

Item of Interest No 73

Christ's Hospital Foundation Visit to the Bodleian Library in Oxford

From the Garton Archive at Lincoln Christ's Hospital School

Compiled by Peter Harrod

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Occasional Paper 56 from the Garton Archive told the serendipitous story of how a collection of old books stored in a bookcase at Lincoln Christ's Hospital School (LCHS) found its way into the Bodleian Library at Oxford University during the summer of 2019, where they are in the process of being catalogued and restored by a team of experts in old and rare books. The article has been re-issued to provide the necessary context for this sequel to the story.

On Tuesday 3 May 2022 a group, including members of the Foundation Committee at Lincoln Christ's Hospital School, visited the Bodleian Library to find out how the work on the Old Books Collection was progressing. We were joined in Oxford by Professor Antony Cox and his wife and by Old Lincolnian and Classicist Dr Peter Pickering.

The group was welcomed to the Bodleian Weston Library by Professor Henry Woudhuysen, Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford; Dr Francesca Galligan, Assistant Librarian (Rare Books); Dr Alan Coates, Assistant Librarian (Rare Books); and Rob Stringer, Social Media and International Communications Officer, Bodleian Libraries. The Weston Library is the home for the Bodleian Libraries' special collections: archives, manuscripts, rare books, maps, printed ephemera, and other specialist material.



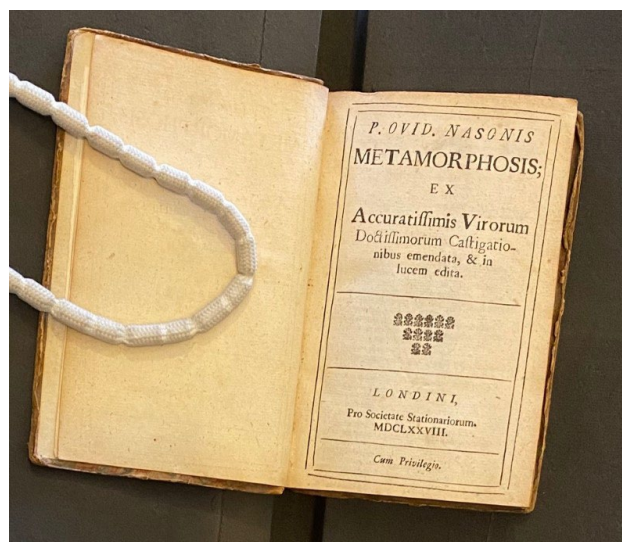
Left to right: Dr Galligan, Dr Coates, Rob Stringer, Professor Woudhuysen

(Photographs by Steve Holt, Chris Williams, and Rob Stringer)

Following a brief welcome and introduction to the Horton Room by Professor Woudhuysen, who had recognised the enormous research potential of the books on a visit to LCHS in 2018, Dr Galligan gave an interesting and informative talk on work in progress made since the collection was donated in 2019. She pointed out that the charitable Christ's Hospital Foundation was set up by Dr Richard Smith in the early 17th century, and that the collection consisted mainly of 16th century printed books. There were 107 editions in total, of which 41 were entirely new to the University of Oxford, and an additional nine that were stored in Oxford college libraries but not in the Bodleian itself.

The books are stored in custom-made barcoded boxes and have been fully catalogued in SOLO, the online Oxford libraries' search website, and named as the Lincoln CHS Collection, each with its own unique reference number.

Dr Galligan proceeded to discuss selected books from the collection, lovingly laid out for our inspection, including a rare 1678 copy of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* of which there is only one other recorded copy in the world.



See Appendix for details

She also drew our attention to another rare copy of *Pliny's Natural History* 1530-60 of which the only other known copy is in the Bavarian State Library. At this stage I confess that I was feeling quite humbled that these two rare volumes were found gathering dust in a bookcase in the Garton Archive at LCHS when I began my work there twelve years ago. The full story of how the collection came to be donated to the Bodleian may be found in Occasional Paper 56.

Dr Galligan also told her audience that the collection is rich in Cambridge bindings by notable binders such as Nicholas Spierinck (c.1470-1546) and Garret Godfrey (d.1539) who worked on Carletti's *Summa Angelica de Casibus Conscientiae* (Lyon, 1512). Binders used distinctive tools and 'signed their work: for example, Nicholas

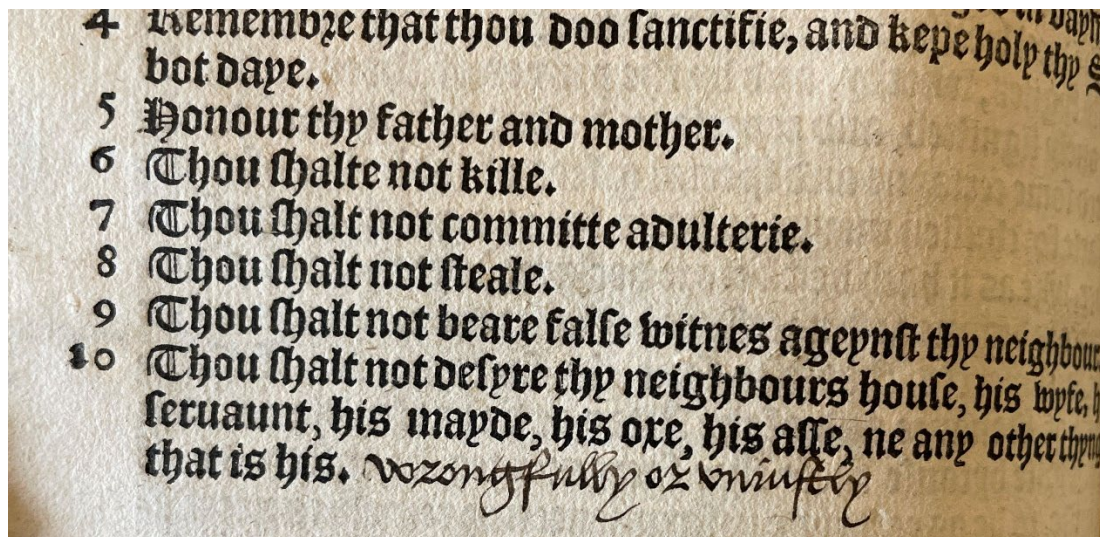
Scrivener. These provided evidence to help the researchers identify the context and time of the volumes.

Thirty-four of the books were found to be rich in 'fragments' of other manuscripts used within the bindings, many of which still need to be accurately identified. Thirty-four of the books have fragments from either printed or manuscript 'waste', which has aroused the interest of several Anglo-Norman scholars.

The pictured fragment of a Latin liturgical text in Plutarch's *Lives*, Vol.3 (Geneva, 1572) has cut-out parts that suggest it was a 'frisket sheet'. Only twenty of such sheets are known to be in existence. A frisket sheet allowed some parts of a text to be printed in red ink. A full sheet from the Bodleian's collections, pictured in the Appendix below, shows how this would have looked.

Of particular interest to the group from Lincoln were those books containing the name John Smith, thought to be the nephew of Dr Richard Smith, founder of the Christ's Hospital School in Lincoln. However, Dr Galligan told us that there is still much work to be done on the provenance of the books, which might be offered to students as a PhD project.

In addition to selected books from the LCHS collection, Dr Gilligan had displayed a few others from the Bodleian library which she thought would be of interest to the group. Two of those contained woodcuts depicting scenes in schools. She also chose her favourite Bodleian book once owned by Henry VIII and containing the Ten Commandments. Alongside the 10th Commandment the King had written in his own hand, "Wrongfully or unlawfully"! (See Appendix for further details).



Following the talk, the group was given the opportunity to examine and discuss the books on display. In the picture below Dr Galligan is leading the discussion.



We were then treated to a visit to the roof of the Weston Library with its iconic views of the 'dreaming spires' of Oxford before returning to Lincoln. From reactions and feedback received following the visit it is safe to say that the decision of the Foundation Committee to donate the books to the Bodleian was fully vindicated and that the group was keen to have regular feedback on how the project was progressing with the prospect of a further visit at a time of Dr Galligan's choosing. The visit had provoked considerable interest and excitement as testified by the buzz of conversation on the journey home, and the flurry of positive messages that followed.



Acknowledgements

Our thanks to the Bodleian staff for making us so welcome and for providing us with refreshments. Special thanks are due to Dr Francesca Galligan for organising the visit and for her most interesting and informative talk.

The photographs were kindly taken by Steve Holt, Chair of the Foundation Committee, historian Chris Williams, and Rob Stringer from the Bodleian staff.

Grateful thanks are due to Steve Holt and Chris Milnes for driving us safely to Oxford and back.

Appendix: Details of the books on display (with selected images)

Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, (London, 1678)

Only one other copy of this edition of Ovid is known, and this is a slight variant. It bears an inscription from the 1880s, so is a later addition to the collection (shown above).

Lincoln CHS 12

Pliny, *Natural history*, (place and printer unknown, between 1530 and 1560?)

We have only been able to locate one other example of this edition of Pliny, and it too is imperfect (housed at the Bavarian State Library). This copy is in a continental panel binding, and was owned by Thomas Venor (his name is crossed out here), then by G?B, with price 3 shillings and 4 pence, then John Smith.

Lincoln CHS 21

Cambridge bindings

This Cambridge example is by the so-called “Heavy Binder”, active 1485–1505. Two of his distinctive tools, the “ihs maria” scroll and two-headed eagle, are used on this binding. Another of his tools later passed to Nicholas Spierinck.

Text: Gratian, *Decretals*, (Basel, 1500)

Lincoln CHS 84

Nicholas Spierinck was a bookseller and bookbinder, likely of Netherlandish origin, recorded in Cambridge from 1506. His workshop produced a great many bindings that often include a tool incorporating his initials NS. We have several examples in the Bodleian, including the large volume shown here from a collection belonging to the medic and medieval scholar Brian Lawn, bequeathed in 2001.

Texts: Clichtove (Paris, 1520); Poliziano (Paris, 1510s); Dioscorides (Basel, 1529); Vincent of Beauvais (Venice, 1494).

Lincoln CHS 59, 63, 81; Lawn c.3



Garret Godfrey is another well-known Cambridge binder of the early 16th century. He is also of Netherlandish origin, and, like Spierinck, was appointed university stationer in 1534. His bindings often include his initials GG, as seen here.

The edition contained in the volume is not present in any Oxford college or other Bodleian collections.

Text: Carletti, *Summa angelica de casibus conscientiae* (Lyon, 1512)

Lincoln CHS 70

Anglo-Norman binding fragments

This book was bound in London in the late 1530s or 1540s and includes two manuscript fragments used by the binder as end-leaf guards. The text on these fragments is from the Anglo-Norman *Li quatre livre des Reis* (*The Four Books of Kings*, a translation of the Old Testament books of Samuel and Kings). The fragments date from the 13th century, and were cut sequentially from a single bifolium, once the original manuscript had been dismembered.

We know of only two other manuscripts of this text: one is a further fragment from a binding, also 13th-century, and one is a complete manuscript from the 12th century. The present fragments are a significant find for Anglo-Norman scholars, offering a slightly later witness to the circulation of the text.

Text of host volume: Haymo of Halberstadt, *Sermons* (Cologne, 1537)

Lincoln CHS 22



An example of a Frisket sheet

Binding fragment (See image above)

This fragment of a Latin liturgical text (13th? century), in a binding probably made on the continent, appears to have had another function after being abandoned as a codex and before it was used for binding waste. The distinctive cut-out parts suggest it was used as a frisket sheet. Frisket sheets allowed some parts of a text to be printed in red ink; a full sheet from the Bodleian's collections shows how this would have looked.

Text of host volume: Plutarch, *Lives*, vol. 3, (Geneva, 1572)

Lincoln CHS 36; Broxb. 97.40

Printed and manuscript fragments

This 16th-century London binding uses both printed and manuscript waste. The Latin text of the manuscript waste relates to biblical history, and includes an illuminated historiated initial, valued by the binder only for the parchment on which it was painted. The printed waste is from Capgrave's *Nova legenda Angliae*, on the lives of English saints, printed in London by Wynkyn de Worde in 1516, and has survived in many copies.

Text of host volume: Johann Hoffmeister, *Sermons on the Gospels*, (Paris, 1549)

Lincoln CHS 33

Fragment from Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies*

By chance, the manuscript fragment shown here includes a passage on the word 'bibliotheca' (library), the 'theca' deriving either from Latin (tegere, to cover) or Greek (θήκη [theke], meaning 'chest'). In the column on the left, three lines from the bottom, 'Inde [et] bibliotheca libror[um] repositio d[icitu]r' ('Whence a storage place for books is called a *bibliotheca*').

Text of host volume: Freig, *Quaestiones oeconomicae* (Basel, 1578).

Lincoln CHS 37

John Smith's books

Leonhart Fuchs, *Methodus* (Paris, 1550)

This copy of Fuchs's medical text bears a gift inscription to John Smith: 'hu[n]c libru[m] dono dedi Joa[n]ni Smyth 1584 in me[n]se dec[em]bri'. The hand has not yet been identified, but has also added headings and notes to this imperfect copy. Could it perhaps be Richard Smith, John's medical uncle? John Smith has written his own name in Latin at the bottom of the page. The volume is heavily annotated by several different hands, with pages of notes bound in, suggesting its usefulness for those studying or practising medicine. There are no other inscriptions to tell us whose hands these are, and the binding is also something of a mystery. The small rampant lion, tooled in gold, is recorded in the online British Armorial Bindings database as 'unidentified' and 'probably not British', but does occur on a book now at Winchester College, once owned by William Sancroft, Richard Bruarne, and Leon Crombe.

Lincoln CHS 52

John Smith's books

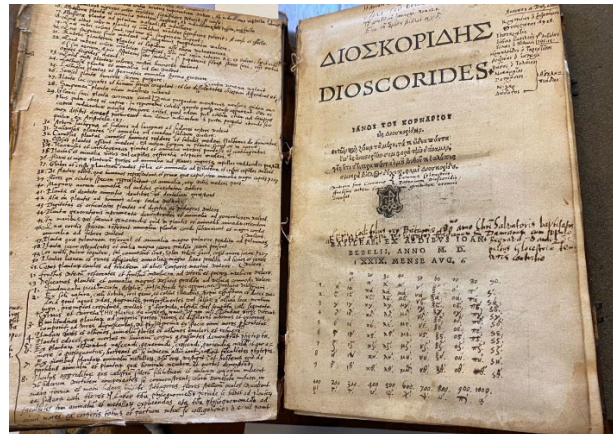
Denisse, *Super sententias*, (Lyon, 1516)

This book tells us a little about John Smith's methods of acquiring books: his inscription 'IS Feb.25.611.S.A. ex permutatione' records that he received it 'by exchange' in February 1611. The book was printed and bound on the continent, and had at least one continental owner, whose inscription ('Guilielmi Lodouici') you can also see on the title-page. There is a further Latin inscription, heavily crossed out, that appears to be that of a 'Brother Nicholas'.

Elsewhere in the volume, a Robert Dale, priest, records his ownership. Of the three Robert Dales listed in the Clergy of the Church of England database for the 16th century, one – a preacher in the archdeaconry of Lincoln, 1557-1597 – seems a likely candidate. Another possibility is the Robert Dale who studied at both Cambridge and Oxford (1531-2).

This edition is not present in any Oxford college or other Bodleian collections.

Lincoln CHS 9



John Smith: connections with Lincoln

Dioscorides, *De materia medica* (Basel, 1529)

Many earlier owners of Smith's books have connections with Lincoln and Cambridge suggesting, perhaps, that he studied at the latter, though he cannot be securely identified among the many John Smiths recorded for the period. This 1529 edition of Dioscorides (above), in a Cambridge binding by Spierinck, was owned in the mid-sixteenth century by William Buckley, admitted Kings, Cambridge 1537, aged 18; Buckley later taught mathematics at the college, and died ca. 1571. The book then passed to John Horner, matriculated sizar from Queen's College Cambridge 1581 (died 1626), and John Smith acquired it in 1600.

A further puzzle to this book is a note in an early hand on the upper endpaper that refers to Elstow Nunnery, and "my lady Boyfyld". Elizabeth Boyfeld was the last Abbess of Elstow Abbey, Bedford, before its dissolution in 1539, and Elstow was frequently visited by the bishops of Lincoln. It is unclear whether the inscription relates to ownership of the book, or is simply a locally relevant historical note.

Lincoln CHS 81

John Smith: Cambridge

This volume contains two works by Angelo Poliziano, printed in Antwerp (1514) and Paris [1507–1511]. There is an early French price and initials "PH" on the latter. These works were brought together in a Cambridge binding by Spierinck between 1514 and 1546. There are early inscriptions "Reuerentte Mayster Demy" and "Dominus Robenson" (perhaps William Robenson, clergyman, 1565?), and inscriptions probably of a Lincolnshire father and son, Edmund and Thomas Dighton, the former perhaps of Gray's Inn (1577), the latter perhaps the Dighton who matriculated fellow commoner, St Catherine's College, Cambridge, 1573. It was acquired by John Smith in 1606.

Lincoln CHS 63

Smith and earlier owners

This edition of *Magna Charta* was published by Richard Tottel in London in 1556. Could the initials RT on the binding indicate that this was his own copy? There are also inscriptions by Roger Norton (the book was in John Smith's possession by 1607, so the inscription is too early to be the printer of this name), and William Burton (a common enough name, but perhaps the antiquary and brother of Robert Burton?).

Lincoln CHS 14

Other owners

Saint Vincent Ferrer (1350-1419), *Sermons* (Strasbourg, 1503).

This copy of Ferrer's *Sermons* was bound in Cambridge[?] in the 16th century, and has a wealth of early owners. Inscriptions on the title-page record the ownership of Houlcrofte, Robert Brokesbie, Francis Brokesbie, and George Gelsthorp, and the large "FB" on the lower edges of the text block are probably the initials of Francis Brokesbie.

What makes these inscriptions intriguing is their connection with Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556), Archbishop of Canterbury. A George Gelsthorpe is recorded as church warden of Whatton-in-the-Vale, Nottinghamshire, in 1597, alongside another warden Francis Brokesbie, so at least two of the early owners (or readers?) are locally connected. Thomas Cranmer's father (another Thomas) is buried in the church of Whatton-in-the-Vale, and a curious note in this volume, listing Thomas and Edmund Cranmer alongside the Brokesbies, suggests a connection or friendship between the families. Thomas and Edmund are most likely the Archbishop and his brother.

This edition is not present in any Oxford college or Bodleian collections.

Lincoln CHS 88

Work in Progress

A late Tudor reader has used the upper endpaper (partly cut away) to write out verses from Shakespeare's *Rape of Lucrece*. This is remarkable because it adds to the scant evidence of readers of the poem from Shakespeare's own lifetime, and there is no other example of an early-modern manuscript version of these lines. The reader, who must have had a printed edition of the poem to hand, has copied out moralising couplets, as though for a commonplace book.

The volume itself offers intriguing possibilities for the person writing out these lines: there are inscriptions of "Mr Nugent" (there were two poets among the prominent Nugents of the time), and Sir "bapthropt" (i.e. Babthorp/Bapthorp). We are working on this and will keep you posted on developments!

Johannes Freig, *Quaestiones oeconomicae et politicae* (Basel, 1578) *Linc CHS 37*

Some Bodleian books, on a theme of schools

Albrecht Dürer, *School-teacher*, (Nuremberg, 1510)

This is one of Dürer's lesser-known works. His woodcut illustration of a schoolmaster and pupils accompanies his didactic verses on how to behave responsibly towards others.

Broxb. 95.39



A schoolgirl

This copy of Thomas Eliot's *Dictionary* (London, 1552) was rebound in the 20th century, but retains some traces of its earlier owners. Of particular interest is the inscription from the 1650s, recording the enrolment of a female student, Sarah Millner, at Thornton School.

The book is part of a large bequest of the medic and medieval scholar Brian Lawn, whose books came to the library in 2001.

Lawn d.18

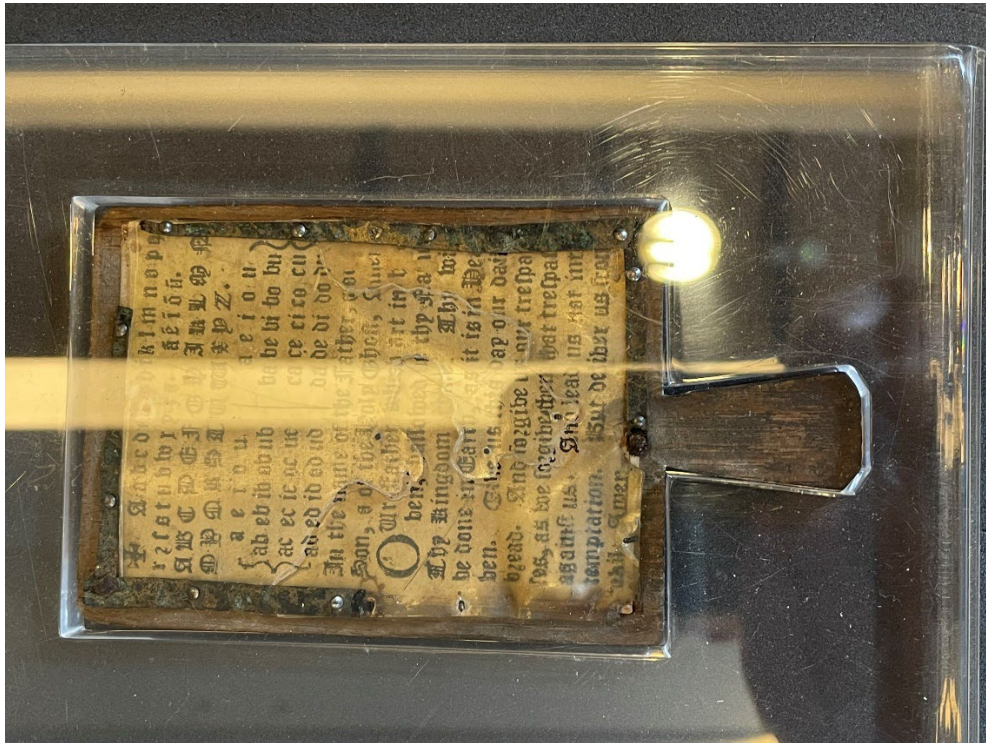
Children learning to read

This hornbook, which dates from about 1620, was found in building work taking place at Brasenose College in 1881, and presented to the Bodleian by the College the following year. Hornbooks originated in England during the fifteenth century and were commonly used from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries as a learning aid for children. This one contains the alphabet, and the Lord's Prayer.

The name derives from the piece of cut-down and smoothed horn, made transparent, which was used to cover the text and protect it. Hornbooks would often

be hung by the handle from a child's belt. The 'book' in the shape of a bat (See below) was also probably used by children for just this purpose, and relatively few now survive.

Arch. A f.11



Henry VIII, *The Institution of a christen man, conteynyng the exposition or interpretation of the commune crede*, (London, 1537).

Known as the “Bishops’ book”, this work was composed by a committee of divines and bishops under Thomas Cranmer. Its purpose was to implement religious reforms in breaking from Rome, and to serve as official formulary of the Anglican faith.

Both Henry himself and Cranmer have annotated the book, adding to and revising the text. It also bears a note at the beginning and end instructing that it should not leave the Privy Chamber: “The kynges commandment ys that I shuld not be had out of the prevy chamber”.

Henry’s hand adds to the end of the 10th commandement (“Thou shalt not desire thy neighbours house, his wife, his seruaunt, his mayde, his ox, his asse, ne any other thyng that is his”) the words “wrongfully or uniuersally”.

4° Rawl. 245

References

The account of the visit has been compiled from notes made in situ by LCHS archivists Peter Harrod and Chris Williams, and from a *post hoc* summary of Dr Francesca Galligan's talk by Rob Stringer.

For access to details of all the books in the Lincoln Christ's Hospital School (Lincoln CHS) collection, download the following 'Search Oxford Libraries Online' (SOLO) website:

<http://solo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/primo-explore/search?vid=SOLO>

Enter "The Christ's Hospital Foundation at Lincoln" in the 'Search' column including the inverted commas.