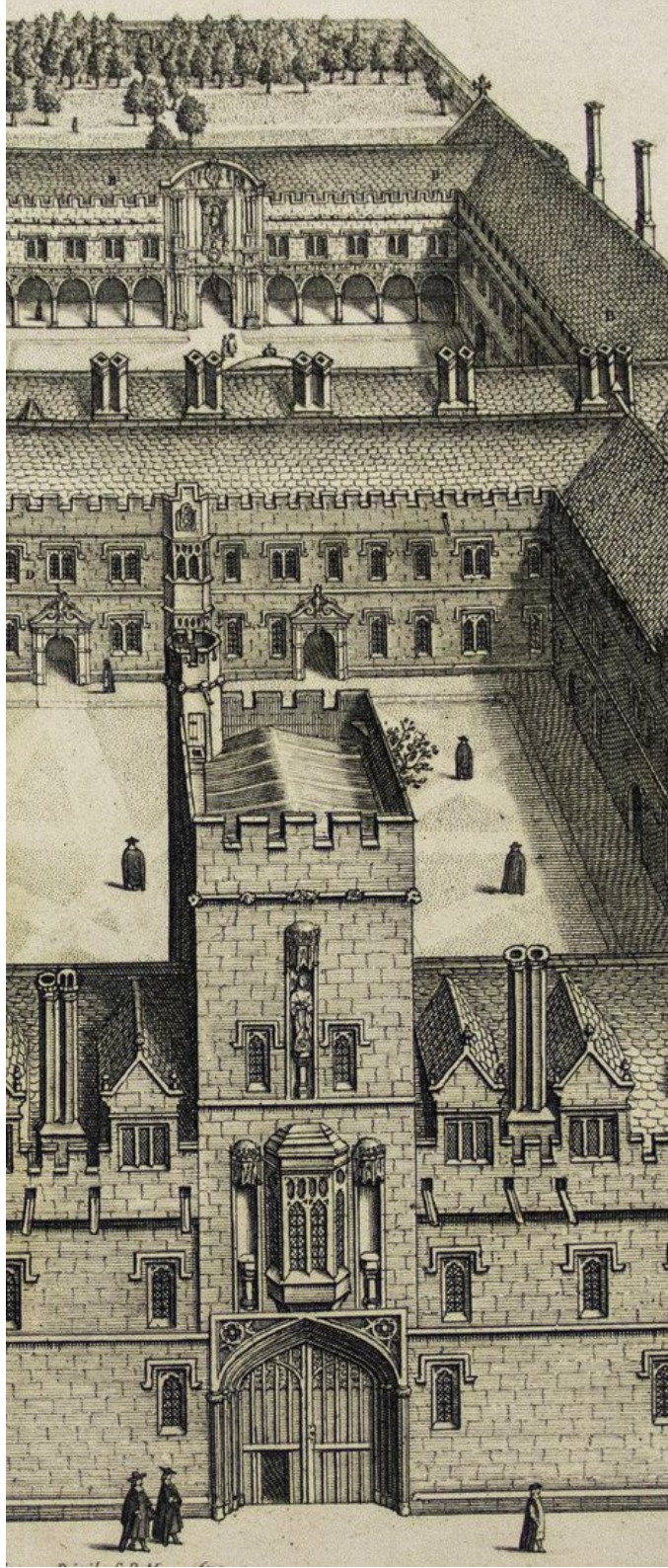


Stories from the Shelves

An exhibition exploring St John's College and its Library through the ages

Michaelmas Term
2017



1: Oxiana Illustrata—David Loggan, 1675.

Beautiful illustrations of Oxford in the late 17th Century, including St John's.

The Library's Collections and their physicality reveal much about how books were obtained, stored and used in the past.

2: First tome or volume of the paraphrase of Erasmus upon the new testament—1548.

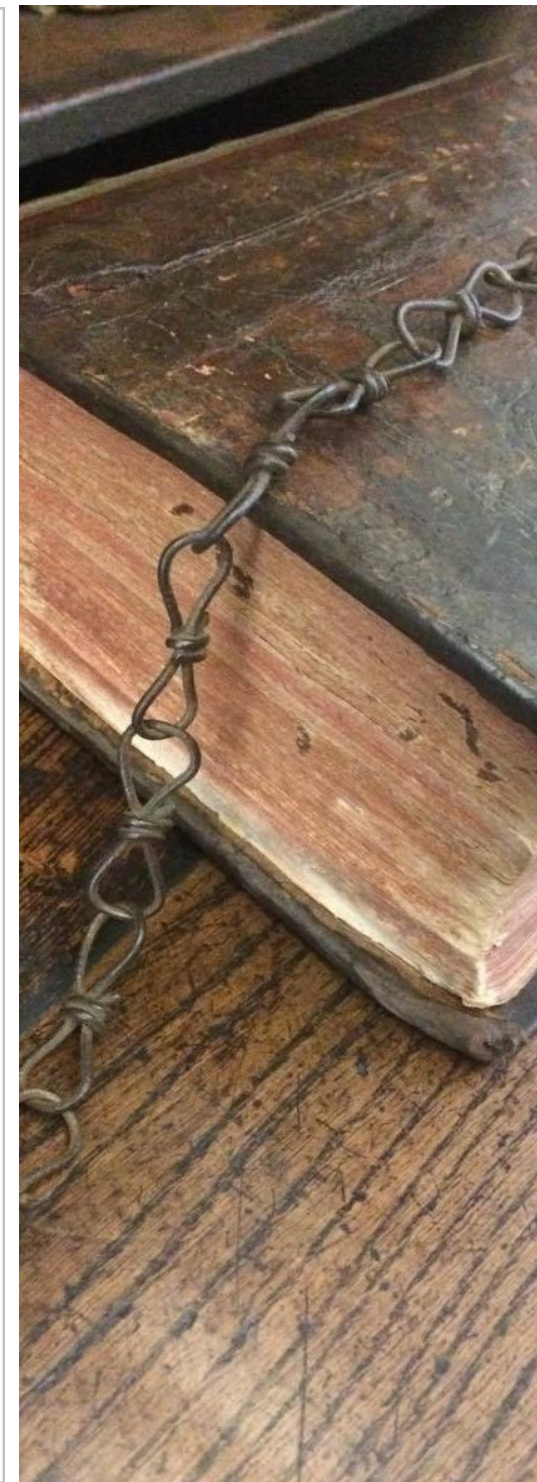
Complete with its chain, this volume offers an insight into the appearance and function of a chained library.

3 and 4: Tomus quartus omnium operum Reuerendi Domini Martini Lutheri (1572) and Latino-Germanicum lexicon (1609).

The covers of these books identify their donors, telling us how they came to be part of the library.

5: Benefactors' Book—across the 17th/18th Centuries.

This book ornately chronicles and celebrates donations to the library.



6: Cura Pastoralis—10th Century.

As part of the First Bequest, this was the very first texts in the Library's Collections.

The Laudian Library originally housed scientific 'curiosities'.

7: Σκελετὸς πολυκινητός—John Speed, 17th Century.

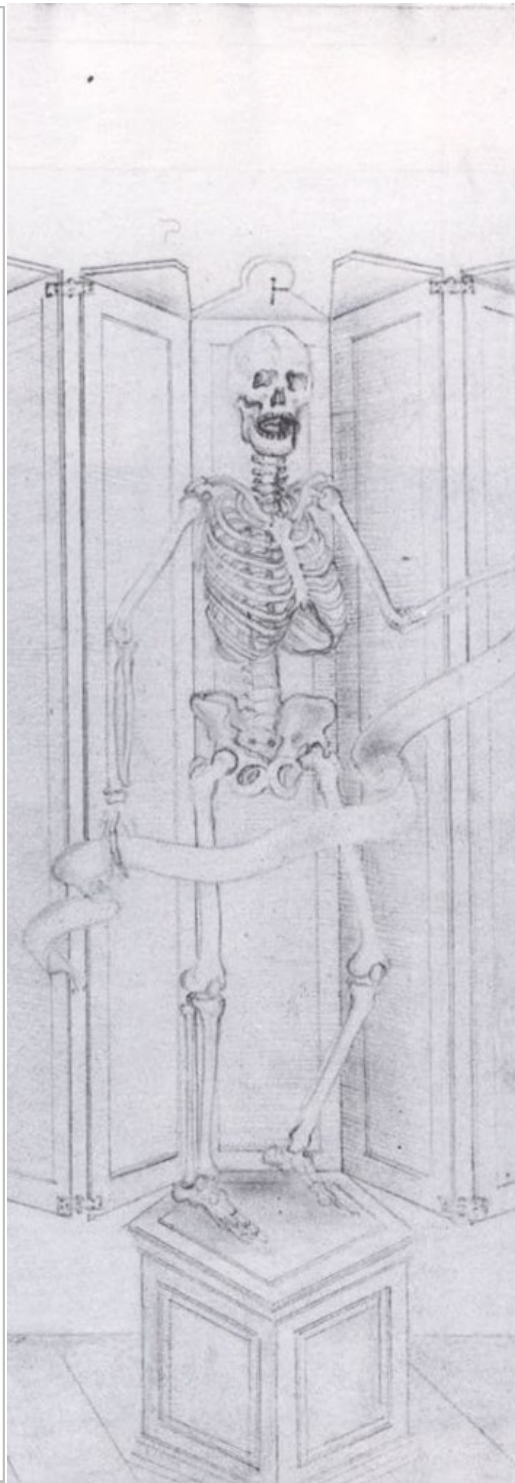
A pair of skeletons once stood either side of the door at the far end of Laudian Library. John Speed's illustrations depict how they were assembled.

8: Laud's diary—1621-1643.

Archbishop Laud was President of St John's and the driving force behind the creation of the Laudian Library. His diary sheds light on his anxieties for both himself and the College.

9: Bladder Stone—1621.

While many of the Laudian Library's curiosities have been lost to the passage of time, this particularly unusual artefact remains with us: a Bishop's bladder stone in a golden box.



10: Two treatises on Globes—est. 1740.

The Old Library's globes, made in 1740, depict the Earth and the constellations. These pamphlets provide instructions and exercises for learning to use the globes.

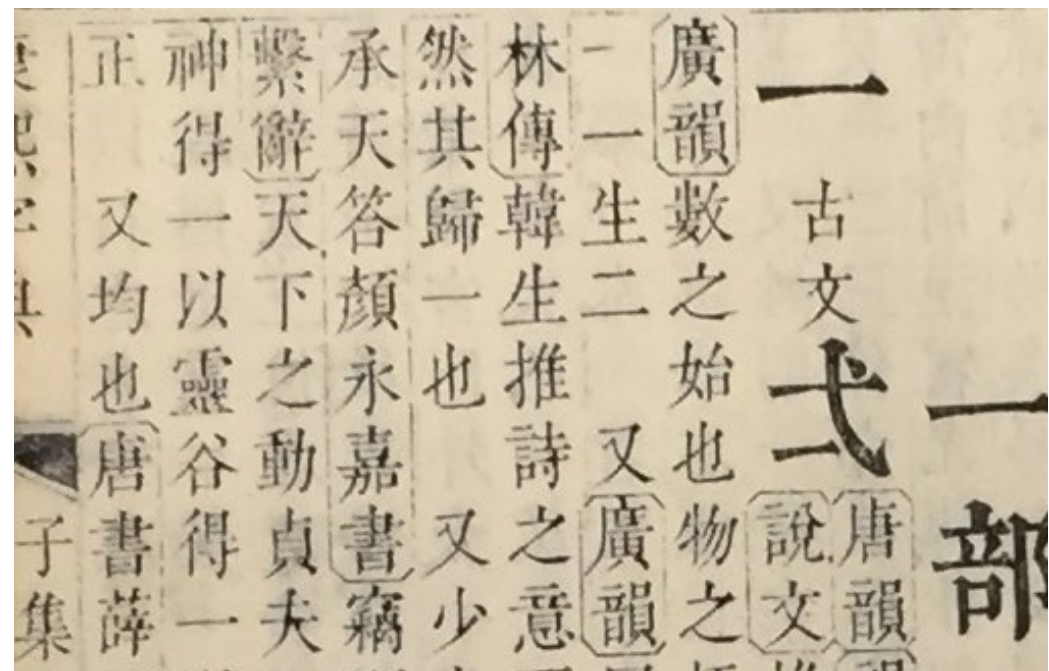
The Library's Collections include items that reveal common themes in student life at the College through the ages.

12: Richard Amherst's letter to his son—1619.

Despite its age, this letter would feel familiar to any student or parent. Amherst offers advice and encouragement to his son studying at St John's—as well as some money and clean linen.

11: The Christmas Prince—1608.

This text collects a cycle of plays collaboratively created by St John's undergraduates as part of their Christmas celebrations. The wit, imagination and joy of these students is preserved centuries later.





13: Kangxi Dictionary (18th Century)

This collection of early Chinese dictionaries illustrates the Library's role within the 18th Century's growing global field of research, travel and collection. Wang-y-Tong, one of the first Chinese travellers to England, visited St John's and allegedly rearranged the previously out-of-order dictionaries.

14: Burnt Fragments.

A fire in the Laudian Library in the 19th Century damaged several printed books. The remaining fragments have been preserved.

15: Larkin's Note (est. 1940).

Philip Larkin, poet and novelist, read English at St John's College between 1940 and 1943. This library copy of 'The Faerie Queene' contains a very discontented note, allegedly written by Larkin.

16: Postcard of the Library (1920)

This 1920s postcard shows us what the Library looked like in the early 20th Century.

17: Architects' Plans.

The final item in the exhibition looks to the future. The plans for the new Study Centre continue in the Library's long tradition of change and innovation, ensuring an academic space and the preservation of Collections for future generations at St John's.

The exhibition contains further information and accounts relating to the College, its Library, and its history. We hope you enjoy exploring St John's College through the ages.





Bibliography

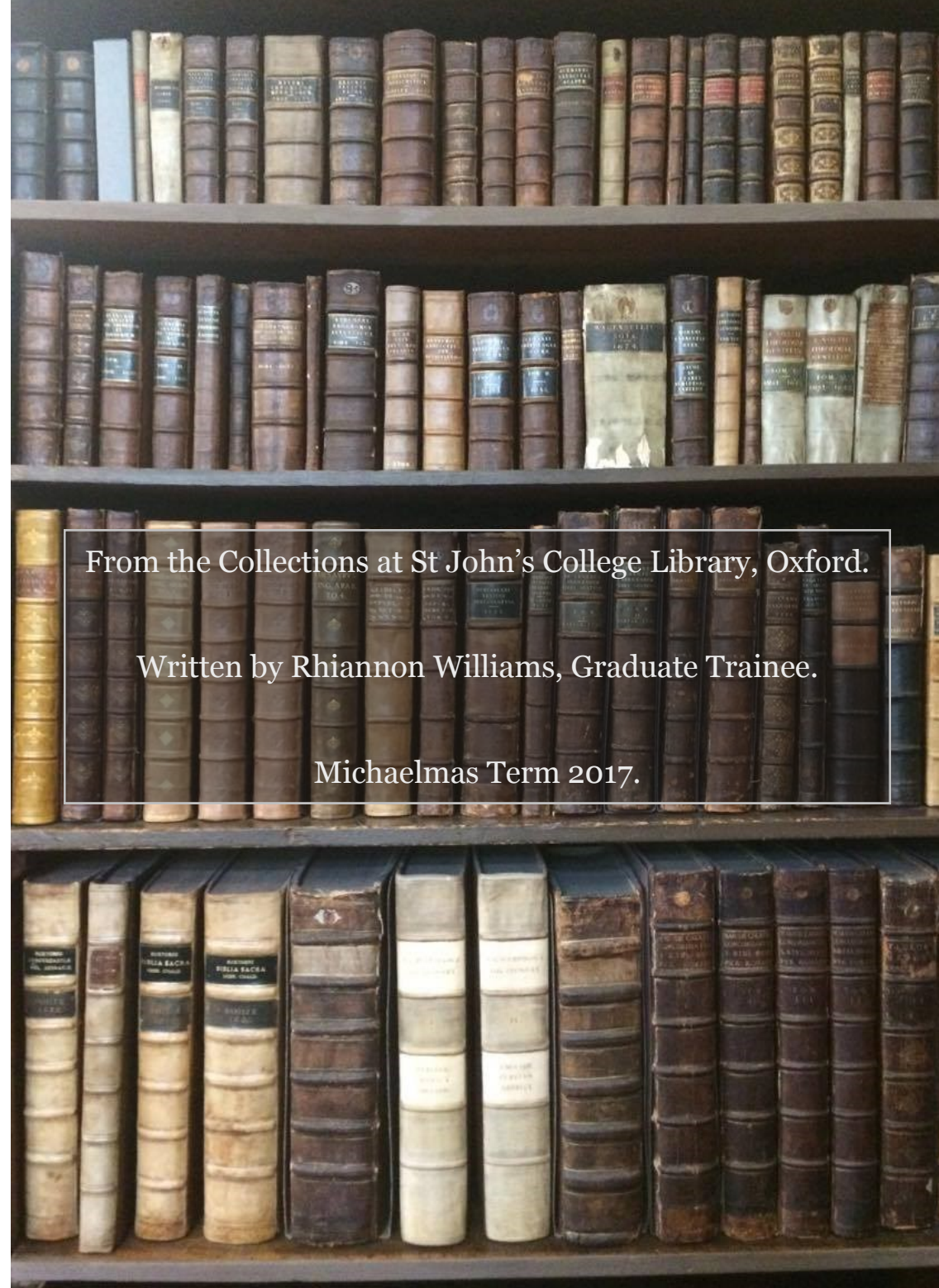
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From the Collections at St John's College Library, Oxford.

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