

FRIENDS OF CHRIST'S COLLEGE LIBRARY NEWSLETTER, Summer 2023



A word of welcome... from the Christ's College Librarian

Dear Friends,

My first year as College Librarian has flown by, and I can hardly believe that it is summertime once again.

I took over from John in July last year, and have had the intention since then to continue this Newsletter, so I'm glad that we have finally been able to do so.

This year has seen many changes in the Old Library, not least the completion of the cataloguing project in the Lower Old Library and preparation of the Old Library for the First Court roof renovations. The removal of books has been carried out safely and successfully, but unfortunately the building works

mean that our lovely Old Library is closed for at least the next year while the works are carried out.



All is not dormant, as far as the Old Library is concerned, however. We are hoping to restart the 'Sponsor a book' scheme, so do keep an eye out for that communication in the coming months.

In the meantime we will be continuing the newsletter with interesting information about the collection, as well as including nuggets of fascinating material from the Archives, with the input of the Archivist, Dr Lucy Hughes.

All that remains is for me to say a big 'thank you' for your ongoing support!

Catherine Ascough
College Librarian

Cataloguing the Lower Old Library



Among the thousands of volumes now catalogued from the Lower Old Library are substantial numbers of Sanskrit language material from our Rouse collection, and various items in Afroasiatic languages, from Coptic to Amharic. Perhaps the most unusual materials we encountered were items written in Dano-Norwegian, a bygone eighteenth-century mixed language.

Left: the Lower Old Library during the cataloguing process

The contents of these items range wildly: Victorian anthropology; catalogues of fossils; Anglo-Saxon dictionaries; and many, many volumes of scripture. The library also holds a sizeable number of 'bound-withs', books that are comprised of a number of disparate items (pamphlets, correspondence, &c.) held together in a single binding. Needless to say, these items are one of a kind and will doubtless prove academically useful for years.

Arabic and Persian Manuscripts

The Library has a total of 58 Arabic and Persian manuscripts, which together constitute a collection of international significance.

The bulk of the collection came from John Hutton of Marske (1774-1841, Fellow Commoner, 1791), and his brother Timothy (Fellow Commoner, 1798). Hutton's collection included

Right: the beautiful binding of MS DD.3.12, a copy of Amir Khusraw's *Dul Rani wa Khidr Khan*, presented by Archibald Swinton. (Browne).



manuscripts dating from the late-fourteenth to the early-nineteenth centuries, including a cookery book, devotional tracts, and poetry.

A new project is being undertaken to catalogue some of our non-Western manuscripts, and it is hoped that one or two of these manuscripts will also find their way onto our upcoming **Sponsor a Book** programme, and will have the chance to be conserved and digitised for all to enjoy.

News from the Archives

A small collection of sepia photographs in the archive collection gives us a glimpse of Hobson Street as it was in the nineteenth century. Most of the artisan workshops and cottages were pulled down in 1889.

Those interested in brewing history will be intrigued to note that on the doors of the large barn in the photograph numbered cc02058 are the words: 'Hobson Street Brewery' and (below the name E. W. Swann) 'Maltster'. This was an area that abounded in inns and small breweries, as Graham Tite (m. 1963) has shown in a fascinating article for the 2021 issue of the College Magazine (no. 246) called 'Viewing



and Tasting Old King Street'. The Archivist Lucy Hughes has recently been helping him add to the picture given in that article. In addition to the signage, we note the townsfolk who lived and worked in Hobson Street, as seen in the image numbered cc02055 (left).

Images like these add to our understanding of the social history of Victorian Cambridge, which is always being augmented by new finds. For example, recent work constructing the new Yusuf Hamied Court uncovered the business card of a basket maker, George Bowman, who had a workshop on King Street between 1901 and 1913: part of the community of artisans that we can see in the photographs.

We would love to hear from you! If you would like to send us comments about this *Newsletter*, arrange a visit to the College Library, sponsor a book, make a donation, or simply share some memories, please contact us at library@christs.cam.ac.uk; by telephone at 01223-334950; or by post at Christ's College Library, St Andrew's Street, Cambridge CB2 3BU.