The Unusual History of 1564 Torah Scrolls

The role of scribe has maintained its honourable calling through the millennia, and nowhere more so than in the Jewish tradition, where the training for scribes is long, detailed, and exacting. It combines strict ethical codes with equally strict rules governing the ingredients of the ink, the condition of the parchment, the formation of words, their arrangement in paragraph and column, rules for the repair of defects and more aspects than the reader of the finished manuscript might even dream of. These are regulated by the treatise Sopherim attached to the Babylonian Talmud.

At the centre of the liturgical life of any Jewish community is the Torah, the first five books of the Bible, in the form of a Torah scroll, written by a qualified scribe according to the rules. They are kept in an ‘ark’ and are usually dressed in embroidered covers. They are ceremonially lifted out of the ark during the Sabbath service, paraded for all to see, then undressed and held high again so the text can be seen, then lowered to a reading table and read from before the congregation, week in week out according to a prescribed order.

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Western Manuscripts Catalogue Online

An online version of the Catalogue of Christ Church’s Western Manuscripts is up and running from 1 May 2008 (http://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/msscatalogue). It is accessible on the College website, together with the Main Library Catalogue and the Music Catalogue. For this, simply click on “Library & Archives” and select “Search Manuscript Catalogue”. This catalogue is the pre-published version of A Descriptive Catalogue of the Medieval Manuscripts in Roman Scripts of Christ Church, Oxford by Ralph Hanna, using materials collected by Jeremy J. Griffiths.

MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS AT CHRIST CHURCH

The medieval manuscripts at Christ Church present something of a paradox. In certain respects, they form quite minor grace notes amidst ‘the largest and richest library for research material in Oxford outside the Bodleian’. Yet Christ Church is also the least investigated manuscript collection in Oxford. In part this neglect reflects cataloguing history: the Christ Church manuscripts were listed neither in Edward Bernard’s 1697 union catalogue of British libraries, nor in H. O. Coxe’s 1852 one of college libraries.

continued on page 2

Detail of illumination in Walter de Milemete’s De Nobilitatibus, Sapientiis et Prudentiis Regum (MS 92 ff.18v)
In many areas, scholars who apparently expect that the latter includes all non-Bodleian examples have managed to overlook some seminal books (e.g., MSS 105, 148, 153). But any collection including three volumes with royal associations (MSS 92, 148, 179) and five more which passed through the hands of early Chancellors of England (MSS 101, 104, 338, 339, and inferentially 340) should scarcely be ignored.

Discussing the medieval western manuscripts and their history scarcely touches the history of Christ Church Library. Such a study abstracts a very small part of an extensive collection, inasmuch as it ignores the huge number of early printed books, as well as much more extensive manuscript materials.

These include not simply an important group of books in Greek (MSS 1-86), in the main a single eighteenth-century donation, that of William Wake; but an enormous collection of musical manuscripts and printed books, again an eighteenth-century bequest, and catalogued separately; a substantial number of books in Near Eastern languages (MSS 185-230); and vast numbers of post-medieval handwritten books, mostly eighteenth-century ecclesiastical collections (e.g., MSS 154-77, 234-334). Amid such riches, the fifty-odd books treated in the Descriptive Catalogue of the Medieval Manuscripts in Roman Scripts of Christ Church, Oxford are an especially isolated and recherché lot: one could be profitably engaged in Christ Church Library for years without ever noting their presence.

The single literary volume (Ker MLGB 141-42, 288) is now in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS fr. 24766, with an Anglo-Norman translation of Gregory the Great's Dialogues and a Life of Gregory. This book, of s. xiii in., narrowly datable 1209 x 1212, is probably the autograph of the author 'frater A[nignier] subdiaconus'.

The other surviving volume, which has probably never left the site, may indeed have been more important to Wolsey. Always perceived as grasping, the Cardinal may never have been more so than in collecting funds. In this, he was ably and congruously assisted by Thomas Cromwell. Cromwell had become Wolsey’s ‘collector of revenues’ as Archbishop of York in 1514, was his prime agent in the 1524-25 suppressions (and widely complained of for his highhandedness in this process), and finally ‘receiver general’ during the entire building process.3

The one book neither he nor Wolsey could dispose of—which now survives as MS 340 - was the priory cartulary. This provided the fullest record of properties now available for collegial exploitation.4

If Wolsey's buildings were to be grandiose (the completed portion of Cardinal College, Tom Quad, remains the largest space in Oxford), his plans for the library were equally munificent. Two letters from Jerome de Ghinucci (bishop of Worcester 1522-35), operating as Wolsey's Italian agent, describe efforts to procure the most recent humanistic books. At the early stage the letters chronicle (16 and 19 May 1526), Ghinucci was obtaining transcripts of the catalogues of the Biblioteca Marciana and the Biblioteca apostolica Vaticana. From these, Wolsey might have prepared a wish-list to stock his foundation with books; in many cases, this would have involved arranging for purchases of new books, but the second letter, accompanying a catalogue of the Marciana, suggests that acquisition from the holdings of the Italian libraries may have been contemplated and possible.5

Whatever Wolsey's projected vision for the library, only negligible evidence of college books in this period survives. The college still owns the sealed copy of the Statutes (MS 339), as well as a fragment of those for

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3. Cromwell continued to operate as receiver for the colleges, 'Wherof m' Cromwell had the receypte and gouernaunce afore be my lordes assignement', after 1529, negotiating with Henry VIII as a form of damage control. The citation is from the biography by Wolsey's usher, George Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, ed. by Richard S. Sylvester, EETS 243 (1959), 125-56. Sylvester follows the autograph, BL, MS Egerton 2402 (1556 x 1558); there are two derivative copies in Christ Church Library, MSS 154 (s. xiii/xiv) and 155 (s. xvii in.), noted Sylvester, 284.

4. Cf. Hiscock, 1-2, describing our lack of knowledge of priory books: 'Apart from the Cartulary of St. Frideswide's and other similar ancient records which became the property of the Dean and Chapter, nothing passed on to the college library'. MS 340 is now kept in the Muniment Room, with current shelfmark D&C v.c.1.

5. For the letters, see L&P 4.1 no. 2181 (974) and no. 2188 (977). In the second, Ghinucci 'sends a catalogue of the Venetian library, that if he wants anything from it for his college, he may procure it through the Datary'.
the feeder school, Ipswich College (MS 338, now preserved in the Muniment Room as D&C vi.c.2).

On Wolsey's attainder, all his properties, including those for Cardinal College, should have passed into the King's hand. But amid all the various inventories recording this sequestration, the most elaborate prepared the day after his removal as Chancellor, only one mentions books, although they are College ones. When Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland, came to arrest Wolsey for treason at his archiepiscopal residence, Cawood Castle (W. Yks.) on 4 November 1530, he searched and inventoried the premises. Among items he noted was 'Oxford stuff belonging to the chapel', which included a number of service (rather than library) books: 4 parchment antiphoners, a parchment legend, 3 parchment gradiales . . . Printed mass books, parchment and paper, a parchment 'porthouse' with silver clasps, 2 written parchment mass books, clasped with silver, one covered with crimson, the other with black velvet, 4 antiphoners, and 3 grayles, written on parchment. The 'parchment mass books' may conceivably represent Christ Church MS 101 and Oxford, Magdalen College, MS lat. 223, a paired set of epistle and gospel lectionaries.

This episode implies that Wolsey may have undertaken some collection for the College but that the books were not in situ but comngled with his personal library. As a result, they suffered the fate of all Wolsey's possessions, confiscation; the great majority of books one can today associate with the Cardinal seem to have at least passed through the Royal Library before 1550, and most of them are still in the descendant collections of the British Library. Any return of books to the college, for example John Lante's 1614 donation of MS 101, occurred by accident. But, as Wolsey's earlier example shows, founding a college and having a library are separate procedures. Christ Church was initially handicapped - and initially here extended over a fifteen-year period - by prevailing institutional norms. Medieval colleges generally expected students to have books for their own use and considered the college library a collective research facility. As a result, colleges did not budget for acquisitions (the endowment being utilised for the fabric and daily living expenses) and relied on benefactions to stock their collections. Consequently, Christ Church began with only a chapel library (bibles and service-books) and those non-academic volumes which had remained on site from Wolsey's foundation.

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This situation does not seem to have been remedied until about 1562, at which point one can speak of the foundation of the college library. First, about 1562, the college procured furniture to establish a permanent location where books could be consulted: 'the desks of the old University Library were purchased by the dean and Chapter and set up in the refectory of St Frideswide's Priory'. Although obviously this step could not be taken in the total absence of books, we have no idea what those may have been: Ker's oldest surviving book with a clear date of donation is 1562.

Ralph Hanna
Keble College

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1. Cavendish describes the creation of this record, which includes rich vestments 'whiche he caused to be made for his Colleges of Oxford and Ipsewiche' (99/10); it is printed at L&P 4.3 no. 6184 (2763-71).
2. See Cavendish's description at 150-57; he alludes to the search at 176/4-9. We cite L&P 4.3 no. 6748 (12) (3045). Wolsey died on his journey south to be tried, at the Augustinian abbey St. Mary's in the Fields, Leicester on 29 November 1530.

3. See further our discussion sub MS 101, 'Provenance'. The list of surviving Wolsey books at BRUO 2080 is substantially incomplete. Three further manuscripts with texts dedicated to Wolsey certainly should be added: BodL, MS Bodley 523 (see Sharpe no. 1534 [578]); BL, MS Royal 12 A.10i.; and MS Harley 1197, fols. 402-13 (which I learned of from Andrew G. Watson). James Carley, who has offered examples from his extensive knowledge of the early Royal Library, knows of five further printed books with manuscript dedications to Wolsey, two of them Linacres Latin translations from Greek. In addition, Jeanne Krochalis has identified BodL, MS Rawlinson B.214, with Wolsey ('Chaucer Review' 23 [1988], 64), and Carley lists thirty manuscripts from the Royal Library with Wolsey's monogram 'TC' at 'Sir Thomas Bodley's Library and its acquisitions: an edition of the Nottingham benefaction', Books and Collectors, 1200-1700: Essays presented to Andrew Watson, ed. by Carley and Colin G. C. Tite (London, 1997), 357-86 at 359-81, 379 n22.

For example, the college's Disbursement Books record only purchases of Statutes, necessary for legal purposes; cf. N. R. Ker, 'Books at Christ Church' (see the next note), acquisition 1579.9, discussed HUO 3.514 and entered in the legal accounts. One such purchase occurs with library expenses during the long vack 1589 for a book of the last statutes 18 g, and no subsequent book-acquisitions from college funds occurred until the academic year 1628-29.

5. In subsequent paragraphs, I rely upon the masterful N. R. Ker, 'Oxford college libraries in the sixteenth century', Bodleian Library Record 6 (1959), 459-515; and the chapter 'The Provision of Books', with the important appendix Books at Christ Church 1562-1602, HUO 3.441-78, 498-519.

6. Ker 1959, 499; the document on which this statement is predicated is quoted by Hiscock (3).
The Case of the Lost Torah

Among the many hundreds of titles in the Manuscript Room at Christ Church, there is one about which very little is known. Despite its size, this item (a huge scroll of the Torah), is only mentioned once in a handwritten entry of the 1867 Christ Church Catalogue of manuscripts (G.W. Kitchin, *Catalogus Codicum Manuscriptorum qui in Bibliotheca Aedis Christi apud Oxonienses Adservantur*). Added on page 59, this entry reads: “CCIa Pentateuch – Roll of the Law (with Phylacteris)”

The scroll in its textile cover (MS 221a)

To start with, both the provenance and the date of this Torah were a complete mystery. Mysteries however are very enticing and, with the kind help of Hebrew scholars and benefiting from the trained eye of a specialist conservator, we are now able to say a few interesting things about the scroll in question. These things, we hope, are just the first steps in a complex process of recovery, which has begun a few months ago, following a generous offer, by a distinguished college alumnus, to have the scroll restored. So, what do we know about this beautifully calligraphed manuscript on thick parchment, kept in a fine embroidered velvet case?

The scroll has been put together by sewing separate pieces, in most cases containing three or four columns each. The text appears to have been corrected with occasional words literally cut out from the parchment and amendments pasted-in by what appears to be the same hand. There are no decorations on the parchment, except for a very tiny flourish of the pen at the very end of the text. The wood of the parchment support is decorated both on the outside and the inside. The present handles are a later addition. The scroll appears to have undergone repairs and re-touching. The interior of the pattern on one of the wooden supports looks painted over, with the old pigment still showing in the background.

DATING THE SCROLL

Dating the scroll is not straightforward. Unlike paper, parchment is notoriously difficult to pinpoint in time. There is always radiocarbon dating as a possibility. The same techniques that are used on papyrus can be applied to parchment as well. However, these do not usually date the age of the writing, but that of the preparation of the parchment itself. Radiocarbon dating on the inks that make up the writing is, in certain cases, feasible since many of them contain organic compounds such as plant leachings, soot, and wine.

Having said this, there are other ways to venture an approximate date for the Christ Church Torah scroll. The layout of the text itself is a very good guide. As Professor Jordan Penkower* (Bar-Ilan University, Ramat-Gan in Israel) noticed, the scroll has 50 lines per column. This is no longer the standard layout. Current scrolls use 42 lines per column. Looking at the layout of the ‘Song of the Sea’ (Exodus:15) provides further clues as to both date and origin.

Exodus 15, ‘The Song of the Sea’ (MS 221a)

On the whole, it appears that this is a relatively late Ashkenazi scroll, transcribed sometime during the 18th century. We assume this because it has the typical Sefardi layout, and no longer preserves the early Ashkenazi style of presentation.
The change is especially visible in the layout of verse 19 ("ki va sus" etc.), with the last two lines of the text laid out like the rest of the song, in two and three parts respectively. In early Ashkenazi scrolls and codices, this section is written as prose, with no breaks in the lines, alluding to the fact that the text was not perceived as part of the song (this was an old controversy)\(^1\).

The hypothesis is confirmed by the layout of the ‘Song of Moses’ (Deut. 32). Medieval Ashkenazi codices and some medieval Ashkenazi Torah scrolls exhibit several variants in the paragraphing. In the case of the Christ Church scroll, the spaces dividing the prose text follow Maimonides' division of paragraphing. This particular layout is typical of late Ashkenazi Torah scrolls.\(^2\)

In contrast, the textile case looks older. The style of the embroidery and weaving suggests that parts of the case at least could have been made in 16\(^{th}\)-17\(^{th}\) century. Having said this however, the richly decorated textile (velvet, silk, gold) shows signs of stitching and could have been assembled at a later date. Further investigations are to be conducted by textile conservators at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London.

In terms of provenance, the simple truth is that, at the moment, we do not know how or when exactly the Torah reached Christ Church. The only clue as to the period when it might have is the handwritten entry in the catalogue. The hand is very similar to that of W.G. Hiscock, one of the former librarians. Therefore, given the period he was in post, the roll could have arrived between the 1930s and 1950s.

This coincides with the period when the college was keen to add to its scholarly lustre by taking on German-Jewish professors who had been removed from their posts by the Nazis. The first and most famous of all was Albert Einstein.

After 1933, when, due to personal circumstances, he could no longer return to Christ Church, he proposed that his stipend be used to fund posts for Jewish academics dismissed from German universities.

The college accepted the proposal and, from May 1934, a number of distinguished professors found refuge at Christ Church. Among these were the classical philologist Eduard Fraenkel (Freiburg University), Felix Jacoby, a specialist in Greek historiography and poetry (Kiel University) and Paul Jacobsthal, professor of archaeology and an expert in Greek vase painting (Marburg University).\(^3\)

Could any one of them, or somebody they knew, bring a scroll of the Torah at Christ Church? There is no direct evidence that they did. However, the fact that this is an Ashkenazi scroll makes it possible. The Ashkenazi are the Jews descended from the medieval Jewish communities of the Rhineland.\(^4\) The academics taking refuge at Christ Church were precisely from that part of the world.

As to where the scroll was made, the painted wood decoration points in the same general direction. In a wider ethnic sense, an Ashkenazi Jew is one whose ancestry can be traced to the Jews of central and eastern Europe. Dr Ariella Amar of the Center of Jewish Art of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, who is an expert on "Judaica" artifacts, and whom we consulted (via Professor Malachi Beit-Arié) suggests that the mantle may be Polish; Galician to be more precise.

The shape of the rollers too matches those produced in Poland, although the coloured decoration is exceptional. It may well be unique. In either case, it seems that Poland is the place of origin, as painted wood decoration is fairly typical for the region.

A lot more work needs to be done. Important information may surface from Victoria and Albert Museum, following tests on the textile cover. Comparing this scroll with the ones of a huge lot rescued from various communities in Bohemia and Moravia (see 'The Unusual History of 1564 Torah Scrolls') might also prove enlightening. Our investigations continue.

Cristina Neagu
Christ Church

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\(^1\) See Jordan S. Penkower, 'A Sheet of Parchment from a 10th or 11th Century Torah Scroll: Determining Its Type among Four Traditions (Oriental, Sefardi, Ashkenazi, Yemenite); Textus 21 (Hebrew University Jerusalem: Magnes 2002), pp. 235-284.

\(^2\) To visualize various layouts (medieval Ashkenazi, Sefardi and Yemenite) in comparison with the scroll at Christ Church, see *Judische Handschriften: Restaurieren, Bewahren, Präsentieren*, (Petra Werner, Ausstellung und Katalog); Berlin 2002, pp. 22-23; *Western Manuscripts and Miniatures* (Sotheby's London, 4 December 2007), no.38 and *Important Judaica* (Sotheby's New York December 19, 2007), no.121.


\(^4\) Ashkenaz is the Medieval Hebrew name for the region which in modern times encompasses the country of Germany and German-speaking borderland areas.
The Unusual History of 1564 Torah Scrolls

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No wonder then that there has always been a need for trained scribes to repair and replace such scrolls on a regular basis, though the material rewards for such painstaking work have never kept pace with secular occupations.

Hence the profession of scribe, or sofer, requires a certain amount of dedication and a willingness to travel and set up one’s tools wherever they may be required. Imagine then an itinerant scribe from Jerusalem, ringing the doorbell of a synagogue in central London in 1967, asking if there were any scrolls to be repaired. The lady who met him at the door could hardly believe her eyes, but quietly welcomed him in and took him upstairs to a room where no less than one thousand five hundred and sixty four scrolls had been stacked and stored, awaiting expert care and restoration.

They had arrived in February 1964, the fruits of delicate rescue negotiations, for they had been gathered during the Nazi period from communities all over Bohemia and Moravia and had been stored ever since in the Michle synagogue, now a Hussite church, outside Prague. Some were burned, some damaged by water; others still bound with beautifully embroidered binders or wrapped in prayer shawls. Some had fine wooden rollers with engraved brass edges.

All were neatly labelled under the Nazi system, with information on their provenance, ghoulish though this now seems. The story of their recovery has been narrated by Philippa Bernard in a brilliant short account, Out of the Midst of the Fire (London: Westminster Synagogue, 2005).

The dramatis personae include Eric Estorick, a London art dealer, who discovered their existence and opened negotiations with the Czech government; Professor Chimen Abramsky, who led the initial examination and assessment of their condition; Ralph Yablon, who took an active part in the project and generously donated the considerable funds required to obtain and transport them; Rabbi Harold Reinhart, who ensured that the scrolls found appropriate refuge in London at Westminster Synagogue; Ruth Schaffer, who presided over their care and the eventual distribution of the great majority of them, and of course David Brand, that ‘itinerant scribe’, who devoted over thirty years of his life to their repair and restoration – itinerant no longer.

Some of the scrolls have gone on permanent loan to communities all over the world for use in their proper liturgical context. Others, too severely damaged to be of liturgical use, have found homes in museums and places of learning. A portion of the scrolls remain at Westminster Synagogue, in the care of the Memorial Scrolls Trust, which has established a permanent museum as a memorial to the communities from which these scrolls came.

This museum will be re-opening after refurbishment in September 2008, and makes a fascinating visit. And two of the scrolls are in regular use in Westminster Synagogue itself, which also welcomes visitors. A special service to honour these scrolls and the communities from which they came will be held on 29th November, 2008.

Of all the scrolls in use in communities today, many have a long history. To undertake the writing of a
new scroll is and always was a major commission and a costly enterprise, requiring expensive materials and highly trained labour, but the reasonable expectation is that it will last for many lifetimes. Consequently many of the scrolls in use have interesting backgrounds, having been brought from one part of the world to another whenever Jews were obliged to leave their homes.

Thus any particular scroll may reveal a very fascinating tale, and we await eagerly further information about the scroll in Christ Church library.

Where the provenance of a particular scroll is unknown, it may sometimes be deduced from the characteristics of the parchment or the ink, from the style of ornamentation of individual letters, or from the style of the wooden rollers (known by the evocative name of Etz Chayim, the tree of life).

Golden Haggadah (Add. MS. 27210, ff 5-6) © British Library
A haggadah is a collection of Jewish prayers and readings written to accompany the Passover ‘seder’, a ritual meal eaten on the eve of the Passover festival. The Haggadah contains the story of the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt, led by Moses, and their liberation from slavery under the Pharaoh.

And the scroll itself may betoken a tale of wider significance, just as the beautifully illuminated Golden Haggadah in the British Library tells of its travels from Barcelona in 1320, escaping the Inquisition in 1492 to Italy where it twice more came under the censor’s hand, but was allowed to pass from one owner to another and eventually into the British Museum; or the Sarajevo Haggadah which also originated in Barcelona just a few years later, and came close to destruction on many occasions during its travels from Spain to Italy to Bosnia. But a Haggadah is used once a year, at the festival of Passover. A scroll represents the life of a community throughout the year, and year on year, providing the very basis for all religious observance wherever Judaism is practised.

Valery Rees
Westminster Synagogue, London

Immanuel Tremellius & the Morris Collection at Christ Church

The Morris collection can be found spanning the far northeast corner of the gallery of the Upper Library. The collection numbers 1133 books and contains most of the library’s early oriental books, going back as far as a 1494 edition of portions of the Hebrew Bible printed in Brescia. The collection combines the personal library left by John Morris and the books purchased later by the library with the small trust fund set up by Morris for that purpose. Morris (d. 1648) was Regius Professor of Hebrew from 1626 until his death. The Morris collection, through its assembled titles, gives a unique glimpse of the controversies and personalities that nurtured Christian interest in Hebrew learning from virtually non-existent to flourishing. What follows is a summary of the life of one these authors, Immanuel Tremellius, and the role that he played in the revival of Hebrew learning.

Immanuel Tremellius (c. 1510-1580) was born and raised in a Jewish family in Ferrara, Italy. However, despite a rigorous Jewish education, Tremellius converted to Christianity sometime during the 1530s, while studying in Padua. His conversion came under the influence of Cardinal Farnese (later to become Pope III) and Bishop Reginald Pole (later to become the last Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury).

To visit Westminster Synagogue, please contact the Secretary, Hilary Ashleigh, on 0207 584 3953 or at secretary@westminstersynagogue.org; for the Memorial Scrolls Trust and the museum reopening in September, contact the Trust Administrator, Julia Hollenbery on 0207 584 3741 or at czech.scrolls@virgin.net. See also their respective websites at www.westminstersynagogue.org; www.czechmemorialscrollstrust.org.

Tremellius, now a baptized Christian and completely cut off from his Jewish family, was given a position teaching Hebrew at the Priory of San Ferdiano in Lucca. As a converted Jew, Tremellius had a
mastery of the Hebrew language which had come to be considered a valuable asset to the early sixteenth century Church. Since Jerome had translated the Bible into Latin at the beginning of the fifth century, Hebrew learning had been considerably neglected by the Church (though there are a number of notable exceptions).

At the beginning of the sixteenth century the new learning of humanism began to infuse the Church with a deep interest in a recovery of the ancient languages of Scripture. Men like Erasmus, the celebrated *vir trilinguis*, became the ideal of humanistic learning.

The general ignorance of the Hebrew language within the Christian Church made this ideal difficult to achieve, leading to a significant dependence on the Jewish communities for Hebrew learning. In fact, when Erasmus opened the doors to his *Collegium Trilingue* in Louvain in 1517, the instructor for the Hebrew language was Matthew Adrianus, a converted Jew. When Tremellius entered the Priory of San Ferdiano in 1541, he discovered that the Christian interest in Hebrew learning was not without suspicion. The return to the *Hebraica Veritas* which Tremellius' learning provided had the potential to be subversive of Catholic doctrine in two ways. First, it was often difficult to find a defence for some of the readings of the *Vulgate* in the Hebrew source. Therefore, Hebrew scholars often found themselves coming to exegetical conclusions that were unacceptable to the Catholic Church. Second, the Jewish exegesis of the late medieval era tended to be much more historical / literal than the allegorical methods that had been developed by the medieval Church.

The new Prior of San Ferdiano, Peter Martyr Vermigli, was an enthusiast of this new learning. But this enthusiasm was leading him away from Catholicism and towards Protestantism. Thus, when Pope Paul III (the man credited above with Tremellius’ conversion to Christianity) issued *licet ab initio*, reviving the inquisition against the Protestant heresies, Vermigli fled north.

Though Tremellius’ time with Vermigli had been brief, it appears to have been quite influential. Tremellius left the Priory shortly after Vermigli, following him to Strasbourg where Bucer had created a haven for Reformed refugees.

Tremellius taught in the Strasbourg Academy for five years. However, in 1548, he fled from Catholicism once more when the Augsburg Interim drove him from Strasbourg to Cambridge. During his time at Cambridge he published his first work, a Hebrew translation of Calvin’s *Genevan Catechism*, Tremellius’ contribution to the growing effort to evangelize the Jews. He served as the Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge until 1554, when the ascendancy of Mary sent him back to Germany.

Eventually, Tremellius was recruited to the University of Heidelberg, in 1561, as Professor of the Old Testament. As far as publishing goes, this was the most fruitful portion of Tremellius’ career. During this time he would write the *Chaldean and Syriac Grammar* (mentioned above), a translation of the *Targum Jonathan* (an early Chaldean translation of the prophets), a commentary on Hosea, and a translation of the Syriac New Testament.

However, his most influential work, composed in cooperation with Franciscus Junius, was a Latin translation of the Old Testament, *Testamenti Veteris Biblia Sacra*, including extensive explanatory notes. This work would be reprinted thirty-four times over the next century and a half and was widely regarded as the preferred Protestant Latin translation, a sort of Protestant Vulgate. It was usually printed along with a Latin translation of the New Testament composed by Theodore Beza (Calvin’s successor in Geneva), as well as the translation of the New Testament that Tremellius had done from the Syriac.

In one sense, Tremellius’ published work minimized Jewish exegesis. The notes taken by one of his students during his lectures on Isaiah have been preserved in a manuscript held by Columbia University. According to these notes, Tremellius’ lectures were full of references to rabbinic authorities and other Jewish sources. In the corresponding section of his Old Testament translation, however, Tremellius rarely cites a Jewish author. And so, it would seem, Tremellius was guarded in bringing his Jewish training into his writing.

But in another sense, Tremellius’ works provided a significant pathway for Jewish exegesis to enter into Christian thought. His Syriac and Chaldean grammar opened up many Jewish sources for Christian readers. And his Old Testament translation may not have frequently mentioned Jewish sources, but the literal / historical method of late Medieval Jewish exegesis was ever present.

The fact that Tremellius was a converted Jew and the fact that much of his work drew from his Jewish learning caused many Christians to be deeply suspicious of Tremellius' work. Those who disagreed with his scholarship found it easy to dismiss it as “Judaizing.”

And those that profited from his work found themselves smeared with this same slur. In a way, the life of Tremellius works as a metaphor for the study of Hebrew throughout the sixteenth century. Those that undertook the study put themselves in a position to profit greatly from the new learning. But

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they also put themselves in a position to be slandered viciously for their reliance on Jews.

Looking back at the volume of Tremellius’ Grammatica Chaldaea et Syra, one can take a step back and notice the lasting impact that Tremellius had on other Christian authors. The book is surrounded by over a century’s worth of authors who continued to profit from Jewish learning.

For instance, moving over one shelf to MC 4.3, one finds Rudimenta Hebraicae Linguae, a Hebrew grammar, written by Antione Chevalier. Chevalier had studied under Tremellius at Cambridge, and also boarded with him during this time there. Tremellius passed on at least two loves to Chevalier. First, Chevalier married Tremellius’ daughter.

But second, after studying with Tremellius, Chevalier gave himself to the study of Hebrew and eventually found himself recruited by John Calvin to Geneva. If one reads the transcripts to Calvin’s lectures on the book of Daniel, Calvin will be heard wrestling with rabbinic sources over the course of a number of lectures which had been pointed out to him by “Our brother Antoine.”

Calvin’s interaction with Jewish scholarship is just one of many examples of the impact of Tremellius’ work. Sir Philip Sidney’s Defense of Poesy cites Tremellius as an important source for his understanding of Hebrew poetry. And John Donne’s versification of Lamentations, The Lamentations of Jeremy, is subtitled – for the most part according to Tremellius.

Oxford’s Jewry

From around 1080 until the expulsion order of 1290, Oxford was home to a thriving Jewish community, which had come to England with the Normans from Northern France (Hebrew Tsarfat). A wealth of archival records has enabled historians to draw up detailed maps of properties in the former Jewish quarter and to learn the names and occupations of their owners.

The main street of the Jewish quarter was St Aldates, then called Great Jewry Street. Jews were property of the King, who protected them and profited from their economic success. Jews were prevented from participating in many trades and professions, being unable to swear Christian oaths. However, as doctors, landlords, pawnbrokers, moneylenders and teachers of Hebrew, Oxford’s Jews played an important role in the life of the University. There was academic exchange between learned local Jews and university Hebraists such as Roger Bacon and Robert Grosseteste.

Jews also lent money to scholars, often taking manuscripts in pawn, which lead to occasional student riots when too many books ended up in the Jewry. The Jews lent larger sums with properties as collateral.

Contracts between Jews and Gentiles, also referred to as starrs (Hebrew sheṭar = bill), were drawn up in Hebrew and in Latin, and a number of these have survived in Oxford college archives (Christ Church, Corpus, Magdalen, Merton, Oriel, St John’s).

The house of Moses, son of Isaac, was given to the town in 1228 by the King, for the building of a new Guildhall, and successive Oxford Town Halls have been on this site ever since.

The medieval synagogue was located in the area of Christ Church’s Tom Quad gate. The Jewish burial ground was outside the eastern city gate, near the river Cherwell, on meadows that are today part of Magdalen College and the Botanic Garden.

In 1268, an Ascension Day religious procession was disrupted going through the Jewry, many Oxford Jews also lent money to scholars, often taking manuscripts in pawn, which lead to occasional student riots when too many books ended up in the Jewry. The Jews lent larger sums with properties as collateral.

The authors would like to thank the following colleagues for their kind assistance: Dr. Peter E. Pormann, University of Warwick; Geoffrey Neate, database applications & project manager, Sara Burnell, operations support, Systems & E-research service, Oxford University Library Service; Juliet Chadwick, sub-librarian; Exeter College, Oxford; Martyn Minty, librarian, Oriental Institute, Oxford; Fiona Piddock, librarian, Lincoln College, Oxford; Janet McMullin, assistant librarian, Christ Church, Oxford; William Hale, Cambridge University Library (formerly retrospective cataloguer, Christ Church, Oxford) and Vanessa Lea, operations officer, Museum of Oxford.
Jews were arrested and the community was ordered to pay for a large stone cross to be erected as a penalty. It is quite likely that the large carved stone base now in the Museum of Oxford is the remains of that cross.

After 1275, when all forms of usury were forbidden to Jews, their economic situation worsened dramatically. In a country-wide purge, many were accused of coin clipping, and some Oxford Jews were executed. The Queen, exercising the king’s wardship of the Jews, confiscated many Oxford Jewish properties. Allowed to only own the houses they lived in, Oxford Jews were forced to sell their remaining assets at a loss.

By 1290 the English Jewish community had been financially exhausted, and was of little use to the crown. In 1290 Edward I expelled the depleted Jewish community from England, more or less in return for a £100,000 tax grant from Parliament, and succumbing to popular pressure fuelled by debt, resentment and mounting religious intolerance.

Allowed to take only the chattels they could carry, the decimated population of Oxford’s Jews, which had been reduced to women and a few elderly men, left for Northern France. Philip Augustus followed the English lead and expelled all Jews from Northern France in 1306.

The last trace of any medieval Oxford Jew is found on a list of Jews living in Paris in 1296, where Meir of Oxford (a.k.a. Myer of Cricklade) is recorded as “Mahy de Quijuelarde, L’englais”. A number of Oxford colleges, such as Balliol, Merton and Christ Church, were endowed with properties originally owned by medieval Oxford Jews.

Although it can be argued that the Medieval Oxford Jewry is the best-documented 13th century Jewish community in the world, none of the above information is currently available to visitors of the city centre. Plaques on Blue Boar Street and at the Botanical Garden are scanty, another one near the remains of Osney Abbey is inaccessible and inaccurate. Information in the Museum of Oxford, located in the heart of what was the medieval Jewry, is patchy and incomplete.

OJC heritage committee founded in 2006

During celebrations of the Jewish New Year in September 2006, the Oxford Jewish Congregation commemorated the 350th anniversary of the readmission of Jews to England. Members of OJC set up a heritage committee with the aim of bringing the history of Oxford’s Jews, in particular their medieval history, to the attention of a wider public.

As a first step, the committee has involved itself in lobbying for the installation of blue plaques and memorial inscriptions, the enhancement of existing plaques and the production of public display boards related to Oxford’s Jewish history.

As a second step, the committee is exploring venues for a permanent museum display and has established contacts with the Ashmolean Museum, the Museum of Oxford, Oxford Town Hall, Merton College, the Pitt Rivers Museum and Oxford Castle.

It has met with representatives of Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire Museum Services, Oxford Preservation Trust, and with local and Jewish museums, in order to plan, design and budget for a permanent exhibition and educational activities for which it will have to raise funds.
Preliminary survey of Hebraica and Judaica

In preparation for future museum displays and educational activities, the OJC heritage committee is collecting information on primary and secondary sources relating to Oxford's Jewish history, enlisting the generous support of medievalists, Orientalists, paleographers, museum curators, art historians and bibliographers. It has also embarked on a survey of manuscripts and printed Hebraica and Judaica held in Oxford collections. In a place like Oxford where theological, Oriental and Hebrew studies flourished in a predominantly Christian environment, one expects to find large collections of Hebrew and polyglot Bibles, Hebrew Bible commentaries, books on Hebrew grammar, dictionaries, and to a lesser extent - Rabbinica, (including Latin translations) and other Judaica in Latin.

By shedding light on former owners, donors, and authors of marginalia, provenance research could be helpful in documenting contacts between Oxford scholars and local Jews.

Bodleian Library

First port of call in Oxford must be the Bodleian Library. Thanks to early donations and a very astute acquisitions policy in the 19th century, it is today home to one of the most important collections of Hebrew manuscripts and early printed books in the world. The Bodleian is special in that its Hebrew collections stem from both Christian and Jewish Hebraist collectors. The majority of these are described in printed or electronic catalogues (S. Schaeper, "That the titles of all your Hebrewe bookees may be aptly taken" : printed Hebraica at the Bodleian Library and their cataloguing 1605-2005", Bodleian Library Record 19:1 (2006), pp. 77-125).

Although none of the Hebrew manuscripts owned by the Bodleian are pertinent specifically to Oxford Jewish history, a number of colleges have deposited Hebrew manuscripts at the Bodleian that are. Uncatalogued manuscripts, printed catalogues for non-Hebrew manuscripts, and documents and correspondence held in the library archives still await investigation.

In total, the Bodleian is thought to hold some 30,000 books printed in Hebrew characters, including books in languages other than Hebrew printed in Hebrew characters. According to a database report obtained in April 2008, OLIS currently lists electronic records for some 12,500 Hebrew publications in a total of 15,700 volumes, mostly books published after 1927, the cut-off date for A. Cowley's Concise catalogue of the Hebrew printed books in the Bodleian library (1929). These figures relate to "real" Hebraica, that is works published mainly in the Hebrew language, with Hebrew imprints, and not to works containing only short passages of Hebrew, translations from the Hebrew, dictionaries and other polyglot works. OLIS-records for works printed in Hebrew characters in languages other than Hebrew (such as Aramaic, Yiddish, Judeo-Arabic, Ladino) would need to be traced separately.

Early printed Hebraica – cataloguing cooperation

Roughly estimated, the Bodleian holds more than c. 7,000 separate early printed Hebrew works, often in multiple copies. This figure includes the famous Oppenheimer collection. Most of these works are not listed on OLIS, neither in the pre-1920 database, nor in the main catalogue. Thanks to an innovative cataloguing cooperation between the Bodleian and the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel, funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft between 2002-2004, it was possible to catalogue around 5% of these works to OLIS antiquarian standard. Interestingly, the founders of the two famous libraries, Sir Thomas Bodley (1545-1613), and August Duke of Braunschweig-Lüneburg (1579-1666), were both keen Hebraists with good contacts to local Jews. During the project, 360 of the Bodleian’s early printed Hebrew and Aramaic works, 646 volumes in total (including numerous duplicates), have been catalogued on OLIS, to OLIS antiquarian standard. Descriptive bibliographic information was produced both in Hebrew characters and in transliteration, using Unicode.
Colleges

In February 2007, the OJC heritage committee sent out a letter to the heads of all Oxford colleges, asking for information on documents and artifacts of Hebrew and Jewish interest in their archival and library collections. Helpful and informative replies have come in over the course of the last year, all information has been collated and is now awaiting detailed follow-up.

A large proportion of these College records, c. 1,500 works in 3,300 volumes, including duplicates, were printed before 1850, and have therefore been catalogued to OLIS antiquarian standard. Only 180 among the 1,500 pre-1850 College-Hebraica records found on OLIS today are "real" Hebraica, c. 300 volumes in total, including duplicates.

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<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>&quot;Real&quot; Hebraica</th>
<th>Uncatalogued Hebraica printed by College libraries.</th>
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<td>Exeter</td>
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<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ Church</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>276</td>
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</tbody>
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Colleges with more than 50 Hebraica editions printed before 1850 on OLIS (April 2008)

The following colleges have up to 50 antiquarian Hebraica on OLIS: Brasenose, Hertford, St Hugh’s, Keble, Lady Margaret Hall, and Wadham. The above table gives the misleading impression that St John’s holds the largest percentage of Hebraica among the Oxford colleges.

St John’s is simply one of the few, if not the only, college libraries in Oxford that has completed the electronic cataloguing of its historic collections of early printed books. Only if and when all early printed books in Oxford are catalogued on OLIS, a goal that is bound to take a long time to achieve, will one get a fuller picture allowing for more accurate comparison.

Lacking the funds for retrospective cataloguing, many college librarians continue to rely on handwritten shelf lists and index cards for accessing their early printed book collections.

Although, for instance, only one Hebrew incunable record currently appears on OLIS (from Merton), we know from ISTC that at least 9 Hebrew incunables are found in Oxford colleges: Christ Church: 3 eds. + 1 dupl.; Merton: 4 eds.; Exeter: 1 ed.; Queens: 1 ed.

Uncatalogued discrete collections of Hebraica

A number of colleges have important collections of Hebraica, each numbering several hundred volumes: Christ Church (Morris collection), Exeter (Edersheim collection, partially deposited at the Oriental Institute), and Lincoln. One can expect sample-checks to prove that copies of most Hebraica held by these colleges are also found in the Bodleian. Cooperation in their electronic cataloguing to antiquarian standard would be bibliographically and economically sensible.

The majority of records for early printed books currently available on OLIS has not been produced by the Bodleian Library, as one would expect, but by College libraries. Peripatetic cataloguers from the Early Printed Books Project have worked in many Oxford College libraries and at the Bodleian, often with external funding, creating descriptive and analytical electronic cataloguing records to the exacting antiquarian standard required by OLIS.

A number of colleges now employ extra staff to continue with retrospective cataloguing work. For the purpose of the OJC survey, copy-related data compiled for these early printed books, such as data on provenances, descriptions of marginalia, bindings, and fragments found in bindings, can be of particular interest.

A report obtained from OLIS in April 2008 shows that 34 Oxford colleges have so far catalogued around 2,140 "real" and related Hebraica, in a total of around 6,000 physical volumes, including duplicates.

Bilingual manuscript used for the teaching of Hebrew in Oxford, 13th cent., written on parchment Corpus Christi College, Oxford, MS 10, fol. 2r Hebrew text of Psalm 1 with three different translations into Latin (St Jerome’s iuxta LXX & iuxta Hebraeos, interlinear).
Not yet surveyed

The following collections with Hebraica and Judaica have not yet been included in the survey: the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, the Oriental Institute Library, the Taylorsian Institute Library (Yiddica), and the Middle East Centre Library at St Antony’s.

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M.Phil (Cantab.) Woodstock

Silke Schaeper
MLS (Hebrew University) St John’s College

Useful URLs
Oxford Jewish Congregation (http://www.oxford-synagogue.org.uk/)

Bodleian Library, Hebrew Collections, in general (http://www.ouls.ox.ac.uk/bodleylibrary/specialcollections/oriental_rarebooks/hebrew)


Hertzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel, catalogue of printed Hebraica (http://www.hab.de/forschungen/projekte/hebraica.htm)

Early Printed Books Project, Libraries outside the Bodleian (http://www.lib.ox.ac.uk/icc/background.html)

PROFESSION: ARCHBISHOP’S WIFE

“. . . I was now in good earnest in my thoughts of marrying; nor did my new settlements at Gray’s Inn put a stop to them. Mrs Sharpe, the then Dean of Norwich’s wife, being with us at Highgate the Xmas last past, had often been speaking of a person whom both she, & Mrs Clagett thought’ would make me a very good wife, and wish’d they could get Her for me. But they feared mr Folkes who had marry’d Her sister would oppose it; and here the matter still ended as often as they spake of it. After Dr Clagett’s death, mrs Sharpe frequently fell upon the subject of my marrying, & seriously persuaded me to it: she was an excellent and prudent woman, and every thing she sayd had a very great weight with me. Making a visit one day at mrs Folkes’s, she was willing to try what she would think of a match between us; and was so far encouraged in the discourse, that she resolued plainly to propose it to the young Lady, mss Hovell; and by consent, it was agreed, that Dr Sharpe should propose it to her Brother in Law, Mr Folkes.

He did so; and tho’ many difficulties were raised, as on such occasions there generally are, yet it ended at last in a marriage between us, the 1st of October, 1688: When we were happily marry’d by Dr Sharpe in his Church of St Giles in the fields. She was the daughter of Sr Wm Hovell of Hillington in the County of Norfolk and dame Ethelrede his Wife; and Coheirress with her two sisters both to Her Father and Mother; who were at this time Both dead. . . ” (p. [22], Archbishop Wake’s autobiography, MS. 541a, Christ Church). Who was this lady who “would make a very good wife” to a man whose spirit, capabilities and connections forebode a great future?

Family and connections

Miss Etheldred (or Ethelreda) Hovell, we are informed, was the daughter of Sir William Hovell of Hillington, in Norfolk. An unverified source (see below, note 1, pg.14) allows us to calculate her birth in 1669. This would make her 19 years old when she married Wake, 12 years her senior.

A photograph of a three-quarter length portrait of Etheldred is kept at Lambeth Palace; the whereabouts of the original are not known.

Her father, knighted in 1664, was a Captain of Foot. He was the eldest son of Sir Richard Hovell of Hillington and Dorothy Chichele, a descendant of William Chichele, who was brother of Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury (1414-1443).

In 1661 Sir William married Etheldred, daughter of Thomas Lilly of South Lynn. They had several children, but only three daughters survived into adulthood: Clémente or Clementia, baptised at South Lynn in 1662, who in 1678 married a Charles Stuart, Esq, son and heir of Sir Nicholas Stuart, baronet, of Hampshire, and then Sir Thomas Montgomery; Dorothy who in 1683 married the Martin Folkes1 whose opposition might have been a problem in arranging Wake’s marriage; and Etheldred.

Three sons are mentioned on tombstones in the parish church at Hillington: Lillius, who died the 3rd of May 1664 only 24 days old; “Thomas, the second son of Sir Will. Hovell, and Dame Etheldreda his wife, born the last day of Febr. 1667, and died the 14th day of October, 1668”; and “William Posthumous, the younger son of Sir William Hovell, knight, and Dame Etheldreda his wife, born the 8th of August, 1670, and dyed the 12 of April, 1671”. Sir William Hovell died on the 4th of March, 1669 [ie 1670]2, at the age of 33, and was buried alongside his sons in Hillington. Dame Etheldreda’s will was proven in 16843.

The order of birth of the Hovell children is disputed. The Dictionary of National Biography, in the entry for Martin Folkes son of Dorothy, states “His mother’s older sister Etheldreda married William Wake, who later became archbishop of Canterbury.”. However, in all other sources Etheldred is listed as the third daughter, and Clémente as the eldest.4

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1 Martin Folkes (d. 1705), one of the benchers of Gray’s Inn, married Dorothy, second daughter of Sir William Hovell of Hillington Hall, near Lynn in Norfolk. Their first son Martin was born on 29 October 1690 in Queen Street in the parish of St Giles-in-the-Fields. (Cl. ODNB: Folkes, Martin (1690–1754)).

2 Reference given in Lady Day’s Dating.


4 So in the Baronetage of England (1771) Charles Stuart is told to have married “Clémence, eldest daughter and coheir of Sir William Hovell, of Hillington, in the county of Norfolk” (on the other hand, in Debrett’s Baronetage of England Clémence is mentioned as an only child). In A
Although I haven’t been able to find a date of birth for her, there is little doubt that Dorothy was the middle daughter. In Blomefield’s *An essay towards a topographical history of the county of Norfolk*, Vol. 4, Aubyn’s Manor is said to have passed to the Folkes “by the marriage of the 2d daughter and co-heir”. Collating these data, we can list the Hovell children in this order: Clementia (b. 1662), Lillius (b. 1664) and possibly Dorothy (b. 1667), Thomas (b. 1667), Etheldred (b. 1669?), and William (b. 1670).

The Hovells’ seat, Hillington Hall, was quite striking. Samuel Lewis, editor of *A Topographical Dictionary of England* (London, 1848) described it in these terms: “Hillington Hall, the seat of the lord of the manor, is a stately mansion, beautifully situated in a richly-wooded park; it was originally erected in 1627, and has been much enlarged and improved by its present proprietor [Sir W.J.H.B. Ffolkes, Bart., a descendant of Dorothy], who has added to it a noble hall, staircase, and library.”

Today only the gatehouse is still standing, the Hall having been demolished in 1946 to make space for a new building.

In the Parish register there is this entry: “Dr. William Wake, archbishop of Canterbury, died at his palace at Lambeth, Jan. 24, 1736, and was brought to Croydon, and buried Feb. 9: and his lady, which was buried at Lambeth, the … of April 1731, was taken up and brought to Croydon the next day, and put in the vault with him.” We have little to no information about her life and the causes of her death.

In his *An essay on generosity and greatness of spirit. The builders of colleges, hospitals and schools, prais’d and commended* (London, 1732), dedicated to Wake and written shortly after Etheldred’s death, Henry Mills rather flatteringly praises her as the perfect woman and wife:

“… Your incomparable lady, … This shining Pattern of Charity, alas for Us! is now no more; but as her condescending Carriage, her Goodness, and other excellent Qualifications made her reverenced, while she lived; so will they make her Memory sweet and precious, now She is dead. I presume not to attempt her Character. They who were long in her Family, and Objects of her tender Care, are better able to write her exemplary Life, and discover it to the World. This, if done, may influence other Women, and so give them also a Title to the Character of the good Wife and perfect Woman in the Proverbs; She looketh well to they Ways of her Houshold, and eateth not the Bread of Idleness. Her Time was not spent in Mirth, Jollity and Pleasure; but every Hour of the Day, as I am informed, was allotted for its peculiar Business. I shall content my self with a short Account of this excellent Person: She was the best of Wives; the tenderest of Mothers; the most respectful to her Relations and Friends; the best of Mistresses to her Servants, and the most obli"
Of course this account by the Vicar of Croydon might have been influenced by the part Lady Wake had played in the rebuilding of the vicarage…

Her books

A more interesting glimpse into Etheldred’s life and tastes emerges from her books in the Wake collection at Christ Church. Not many have survived, but they all bear a very clear, elegant signature: “Etheldred Hovell”. She seems to have read the usual array of religious texts you would expect to find in the library of a well educated, genteel lady of means, raised in the Anglican faith.

The books in the Wake collection identified as hers to date all precede her marriage, and include: the Countess of Northumberland’s Meditations and prayers to be used before, at, and after the receiving of the holy sacrament of the Lord’s Supper (London, 1687, shelfmark: WM.8.3); Lake’s Officium Eucharisticum.: a preparatory service to a devout and worthy reception of the Lords Supper. … To which is added, a meditation for every day in the week (London, 1683, shelfmark: WH.8.33); Dean Patrick’s A treatise of the necessity and frequency of receiving the Holy Communion (London, 1685, shelfmark: WH.8.17); Rawlet’s A dialogue betwixt two Protestants (London, 1686, shelfmark: Wc.7.33); The sermons of Mr. Henry Smith, sometimes minister of St. Clement Danes, London (London, 1676, shelfmark: WK.5.10). Jeremy Taylor seems to have been a favourite of hers: three of his books feature in her collection: Vnum necessarium. Or, The doctrine and practice of repentance (London, 1655, shelfmark WP.6.16); A dissuasive from popery to the people of England and Ireland (London, 1686, shelfmark WT.7.26); and The rule and exercise of holy living and of holy dying (London, 1682, shelfmark WT.7.20).

In particular, The sermons of Mr. Henry Smith and Taylor’s The rule and exercise of holy living and of holy dying bear a prettier than usual signature, with a little ornament on the “E”. It is rather endearing to think about this teenager of three hundred years ago devising a fancy signature for herself.

But possibly the most human and intriguing hint about her is to be found in the book held at shelfmark Wc.8.20. It is titled: The lady’s new-years gift: or, Advice to a daughter, under these following heads: viz. religion, husband, children, servants, behaviour and conversation, friendships, censure, vanity and affectation, diversions, dancing (London, 1688). The licence to print is dated Jan. 9. 1687/8. Etheldred and William Wake got married on the 1st of October 1688.

Was this an engagement or a wedding present? By whom? Or had she bought it herself, to prepare for the life which lay ahead of her?

There is a ms. ink pointing hand on leaf C5v, p. 34, the only ms. addition in the whole volume. It highlights a passage about faithful and unfaithful husbands and wives, and the different share of blame the world put upon the different sexes.

“… But if in this it lieth under any Disadvantage, you are more than recompens’d, by having the Honour of Families in your keeping. The Consideration so great a Trust must give you, maketh full amends; and this Power the World hath lodg’d in you, can hardly fail to restrain the Severity of an ill Husband, and to improve the Kindness and [poiting hand] Esteem of a good one. …"

Her marriage

So, was this a happy marriage? Had Mrs Sharp and Mrs Clagett been right in suggesting Etheldred as a wife for Wake? Had he been a good husband, or an ill one?

The Wakes had eight daughters, of which only seven survived into adulthood, and six got married and formed families of their own. They all bore family names. Amye married Henry Seymer, Esq., of Handford, Dorset; Etheldred married Thomas Bennet, Esq., of Norton Bavant, Whiltshire; Hester married first Richard Broadrep, Esq., of Mapperton, Derbishire, and secondly Thomas Strode, Esq., of Parnham, Derbishire; Dorothy married James, eldest son of Sir James Pennyman, Bart., of Ormsby, Yorkshire; Magdalen married William Churchill, Esq., of Hanbury, Dorset; Elizabeth died unmarried; Mary married Dr. John Lynch, dean of Canterbury; and Catherina died an infant. In some sources three more children are recorded: William, Edward and Anne, who apparently did not survive childhood.

We cannot hear Etheldred’s opinion about her husband and wedded life. However, we know that Archbishop Wake found happiness in her company. Her death was a blow to him. In a letter to his friend Browne Willis he wrote: “my long-continued sickness and weakness, both increased by the misfortune I have had in losing my wife, has so broken me …”1

1 Quoted in Sykes.
But we have an even better reason to believe this was a happy marriage. The passage at the beginning of this article was taken from the good copy of the Archbishop’s autobiography. The draft version, kept in the same binding at Christ Church, is less guarded and much more revealing, and allows us a glimpse into the Wakes’s married life. Following the description of how the match was agreed, it reads:

“There were several Circumstances so very providential in this match, & it has Pleased God to blesse it so signally since, & to make it so happy to both of Us, that We have great Reason to ascribe the whole to his particular providence, who was indeed the author, & director of it: & has blessed us now in the enjoym[en]t of each other, above 17 years. 1

Maria Franchini
Early Printed Books Project

PROOF AND EVIDENCE

Archbishop Wake was very considerate with his books, and treated them well. If any mark of his pen is to be found in them, usually it is limited to a statement of authorship on the title pages of anonymous works, the occasional correction of mistakes, tidy and discreet pointing hands (printer’s indicators), very occasionally a signature. It is therefore quite an important and exciting event to find a longer inscription in his own hand.

One such inscription can be seen on both recto and verso of the imprimatur leaf of a pamphlet intituled: “An ansvver to the paper delivered by Mr Ashton at his execution to Sir Francis Child: Sheriff of London, &c. Together with the paper it self.”, published anonymously in London in 1690/91, and now attributed to Edward Fowler 2 (Shelfmark: We.6.5 (11)). The words traced in light ink in Archbishop Wake’s hand read:

“The munday before mr Ashton’s Execution Dr Hickes the late Dean of Worcester came to me, desiring me to deliver a request of mr Ashton’s to my Lord Preston (who was also at yt time in Newgate under the same Condemnation) viz yt my Lord would justify mr Ashton from being privy to his Lordships Papers & Business; w[h]ich he sayd might be of some Use to Him for yr saving of his life. Upon this I went forthwith to Newgate & delivered my Message, w[h]ich also mr Ashton had just before got an Opportunity to convey by Letter to my Lord. My Lord answers I return’d presently to mr Ashton in the presence of Capt. Richardson; who was all ye while by; & received mr Ashtons answer; w[h]ich was All yt passed between us, tho’ report has made a great deal more of it. Some time after mr Ashtons Execution, I received 2 Copies of the Paper at ye End of this Book. And thereupon I begg’d my Lord Preston to fill me wt the knew of mr Ashtons Papers relating to ye Prince of Wales. 3 My Lord assured me he never heard any thing of any such papers yt mr Ashton had; & had two reasons to believe there were no such in his Trunk. 1: Bic [?] speaking to mr Ashton, at their being [original word “taking” corrected into “being” in a different ink] about yt trunk; mr Ashton bid him not be concern’d; for yt there was nothing in it besides his Linnen, & a few printed Books of no Importance. 2dly: That my Lord having a little bundell of linnen in it, ye Trunk was brought by some messenger from my Lord Nottingham to him: but my Lord refused to receive it, & desired it might be carried to mr Ashton to whom it belong’d. W[h]ich the Messenger taking notice of, told my Lord he needed [“needed” inserted in a different ink] not be afraid to Open it, [“O” of “open” capitalised in a different ink] for that whosever ye trunk was, they had [“had” inserted in a different ink] found nothing in it that could prejudice either Him or mr Ashton.

I will add yt I have been assured from very good hands yt my Lord Nottingham had declared ye same to yt: And it seems strange yt mr Ashton hoped to have saved his life by getting my Lord Preston to own [?] ye Papers produced at yter [?] Tryall, if he knew yt at the same time they had Kept Other Papers in their hands, for w[h]ich y[?] would be sure to Hang him. Will: Wake”.

1 Wake’s autobiography was written in 1705.
2 Archbishop Wake’s copy bears a different manuscript ink attribution of authorship on title page, in the Archbishop distinctive hand, crediting it to Dr. Sherlock.
3 Allegedly, the proofs of the legitimacy of the Prince of Wales, James Francis Edward Stuart, son of James II and Maria Beatrice d’Este of Modena. It is interesting to note that Wake had no doubts about his legitimacy (ODNB, Wake).
Aside from Wake’s involvement, or rather not-involvement, in this intriguing story of Jacobean espionage, of which a vivid account can be read in the entry for John Ashton in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, what is important in this finding is the rarity and exceptionality of such an account in a book in the Wake collection.

Moreover, it allows the definitive attribution to Archbishop Wake of a particular kind of wavy “W”, recurring in several of his (few) autographed books, as well as its dating. A young man in his thirties, recently married and rapidly ascending the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and already making a name for himself as a “young, most learned, pious, and excellent preacher”¹, it is understandable that his signature would be flamboyant and distinctive. In later years his hand will reduce in size, and the “W”s will lose all their flaring, adapting themselves to the gravity and seriousness of their author.

Maria Franchini
Early Printed Books Project

Archbishop Wake, All Souls, & the Blood of Chichele

In 1722 Archbishop William Wake (1657–1737), in his position as Visitor to All Souls College, was embroiled in what was to become a landmark case involving the right of the College to reject an applicant claiming entrance under the privilege of Founders’ Kin. Wake’s interference in All Souls politics and his over-turning of their electoral process was hardly welcomed there, but the real impact of the case was only to become apparent over time, with the transformation in genealogical composition of the fellowship over the course of the eighteenth century.

The College of All the Souls of the Faithful Departed in Oxford was founded in 1438 by royal charter from Henry VI, by Henry Chichele (c.1362–1443), Archbishop of Canterbury. The College was dedicated to the intellectual development of lawyers and theologians, and to prayer, in memory of those killed during the French wars fought under Henry VI and his father Henry V. The foundation statutes of the College provided for Chichele’s kin and their descendants in the form of exceptional fellowships.

The statutory institution of Founders’ Kin for the preferment of the descendants of the Founder’s family may seem like bare-faced nepotism to modern eyes, but it was established practice for churchmen during the medieval and early modern period to provide for their families in this, rather than more immediately pecuniary ways.

For over 500 years, many Oxford colleges were to draw a substantial proportion of their fellowship from men claiming that their descent from the founder gave them right of admittance. It was not until the eighteenth century that the practice began to be questioned, and well into the nineteenth before there were attempts made to challenge and redress the tradition, although even then it was not done in any systematic way².

All Souls is one of the more prominent of Oxford colleges whose fellowship flourished under the aegis of Founders’ Kin, but it by no means stands alone. At their foundation, Merton, Queen’s, New, St. John’s, Pembroke, and Worcester colleges’ statutes all gave express preference to the admittance of the Founders’ kindred and descendants.³

In addition, many colleges subsequently instituted so-called ‘engrafted’ fellowships - scholarships or exhibitions open only to their relations and descendents - until by the 19th century two thirds of the Oxford colleges or halls then in existence had arrangements of this type in place. Perhaps surprisingly, very few kinsmen claimed their privileges at All Souls until the middle of the sixteenth century, when elections of kinsmen became a fairly regular though unremarkable occurrence, with Founders’ Kin comprising only a negligible proportion of the fellowship. It is worth noting that applicants claiming Founders’ Kin were required to be suitably learned – at All Souls, there was an insistence on the knowledge of Greek and Latin. The debate that raged through the eighteenth century was to what extent familial privilege should be allowed to compensate for educational deficiencies.

Archbishop Wake, as Visitor to All Souls, declared that ‘the relations of the founder are not obliged to have qualifications equal to those of all others’.⁴ Wake used his powers as Visitor to enforce this stance in the infamous case of Robert Wood, and his non-election but subsequent admission to All Souls in 1722.

¹ John Evelyn’s Diary, entry for the 20th of March, 1687.
³ Squibb.
⁴ Squibb, p. 50.
Robert Wood (Christ Church matric. 18 March 1718/19) presented his candidacy to All Souls claiming Founders’ Kin. Along with the other candidates he was examined, but was unsuccessful and two others were elected to the fellowship. Wood lodged an appeal against the decision, and the College was obliged to explain itself to the Visitor, Archbishop Wake. One of the points of interrogation answerable by those fellows who had been present at the examinations, concerned the possible existence of a conspiracy within All Souls against election through Founders’ Kin.

Several of the fellows had in fact favoured Wood’s appointment, until it was discovered that his knowledge of Greek and Latin was scanty. Wake, having had Wood examined separately by his own men who had found him proficient, nullified the College elections, declared both places vacant, and appointed Wood to one of them. One of the formerly successful candidates was appointed to the other, the remaining candidate waiting until the following year to regain his admission to the fellowship. Interestingly, at least six All Souls fellows at the time of Wood’s admittance who could have claimed their places through Founders’ Kin had not done so; the evidence does not exist to indicate their awareness or otherwise of their entitlement, or why they may have chosen to ignore it if they did.

Wake was aware that he himself had an indirect claim to the privileges of Founders’ Kin; his wife Etheldred was descended from Henry Chichele’s younger brother William, Sheriff of London, through her grandmother Dorothy Hovell, née Chichele.

Wake’s prophecy was fulfilled, when his grandson Thomas Bennet became a fellow in the 1750’s; and Wake’s daughter Amy’s grandsons Henry Seymer and Seymer Love joined the fellowship in the latter decades of the 18th century. Ironically, there was another strain of relationship to the Founder of which Wake was probably unaware: he was Founders’ Kin in his own right, drawing his lineage from Agnes Chichele, grand-daughter of the afore-mentioned William Chichele, Sherriff of London.

Wake’s decision in Wood v. All Souls opened the floodgates for poorly qualified candidates seeking a place in the All Souls fellowship. The fellows continued to object to the appointment of inferior candidates, and a number of unsuccessful applicants took their appeals to the Visitor.

The then Dean of Laws William Blackstone published his Essay on collateral consanguinity in 1750, in an attempt to lend some legal weight to the College’s struggle against the rulings of successive Visitors; the work had been written some years before and used privately within College. Blackstone somewhat cheekily dedicated the published work to the Visitor, as well as to the Warden and Fellows of All Souls. Blackstone’s friend Benjamin Buckler added his voice to the protest in 1765 when he edited and published (probably at Blackstone’s request) a collection of pedigrees, Stemmata Chicheleana: or, a genealogical account of some of the families derived from Thomas Chichele, of Higham Ferrers in the County of Northampton.

At an earlier stage of Wood’s trial, Wake had excused himself from passing judgment on Wood’s right to election, on the grounds that ‘my children are nearer of kin to the Founder, than the appellant is:

from Thomas Chichele. Blackstone and Buckler’s aim was to make plain and public the extent of the Chichele bloodlines, and therefore to widen the field of candidates claiming Founders’ Kin. Ten years later a supplement¹ was published, this time at the College’s own expense, containing corrected and additional pedigrees (wherein is included Archbishop Wake’s pedigree).

Despite only one kinsman being elected during the 1750s, the 1760s brought a deluge, with seventeen kinsmen joining the fellowship. One of the kinsmen who felt inclined to take his case to the then Visitor, Archbishop Cornwallis, was Wake’s great-grandson Seymer Love (Christ Church matric. 6 Nov. 1765)². In 1770 Love had presented himself for election claiming Founders’ Kin, but had failed to submit his pedigree within the timeframe dictated by the College. In disputing his subsequent non-election, he claimed that the College’s reason for their decision was inconsistent with the statutes and therefore had no basis in law. Love’s case was upheld. Twenty kinsmen were elected to the fellowship during the 1770s, forming a majority within All Souls.

Over the course of the eighteenth century another phenomenon amplified the complexity of familial relationships within All Souls: that of fellows marrying with the female relatives of other fellows.

Prior to the latter half of the eighteenth century, fellows’ claims to Founders' Kin could be drawn straight back through their lineage to Chichele's kin and their descendants; increasingly, marriages were taking place between fellows and the sisters or daughters of other or former fellows (of course with the official requirement that they go out of Fellowship at their marriage). In this way the existing kinship patterns within the College were strengthened by the inter-weaving of existing bloodlines.

For example, Catherine Wake, daughter of Archbishop Wake's cousin Edward and therefore herself a carrier of the Founders' blood, married a former fellow of All Souls, Herbert Randolph, also of Founders' Kin (although he was one of those fellows resident at the time of Wood's appeal in 1722, who had not claimed their place through kinship). Catherine’s younger brother Charles went on to sit the entrance examination in 1743. Thus it appears that women, through their marital alliances as much as through their own bloodlines, were influencing the educational choices of future generations.

Entry to the All Souls fellowship by the claiming of birthright was formally abolished by Ordinance in 1857, as part of wide-ranging University reforms. However, even today members of the public occasionally attempt to gain favoured treatment at All Souls. One individual requested to hold his wedding in the chapel, on the grounds that he could prove he was Founders’ Kin; another claimant applied for admittance to the fellowship, despite lacking any of the requisite academic qualifications. One wonders if Henry Chichele would have envisaged his blood stretching so far.

¹ Benjamin Buckler. A Supplement to the Stemmata Chicheleana, containing corrections & very large additions to the tables of descents from Thomas Chichele (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1775)
The project has currently reached a total of over 5,000 reels of 35mm microfilm containing more than 100,000 volumes, of which roughly one third covers the period 1475 to 1640, and two thirds the period 1641 to 1700.

Eventually all microfilms in the EEB Project will be scanned and available as digital images online (EEBO). Currently some 125,000 volumes have already been scanned (including Thomason Tracts 1640-1661 and the EEB Tract Supplement).

Filming the current tranche of volumes began in Oxford at Balliol College Library in November 2007 and on completion of the items there our camera was moved to Christ Church Library in March 2008 where we are currently filming.

Michael J. Gunn

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THE TOWER POETRY SUMMER SCHOOL
CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD, 26-29 August 2008

Tower Poetry is offering young poets between the ages of 18-23 the chance to attend the annual Tower Poetry Summer School in 2008. The residential school will give 12 young people the opportunity to develop their own writing and critical skills through a series of exciting and challenging workshops run by experienced tutors. The course also offers readings by guest poets as well as visits to places of literary interest in Oxford. The summer school will be held at Christ Church, Oxford, between 26-29 August, 2008. All tuition and accommodation costs will be paid for by Tower Poetry. The tutors will be Jane Draycott, a UK-based poet with a particular interest in sound art and collaborative and digital work, and Frances Leviston, whose first volume of poems was shortlisted for this year’s T.S. Eliot Prize. The course offers its students a unique and challenging opportunity to work with other writers. At the end of the summer school, the students’ work will be collected and edited for publication in a poetry pamphlet. To be eligible for the summer school, students should be usually resident in the UK. They should be no younger than 18 years old, and no older than 23 years, on 26 August 2008. Students will be selected for the course on the basis of written work. If you would like to apply for a place, send three of your own poems together with a covering letter listing any previous writing achievements and outlining your reasons for wanting to take part in the summer school. You must also include: your date of birth, home address, telephone number (mobile or home) email address (if applicable), name of school, college or university (if applicable), school/ university address and telephone number, name of a tutor whom we can approach for a reference (for those applicants in full or part-time education). Applications for the course must be received by 13 June. Entries via email cannot be accepted.

Submissions should be sent to: Tower Poetry, Christ Church, Oxford, OX1 1DP Tel: 01865 286591; Email info@towerpoetry.org.uk

Information about the summer school and other Tower Poetry initiatives can also be found on the website: www.towerpoetry.org.uk

Illustrations for this issue from material in Christ Church Library collections, Memorial Scrolls Trust, Lost Heritage - Lost Country Houses of England www.lostheritage.org.uk and British Library. Original photography by Christopher Rees (The Unusual History of 1564 Torah Scrolls), Silke Schaeper and Peter E. Pormann (Documenting Oxford’s Jewish History), Cristina Neagu. Proofreading Ioana Costache (Lady Margaret Hall)

For submissions and queries regarding the Newsletter, please contact the Editor - Cristina Neagu (01865 275 265).

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