**May 2010**

# The Annual Report of the Lonsdale Curator of Archives and Manuscripts

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ACS continues to sit on the Computing and Portraits Committees, and to report to the library Committee.

Many of our acquisitions this year have been digital ones, for which we are grateful as we pack up the archives and manuscripts in preparation to move to St Cross. We look forward to welcoming new accessions into the new and vastly improved facilities in 2011. The Acquisitions section of this report covering 2008 omitted to report the gift from the Rev. Hamish Fullerton of a photocopy of the Indian Civil Service covenant of Willie Walker Loch (Balliol TT 1864), dated 17 September 1868. This rare example of an ICS covenant has been reproduced in Prof Brown’s recent book, reviewed [in this issue of the Record].

## Conservation Consortium

Balliol’s membership of the Oxford Conservation Consortium began in October 2006. The conservation studio is located in Longwall Street – very convenient for St Cross!

Over the summer of 2009, Balliol’s oldest document (Archives B.22.1, from Robert, Abbot of St. Sauve, Montreuil, to John de St. Lawrence, re a grant of the Church of St. Lawrence-Jewry, London, with rents, etc. ca.1200) was cleaned, mounted and boxed. This is an extremely attractive document and an excellent one for occasional exhibitions. The repackaging has made it safe and secure to display and improved its normal storage conditions as well.

We had hoped to clean and rehouse the medieval title deeds before the move to St Cross, but owing to budgetary restrictions this major undertaking is not yet possible – the gusseted acid-free envelopes cost more than £1 each. Instead, following on from the great success with B.22.1, we have been cleaning, repairing and boxing several other individual documents of key importance to college history. This treatment has made the documents accessible for research and exhibition purposes, while keeping them physically safe.

Two documents rehoused in this way this year are Formal Archives D.4.3-4, which are boxed together as they are two copies of the same information: the Bishop of Lincoln in 1284, granting his approval to Dervorguilla’s foundation of the College. These documents, long since superseded by centuries of statutes, had an unexpected resurrection into something like legal relevance earlier this year, when they were sent to the Charity Commission as the earliest foundation document which specifically stated the College’s purpose as a place of learning:

...’eosque philosophiam audire decreverit & quousque in artibus cessaverint inibi commorari, ex quibus multi moribus & sciencia prediti exeuntes in religionem & alibi magnum fructus cumulum produxerint, & adhuc majorem domino concedente producent...'

‘...[Dervorguilla] decreed that they should attend lectures on philosophy and remain there until they graduate in arts, from studying which many of them, enriched with piety and learning, may enter religious life and be responsible for much benefit elsewhere, and may bring forth still more, God willing...’

Latin transcription from EH Salter, *Oxford Deeds of Balliol College.* Many thanks to Guy Westwood (Balliol 2003 – check year) for the English translation.

## Cataloguing

Scans of RAB Mynors’ *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Balliol College, Oxford* can now be read online. Catalogues of the Arnold. Browning, Conroy, Jenkyns, Jowett, Morier Family, RBD Morier and AL Smith papers have been also been made available in searchable format online: see <http://archives.balliol.ox.ac.uk/Modern%20Papers/modernmsssum.asp>

The final thousand entries have been added to the Admissions Register database, filling a gap 1738-1816. The database is now complete – as far as possible from surviving records - with more than 3500 entries covering from 1636, from when College Admissions Registers survive, to 1832, after which there are published Registers.

## Enquiries

During January – August 2010 there have been 347 enquiries to the archives. The total for 2009 was 603 enquiries. The mix of enquirers is similar to that of previous years: requests for historic administrative documents from within the college, a wide range of enquiries from academics in Oxford and other universities in the UK and abroad, and a solid base (about half of all enquiries) of amateur family, local and military historians from around the world enquiring about individual past members and former Balliol properties. It is clear to us that answering these enquiries as helpfully as we can is an important contribution to the College’s PR .

Outreach:

September 2009 saw a major exhibition of printed books, original documents and more than 100 facsimile photographs from both the Chalet Books and Francis Urquhart’s personal photo albums – all in the Library - for the 100th anniversary of Urquhart’s chalet in France, the location of college reading parties by New, Univ and Balliol. The exhibition formed a popular and well-visited part of the main anniversary celebrations at both Univ and Balliol, and the Chalet Books and a large selection of the facsimile photographs were lent to New for their events. The photos from FFU’s personal albums were of particular interest, as even long-standing Chalet Trustees had not been aware of their existence. Dr Stephen Golding will be one of St Cross’ first regular researchers as he completes the first full history of the Chalet.

In addition, ACS has presented more than 20 displays, exhibitions of original documents, talks and college tours, several in conjunction with PAB, for college, alumni and external groups. A favourite was the visit in May 2010 to two classes of Year 3 and Years 5 pupils at St Aloysius School, Woodstock Road, to present an illustrated talk and discussion, with facsimile documents, reproduction medieval seals and singing in parts from medieval notation, to augment their study of *The Red Towers of Granada* by Geoffrey Trease. This visit was arranged by Lucy Hawker (Balliol 2003) who was student teaching there this year.

Since building work began in January 2010, there have been numerous visits by JHJ and ACS to the St Cross building site with benefactors, College staff and other interested groups. I have lost precise count but there has been at least one every other week, nearly all led by JHJ. On June 1st we published (and continue to publish) a notice to the effect that ‘Owing to the work entailed in preparing them for the move to new premises in St Cross Church, Holywell, the archives and manuscript collections of Balliol College will be closed to enquirers in person from 1 October 2010 for about a year. Please see <http://archives.balliol.ox.ac.uk/Archives/newspub.asp> for more information.’ Also linked from this page are many photos of the interior of St Cross at various stages during the building work.

The design of the archives website will be brought into line with the rest of the new college website; this work has not yet been scheduled by the external designer, so ACS continues to add information to the old site, all of which will be transferred to the new one. We are promised a gallery or slideshow function which will make browsing and viewing images considerably friendlier than is possible at the moment.

college tours, displays, exhibitions, talks, publications, web exhibitions and pages

1. Display: Gaudy, June 2009
2. Exhibition: Chalet des Anglais Centenary, University College, Sept 09
3. Tour & display: visitors from the House of Lords and Elysees Palace, Sept 09
4. Exhibition: archives & MSS conservation, Balliol Society, Oct 09
5. Exhibition: Chalet des Anglais Centenary, Balliol College, Nov 09
6. Display for 30 yrs Women’s Lunch, Nov 09
7. Display for Spring Gaudy, March 2010
8. Exhibition and display for visit of benefactor (OCR), May 2010
9. Exhibition and display for visit of benefactors (Russell Rm), May 2010
10. Display for Pathfinders reunion, May 2010
11. Display for 30 yrs Women Lunch, May 2010
12. talk and tour with display of facsimiles for Dr Ion Jinga, Romanian Ambassador to the UK, and members of the OU Romanian Students’ Society, May 2010
13. Talk and display with facsimiles for 2 classes of Year 5 pupils at St Aloysius School, Woodstock Rd (through Lucy Hawker, Balliol 2003, who is teaching there), May 2010
14. St Cross tour for John Phillips, manuscripts benefactor, June 2010
15. Talk and college tour with Natalia Polenova, curator of Polenov Museum <http://www.vassilypolenov.com/presentation/about/museum/> (south of Moscow)
16. St Cross tour for Andrew & Peggotty Graham, July 2010
17. MSS display & St Cross tour for David Kogan, benefactor, July 2010
18. MSS display & St Cross tour for Sir Henry Brooke & Chris Brooke, September 2010

3 tours of St Cross for benefactors

###### Work placements

ACS has again been fortunate to work with several excellent current student assistants this year:

George Matthews end of Trinity Term 09.

Erin Lee (Corpus) Long Vac 2010. Erin has just finished Greats at Corpus and is heading to Cambridge for a year’s traineeship in the archives and special collections at St John’s before taking up a place on the MPhil in archives & records management at the University of Glasgow. She listed several of the early MBP accessions, notably a collection of letters re Edward Caird’s mastership.

**Continuing Professional Development**

ACS attended AMARC conference on digitisation of Harley and Royal MSS, BL, June 2009;

termly OAC meetings on response to A21 document, Adlib cataloguing software and digital records management in higher education; MAPLE group meeting re moving collections to new repositories, March 2010. She chaired a session at the Cambridge International Chronicles Conference in July 2010 and in the same month participated in the 1st Balliol Chalet reading party of 2010.

ACS completed the requisite year of permanent resident status without time restrictions in December 2009 and applied for UK citizenship in March 2010, application approved April 2010, received certificate of naturalisation May 2010.

On top of all this much time and effort has been spent by both of us, especially JHJ, considering details of the St Cross project with the architect and others concerned; and JHJ has been much engaged with the complexities of Trusts and Charity Registration, which involves much archival delving.

- Anna Sander