Filming in the Upper Library

The Upper Library represents an unusual space to photograph, not just for its incredible architecture and immense collection of rare and antiquarian books, but because it is also a location in which research, restoration and documentation are visibly taking place nearly all the time. As such, it would typically be difficult for a student to gain access to make images of such an environment first-hand rather than through generic source photographs. I was fortunate enough to be allowed to use both film and digital media there over a period of time and to take a number of photographs that provided me with sufficient material to map out a storyboard for a short artist’s film that included the activities of the archivists, the volunteer conservators who mend and restore the books as well as two people carrying out research.

I had to make certain choices that would determine the quality and nature of the final product: whether to use film or video, natural or artificial lighting and the number of crew to involve. Artificial lighting is extremely expensive and presents a fire hazard because of the high voltages involved.

continued on page 7

An Exciting Discovery in the Manuscripts Collection

On Tuesday 19th December in preparing for the exhibition on Books of Hours I perused the library’s collection of the relevant manuscripts and printed books which Cristina Neagu had assiduously assembled. As some of the manuscripts were already in their display cases, we examined them together as a preliminary step to deciding on the openings to be shown. Among these was Ms 98, thought to be a 13th century Psalter.

It has been rebound and the gold stamped armorial on the cover has the see of Canterbury impaling a cross with fleur de lis at its extremities but these are not associated with any Archbishop of Canterbury.

In his as yet unpublished catalogue of the Christ Church Western manuscripts, Professor Ralph Hanna suggests that the gift was made by Archbishop John Moore who died in 1808. In a letter (inserted in the front of the Ms which was written by H.M.Bannister on 15 August 1902 to the librarian of Christ Church) it was suggested that the Ms was French, probably from the abbey of St Bertin at St Omer because of the inclusion of three feast days for St Audomarus (St Omer).

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Historiated initial in a 13th century Psalter (MS. 98, ff.80r)
Bannister suggested that it was older than stated in Kitchin’s catalogue (which suggests the fourteenth or fifteenth century) and that the ‘terminus a quo’ as evinced by the calendar was 1255, for it gives the feast of St Clare (f.4v), who was canonised in that year (12 August).

He also suggested that the Ms was thirteenth century since St Louis, canonised in 1297, was not included. He thought that this was born out by the added obit of Eleanor, Edward I’s queen, and that since she had no special connection with France the Ms must have got to England before the beginning of the fourteenth century. The queen died on 28 November though the entry actually gives 27 November.

Upon examining the relevant folio (6), my eye travelled up to an entry for 21 November which recorded that ‘on this day, a Sunday, Edmund Rede and Agnes his wife were married in the year 1435’.

I could hardly believe my eyes. It is always exciting to handle manuscripts, and Books of Hours and Psalters have the added attraction of delightful and often extremely lavish illustrations with more or less gold leaf depending on the wealth of the owner. The Books of Hours were the ‘best sellers’ of their day and some 800 made for the English market alone have survived.

Psalters are much fewer in number and what is also less common in these are marks of ownership, never mind records of major family events. I immediately asked Cristina if it was known that the manuscript had a connection with the Rede family, but it transpired that Bannister had completely failed to notice not only this entry but a further seven which are scattered through the calendar pages, all of which relate to the family of Sir Edmund Rede, who lived at Boarstall in Buckinghamshire and who had extensive lands in Oxfordshire.

Some sources claim that Edmund was knighted at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth Woodville but this took place on Sunday 26th May and Ascension Thursday was 23 May.

The June calendar confirms that 1444 was clearly a difficult year for the family for the death of another

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**The Family and Connections of the Redes of Boarstall**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>John Rede = Cecilia Halyngrugge (d.1404)</th>
<th>Christine James = Edmund Rede the Elder (d.1435)</th>
<th>Agnes Cottesmore = Sir Edmund Rede the Younger (d.1489)</th>
<th>Katherine Green = (1) John Gaynesford</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>Thomas Alan</td>
<td>Joan</td>
<td>Nicholas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George</td>
<td>William</td>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>William</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amice</td>
<td>William</td>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>George</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rede’s grandfather John, was MP for Oxfordshire in 1388 and Sir Edmund represented the county in the parliament of 1450-51. Starting in January, the same hand has ‘scribbled’ on the calendar the death of Nicholas, an otherwise unrecorded son of Edmund, who died on the feast of St Agnes (21 January) 1444 and the marriage of Edmund and his second wife Katherine at London on Thursday (29 January) 1460. Rede’s only biographer stated that they were married by 1471 but was unable to be more accurate. There is every reason to suppose that the Psalter gives the correct date although the book poses something of a problem as 29 January that year fell on a Tuesday! The March calendar records the death of Christine Rede, Sir Edmund’s mother, on 28 March 1435.

Perhaps most astonishing of all is the entry boldly added at the bottom of the calendar page for May which relates the fact that it was on Thursday, the feast of the Ascension of our Lord that Edmund Rede was knighted at the Tower of London in the fifth year of the reign of Edward IV, that is 1465.

The June calendar confirms that 1444 was clearly a difficult year for the family for the death of another
otherwise unknown child of Edmund, a daughter Amice, is entered against 30 June.

An apparently less obviously interesting death which is recorded for the feast of Sts Felix and Adauctus (30 August) in 1439 is that of the king’s justice, Sir John Cottesmore.

The latter was, however, the father of Edmund’s first wife Agnes and his inclusion suggests that the Psalter did indeed belong to Sir Edmund and perhaps that he was quite close to his first wife’s family though it might also suggest that Agnes had some say in what was entered in the book. Her own death, however, is not recorded though as we have seen Edmund’s second marriage is noted.

The death of Edmund’s father, Edmund the Elder as he is known, is recorded in the calendar for the 8 October 1430, a date confirmed by the inquisition held at Goring in Oxfordshire on 9 April 1431 to establish what lands he had held in the county and which recorded that his son Edmund the younger was then 16 years old. The future owner of the Psalter was thus born in the year of Agincourt.

There are no entries for the month of December and the latest in date is, therefore, that of the knighting in 1465 though Sir Edmund did not die until 7 June 1489 when he was seventy-five.

There is, however, one last and very delightful tie up for this manuscript. On 7 April 1487 Sir Edmund drew up his last will and testament in which he itemised among many other things his collection of books including ‘my two psalters, one with two silver gilt clasps ‘pounced’ with unicorns heads, a small book of matins with other prayers with silver clasps [and] my very small psalter with silver gilt clasps’. All of these were to pass to his ‘heir apparent’ who in the event was his grandson William. The whole will is remarkable for the quantity of books which are mentioned and they certainly suggest a man of some education. It is possible that he was at Oxford in his youth. In a letter to him from the university on 11 March 1453, it is stated that he had given timber for the new Divinity School and he was asked to provide stone for the completion of the work. On 20 March the university appealed ‘by the enformacion of oure right welbeloved Edmund Reede’ to Lord Lovell of Minster Lovell for his help with the works. When Magdalen College was founded by Waynflete stone was obtained from the quarry of Sir Edmund Rede at Headington and he seems to have given them timber as well. In return his name was to be mentioned daily in the mass of St Mary with other benefactors of the college (Magd. Coll Reg., ed J.R.Bloxam, ii, xxix, 228, 233).

It is not known how Archbishop Moore came by the volume but it seems likely that this Psalter has never been far from the locality of its fifteenth century owner and it is just remarkable that it has lain for so long in the College library without its real significance having been recognised though in his as yet unpublished catalogue of the College Mss Ralph Hanna has, of course, drawn attention to the Rede connection and pointed out that two of Rede’s other books mentioned in his will – his copy of Nicholas Upton’s Officium Militare and of Gower’s Confessio Amantis - survive in the British Library.

Rowena E Archer
Lecturer in Medieval History

Archives & Library Contributions to
A Portrait of the House

The new Portrait of the House, which was published at the end of last year, has very specific pieces on the Library and the Archive.

Janet McMullin, for example, wrote the chapter on the history of the building and its collections, which is illustrated with plans from Dean Aldrich’s collection (pp.78-81). She also wrote on Charles Dodgson / Lewis Carroll and Alice in Wonderland, with its wonderful images from Tenniel (pp.94-6).

And there is a section by me on the college estates, words and pictures all gleaned from the Treasury records in the Muniment Room. (pp.82-3)

But these are the obvious bits. Tucked away throughout the text are all sorts of references, some
clear, others more oblique, to items in the Library and Archive. The proofs of the Greek lexicon which Peter Parsons talks about in his article (pp.104-6) are kept in the Manuscript Room, as is the beautifully illuminated manuscript an image from which concludes the piece. The elegant classical statue of Aphrodite and Eros stands in the corner of the Upper Library. John Locke, whose work and life is described in a piece by Brian Young (p.61-2), is represented in the Library by his extremely ugly travelling desk, and the head of the original Mercury, whose picture graces a number of pages throughout the book, sits on a windowsill staring wistfully at the glorious ceiling. Fell’s delightful silver filigree box, which once held mandrake roots, is also a Library treasure (p.57). The orrery, named after the earl who bequeathed us his collection of books on early science and medicine (p.65) and which once stood in the Library many years ago, is brought back to the House through the Portrait.

Pictures, they say, speak a thousand words, and there are innumerable examples from our collections. The end papers show a section of William Williams’s ground plan of Christ Church, drawn in 1736, and still of great use today. Spectacular images from manuscripts, such as the college arms (p.11) and St Frideswide (p.18) from Wolsey’s beautiful lectionary, as well as the famous cannon from MS 101, grace pages where they do justice not only to themselves but also the text. The article on travellers and explorers (pp.37-9) is illustrated entirely from printed books in the Upper Library. A much annotated and mangled page from the draft statutes show the unsteady beginnings of the college during the reign of Edward VI (p.14).

The problems that the Civil War caused the college are graphically illustrated in two letters, one signed by Oliver Cromwell himself (p.53), granting permission for a Student to go overseas on Commonwealth business, and one by an aristocratic tenant who was having difficulty sending his rent through a siege of 3000 Parliamentarians (p.82). An army, they say, marches on its stomach, and those soldiers standing guard over Skipton castle, may well have been glad of the victuals purchased by the manciple, and meticulously recorded in his ledgers (p.74).

Photography was a fashionable past-time in Victorian and Edwardian England. Charles Dodgson, whose skill with a camera was put to good use in Christ Church, took many pictures of senior members of the House which are used in the Portrait, but undergraduates, too, were fond of recording their lives in Oxford, and the pictures illustrating Mark Curthoys’s piece on Christ Church in 1900 (pp.114-5) come from an album given by William Robinow, a junior member in 1901. Clubs and societies, as well as individuals, ensured that their activities were remembered, and their photographs, such as those on p.124 and p.161, are all in the Archive. If only modern clubs were half as good at depositing their pictures and papers!

The Portrait is filled with images from both Library and Archive, which do credit both to curators past and present, and to the amazing photographers who were sometimes charged with creating silk purses out of pigs’ ears. If these collections are to be maintained and improved, we need input from everyone. Please help to ensure that our times are not the forgotten ones.

Judith Curthoys

Early Printed Books Cataloguing

Provenances in a book of canon law

I have recently been attempting to unravel a string of early provenances in a law book from Wake’s library. The book in question is William Lyndwood’s Provinciale seu Constitutiones Anglie. The text is a collection and abridgment of canon law of the ecclesiastical province of Canterbury, with Lyndwood’s commentary of 1433. Printed in Paris in 1501, this edition was intended for sale in England, and the Christ Church copy is one of at least 5 currently in Oxford libraries. Wake has at least three other editions of this same text, including a copy of the 1525 edition, whose previous owners include Thomas Cranmer.

Wake’s copy of the 1501 edition, like that in the Bodleian, is no longer in its original binding, but a copy at Merton retains its 16th-century blind-tooled calf by an Oxford binder known as the Dragon Binder, and suggests the style of binding in which a book of this sort would have been housed.

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From the array of names written onto the title page of the Christ Church copy, I have constructed a tentative chronology of the book’s early ownership.

The name that appears first, at the head of the title page, is that of the earliest owner, Thomas Beaumont. The inscription, “Liber Thomae Beaumount Archi- Wellen-”, tells us that he was an archdeacon at Wells, and church records show that a Thomas Beaumont held this position from 1502-1507. So Beaumont seems to have acquired the book between 1502 and his death in 1507. A Doctor of Canon and Civil Law, he was at both Magdalen and Merton Colleges, and held various positions within the Church, including several at Wells. Beaumont is also recorded as the donor of an early edition of Justinian to New College, although the inscription in the item is now barely legible, and cannot usefully be compared with the Christ Church inscription.

The other four named owners of the Christ Church copy belong to the second half of the 16th-century, and so the book enters a dark period after 1507.

At some point, it entered the possession of Thomas Owen, whose ownership is recorded in connection with his gift of it to a Peter Warbrick. This gift is recorded with the inscription “Liber Petri Warbricki ex dono Tho. Owen Lincoln”. A Thomas Owen was admitted to Lincoln’s Inn in 1562, having graduated BA from Oxford (either Broadgates Hall or Christ Church) in 1559. He went on to become a judge, and is almost certainly the Thomas Owen recorded here. We have no evidence for when he acquired the book, but he must have passed it on between his admission to Lincoln’s Inn in 1562, and his death in 1598. According to his entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Owen “was a man of wide culture, his library at his death containing books in French, Italian, and Spanish as well as the more technical works of common law”.¹

Having passed from Owen to Peter Warbrick at and for an uncertain period (Warbrick does not appear to have attended either Oxford or Cambridge, and his identity thus proves difficult to trace), we then pass to the third and longest inscription: that of William Fleetwood. Fleetwood, born around 1525, was also a lawyer, and antiquary. He records his ownership and gift of the book to a prominent fellow lawyer, Edmund Anderson. Fleetwood’s lengthy note offers a brief summary of the book’s contents, and biographical details about its author: “This Lyndewood was a Cambridge man and doctor of both the lawes”. He then records his own position, and that of the man to whom he gives the book: “The which book I William Fleetwood Sergeant att Law & Recorder of London doe freely give unto Sr Edmund Anderson Knight Lorde chiefe justice of the common pleas.” Like Thomas Owen, Fleetwood is also thought to have amassed a substantial collection of books: “Though their contents are now widely dispersed, he must have established large libraries at this country house as well as in London”.² Four or five of these books, according to the ex dono inscriptions they contain, were given to Trinity College library in 1595, a year after Fleetwood’s death. Fleetwood became Sergeant at Law in 1580, and Anderson became chief justice of the court of common pleas in 1582, so the book must have passed from Fleetwood to Anderson between 1580 and 1582.

Sir Edmund Anderson (1530?-1605), another judge, and the final named owner of our book, played a prominent role in the political trials of his time, including the prosecution of Anthony Babington. After Anderson’s death in 1605, the book again enters a period of uncertain ownership, before its addition to the collection of William Wake a century or so later.

The book offers some evidence of how it was used by its readers. There are occasional marginal annotations as well as more substantial notes on the endpapers in an early hand, listing names and dates of archbishops, and points of interest from the text.

¹ David Ibbetson, *ODNB*, ‘Thomas Owen’.


The author of these annotations seems to have been interested, amongst other things, in Pelagianism: text on fol. iii that offers a definition of Pelagianism has been underlined, and the note “Pelagiano[rum] error” written into the margin. The definition is then paraphrased on the final blank leaf at the end of the book, in the same hand.

By contrast, an early reader of the Bodleian copy draws a pointing hand in the margin to highlight a reference to Leviticus. Differences in binding, annotations and provenances reinforce the value of these books to scholarship, and the need for our continued preservation of what might otherwise be thought of as duplicate copies of a text.

Francesca Galligan
Bodleian Library
Exhibitions in the Upper Library

Books of Hours & Psalters

Illuminated Prayers in Canonical Time

Books of Hours were produced for ordinary people and they constitute the single most common object that has survived from the middle ages; they can still be bought on the open market today. They range in size and quality from the well known richly illuminated Trés Riches Heures of John, duke of Berry (d.1416), begun by the Limbourg brothers but not finished until 1485, measuring 290 x 210 mm and containing 131 miniatures, to humble pocket sized books with almost no decorative pages.

They grew out of the Psalter, a book containing the psalms, which by the thirteenth century was the universal choice of private prayer book. A thirteenth century example is on display here [ChCh Ms 98] and since in England there are only 157 to have survived from this century, this is a great treasure.

To this text was later appended the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The earliest independent Book of Hours was that made about 1240, known as the de Brailes Hours after the illuminator who signed himself 'W. de Brailes' and who was almost certainly the craftsman of this name who appears in thirteenth century Oxford records as living in Catte Street. The Little Office contained the eight services – Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers and Compline - modelled on the clerical Divine Service which appears in the Breviary - but in a shortened version. The Book enabled the owner to mark each canonical hour in private with a short series of prayers, usually a hymn, three of the psalms, a brief reading and a prayer.

Books of Hours have been described as 'a standard work of almost limitless variation'. At the core of the Book was the Office or Hours of the Virgin but it frequently contained a calendar and might also have Gospel texts from the four Evangelists, two prayers to the Virgin, the Hours of the Cross; the penitential Psalms, the fifteen joys of the Virgin, the Litany of the Saints, the Suffrages of the Saints and the Office of the Dead, these often reflecting the choice and the purse of the owner, besides a number of other texts.

There was considerable uniformity of decoration which, as the late middle ages wore on, developed from the simple historiated initial letters to full page illuminations; thus in the Office of the Virgin each hour was commonly illuminated with a standard sequence of images, viz., the Annunciation, the Visitation, The Nativity, the Shepherds, the Magi, the Presentation in the Temple, the Flight into Egypt and the Coronation of the Virgin. Here too, however, the predilections of the owner and the amount he wished to pay - as the Tres Riches Heures shows - accounts for the greater or lesser degree of ornamentation.

In the case of the vast majority of surviving exemplars it is not possible to know the provenance of the Books or who owned or commissioned these works. One telling characteristic is the so called ‘use’ of the Book, that is a variation of certain texts which indicate where it was to be used, thus the ‘Use’ of Rome (Mss 94 & 100) or Sarum (Salisbury) (AE.8.5), or Paris. (Gibbs 157 is of the ‘use of Auxerre).

Personal touches appear in different forms. Most obvious is an image of the donor or patron, as is the case in ChCh Ms 93, folio 1, showing Guy XV, Count of Laval Montmorency kneeling. This is often before the Virgin and Child but often there is simply an heraldic shield which may be that of the original patron or a later owner. The choice of saints either for the Calendar, where the norm was to mark in red - hence ‘red letter days’- or gold, the principal feasts of the church (Easter, Christmas) and the principal Saints (St John the Baptist; St Michael), or the Suffrages of the Saints can sometimes give clues as to dates or to the likely location of an owner – hence in the case of ChCh Ms 98 the reference to St Clare makes it certain that the Ms dates from after 1255 when she was canonised. In this case there is also the additions to the calendar which put it beyond doubt that this Psalter once belonged to the Redes of Boarstall. (See separate article).

The introduction of printing brought major changes. The basic layout and the texts remained the same but it was now possible to produce the Books more cheaply, on paper and in larger numbers. For the
period 1500-1535 only 28 manuscript Hours survive for England whereas there are 610 for the fifteenth century.

The earliest printed Book of Hours in the Christ Church collection - just not an incunabulum – is that of 1501 (Gibbs 213), produced in Paris. Typical for these early printed copies was their printing on parchment or vellum and completion with hand drawn and painted illuminations to give the appearance of a manuscript.

The College can boast a copy of the Book of 1530 produced for Simon Vostre by the Paris publisher Francois Regnault who had effectively cornered the English market. (WM.4.4).

It was a 1530 copy that Thomas More had with him and annotated when he was imprisoned in the Tower in 1534 and which has miraculously survived.

Simon Vostre also used the printer Philippe Pigouchet to produce very expensive Books for the English market (Gibbs 157).

One of Regnault’s rival producers in Paris was Thielman Kerver, and later his widow, (Gibbs 145) but Richard Pynson was printing in London (AE.8.5) and English printings tended to be less lavish than their French counterparts.

As printing became quickly more sophisticated so the ornamentation of the printed Books became hugely varied. As with the manuscripts, owners continued to use them to record all manner of additional things, family matters, additional prayers, great events or pieces of doggerel verse.

As the Reformation, with its condemnation of prayers to the saints and, of course, the Pope, got under way, those Books already in print suffered very pointed defacement – the scoring out of texts citing the pope or demoting him to the position of Bishop of Rome and the removal of so called dubious saints, such as Thomas Becket.

Indeed with their central text of devotion to the Virgin and the idea of Prayers for the Dead and the devotion to the saints these Books became a veritable battleground between Catholics and the various shades of Reformers. Some very beautiful Books suffered hideous damage as owners sought to comply with the new rules, including scraping the images off the parchment. When after 1535 such Books were banned by royal proclamation printers responded by producing Books to meet the changed conditions.

In 1545 the crown produced an Official Primer intended to replace all other Books of Hours but the college’s collection stops with Books printed up until 1530 (WM.4.4.), though it has some very late but quite different prayer books produced in the early eighteenth century (Gibbs 215, Gibbs 246, Gibbs 181 & WR.8.33.

Rowena E Archer
Lecturer in Medieval History

Filming in the Upper Library
continued from page 1

Video, by far the most common and accessible means to create a piece, presents a flatter image as a result of its smaller tonal range and allows less latitude in terms of what you can do with it post-production to change the quality of the image, though it offers a definite advantage in allowing editing without any transfer or intermediate stage necessary. Video also allows you to capture sound directly so that it is already synchronised with the action being recorded. Film is more expensive both as a material to work with, requiring specialist equipment in the form of cameras and lenses, as well as processing and printing; and can only be edited after it has been
transferred to a digital media as a result of being telecined (a digital recording of the film projection). Only at the editing stage can the independently recorded sound be added.

Having always worked in film photography it seemed obvious to use film and with a small budget, to rely on natural light and a crew of cameraman and runner. As a result, the biggest question on the day of filming wasn’t whether the actors would arrive or the cameraman’s car would survive the journey home, but whether the light would hold. Without decent light the result would look not only dark but also grainy.

Starting with a shooting list we proceeded to locate and adjust each of the positions, a tap feed allowing me to see on a screen what the cameraman could see through his lens, sometimes managing a shot in one take, but usually two or three and a rehearsal in between.

Having committed ourselves to rely on natural light we then had to negotiate the library’s network of lights, knowing that we needed something to supplement the light from the windows but not wanting to have the flare of fluorescent lights in the frame.

In this everyone at the Library was extremely helpful considering the amount of disruption we caused by asking for different groups of lights to be turned off and on selectively in order to achieve the right balance of light within a particular shot.

On reflection it would have been better to use colour film in such difficult filming conditions, as it would have been more tolerant of the contrast range found in the library space going from tall windows to dark non-reflective bookcases. In fact, the most helpful elements in the Upper Library were the display cases and the wooden floor, both of which added reflected light to the subjects being filmed.

The day of filming ran from 8.30 to 4, though the filming itself only took place between 11 and 3; the rest of the time was used for setting up and later dismantling and packing equipment. I was able to help decide on shots, whether static or panning, direct the performances of the actors (all of which had been rehearsed beforehand, though in a different library) and now, through post-production, generate a final cut of the film.

It was a great experience in learning how to make a film for the first time and one which would not have been possible without the NADFAS volunteers and other researchers who allowed themselves to be interrupted and co-opted into my small-scale film production as extras on the ‘set’ as well as the incredible patience and generosity of Christ Church Library and its staff. Thank you all!

Mali Purkayastha

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