

## Centre for the Study of the Book: Report of the year 2008-9

Pursuing its core objective, “to develop a set of actions and activities that link together curatorial and research concerns connected with our understanding of the Book and its origins and subsequent development”, the Centre has continued in its second year to support a regular series of public programmes and private curatorial meetings.

In addition to presenting programmes, the CSB serves to coordinate the results of these events by collecting disseminating the scholarly and curatorial information they yield. This year the CSB has started to realise this role by initiating projects for capturing information on events and notable rare books and manuscript items in the CSB webpages and in a weblog.

### 1. Programme of events

#### *Symposia*

##### *Collectors and collections*

November 20, 2008

In collaboration with Christ Church College, the CSB invited scholars working in museums, libraries, and archives to consider the histories of collections and the curatorial challenges of working with collections. This symposium attracted an audience of 50 from Oxford and from the Centre partners.

The speakers were:

David Berry, Ashmolean Museum ‘The Collections of Antique Sculpture at Oxford ‘

John Milsom, Christ Church College Oxford ‘Oxford's Music Collections, c. 1600-1750’

Annette Walton, Linacre College Oxford ‘The Thomas Marshall Collection of Civil War Pamphlets: One Man’s Record of ‘ye late troubles of England’

Cristina Neagu, Christ Church College Oxford ‘The Books of Thomas Wolsey at Christ Church’

Mark Purcell, National Trust ‘Sir Richard Ellys (1674-1742) and his Library’

Malcolm Jones, University of Sheffield ‘In the Lost and Found: Discoveries in Douce's Collection of Early Modern English Prints’

Julian Pooley, The Nichols Archive Project ‘A Packhorse to Literature: John Nichols (1745-1826), Printer, Antiquary, Biographer and Collector’

An account of the concluding discussion, chaired by Bill Stoneman of the Houghton Library, Harvard, can be found here:

<http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/csb/CollectorsandCollections.htm>

### *Curators' Roundtable*

21 November 2008

This year's roundtable was on the subject of music manuscript cataloguing. Invited guests were the music manuscript curators of the British Library, Christ Church College Oxford, the Bodleian Library, and contributors to the DIAMM project.

### *Gough Day*

Friday 20 March 2009

This day marked the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the bequest to the Bodleian Library of book and antiquarian collections by Richard Gough (1735-1809). The Seminar Room was open throughout the day, with a display of items from the collection including drawings by William Blake, a volume of sketches by antiquarian researchers of the 18<sup>th</sup> century of Roman remains in Britain, and a facsimile of the Gough Map, the first route map of Great Britain, dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

During the day four short lectures on highlights of the collection were delivered by Julian Pooley (Surrey Records Office); Nick Millea (Bodleian Library, Maps Section); Mark Crosby, and Elizabeth Solopova (Bodleian Library, Medieval manuscripts cataloguer).

Professor Rosemary Sweet of the University of Leicester gave the plenary lecture in the Divinity School, on the subject of Richard Gough's importance in stimulating historical research in 18<sup>th</sup> century Britain.



A volume from the Gough Collection containing sketches of Roman remains collected by William Stukeley in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century



Bodleian Library Western manuscripts curator Mike Webb (right) showing a manuscript catalogue of Richard Gough's collections to a delegate at Gough Day.

### *Anselm Day*

Monday 27 April 2009

Marking 900 years since the death of Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, the Centre hosted an event convened by Richard Sharpe (History Faculty) that brought together an illustrious group of scholars and an illustrious group of manuscript volumes (one from Trinity College, Cambridge, two from Lambeth Palace, and two from the Bodleian Library). Presentations by Prof. Sharpe, Teresa Webber, Samu Niskanen, and Michael Gullick combining historical, codicological, and palaeographical investigations allowed these eleventh- and twelfth-century witnesses to speak of how the works of a living author were published in the period of manuscript transmission, and how his collected works were compiled after his death.



Richard Palmer (Lambeth Palace Library), Richard Sharpe (History Faculty), and Teresa Webber (Trinity College, Cambridge) at Anselm Day in the Seminar Room, Bodleian Library, when the manuscripts MS. Bodley 271, MS. Rawlinson A. 392, Trinity College MS. B. 1. 37 and Lambeth Palace MSS. 59 and 224 were shown.

### *Lectures*

The Centre has presented a number of individual lectures on book history in 2008-9. In partnership with the McKenzie Trust, the Centre presents the annual McKenzie Lecture each Hilary term. Taking advantage of the presence of visiting scholars and those in the university with expertise relating to Bodleian materials and history of the book, the Centre presents special lectures throughout the year. In some cases these lectures are held in the presence of the original materials, in the Bodleian's Seminar Room. Larger public lectures are held in the English Faculty building.

2 July 2008: Joseph Gwara (U.S. Naval Academy) 'Four early English printers'. Professor Gwara described his research into the fonts used by early printers, suggesting links between them and re-attributions of works.

7 October 2008: Charles E. Robinson, (University of Delaware) 'The Original *Frankenstein*: A new text of the novel by Mary Shelley (with Percy Shelley)' [in the presence of the original manuscript] This coincided with publication by the Bodleian Library of *The Original Frankenstein*, edited by Prof. Robinson, presenting the published and manuscript texts of *Frankenstein*.

23 November 2008: Peter Wiley 'John Wiley & Sons, Inc. as a Global Publisher: An Insider's Perspective'

17 and 19 November 2008: Bill Stoneman (Houghton Library, Harvard) 'Private collectors and public libraries' .



William Stoneman, Florence Fearington Librarian  
of Harvard University's Houghton Library

This year marks the one hundredth anniversary of the Burlington Fine Arts Club exhibition of medieval and Renaissance manuscripts, the last in a series of exhibitions of such material usually held at private clubs for collectors. This series of exhibitions held in London, New York and Liverpool, was extremely important in the growing scholarly understanding and appreciation of such material, but it also played another role, unarticulated and only perhaps unintended, namely to highlight the material still in private ownership and to create an increased market for it among private collectors and public libraries.

Stoneman demonstrated how such collectors as Henry Yates Thompson, Charles Dyson Perrins, J. Pierpont Morgan, Sir George Holford and Sir Alfred Chester Beatty used the exhibition to inform their later buying and selling of such material. This year also marks the fiftieth anniversary of the first of the Dyson Perrins sales of medieval manuscripts. In his second lecture Stoneman demonstrated how private collectors and public libraries, such as the British Library, had learned over the preceding fifty years how to prepare effectively for such an important sale by acquiring material for their collections by private treaty before the sale and by carefully targeted bidding at the sale itself.

9 December 2008

Dr. Elena Ene D-Vasilescu (Centre for Classical and Byzantine Studies)  
'The Gospel manuscript of Neamt, Moldavia, AD 1429 [MS. Gr. 122]' [in the presence of the original manuscript]

5 March 2009 (The 14<sup>th</sup> annual McKenzie Lecture)

Professor Jerome McGann (University of Virginia) 'Philology in a New Key: Information Technology and the Transmission of Culture'

## **2. Teaching with Special Collections materials**

The Seminar Room in the New Bodleian is now used regularly for university teaching classes and research seminars utilising the Bodleian's special collections. Centre funds were used to fit the room with a projector and projection screen, and the library installed new furniture to make the room suitable for seminars and lectures. The Centre helps to provide publicity and administrative and technical support for programmes taking place in the Seminar Room.

### Masterclasses:

These take the form of an invited guest speaking about an item from OULS special collections, in the presence of the item. Attendance at these classes is open to the public and the CSB administers registration and gives technical support to the masterclasses.

#### *Literary Manuscript Masterclasses*

With a grant from the Fell Fund, Chris Fletcher, the Keeper of Manuscripts, and Kathryn Sutherland, the Professor of English Literature, have initiated a series of masterclasses examining modern literary manuscripts. Four classes will be held each Michaelmas term. The Fell Fund grant covers costs for the next four years.



Participants at the first Literary Manuscripts masterclass in October, 2008, folding paper to make a model of the type of small notebook used by Jane Austen.

#### *Medieval and Early Modern Manuscript Masterclasses*

The palaeography masterclasses now in their fifth year continue under the direction of the Martin Kauffmann, of the Western Manuscripts section, and Professor Richard Sharpe of the History Faculty. Four classes are held each Michaelmas term.

### University Classes:

#### *Bibliography*

For the first time, Professor Kathryn Sutherland of the English Faculty held the classes in bibliography for first-year master's degree students (approx. 50 students in total) in the Seminar Room, calling upon Rare Books materials to illustrate her lectures. Teaching took place in Michaelmas term and library staff attend each class for one-half hour to display the materials and answer questions.

#### *Preservation skills*

The postgraduate English research students also received a special book-handling training session in the Seminar Room from Nicole Gilroy and Andrew Honey of the Conservation section, on October 30.

#### *Special workshops*

The Centre participated in the June, 2008 meeting of the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing (SHARP), held at Brookes University, Oxford, by presenting a postgraduate study day during which international delegates were able to attend a workshop with Prof. Kathryn Sutherland. Prof. Sutherland showed books from the Bodleian's collections of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>-century material to demonstrate issues of book design, structure, and textual variation. Students were then able to experience

setting type as done in the period of the hand-press book, using the Bodleian's Bibliography Room, with the assistance of tutor Paul Nash. The workshops were organized and administered by the CSB.



Professor Kathryn Sutherland, University of Oxford Faculty of English, with SHARP postgraduate delegates at the workshop in June 2008

### **3. Publications**

Papers from the first CSB symposium, 'The psalms and the psalter', (June 2007) have been published in the *Bodleian Library Record* (Volume 21, Number I)

Proceedings of the Seminar on History of the Book, 1450-1830, have been noted in the weblog, "The Conveyor", which is published by the Centre.

<http://theconveyor.wordpress.com/>

## **4. Reports of Projects affiliated to the CSB**

### A. Blockbooks and masterpieces of the non-western book

Report by Alexandra Franklin

The project has completed the following steps in building the digital collection:

- Scanning of all items listed in the “Blockbooks” section of bod-inc, namely 8 blockbooks and 46 single-sheet items, with the addition of a single-sheet woodcut from the Ashmolean Museum and the printed *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*, Arch. G d.56, (bod-inc number S-268) containing woodblock illustrations. The digital collection representing these items numbers 878 scans.
- Installing the digital copies of the first seven blockbooks, complete in 585 images, with brief descriptions of the items and further captions to the individual woodcut pictures, into the Luna Insight image database
- Creation of metadata to page level, with image descriptions and ICONCLASS codes, for all items (approx. 50) in the Blockbooks and Xylographic prints section of the Bodleian incunable catalogue
- Recording of existing images of watermarks (beta-radiographs) linked to the individual pages imaged
- Additional imaging of copy-specific highlights from early printed books, including marks of ownership and other inscriptions, based on the descriptions published in the *Catalogue of books printed in the 15<sup>th</sup> century now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford* (2005).

### B. Thyssen project (Latin manuscripts from German lands)

Report by Daniela Mairhofer

The catalogue of mediaeval Latin manuscripts from the charterhouse at Mainz in the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford

The cataloguing of medieval manuscripts as the source of ancient as well as mediaeval culture is absolutely essential – for all fields of historical research. In the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, there is a collection of about 90 manuscripts that used to be part of the library in the charterhouse at Mainz on the St.-Michaelsberg and was brought from Germany to England in the 17th century; the manuscripts finally came into the possession of the Bodleian Library as part of the donations of Archbishop Laud in the 1630s.

The collection from the Mainz charterhouse consists predominantly of Latin manuscripts comprising a wide variety of texts and grades of production. The manuscripts were briefly described in the 19th century by H. O. Coxe, and more detailed descriptions of a few manuscripts have appeared in various publications; but there has been no all-embracing description in line with modern scholarly standards. The new project, launched in autumn 2007, and generously financed by the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung, will fill this gap by creating detailed descriptions: of textual content, of illumination, of codicology, (including binding), and of provenance. The work is being carried out by Dr. Daniela Mairhofer, under the direction of Mr.

Richard Ovenden (Keeper of Special Collections) as well as the academic support and guidance of Prof. Nigel Palmer (Professor of Medieval German) and Dr. Martin Kauffmann (Curator of medieval manuscripts).

Thus the aim of the project – a precursor, it is hoped, of further projects to describe other German manuscripts in the Bodleian grouped by provenance – is to make unknown source-material accessible and to establish a basis for further research in the fields of history, history of art, literature, law and medicine as well as theology. Since these manuscripts are German objects of cultural value – the manuscripts once belonged to the library of the Mainz charterhouse and were either written in Germany or brought there – their description has not only an important place in the history of the culture of Germany, but also in the history of the Carthusian order and its libraries. In order to make the catalogue suitable for an international audience, the descriptions are written in English and in line with the best practice of other European catalogues.