

Christ Church Library, Carroll Collection

The Harcourt/Dodgson Papers

Digitised images: *A Method of Taking Votes on more than Two Issues* (BXB-04-WK)

Notes and captions by Edward Wakeling

Introductory notes:

The Harcourt/Dodgson Papers, containing various Carrollian items, was donated to Christ Church Library by Robert Vernon Harcourt in 1984. He was the second cousin of Augustus George Vernon Harcourt (1834-1919), Lees Reader in Chemistry at Christ Church, who was a good friend of Dodgson. Many of these items were presented to A. G. V. Harcourt by Dodgson. The items are:

BXB-01-WK, Notes by an Oxford Chiel: The Dynamics of a Parti-cle

BXB-02-WK, The Blank Cheque

BXB-03-WK, The Game of Logic

BXB-04-WK, A Method of Taking Votes on more than Two Issues

BXB-05-LF, Scenes from an Unfinished Drama entitled Phrontisterion

BXB-06-WK, A Discussion of the Various Methods of Procedure in Conducting Elections

BXB-07-WK, The Vision of the Three T's

BXB-08-LE, Letter from Dodgson to Harcourt

BXB-09-LE, Letter from Dodgson to Mrs. Harcourt

BXB-10-LE, Letter from Dodgson to Harcourt written as a poem

BXB-11-WK, A Tangled Tale Knot II, Mad Mathesis

BXB-12-WK, A Tangled Tale, Answers to Knot II

BXB-04-WK. *A Method of Taking Votes on more than Two Issues* was issued as a preliminary pamphlet in March 1876. Above the title-page was printed "Not yet published" and in most copies the pages were interleaved with blank pages for the reader to write notes which were then collected by Dodgson as suggestions to amend the text. In Harcourt's copy, the interleaved blank sheets are missing, probably because he submitted his comments to Dodgson. The paragraph on the title-page which indicates that this is just a preliminary printing has been crossed out by Dodgson using violet ink. This is an anonymous publication and an improvement on *Suggestions as the best method of Taking Votes where more than Two Issues are to be voted on* which was issued in June 1874. Dodgson noted in his diary on 23 February 1876: "Spent the afternoon in writing out a new *Method of Taking Votes* which I sent to the Press to be set up in slip." The printer's name is not given. Dodgson was concerned that the Governing Body of Christ Church, of which he was a member, did not always make good decisions when voting on an issue. This resulted in a series of publications as he perfected his method, leading to his papers on Proportional Representation as a fairer method than voting based on "first past the post."