

Setting upon that hoary old chestnut ‘continuity and change’ as the main theme of a piece of historical writing is normally a recipe for disaster, or at least a score in the low 2:1s. We hope readers will forgive us just this once however, as in reflecting on this edition of *Symeon*, it does seem particularly apt.

Generous funding from the Durham University Alumni Relations Office (DARO) has made it possible to bring in professional designers (Warm Design, Gateshead) to raise this edition’s production quality. This year has also seen a large expansion of the community which *Symeon* serves as it is now being sent to all Durham alumni – a change which feels particularly appropriate in this new, interdisciplinary world. Behind the scenes, the editorial team has been strengthened by the welcome addition of Kathleen Reynolds.

In the midst of all this change, the guiding principle of *Symeon* remains the same; a magazine produced by members of the history community in Durham for their contemporaries and predecessors. In that context it is striking that this edition, more than most, reflects on that sense of ‘place’ which helps to define the study of History at Durham, with articles considering the North East’s long and multifaceted history, the city’s

place in this, and the resources kept and administered by the University as a result. Mark Bennett’s article on Victorian-era arms manufacturers explains the place that the Armstrong Company had in the life of the nineteenth-century North East. Elsewhere, Katherine Krick’s article on the University’s ever-expanding library collections, Dr Adrian Green’s on the Strickland archive and Sarah Gilbert’s article on ‘Hunter 100’ reveal the manuscript resources which are so important to the study of history in the North East. The study of history, contrary perhaps to the popular image, involves many non-manuscript resources as well, and Sophia Stovall’s article on the renovation of the Monk’s Dormitory in the cathedral is a reminder of the struggles, physical and theoretical, in providing access to and presenting historical resources and materials. Margaret Harvey’s article on her impressions of the changing life of the History Department as a long-serving member of staff is

meanwhile a fitting reminder of the people who drive forward the boundaries of historical discovery, a theme which is poignantly picked up in Dr Green’s tribute to Professor Chris Brooks.

As always, our aim in assembling this year’s *Symeon* has been to provide an insight into how the study of History, in general and specifically at Durham, is developing, and how it is staying the same. We hope it provides you with a reminder of happy and fulfilling times spent studying at Durham and also an insight into how that work continues in the present day. We would be delighted to hear from alumni, whether to recall a specific moment in the Department’s past; to reflect on the lessons learned and skills gained while at Durham; or simply to express curiosity about any of the projects featured in this edition. For our contact details, please see the penultimate page. In the meantime, we sincerely hope you enjoy the magazine.

# CONTENTS

<b>Lord Bomb and the Cannon King</b> .....	04
<b>Historical Research in Durham’s Libraries:</b> <i>The Changes and the Opportunities</i> .....	08
<b>Reflections on History at Durham since 1964</b> .....	14
<b>News</b> .....	18
<b>Obituaries</b> .....	20
<b>Moving an Archive</b> <i>The transfer of the Strickland MS from Canada to the UK</i> .....	22
<b>Open Treasure</b> <i>Coming to a Cathedral near you</i> .....	28
<b>Urbi et orbi de manu monachi</b> <i>A modern investigation of a medieval manuscript</i> .....	34
<b>Tribute to Chris Brooks</b> .....	38
<b>Contact us</b> .....	42

# LORD BOMB & THE CANNON KING

## A TALE OF TWO VICTORIAN ARMS MAGNATES

IN 1854...

...as Europe prepared for the Crimean War, its artillery differed little from that of the armies of Waterloo forty years earlier: bronze tubes mounted on wooden carriages, dragged into visible range of the enemy, loaded from the muzzle with solid iron balls and gunpowder, and hauled back into place after every shot.<sup>[1]</sup>

In 1914, as war broke out once again, the picture had changed dramatically. Safely concealed miles away from their targets, artillery rained down high explosive shells detonating on impact, at rates inconceivable sixty years before. Two men contributed more than any others to this transformation: Britain's William Armstrong, dubbed 'Lord Bomb' by the satirical magazine *Punch*, and Germany's Albert Krup - the "Cannon King".<sup>[2]</sup>



**MARK BENNETT**  
First year PhD British  
Political History

Mark is a first-year PhD student with a focus on British political history. His thesis, a study of the county of Yorkshire in the mid-Victorian period, examines the way in which changes in global power influenced domestic interpretations of concepts like race, democracy, empire and the nation.

Founders of massive manufacturing conglomerates, they exemplified both the technological progress of the period and the fundamental shift from agriculture to industry across Europe. This article explores the way in which their businesses grew, and how this growth was affected by a combination of events, personality and wider social and cultural trends.

Albert Krupp was born and raised around iron: his family lived in a small cottage on their foundry in the Rhineland town of Essen. Krupp, who later boasted that 'I got my schooling at an anvil,' was left with his mother to run the business at the age of fourteen when his father died. By contrast, William Armstrong seemed to be destined for more genteel things. His father had worked his way up from clerk to partner in a corn trading business and, by the 1830s, was an active municipal reform politician. Armstrong studied at Lincoln's Inn before starting a career as a Newcastle lawyer.

However, Armstrong had displayed a talent for engineering since childhood, building gadgets that impressed Robert Stephenson and smashing his neighbour's window with a home-made crossbow. He continued to pursue his interest in science alongside his legal career and was sponsored for membership of the Royal Society by Michael Faraday, whose eye had been caught by Armstrong's papers on electricity. After Newcastle Town Council bought a crane of Armstrong's design, he abandoned his legal practice and, from a factory at Elswick, supplied hydraulic machinery to the burgeoning industrial enterprises of Victorian Britain.

Krupp's business only took off with the inauguration of the German customs



**THE LONG ARM OF EMPIRE:** An 1886 Armstrong 8 in coastal defence gun on a hydraulic disappearing mounting at North Head, Auckland, New Zealand.

union (Zollverein), after which he rapidly increased his workforce from 11 workers in 1834 to 70 in 1835. As a businessman, Krupp was less innovative than aggressive. He travelled to Sheffield in order to steal the secret of making steel, although his planned subterfuge was rendered unnecessary when the local ironfounders proved more than happy to show a properly 'booted and spurred' gentleman even the most confidential parts of their plants.

Krupp remained confident that he could revolutionise the world of artillery, and lobbied the Prussian Ministry of War to try his new cast steel gun. After trials in 1847 reported unfavourably, Krupp redoubled his efforts to publicise the new gun; sending it to the 1851 International Exhibition, gifting one to the King of Prussia, and inviting Prince William of Prussia to visit his works. When the Prussian army designed a new rifled gun, loading from the breech

instead of the muzzle, the army turned to Krupp for a material stronger than iron or bronze; when the army tried to reduce the order, Prince William overruled them.<sup>[3]</sup> As the Prussian military battled with parliament to deny them oversight of the army's budget, Krupp offered them a 'take now and pay later' arrangement worth £300,000, thus allowing the army to avoid civilian oversight.<sup>[4]</sup>

Conversely, Armstrong's route into gun design was more coincidental and less forced: he was persuaded to try his hand making guns on reading reports of the Battle of Inkerman, where the lack of draught horses meant 150 soldiers had taken three hours to haul the British army's antiquated guns into position. Armstrong sketched out the design of a new wrought iron rifled breech-loading gun the next day and submitted it to the War Office, who granted him £7,219 to pursue his research.<sup>[5]</sup> The new design was a great success:

<sup>[1]</sup> The future American Civil War general George McClellan's *The Armies of Europe* (Philadelphia, 1862) gives a technical overview of the contemporary situation.

<sup>[2]</sup> Unless stated otherwise, biographical details on the two men come from Henrietta Heald, *William Armstrong: Magician of the North* (Newcastle, 2010), and William Manchester, *The Arms of Krupp, 1587-1968* (London, 1969).

<sup>[3]</sup> In breech-loading guns, ammunition enters via a sealable hatch in the rear of the gun, rather than being pushed down

the barrel with a ramrod ('muzzle-loading'). Breech-loading guns theoretically offered a higher rate of fire and greater accuracy than muzzle-loaders, but the metallurgical and technical difficulties in ensuring the breech did not blow open when the cannon was fired meant that muzzle-loading had held sway since the Tudor period.

<sup>[4]</sup> The politics of the Prussian army in this period are discussed in Dennis Showalter, *The Wars of German Unification* (London, 2004); the specific reforms which

prompted the deadlock between king and parliament and Bismarck's rise to power are described in Dierk Walter, 'Room, the Prussian Landwehr, and the Reorganisation of 1859-1860,' *War in History* vol. 16 no. 269 (2009), pp. 269-297.

<sup>[5]</sup> The noted seismologist, Robert Mallett, received £11,807 for a mortar firing shells a yard in diameter: the mortar, never used in action, is displayed in the Royal Armouries' artillery collection at Fort Nelson, Portsmouth.

by 1859, Armstrong was Director of Rifled Ordnance, a knight and a Companion of the Bath, building guns for army and navy in calibres ranging from 2.5in to 7in.<sup>[6]</sup>

The Armstrong gun rapidly became the symbol of British military power. After a potential clash with the United States was defused, *Punch* portrayed the angel of peace sitting on an Armstrong gun. Guns were rushed to China shortly after their adoption for the Anglo-French expedition to Beijing. More were subsequently sent to New Zealand to help crush a rebellion, where their accuracy and range- reported with awe by local newspapers- were negated by extensive Maori earthworks.<sup>[7]</sup> The Armstrong gun's vogue, however, was to be short.

The development of the ironclad warship sparked a European arms race, with nations designing progressively thicker armour. Tasked with building a gun capable of piercing this armour, Armstrong reverted to designing muzzle-loaders.<sup>[8]</sup> His breech design came under

increasing criticism, with the Royal Navy complaining of repeated failures when they bombarded the Japanese town of Kagoshima in 1863.<sup>[9]</sup> Armstrong was forced into print to defend his design, but in 1866 a committee concluded that a new rifled muzzle-loading gun presented the best way forward.<sup>[10]</sup> The controversy is often seen as highlighting the backward and amateurish nature of the British military, with one eminent Royal Artillery officer inquiring naively whether the random fire of the old smoothbores was not harder to dodge, but the extensive tests performed bely this assumption.<sup>[12]</sup> Britain readopted the breech-loader in 1885, but with a different mechanism.

By contrast, Krupp's work was made easier by the Prussian army's lack of accountability and the favour of the newly crowned, ambitious King William. Outdated artillery doctrine meant Krupp's guns under-performed against the Austrians in 1866, but in the Franco-Prussian war they worked wonders, smashing French infantry out of strong defensive positions.<sup>[12]</sup>

The British saw the failure of over 200 Krupp breeches in the war as vindication of their decision to revert to muzzle-loading, but the military of the newly-united Germany felt differently. In 1874, they rewarded Krupp with an order for more than two thousand new breech-loading cannons.

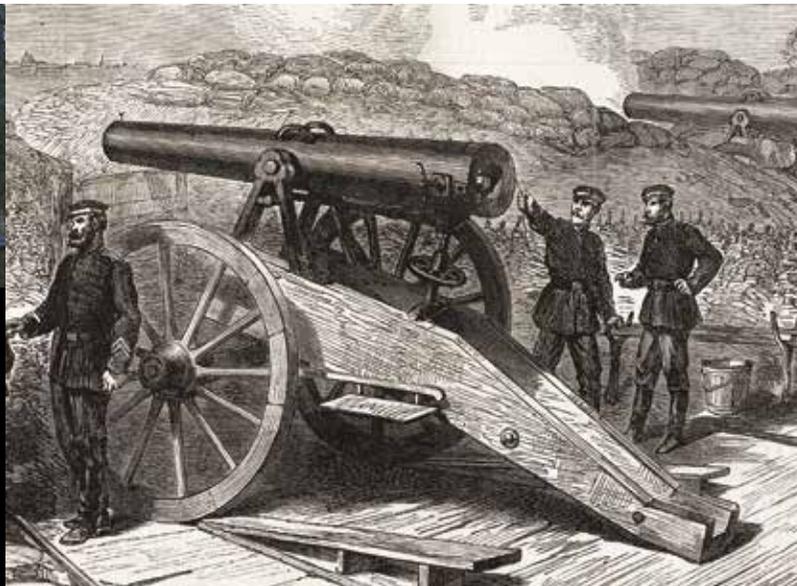
Through Armstrong's disappointment and Krupp's success, the two continued to compete for other lucrative contracts overseas. Armstrong felt that selling to foreign nations was unpatriotic, but also felt obliged to keep his staff employed: by 1864, he had orders from both Europe and South America. His construction of hydraulic turret machinery led relatively naturally to building the battleships themselves, and much of the new Japanese navy was built on the Tyne.<sup>[13]</sup>

Krupp deployed sophisticated charm offensives to win customers. He gave away teams of horses pulling ceremonial guns, organised an 18-country artillery competition on his testing range, and sent a 14in cannon to the Philadelphia



**ABOVE - RURAL MODERNITY:** Armstrong's iron bridge at Cragside, spanning the river he dammed for hydroelectric power.

**RIGHT - BISMARCK'S "BLOOD AND IRON":** Prussian siege artillery in the trenches around Paris. Taken from the *Illustrated London News*, 4 February 1871; pg. 109; Issue 1635.



<sup>[6]</sup> HMS Warrior, the Royal Navy's first ocean-going ironclad (also preserved at Portsmouth) carried one 6pdr, one 12pdr, two 20pdrs, four 40pdrs, and ten 110pdrs.

<sup>[7]</sup> The battle of Gate Pa, described in James Belich's *The New Zealand Wars* (Auckland, 1998) pp. 182-3. For a contemporary press reaction, see *Daily Southern Cross*, 31 Dec 1862, p.9.

<sup>[8]</sup> A more technical breakdown of Armstrong's work over this period can be found in Marshall J. Bastable, "From Breechloaders to Monster Guns: Sir William Armstrong and the Invention of Modern Artillery, 1854-1880", *Technology and Culture*, vol. 33, no. 2 (April, 1992), pp. 213-247.

<sup>[9]</sup> Copy of Admiral Kuper's Official Report of the Performance of the Armstrong Guns in the Action at Kagosima, Parliamentary Papers 1864, Cmd. 145

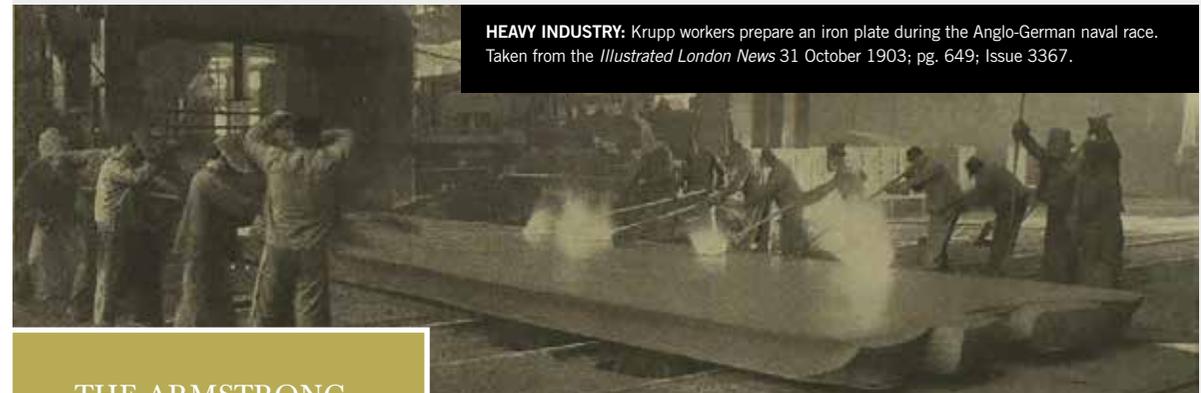
<sup>[10]</sup> William George Armstrong, "The Armstrong guns: letter from Sir W.G. Armstrong to 'The Times,'" dated 25 November 1861 (London, 1861); Report of the Special Armstrong and Whitworth Committee, vol. 1, *Parliamentary Papers* 1866, Cmd. 3605, i.

Centennial exhibition in the hope of cracking the American market. However, he was not above using personal influence with the Kaiser to deprive Armstrong of a contract to provide guns to the expanding Prussian navy in 1868.<sup>[14]</sup>

These industrial enterprises operated on a scale previously unseen, though still paternalistic at heart. Armstrong lagged behind Krupp, who had 16,000 workers by 1873, but a quarter of Newcastle relied on him for their living by 1886. He set up a mechanics'

institute for the workers and subsidised elementary schools for their children.<sup>[15]</sup> Krupp, meanwhile, codified his belief that workers should devote themselves entirely to the company in his General Regulations. A third of his employees rented Krupp-owned houses: the firm owned amenities from bakeries and grocery stores to public baths and a soft-drinks factory. However, he demanded absolute loyalty in return, and employees who left before normal retirement age forfeited their pension and sickness fund contributions.

The pair also followed the usual path of Victorian employers by investing the proceeds of their enterprises in country estates. Krupp only moved off the factory in 1864, claiming he preferred the sound of forges to music and ignoring his wife's complaints of vibrations cracking her glassware. When none of the local nobility would sell to him, he built a 269-room villa of French limestone, which he imported through Belgium as the Franco-Prussian war raged. Armstrong, meanwhile, built a mock-Tudor house in the Northumberland hills he had visited in childhood: the Prince of Wales



**HEAVY INDUSTRY:** Krupp workers prepare an iron plate during the Anglo-German naval race. Taken from the *Illustrated London News* 31 October 1903; pg. 649; Issue 3367.

## THE ARMSTRONG GUN RAPIDLY BECAME THE SYMBOL OF BRITISH MILITARY POWER.

stayed there in 1884, snubbing the Duke of Northumberland's offer of Alnwick Castle. However, these nouveau riche cannon-makers also used their properties to differentiate themselves from the traditional aristocracy. Armstrong installed electric lights powered by his own design of hydroelectric generator, and filled the house with labour-saving devices like dishwashers. Krupp built a house of steel and stone, without pictures, tapestries, library, or even wood, buying and transplanting entire avenues of trees from neighbouring estates rather than waiting for them to grow.

The extent to which these were cultivated public images is unclear.

Neither Krupp's eccentric misanthropy nor Armstrong's benevolent genius would have made them rich if they had not also been shrewd businessmen capable of inspiring loyalty in others. Their careers not only show the effects of their personalities, but also hint at the way that attitudes towards government, social responsibility and commerce differed in Britain and Germany. Both died as pillars of the community, both their weapons and companies symbols of national power, well before the Great War. However, as we begin to commemorate its centenary, it is startling to consider the effect Armstrong's curiosity and Krupp's obsession had on millions of European lives.

<sup>[11]</sup> The anecdote is recounted in Major-General Sir Charles Callwell and Major General Sir John Hedlam, *The History of the Royal Artillery from the Indian Mutiny to the Great War*, vol. 1 (Woolwich, 1931; reprinted Woolwich, 2009) p.148n; see also p.153n.

<sup>[12]</sup> Geoffrey Wawro's *The Austro-Prussian War* (Cambridge, 1996) and *The Franco-Prussian War* (Cambridge, 2003) discuss the wars, and Showalter's *Wars of German Unification* the broader context.

<sup>[13]</sup> Armstrong's first Royal Navy battleship, HMS Victoria, proved to be ill-fated: it was rammed and sunk by HMS *Camperdown* while on exercise in the Mediterranean, an event which provided a vignette for the film *Kind Hearts and Coronets*.

<sup>[14]</sup> Marshall J. Bastable, *Arms and the State: Sir William Armstrong and the Remaking of British Naval Power, 1854-1914* (Ashgate, 2004) details his attempts to expand overseas.

<sup>[15]</sup> Charles Parsons, third son of an earl and later inventor of the turbine, was an apprentice at Elswick.

# HISTORICAL RESEARCH

## — IN DURHAM'S LIBRARIES —



### THE CHANGES AND THE OPPORTUNITIES

— IN 2009/2010... —

...I came to Durham as a visiting undergraduate student. At that time, the Bill Bryson Library was just the Main Library and books in the library were arranged by faculty (i.e. sciences, arts and humanities). Palace Green Library had computers and only a poorly lit central room as the Special Collections Search Room. In October 2011, I returned to Durham as a Master's student and have been able to observe and take advantage of significant changes to the Durham libraries, which have offered increasing opportunities to complete historical research in new ways with new resources.



**KATHERINE KRICK**  
*Third year PhD student*

Katherine is a third-year PhD student who researches the history of medieval manuscripts and early printed books. Her thesis, 'The 1549 Book of Common Prayer and its Origins in Catholic Service Books', redresses the lack of attention given to Catholic influence on Church of England service books.

#### BILL BRYSON LIBRARY

My doctoral research focuses on the impact of the English Reformation on religious books between circa 1500 and 1549. In particular, I am looking at how the production of books changed (or did not change) and the effect of such changes on medieval religious and social rituals. Durham is a treasure trove of material, both in primary sources for my case studies and in secondary sources for contextualising the material in historical, theological, and social frameworks. The libraries of Durham have offered me, as well as

other historians, great opportunities for research with improvements and changes to the facilities and the collections in the past five years.

#### BILL BRYSON LIBRARY

The Bill Bryson Library, dedicated to the former Chancellor (2005-11) on 27 November 2012, underwent considerable structural changes in 2011-2012. The addition of the East Wing, and a reorganisation of materials by the Dewey Decimal classification

THE BILL BRYSON LIBRARY, DEDICATED TO THE FORMER CHANCELLOR (2005-11) ON 27 NOVEMBER 2012, UNDERWENT CONSIDERABLE STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN 2011-2012.

system, reflected the incorporation of the Law and Music libraries into the main collection.<sup>[1]</sup> This meant that most of the History collection is now on Level One of the library; the historical books are in sequence together with the journals of local history and archaeology. By the start of the 2012/2013 academic year, a history student could spend their study time on one floor, with plenty of desks to work at in the new East Wing. For students working with older materials that belonged in the 'Store Collection,' access became much easier. Prior to

<sup>[1]</sup> For more on the library developments: [www.durham.ac.uk/library/developments/mainlibrary/](http://www.durham.ac.uk/library/developments/mainlibrary/)



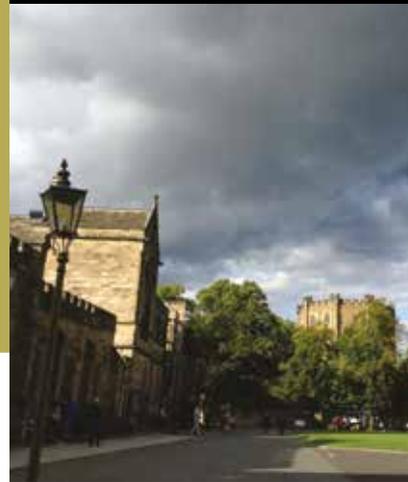
ABOVE - PALACE GREEN FRONT



RIGHT - PALACE GREEN AERIAL: Palace Green Library underwent considerable changes in 2012 and 2013.

THE ARTEFACTS  
ARE AS DIVERSE AS  
THE UNIVERSITY,  
FROM CHINESE  
RINGS IN THE  
ORIENTAL  
MUSEUM TO  
PHOTOGRAPHS  
FROM THE 1953  
DURHAM MINERS'  
GALA IN PALACE  
GREEN, AND ALL  
NOW SEARCHABLE  
ONLINE.

BELOW - PALACE GREEN



2012, such materials were held in a remote access location and had to be ordered in advance. The East Wing expansion included a set of mobile shelving for older materials that were infrequently used – material commonly used by research postgraduates, such as myself. Despite current construction to refurbish Level One to the same architectural and aesthetic standards as the new East Wing, the new system allows history scholars to find most of their materials in one location, maximising time spent on research rather than searching for sources.

To improve the ways in which historians look for material in their research, the library is piloting a new form of library catalogue. The older catalogue allowed typical searches using author, title, and

keyword but was limited to of the books and ebooks in the library collection. The new catalogue, called Discover, allows users to search not just the books and ebooks of the library collection, but articles from databases and artefacts from the University Museums collections.<sup>[2]</sup> The artefacts are as diverse as the university, from Chinese rings in the Oriental Museum to photographs from the 1953 Durham Miners' Gala in Palace Green, and all now searchable online. Discover offers a rounded approach to historical research, creating new opportunities to research more easily the cultural items located in Durham.

#### PALACE GREEN LIBRARY

Palace Green Library underwent considerable changes in 2012 and 2013. The library houses the History

of the Book Collection, which is key for my research, as well as archival and rare book materials, which are the primary sources of my thesis. The collections have remained predominantly in place from 2009, so that most changes to Palace Green have been structural.<sup>[3]</sup> Much construction was in preparation for the exhibition of the Lindisfarne Gospels that took place from July to September 2013.<sup>[4]</sup> Palace Green has been restructured to include several exhibition galleries, new teaching facilities, new manuscript and book conservation facilities, and a new Search Room. The exhibitions which the new facilities have allowed have been of great value to scholarship. With the Lindisfarne Gospels, work was undertaken to understand

the composition of the inks in similar manuscripts using Raman spectroscopy.<sup>[5]</sup> This was a special opportunity to study the manuscripts in ways that are not often available to historians. Another exhibition, on bookbinding, featuring the Cuthbert Gospel, was held in Palace Green between October 2014 and January 2015. This exhibition allowed Durham scholars to view the oldest original bookbinding close up.<sup>[6]</sup> Palace Green is also preparing an exhibition to display the Cathedral Library copies of the Magna Carta from June to August 2015, commemorating the anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta and reflecting Durham's role in preserving the unique legal history of England.<sup>[7]</sup>

<sup>[2]</sup> To try the new catalogue yourself: [http://discover.durham.ac.uk/primo\\_library/libweb/action/search.do](http://discover.durham.ac.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do)

<sup>[3]</sup> The Law library and local collection have been moved to the Bill Bryson building.

<sup>[5]</sup> A report on the process can be found here: <http://community.dur.ac.uk/andrew.beeby/Manuscripts.html> <sup>[6]</sup> For details, visit: [www.durham.ac.uk/palace.green/whatson/details/?id=21269](http://www.durham.ac.uk/palace.green/whatson/details/?id=21269)

<sup>[4]</sup> For a review of the exhibition success: [www.durham.ac.uk/news/](http://www.durham.ac.uk/news/)

<sup>[7]</sup> *Magna Carta and the Changing Face of Revolt*, 1 June to 31 August, 2015. For details, visit: [www.durhamcathedral.co.uk/heritage/magna-carda](http://www.durhamcathedral.co.uk/heritage/magna-carda) and [www.durham.ac.uk/palace.green/whatson/](http://www.durham.ac.uk/palace.green/whatson/)



THE CATHEDRAL LIBRARY, ANOTHER OF THE TREASURES IN THE DURHAM PENINSULA TROVE, IS CURRENTLY UNDERGOING REFURBISHMENT TO IMPROVE VISITOR AND RESEARCHER EXPERIENCE WITH THE OPEN TREASURE PROJECT.

The new learning spaces of Palace Green have also allowed more frequent display classes to take place. More students can now be shown manuscripts and facsimiles in the refurbished Bishop Cosin's Library, or in the new teaching spaces of the Deane Room and the Learning Centre. The new Search Room in the Barker Research Library now allows for natural light when using rare and archival materials, rather than the fluorescents of the former facility. The changes to Palace Green have resulted in more frequent opportunities to study rare materials and better facilities in which to do so.

#### DURHAM CATHEDRAL LIBRARY

The Cathedral Library, another of the treasures in the Durham peninsula trove, is currently undergoing refurbishment to improve visitor and researcher experience with the Open Treasure project. The Cathedral, in conjunction with the University Library, is also in the process of digitising the manuscripts that previously belonged to the monks of Durham.<sup>[8]</sup> The Cathedral collection, which includes manuscripts from Bede's lifetime, is a magnificent resource for Durham and the digitisation of the manuscripts will allow remote access for scholars as well as preserving the manuscripts from deterioration. The exhibition space of the Monks' Dormitory will be opened up to display more of the Cathedral's collections and ensure that they remain in good condition as the Cathedral ages.<sup>[9]</sup> In addition, the project will re-create the library of Durham Priory before the Dissolution of the monastery in 1540. The project, supported by the Institute of Medieval and Early Modern Studies, hopes to generate further academic interest in the Durham library and encourage new collaborations and



DURHAM CATHEDRAL LIBRARY: The Monks' Dormitory.

studies from the digitised material.<sup>[10]</sup> The Cathedral is redeveloping its location and enhancing access to its collections to benefit historical study and emphasise the medieval origins of the Cathedral, physical and spiritual.

#### USHAW COLLEGE LIBRARY

Durham's historic treasures are no longer restricted to the Peninsula and the Bill Bryson Library. Ushaw College, a former Roman Catholic seminary about six miles from the Cathedral, has developed a working relationship with Durham University.<sup>[11]</sup> In particular, this agreement includes opening access to the Ushaw College Library collections for the University population. Library staff have worked to make the contents of Ushaw College available on the library catalogue, in addition to operating an on-location search room for scholars to investigate the materials there. For my part, this is a new source of primary source material for my

thesis. The collections contain material that will be useful to early modern and religious history scholars, particularly as much of it is from the college's initial foundation in Douai, France, as a community of English Catholic exiles. There are undiscovered depths to Ushaw College for historians to plumb.

In the past five years, as I have worked on my successive undergraduate, Master's, and doctoral dissertations, the libraries of Durham have been refurbished, expanded, and altered to better respond to the needs of Durham's scholars. From better lit search rooms to technological advances in catalogues to new collections being made available, the collections of Durham are ripe for new historical investigations. Happy picking!

<sup>[8]</sup> For more details, visit: [www.durham.ac.uk/imems/durhampriory/](http://www.durham.ac.uk/imems/durhampriory/)

<sup>[9]</sup> To find out more and watch a clip of the rendering of the new space, visit: [www.durhamcathedral.co.uk/open-treasure](http://www.durhamcathedral.co.uk/open-treasure)

<sup>[10]</sup> A Development Board consisting of several distinguished University alumni and supporters is spearheading a fundraising campaign to raise the funds required to digitize and conserve the whole collection and to offer scholarships for the study of the material. Please contact Geoff Watson (Development & Alumni Relations Office) for further information: +44 191 334 6434; [geoff.watson@durham](mailto:geoff.watson@durham)

<sup>[11]</sup> For more details, visit: [www.durham.ac.uk/durham.collections/ushaw/](http://www.durham.ac.uk/durham.collections/ushaw/) and [www.ushaw.org/](http://www.ushaw.org/)

# REFLECTIONS

## ON HISTORY AT DURHAM

### SINCE 1964

When I joined the Department as a part-time lecturer in 1964 our syllabus was very like that of Oxford: Stubbs Charters, continuous English History, tutorials in very small groups, almost no seminars (in fact did we have any?), and very little choice for students. All students were interviewed for entrance, by both College and Department. For Prelims, as I recall, Tudors and Stuarts were compulsory, and continued to be so until it became clear that many students were merely repeating what they had already done for A level. There were no modules. There was also little recognition of any but European History, and almost no course included the wider British Isles. English History was England-centred.



**MARGARET HARVEY**  
*Honorary Fellow in the Department of History*

Margaret is an Honorary Fellow in the Department of History. Her research concerns Anglo-Papal relations in the fifteenth century and English & European Church history in the late-Middle Ages.

Gradually over the years the Department has had to adapt to the changing perceptions of the subject and to the changing qualifications of students. Advancing years prevent me from being able to date precisely when many of the changes occurred so I will content myself with simply noting how and why they have happened.

Perhaps the most revolutionary change is the arrival of the computer, the internet and email. When I arrived in Durham Professors Offler and Hughes sent notes round the colleagues, and secretaries typed books for the privileged (the rest had to learn to type). At Examination time marks (in alphas, betas and gammas, with appropriate pluses and minuses), were entered by hand onto mark sheets and read out at examining boards to be copied by hand. Somewhat later, I recall, marks were sent to the Chairman in advance, to be entered by him/her on a master sheet, allowing problem cases to be identified in advance. For many years examination

papers were not anonymous. The whole process I am sure shortened the lives of several chairmen! Gradually over the years, the system altered, not without controversy. Numerical marks were adopted (we learned how to do this from the Faculty of Social Sciences). Later anonymous marking became the norm.

Interviewing for admission was gradually dropped throughout the University. It had taken a great deal of time and it was by no means clear that it was any better as a way of discerning talent than simply grading the forms.

PERHAPS THE MOST  
REVOLUTIONARY  
CHANGE IS THE  
ARRIVAL OF THE  
COMPUTER, THE  
INTERNET AND EMAIL.



LEFT - HISTORY ACADEMICS AT GRADUATION

BELOW - SEMINAR ROOM 1 AFTER THE RECENT RENOVATION

Gradually the central administration took over the major part of the process. Language requirements went early; Latin was no longer available for many students and many had never studied a foreign language beyond tourist level. When it was decided to include Christendom and Islam as a subject for Prelims the medievalists (led by Alan Forey) translated a whole book of Latin documents for use on the course. When I set up a Special Subject on The Great Western Schism I spent the entire summer vacation translating the bulk of the documents.

In 1964 History was in the Faculty of Arts, along with English, Theology, Classics etc. Over the years, in fact, History had developed Joint Honours with some Social Sciences, well before Economic History merged with History in 1985. Throughout the late 1970s arguments raged in the Department about whether History was a social science or not. In fact much of the most innovative thinking was probably coming from that quarter but the change required many alterations in method and ways of approach. As long as Professor Offler remained in post no move was possible but on his retirement in 1978 the Board of Studies finally accepted the change.

Further developments involved a complete rethinking of the syllabus. By the time this came about many colleagues were arguing that we did not allow students enough choice, and that we needed to widen our range of subjects to include a much wider world. There was also much discussion about the stress of examinations and the different ways in which individuals react to it. The adoption of modules and with it the examining of these by continuous assessment as well as by an unseen examination with some examinations in the second year, were revolutionary changes, hotly contested at the time. Try telling a modern student that in

the 1960s students took all final examinations at the end of the third year, and that on these depended the whole degree. They are aghast, yet I would have preferred to have a second year free of exams, and to have got the horrible things over as fast as possible, not have them drag on over several weeks as the modern system makes necessary.

The basic structure of the single honours degree is still somewhat the same as it was when I retired, but the choice available to students is much wider and the teaching and secretarial staff much more numerous. The pressures on staff to publish seem to me much greater. I am not sure if the student experience is better, but it is certainly very different from the experience in 1964.



THROUGHOUT THE LATE 1970S ARGUMENTS RAGED IN THE DEPARTMENT ABOUT WHETHER HISTORY WAS A SOCIAL SCIENCE OR NOT.

# NEWS



## AT THIS TIME LAST YEAR THE DEPARTMENT WAS 'IN EXILE' AT USHAW COLLEGE.

Working so far from the City for six months, with very limited transport links, was difficult, though there were some compensations in the views over the Durham countryside and the opportunities to explore the treasures of Ushaw. Everyone was delighted, however, to return to our refurbished buildings on the Bailey, more or less on time, last September, and for the first time in many years colleagues and students were able to enjoy the benefits of a heating system that (for most of the time) works well. The University also carried out a general refurbishment of the buildings, the most visible elements of which are the murals that have been installed on the first and third staircases, and generally the Department is a brighter and more comfortable environment in which to work.

### DEPARTMENTAL RENOVATION:

The first staircase and wallpaper which is now a historical map of county Durham.

The summer, however, also brought the immense shock of the death of Chris Brooks, after a short illness. That Chris was on the point of retirement did not diminish the sense of loss. An appreciation of Chris appears later in this issue.

Various other staff changes have also occurred over the past year. After a period of considerable disruption in the Department Office, we now have a completely new team: Imogen Barton became our permanent Administrator last autumn, having helped us out for some months as a temporary member of staff. She was joined by Audrey Bowron as Department Secretary, Kelly Groundwater as Admissions Secretary, and Jasmine Baker-Sones as Programme Secretary. Should you get in touch with the Department, there is a good chance that one of them will answer the 'phone, and they are always happy to welcome alumni in person.

After going to press last autumn, we were pleased to be able to make three temporary appointments: André Keil as lecturer in modern European history, Bart Lambert as lecturer in Renaissance and Reformation history, and Bart van Malssen as lecturer in Chinese history. These appointments were made possible by the success of other colleagues in securing prestigious fellowships which allowed them time to pursue their research both in Britain and abroad. Nicole Reinhardt has been enjoying a year as a Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Study at Princeton University, while completing her book on royal confessors in early modern Europe. Two of our more junior researchers have also been given valuable opportunities to concentrate on their book projects: Sare Aricanli as a visiting fellow at Koç University in Istanbul and Tom Stammers as Deakin Fellow in French History at St Anthony's College, Oxford. There have been further successes with applications next year, so we shall shortly be wishing well to John-Henry Clay as he departs to take up the Solmsen Fellowship at the Institute for Research in the Humanities at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Julian Wright, meanwhile, will be remaining in Durham, but he will be enjoying a year of research leave to pursue his project on socialism and modernity in France as the recipient of a prestigious Leverhulme Trust Research Fellowship. As a result, we are delighted to be able to extend the appointments of Drs Keil, Lambert and van Malssen for a further year. In addition, in October we shall be welcoming Dr Hui Zhao as a CoFund International Junior Research Fellow. Hui was awarded her PhD from Harvard University, and she will be pursuing a comparative study of the development of constitutional thought in China and Japan in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

It is always a pleasure when the work of colleagues is recognized by the University, and this year we were delighted that Kay Schiller and Jennifer Luff were successful in the annual promotion round. Kay, a specialist in modern cultural history whose most recent work has been on FIFA and

the World Cup, has been promoted to a professorship, while Jennifer, who recently published a book on American anti-communism and the labour movement, has been made a senior lecturer.

Further notable success has been achieved in competitions for funding for research projects. Justin Willis was the lead applicant in a major collaborative application to the Economic and Social Research Council for a project to research voting, political behaviour and democracy in sub-Saharan Africa, and Andy Wood secured a major grant from the Leverhulme Trust for his project on social relations and everyday life in England 1500–1640. The latter has given us the opportunity to appoint Andy Burn, a former graduate student in the Department, to the post of postdoctoral research assistant. Ludmilla Jordanova was one of the key figures in the development of an application to the Leverhulme Trust to support a programme of Leverhulme Doctoral Scholarship in the Visual Arts, which will run for the next five years. Andy Wood was the recipient of the American Historical Association's Leo Gershey Award for the 'most outstanding work published in English on any aspect of 17th- and 18th-century European history' for his book, *The Memory of the People*. Special mention should also be made of the election of Randal Michie, who retired last year, as a Freeman of the City of London, a well-deserved tribute to his pioneering work on the history of the City and its financial institutions.

The most notable Higher Education story in the national press during the past year was the outcome of the Research Excellence Framework, the periodic assessment of the quality of research in all UK universities. The 2014 exercise was given a new dimension through the inclusion, for the first time, of an assessment of research 'impact' on the wider economy, society and culture. The outcome for Durham History was good, as we managed to improve our position compared with the previous exercise in 2008. As a result the Department will receive increased funding for its research activities, though our pleasure

at this outcome is mitigated by the likelihood that research funding is likely to be reduced, perhaps significantly, in the next Comprehensive Spending Review. More generally, it is pleasing that the Department is succeeding in maintaining its reputation as one of the best in the country: we were ranked second in both the Times and Sunday Times University Guide and Complete University Guide for 2016, and third in the Guardian University Guide for 2016. Indeed, applications for places on our undergraduate programmes increased significantly this year: we received almost 2,000 applications for about 150 places, over 95 per cent of which met, or were predicted to meet, our criteria of A\*, A, A, or equivalent, at A-level.

The outstanding quality of our undergraduates makes teaching a pleasure. The results in Finals this year were, as always, excellent, and it is a delight to be able to end this report by recording the winners of the Department's prizes. This year particular congratulations are due to Howard Davies, who has been awarded the Thompson Prize for the best performance in the final examination, and to Matthew Hoser, who has been awarded the History Dissertation Prize. Jack Hepworth has won the Gibson Prize for the best dissertation on a topic in local history. The Alumni Prize for the best performance in the second year examinations has been awarded to Samuel Westwood, and the Edward Allen Prize for the best performance in the first year has been awarded to Maksymilian Loth-Hill. My colleagues and I wish all our finalists the very best for the future, and we are looking forward to seeing them and their families at graduation in a couple of weeks' time. We are all aware that it is an enormous privilege to teach such talented and able students. We hope that they will take with them an abiding love of history, and we trust that the skills of critical enquiry, research and argument that they have developed while at Durham will help them to fulfil their potential as they go out into the world. We hope, too, that they – and the rest of our alumni – will keep in touch with the Department and we look forward to welcoming back any who are passing through Durham.



## ANNE W. ORDE

### 1924–2015

Anne Orde, who has recently died, joined the History Department of the University of Durham as a Lecturer in Modern History in 1967. She came immediately from the University of Aston, but had before that worked in publishing. She had begun a degree in History at Lady Margaret Hall during the Second World War but left after the Preliminary Examination to join the Navy, where she was a meteorologist. When the war ended she rejoined L.M.H. to finish her BA in History. She then worked on Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919–1939 before teaching at Aston. She had already embarked on a PhD in Birmingham, but she transferred to Durham on obtaining a post there and Professor W.R. Ward became her supervisor. The thesis was presented in 1972 and was published by the Royal Historical Society in 1978 as *Great Britain and International Security 1920–1926*. Continued research on inter-war Reconstruction produced *British Policy and European Reconstruction after the First World War* published by Cambridge in 1990 and *The Eclipse of Great Britain. The United States and British*

*Imperial Decline, 1895–1956*, published by Macmillan in 1996. She had by then retired and decided therefore to turn her mind to history nearer home but further back in time. There followed a study of the Pease family of Darlington: *Religion, Business and Society, in North East England*, published by Shaun Tyas in 2000 as volume 4 of *Studies in North–Eastern History*. She then edited *Matthew and George Culley, Travel Journals and Letters 1765–1798*, published by the British Academy as *Records of Social and Economic History New Series 35* in 2002, and two volumes for the *Surtees Society: volume 210 (2006) Matthew and George Culley, Farming Letters 1798–1804, and volume 217 (2013), Letters of John Buddle to Lord Londonderry 1820–1843*. So successful was her transfer of research interest that many who knew her only in retirement thought of her as an eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century historian only.

She played a full part in the administration of the Department of History, including being Secretary of

the Board of Studies and Chairman of Examiners. She was also a member of the SCR of Trevelyan College from its beginnings, and acted for many years as a College tutor, and latterly was a member of St John's SCR.

Her chief recreation for years was mountain-climbing. She spent most summers as a younger woman in the Alps and climbed the Himalayas to celebrate her retirement. She was also a guide (in French and German) and a steward in Durham Cathedral for many years. She gave many talks to the Friends of the Cathedral and organised several series of lectures for them.

Margaret Harvey

SO SUCCESSFUL WAS HER TRANSFER OF RESEARCH INTEREST THAT MANY WHO KNEW HER ONLY IN RETIREMENT THOUGHT OF HER AS AN EIGHTEENTH- AND EARLY NINETEENTH-CENTURY HISTORIAN ONLY.



## CHRIS BROOKS

### 1948–2014

Chris was a leading historian of early modern England, with an international reputation for world-class research on English society, constitutional history, and the common law of England.

Chris had devoted his life to the study of English history, starting during his days in the late 1960s as an undergraduate at Princeton, where he was taught by Lawrence Stone. For his postgraduate research, Chris first moved first to John Hopkins in his native Maryland and then to Oxford, where he completed a D. Phil thesis under the supervision of J.P. Cooper in 1978. Following a Junior Research Fellowship at Brasenose (1976–80), alongside a college lectureship at Wadham (1977–80), Oxford, Chris was appointed Lecturer in Early Modern History at Durham in 1980. Promoted to Reader in 1997 and finally Professor in 2001, Chris also held a Mellon Foundation Fellowship at the National Humanities Centre, North Carolina, in 1989–1990. In 2008, Chris was awarded a Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship to complete the 1625–1689 volume for the prestigious Oxford History of the Laws of England series. In 2012–13, he interrupted this important work to take up the Fletcher-Jones Foundation Distinguished Fellowship in British History at the Huntington Library, California, and in Spring 2012 he led a Faculty Weekend

Seminar on 'The Legal and Cultural Worlds of the Inns of Court', with an accompanying exhibition, at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington D.C.

Brooks' international stature as a legal historian rested on a massive scholarly effort into England's legal records, principally at the National Archives (formerly the Public Record Office). Over three decades, he used research leave from Durham and a variety of external funding to visit almost every repository in England, as well as the major research libraries in the United States. His scholarship was distilled in two major monographs: *Petty Foggers and Vipers of the Commonwealth: The Lower Branch of the Legal Profession in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1986), and *Law, Politics and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2008). He also produced a collection of essays, *Lawyers, Litigation and English Society since 1450* (Hambledon, 1998). An edited collection on *Communities and Courts in Britain, 1150–1900* (Hambledon, 1997), was completed with Michael Loban, then in Durham's Law Department. Chris also made a lasting impact on social history through a seminal edited volume and teaching text: *The Middling Sorts of People in England 1500–1800* (MacMillan, 1994), edited with Jonathan Barry, and translated into Japanese.

Chris' teaching career at Durham was closely related to his research interests. Undergraduate courses on 'The English Household and Family, 1500–1800'; 'Law and Society in Early Modern England', and a Special Subject on the English Civil War, enabled him to educate and inspire students while refining his own ideas. Chris was also an excellent, if demanding, PhD supervisor. In the 1990s and 2000s he supervised a series of topics on social history, and encouraged his research students to make imaginative use of the rich archival resources for Durham available in Palace Green Library. Several of his former students have established academic careers or work in related historical professions.

Within the University, Chris played a leading role in the inter-disciplinary Centre for Seventeenth-Century Studies, and the Durham Early Modern Group seminar. For many years he was a conscientious Director of Postgraduate Studies in the History Department. Externally, Chris served the Selden Society, the American Society for Legal History, and was on the Editorial Board of the inter-disciplinary historical journal, *Continuity and Change*, and external examiner for Oxford University's Master of Studies in Historical Research.

**A tribute to Professor Brooks can be found on p38.**

# *moving an* **ARCHIVE**

## THE TRANSFER OF THE STRICKLAND MS FROM CANADA TO THE UK



**Adrian Green**  
*Lecturer in the  
Department of History*

Adrian is a Lecturer in the Department of History. His research concerns the social and economic history and archaeology of the period 1450-1750, with his main interests focussing on housing in Britain and its colonies.

### FOR MANY YEARS...

...one of my favourite escapes from Durham has been a research project on Boynton Hall, on the Wolds near Bridlington in Yorkshire. It's a stunning drive from Durham – down the A19 to Thirsk with glimpses of the North Sea and the industrial landscape of the Tees estuary; then on to the steep climb up Sutton Bank, across the North York Moors towards Helmsley, and on through the Howardian Hills, past Castle Howard, through Malton to the open roads of the chalk Wolds recently made famous by Hockney. It's a two hour run, and I have made the journey many times, usually with Special Subject marking in the boot which remains untouched for the weekend.



**ABOVE - POSTHUMOUS PORTRAIT  
OF WILLIAM STRICKLAND (D.1595):  
"The Navigator".  
Tim Schadla-Hall photo.**

At Boynton, Richard and Sally Marriott have been restoring this little known country house, and have supported research into the history of the house and its landscape, as well as on their forebears – the gentry Strickland family who made Boynton their chief 'seat' from the mid-sixteenth to mid-twentieth centuries. Richard's uncle, the Reverend James Marriott, (who changed his name to Strickland on inheriting Boynton), sold the Boynton estate in 1950. The house was subdivided into flats and its contents and estate papers dispersed. Since purchasing Boynton back in 1980, Richard and Sally have restored the house and gardens, and retrieved some of the original furnishings and paintings. However, until recently, the

missing element in reconstructing Boynton's history had been the estate papers, belonging to descendants of James Marriott settled in Fredericton, New Brunswick.

Richard and Sally maintain a grand tradition of hospitality, exemplified when several Durham students came to stay while excavating the Tudor garden and kitchen one Easter vacation. The Boynton research project has entailed a systematic measured survey of the standing buildings, landscape survey, and excavation. But the documents remained the missing part of the jigsaw. The papers survive, and for sixty years were cared for by the Ferris family in Canada before being largely transferred to the

East Yorkshire Archives at Beverley in 2014. In July, I had the happy task of spending two weeks in Canada, making a fully itemized list of the documents, boxing up the papers in acid free files, arranging for the forty five boxes to be shrink-wrapped on a pallet, and shipped to Southampton, before making their way safely by road to the Treasurer's House in Beverley, where they arrived in September.



**LEFT - FERRIS FAMILY HOME:** A small part of the Strickland papers in the Ferris family home, Fredericton, New Brunswick.  
*Adrian Green photo.*

**RIGHT - BOYNTON HALL, EAST YORKSHIRE:**  
*Tim Schadla-Hall photo*

Boynton Hall was constructed in the fifteenth century for the Newport family, and sold in the mid-sixteenth century to William Strickland, known to posterity as 'the Navigator'. William was granted a coat of arms in 1549. Strickland chose a turkey cock for his crest, which gave rise to the later family myth that he had introduced the turkey bird to England as a result of sailing to the New World with Cabot. This is nonsense. The turkey was introduced to Europe in the 1520s via Spain. Given that Strickland died in 1595, admittedly at a great age, he is unlikely to have been so long lived as to have sailed to the New World in the 1490s or early 1500s. But myths have a habit of becoming historical facts, and the claim that William Strickland introduced the turkey to England is widely disseminated. It featured in the Lidl Christmas catalogue in 2013 and on Radio Four's *The Archers* in October 2014.

After William Strickland's purchase, Boynton was not sold again until 1950, when his direct descendants decided

to move to Jersey. The daughter of Jim and Louise Marriott, Patricia, married a Canadian, Mac Ferris, whom she met while he was on military service in Britain during the Second World War. Patricia saved the estate papers and some of the library from Boynton Hall, and shipped them to the farm she and her husband established at Penniac, near Fredericton in New Brunswick. Patricia's children – Mary, Blair and Charles Ferris – inherited the papers and stored them in three large trunks in the box room of their family house until 2014, when two thirds of the collection was returned to Yorkshire, with the rest retained by Charles.

Before deciding to return the papers to England, which was always Patricia Ferris' wish, Blair and Mary Ferris generously allowed me to examine the Strickland papers in their care for my research on Boynton. I made two visits to New Brunswick in autumn 2012 and spring 2013, before returning again in summer 2014 to organize the shipment of the papers to England.

SIR WILLIAM STRICKLAND DIED IN 1735, HAVING REMODELLED BOYNTON TO A DESIGN BY LORD BURLINGTON.



It is a remarkable collection. There are title deeds from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, documenting the accumulation of lands in Yorkshire as the descendants of William Strickland established themselves as a county family, and gained a baronetcy.

More diverse material survives from the mid seventeenth century. The Stricklands were on the side of Parliament in the Civil War, and one family member was Cromwell's Ambassador to The Hague in the 1650s. A letter relating to this diplomatic mission survives in the papers. There is also a 'Christmas Shew' from the mid seventeenth century, mentioning Durham. More literary material survives from the later seventeenth and eighteenth

centuries. These manuscript copies of plays and poems are an important survival, and characteristic of the material that circulated among gentry families, but will require someone more qualified in literary history to judge their significance.

The papers also include documents relating to the government of Yorkshire in the Restoration period, the development of horse racing at Malton, and the family's political prominence in the early eighteenth century. Sir William Strickland (d.1735) was Secretary of State at War under Robert Walpole, and Treasurer to Queen Caroline. The Strickland MS include Strickland's personal accounts as well as his government and court business. The accounts show that Strickland was purchasing South Sea stock from his government income, but only slowly paying off the mortgages taken out by his over-spending parents. Of national and international significance are Strickland's army papers from his time as Secretary at War. These detail the British army in Algiers, Jamaica and Nova Scotia, to name a few, and there are many bundles of petitions for army pensions from the widows of fallen soldiers. These documents thus relate to the history and heritage of a much wider range of people than the aristocratic Stricklands and their friends. Similarly, within the detailed and largely continuous records for the Boynton estate, the manorial records for Carnaby and Burton Fleming document the Yorkshire farming community; who evidently used the manor courts as an arena in which to settle their own affairs

largely free from interference by their landlords. Indeed, an important message from the estate papers is how rarely the Stricklands were at Boynton in some generations. In many years the family rarely visited, being mainly resident in Malton, York and London, returning to their 'seat' at Boynton most often at Christmas and in the high summer. This becomes obvious from the account books, pocket books, and correspondence, and is an important reminder for students of the English country house that elite families were not always as present as we might imagine. Their 'seat house', after all, stood symbolically for their political presence and power.

Sir William Strickland died in 1735, having remodelled Boynton to a design by Lord Burlington. The architectural plan in Burlington's hand survives in the Strickland papers. There are also documents relating to the purchase and furnishing of a house on Grosvenor Square and it was a revelation to discover that the elegant sash windows at Boynton were made in London (and shipped to Bridlington) at the same time as the windows for the Grosvenor Square house. Strickland was keen on gardens; a plan survives for the Queen's gardens at Richmond, and there are many references to the gardens at Gubbins and Thorpe – both houses in the Home Counties belonging to his wife's family, the Sambrooks. Charles Bridgeman was involved with the Queen's gardens, and it is probable that Strickland created a garden at Boynton, which we have detected from landscape survey and excavation. William Kent may possibly have had a hand in the Boynton landscape, and Kent certainly supplied designs for chimneypieces in the house. Kent himself was born in Bridlington, where his talent for drawing was recognized by his school masters, and a group of Yorkshire gentlemen – including the Strickland family – took up the young lad and paid for him to go to London and travel in Italy. The eighteenth century elite's openness to artistic talent enabled Kent to enjoy spectacular social

mobility, to the highest tables in the land, and he was a particular favourite of Queen Caroline. The Queen's treasurer's papers – which Stephen Taylor, who is researching a biography of Queen Caroline, assures me are not available elsewhere – may be among the most significant (and hitherto unknown) papers in the Strickland collection.

The early death of Sir William Strickland was beneficial to the Boynton estate, as the long minority of George, his son, enabled the estate to clear the debts accrued by the previous generation. Elizabeth Strickland continued to reside at Grosvenor Square and Boynton evidently fell into some decay. A letter from Daniel Draper, the Boynton estate steward in 1749 is a wonderfully earthy account of the dilapidations on the estate. Having described the house, 'The Great House is in Exceeding good Repair and so are the Offices, Except the North Roof of a long Building that runs from the House', as well as the farms, fences, and grounds, Draper offers an apology – worthy of a scene in a mid-eighteenth century novel – for the outstanding dilapidations, owing to his difficulty in getting round to repairs 'when I have wounds up my Bottom'.

On his majority in 1750, Sir George Strickland and his wife Letitia, nee Winn, made Boynton their home. Living off the estate, rather than pursuing a political career like his father, the couple settled to a family life. They employed the architect Carr of York, who had been trained by Burlington and Kent, to restore Boynton, adding a library, a bedroom suite with dressing rooms, and a nursery on the top floor. They even took their children on a Grand Tour to Italy in the 1770s, and the documentation for the transfer of the marbles purchased in Rome to England survives. These marbles were displayed in the sculpture gallery created in the space originally occupied by the great hall of the sixteenth century house. There is a conversation piece by Arthur Devis of the couple in the grounds of Boynton Hall, and Lady

*I send you a guinea Peter to drink the health of Sir George and all the Ladies this very day.*

*Be a good lad, you have got a good family to serve; wel serve them honestly and faithfully with all your heart and soul.*

*Mind their interest as you would mind your own and you shall never want.*

*Give my hearts wel wishes to them all and in hopes of seeing them all once more.*

*I am in the most damnable haste*

*Yours*

*Jack Stedman*

Gloucester Archives D1245/F2

Strickland's Dairy and Sir George's Woollen Manufactory still survive in the park, as well as Carnaby Temple; a tower on the horizon from the main house, overlooking the North Sea. A great deal of correspondence survives, as well as systematic accounts for the Boynton estate through to the nineteenth-century. For the following generation, there is a diary from a tour of the North of England and a visit to North America in 1794-5 by William Strickland (6th Baronet), who corresponded with Washington and Jefferson. The majority of the papers relating to Sir William's North America visit were long ago deposited with the New York Historical Society. As this indicates, not everything relating to the Stricklands is contained in the Canada papers. There is also a separate set of Strickland papers in the Gloucester Archives relating to the daughters of Sir

George and Lady Strickland, who were living at Apperley in Gloucestershire on a rentier income from Boynton farms. Among the Gloucester papers is a list of female servants at Boynton in the 1790s, which is an excellent help with researching the servant members of the Boynton household. There is also an undated letter 'From Mr. Stedman to Peter the Negro, Servant to Sir George Strickland' at Boynton Hall, 'With a Guinea' (Gloucester Archives D1245/F2) - see above.

It is one of the great thrills of this research to demonstrate a black presence in Georgian Bridlington, and a reminder that no archive is complete as this document was in Gloucester not New Brunswick. With online cataloguing it is now possible to link archives, and the Gloucester material will be cross-

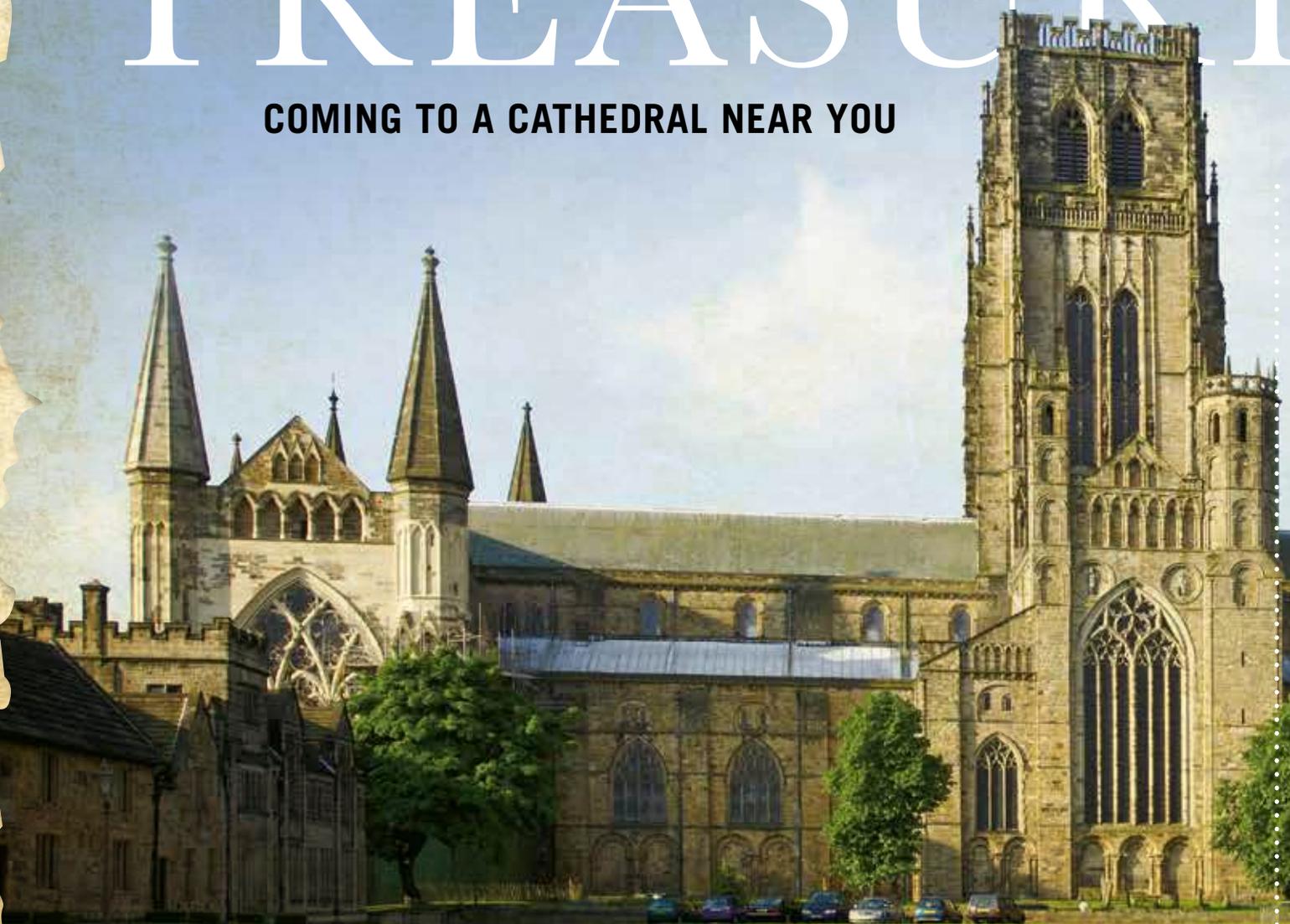
LEFT - Undated letter 'From Mr. Stedman to Peter the Negro, Servant to Sir George Strickland' at Boynton Hall, 'With a Guinea' (Gloucester Archives D1245/F2)

referenced with the Strickland MS, now in Yorkshire. The archivists at Beverley are currently in the process of producing a full catalogue of the Strickland papers, which should be publicly available before the end of 2015, when researchers of all kinds will be able to access the archive in all its riches. The online catalogue will be linked to The National Archives, so that the material is visible to the widest range of historians.

A lecture on Boynton, given to the Society of Antiquaries of London in January 2014, is available on YouTube. And the book, *Boynton Hall: An Archaeological & Social History of a Yorkshire Country House* (Oblong Press), is in preparation. The costs of the transfer of the Strickland papers to Bridlington has been funded by the Richard Marriott Trust via Durham University. In addition to Richard Marriott, I am also extremely grateful to the Ferris family in Fredericton, and the archive staff at Beverley, for making the transfer of the papers to England such an interesting experience. Two thirds of the material has now been placed on deposit at Beverley by Blair and Mary Ferris. One third of the papers remain in Canada, in the possession of Charles Ferris. Largely relating to the nineteenth and twentieth century history of Boynton and the wider Strickland and Marriott families, it is hoped that these materials will join the rest at Beverley in due course.

# OPEN TREASURE

COMING TO A CATHEDRAL NEAR YOU



## DURHAM CATHEDRAL IS ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S BEST LOVED BUILDINGS...

...voted Britain's best building by *Guardian* readers in 2011 and in the words of Bill Bryson 'If you have never been to Durham, go there at once. Take my car. It's wonderful.'<sup>[1]</sup> Many will agree that what makes Durham so special is the Cathedral and the city's unique and well preserved heritage. Durham's architectural value lies in the fact that it is the oldest surviving building with a stone vaulted ceiling of such a large scale, with what is believed to be the first structured pointed arch.

<sup>[1]</sup> Bill Bryson, *Notes from a Small Island* (HarperCollins, 1995.)



**Sophia Stovall**  
Development Officer

Sophia Stovall is the Development Officer at Durham Cathedral. She manages the Patron Programme, fundraising campaigns & events, legacies and new business development. Sophia previously worked for the Art Fund, English Heritage and a number of galleries before moving to Durham, where she also teaches Danish at Durham University.

**Durham Cathedral is unique** in the fact that its awesome Norman architecture has survived largely intact, despite numerous attempts to destroy its striking grey towers. Most other important Norman buildings in Britain were substantially modified, often beyond recognition. As such, it is recognized both as an exemplar of the Romanesque architecture, and as one of the world's greatest cathedrals and still in continuous use since its original construction 900 years ago.

Following the relocation of the remains of Saint Cuthbert from Lindisfarne to Durham, the Cathedral was constructed between 1093 and 1133 by the region's first Prince Bishop, William of Calais, and remains a stunning example of Norman architecture. The current treasures of the Cathedral include the Shrine of Saint Cuthbert and the tomb of Britain's first historian, the Venerable Bede. After being named part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1996, the Cathedral was voted the Best Building in Britain in 2011 by *Guardian* readers and, more recently, the North East's Best Building 2015 by *The Journal*. Today, the Cathedral welcomes over 700,000 visitors each year to discover its magnificent heritage, share in its worship and music, and participate in its diverse programme of events and activities.

Open Treasure is the next step in increasing Durham Cathedral's relationship with both national history and the Durham community. It is a multi-phased development project that will transform the experience of visitors to Durham Cathedral, improve knowledge and conservation of the Cathedral's collections and historic buildings, and, crucially, help to keep entry to the Cathedral free. Durham Cathedral does not receive regular statutory support and must rely on its own resources for daily life, maintenance and development. Previous phases include the creation of a new shop, refurbishment of the



**BEFORE:** The Monk's Dormitory in progress March 2015.



**AFTER:** The museum design as visualised by Purcell.



**ST CUTHBERT EXHIBITION:** The Great Kitchen and the Treasures of St Cuthbert exhibition, by Purcell.

Undercroft restaurant and provision of new choir vestries.

Through Open Treasure the Cathedral will create new, specialist exhibition spaces within its Claustral buildings which will enable the display of items from its internationally significant collections, along with complementary items from other notable institutions. The exhibitions, along with associated education activities and events, will inform and inspire visitors through the story of the Cathedral and its important place in English history. Here lies a unique opportunity for Durham University students to support Durham Cathedral, and to enable Durham Cathedral to support the study and research of departments such as History and Theology through IMPACT funding opportunities. Open Treasure will work to create many opportunities for partnership working and help Durham Cathedral meet the rising cost of maintaining its buildings and public spaces while increasing its

contribution to the City, north east region, and the nation.

**TELLING THE STORY: THE MONKS' DORMITORY**

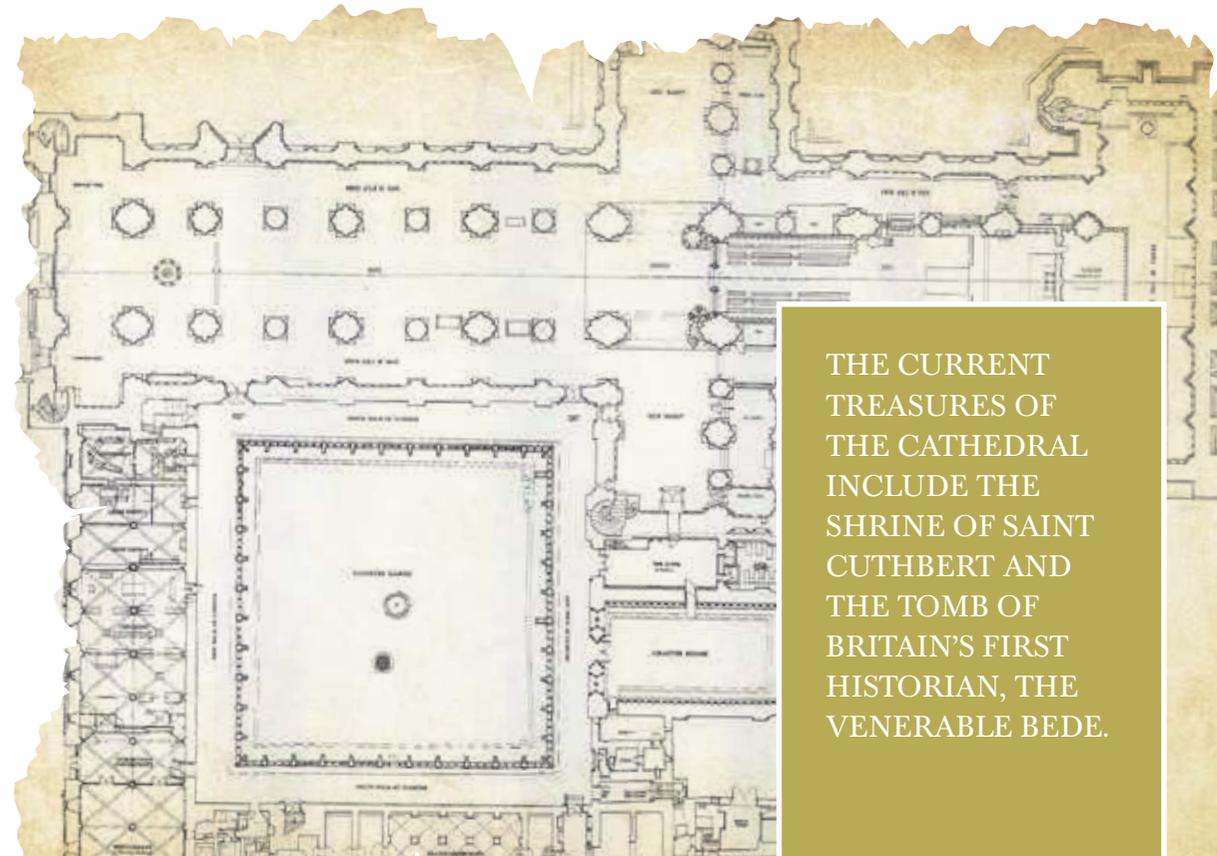
The late fourteenth-century Monks' Dormitory will mark the start of the exhibition route. The long oak-beamed room – the only intact monastic dormitory in England – will become an accessible, visitor-friendly exhibition space. Additionally, the Dormitory's long-standing function as a working library will be retained and enhanced; one example of this is the installation of lighting throughout the space, highlighting the impressive solid oak beams (one of only two of its kind in the UK). The dormitory will be fully accessible with a glass elevator taking visitors up to the first level from the Cloister entrance and benefit from a user friendly automatic system to allow library members to access the facilities, making it easier to come and go.

The exhibition will tell the story of the development of Christianity in the

North East, including the arrival of the Community of St Cuthbert in Durham and the significance of the Cathedral's founding saint. It will detail life in the Benedictine priory until the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1539 and thereafter the formation of the Church of England. The Cathedral's unique collection of Anglo-Saxon carved stones will be redisplayed.

**TELLING THE STORY: THE COLLECTIONS GALLERY**

This is a new building, created from existing medieval spaces adjoining the Monks' Dormitory. Environmental and security conditions will be designed to achieve the conservation standards necessary for exhibiting sensitive artefacts within the Cathedral Collections, including the Durham Gospels and Magna Carta – one of the most celebrated documents in English history, as well as complementary loans from other institutions. A new staircase and lift will be installed to allow visitors to descend safely to the ground floor and continue on the exhibition journey.



**THE CURRENT TREASURES OF THE CATHEDRAL INCLUDE THE SHRINE OF SAINT CUTHBERT AND THE TOMB OF BRITAIN'S FIRST HISTORIAN, THE VENERABLE BEDE.**

Across from the Gallery, the historic Refectory Library will undergo environmental improvements better to preserve the Cathedral's notable collection of pre-1850 books. Additionally, a new reading room will be created to better enable researchers to access and understand the Cathedral's collections.

**TELLING THE STORY:  
THE GREAT KITCHEN AND COVEY**

The fourteenth-century priory kitchen will be the pinnacle of the Open Treasure exhibition route. This updated space will provide a fitting and permanent home for the most precious and sacred of the Cathedral's treasures, the relics of its founding saint, Cuthbert. The seventh-century Relics include the Pectoral Cross (the emblem of Durham Cathedral and City), vestments and St Cuthbert's Coffin. The space will be environmentally-controlled to the highest standards to preserve these treasures whilst enabling them to be enjoyed by all who visit.

The adjoining Covey, once an external medieval yard will be the final stop on the exhibition journey and tell the story of pilgrimage. Durham Cathedral has always been a place of pilgrimage, and its appeal to people of all faiths and none has remained steadfast throughout its history. The Covey will also house a community gallery which will emphasize the continued relevance of Durham Cathedral through the showcasing of work created through education, outreach,

and public events programmes.

**LIVING THE STORY: EDUCATION,  
OUTREACH & PUBLIC EVENTS**

To complement the exhibitions, the Cathedral will improve signage and interpretation across its site and deliver a rich programme of learning in the form of events, outreach activities, lectures, tours, and workshops for schools, young people, families and adult learners.

One project 'recreating the community', will seek to engage artists, schools, families, community groups and ex-offenders with the Treasures of St. Cuthbert. The project will enable participants to learn new skills, interpret and create their own response from the artisan crafts of the Anglo-Saxon Community of St. Cuthbert including the Cuthbert silks and carvings from the coffin of St. Cuthbert.

This programme will enhance the Cathedral's award-winning Education Service, which already engages 20,000 young people each year, and its Events Programme, which provides lifelong learning, cultural and social opportunities. These activities, together with the new exhibitions, will engage current and new visitors in the Cathedral's heritage and its life today.

**THE REGIONAL STORY**

Durham Cathedral already welcomes over 700,000 visitors each year, which equates to a contribution of £8.4

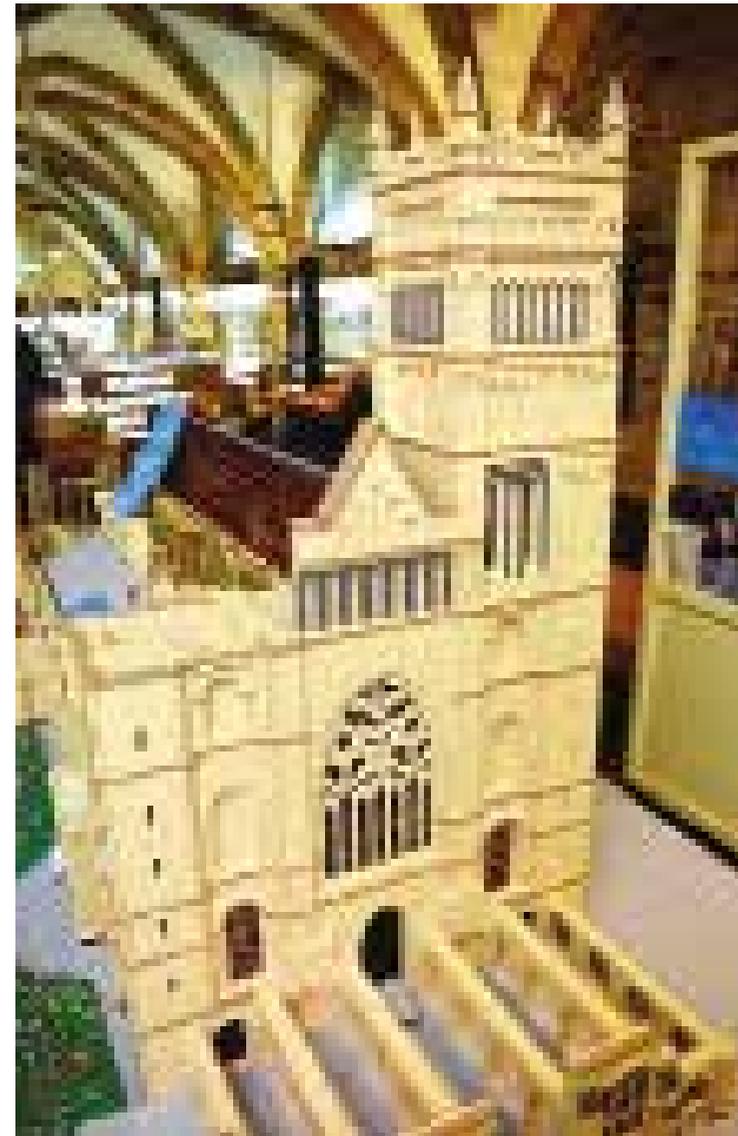
million to the local economy through ancillary visitor spending. We anticipate that our new exhibition spaces will attract many more people to the City and region. Alongside the Cathedral's active participation in City-led projects, such as the highly acclaimed light festival Lumiere, Open Treasure will serve to broaden its relevance to contemporary society and to encourage greater numbers of people to walk through its doors.

Open Treasure will develop the Cathedral's social and economic contribution to local communities and North East England through the creation of jobs and volunteering opportunities, partnership and outreach, and by raising the profile of Durham City and County as a visitor destination.

**THE STORY SO FAR**

The main capital works programme began in June 2014, with the necessary approvals secured from the Cathedrals' Fabric Commission for England and other regulatory bodies. The new exhibition spaces will open to the public in early 2016.

The total cost of this work is £10.5 million. At the time of writing the Cathedral had secured £8.1 million of this from fundraising income, including a £3.9 million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF); and contributed £1 million from its own resources. The Cathedral is extremely grateful to all of those who



have already pledged their generous support. You may have also heard of our fundraising initiative 'Durham Cathedral in LEGO' which has to date raised a total of £130,000 towards Open Treasure.

**BECOME PART OF THE STORY**

There are a number of different ways you can support Durham Cathedral and its future.

**BECOME A PATRON**

From as little as £5 a month you can enjoy exclusive behind the scenes access to curators, artists, academics, heritage specialists and the chance to share interests and ideas with likeminded people, while playing a vital part in preserving and promoting the Cathedral's buildings and collections.

**BE PART OF THE  
#BigBuild**

Buy a Brick or several, for £1 each and support Durham Cathedral in LEGO and help make Open Treasure, our museum in the making a reality.

For more information or to become a Patron please contact Sophia Stovall, Development Officer 0191 374 4055 or sophia.stovall@durhamcathedral.co.uk

You can also find information on our website [www.durhamcathedral.co.uk](http://www.durhamcathedral.co.uk)

**LEFT - WORK IN PROGRESS:** Working on the Cathedral in LEGO which is fundraising for Open Treasure. £1 per brick.

**ABOVE - THE GREY TOWERS OF DURHAM CATHEDRAL COMING TO LIFE IN LEGO.**



**GREAT KITCHEN:** A behind the scenes tour taking place during the early stages of work in the Great Kitchen.

# Urbi et orbi de manu monachi

## A modern investigation of a medieval manuscript

By the time that you are reading this article, a team of Durham University’s medieval historians will be putting the finishing touches to a project to explore, describe and investigate one of Durham Cathedral’s most unusual medieval manuscripts. Dr Giles Gasper will be hosting the internationally renowned Professor Faith Wallis of McGill University, Canada, who will be attached to the Institute of Medieval and Early Modern Studies on a Slater Fellowship. Professor Wallis will lead a team unpicking the history and text, and establishing the context of a fascinating scientific compendium in the Cathedral’s collection. This will be part of the Durham Priory Digitization Project, a partnership between the University and the Cathedral.



**SARAH GILBERT**  
second-year PhD student

Sarah is a second-year PhD student who researches the history of medieval manuscripts. Her thesis, ‘Anglo-Saxon medical recipes in non-medical manuscripts’, draws attention to the medical notes which were added to early manuscripts and the uses to which they were put.



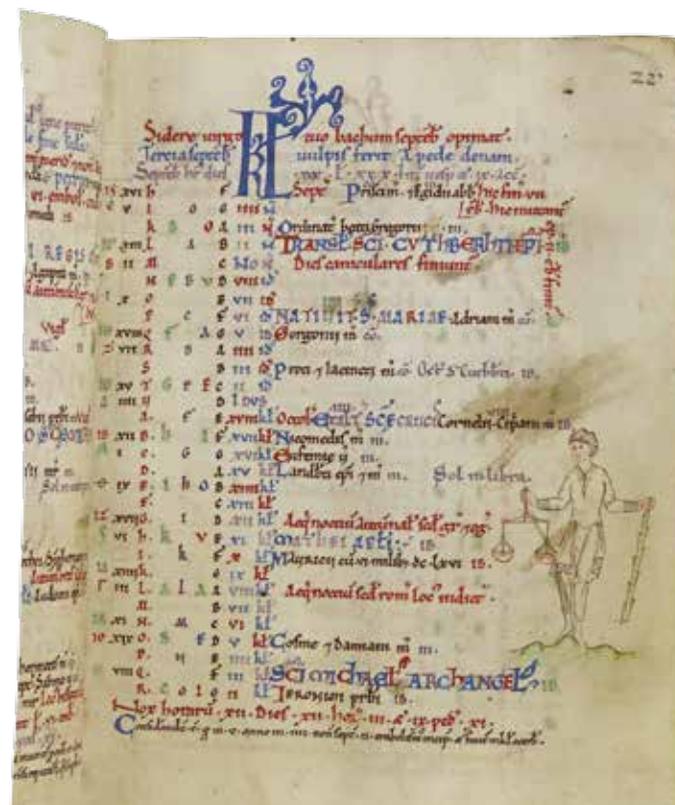
The manuscript in question is known as ‘Durham Cathedral Library, Hunter 100’, or simply as ‘Hunter 100.’ Hunter 100 was created in the early twelfth century by the monks of Durham Cathedral and contains calendric material (see fig. 1), as well as texts on astronomy, medicine, and the calculation of the date of Easter. The manuscript is of particular interest to Durham scholars as Symeon, the Durham monk and historian after whom this periodical is named, copied some of the text into the manuscript.<sup>[1]</sup> Symeon is most famous for his *Libellus de exordio atque procursu istius hoc*

*est Dunhelmensis ecclesie* (Article on the origin and progress of this church of Durham), from which we have gained much of our knowledge of Durham’s early years as a religious site, and his handwriting can be found in a number of Durham manuscripts. Symeon’s handwriting is particularly helpful as we know the year of his death (c. 1129), which gives us a *terminus ante quem* for the production of Hunter 100.

Hunter 100 was produced in Durham during a period when the religious community was flourishing, and the

quality of the manuscript reflects that.<sup>[2]</sup> Hunter 100 is also interesting because it preserves some late examples of Old English, the language that evolved in England after the Saxon invasions and settlements of the fourth and fifth centuries. When William of Normandy became king of England in 1066, the language we know as ‘Old English’ became the third most useful language in England. If you were a member of the Church, or one of the few literate members of the aristocracy both Latin (the language of the Church and the default language of European communication) and Norman French (the language of the new elite) were more useful and widely understood by people who needed to interact with text on a regular basis. The copying of texts in Old English became less frequent after the Norman Conquest, so to have examples of Old English from the early twelfth century, such as Hunter 100’s Latin and Old English plant glossary suggests people were still moving between one language and the other for some tasks in the early twelfth century.

Hunter 100 is a scientific handbook, containing short texts by multiple authors on matters to do with medicine and astronomy. The astronomical texts are in Latin and are accompanied by beautiful illustrations of the constellations. Medieval Christian communities took a particular interest in astronomy because the most important feast in the Christian calendar, Easter, does not fall on a specific date, but is determined according to the phases of the moon and the Jewish feast of Passover, which also moves. Medieval monks needed to know when Easter would be so that they could carry out all of the preparations and observances for Easter on the correct days leading up to it.<sup>[3]</sup> Hunter 100 has several



**FIGURE 1 - FILE DCL HUNTER 100 016:** Durham, Cathedral Library, Hunter 100, f. 6r, a page from the calendar material with an entry referring to the festival of the translation of St Cuthbert’s body.  
IMAGES © Chapter of Durham Cathedral or ‘By kind permission of the Chapter of Durham Cathedral

<sup>[1]</sup> Bernard Meehan, ‘Symeon of Durham’, ODNB, www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/article/25556 accessed 4 March, 2015.

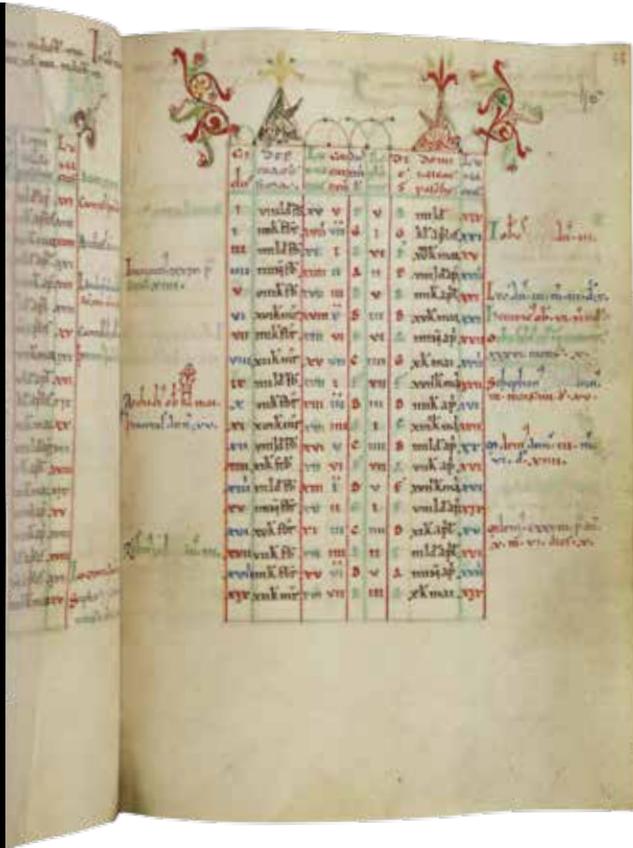
<sup>[2]</sup> See R. A. B. Mynors, *Durham Cathedral Manuscripts to the End of the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1939) for a discussion (and images) of the treasures produced by Durham in the twelfth century.

**RIGHT - FIGURE 2 - FILE DCL**

**HUNTER 100 080:** Durham, Cathedral Library, Hunter 100, f. 38r, a page from the paschal tables which would have been used to calculate the date of Easter.

**DCL HUNTER 100 129+130:** Durham, Cathedral Library, Hunter 100, ff. 62v-63r pages from the Hunter 100 star catalogue, an illustrated text combining astronomical and astrological scholarship.

IMAGES © Chapter of Durham Cathedral or by kind permission of the Chapter of Durham Cathedral



complex tables for calculating the date of Easter decades in advance (see fig. 2).

The medieval study of astronomy in order to calculate the date of Easter is known as computus, and Hunter 100 contains a selection of the finest medieval research on the subject, including works by the famous Northumbrian monk, Bede.<sup>141</sup>

The intention of the project is to prepare Hunter 100 for online presentation, and to make it available

to researchers and members of the public. Dr Gasper and Professor Wallis will be leading a team of academics, post-doctoral students and postgraduates including members of the departments of English, History, Theology, Archaeology, and even the Institute for Computational Cosmology. The project will also involve a significant training aspect, enabling postgraduate students to contribute material relating to their specialisms and to work closely with a team of renowned academics preparing a

manuscript for digital publication, a process which is likely to become increasingly important to historical studies over the next few decades.

The project is being supported by Durham University's Institute of Medieval and Early Modern Studies and will involve advanced seminars given by Professor Wallis to Durham's postgraduate community. Students will then be able to test their skills and ideas out on a practical case study. A complex miscellany such as Hunter 100 requires multiple

<sup>141</sup> See Francis Wormald, *English Benedictine Calendars after A.D. 1100 vol. 2* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1939) for a discussion of the calendars in Hunter 100, and D. E. Duncan, *Calendar: Humanity's Epic Struggle to Determine a True and Accurate Year* (New York, 1998) for an accessible history of how humans have come to understand time and the calendar.

<sup>142</sup> See Faith Wallis, *Bede: The Reckoning of Time* (Liverpool, 1999) for commentary on Bede's writings on computus.

THE INTENTION OF THE PROJECT IS TO PREPARE HUNTER 100 FOR ONLINE PRESENTATION, AND TO MAKE IT AVAILABLE TO RESEARCHERS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

approaches and minds in order to produce a world-class resource, and with this project it is hoped that the team will be able produce the best possible scholarship to accompany this unusual piece of Durham's heritage. There will also be a series of lectures and presentations for members of the public in collaboration with Durham Cathedral.

By the time the project has ended, we will know more about the sources that the monks of Durham used to create this remarkable manuscript, and have a better understanding of how humans at the edge of the known world in the twelfth century related to the world around them and conceived of their place in the past and future—and we will be preserving, increasing and sharing this knowledge for the decades and centuries to come.



1948-2014

# CHRIS BROOKS

Chris Brooks was a member of Durham History Department from 1980 till his scheduled retirement in 2014. Sadly, Chris died aged sixty-five of a heart attack shortly before his official retirement date. He will be remembered as a first-rate historian, who dedicated his life and an impressive mind to the study of society, politics and the law in early modern England. Chris enjoyed a high reputation in the worlds of legal history and early modern social history, and it was his unique contribution to have mastered both disciplines and transformed both fields. Chris' legacy is a formidable body of scholarship, much of which will hold good for generations, and he exercised a further influence through the many acts of kindness and unwitting inspiration he generated among those whose lives he touched.



A US citizen with a mid-Atlantic drawl, Chris was very much a child of the Sixties whose politics were forged in opposition to the Vietnam War. Although Chris was a hard-worker, he was irreverent and humorous, and had no respect for authority or those who held it unless they were enabling the good. In his scholarship and teaching, Chris was very much committed to uncovering knowledge and achieving understanding on empirical foundations. In this, he had a rather seventeenth century cast of mind. Towards the end of his career, Chris came to see himself as not engaged in a passing historiographical scene of the current generation, but as contributing to a line of English historical scholarship reaching back to the legal antiquarians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such as John Selden. While this might suggest that he became his subject, he never lost a sense of its contemporary relevance. His commitment to scholarly empiricism and the role of law in politics and society led Chris to remark that no one who took a Durham History degree should be capable of compiling (or accepting) a 'dodgy dossier', such as was used to justify the Iraq war. For Chris, the practice of history was a lesson in seeking the truth about power, and he found the notion that academia might be a route to power an absurdity. The institution of the university and the discipline of History should be about creating and teaching scholarship as the basis for knowledge, and sustaining the resources with which to speak truth to power. Before he discovered early modern history as a student, Chris had contemplated a career in journalism and a passion for establishing what was really going on never left him.

Chris studied at Princeton as an undergraduate, then – following officer training in the US army in 1972 – he moved to John Hopkins in his native Maryland for postgraduate work. Chris was strongly influenced by Lawrence Stone at Princeton, and began his doctorate at John Hopkins with Wilfred Prest. When Prest left for Australia, Chris decided to move to Oxford to complete his doctorate on the English common law, where he was supervised by the fastidious J.P. Cooper of Balliol. Chris was awarded his D.Phil in 1978, and was college lecturer at Wadham (1977-80) as well as a Junior Research Fellow at Brasenose (1976-80) in Oxford, before being appointed to a permanent lectureship in early modern history at Durham in 1980. Aside from research fellowships in the US – notably at the National Humanities Centre, North Carolina; the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC; and the Huntington Library, California – Chris remained at Durham throughout his career. He was promoted to Reader in 1997 and Professor in 2001.

Generations of Durham undergraduate and postgraduate students were taught by Chris, a number of who went on to academic careers in History or associated historical professions. For Chris was very much the historians' historian. Never the most all singing, all dancing of lecturers, Chris was an assiduous teacher, and delivered carefully prepared and authoritative lectures that were anchored in his scholarship. I don't believe he ever used Wikipedia, but relied on his own extensive notes from primary and secondary sources. While his hand-

GENERATIONS OF DURHAM UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS WERE TAUGHT BY CHRIS, A NUMBER OF WHO WENT ON TO ACADEMIC CAREERS IN HISTORY OR ASSOCIATED HISTORICAL PROFESSIONS.

written lectures remained traditional cogent arguments, Chris was an innovator in introducing the seminar as a new mode of teaching – replacing the traditional essay tutorial – in a course he co-taught with Anthony Fletcher on 'The English Household and Family, 1500-1800'. Chris' interest in the English family stemmed from his own teacher, Lawrence Stone, and he combined an admiration for Stone's bold insights with a meticulous commitment to source-based argument that he had learned from J.P. Cooper.

In his research and teaching, Chris combined an interest in the workings of society with work on the English law. His study of the uses to which the law was put led him to reject the view that early modern society was polarised between the powerful elites and

powerless poor. His work demonstrated that all of English society in the seventeenth century participated in the law, and largely felt entitled to use it to redress grievances and injuries. Even servants and the poor were familiar with the law, particularly when appearing as witnesses or defending custom. Chris demonstrated that the seventeenth century was the most litigious period in English history, and showed that a greater proportion of the population was involved in civil litigation between the Reformation and the Civil Wars than in twentieth century America. The implications of this finding were profound, and were explored further in an ambitious work of comparative history. *Lawyers, Litigation and English Society since 1450* (Hambledon, 1998) examines the role of litigation in resolving inter-personal disputes from the fifteenth to the twentieth centuries. Given that the alternative remedy was generally violence or community sanctions, Chris had a nuanced appreciation of law's value.

Chris made a further impact on early modern history by promoting a new paradigm that recognised the crucial importance of the 'middling sorts of people' in English society. It was clear that the middling sorts made extensive and pervasive use of their law – both the upper middling sort professionals who practiced the law, and lesser middling sort commercial folk in craft and farming enterprises who relied upon the law to enforce contracts and assert property title. With Jonathan Barry, Chris edited a seminal volume, *The Middling Sorts of People in Early Modern England* (Macmillan, 1994). Known to generations of students as 'Barry and Brooks', the book carried an important essay on the languages of class by Keith Wrightson, on 'Sorts of People in Tudor and Stuart England'. Barry and Brooks' recognition of the role of the middling sorts in early modern England, and the ways in

which these sorts were distinct from a Marxist conception of class, reshaped the understanding of the period, and shaped countless undergraduate essays and postgraduate projects.

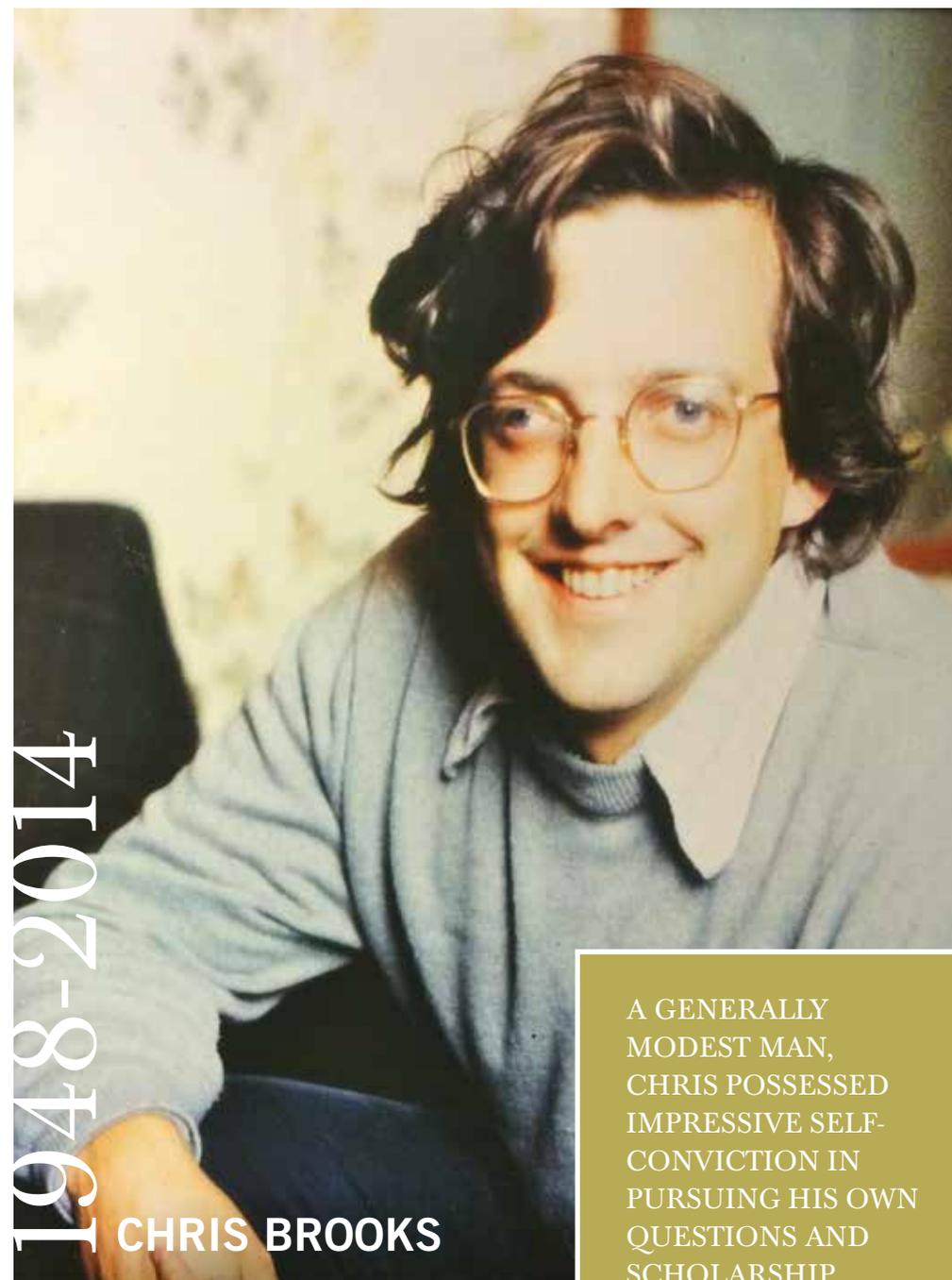
Chris also taught a long running undergraduate course on 'Law and Society in Early Modern England', which was an important part of the preparation for his book on Law, Politics and Society in Early Modern England, published by Cambridge University Press in 2008. This major work expanded on his earlier study of the English common lawyers, published as *Pettyfoggers and Vipers of the Commonwealth: The Lower Branch of the Legal Profession in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1986). Chris was not only concerned with litigation and lawyers, but in the very workings of early modern England as a social and political organism, and the sheer range of subjects treated in *Law, Politics and Society* rests upon a formidable body of scholarship – from the role of Magna Carta and the common lawyers' conception of England's constitution, to the workings of manorial and church courts at a community and familial level. Again influenced by Lawrence Stone, Chris was intrigued by the question of how and why England came to tear itself apart in the civil wars of the 1640s and reconstructed itself in the *Commonwealth of the 1650s*. As Chris' Special Subject students will recall, his interest in fresh thinking on the English civil wars and Commonwealth never diminished.

Chris could be a demanding undergraduate teacher, and his commitment to pedagogy was sometimes more obvious in his own mind than in those of his pupils. But very many Durham undergraduates were glad to have met a fellow high-achiever, and responded to his exacting standards by raising their game to match. Chris was also much loved by his graduate students, in whom he inspired a

scholarly commitment to historical argument. Somehow, the tougher Chris was in his commitment to intellectual clarity and academic standards – and he never sugared the pill when giving criticism – the more he was admired.

A generally modest man, Chris possessed impressive self-conviction in pursuing his own questions and scholarship. This conviction rested on a sense of integrity – that he was doing the right thing and going about it in the right way. He combined this sense of duty to a vocation with a remarkable lack of ego. A large part of this stability came from his marriage to Sharyn. Together ever since they met as teenage sweethearts, Sharyn supported Chris throughout his career and they both enjoyed a loving marriage that lasted forty-five years to the day. There is no better image of Sharyn's devotion than her prayers at the shrine of Saint Bede in Durham Cathedral, when Chris was being interviewed for the job. It is an enormous disappointment that they will not share their planned retirement together in Saint Augustine, where Chris intended to continue to write in the Florida sunshine.

A fuller account of Chris's career can be found in Adrian Green, , 'Christopher W. Brooks, 1948-2014: A Tribute', *The Seventeenth Century*, 29, 4 (2014), pp. 403-9.



1948-2014

CHRIS BROOKS

A GENERALLY MODEST MAN, CHRIS POSSESSED IMPRESSIVE SELF-CONVICTION IN PURSUING HIS OWN QUESTIONS AND SCHOLARSHIP.

# Contact Us

---

We hope you have enjoyed the fifth issue of Symeon. We would like to include more about you, as alumni, in subsequent issues, so please do get in touch and let us know what you are doing now. Perhaps you are in a job in which you use on a daily basis the skills you learned studying history? Perhaps you are doing something entirely different? Either way, we'd love to hear from you.

We'd also be delighted to hear your thoughts on Symeon. Is there a subject area you'd like to see us cover in future editions? Perhaps you'd like to consider contributing an article? We'd be interested to have your thoughts.

**Please write to:**

43 North Bailey Durham DH1 3EX  
or email: [history.alumni@durham.ac.uk](mailto:history.alumni@durham.ac.uk)  
or join our Facebook group:  
'Durham University History Alumni'.



