

Bodleian Library Friends' NEWSLETTER

Summer 2007

BENT JUEL-JENSEN

The last Friends' Newsletter reported the decision of Dr Bent Juel-Jensen to step down as a member of the Council of Management, having served for forty-nine years. Now we report with great sadness the death of Dr Juel-Jensen on 20 December 2006 at the age of 84. Appreciations of his extraordinary achievements as collector, traveller, medical researcher and campaigner for refugees from Ethiopia and the Sudan were published in obituaries in *The Times* of 6 January and *The Independent* of 4 January 2007. A memorial service for one of the great twentieth-century benefactors of the Bodleian was held at St Cross College where he had been a Fellow since 1973. At this service four short addresses were delivered on various aspects of Dr Juel-Jensen's life. We print here that by David Vaisey, Bodley's Librarian Emeritus, on 'Bent: the Collector'.

BENT: THE COLLECTOR

Let the first words on Bent, the collector, be his own. Writing forty years ago he said:

'It is possible that the collecting instinct in the individual, like height and blood pressure, is a graded characteristic determined by many hereditary factors. As most people are of middle stature and have an average blood pressure so, no doubt, the majority have a middling urge to collect. This could be subjected to scientific investigation. My inheritance was such that I landed well to the right on the Gaussian distribution curve that seems to illustrate so many biological manifestations in man. I have collected a large variety of objects since I was a child. Fortunately most of the more bizarre categories have long since been abandoned. My stamp collection is easily portable in a waistcoat pocket, and I no longer feel an irresistible urge to chase Camberwell Beauties. There is little hope, however, of ever getting rid of the remaining subjects: islands, plants, prints, drawings and books.'

You will, I hope, forgive me, as one whose acquaintance with Bent arose from my position as a keeper of manuscripts and a library director, if I speak about him principally as a book collector, even though his gatherings of coins (many most generously given to the Ashmolean), and of pictures, artefacts, and just plain old *objets trouvés* are in many ways just as remarkable.

His instinct to collect books was nurtured by his father and it grew when, as a medical student in Denmark he began searching bookshops, with his friend Erik Dal, for inexpensive items to provide a tangible history of typographic styles and of master printers of the past. When he came to England, and especially when he came to Oxford and to New College with its ready-made bibliographical community, the interest took flight. From then on the rest is a history well-known to many people here today.

Some years ago his formidable collection of some 350 editions of the works of the Elizabethan poet Michael Drayton (the first of which he had purchased in 1941 in the dark days of German-occupied Denmark) was presented to the Bodleian and, at a stroke, turned the Library into one of the leading institutions in the world for the study of that poet. And just recently he gave the Bodleian his collection, built up over a lifetime, of books and manuscripts of the Danish writer Johannes V Jensen. Now, by his will, the Library will receive his collection of works by Sir Philip Sidney, probably the greatest such collection in these islands, and his collection of over fifty Ethiopic manuscripts.

His bibliographic interests eddied out from those four areas to include early printing in Denmark, Greenland and Iceland; early works about Ethiopia and North Africa; and in England to many writers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. His library abounds in seventeenth-century sermons, Civil War tracts, early scientific works, a collection concerning Henry, Prince of Wales (son of James I), and what he liked to call his 'little books'. Amongst the latter he was especially fond of the Elizabethan Sir Hugh Plat's cookery book – *Delights for Ladies*; the works of Stephen Hales, chemist, physiologist, honorary Doctor of Divinity of Oxford and campaigner for clean air; the royalist Thomas Fuller's *Good Thoughts in Bad Times*; John Earle, fellow of Merton, and author of *Microcosmographie*; and many more – some now bequeathed to the Bodleian, but most now destined to go back out into the world at large to satisfy other collectors.

To be taken by Bent into his study and to be shown his collections was to be in the presence of someone whose pleasure in his books was palpable and infectious. He delighted in explaining to those whose knowledge was less

than his own the significance of this Civil War sermon or that Ethiopic illustration. He wanted others to use his books and was generous of access – though in this, as in other aspects of his life, his advice on how to handle them could be fiercely given, and some applicants for access (especially those whose research he considered unnecessary or ill-founded) could receive short shrift. He could be just as fierce with books in the ownership of others. One incident, on a visit to the Bibliotheque Nationale with the Friends of the Bodleian, when he took one of the French curators to task for mishandling one of her own manuscripts, has entered Bodleian folklore. Such indignation often vehemently expressed was, however, usually short-lived. I have seen an exchange of correspondence with a cataloguer for one London dealer whose misdescription of an item incensed Bent. A highly critical letter was fired off in which no words were minced. A very chastened cataloguer wrote abjectly apologising to such an important client and received the reply 'Oh, please don't worry; we all make mistakes.'

He loved his books and employed fine binders to ensure that they looked well on his shelves, but he quite understood that books in libraries, especially libraries such as the Bodleian that believe in use, will wear out. This was one of his reasons for giving and bequeathing to the Bodleian many rarities which he knew duplicated books already in the Library; and he argued forthrightly against university libraries elsewhere which disposed of duplicates of such rarities in order to raise money. In typical Bent fashion all his gifts to the Bodleian and all his bequests are accompanied by a strongly-worded threat that if ever any one of his books were to be outhoused in another library – either within Oxford or elsewhere, then everything that he had ever given is to be withdrawn and sent to Cambridge.

Bent was a great collector, a great bookman, a great bibliographical scholar, and a great Oxford benefactor. I am glad to have been numbered amongst his friends.

RONALD MILNE

In January 2007 we said farewell to Ronald Milne, who had been Acting Director of Oxford University Library Services and Acting Bodley's Librarian from 2004. Ronald came to Oxford in 2002 having been Director of the hugely successful Research Support Libraries Programme, based in Edinburgh. Prior to this national appointment, Ronald had been Deputy at King's London and at Trinity Cambridge. Ronald served Oxford with great energy and commitment, both within Oxford, but also by serving on numerous committees nationally and internationally. We wish him every success in his new role as Director of Scholarship and Collections at the British Library.

BIBLE EXHIBITION

The Bodleian was proud to enter into a collaboration with the Freer Sackler Galleries of the Smithsonian Institution at the end of 2006 in curating an exhibition in Washington DC on early Bible manuscripts called *In the Beginning: Bibles before the year 1000*. Fifteen of the Bodleian's earliest Bible manuscripts, including the earliest translations of the Bible into English, were featured in the exhibition. A scholarly catalogue included contributions from Bodleian curators Dr Bruce Barker-Benfield and Dr Martin Kauffmann. More than 250,000 people visited the exhibition, which took place between October 2006 and January 2007.

FILMER MANUSCRIPTS

With support from the Friends of the Bodleian, an important group of manuscripts associated with the 17th century political theorist Sir Robert Filmer have been acquired by the Library. The Bodleian already possesses a number of the most important Filmer manuscripts, and is doubly pleased to acquire this clutch of papers as they add to the Library's holdings of materials exemplifying 17th century thought. Filmer's views were famously opposed by John Locke, whose Library and papers were acquired in part through the good offices of the Cambridge scholar Peter Laslett, from whose Library this clutch of Filmer manuscripts were also acquired.

“AN EMINENT AND ENDLESS TOKEN OF OUR THANKFUL ACCEPTATION...”: A SHORT HISTORY OF THE BENEFACTORS' BOARD.

The hundreds of Bodleian readers using their daily route to their research texts may no longer even notice it. Having entered the large doors of the Divinity School, turned left opposite the shop to show their identification (leaving any large bags in the cloakroom, please) they mount – with greater or lesser ease – the seemingly endless flights of wooden steps to Duke Humfrey's Reading Room. Absorbed in their concerns of the here and now few will notice, and fewer still will have time to contemplate, the massive historic marble tablet above the staircase known as the Benefactors' Board.

The Bodleian is one of the most renowned libraries in Europe if not in the world and requires large amounts of philanthropy to maintain itself. Thomas Bodley, its Founder, was a consummate fundraiser and fortunately for University and everyone in the worldwide 'republic of letters' it seeks to serve, the Bodleian has continued to be astoundingly successful in attracting benefaction on a scale large enough to enable it to continue to meet its vision, grow its collections and provide the best and most efficient service to its readers into the present century.

The Bodleian has developed many ways of thanking its donors, and the Benefactors' Board is traditionally reserved for the most outstanding gifts it receives. The Board unveiled by Dr L R Farnell, the then Vice-Chancellor in January 1923, replaced the leather-bound books kept by Thomas Bodley to record the names of benefactors 'exposed, where it may be still in sight, for every man to view, as an eminent and endless token of our thankful acceptance of whatsoever hath been given'. Bodley well understood the power this could have 'as an excellent inducement for posterity to imitate those former good examples'.

Bought from a firm in Torquay at a cost of £434, the marble tablet was itself made

possible through the gift of £50,000 from a donor named Walter Morrison in 1920. At that time, his was the largest single donation not only to the Bodleian Library but to any department of the University of Oxford. (The James Martin gift to the University in 2004/5 of \$100 million shows not only the generosity of the giver, but also how philanthropy is developing in a new way.)

"How much to get up there?" is, according to D S Porter, author of 'The Bodleian Benefactors' Tablet' (published by the Bodleian Library in 1989 but now sadly out of print), one of the commonest questions visitors to the Library ask. But it is never a question that has had a completely straightforward answer. The first names to be inscribed – Latinised (as was the custom at the time) and arranged in chronological order – were only, according to Porter, "arrived at after some argument as to who should be there". In the late 1950s the 'going rate' was around £5,000; in the 1990s more like £250,000; now it is probably closer to a million pounds.

The Latin inscription above the board means 'Lest the memory of so many benefactors should fade away, here with grateful mind the university inscribes the names of those who, with their gifts have magnificently augmented this library'. The one below is from Daniel 12 verse 4: 'Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased'. Some scholars think this refers to mental agility in studying, rather than staff racing about to fetch the books as the more practically-minded might infer.

In the last few months the Board – which records nearly 600 years of philanthropic giving to the Library – has been completed with the addition of the final two names.

The newly completed Benefactors' Board contains some fascinating social and political history as well as an insight into the development of the Library itself. Humfrey,

Duke of Gloucester (1390-1447) – the first benefactor – was the youngest brother of Henry V and donated substantial number of books to the library, some of which he commissioned or purchased for the specific purpose. His early death, brought on by his sudden arrest on the King's orders in 1446/7, put paid to his plans to donate further Latin manuscripts. Sadly the collections were later disbanded (partly as a result of religious bigotry and partly because the invention of printing was making them obsolete).

Famous names listed, among many others, include the Rockefeller Foundation – "Fundatio Rockefellerana" – who gave \$840,000 (credited as the biggest straight cash gift valued according to its era) which provided three fifths of the cost of the New Bodleian. Kenneth Grahame, Edinburgh born author of 'Wind in the Willows' left the proceeds of copyright and royalties. The original manuscript of the book, which was presented by his widow in 1943 together with the letters to their son in which the work originated, formed the basis of this year's World Book Day display in the Divinity School on 1st March. Pages of the manuscript, images of the original illustrations and some of the letters can be seen on the Bodleian's website at http://www.ouls.ox.ac.uk/news/2007_feb_23. Cecil Rhodes left money for his scholarships in the early 20th century (there are about 85 scholars per year, and ex-President Clinton was one 1969).

Plans for a new Benefactors' Board, to be sited on the stairwell opposite the original, are now underway. Which names will be carved on this, and what story will they tell in their turn about the issues facing us now? We cannot know for sure, but we can hope that the Bodleian, with the help of its Friends and benefactors, will continue to thrive and serve the worldwide academic community for the next 600 years at least.

BODLEY'S CIRCLE ANNUAL LUNCH MEETING

Bodley's Circle was formed in the Library's 400th anniversary year (2002) following an initiative by Jonathan Taylor, former chairman of the Library's Development Board, and David Vaisey, Bodley's Librarian Emeritus. Open to all those who are known to have made provision for the Bodleian by way of bequest, the Circle's fourth annual get-together was held on Thursday 9 September 2006. Fifty-four legators attended.

The day began with refreshments in the Divinity School followed by a guided tour of the Library's acclaimed exhibition 'Summoned

by Bells – John Betjeman and Oxford' and a most informative demonstration and display of conservation and collection care work by binding and preservation staff. Before lunch members moved to the Sheldonian Theatre for an illustrated talk by David Vaisey entitled 'Personal favourites from the Collections: the reflections of a Bodley's Librarian Emeritus', favourites ranging from Anglo-Saxon manuscripts to 19th-century printed ephemera.

A buffet lunch was served in the Divinity School which gave Circle members a chance to

minge and to meet members of the Library's staff; and a most enjoyable day was completed in the afternoon with a recital in Convocation House of English and German partsongs from Elgar and Vaughan Williams to Schubert and Brahms by the Oxford-based vocal quartet Liedertafel.

The Library is always keen to welcome new members into the Circle, and further details on how to make a legacy to the Bodleian and to have the opportunity of coming to these most enjoyable events can be obtained from Tany Alexander, Bodley's Circle, Bodleian Library, Oxford OX1 3BG

THE FLOWER GARDEN OF SPRING: PAINTINGS FROM MUGHAL INDIA

For the first time since 1947, highlights of one of the richest and most historically important collections of Mughal paintings and manuscript illustrations in the world were on display in the Library's Exhibition Room from December 2006 until April 2007.

The Flower Garden of Spring: Paintings from Mughal India showcased some fifty paintings made between about 1560 and 1800. These superbly painted works were created for famous patrons including the Mughal emperor Akbar – whose reign (1556–1605) is regarded as the most vigorous, formative period of the Mughal school – as well as for the Sultans of the Deccan and other provincial rulers. A unique style of painting developed in India during the reigns of the Mughal emperors (16th–19th centuries), blending Indian and Persian styles with additional European influences, which was initially confined to manuscript illustration. But soon finely painted individual paintings became equally prized by Mughal patrons, who had them mounted in splendid decorative borders and bound in albums. These paintings include royal portraits, scenes of court life and hunting, as well as illustrations to poetical works and to the *ragas* or modes of Indian music.

The centrepiece of the exhibition was Akbar's magnificent illustrated copy of the *Bahārīstān*, 'Garden of Spring', which inspired the title of the exhibition. This sumptuous manuscript, copied at Lahore in 1595, represents the mature flowering of the art of the book in the early Mughal period. Using gouache (opaque watercolour) combined with gold and silver, the illustrations combine Persian technical finesse with Indian vitality and feeling for nature. Each of the manuscript's six exquisite miniatures, and some of its fabulous decorated borders, are seen all together for the first time.

The Bodleian Library's collection of Mughal art started in 1640, with an album of paintings donated by Archbishop Laud (1573–1647). Over the next two-and-a-half centuries it continued to grow steadily in size and importance through acquisitions from various sources, the two most significant ones

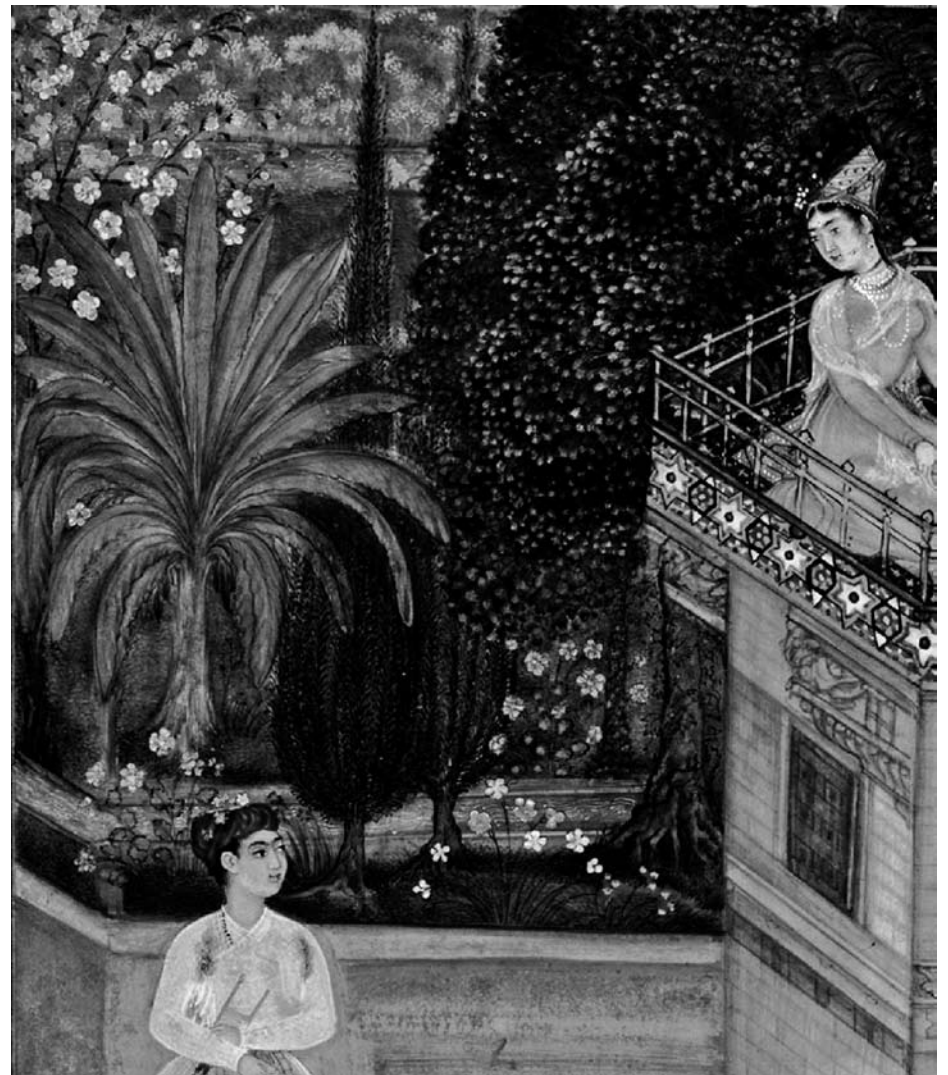


Image of the singer on the balcony, illustration to the Fifth 'Garden' (on Love) of the *Bahārīstān* of Jami (Mughal 1595).

being Francis Douce (1757–1834) and Sir Gore Ouseley (1770–1844).

The exhibition was officially opened by William Dalrymple, writer and historian, during a special evening on Thursday, 21 December 2006 in the Divinity School.

A book, *Paintings from Mughal India* by Andrew Topsfield, reproducing most of the

images displayed in the exhibition, along with other outstanding paintings that cannot be displayed in the exhibition because they are bound in albums, will be published by the Bodleian Library in Summer 2007.

ITALY'S THREE CROWNS: DANTE, PETRARCH, AND BOCCACCIO

The Bodleian's main summer exhibition (to run from 19 June to 31 October 2007) has an Italian flavour, and is timed to coincide with the visit of the international Dante seminar to Oxford in September. The guest curator is Professor Martin McLaughlin, Fiat-Serena Professor of Italian.

The exhibition has a dual focus. On the one hand, it explores the production and reception of the works of Italy's three most famous medieval and early Renaissance authors through a display of some of the Library's most visually attractive holdings; and on the other it documents the extraordinary revival of British interest in Dante during the last two hundred years, following the waning of his reputation in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

All three writers stimulated a considerable amount of visual representation in manuscripts, printed volumes, and the visual arts. The manuscript treasures on display include an early illustrated manuscript of the *Divine*

Comedy (MS. Holkham misc. 48, dating from the mid-fourteenth century) and two fine Renaissance illustrated manuscripts of the works of Boccaccio, both dating from the 1460s: the Mantua *Filocolo* (MS. Canon. Ital. 85) and the *Decameron* from Ferrara (MS. Holkham misc. 49). The fact that the Bodleian is able to mount such an impressive display from its own holdings is due to the purchase by the Library of the greater part of the manuscript collection of the eighteenth-century Venetian Jesuit Matteo Luigi Canonici after his death, and to the acquisition in the twentieth century (partly by purchase, and partly through the satisfaction of death duties) of manuscripts and early printed books from the library of the earls of Leicester at Holkham Hall.

The section focusing on the British revival includes fine nineteenth-century editions of all three writers, many of which are drawn from the collection donated to the Library by the great Dante scholar Paget Toynbee

(honorary fellow of Balliol College and the author, amongst other things, of the *Dictionary of proper names and notable matters in the works of Dante* of 1898). As well as books and manuscripts, there will also be portrait busts, the painting (on loan from Oriel College) after Vasari of *Six Tuscan poets*, and two watercolours (on loan from the Ashmolean Museum) by Dante Gabriel Rossetti inspired by Dante's *Vita nova*. The exhibition is rounded off by items from the archive (newly acquired by the Library) of the contemporary artist Tom Phillips, revealing how his translations and visual work fits into this tradition of Dante illustration and scholarship.

An accompanying illustrated book, edited by Professor McLaughlin and his opposite number in Cambridge, Professor Zygmunt Baranski, is published by the Library to coincide with the exhibition and is available from www.bodleianbookshop.co.uk

ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE BICENTENARY

2007 is the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade, with the Parliamentary bill receiving Royal Assent on 25 March and coming into force on 1 May, 1807. This anniversary has prompted much media interest in the slavery-related collections held by the Bodleian Library of Commonwealth and African Studies at Rhodes House.

BBC Radio Four recorded part of a programme at the library concerning the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the Anglican missionary society whose historic archive is held by the library. In 1710 Christopher Codrington bequeathed to the SPG his plantations on Barbados, including three hundred slaves, and the SPG's acceptance has long attracted criticism. Several documents, including a copy of Codrington's will, were discussed in the course of the programme.

BBC Kent filmed the manuscript journal and some of the published anti-slave trade pamphlets of the Rev. James Ramsay for a television programme about Ramsay, which formed part of a series about Kentish associations with the slave trade. Ramsay was vicar of Teston, near Maidstone, and was a prominent early abolitionist, who supplied Wilberforce and Clarkson with much of the factual evidence on which they based their campaign. What particularly distinguished his writings was that, unlike those of many other abolitionists, they were based on first-hand knowledge, as Ramsay had lived for a number of years in the West Indies, and had married into a slave owning family.

BBC Oxford broadcast a programme about Oxford's connections with the slave trade, which included some of the manuscripts and contemporary printed materials held by Rhodes House. Amongst the documents discussed were original plans of one of the slave castles on the West African coast, Ramsay's journal and the autobiography of slave trade captain Hugh Crow. Crow was one of the very few slave trade captains to record his views of the trade, and his memoirs include, surprisingly, a song composed by some of the slaves in his honour. To mark the bicentenary, this has been re-orchestrated and had additional verses written commemorating abolition, and was sung by a local gospel choir as part of a further television broadcast.

The Library marked the bicentenary by holding a small exhibition in the entrance to Rhodes House around the May anniversary. This will also be mounted online in order to make it more widely accessible.

The Library has also published two books to mark the anniversary. The first, *The slave trade debate: contemporary writings for and against* brings together a selection of pamphlets published by proponents from both sides of the debate from the mid-1780s through to 1807, together with transcripts of a number of sections of James Ramsay's journal. The second is a reprinting, with a new introduction, of Captain Crow's *Memoirs*. Both are available through the Bodleian Library shop (www.bodleianbookshop.co.uk).

ANGLO-BOER WAR MATERIAL ACQUIRED BY RHODES HOUSE LIBRARY

The Bodleian Library of Commonwealth and African Studies at Rhodes House has recently enhanced its holdings of material relating to the Anglo-Boer war of 1899-1902 through the acquisition of a number of items from the collections of the noted actor and collector, Kenneth Griffith, who died last year. The bulk of his extensive collection of manuscripts, books and ephemera of all kinds was sold at auction, and, with the support of an anonymous member of the South African Friends, the Library was able to acquire an important album containing four hundred photographs, particularly of Boer refugee camps and concentrations camps, unusually all captioned in a volume of this kind, and a small group of letters by a serving British soldier, which are particularly interesting in referring to the use of the biograph to record the war. Since so much of the surviving film of the Boer War is now regarded as fake, it is pleasing to have acquired a contemporary record of at least some of it being made in the field.

At the same sale the Library was able to acquire a small number of rare printed items relating to the war, and these have since been augmented by around thirty further volumes from the Kenneth Griffith collection, purchased through the book trade. As a group, these significantly enhance the Library's holdings of contemporary writings on a key conflict and the first 'modern' war in which Britain was engaged.

LEONARD WOOLF AND EDITH WHARTON: TWO LONDON LECTURES

On 29 September 2006 at the Society of Antiquaries of London, Victoria Glendinning spoke to the Friends' London Lecture on *Leonard Woolf: publisher, author and man of letters*, following the publication of her book on Woolf.

Leonard Woolf was central to the Bloomsbury circle in that he married Virginia Stephen, but he was always treated as an outsider both by temperament and by circumstances. As his wife once put it, he was not really a gentleman.

Victoria Glendinning outlined his family background. He was a Jew but lost his faith in adolescence. Leonard's archive is massive, but incomplete. Describing his nature and his character, Victoria Glendinning said that he suffered from low-level depression. He developed a self-protective background, but was more thin-skinned than he made out. His undergraduate life at Cambridge, in a hot-house all male world, was described. He retained to the end of his life a very strong belief in art and love as the primary and eternal values. He rejected all metaphysics and religion and by extension all dogma and authoritarianism as leading to barbarity and war. He was a passionate, emotional man, and his belief in reason was intense. By nature, he was completely chaotic.

After Cambridge came his period in the Colonial Civil Service in Ceylon, where he was a very strict administrator. While home on leave he fell in love unconditionally and fervently with Virginia Stephen, and he found in her the cause and the person to whom he could devote himself. There was no question of her returning to Ceylon with him and he was not at all sure he wanted to remain in the Service anyway, so he resigned. Their life together dominated the middle section of his

life and distorted for good or ill the course of his career. He could not have known in 1912 that this brilliant, original woman would have become one of the most important writers of the 20th century, and he was not properly advised by her family, before they married, of the extent of her mental vulnerability. In the book this story is told entirely from his point of view. Virginia was the absolute love of his life, but he later found a different kind of happiness, as a widower, with a married woman, Trekkie Parsons.

In the final volume of his autobiography *The journey not the arrival matters* he wrote: "Life is not an orderly progression... If one is to record one's life truthfully, one must aim at getting into the record of it something of the disorderly discontinuity which makes it so absurd, unpredictable, bearable."

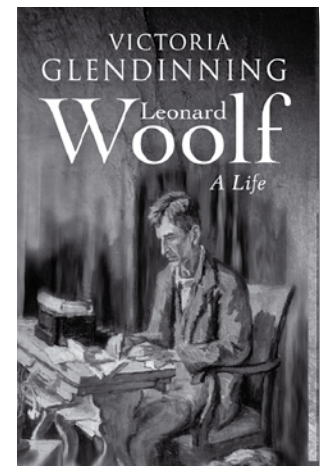
Victoria Glendinning then discussed Woolf's work. The Hogarth Press, started as a hobby shared with Virginia, became a business, run chiefly by himself. Eventually, when it was taken over by Chatto and Windus, the fulfilment by Chatto of a long held ambition, the happy outcome suited the aging Woolf beautifully.

Woolf's own writing was Victoria Glendinning's next subject. He published two novels before Virginia had published her first, and also short stories and poems. His literary activities, when he abandoned writing fiction, spread into journalism and book reviews. For decades he wrote political articles for *The New Statesman* and was later founding co-editor of *The Political Quarterly*. His central preoccupation always was politics and in particular international relations. He strongly believed that one should engage with the real world and the way in which society is ordered. He was a Marxist, a socialist,

but of an idiosyncratic kind. He could only subscribe to any political system or dogma up to a point. He had influence. His book *International Government* informs the charter of the League of Nations after the Great War. Victoria Glendinning emphasised how primary and how raw his research had been.

Woolf was the *éminence grise* of the Labour Party between the Wars. He was in charge of two hard working committees which researched, informed, briefed and advised behind the scenes – his influence was invisible but crucial. In the end he felt all his political activities had not made any difference to the world.

The idea of forces pulling in different directions is familiar to any student of Leonard Woolf. He was vehement and violent, tender and patient. He was a welter of warring antitheses. Victoria Glendinning thought that the positive constance of the character were honesty, persistence and energy. There was something of self-limitation in him.



Leonard Woolf

REG CARR IN JAPAN

Taking advantage of his presence as the keynote speaker at an international conference in the University of Hong Kong on the future of the electronic book, the then Bodley's Librarian, Reg Carr, was pleased to be able to combine his visit to the Far East with attendance at the Annual General Meeting of the Japanese Friends of the Bodleian, in Tokyo.

A well-attended gathering of the Library's Japanese Friends took place on the evening of 25 September 2006 in the residence of the British Consul General in Tokyo, where Dr Carr had the pleasure of addressing the Friends, and took the opportunity to thank them personally for the steady stream of books and other materials which they contribute to the Bodleian Japanese Library in the Nissin Institute.

The photograph shows Bodley's Librarian and Mrs Carr at the Friends' reception with the Chairman of the Japanese Friends, Professor Kawai (left), and the Secretary and Treasurer, Mr Soma.



MR GEOFFREY GROOM EDITH WHARTON

At Christmas 2005, the Friends suffered a loss, almost amounting to a bereavement, in the retirement of the Society's Secretary and friend of the Friends, Geoff Groom. Joining the Bodleian staff in 1966 (from the John Rylands Library in his native Manchester), Geoff was appointed Secretary to the Friends in 1979 and, for the next 26 years, served under – but watched over – six Chairmen.

His richly deserved retirement robbed the Society of its Master of Ceremonies and Master of the Rolls, and set Council the daunting task of finding a suitable replacement. Council, however, was equal to the task, and your Chairman is happy to announce the appointment – as Honorary Secretary – of the perfect replacement: none other than Geoff Groom. He may not have missed the Friends as much as the Friends missed him, but he missed them enough to allow himself to be lured out of retirement and installed, with a new computer, in the sumptuously refurbished Clarendon Building. We rejoice at his return.

THE ROSENTHAL MOZART COLLECTION

The Bodleian has received a magnificent donation of 87 first and early editions of the works of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, all published in the composer's lifetime. They were collected over a period of 60 years by the late antiquarian music dealer and member of the Council of the Friends, Albi Rosenthal, whose death in 2004 was recorded in the Spring 2005 issue of this newsletter. He had expressed a wish to see the collection come to the Bodleian, and with the goodwill of the Rosenthal family, it was accepted by the Government in lieu of Inheritance Tax and allocated to the Library. The works range from the first printed works of the child prodigy published in 1764/65 to a first edition of *Die Zauberflöte* from the very end of his life in 1791. The Bodleian's collection of such editions is now second only to that of the British Library in the U.K., and includes some 25 editions not found in any other U.K. library. On 5 December 2006, the anniversary of Mozart's death, over 100 people attended a reception in the Divinity School to celebrate both the arrival of the collection and Albi Rosenthal's wider association with the Library.

On the eve of the publication of her biography of the American novelist Edith Wharton (1862-1937) Professor Hermione Lee, Goldsmiths' Professor of English Literature, Oxford University, gave the Friends' 2007 London lecture at the Society of Antiquaries of London on the subject of *Edith Wharton and Biography*. She spoke of some of the challenges of writing a new biography of Wharton and quoted an elaborate architectural metaphor used in an early story of Wharton's which speaks of a woman's nature being like a great house full of rooms: in the innermost room, the holy of holies, the soul sits alone and waits for a footstep that never comes. That footstep could be that of the biographer. Edith Wharton holds the biographer at bay in many ways. There are many gaps and secrets in her long life: there are very few family letters, there is very little written evidence about her marriage, there were a number of bonfires. In her biography Professor Lee has treated Wharton's life thematically, like a series of interconnecting rooms, thick with things, architecture and material possessions. Professor Lee's pursuit of her has been very much through her places. There has been a natural tendency to think of Wharton entirely in terms of her life in America, but Professor Lee has shifted the emphasis towards her life in Europe, dealing with her passion for Europe, for garden history, for architectural history, and with her extraordinary wartime work in France. Following in Wharton's footsteps in Europe gave Professor Lee a sense of Wharton's European life, and during a fellowship year spent in New York every step she took brought her subject into focus.

In all the emphasis in her work and her life on the decoration of houses the room in the house that matters most to Wharton is the library. She designed libraries for all her houses. Professor Lee quoted a fictional version of her passion for private libraries from her late novel *Hudson River Bracketed*, an example of how complicated was her use of her own life story – she divides herself up between her characters. One of her legendary habits was writing in bed in the morning and tossing the sheets of manuscript over the side of the bed for the secretary to pick up. Her libraries in her French houses were where her friendships were rooted. One half of her private library survived, having been left to her godson Colin Clark, later in 1983 bought by the London bookseller Maggs and sold to the York bookseller George Ramsden, and then in 2006 sold to The Mount, Wharton's home in America. This portion gives a good sense of what the libraries in her French houses must have been like. She insisted that books must be used. There are lots of

markings (more markings than annotations) in her books. Many show tracings of her reading, and the range of her reading was immense. There are traces within the books of her relationships, in the form of dedications. In the markings in her books there are gripping examples of what moved her or interested her. The markings are a form of autobiography, and the contents of her commonplace book overlap with the markings.

Wharton resists biographical analysis. Professor Lee quoted an example of her distancing process in her writing of *Ethan Frome*, a brilliant exercise in authorial control, and that formidable control raises for the biographer a question of tone. There is a temptation with Wharton always to think of her as grand, formidable, and grown-up. There is also a prevailing tone that is used about her for which Professor Lee blames Henry James. Professor Lee wanted to do justice to her friendship with James and also wanted to separate her from James, because for so many years she was seen as a female Henry James and because the friendship with James was such an important part of the life story, and his tone about her has had a strong influence on her reputation. It is a mistake to make her into a 'grande dame'. Professor Lee is more interested in her professionalism, her hard-nosed practical professional dealings with her publishers, attentive to every detail.

Professor Lee ended her talk about the type of challenges Wharton presented the biographer by quoting two passages of Wharton's writing to point out the variety and complexity of her self-presentation and to show the range of tones and emotions in her life.



BODLEIAN POETRY MANUSCRIPTS ON RADIO 4

Readings of poems represented in Bodleian manuscripts were broadcast by BBC Radio 4 in three programmes in February–March 2007. The manuscripts were discussed on air by three members of the Department of Special Collections and Western Manuscripts, Richard Ovenden (Keeper), Chris Fletcher (Head of Manuscripts), and Bruce Barker-Benfield. Two programmes in the series ‘Poetry Please’ (first broadcast on 4 and 11 February) were presented by the poet Roger McGough, with readings by Jamie Glover and Claire Skinner. Through the series’ standard format of selecting poems requested by listeners, Roger McGough was shown manuscript witnesses at the Bodleian to match the requests. In the first programme, the full range of the Library’s collections of English poetry was demonstrated, with a selection ranging from the anonymous medieval ‘Bring us in Good Ale’ to Philip Larkin’s unfinished typescript and discussion of *An Arundel Tomb* (purchased in 2006 amongst his letters to Monica Jones). Other poets represented were Sir Walter Raleigh, Christopher Marlowe, John Donne, William Wordsworth, Thomas Hardy, Gerard Manley Hopkins and Kenneth Grahame.

The second ‘Poetry Please’ concentrated on Percy Bysshe Shelley and Mary Shelley, since the Bodleian holds the world’s finest collection of their literary manuscripts

(augmented in 2004 with the Abinger papers, purchased with the help of the Friends). The programme started in University College at the Shelley Memorial, which had been given to the College in 1893 by Lady Shelley (daughter-in-law of Percy and Mary) at the same time as her first donations to the Bodleian. One of these was the notebook containing the fair copy and draft of *Ozymandias*, which Roger McGough examined in the Library: in the draft, he recognized the ‘Eureka!’ moment where Shelley first scrawls ‘My name is Ozymandias – King of Kings’ decisively at the top of the page. The manuscripts’ interplays of handwritings of Percy and Mary Shelley were echoed by the radio voices: for example in a laundry-list of 1820–21, where Mary’s domestic voice (‘2 gowns, 4 sheets, 2 petticoats ..’) is overlaid by Percy’s desolate cry, ‘Such hope as is the sick despair of good ...’. Finally, Shelley’s guitar was presented as the embodiment of the poet’s spirit, forever imprisoned there like Ariel through the words of his poem *With a guitar. To Jane*.

The third programme (4 March) formed part of John Bakewell’s poetry series ‘The Great Libraries’, in which she seeks out the most treasured poetry in some of the UK’s great libraries. The Bodleian’s poems were read by Andrew Motion. Richard Ovenden introduced the programme by showing Joan Bakewell the

Old Bodleian and Duke Humfrey’s Library, and describing how Sir Thomas Bodley had restored and restocked the library with the help of honoured friends—a tradition still very much alive today. He went on to display the manuscripts of poems by T. S. Eliot (*Marina*) and W. H. Auden (‘O tell me the truth about love’). Moving to the New Library, Chris Fletcher showed the autograph fair copies of poems by Gerard Manley Hopkins (*The Starlight night*) and Edward Thomas (*Rain*), and discussed the feelings which these manuscripts must have inspired in their first recipients, Hopkins’s mother and Edward Thomas’s wife. Bruce Barker-Benfield then showed a 15th-century Book of Hours, MS.Auct. D.inf. 2. 11, of which the illuminated calendar (illustrated with Zodiac Signs and Occupations of the Months) had been the source for a series of 12 Bodleian postcards published in 1979. A copy of the July card was posted on 22 July 1982 by Philip Larkin to Monica Jones: on the back is the fair copy of one of his last great poems, ‘Long lion days’, which the postcard’s images of Leo (Larkin’s own sign) and the golden harvest must have inspired. Finally, listeners heard excerpts from Shelley’s *Adonais*, and Joan Bakewell examined the poem’s first drafts from the ‘drowned’ notebook of 1821 which was salvaged from the wreck of Shelley’s boat in September 1822.



The ‘Long lion days’ postcard

NEW MEMBERS

We have much pleasure in welcoming the following new Friends (this list continues that published in the Autumn/Winter 2006 Newsletter):

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Friends of the Bodleian
Ian Wilde, Friends' Administrator
Bodleian Library, Broad Street
Oxford OX1 3BG
Tel: (01865) 277234
Email: fob@bodley.ox.ac.uk

Bodley's American Friends
Ian Wilde, Friends' Administrator
Bodleian Library, Broad Street
Oxford OX1 3BG
Tel: +44 (0) 1865 277234
Email: baf@bodley.ox.ac.uk
Or
Steven A. Crown
Administrator, American Trust for Oxford
University,
One Microsoft Way
Redmond
WA 98052-6399, USA
Tel: 425 703 6552
Fax: 425 936 7329
Email: Steve.Crown@microsoft.com

Canadian Friends of the Bodleian
John R. Pinfold, Secretary
Bodleian Library, Broad Street
Oxford OX1 3BG
Tel: +44 (0) 1865 277450
Fax: +44 (0) 1865 277182
Email: john.pinfold@ouls.ox.ac.uk

German Friends of the Bodleian
Peter Ward Jones, Secretary
Bodleian Library, Broad Street
Oxford OX1 3BG
Tel: +44 (0) 1865 277064
Email: pwj@bodley.ox.ac.uk
Or
Dr Jan Willisch
Alsterarkaden 27
D-20354 Hamburg
Germany

Japanese Friends of the Bodleian
Mr Jun'ichi Soma, Treasurer
Membership Secretary
1-58-3-304, Sumiyoshi, Fuchu
Tokyo 183-0034 Japan
Tel / Fax: 042 302 1925
Email: Blenheim@secretary.office.ne.jp
JFOB web: www.jfob.org
Or
Mrs Izumi K. Tytler, Oxford Secretary
Bodleian Japanese Library
27 Winchester Road
Oxford OX1 6NA
Tel: +44 (0) 1865 284502
Fax: +44 (0) 1865 284500
Email: ikt@bodley.ox.ac.uk

South African Friends of the Bodleian
John R. Pinfold, Secretary
Bodleian Library, Broad Street
Oxford OX1 3BG
Tel: +44 (0) 1865 277450
Fax: +44 (0) 1865 277182
Email: john.pinfold@ouls.ox.ac.uk
Or
Correspondent in South Africa:
Len Swimmer
11, Oxford Street
Hout Bay 7806
Cape Town
South Africa
Tel: 021 790 0268
Fax: 021 790 3839
Email: swimmer@telkomsa.net