

FRIENDS OF CHRIST'S COLLEGE LIBRARY NEWSLETTER, January-February 2022



A word of welcome...

From John Wagstaff, College Librarian

Dear Friends: The mind can play strange tricks! I sincerely thought that I had produced a *Newsletter* for November-December 2021, but it appears that, if that issue existed at all, it existed only in my head. I can only apologise for the fact that you haven't heard from the library for three months, and will try to be rather more organised in future. My only defence (assuming a defence is needed) is that I myself had COVID in the second half of November, and spent much of December catching up with other library matters.

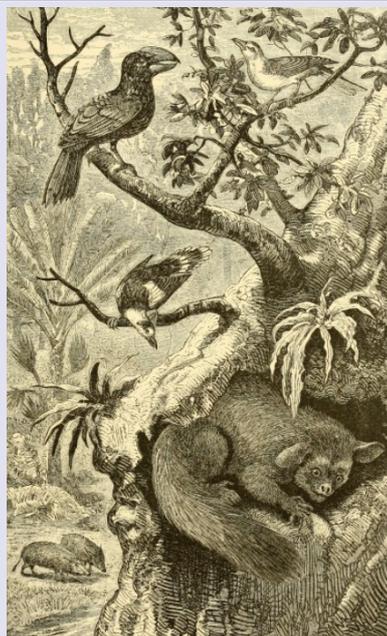
November was, nonetheless, a successful time overall for the Old Library, with Amy Leahy's new

exhibition opening to a large gathering of invited guests (including several of our library Friends) in mid November. Since then we have received a steady flow of visitors to the exhibition, which is — as those of you who have visited us before will know — open most Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 2 p.m. until 4 p.m. If you are travelling from some distance to visit us, it's always worth checking in advance that the exhibition will be open. The exhibition was originally scheduled to close in late February, but was extended, now until **Thursday, 10 March**.

If you have managed to visit the college over the past year or so

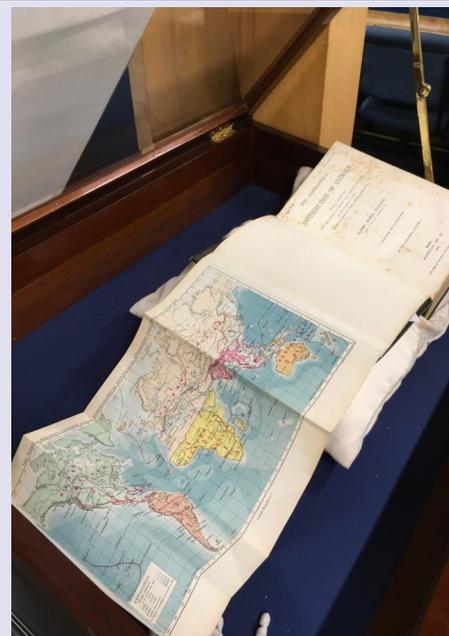
you may well have admired the renovated roof on one side of First Court. There are plans, starting in late spring 2023, to replace/renovate the roof over the Upper Old Library too, and — although plans are at an early stage — it seems very likely that the Old Library will be completely closed from mid-2023 until mid-2024. Further announcements will, of course, be made as plans develop. Logistically this will be a complicated renovation, as the books currently in the Upper Old Library will have to be moved into off-site storage while the roof work is done.

The Geographical Distribution of Animals



Our February Treasure of the Month is Alfred Russell Wallace's *The Geographical Distribution of Animals* (in 2 volumes; published London, 1876).

Wallace is perhaps best known for independently conceiving the theory of evolution through natural selection; he and Charles Darwin jointly presented their ideas on the subject at a meeting of the Linnean Society in 1858. Our copy, in good condition, still has its original accompanying maps.



Poetry and Place in Cambridge

Our Old Library exhibition explores the rich history of poetry about Cambridge by focusing on the poems and poets surrounded by the city. Here we introduce some highlights from the display.



Left: The opening of Chaucer's 'Reeve's Tale', in medieval Trumpington. Below: Rupert Brooke's 1914 and Other Poems (1915), including his most famous poem on Grantchester's Old Vicarage.



Nineteenth-century Cambridge. *Magna Britannia* (London, 1808)

Right: poems and photographs of Christ's during lockdown, by the College's Poetry Society

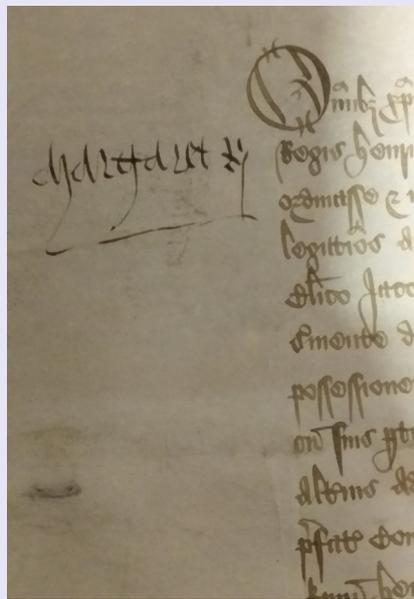


If you missed the exhibition, an online version is now available for viewing at: <https://www.christs.cam.ac.uk/poetry-and-place>

News from the Archives

The big news from the Archive is that the remarkable collection of paintings, photographs and other 'pictures' held in college are about to become more accessible through the generosity of two alumni. Although the collection is already catalogued, funding has been found for a new database, Axiell Collections, which will make our content available more widely on the internet, including thumbnail images of the pictures.

Genny Silvanus (College Archivist) has also been busy supervising archive volunteers in creating detailed location guides, a condition survey and are now working on the 'Fellows Papers' collection one morning a week



Above: letter of attorney with Lady Margaret's signature. Right: Archive volunteers.



We would love to hear from you! If you would like to send us comments about this *Newsletter*, arrange a visit to the College Library, sponsor a book, make a donation, or simply share some memories, please contact us at library@christ's.cam.ac.uk; by telephone at 01223-334950; or by post at Christ's College Library, St Andrew's Street, Cambridge CB2 3BU.