharing'; but I knew I had to try *something*, and to give it my best shot.

We transferred the Delta-T equipment to a draughty barn at the Commune. The medical temperature meters were being sold – but only gradually. I left my job to devote all my time to finding more products to make. Two years in the wilderness followed whilst I visited hospitals, consultants, doctors and vets, and cultivated contacts within nearby University departments and institutions. Then, unexpectedly, a distinguished academic contacted Delta-T asking us to make a range of microclimate instruments for environmental physics and plant physiology. Suddenly the future took on a different aspect. Diffidence evaporated. The relationship with Professor J L Monteith of Nottingham University flourished, a business agreement was drawn up, and orders started to arrive from far-flung parts of the world.

By 1976 we were undoubtedly a viable business operation, and starting to make profits. The workforce numbered half a dozen, but no longer included Joan – sadly we had parted company. A splendidly un-capitalist partnership agreement embodied the concept of deferred earnings being repaid later when (if!) profits exceeded a fair rate of pay for everybody. Equal pay per hour had already been introduced – it simplified things. Management was by weekly meeting, aiming for consensus.

Nor were scruples abandoned. Our growing group contained CND members, Quakers and women's peace collective members. During the anti-apartheid era we received an order from South Africa. Favouring dialogue, we requested – and obtained – a statement signed by the customer (actually in Botswana) decrying the exploitation of one race by another. Two years later Israel had just invaded Lebanon when an order arrived from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. We invited the academics there to disavow the aggression of their government. It triggered an instantaneous eruption of Zionist outrage that showered down on us from around the world. Ultimately we did not supply these instruments, but this uncomfortable episode led us to publish a policy statement that helped us establish in advance dialogue with problematic customers.

By the early eighties our products were expanding further into areas of plant and environmental science and agronomy. Medical instruments no longer featured. Our membership continued to grow, rising towards twenty. The increasingly unwieldy consensus meetings gave way to a workers' cooperative structure with limited liability. Common-ownership rules specified an elected management committee, with no external shareholders or outside control. Democracy had arrived, but was greeted with considerable caution – not even two cheers!

Now at 66, I work an agreeable half-time regime, still in daily contact with some of my original colleagues.

And Delta-T now? The membership is not quite thirty. Sales are buoyant – fears of global climate change are working to our advantage. Equal pay lasted into the nineties but finally caved in when we could no longer attract software writers. For a democratic self-managing group, devising a graded pay scale has been a stern test of our principles – and it's only just complete! Now at 66, I work an agreeable half-time regime, still in daily contact with some of my original colleagues. In 2010 Delta-T will celebrate its 39th anniversary. Where will it be in a further thirty-nine years' time, I wonder?

Evensong was ending. The Choir filed past under my quizzical and ambivalent gaze. The muse refused to depart … suppose that evolution has structured our brains to embrace the values of fairness, justice, integrity, and in addition the surely universal needs for ritual and mysticality, then dare we ever hope to master the aberrations that lead to our mutual destruction? Heaven preserve us from the false certainties of dogmatic truth, I mutter in silent prayer – or, as E M Forster expressed himself: 'Lord, I disbelieve – help thou my unbelief'.

Edmund Potter (1961)

Dr A C (Ricky) Metaxas is a Fellow of St John's and director of AC Metaxas and Associates.

Dr Metaxas joined the College in 1987 and in 2007 was asked to revive the President's Cup. Here he documents the early history of the President's Cup and his task in the resurrection of today's tournament.

The President's Cup 1929-1963

Soon after the President, Dr Mark Nicholls, took office in October 2007 he asked me to consider resurrecting the President's Cup, a unique golf feature in the annals of the College over the past 70 years. Thus I became de facto Secretary to this illustrious event, in which I had never participated. This was because of the interruption of this annual event since 1997 due to lack of support from Fellows and members of the High Table. We feared this would be repeated in the long vacation of 2008 and, although it was first announced during the Lent Term, it once again proved difficult to raise more than two competitors. It was then suggested that it might help to open the competition to members of staff of the College. Both the Master and President readily agreed and finally we were able to raise nine competitors with varying handicaps from 10 to 28.

The winner of the President's Cup for 2008 was Jim Wocha, Wines and Provisions Manager, who scored a very respectable 39 Stableford points off a handicap of 16, and, as tradition has it, the proceedings of that day were recorded in the Minutes book. The book is now displayed in the Library for all to glance through. The Cup resided only briefly with Jim because Dick McConnel, winner in 1987, claimed that he had never been given the Cup so he persuaded last year's winner to part with his trophy. The Cup therefore resided on Dick's mantelpiece for a while.

The existence of the Minutes book was raised by John Matthewman, Fellow of St John's, another regular participant in the President's Cup in the 1990s, and sure enough I received it a few days prior to the 2008 competition. Its existence had also been drawn to my attention by Guy Lee[1] (lowest handicap 4) and Reginald Prince, two fine High Table Fellow golfers who were regular competitors in the President's Cup since the late 1940s; Guy Lee won it in 1947, the first of his six wins spanning the years 1947 to 1990. Reginald (four times winner) and I had spent many a delightful warm and sunny afternoon early in the millennium at the Gog Magog Golf Club in Cambridge trying to subdue that little white ball and force it in the intended direction. It did not occur to us that golf balls have minds of their own, embedded in the 400 odd dimples that make their circumference. Oliver Choroba[2] and I, over the same period, would often see Reginald Prince in the company of Guy Lee, playing a few holes in the surroundings that Guy loved so much. Alas Oli Choroba moved to Charterhouse and pressure of work, not lack of form (or so he tells me) was the reason for not being able to participate in the 2008 meeting.

I expected the book to detail dates and decisions taken. When John Matthewman left it in my pigeonhole and I proceeded to glance through it I was frankly astonished at what I read. The first recorded entry was for the 1937 President's Cup, held on 10 August, but this is preceded by a letter dated 11 August 1937 from Professor J T Wilson[3] to Harry Banister[4], five times winner of the Cup and handicap 14 (although the 1945 entry records a handicap of scratch), informing him that the President's Cup started in 1929, when he was the first winner, but there are very few records of the matches in the intervening years bar a list of each year's winners. Wilson ends the letter by stating that, 'I extracted the above information from an old Cambridge Pocket Diary'. Following this letter is the first recorded entry of the Cup which at one point states, '…the players all fought Colonel Bogey to the last green. But the honours remained with the gallant Colonel', a reference relating to the fact that the scorecard of the Royal Worlington and Newmarket Golf Club, where the majority of the President's Cups were held, records both the par and the bogey of each hole. The entry continues a little further, 'One record which for long remained unbroken was set up by Glanville Williams[5] (handicap 27) who, playing with Celtic audacity and disregard for obstacles, lost nine balls in the round.'

Competitors sitting on the veranda of the Royal Worlington and Newmarket Golf Club during the 1938 competition; from l to r: John Cockcroft, Harry Banister, JT Wilson, Edward Appleton, Thomas Wormell[12], The President [Martin Charlesworth], Dennis Bailey[13], Reginald Seeley[14], Robert Howland, and James Stevenson.[15]

There follows a schedule of the President's Cups held, with participants' names, their final scores, reminiscences and sublime anecdotes with photographs of the occasion. Apart from the years 1935 and 1993 the competition was held every year including the WWII years, up to 1997. Amongst the first notable names were such luminaries as Edward Appleton, Frederic Bartlett and John Cockcroft. Appleton[6], in 1924, proved the existence of the first ionospheric layer and was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1947. He was knighted in

1948, and won the President's Cup in 1938 with a handicap of 14. Bartlett[7], four times winner of the Cup, was a forerunner in cognitive psychology who, with Kenneth Craik, set up the MRC's Applied Psychology Research Unit. He had a handicap of 14, won the President's Cup three times up to 1946 and his fourth win, which he shared with Guy Lee in 1954, was after he was honoured with a knighthood in 1948. Cockcroft[8] (handicap 18), and his colleague Ernest Walton, split the atom in a ground-breaking experiment at the Cavendish in 1932. He succeeded Appleton as Jacksonian Professor of Natural Philosophy, was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1951 and became first Master of Churchill College in 1959. The record for the most wins, seven in all, is held by Robert Howland[9], who prior to coming up to Cambridge, was Master at Eton College and served with the RAF in the Mediterranean and South East Asia during WWII. The President during the early years of the Cup was Edward Ernest Sikes[10], who held this position up to 1937. He was then succeeded by Martin Charlesworth[11], who, amongst the other positions he held, was a Recruiting Officer at Bletchley Park during WWII.

> The Minutes book also contains an amusing entry . . . where the competitors divided themselves into two teams, the 'Doctors' versus the 'Rest'.

The Minutes book also contains an amusing entry for 24 May 1939 when it was decided to play a 'friendly' game at Flempton Golf Club, which was said to be 'more of a golfers course', where the competitors divided themselves into two teams, the 'Doctors' versus the 'Rest'. Another competitor that day, Fred Hoyle[16], was one of the most distinguished, creative and controversial scientists of the twentieth century. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1957 and held the Plumian Chair of Astronomy and Experimental Philosophy from 1958 to 1972. He established the Institute of Theoretical Astronomy in Cambridge, which is now part of the Institute of Astronomy. Hoyle liked to climb mountains, was a keen chess player, wrote science fiction and was the first to coin the phrase 'Big Bang', although he was one of the proponents of the steady state theory of the universe. In 1972 he received a knighthood for his services to astronomy. The 1939 entry goes on to state, 'It was a hot and cloudless sky. Sixteen players were eventually mustered. Cockcroft after a joyride round St Ives and the Doctors of various kinds settled down to a struggle against the Rest. Whether on account of the heat or whether we were astonished of our scores full records are not available'. The entry continues, 'Rest' had won but it was not known for which side Hoyle played. Foursomes and more singles were played in the afternoon while the Chaplain stalked about with his cine camera taking photos at distressing moments. The entry concludes with a photo of four competitors standing near the ball and the hole, the caption stating 'The Uncertainty Principle'.

The Uncertainty Principle

This statement relates to Werner Heisenberg's momentous paper in 1927 postulating that the more precisely one knows the position of a particle, the less certain one is of its momentum at the same time. Incidentally, in coming to this conclusion, Heisenberg was influenced by Paul Dirac and his work on quantum mechanics. Dirac, who had succeeded Joseph Larmor as Lucasian Professor of Mathematics, had predicted the existence of the anti-electron, or positron as it subsequently became known, and he also shared the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1933 with Erwin Schrödinger. So, with such physics luminaries as Cockcroft, Hoyle, and Lyttleton amidst the 'Doctors' in the friendly at Flempton, no wonder that the Minutes book makes a jovial reference linking a principle of subatomic particles to a golf ball. With the gap in minutes between 1929-36, one can only hazard a guess as to what the banter could have been at the Royal Worlington and Newmarket or Gog Magog fairways. On a more serious note it could have been about Hitler's rise to power in Germany, where Dirac's contemporaries, such as Einstein, Heisenberg, Pauli and others, were at that time based.

Depleting numbers of Fellows and members of High Table forced those available to play at the Gog Magog golf course on 13 August 1940, which was during WWII's Battle of Britain. This course, established in 1901 on land owned by Gonville and Caius College, is regarded as the home course for many Cambridge golfing dons. It contains two golf courses on the famous Gog Magog hills, south of Cambridge, giving excellent vistas across the fens. On a clear day one can spot the top of Ely Cathedral from the thirteenth tee of the old course. The 1940 entry states that 'As there was no cup a sweepstake of 1/2d each was played for. This [William Blair] Anderson[17] won and handed over to the Grantchester Red Cross Fund the total being raised to 7/ by the Dean who could not play'.

The entry of Wednesday 5 August 1942 enlightens us as to the difficulty of persuading the ball to go in the intended direction: 'Perhaps it was the fault of the ground, perhaps it was the roaring overhead of the engines of the Stirlings being given trial trips preparatory to the night's raid…' The 3 August 1943 entry of the Cup, held at the Gog Magog Golf Club, states, '...owing to the difficulty of finding errant balls, we saw much more of each other than expected'. The 10 August 1945 entry at the Royal Worlington and Newmarket Golf Club starts, 'VE day has come and gone but still the war with Japan goes on and many High Table Golfers have not returned…' The 7 August 1946 entry includes the names of the non-players adding, 'It is hoped that non-players will become players within High Table meaning of the word by next year' and the record ends with, 'Over an excellent golfers tea and after the presentation of the "cup" it was proposed and carried unanimously: that a weekend be spent in the not too distant future at Sunningdale'.

> During this speech he was interrupted by one of his hosts with a limerick about Swans and Dons, to which George replied with two more appropriate and amusing limericks.

Notably St John's owns part of the grounds of that famous club and every year the Bursar is invited to the dinner held in honour of the past Captains. I attended in 2006 and the Sunningdale Captains were very disappointed that I could not offer an entertaining speech 'à la George Reid' who was a regular guest of this dinner during his bursarial years and, although of negligible golfing talent, was asked at the Centenary dinner to make a speech highlighting the connections with St John's College. During this speech he was interrupted by one of his hosts with a limerick about Swans and Dons, to which George replied with two more appropriate and amusing limericks that apparently went down with great acclamation. One limerick went thus:

'On the breasts of a barmaid from Sale,
Were tattooed all the prices of ale,
And on her behind,
For the sake of the blind,
Was the same information in Braille'

The wording of the limerick, admittedly risqué, reflected a late and relaxed stage in a merry evening.

In the 6 August 1947 entry of the Mildenhall meeting the Secretary records the names of the players as well as the non-players referred to as 'Gentlemen'. The record tells us, 'Professor Jopson[18] with immense energy cycled out to join the party at lunch and left at 3:30 to ride the 20 miles back again.' It was said that the Professor, a renowned and persistent cyclist, and Professor of Comparative Philology, was 'fluent in fourteen languages, thirteen of them dead languages' (Fifty Years of Japanese at Cambridge, 1948-1998 compiled and edited by Richard Bowring). It is also interesting to note that Robin Orr[19] played off scratch in the 1946 competition but off handicap 18 the following year, both times trailing the field. In 1950 we see his handicap raised to 29 without improving his standing by much.

From the entry of 14 August 1948 we learn that, 'Petrol was short and travelled by train; thirteen in all and it came on to rain – the second wet day in the annals of the contest. But if the rain wet our clothes it in no way damped our spirits…' A little later the record continues '…Guillebaud[20] was declared the winner of the "cup", which, in the form of an ashtray, was duly presented to him by the President [Charlesworth] amidst much acclamation'. Incidentally Guillebaud was the Tutor of Glanville Williams who, as recorded above, had lost nine balls in the 1937 cup.

The present cup was first used in 1949. That year's entry begins, 'The President [Charlesworth] signalized the coming of age of the Competition this year by the presentation of a large silver cup, a permanent memento to the players by the members of the High Table.'

> The ball rose with a graceful parabola, making straight for the green. It was gathered up by the flag, which twirled around the post twice and then unwound, depositing the ball gently into the hole.

The 8 August 1951 entry concludes, 'The scores were somewhat lower than usual and for the first time the winner who finished at +1 was "up" on the Colonel', while the 5 August 1953 entry states, 'The desirability of having the cup insured was discussed and it was resolved that Howland would have the cup valued and insured and that, in succeeding years, the winners would have the privilege of paying the insurance!' The following year's entry, however, dated 4 August 1954, resolves this issue: 'Howland reported that the insurance of the cup was not an expensive undertaking…' and that '…The apparently continuous sequence of wet dates for the annual match in recent years raised the question of the correspondence between atom bombs and rain. A search through the records disclosed the fact that in the years 1937-45 there was not a single damp day for the match and that in 1947-51 also the weather was kind while rain of varying severity fell in 1946, '48, '49, '50, '52, '53 – in but two of the eight years from 1946 had the match been played on a fine day, which in the nine years to 1945 the match was favoured every year by a fine day. The weather expert smoked his cigarette with a superior smile.' Incidentally the last name in the scores for that day was that of Richard Mead Goody (brother of Jack Goody), who was playing off a handicap of 18.

The poetic nature of the minutes is well illustrated by the 8 August 1956 entry at the Royal Worlington and Newmarket Golf Club, which concludes: 'One record. Sir John Cockcroft playing the front 5th. Sir John had found some difficulty, my information goes, in reaching and staying on the green [evidenced by him coming last with 16 holes down]. However, from among the trees just before the green, he eventually played with a niblick [a nine iron golf club]. The ball rose with a graceful parabola, making straight for the green. It was gathered up by the flag, which twirled around the post twice and then unwound, depositing the ball gently into the hole.'

Another competitor and three-times winner of the President's Cup with a handicap of 9 was Raymond Lyttleton[23], who returned to Cambridge after being awarded a Procter Visiting Fellowship at Princeton University. He then took up a Fellowship at St John's College, which he held until his death. In the late 1930s, he and Hoyle worked together on problems involving the formation of stars and evolution and they produced a number of ground-breaking papers leading up to WWII. A significant advance was the proof after the war that hydrogen is abundant in space between the stars and galaxies, which formed the backbone of subsequent theories. He then concentrated on work concerning the stability of rotating liquid masses, enlarging and correcting previous published work by James Jeans and Henri Poincaré. He was awarded the Royal Society's Royal Medal in 1965. He also investigated the origin and structure of comets, resulting in a book entitled, *The Comets and their Origin*. The President's Cup entry of 7 August 1957 describes Lyttleton, who by then is playing off a handicap of 11, as being 'in a class by himself …'

The 1959 entry reveals a departure from the norm, 'in order to suppress the delicate and individual task of assigning individual handicaps, the procedure should be experimentally adopted of giving all players 18 strokes, except the previous winner, who would have 9, and other recent winners, who would have 12. Individual exceptions might be permitted at the discretion of the convener.' However, after a few years this was abandoned and the 7 August 1963 record informs us that, '… Further, partly because it has proved to be felicitous at the Johnian Society golf meetings the Stableford System of scoring was tried out'. We learn that, 'No account of the day's play would be complete without reference to the President's (Briggs[24]) tee-shot at the 5th. He drove with nothing less than his usual vigour but the ball was heavily topped. It

Competitors during the 1954 Competition at the Royal Worlington and Newmarket Golf Club; from l to r, back row: Harry Banister, Barry Kipping[21], Richard Goody[22], Claude Guillebaud, front row: Robert Howland, Guy Lee, George Briggs and Frederic Bartlett.

Dr Metaxas

bounded forward twenty-five yards and popped straight into the Ladies tee box on the forward tee, where, after a frenetic death-rattle round the walls of the box, it came to rest on the bottom on a position from which no known club could extract it.' It is revealed much later in the Minutes book that the Stableford System they had adopted was against Bogey for each hole and not par, hence the very respectable scores of some of the competitors.

Dr A C Metaxas

The author is indebted to Fiona Colbert, Biographical Librarian, for her expert advice on biographical data and for many corrections and suggestions. Thanks are also due to Malcolm Underwood, Archivist, who suggested a list of illustrious names from the Minutes book to concentrate on and to the President, Reginald Prince, George Reid, Allen Purvis, and Jonathan Harrison, Special Collections Librarian, for many helpful suggestions and to Margaret Metaxas for reading and editing the article.

Biographical notes

1 Fellow 1945-2005, College Lecturer in Classics 1948-1982, Tutor 1949-1956, Librarian 1961-1984, Praelector 1956-1961, University Lecturer in Classics 1949-1982.
2 Fellow 2000-2004.
3 Fellow 1920-1945, Professor of Anatomy 1920-1934 (Emeritus 1934-1945).
4 University Lecturer in Experimental Psychology 1926-1947, Director of Studies in Moral Sciences and Supervisor in Psychology 1934-1947.
5 Fellow 1936-1942, Rouse Ball Professor of English Law 1968-1978.
6 Fellow 1919-1925, 1936-1939, Jacksonian Professor of Natural Philosophy 1936-1939, Honorary Fellow 1946-1965.
7 Fellow 1917-1969, Professor of Experimental Psychology 1931-1952.
8 Fellow 1928-1946, Jacksonian Professor of Natural Philosophy 1939-1946, Honorary Fellow 1946-1967, First Master of Churchill College 1959-1967.
9 Fellow 1929-1986, College Lecturer in Classics 1931-1972, University Lecturer in Classics 1938-1972, Tutor 1934-1965, Senior Tutor 1956-1965, President 1963-1967.
10 Fellow 1891-1940, Tutor 1900-1925, President 1925-1937.
11 Fellow 1923-1950, College Lecturer in Classics 1921-1950, Tutor 1925-1931, Laurence Reader in Classics (Ancient History) 1931-1950, President 1937-1950, Ordained Deacon and Priest 1940.
12 Supervisor in Physics 1943-1963, University Lecturer in Meteorological Physics 1950-1971.
13 Fellow 1931-1980, College Lecturer in Law 1931-1950, Tutor 1939-1946, Rouse Ball Professor of English Law 1950-1968.
14 Chaplain 1934-1938.
15 University Lecturer in Divinity 1936-1968, Fellow of Downing College 1951-1983.
16 Fellow 1939-1972, Plumian Professor of Astronomy and Experimental Philosophy 1958-1972, Director, Institute of Theoretical Astronomy 1967-1973, Honorary Fellow 1973-2001.
17 Fellow 1936-1959, Kennedy Professor of Latin 1936-1942.
18 Fellow 1937-1969, Professor of Comparative Philology 1937-1954 (Emeritus 1955-1969).
19 Organist 1938-1951, Fellow 1948-1956, 1965-1976, Professor of Music 1965-1976 (Emeritus 1976-2006), Honorary Fellow 1987-2006.
20 Fellow 1915,1926-1971, Praelector 1926-1929, Tutor 1929-1956, College Lecturer in Economics 1946-1957, Senior Tutor 1953-1956, Reader in Economics and Politics 1956-1957.
21 Fellow 1954-1965, College Lecturer 1956-1965, University Lecturer in Chemistry 1937-1965.
22 Fellow 1950-1953.
23 Fellow 1937-1940, 1949-1995, College Lecturer in Mathematics 1949-1969, Professor of Theoretical Astronomy 1969-1978 (Emeritus 1978-1995).
24 Fellow 1920-1985, President 1952-1963, Professor of Plant Physiology 1946-1948, Professor of Botany 1948-1960.

More extensive biographical details can be found in the *Register of Twentieth-Century Johnians, Volume I, 1900-1949*, or J A Venn's *Alumni Cantabrigienses*.

Professor Stefan Reif is Emeritus Professor of Medieval Hebrew Studies at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of St John's.

After the success of the one-day seminar on the achievements of Charles Taylor, Master of St John's 1881-1908 and accomplished Hebraist, Professor Reif is writing a booklet on the same subject.

The Achievements of Charles Taylor – a Century after his Death

A day-long seminar held at St John's College, Cambridge, on 2 November 2008 – arranged by the College and the Genizah Research Unit at the University Library – offered about a hundred participants an experience that was, in a number of major respects, unique.

The papers on Charles Taylor, Master of the College from 1881 until his death in 1908, constituted the first serious attempt to assess that scholar's contribution to learning in the diverse fields of Genizah manuscript acquisition, Hebrew studies, mathematics and University development. The current Master, Professor Chris Dobson, who chaired all the proceedings, was probably the first Cambridge head of house to function in this way on the subject of the Genizah texts and related fields. An exciting collection of manuscripts, from both the University Library and the College Library, was exhibited in the Rare Books section of the latter. What is more, one of the lecturers, Professor Raphael Loewe, was lecturing on the seventieth anniversary of his arrival at St John's to study Classics in 1938.

One part of the proceedings, arranged to mark the centenary of the death of Taylor, was devoted to his academic achievements and their intellectual, social and historical background, while, in the remainder, the stress was placed on the scholarly significance of the Genizah materials, found in Cairo in the nineteenth century and dating from about a thousand years ago. Most of the lectures were illustrated with a variety of images that were often colourful and exotic.

Janet Soskice, Reader in Philosophical Theology at the University of Cambridge, spoke about the learned Cambridge twins, Scottish Presbyterians, Mrs Agnes Lewis and Mrs Margaret Gibson, and how they had studied numerous European and Semitic languages in order to improve their understanding of European and Near Eastern culture. They had brought back remarkable Hebrew, Arabic and Aramaic documents from Egypt and the Holy Land, including some items from the Cairo Genizah. Although they were on good terms with such Hebraists as Charles Taylor, they also enjoyed close friendships with non-establishment figures within and around the University. They were on especially good terms with Solomon and Mathilde Schechter, and it was Dr Schechter who was shown some of their finds in May 1896 and who then made his famous visit to Cairo, bringing back almost 140,000 manuscript fragments to Cambridge University Library.

Professor Loewe, retired from the Goldsmid Chair at University College, London, explained how rabbinical Hebrew had come to be studied in Cambridge, especially in the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, and how Solomon Marcus Schiller-Szinessy, a Hungarian Rabbi with impressive classical as well as rabbinic learning, had been engaged to describe the Hebrew manuscripts in the University Library and to introduce the systematic teaching of post-biblical Hebrew to the University's students. Charles Taylor had been one of his pupils and had been inspired to a life-long study of rabbinical texts. Others had been among the country's leading Old Testament scholars in the late nineteenth century.

The mishnaic tractate 'Avot, replete with ethical maxims and apothegms, was the subject of the lecture given by Professor Shimon Sharvit, Emeritus Professor of Hebrew and Semitic Languages at Bar-Ilan University, Israel. He noted how the extensive halakhic and liturgical use of the tractate had led to corruptions in its transmission, and traced the beginnings of serious manuscript study of this work in the nineteenth century. Taylor had recognized the importance of 'Avot for the literary and linguistic history of the Mishnah and had compiled a detailed commentary. Though himself very much at home in this form of literature, he had been assisted in his early editions by Schiller-Szinessy and later by Solomon Schechter. Professor Sharvit pointed out examples of the quality of Taylor's insights into the meaning of unusual words and phrases.

> Taylor had recognized the importance of 'Avot for the literary and linguistic history of the Mishnah and had compiled a detailed commentary.

One of the College Fellows, Professor Stefan Reif, Emeritus Professor of Medieval Hebrew in the University of Cambridge, and founder of the Genizah Research Unit, dealt with the manner in which Taylor had related to other Hebrew scholars. Taylor had demonstrated outstanding kindness and generosity, had funded part of the cost of the lectureship in Talmudic and Rabbinic Literature, and had cooperated in numerous academic projects. Above all, he had covered the expenditure of Schechter's historic visit to Cairo. It now even seemed likely that he had paid a large sum for the acquisition of the Genizah texts. The Taylor-Schechter Genizah

Collection testified not only to his munificence but also to his involvement in the early identification and careful publication of some of the most exciting finds.

It was Charles Taylor's career at St John's that occupied the attention of another Fellow of the College, Dr Andrew Macintosh, who had served as President of the College and taught Hebrew at the Faculty of Divinity for many years. He acknowledged the role played by Taylor – an Anglican priest with a conservative love of tradition of learning but also with an open mind and 'cautious courtesy'– in changing the University's regulations to enable religious nonconformists, such as Roman Catholics and Jews, to become members of the University. Dr Macintosh described the young Taylor's rowing and mountaineering skills, his middle-aged Hebrew expertise, and the marriage made in his mature years with the young Margaret Dillon, who was to continue calling him 'my Master' throughout her fifty-four years of widowhood.

An assessment of Taylor's contribution to mathematics was made by another Johnian Fellow, Peter Johnstone, Professor of the Foundations of Mathematics at Cambridge. Having examined his books and articles on the subject, he had been impressed by the fact that Taylor had continued to publish in the field virtually throughout his career. He had produced many editions of textbooks on 'conics', had apparently been the first to refer to the subject in that way rather than as 'conic sections', and had given mathematical papers to learned societies. Although most of what Taylor had to say was in the realm of the further clarification of Euclidian geometry, he had in his later work also begun to demonstrate a more analytical approach.

Dr Efraim Lev, of the University of Haifa, dealt with the Genizah manuscripts' contribution to the history of medicine. He explained how Taylor had added about another 200 items to the catalogue prepared by the late Dr Haskell Isaacs, reaching a total of over 1,800 descriptions. He had drawn up details of the drugs used and those who traded in them, and had prepared lists of the physicians and pharmacists mentioned. He had encountered a range of textbooks employed by these specialists, some of them not previously known. He analysed examples of common prescriptions, some of them written in Hebrew script while others preferred Arabic. Dr Lev also distinguished between those texts relating to practical materia medica and those concerned with medical theory.

Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner made it clear that the Genizah texts were a rich source of data for Arabic and Islamic studies and regretted that the attention given to these texts had come mainly from scholars on the Jewish rather than on both the Jewish and Muslim sides of learning. Working as she now does as a Research Associate in the Genizah Research Unit, she had come across a wide variety of fragments that were not only parts of sacred literature, both Muslim and Jewish,

Professor Stefan Reif

but also filled many gaps in our knowledge of more mundane fields. The Karaite use of Arabic was an intriguing topic and the dialect of Arabic reflected in the Judaeo-Arabic used by the Jewish communities of the Genizah period, especially around the twelfth century, was of major importance to our understanding of the development of vernacular, as against Qur'anic, Arabic.

The final paper on the significance of the Taylor-Schechter Genizah Collection was given by Professor Gideon Bohak, who heads the Department of Jewish Philosophy and Religious Studies at Tel Aviv University. Dealing with his specialist field of Jewish magic, he demonstrated how much easier it was for the researcher to deal with conserved Genizah materials, which were in specific locations and had clear classmarks, than to struggle with artefacts such as Babylonian incantation bowls which often had very dubious origins and questionable ownership. Professor Bohak explained the trade in amulets, the historical continuity of many magical traditions, and the degree to which this kind of material illuminated social history, cross-cultural borrowings and the struggle between popular and authoritative religiosity.

> Scholars should promote a love of learning and an industrious enthusiasm for explaining its ramifications and publicising their findings.

In the final section of the seminar, the current head of the Genizah Research Unit, Dr Ben Outhwaite, pointed out that the Unit, and indeed the University Library, was keen to find the necessary funding to continue all the projects that had been ongoing for a number of years, as well as undertaking new ones. He made specific reference to the most recent work on the newly loaned Mosseri Genizah Collection and to its special problems of conservation. He also updated the audience on an exciting project, for which funding of £1 million had just been promised by the Friedberg Genizah Project in New York, and which would ensure that within about three years every Cambridge Genizah fragment would be digitally scanned and made available online by both Cambridge University Library and the Friedberg Genizah Project.

Professor Reif then summarized what he felt had been learned during the day, especially from the life and work of Charles Taylor. Scholars should promote a love of learning and an industrious enthusiasm for explaining its ramifications and publicising their findings. They should encourage cooperative research, rise above their religious and national differences, and leave a legacy significant enough to ensure the future continuity of their scholarship. He thanked the Master and the College for their generous support, the lecturers for their contributions and the audience for its participation. He hoped that as a result of the seminar, and as a tribute to Taylor, it might be possible to raise the funds to endow another research post in the Unit, possibly with a Johnian connection.

For those who missed the seminar, a booklet is now being prepared with texts of the lectures and plates of some of the exhibits, and will soon be available from the College.

Professor Stefan C Reif

Professor Raphael Loewe and Dr Michael Loewe

Professor James David Lewis-Williams is Professor Emeritus of Cognitive Archaeology at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg and was an Overseas Visiting Scholar to the College in 2008-09. He is a specialist in the San or Bushmen culture, especially their art and beliefs.

The following article is based on a lecture given by Professor Lewis-Williams about Bishop John William Colenso, former Fellow of St John's College, and his work with South African tribes.

The Bishop and the Bushmen: St John's College and the new South African coat of arms

History is a palimpsest of individual lives, overlapping, interacting and often leading to unexpected consequences. Here I follow a seemingly unlikely trail from mid-nineteenth century London to the new post-apartheid South African coat of arms and motto.

It all began in 1854 when the Prussian Ambassador to Britain, Baron Christian Charles Josias von Bunsen (1791-1860) and the Anglican theologian, the Reverend Frederick Denison Maurice (1805-72) arranged a reception in London. The purpose of the gathering was to bring together three men: Dr Wilhelm Heinrich Immanuel Bleek (1827-75), Bishop John William Colenso (1814-83) and Sir George Grey (1812-98).

Bleek, a German philologist, had just returned from West Africa because of ill health. He had hoped to study African languages. Colenso, a Fellow of St John's College, had recently been appointed to the new bishopric of Natal, and he was looking for someone to prepare a Zulu grammar to aid him in his missionary work. Grey was also about to set out for southern Africa: he had been appointed governor of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope.

Bleek's father, Professor Friedrich Bleek of Bonn University, von Bunsen, Colenso and Maurice were all theologians of a radical, some say heretical, persuasion. Therein lay the seeds of disaster for Colenso. He was an ordained Fellow of St John's but was influenced by the famous geologist Sir Charles Lyell, one of his 'warmest friends', and later by Charles Darwin. He thought a six-day creation and the prohibitions of Leviticus and Deuteronomy absurd. Indeed, he sent Wilhelm Bleek an amusing rhyme that was doing the rounds:

The Bishops all have sworn to shed their blood,
To prove 'tis true, the hare does chew the cud.
Ah! Bishops, Doctors & Divines, beware!
Weak is the faith that hangs upon a hare!

Colenso and his entourage, which included Wilhelm Bleek, arrived in Durban on 7 March 1855. The colonial Chaplain, the Reverend William Lloyd, who resided in Durban with his large family of daughters, welcomed them but soon realised that he and Colenso were theologically diametrically opposed. After an uncomfortable week in Durban, Colenso and his party set off in ox wagons for Pietermaritzburg, the inland capital of the Natal. As soon as he could Bleek went to live with the Zulus in their homesteads. In his diaries he recorded not only their language, which was his principal remit, but also many of their customs, the layout of their settlements, and their political structures. Arguably this was the first hands-on social anthropological work ever to be performed.

During this time Bleek heard of San cattle raids over the Drakensberg Mountains, but was unable to interview any San people. He was intrigued by what he had heard about their click language. When Bleek had completed his Zulu studies, Sir George Grey offered him a post in Cape Town as curator of his valuable library with its African folklore and language material. This must have been an attractive proposition for Bleek, and when he departed for Cape Town he left behind tumultuous circumstances in Natal. Colenso had found that the Zulus, whom he had come so far to convert, were not ignorant of God. He wrote:

'I believe that, by thus meeting the heathen, half way, as it were,
upon the ground of our common humanity and with the recollection
that that humanity is now blessed and redeemed in Christ… we may
look for greater success in Missionary labours.'

The Bishop of Cape Town, Robert Gray, a clergyman of conservative persuasion, became increasingly alarmed. Embarrassingly, news of Colenso's heretical teachings had reached Britain. Colenso's strained relations with Bishop Gray were exacerbated when the colonists reported that the new Bishop of Natal was establishing favourable relations with the Zulus. The British-Zulu war was imminent, so this sort of thing was regarded as treachery. But Colenso persisted in doing what he could to save the Zulu nation from destruction. Eventually he was excommunicated. Colenso died in 1883, still living in Pietermaritzburg and maintaining his right to the bishopric. Thousands attended his funeral, and a town, later made famous in the Anglo-Boer War, was named after him.

Meanwhile, Bleek had married Jemima Lloyd. Her sister, Lucy, had come to live with them in Cape Town. The irascible Reverend Lloyd had thrown both sisters out of his house. Bleek soon discovered that there were San prisoners incarcerated in Cape Town; they spoke the click language that had intrigued him when he had heard about it in Natal. He persuaded the governor, who was by then Sir Philip Wodehouse, to allow some San people to stay with him in his suburban Cape Town house. They were /Xam San from the central part of Cape Colony and had been brought to Cape Town to serve prison sentences for crimes ranging from sheep stealing to murder.

Boldly, and no doubt thinking of the controversy surrounding his friend Colenso's dispute with the colonists, he used the word 'religious'.

Lucy assisted Bleek in the phonetic transcription and translation of /Xam San word lists, personal histories, folklore and accounts of rituals. Together they compiled approximately 12,000 pages of /Xam narratives and, in parallel columns, English transliterations.

At this time Bleek showed his /Xam informants copies of San rock paintings. As a result of what they told him he concluded that San rock art was an 'attempt, however imperfect, at a truly artistic conception of religious feelings' (Bleek 1874:13). Boldly, and no doubt thinking of the controversy surrounding his friend Colenso's dispute with the colonists, he used the word 'religious'. Bleek also dared to use the word 'art', thus challenging the assumption that art was the product of 'higher civilisations'.

Bleek died in 1875, eight years before Colenso. Some years earlier the German philologist had been awarded a British pension, the petition being signed by such luminaries as Lyell and Darwin. After Bleek's untimely death Lloyd continued with the work and eventually saw to the publication of extracts from the collection. After Lloyd's death in 1914 Bleek's daughter, Dorothea, took over the study and published further extracts. Today, the entire collection is available online: www.lloydbleekcollection.uct.ac.za.

Our story ends in a remarkable way. When the South African government was designing a new national coat of arms, President Thabo Mbeki approached the Rock Art Institute at the University of the Witwatersrand to select a San rock art image to sit in the centre of the coat of arms. The Institute provided a number of images, from which the national heraldry authorities chose a painting of a human figure with a raised arm. In the interests of symmetry rather than authenticity, they reversed and duplicated the image.

President Mbeki then asked that the new national motto be translated into the now extinct /Xam San language, the one that the Bleek family had recorded. He supplied the meaning of the motto: ‘People who are different come together’. In /Xam it reads: !Ke e: /xarra / /ke. The President commented:

‘We have chosen an ancient language of our people… This emphasises the tragedy of the millions of human beings who, through the ages, have perished and even ceased to exist as peoples, because of people’s inhumanity to others.’

Our circuitous trail has led from St John’s College to a controversial southern African Bishop, to a young German philologist, to insights into the religious nature of San rock art and finally to a symbol around which the diverse peoples of southern Africa can now rally. Colenso would have been delighted!

Professor J D Lewis-Williams

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The Honourable Frank Iacobucci is a former Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. Frank arrived in Cambridge in 1962 and studied International Law at St John's. Frank now works for Torys as Counsel, where he advises government and business on legal and policy matters. His work includes guidance, advice and support to clients of Torys and members of the firm.

The following is adapted from a speech given by Frank at the Cambridge Society of Toronto's annual Boat Race Dinner in 2007.

A toast to Cambridge

It is a great pleasure and honour to propose a toast to Cambridge. Although when my wife Nancy and I attended an Oxford / Cambridge Boat Race dinner in New York City many years ago, the speaker of the evening was Professor A L Goodhart, who was Master of University College, Oxford. Goodhart was a transplanted American and was obviously not a fan of the Boat Race or of rowing. In fact he said as far as he was concerned, the best boat race was the one in which both boats sank!

I will be giving some personal memories of my time in Cambridge and I know that each of you could provide your own memory chest of experiences you had at Cambridge and I apologize for mine being so personally based. I have to confess, however, that my problem has not been finding something to say but rather having too much to say because I have such a rich abundance of memories of Cambridge days.

In 1962 I went to study International Law at Cambridge, having graduated in Law from the University of British Columbia. Cambridge was without question the leading centre for the study of international law, which was a subject that was most popular in the '60s but less so since.

My reminiscences begin with a transatlantic boat trip from New York to Southampton. At the Southampton dock the English immigration official asked me what I was doing in England. I said I was going to study at Cambridge and he replied in a Northern accent, 'So you've come to learn the language, have you?' That rather unusual greeting labelled me as a colonial. I had gone over on an ocean liner with a good friend of mine, John Helliwell, who was going back to Oxford to do his DPhil and we travelled there with another UBC mate of mine from Oxford. It was my first visit there and both my friends took me around to see the colleges and, in particular, Magdalen College, where my friend was a member. In wanting to take me up Magdalen Tower he had to get the permission of a Fellow. The Fellow he asked was none other than Professor Gilbert Ryle, the eminent philosopher. A fierce pipe smoker, Ryle asked me what I was doing in England and I told him I was on my way to Cambridge. He then asked me which college I was going to and I told him St John's. At that response Ryle became quite excited and replied, 'Oh wonderful choice, wonderful choice'. I thought that was a very nice comment and asked him why? Ryle replied, 'Because John's has the best lavatories in Cambridge'. Again, an early introduction to English eccentricity.

Speaking of that, when I got settled in Cambridge I went to the lavatory at the Old Schools where the Law Faculty was. I knew from that experience I was in a very different place. The graffiti on the lavatory walls was upmarket compared to what I had previously seen. One in particular stood out in my mind and it was this:

To be is to do: Adam Smith
To do is to be: Jean-Paul Sartre
Do be do be do: Frank Sinatra

As a graduate student I did not live in College. My landlady was called Miss Hudson. I never knew her first name. I always called her Miss Hudson and she always called me Mr Wybockee. She came from generations of landladies that only Cambridge can provide. But typical of the English, she took a great interest in me and felt a sense of responsibility for my welfare. She told me that my tutor, Professor F H Hinsley, a modern historian who later became Master of St John's, also took a great interest in ensuring that I was going to be comfortable in her digs. In fact Miss Hudson told me that Professor Hinsley had visited the digs to see what I would be assigned and to make sure that things were okay for my staying there. My first meeting with Hinsley was also memorable; he was the quintessential don resplendent in Harris Tweed and pipe, and he said upon my leaving to please be careful because the steps down from his College rooms had not been properly repaired since the mid-1600s.

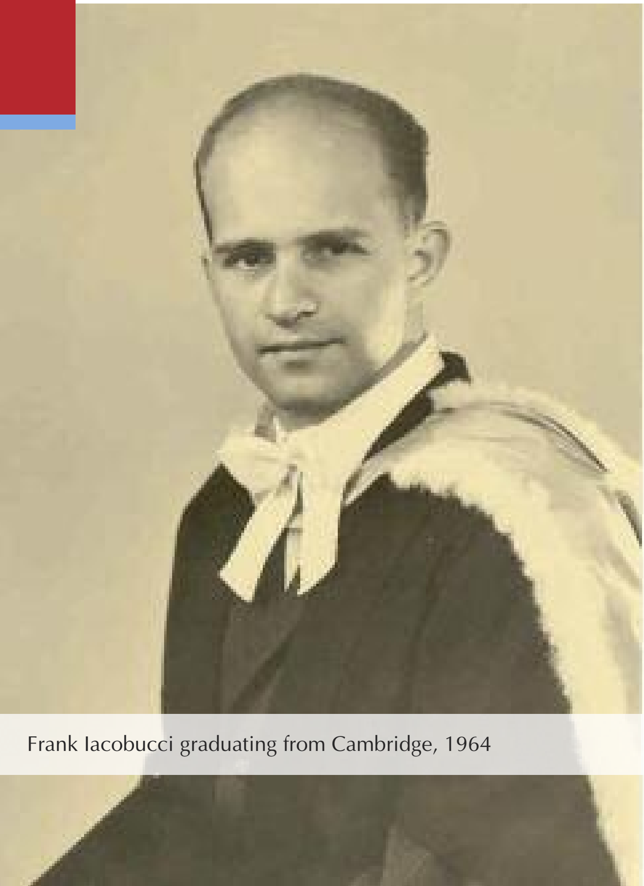
I confess that the first thing I did was to walk on the lawn in joyful celebration.

In the early days I committed one breach of the rules after another, starting with walking on the lawn. On visiting Cambridge after my election as an Honorary Fellow of St John's, I confess that the first thing I did was to walk on the lawn in joyful celebration. Cambridge was the place where no one really told you the rules. You had to break them first and then everyone told you.

Before graduate studies I had played sports at UBC and played on the UBC soccer team. Consequently I thought I would go out for the Cambridge team, even though I hadn't played soccer competitively for some three years. In an unsuccessful try-out for the Cambridge team I was told by one of the young players I must have been pretty good in my day! But I played for my College first team as a result and enjoyed the camaraderie very much despite being older than all the other team members.

Rowing at Cambridge was something to behold. I shall never forget hearing the cheers on the Cam.

I also rowed for the College in what was called the Lady Margaret 14 boat. Reflecting a culture of participation, St John's had sixteen boats in the May Bumps and our boat was a soccer boat. I was put in the number five spot because a good friend of mine from UBC, John Lecky, had rowed for Canada and for Cambridge on two occasions, and both times Cambridge won. He rowed five in the Cambridge boat so they thought since I was from British Columbia, I should also row number five. I got Lecky to come out and coach us and the first thing he did was to tell us to stop rowing and said, 'Iacobucci, get out of number five. Go in the bow. You're the weakest person in the boat!' Rowing at Cambridge was something to behold. I shall never forget hearing the cheers on the Cam. This combination of the secular cheering with a religious connotation was something I had never heard before nor have I ever heard anything like it since.



Frank Iacobucci graduating from Cambridge, 1964

In my second year of studies St John's asked me to do College supervisions in International Law. This was an incredibly welcome offer because my Canadian Fellowship was not that luxurious. The generosity of the College stipend made me quite comfortably off. But again I shall never forget my first supervision, which was to be held in the rooms of one of the St John's Law Fellows, Ken

Scott. Upon entry into his rooms I nervously prepared for the supervision. A man suddenly sprang up from the couch like a jack-in-the-box and I, of course, was scared to death. I immediately thought that the rooms were haunted and all of these stories about ghosts and so on were true. But it was Ken Scott in his underwear and shirt arising from a nap, which apparently he used to do right after his lunch and several glasses of wine, of which he was very fond.

Another outstanding memory that encapsulates living in Cambridge at that time was the winter of '63. It was incredibly cold. The Cam froze as did the water in the basin for flushing the toilet. Of course then we had no central heating and the headline in the Cambridge newspaper read, 'Coldest winter since Cromwell'. I have always felt that everything bad in English history happened during Cromwell's time.

In that winter we were also to witness seeing ice hockey being played on the Cam with field hockey sticks. I think the river was frozen for close to a month and during that time the nightly practice of my landlady was to climb three flights of stairs to put a stone hot-water bottle in my bed. Needless to say this was most welcome. Although in the morning, when the bottle turned icy cold, it became a great incentive to get out of bed!

In America at that time you could never admit to being a communist. In Canada you could, but you certainly wouldn't be elected to any office as prestigious as President of the Cambridge Union.

Apart from excellent scholars and an intellectual environment that was quite spectacular, Cambridge had a huge number of characters. In fact, in some ways, you stood out if you weren't a character. The environment was highly liberal and, to illustrate this, I recall the President of the Cambridge Union was an openly admitted communist. The counterpart on an American campus, or even Canadian one, could not exist. In America at that time you could never admit to being a communist. In Canada you could, but you certainly wouldn't be elected to any office as prestigious as President of the Cambridge Union.

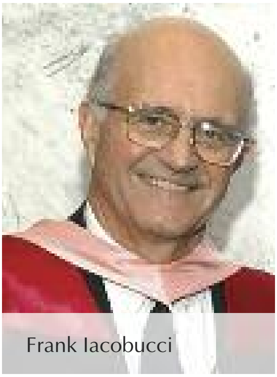
But as I say, the characters were numerous. One of my best friends, Lawrence Collins, now Lord Justice Collins of the Court of Appeal, was at Downing College and he introduced me to a couple of his Downing friends, Jonathan Lynn and John Cleese, both of whom starred in the Footlights production for that year, as did Graham Chapman, whom I did not meet. Both Cleese and Chapman of course went on to Monty Python fame. Lynn was equally successful, the creator of that widely acclaimed television series *Yes Minister* and a director of many movies including *My Cousin Vinnie*. Lynn seemed to be the most normal of the three and also quite easy to meet. Cleese had a great reputation for pranks, one of which was knocking on doors to solicit signatures to a petition to bring back capital punishment because he thought capital punishment was funny and people needed more humour in their lives.

I had two friends at the College who are worth special mention in my memory chest. One was D C K Jones, the Captain of the College soccer team, who was from Wolverhampton. David was responsible for one of the kindest gestures that ever happened to me. He got two tickets to the Cup Final match at Wembley in 1964 and invited me as his guest. He could have invited any number of friends but chose me because he knew as a Canadian I probably would likely not have a chance to see a Cup Final, unlike his English mates. In any event it was an act of kindness that remains high on my list and our friendship has continued.

Another one of my College friends was a man named Jim Cargile, an American who is now Professor of Philosophy at the University of Virginia. Jim was doing his doctoral thesis on paradoxes. He was an extremely comical person and most eccentric. To illustrate, one evening at dinner in Hall the entrée was boiled beef, which was one of the most terrible dishes I have tasted in my life. Even the English were pushing their plates to the centre because they couldn't quite handle it. It was the saltiest piece of meat that I ever tasted. But Cargile, who could eat linoleum if he was hungry enough, seized the moment. He saw the gasps for the water-pitcher and immediately said to his neighbour, 'Would you please pass the salt?' As the salt-cellar was passed down the table everyone looked to see who on earth had requested the salt. When it arrived at Cargile's place he joyfully sprinkled an abundance of salt on the already salt-laden beef and, to everyone's astonishment, devoured the meat.

One cannot speak about Cambridge in those days, or even today, without mentioning the extra-curricular activities, particularly the music. I was fortunate to be at St John's, which rivalled (and still does) King's for the best college choir, not only in Cambridge but in the United Kingdom. Nancy, who has had much musical experience, particularly in choral singing, made the choir of the Cambridge University Musical Society (CUMS), which was conducted under David Willcocks, as he then was, now Sir David Willcocks. CUMS enjoyed the incredible experience of singing in both King's College Chapel and Ely Cathedral, performing Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* under the direction of Willcocks and Britten himself with a world-class group of soloists. It was one of the great musical experiences that I have witnessed in my life.

Speaking of Nancy brings me to the high point of my time at Cambridge. The experience that I had and I believe each of us had, at Cambridge was


Frank Iacobucci

transformative. There are many things that are extraordinary about Cambridge: the intellectual stimulation, the talented professors and students, the sheer beauty and history of the place, the family-like ties to one's college, the opportunities to study and play, the friendships formed, the kindness and decency of the Brits, and so on.

For those of us who met our life partners that was, and remains, the highlight. In the Law Faculty, Nancy and I were known as a Cambridge romance and amusingly many faculty members took credit for our eventual marriage. Of course that could not have happened were it not for the providential events that led each of us to Cambridge and to meet each other. That alone ranks as the turning point in my life. But also a part of that turning point was the unalloyed joy and good fortune of being privileged to attend Cambridge. Cambridge not only gave me a ticket to earn a living but it also, more importantly, provided me with a passport to learn how to live. For that I can never repay it.

Please rise and join with me in a toast to one of the truly great universities of the world, to Cambridge!

The Honourable Frank Iacobucci (1962)
Honorary Fellow

Sumet Jumsai read for his PhD in architecture at St John's College from 1958-67, and intermittently taught at the Department of Architecture from 1989-93. He has been elected an Honorary Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, Member of the French Academie d'Architecture and Fellow Commoner of St John's College. His architectural works have been exhibited at the Venice Biennale 1996 and his paintings in Paris galleries.

Here, Dr Jumsai describes the design of the Privy Council Chambers of Bangkok, which contributed to the award of Chevalier de l' Orde des Arts et des Lettres by the French government in 2008. The decoration was conferred in recognition of his role in Franco-Thai relations and in the field of architecture.

The Tree Building – Privy Council Chambers, Bangkok 2004

The Privy Council is one of the revered Thai institutions. It comprises 19 Privy Councillors or 'advisors' to the King who meet regularly to deliberate on a variety of issues. They also represent His Majesty at functions and receive dignitaries and ambassadors. The Chambers accommodate their private offices, a secretariat, meeting rooms, reception and dining rooms. The Royal Secretary, who liaises with the Privy Council, also has his offices and secretariat in the same building.

North end of the west elevation

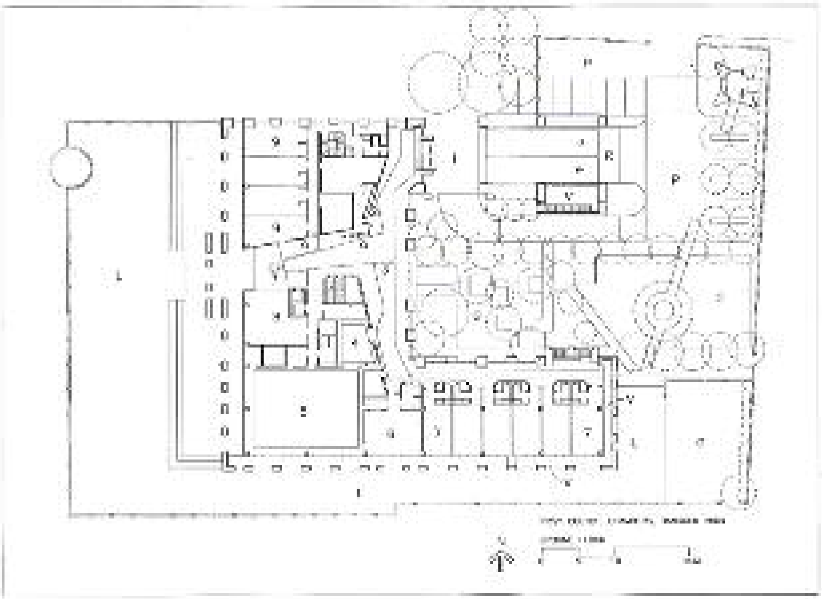
Its principal elevation is to the west and faces the royal palace, the Grand Palace. Going round clock-wise, its north side faces a nineteenth century palace in the neo-classical style, the rear on the east abuts an old temple in the traditional Thai style, and its south elevation merges into a public park full of large trees.

The building is on three floors, with a basement for parking, and its plan is a U-shape wrapping around an existing clump of trees. A lotus pond has been created on three

Looking out from the I-beam gables with the view of the royal palace in the background

sides of the structure and penetrates into parts of the façades to make the building appear as if it is standing in water.

The architectural agenda is multi-faceted: the building has to reflect its institutional character, blend in with both the traditional Thai and neo-Classical buildings nearby and, at the same time, reflect the spirit of the time. Its austere front on the west side is reminiscent of colonnades applicable to both Thai temple and European classical architecture. But here, in this façade, naked I-beams forming triangular frames and perched atop the colonnade invoke the traditional roof gables. The I-beam triangles become more marked as the building is viewed clockwise while the elevation



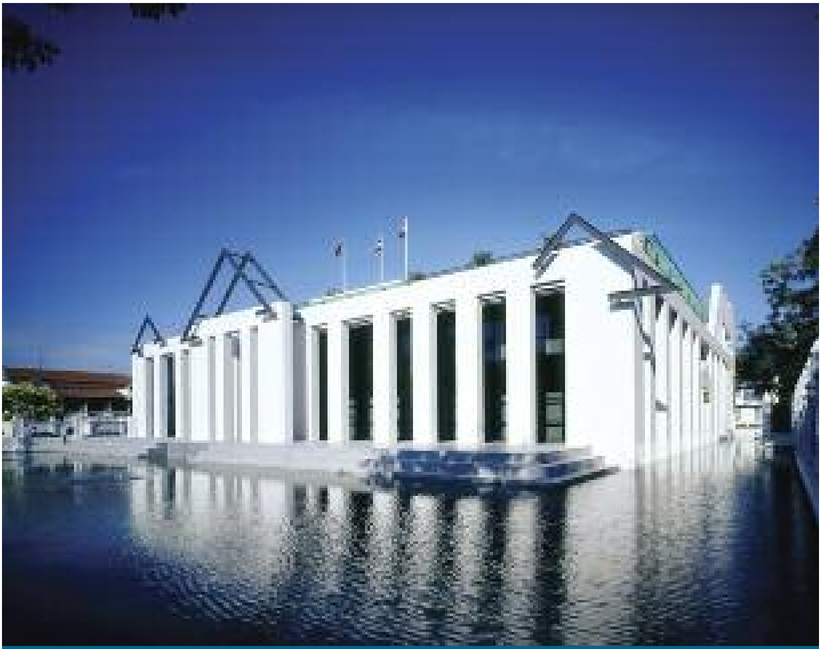
Ground floor plan

responds increasingly to the trees at the back and the adjacent park on the south side. In effect, the building goes through a metamorphosis, becoming arboreal with the real arborescent environment.

Dr Sumet Jumsai (1958)

Architects: Sumet Jumsai and SJA+3D design team

Photography: Sky Line Studio and Sumet Jumsai



West elevation