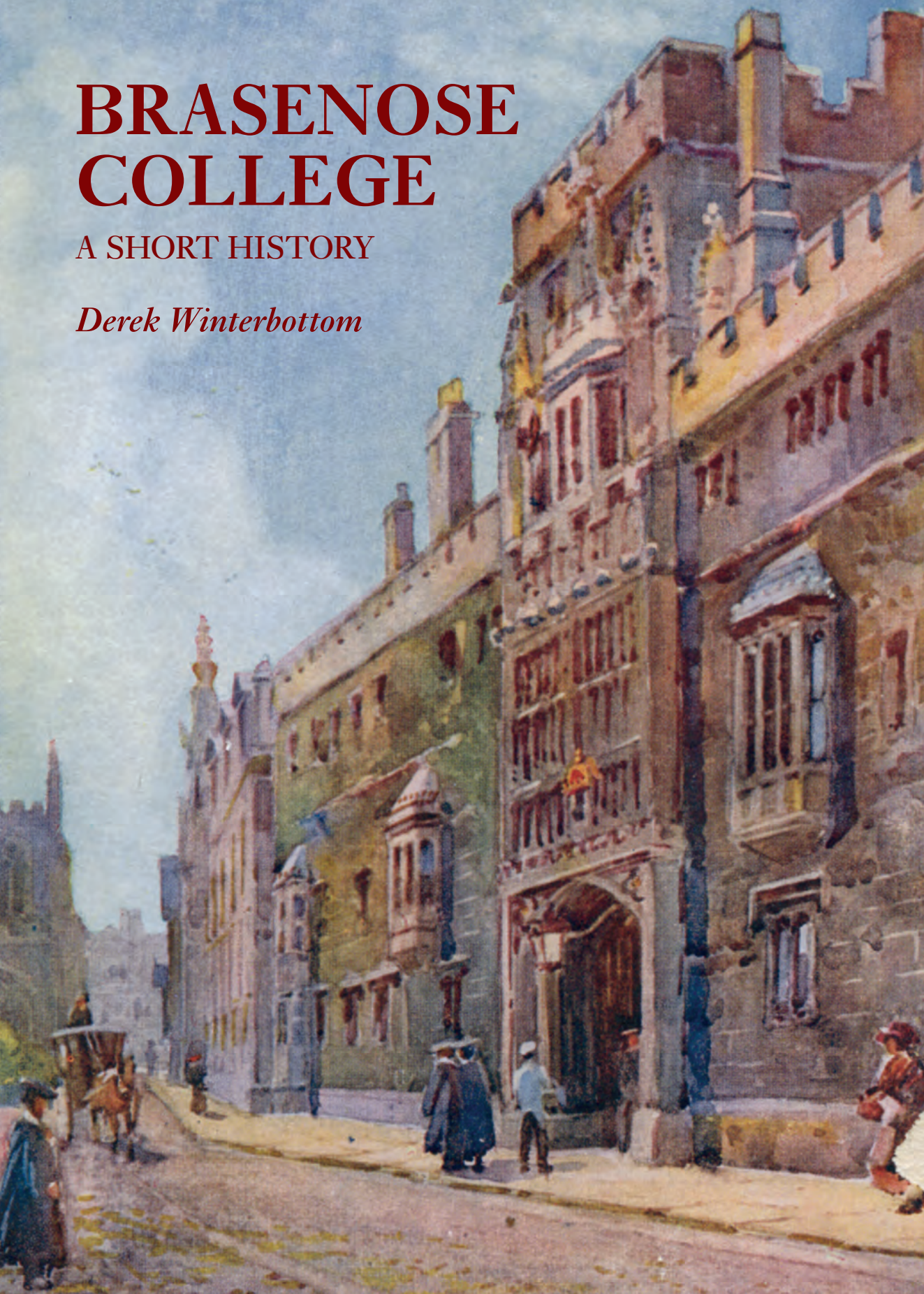
BRASENOSE COLLEGE

A SHORT HISTORY

Derek Winterbottom



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Preface

Some might think it impertinent to produce an account of BNC's history so soon after the publication in 2008 of Professor Joseph Mordaunt Crook's magnificent 'biography' of the college but his text runs to about 433 pages plus a further 120 pages of notes, appendices and indexes and an additional 100 plates of illustrations. So it requires serious study. The main authority for the college's early history are the two volumes of Quatercentenary Monographs, published in 1909, and they probably run to a thousand pages and are not easy to obtain. John Buchan's short history of the college, published in 1898, is entertaining but sketchy, so this is an attempt to produce an easily available and inexpensive 'textbook' history of the college giving a reliable overview but leaving plenty of room to consult other sources for further details. The endnotes will show the extent of my debt to Professor Crook and the many authors of the Monographs, as well as other authorities, especially Elizabeth Boardman, who was the college's archivist for many years.

While writing this account I have been shocked to realize how little I knew about the history of the college when I was an undergraduate reading history in the early 1960s, especially the fact that Sir Richard Sutton hailed from Prestbury in Cheshire and provided special privileges to boys born there. I should have been born in Manchester but because of wartime problems the maternity wing of St Mary's Hospital was moved for safety to Collar House in Prestbury, where I was born early in 1944. My history tutor, Eric Collieu, would, I now see, have been interested to know that. Fortunately the fact that I have a good northern name was perhaps enough to stand in my favour. So thank you, Sir Richard.

This book was written and published during the Covid pandemic of 2020–2021 and I am very grateful to Principal John Bowers and

the officers of the college for their encouragement and support at a time when they were dealing with massive disruption to the life of the college and the university. Disruption, sometimes on an even greater and more deadly scale, has often been a feature of college life in the past, but knowing this has not made dealing with the current problems any easier.

There are about 8,000 BNC people presently alive and this book will probably irritate all of them either because they are not mentioned by name or because they have spotted mistakes, so I apologize on both counts in advance: in any case, they all know far more about the history of the college in their day than I could ever hope to do.

Derek Winterbottom
Autumn 2021

Chapter One

The growth of the medieval university

The University of Oxford has no specific founder but it developed during the twelfth century influenced by similar movements towards academic study, first in Bologna and then in Paris, both of which were much larger cities than Oxford. The Domesday Book in 1086 revealed that the town of Oxford, which had walls in Anglo-Saxon times, had expanded beyond them but contained only a thousand recorded houses with about eleven churches, making it the sixth biggest town in England. In 1071 the Norman lord Robert d'Oilly built a castle west of Carfax, the ancient intersection of main roads travelling north-south and east-west, and the new castle contained a church and college dedicated to St George. The college was administered by secular canons who were men of learning and they may have provided the original academic impetus in the town, especially in the early 1100s when Walter, Archdeacon of Oxford, was provost of the college, a person renowned for his learning and ability.

The first recorded lecture seems to have been given to between 60 and 100 students (known as 'clerks') as early as 1117. Shortly afterwards, the Augustinian order founded a new priory at the ancient monastic house of St Frideswide's in 1122 and later a new abbey at Oseney in 1129, both of which substantially increased the number of educated men in the Oxford area: in 1133 these religious houses for men were joined by a nunnery at Godstow. In five years between 1125 and 1146 Robert Pullen is recorded as giving lectures at Oxford on the Bible while Robert Cricklade, Prior of St Frideswide's from 1141, also had a scholarly reputation. It is likely that Vicarius, an Italian lawyer, lectured at Oxford around 1170 and wrote a textbook for students on early manuscripts of the Bible as well as Roman Law. At this time the

numbers of students may have been swelled because as a result of his famous quarrel with Archbishop Becket, King Henry II forbade travel abroad without permission. Henry visited Oxford at least eight times during his reign, held four councils there and maintained apartments for his use in the castle as well as in a royal residence established earlier by King Stephen. Henry's sons, the future kings Richard I and John, were both born in Oxford.

Most of the evidence for a body of students at Oxford in the twelfth century comes from Gerald of Wales (1146–1223), a scholar and high-ranking clergyman, who in 1188 completed his *Topographia Hibernica*, an account of the landscape and people of Ireland. He describes taking it to Oxford where he read it over three days to the poor scholars on the first day, to the faculty doctors and their pupils on the second day and to other scholars, townsfolk and soldiers on the third day. By 1210 the student body consisted of groups of free scholars presided over by a master, studying a curriculum based on that of Paris and divided into the faculties of theology, canon and civil law, and arts. The faculty of arts was further divided into the 'trivium', (grammar, rhetoric and logic), and the 'quadrivium', (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music). To these were later added natural, moral and metaphysical philosophy. A student had to study the arts faculty curriculum to become a master, after which he could proceed to higher studies. Once a master he was entitled and indeed expected to instruct pupils.

In 1209 two students were illegally hanged by Oxford citizens in revenge for the alleged murder of a woman and this led to many masters and students feeling unsafe and deciding to leave for other destinations, including Paris and also Cambridge, where they laid the foundations of the university there. In June 1214 the papal legate issued an ordinance punishing the citizens of Oxford for their actions in 1209 and requiring them to grant masters and students special privileges, including the maintenance of poor scholars. It also stipulated that the

town officials should hand over to the church authorities any 'clerk' arrested by them and from this the university gradually developed its claims of independence from the town. This was important because the town merchants had played an active part in the growth of the prosperous wool and cloth trade in the previous century and by the early 1200s, judging by the amount of tax paid, Oxford's wealth was equal to York and second only to London. The ordinance also laid down that a chancellor should be appointed to govern the masters and students and from 1221 there is an unbroken succession of men who have held this office.

In 1216 the Dominican or 'Black' friars were founded in Spain as a teaching order with a mission to preach the gospel and encourage learning and they arrived in Oxford in 1221, soon to be followed in 1224 by the Franciscans, or 'Grey' friars. Both orders embraced a life of extreme poverty, devoted to preaching and teaching: they won many converts and had an important impact on the development of intellectual life in Europe over the next two centuries.

In addition to following the curriculum of the University of Paris, Oxford also copied its practice of dividing the students into 'nations'. There were four at Paris but only two at Oxford; Northerners (English men from north of the Trent and Scotsmen) and Southerners (the rest of the English with Welsh and Irish). They spent much of their time quarrelling with each other and came into regular conflict with the local townspeople. There were serious riots in 1252 and 1267 while in 1274 some 50 men were charged with murder. In 1333, after yet another conflict between the students, in which the Southerners defeated the Northerners, many of the latter decided to abandon Oxford and set up their own rival university at Stamford in Lincolnshire. They were forced back by the intervention of Edward III and from 1334 Oxford students were required to swear on graduation that they would not deliver or attend lectures at Stamford, an oath that remained in force until 1827.[1]

By the 1240s students were required to live with their master in accommodation, known as halls, supervised by him. These halls often contained a dining-room and kitchen and there were very many of them in the town. The precise dating of the founding of colleges for a larger number of students is open to some dispute, but the first is reckoned to be Merton College, founded in 1274 by Walter de Merton, the Chancellor of England, and followed in 1280 by University College, founded by William of Durham, and Balliol College, founded by Sir John de Balliol two years later. After this there was a pause until the next century when Exeter College was founded by the Bishop of Exeter in 1314, Oriel by Adam de Brome in 1324, the Queen's College in 1341 in honour of Edward III's wife Philippa, and New College in 1379 by William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester.

Another pause followed until 1427 when the Bishop of Lincoln founded Lincoln College and 1438 when the pious King Henry VI and Archbishop Chichele of Canterbury jointly founded All Souls College in memory of those who had died in the Hundred Years War against France. The final collegiate foundation of the fifteenth century was Magdalen, founded in 1480 on a grand scale by William of Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester.[2] In some cases the construction of new college buildings took place soon after the foundation and on their present sites, but in many cases this was a gradual process over several years. The creation of colleges imposed a much greater degree of discipline and organization on the students than was the case in the halls and they gradually reduced the unruliness of the student body. The college system at Oxford was copied by Cambridge where the Bishop of Ely founded Peterhouse, its first college, in 1284.

Hence by 1500 there was a flourishing university at Oxford where there were ten major secular colleges, most of which were by now impressive buildings. They had quadrangles and private chapels, capable of housing about 40 students and 'fellows', who were both lecturers and also part of the governing body of the college. Then there

was a large number (84 in 1440) of much smaller 'halls', many dating from the early 1200s, which also housed a few students under the authority of a master. But while the university grew and flourished, the town gradually declined along with the cloth and wool trade. By 1334 it was only the eighth among English provincial towns by taxable wealth and it was further hit by the Black Death of 1348. Only 2,357 adults were assessed for the poll tax in 1377 and by 1500 Oxford was only just in the top thirty of English towns judged by wealth. So the university grew but the town declined and relied more and more on the students for its economic prosperity.

Brasenose Hall

The name Brasenose is first mentioned in a survey of the City of Oxford made in 1279 which describes a small property which stood on the footprint of the present college gateway plus about 20 feet to the north and another 20 feet to the south. It seems that it had been bought by the university in 1262 and was in 1279 a house known as 'Brasennose', occupied by four scholars. There were many such student halls in the university and while at first they were probably named after their master, the practice grew of adopting a permanent name for the hall which would not change with successive masters. Brasenose Hall seems to have been named after a bronze knocker which was attached to its front door. This still exists and has been dated between 1120 and 1130: it was probably made in England and it consists of a leopard's or lion's head of antique bronze, five inches wide, with an iron ring in its jaw.

The next we hear of the handful of students from Brasenose Hall is that they joined those members of the university who abandoned Oxford for Stamford after rioting between 'Northern' students and 'Southerners' in 1333, perhaps because they were themselves from the north, and it is assumed that they took their doorknocker with them

The ‘Brazen Nose’. This ancient doorknocker, probably made in England c1132 found its way to the front door of a small student hostel which was described as Brasenose Hall in 1279 and stood where the entrance to the Old Quad is now. The knocker was taken to Stamford after students moved there in 1333 and it was not recovered until 1890, since when it has hung behind the Principal’s chair in hall.

This is the first known drawing of Brasenose College, by John Bearblock (born c 1532), a fellow of Exeter College. When Queen Elizabeth visited Oxford in 1566 he drew sketches of all the colleges and they were displayed on the walls of St Mary’s, where they were shown to the queen. The tower is accurately drawn but the rest of the college is about half the size it should be.

and fixed it to the front door of the house they occupied in Stamford. The fact that a Brasenose community existed at Stamford is borne out by a list compiled in 1335 of Oxford men who were still there in defiance of King Edward III's command to return and one is described as 'Philippus, le manciple atte Bresenose'. Yet when the Brasenose men did return to Oxford, they seem to have left their doorknocker in Stamford, because it was still part of a building there, known locally as 'Brasenose College' as late as 1890. When this building was auctioned in that year BNC was informed and bought the whole property, including the doorknocker, which returned to Oxford, where it can now be seen in its place of honour in hall above the principal's chair on high table. The Stamford property, known as Brazenose House, was eventually sold by BNC to Stamford School in 1929 and in 1961 the college presented the school with a replica knocker for old time's sake.[3]

This is the official story but it raises many unsolved issues, not least why, if they had been so keen to take their Nose with them to Stamford, the Brasenose students did not bring it back to Oxford. It may be that, disillusioned by the whole process, they did not return to Oxford at all. Even so, it is odd that the Brasenose authorities in Oxford made no attempt to recover the knocker until 1890. For nearly 400 years the only Nose known to Brasenose men was the one currently displayed above the present college entrance gate but it is altogether a more light-hearted image, consisting of just a very large nose, without a knocker. It is not known exactly how old it is but it was recorded in this position by the Italian humanist scholar Polydore Vergil as early as 1534.

Whatever might have happened to the ex-Brasenose Hall Stamford students, the hall itself still stood in Oxford and continued to take in students after they had gone, though there is no further mention of it in the records until 1413 when both it and nearby St Thomas's Hall were granted by University College to John Legh, a local priest. Then in 1435 we hear of the first three recorded principals of Brasenose Hall,

all of whose tenure was brief: William Long, 1435, R. Markham, 1436 and Roger Grey, 1438. John Lye followed in 1439 and was succeeded by R.Markham again in 1444 and William Church in 1451, who held office for a decade. Then there were evidently a couple of turbulent years when William Braggis and William Wryxham both held office in 1461 and William Braggis and John Molineux in 1462. Adam Heale took over early in 1465 but died in May that year.

This brings us to his successor, William Sutton, the twelfth principal, who was in charge for at least eighteen years and who presided over a considerable increase in the size of the hall. It was already quite large, with four lecture rooms, and from about 1413 it had control over St Thomas's Hall and from 1450 Little University Hall, next door. By 1500 it had swallowed up seven more contiguous halls, Shield Hall, Ivy Hall, St Mary's Entry, Salissury Hall, Little St Edmund Hall, Haberdasher Hall and Broadgates Hall. It is not certain when William Sutton ceased to be principal but he was clearly an influential figure in the university because he served as joint vice-chancellor from 1480 to 1482. In 1501 Edmund Croston was principal and John Fornby in 1502, then Croston again in 1503. By this time Brasenose Hall, with its students of canon and civil law, was a flourishing institution and ripe for elevation to collegiate status. Such a plan was already forming in the minds of two imaginative and generous men, one the powerful holder of a great bishopric, the other a very successful and wealthy lawyer who was eventually knighted, though only a short time before his death.[4]

Chapter Two

The Founders

William Smyth[1] came from a line of country squires from the north-west of England. His grandfather had land at Cuerdley, near Warrington in Cheshire and his father had land at Prescot in what was then Lancashire. William was his father's fourth son and he was born at Farnworth, in the parish of Prescot, probably in the mid-1450s. Lathom, the seat of the noble Stanley family, lay nearby and in 1472 Thomas, Lord Stanley, married Lady Margaret Beaufort, the mother of Henry Tudor by her first husband, and there is no doubt that William Smyth was well known to her and benefited greatly from her patronage. He studied at Oxford, possibly at either Brasenose Hall or Lincoln College, and became a bachelor of canon law in 1476, after which he held a number of relatively modest ecclesiastical appointments.

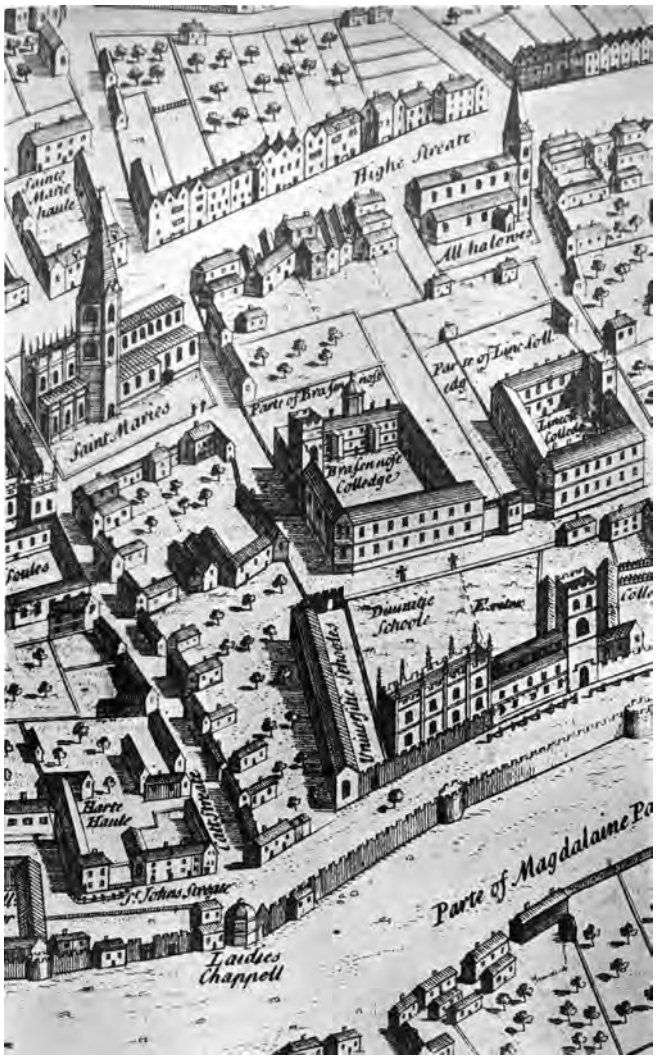
In 1485 Henry Tudor, with the help of the Stanleys, defeated and killed King Richard III at the battle of Bosworth in August and reigned in his place as Henry VII, while Lord Stanley was elevated to the earldom of Derby. Within a month Smyth was appointed to the lucrative office of clerk of the hanaper in chancery and he also became Dean of Wimborne, in Dorset, where Lady Margaret's parents were buried: the following year he was appointed a member of the king's council. Clearly his family were in high favour with the Tudors and they were being rewarded for their support in the recent civil wars.

Being well-connected is of little use without accompanying talent, which Smyth had in full measure, especially as an administrator. In 1485 he was appointed a canon of St Stephen's Westminster and became dean of the royal chapel from 1490. This led to his elevation in 1493 as Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield and appointment as a member of the ruling council of the Marches in Wales. At Lichfield he revealed

his interest in education by converting a ruined house of friars into an alms house and grammar school which has developed into the present comprehensive, King Edward VI School. In 1496 Smyth was translated to the bishopric of Lincoln, the largest medieval diocese, of which Oxford was then a part, and from 1500 to 1502 he served as chancellor of the university, relinquishing this post on his appointment as lord president of the Marches. This meant that he effectively governed the principality of Wales until his retirement in 1512.

As Bishop of Lincoln Smyth was already the Visitor (a one-man court of appeal) of both Oriel College, where he founded a fellowship in 1507, and Lincoln College, which he endowed with two manors in Staffordshire totalling 520 acres: he also founded a free grammar school at Farnworth, the place of his birth. The will of Edmund Croston, fifteenth principal of Brasenose Hall, dated January 1507, gives the first recorded indication that Smyth had by this time conceived an even grander plan of founding a new college at Brasenose because Croston bequeathed the projected new college the sum of six pounds, thirteen shillings and four pence, but only if it should actually be founded by Bishop Smyth and his collaborator, Richard Sutton.

If Smyth was a great public figure, ruling his vast diocese as well as the principality of Wales, Richard Sutton had a much lower profile.[2] He was the younger son of Sir William Sutton, a landed knight who had estates in Cheshire and was also master of the foundation of Burton Lazars in Leicestershire. This was a hospital for lepers founded in the 1130s, where the master was in charge not only of the hospital itself but also the considerable land and properties belonging to the Order of St Lazarus throughout England. This brought him into contact with many public figures, including Lady Margaret Beaufort, who was a patron of the order. Sir William's son Richard was probably born around 1460 at the family home of Sutton, in the parish of Prestbury in Cheshire, but little is known of his early life except that he may have attended Macclesfield Grammar School and that he became a



This 'bird's eye' view of Oxford was drawn in 1578 by Ralph Agas (c1540–1621), a local land surveyor and cartographer, and it gives an excellent impression of the location of Brasenose as well as more detail of the south side of the quadrangle, containing the hall and first chapel. The hall has a cupola because it was heated by a central open fire and the smoke escaped through the roof.

barrister at the Inner Temple, where he is reputed to have made a fortune: this enabled him in 1490 to purchase an estate at Somerby, in Leicestershire. In 1498 he reached the centre of government on his appointment as legal assessor to the privy council, where it is likely that he came to know Bishop Smyth.

We do not know exactly when and why Smyth and Sutton developed their plan to convert Brasenose Hall into a college but the evidence of Principal Croston's will reveals that plans for the foundation were well advanced by January 1507. The bishop's motives for such a move are consistent with his lifetime's interest in scholarship and education, as well as the fact that he was a celibate priest with very considerable financial resources. Sutton, on the other hand, was not a priest, though he did not marry and showed throughout life more than an ordinary layman's interest in religious and educational matters. Indeed, he was to be the first lay founder of any college at Oxford or Cambridge. His value as a co-founder as far as Smyth was concerned lay not only in his enthusiasm for the project but also in his expertise as a lawyer and financial manager.

As to the question of why their choice fell upon Brasenose there is the fact that Richard Sutton bore the same coat of arms (the Suttons of Cheshire) as Dr William Sutton who was principal of Brasenose Hall from 1465 to at least 1483 and it is almost certain that he was a member of the same family. Indeed, given that Richard Sutton was a lawyer, he may well have been a student at Brasenose Hall in the time of William Sutton.[3] The other attraction was that Brasenose Hall by 1500 consisted of an amalgamation of earlier halls, all assembled on a very central and attractive site within the city and with an entrance to School Street, (now Radcliffe Square) which was the main academic thoroughfare at the time: it led from the High Street to what were then the main university lecture halls.

The first essential step towards the construction of a new college was taken by Richard Sutton in October 1508 when he acquired

from University College a 92-year lease on Brasenose Hall and Little University Hall, with an option to acquire the freehold in due course on generous terms. There were no architects as such in those days so the procedure was to appoint a master mason or contractor, give him some general instructions and let him get on with the job. The contractor's first step was to clear the site, so he demolished the existing Brasenose and Little University Halls while the masters and students were found temporary accommodation elsewhere. Bishop Smyth in person laid the foundation stone of the new college on 1 June 1509, five weeks and six days into the reign of the young King Henry VIII, and a damaged version of it is currently to be found over the doorway of Staircase No 1 in the Old Quad.

The completed original college, built from stone quarried in Headington, was handed over for use in 1516, so it took roughly seven years to build and it consisted essentially of the present Old Quad minus the elevated dormer windows. The college was not conceived on a magnificent scale but its best feature was the gateway and tower, boasting battlements, mullioned windows and panelled tracery and housing the principal's lodgings. The quadrangle, which measured 120 feet by 90 feet but was slightly narrower at the gateway end had only two storeys plus attics at this time, which had the effect of making the tower look even grander. The only nearby competitor in height until the Radcliffe Camera was completed in 1749 was the spire of the church of St Mary the Virgin, constructed in the 1320s. The church itself had belonged to the university since the 1250s and it was used for religious services, lectures, meetings of the university's governing body and as the first university library.

The dining hall of the new Brasenose College was sited where it is now, on the south side of the Old Quad, though it was less elaborate in design and decoration than the present hall. There was an oriel window and also a gothic lantern over the timbered roof which allowed smoke to escape from a central hearth. The walls were covered in

small oak panels, with seats all round. The kitchens lay to the south of the hall and were probably converted from an earlier building on the site. The original chapel was very small, occupying a space to the west of the hall on the first floor, while the original common room for the fellows was on the ground floor, on the southern side of Staircase II. On the north side of the quadrangle, on the first floor, there was quite a small library. The rest of the quadrangle contained rooms for students and masters on the ground floor, first floor and attics (or 'cocklofts'). The original statutes state that the upper rooms were for three occupants and the ground floor rooms for four, so no-one was living in luxury. Below ground there were cellars, probably very damp in the early days. All told, the new college was a neat and economical design, providing all that the masters and students needed, modest in its architectural scope but in harmony with the existing buildings of the university.[3]

On 15 January 1512 Henry VIII, who at the age of 20 was more or less of student age himself, issued a royal charter formally authorising Smyth and Sutton to found a new college 'in the messuage, hospice or tenement in the University of Oxford now commonly called Brazen Nose' for a principal and sixty scholars and more to be instructed in 'sophistry, logic and philosophy as ancillary to theology', and its name was to be *The King's Haule and College of Brasennose*. The foundation of the college has traditionally been dated at 1509, when Bishop Smyth laid the foundation stone, but it could be argued that it was only then an unfinished building: it was the royal charter of January 1512 followed by the first statutes of Bishop Smyth that legally established it as Oxford's eleventh college.[4]

It seems that Smyth and Sutton disagreed about precisely how their new college should be run because the first statutes (now lost) were written by Smyth on his own, to the exclusion of Sutton. However, Smyth died on 2 January 1514, before the college building was completed. In his will he named executors with whom

Sutton negotiated a revised set of statutes, more suited to his own religious views, and these were confirmed by Sutton together with Smyth's executors in 1522. Sutton's religiosity is illustrated by the fact that in 1513 he was appointed steward of the monastery of Sion, an exceptionally wealthy house of Brigittine nuns at Isleworth. In May 1522 he was still an esquire but he was knighted at some time before his death late in 1524.

The preface to the revised statutes of 1522 describes the new foundation as 'a perpetual college of poor and indigent scholars, who shall study and make progress in philosophy and sacred theology'. Instruction in the college was to be given by a principal and twelve 'scholar-fellows' who should be at least bachelors of arts and natives of the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield, with a preference given first to those born in Lancashire and Cheshire, especially Prescot and Prestbury, and then natives of the diocese of Lincoln. The principal was to be elected by all the fellows and approved by the Visitor, the Bishop of Lincoln of the day. The principal and the six senior fellows together were invested with the real power within the college and they elected a vice-principal annually as well as all new fellows. The principal and fellows were not to be absent from college for more than a month in any year and strict penalties, including dismissal, were laid down for misbehaviour. There should be two bursars and a bible-clerk to read at meal times. The principal received £5 a year but the fellows little stipend other than free food and accommodation, except for certain specified duties. Principal and fellows were allowed to earn a limited amount of extra money from suitable employment that did not detract from their college duties.

An Oxford college at this time was not primarily intended for the tuition of undergraduates. The fellows were essentially in place to run a seminary for the Roman Catholic Christian faith and, if so inclined, to pursue their own scholarship, though they did give instruction to poor young men and boys with scholastic and clerical

ambitions. A novel feature of Sutton's statutes was the provision for up to six sons of noblemen to be admitted to the college, paying their own way, and this soon developed into the practice of admitting young men who were neither noble nor poor. Sutton also stipulated that these men should be placed under the control of a 'tutor' (his word) who would monitor their studies and behaviour. Scholars on the foundation were required to follow a course in logic and sophistry for three years before becoming bachelors and then a further four year course which centred on disputations (oral debates) in the college chapel on matters of natural and moral philosophy, after which they could take the master's degree.

Both Smyth and Sutton showed by these statutes that they were no admirers of the new learning which gradually established the love of Greek and Latin literature and poetry as the paramount scholarly study in Britain until late in the nineteenth century. Moreover the statutes were insistent that strict standards of discipline should be maintained in the student body. There were fines for all manner of offences, especially non-attendance at lectures and also being late: even corporal punishment was authorised, at the principal's discretion. This may sound bizarre but the student body at this time contained a good many very young teenagers, for whom the rod was considered a proper means of correction. The gates of the college were to be closed from 9.00 pm to 5.00 am and only Latin was to be spoken in hall and other public places. All members of the college were required to hear mass daily in the college chapel and to pray for the souls of founders and benefactors: they were to wear academic gowns and sober garments, nothing showy. Dice, dogs and musical instruments were forbidden and students were required to walk outside the walls in pairs. The new college was to be for serious study, intended by Smyth and Sutton as a place which would educate clergymen on traditional lines, leaving them well equipped to resist excessive change at a time of turmoil within the Church. This contrasted with Oxford's next college, Corpus Christi, founded in 1517 by the bishops of Winchester and Exeter as a fount

of new learning, with a library said to be one of the finest in Europe at the time.[5]

The early college, 1509-1642

The man entrusted with putting the wishes of Smyth and Sutton into effect was Matthew Smyth, a fellow of Oriel College, who was appointed the seventeenth principal of Brasenose Hall in August 1510 when the new college was in the process of being built: he was officially the first Principal of Brasenose College not later than 15 January 1512 and the first Oxford college head to use the title of principal. No family connection between Matthew Smyth and the founder has been firmly established but Bishop Smyth appointed Matthew to a benefice in the Lincoln diocese as early as 1508. The new college buildings were not ready for occupation until 1516, after the death of Bishop Smyth, so Matthew's first four years as principal were spent outside the college walls in nearby halls of residence, preparing for the eventual occupation. His tenure of the office lasted until his death in 1548 so this period of 36 years was inevitably a crucial one for the development of the fledgling college. In religious matters, which experienced a revolution in the 1530s, Smyth was prepared to bend before the wind and with seven senior fellows recognized Henry VIII, rather than the pope, as head of the English Church in July 1534, thus shielding the college from the wrath of the king.

Matthew Smyth also proved to be a very successful fund-raiser for his new college. The founders endowed Brasenose with lands worth about £2,000 and Richard Sutton seems also to have been influential in persuading Mrs Elizabeth Morley, the widow of a wealthy London draper and vintner, to make a significant gift of lands in Faringdon in 1515. Over the next sixteen years a further 31 landed properties were gifted to the college by benefactors, who included John Coxe, John Williamson, Sir John Port, John Elton and William Porter. Other major benefactors in Smyth's time between 1531 and 1548 included

Edward Darbie, William Clifton, John Claymond, Humphrey Ogle and John Booth. These benefactions put Brasenose about mid-way among the other colleges, judged by wealth.[6]

Two students of Smyth's Brasenose made an important impact in later life. One was John Foxe, who arrived at the college in 1534 when he was sixteen and became a fellow of Magdalen in 1539, though he resigned six years later on converting to Protestantism. In 1563 he produced a vast volume of 1,800 pages, subsequently famous as *Foxe's Book of Martyrs,* which recounted the lives and fates of all those persecuted by the Roman Catholic Church. Meanwhile, his Brasenose contemporary Alexander Nowell (who is said to have shared rooms with him) also became a fellow before his appointment as headmaster of Westminster School in 1543. As a Protestant he chose exile under Mary in 1555 but returned under Elizabeth, who appointed him Dean of St Paul's: despite causing offence by urging her to marry, he remained in this post until 1602. He was a notable benefactor of Brasenose, a keen angler and he allegedly discovered bottled beer after forgetfully leaving some ale out of doors for days and then discovering that it had fermented and exploded when opened.[7]

Matthew Smyth was followed as principal in 1548 by John Hawarden, formerly a fellow of the college. When he was elected, the boy king Edward VI had reigned for a year and under his advisers Protestantism took hold: a new order of communion was issued in 1548 and new prayer books in 1549 and 1552, all of which the conservative Hawarden was obliged to accept. Then the young king died unexpectedly in 1553 and his Catholic half-sister Mary reigned in his place, marrying the heir to the throne of Catholic Spain and re-introducing the Catholic Mass. In 1555 Hawarden attended the trial across the road at St Mary's of Thomas Cranmer, the Protestant archbishop of Canterbury, and Bishops Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley. They were all found guilty of heresy and the two bishops were burnt at the stake a few minutes' walk from the college in October that year: Cranmer was

burnt five months later, in 1556, the same year that Hawarden was forced to remove five Brasenose fellows from office for failing to attend the prescribed service in the college chapel.[8]

During this eventful year, Thomas Egerton, aged 16, arrived at Brasenose. He was the illegitimate son of a Cheshire landowner and received his BA in 1559, then studied law at Lincoln's Inn, where he was a barrister by 1572 and master of the bench in 1579. He then rose steadily through the offices of solicitor general, attorney general and master of the rolls. King James I made him lord chancellor and Baron Ellesmere in 1603 and he remained in office until 1617. Inevitably he amassed great wealth and acquired estates at Tatton in Cheshire and Ashridge in Hertfordshire which were inherited by his son John, who was created Earl of Bridgewater. Brasenose has produced many well-known lawyers but Ellesmere remains the college's most famous jurist.

Queen Mary died in 1558 and her successor Elizabeth, though a Protestant sympathiser, proceeded cautiously, unwilling to provoke hostility with Spain. The Elizabethan Settlement of 1559 confirmed the break with Rome and the queen became Supreme Governor of the Church, while an Act of Uniformity re-introduced Edward VI's Book of Common Prayer. Hawarden again bent before the wind and remained in office, unlike nine other heads of Oxford colleges, who were forcibly removed by the government when they refused to accept the new regulations. Brasenose pursued a path of conservative conformism, though there were many among its former students who later embraced Protestantism and also many who remained loyal to the old faith. This was a dangerous course after 1581 when all undergraduates were required to accept the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity and to be a Roman Catholic in England was high treason. In the last 22 years of Elizabeth's reign her government hunted down and executed 123 Roman Catholic priests and 56 laymen.[9]

Hawarden must be regarded as a successful principal because he avoided the many pitfalls of the times and under him the number of

students increased markedly. In 1552 there were nine fellows and nearly sixty students, about 40% of whom were undergraduate commoners. This growth continued under his successor Thomas Blanchard, about whom little is known except that he was a Yorkshireman and held office for ten years, from 1564. In 1566 there were 31 graduates, 57 undergraduates and eight poor scholars at the college. A number of valuable benefactions were made in Blanchard's time, including Lord Mordaunt's gift of the manor of Tiptofts and Higham in Essex, Richard Harpur's gift of lands in Derby and Alexander Nowell's re-founding of Middleton Grammar School, near Manchester (where he had been educated) together with 13 scholarships from there to Brasenose. Nowell appointed the principal and fellows as governors of the school and a fine new schoolhouse was built in 1586.[10] Around 1900 the old school closed and in 1910 the college contributed to the creation of a new 'Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School' which moved to various locations but still exists as St Anne's Academy. Nowell's original school house has been preserved by enthusiasts and is currently available for public use. Another important and long-lasting connection with schools in Manchester (then only a small town) was made when around 1560 ex-Brasenose student James Bateson was appointed head (high master) of Manchester Grammar School, founded next to what is now Manchester Cathedral in 1515.

In Blanchard's time there was in 1571 a particularly virulent outbreak of the plague in Oxford. This scourge had first arrived in Europe as 'The Black Death' in 1348 and it killed about a third of the population. Subsequent outbreaks were less serious but it did not go away, especially in London where a large population was crammed into insanitary streets. Oxford students had to flee the university because of plague in 1557 and in 1563 all lectures were postponed. In 1571 university lectures were deferred from April to October and Blanchard and all but four of the Brasenose fellows were given leave of absence. Six hundred people died of the plague in Oxford before April 1572

and in 1575 the disease was back again and the term was postponed. The Oxford historian Anthony Wood wrote that in 1577 'the Doctors and Heads of Houses all, almost to one, fled and not any College or Hall there was but had some taken by this infection'. St Mildred's Lane (or Brasenose Lane) was regarded as especially pestilential and had to be closed. There followed a relatively plague-free number of years, but in 1593 and 1603 it came back with a vengeance.[11] So life for most of the students at Brasenose was hard, not only because many of them were very poor, but because Oxford could be very unhealthy and remained so until the Great Fire of London in 1666 destroyed vermin and fleas and reduced subsequent outbreaks of the plague to a considerable degree.*

Thomas Blanchard resigned in 1574 and was succeeded by Richard Harris, who had previously been junior bursar and vice-principal. He was sufficiently well regarded as to be appointed one of the eight commissioners who drew up the statutes of Jesus College, the first Protestant college to be founded at Oxford and by no less a person than Queen Elizabeth herself, who issued its royal charter in 1571. The statutes of Jesus resemble those of Brasenose in many ways (the college head was also given the title principal) which suggests that Harris's voice was influential.

In February 1580 Harris made what would turn out to be a momentous decision and successfully negotiated the purchase of the chapel and dilapidated outbuildings of the former St Mary's College of Augustinian canons. This occupied a valuable city-centre site in New Inn Hall Street (now known as Frewin Hall). Between 1090 and 1150 a large stone house was built there with an undercroft which still exists, one of the oldest of its kind in Britain. The house was the property of a succession of secular owners until in 1435 one of them, Thomas Holden, transferred it to the Augustinian monastic order for

* See p. 170.

the foundation of a college of canons – clergy who were not monks but who lived in a community governed by religious vows. In the autumn of 1499 the Dutch scholar Erasmus was their guest for several months but the construction of buildings for the college made slow progress until the powerful Cardinal Wolsey gave them his support, as a result of which a large chapel was built between 1515–1525 which boasted a fine hammer-beam roof, very similar to that of the hall of Corpus Christi College and even the great hall of Wolsey's college, Christ Church. These roofs were probably the work of the Oxford carpenter Robert Carow, working from designs of Henry VIII's master carpenter, Humphrey Coke.[12]

Within a very short time of the chapel's completion, Henry VIII dissolved the monastic houses in England between 1536 and 1541 and the buildings of St Mary's College were at first used by secular canons and then as a school for local boys. Neither of these experiments were successful and the property, by then owned by Henry Hastings, the Puritan third earl of Huntington, was acquired by Brasenose in return for rents in Derbyshire which had been a benefaction of Sir John Port, whose father had been a good friend of Bishop Smyth. Hence Brasenose acquired a valuable and extensive property, 'containing by estimation 1 acre, 25 and half perches and an orchard of 21 perches'.[13] It was divided into several sections which were rented out, and the tenant of the property above the Norman undercroft was Griffith Lloyd, Principal of Jesus College, who rebuilt the house there.

Harris was clearly a rough diamond because in the summer of the same year he was enraged when the vice-chancellor, Dr Toby Matthew, a younger man who was head of a younger college (Christ Church, 1546) failed to seat him with the other heads of house on Act Monday, the forerunner of Encaenia. Harris stalked over to Matthew and told him in a loud stage whisper that he wished him the Devil's turd in his teeth. Matthew complained to the chancellor, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, and Harris was told to apologise, but he did not and bad relations ensued

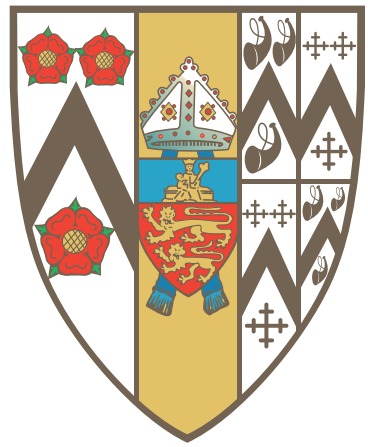
between Christ Church and Brasenose for several years afterwards, leading often to scuffles between the students of both colleges.

During Harris's years as principal the college benefited greatly from the generosity of Mrs Joyce Frankland, a daughter of a London goldsmith who hailed from Lancashire. Twice widowed and sorrowing for her deceased son, in 1586 she gave lands and property in Kensington and followed this with other gifts and bequests totalling a magnificent £1,840, no doubt influenced by her executor, Alexander Nowell. Three men who later made their mark as writers studied at the college in the early 1590s: the poet Richard Barnfield, William Burton and his more famous brother Robert, author of *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. In 1592 the queen came on a state visit to the university and Principal Harris was a member of the committee appointed to make arrangements for her reception: his particular responsibility was the erection and decoration of the stage in St Mary's where the queen was welcomed by the university's dignitaries. The colleges were required to contribute to the cost of all this on a scale which reflected their wealth and Brasenose's share was very considerable.

Richard Harris's last service to the college was to end a long-running dispute with Sir Edward Hoby over his lease from the college of the manor of Upbury and rectory of Gillingham, both in Kent, which had been bought by Alexander Nowell for the purpose of endowing the grammar school and scholars at Middleton. To recover debts running into hundreds of pounds the college appealed to the privy council which referred the matter to the senior law lords and the chancellor of the university. Sir Edward managed to wriggle out of payment for several years but in June 1595 he agreed to pay arrears totalling £330 and to pay for repairs to the church at Gillingham. This was less than the college was owed, but it was better than nothing. Perhaps satisfied with this result, Principal Harris resigned in August 1595 after 21 years in office, during which he had achieved a great deal to ensure the future prosperity of the college.

His successor lasted three months and this was no less than Alexander Nowell, Dean of St Paul's, the first man with a national reputation to be elected Principal of Brasenose. Born in either 1507 or 1511 he had studied at the college and received his BA in 1536. He was elected a fellow in 1545 but his career in the church took him away from the college, though he worked hard throughout his life to secure endowments for it. Given that he remained Dean of St Paul's until his death in 1602 it is strange that he accepted the principalship in September 1595 and then resigned it in December of the same year, a period just long enough for him to be awarded the degree of doctor of divinity by the university. His biographer Ralph Churton guessed two hundred years later that the appointment was made by way of thanks for Nowell's great services to the college as a benefactor and encourager of benefactors, and this may be true. As a Calvinist sympathiser he was certainly the first unequivocally Protestant Brasenose principal and he may also have been the first married one. His will, written on a single sheet of paper, bequeathed three books to the Brasenose library, one of which was his copy of *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*. Churton says of him by way of summary that 'His own art of angling suggests the true character of the man. Placid and contemplative, and studious of peace …'[14]

Nowell was succeeded by Thomas Singleton, a fellow of the college who had already been senior bursar and vice-principal a number of times. It is a mark of his standing that he was the first principal of Brasenose to be elected vice-chancellor of the university, from 1598–99 and then from 1611 to 1614. He presided over what was by now numerically the fourth largest college in the university, which had in 1612 some twenty fellows, 29 scholars, 17 poor scholars and 133 commoners. All these were either crammed into the main quadrangle (where trees grew in the middle) or distributed in the older halls surrounding it. The ground floor rooms in the old quad were occupied by a fellow with several scholars sleeping in the same room in truckle beds and there were also several occupants in the first floor rooms. In short, Brasenose was seriously overcrowded.[15]



Top left: William Smyth (c 1460–1514), Bishop of Lincoln, Lord President of the Council of Wales and Chancellor of Oxford University.

Bottom left: Sir Richard Sutton (1460–1524). Both these portraits of the founders of Brasenose are by an unknown artist, date from the early 1630s and are probably based on much earlier stained-glass images in the north bay window of the college hall.

Top right: The college coat-of-arms incorporates the personal arms of Smyth (left) and Sutton (right) with those of the bishopric of Lincoln (centre).

Alexander Nowell, Dean of St Paul's from 1561 and also Principal in the last four months of 1595 was a notable benefactor of the college as were Joyce Frankland (top right) and Sarah, Duchess of Somerset (bottom left). The oversized 'Childe of Hale' (bottom right) visited the college in 1617 and has been a legend and mascot ever since.

King James I, who visited Brasenose in 1605, wrote to the college fellows in Singleton's time suggesting that he should be replaced in his post by Henry Walmesley, another fellow, of whom James had heard good reports, but in fact when Singleton died in 1614 after nineteen years in office the fellows elected Samuel Radcliffe to take his place. Radcliffe was principal for thirty-four years and his destiny was to steer the college through very troubled times. Born in Rochdale in 1580 he was educated at Middleton School and came to Brasenose aged seventeen as a Nowell scholar and was elected a fellow in 1603. He was junior proctor of the university in 1610, making him the third university officer from Brasenose during the period 1610–1612, the others being Singleton, who was vice-chancellor and Lord Ellesmere, who was the chancellor. Although there were twenty fellows, only the six senior ones, with the principal, acted as the governing body and they were still elected, as the statutes decreed, on the basis of their northern birth. They dined at high table in hall at 11.00 am and had supper at 5.30 pm and were supposed to speak only Latin, as were the students, though there are signs that this requirement was beginning to lapse.[16]

Between 1600 and 1620 Brasenose matriculated more students than any other college except Exeter, but its revenue from endowments placed it only in eighth place, and the pay of the principal, at £80 a year, was the seventh highest, while the senior fellows might have earned, from various sources, about £50 in a good year. Tutorials and lectures were well established as methods of instruction and tutors accepted a good deal of responsibility for the academic, moral and financial welfare of their pupils. Undergraduates by now consisted of three classes. A small number of wealthy and high-born 'gentlemen-commoners' lived in the best rooms in the quadrangle, had servants to look after them, dined with the fellows on high table, wore fine clothes, went riding and had a lifestyle which probably cost their father about £50 a year. After them came the bulk of the commoners who were mostly from the lower gentry or merchant class, a very large number

from the north of England, and they could pay their way with relative ease. Third came the batellers who were poor, did menial jobs and lived somewhat hand-to-mouth, though many of them were also scholars with academic ambitions who eventually became fellows.[17]

On the whole the undergraduate body was young, with most students matriculating at sixteen, and they were certainly kept in order with corporal punishment, dished out by the vice-principal. Their day started with a chapel service at 5.00 am (6.00 in winter) followed by public lectures in philosophy, grammar or rhetoric. Dinner in hall came at 11.00 am after which there might be oral disputations, which played a large part in the curriculum. Recreation was limited, with ball games despised, especially football, though the fellows asked the Visitor whether they could set up a tennis court in college in 1608. He, foreshadowing what were to be the glory days of the nineteenth-century college, replied sympathetically that 'Bowes and brains, if long and deeply bent, will quickly weaken and crack', but no tennis court seems to have been built. Supper was in hall at 5.30 after which a student might work in the library, to which he had his own key. It was still a small library, though the number and quality of books (many chained to the shelves) had steadily increased with bequests and benefactions. The college gates closed at 9.00 and because candles were extremely expensive, many students were in bed by then.[18]

A momentous visit to the college was made in 1617 by John Middleton, a rustic born in 1578 in the Merseyside village of Hale, near Liverpool. He grew to the amazing height of nine feet and three inches, so earning the ironic nickname 'The Childe of Hale' and was employed as a bodyguard to Sir Gilbert Ireland of Hale Hall, who took him to the court of James I in 1617, where he is alleged to have defeated the king's champion in a wrestling match. On his return he stopped in Oxford and visited Brasenose, well-known to house many Lancashire men, and he is said to have left an impression of his hand – nearly twelve inches long – on a wooden doorpost in the college cellar.

Middleton died in 1623 and the college owns a portrait of him and two paintings of his hand, none of which are contemporary, so there is much about the 'Childe' that must be legendary. Two centuries later he was adopted by the Brasenose College Boat Club as a sort of mascot as its eights wrestled for supremacy on the river.[19]

An important change in the environment of the college took place between 1613 and 1619 when a new university library was constructed, thanks to the generosity of Sir Thomas Bodley. A scholar and former fellow of Merton College he became an MP and was entrusted with important diplomatic missions under Elizabeth I. In 1587 he married Ann Carew, a wealthy widow, and after the succession of James I in 1603 he devoted the rest of his life to his Oxford library project. The first library of the university had begun with a bequest made in 1327 and it was enlarged by a fine collection of manuscripts donated by Henry V's brother Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, between 1435 and 1437. These were housed in the same building as the university schools at the north end of what is now Radcliffe Square. Bodley's plan was to build a new library next to the schools to form a quadrangle dominated by a lofty tower which displayed five orders of architecture, starting with Romanesque at the bottom. After the completion of this building, the Bodleian Library was able to embark upon its career as one of the great libraries of the world. With this magnificent new facility to the north, the university church of St Mary to the south and the medieval All Souls College opposite, the Brasenose site became even more central to the life of the university. Yet the piece of land surrounded by these buildings was not at all attractive or healthy at this time. A range of houses ran on the other side of the street opposite the college and beyond that there were a series of dilapidated tenements.

James I died in March 1625 and was succeeded by his son Charles I who was intent (mostly for ill-advised personal reasons) on making war with Spain. For this he needed the permission of parliament to raise taxes and he called the Lords and Commons to meet

in Oxford in June 1625 because it was free of the plague which was raging in London. Hence the fellows and students of Brasenose would have been surrounded for a time by all the great men of the realm, though the parliamentarians brought the London plague with them and it devastated Oxford in the following twelve months. Suspicious of the new king's inexperience and high-handed methods the 'Oxford' parliament voted money for one year only and also criticised Charles's chief friend and adviser, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham.

Angry and disappointed, Charles dissolved this parliament but another back in London in 1626 also refused money and threatened to impeach Buckingham, so he dissolved it and raised taxes without their consent. The next parliament in 1628 produced a 'Bill of Rights' which stated that the king should not raise taxes without parliament's consent and also criticised his support for 'High Anglicans', who were Protestants with strong Catholic sympathies. When Charles ordered the dissolution of this parliament in 1629, MPs held the speaker in his chair while they passed a series of resolutions criticising the king's taxation and religious polices. After this Charles decided that he would try to rule without parliament and managed to do so for eleven relatively peaceful years.

The king's religious policy was strongly supported by William Laud, who had studied at St John's College in Oxford, where he became a fellow then proctor of the university in 1603 and president of his college in 1611. He was appointed Dean of Gloucester in 1616 and Bishop of St David's in 1621. His further rise to fame resulted from the patronage of Buckingham and he was moved to the bishopric of Bath and Wells and then London in 1628. After 1629 he encouraged Charles to rule without parliament by 'divine right', a notion that was anathema to both political and religious reformers. Laud's brand of churchmanship favoured ceremony, altars at the east end, music and 'the beauty of holiness', all of which the radical Protestants and Presbyterians or 'Puritans', as they were increasingly being called,

deeply disliked. From 1630 to 1641 Laud was Chancellor of Oxford University and he introduced reforms intended to tighten up discipline (he insisted on flogging for miscreant students), encourage hard work and introduce more elaborate ceremonial into chapel services. He was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633 and set about creating a High Anglican pattern of worship throughout England with a ruthlessness that made him many enemies and stored up trouble for the future.

For the time being, however, there was peace in England, the numbers of students at Brasenose, as at other Oxford colleges, continued to increase, and Principal Radcliffe had dreams of creating a far larger and more beautiful college. He was not married and he was a wealthy man and it is a matter of record that he personally paid £200 for the construction of six dormer windows on the hall side of the quadrangle in 1635, to match the ones already built round the other sides. Documentary evidence is lacking for the precise dates of the earlier windows and who paid for them, but it is very likely that they all resulted from Radcliffe's initiative. He also paid for the statues of the two founders in the niches of the hall parapet. This was only the beginning of his plans because he had long believed that the existing chapel was far too small and that the library was unworthy of the college. Contribution towards the building of a new chapel had already begun when Radcliffe took office and he worked steadily towards this goal.[20]

Chapter Three

The Civil War years, 1642-1649

Unfortunately, Radcliffe was overtaken by national events. When Charles I attempted to impose High Anglicanism on Scotland in 1637, thousands of Scots signed a Covenant pledging to defend Presbyterianism and defied the king's authority. Instead of compromising with the Scots Charles called his first English parliament for eleven years and asked for money for an army to enforce their obedience. Parliament refused and the Scots invaded and occupied Newcastle. Charles then called another parliament in November 1640 and with the king in a weak position, it denounced Laud and also Charles's powerful military adviser the Earl of Strafford, who was executed, while Laud was imprisoned. Parliament then passed a number of Acts which reduced the executive power of the crown. Most people in England were content with these measures but a determined group of Presbyterians in parliament went on to demand the abolition of bishops and the introduction of a Presbyterian church on the Calvinist model. Charles took a gamble and against centuries of tradition personally entered the House of Commons with the intention of arresting the Presbyterian ringleaders but they had been tipped off and were not present. The reaction of Londoners to this was very hostile and Charles had to leave the city for his own safety. In June 1642 Parliament offered Charles a limited monarchy with a Presbyterian church but he rejected this and raised his standard at Nottingham in August, commanding all loyal subjects to support him.

So began a civil war which lasted for six years during which some 140,000 men were in arms (about 10% of the adult male population). People took sides for a variety of reasons but in general Presbyterians and radicals favoured parliament while Anglicans and traditionalists supported the king. Geographically, London and much of the south

were for parliament while most of the north and west was royalist. Charles and his army set out to capture London, failed to defeat the enemy at Edgehill, Warwickshire, in October 1642 and was faced outside London by superior forces in November. Charles retreated and decided to make Oxford his capital and headquarters, so that life in the university changed dramatically. For four years the city housed the king and his court, loyal parliamentarians, the law courts and a garrison of many thousands of men, both infantry and cavalry. Charles occupied Christ Church and his wife Merton while Pembroke College, for instance, made room for an extra 107 men, women and children.

Even before settling in Oxford Charles had issued demands to the Oxford colleges for contributions to his war chest and Brasenose provided £500. This was technically a loan, though it was never repaid and Parliament issued a warning that the loan was illegal and would be punished in due course. Undaunted, the University Convocation voted in January 1643 to give its valuable silver plate to be melted down at the royal mint established in New Inn Hall and Brasenose thereby lost all its silver except for two chalices dated 1498 which the college still owns: all colleges were also required to maintain a hoard of food, which was kept at Brasenose in the tower. By 1643 it was clear that the city was likely to be besieged and by royal proclamation both townsmen and students were required to recruit working parties to construct fortifications: Brasenose provided the third highest number of university men (79), and they laboured at the junction of Christ Church meadows and Grandpont Street, from 6.00 am to 11.00 am and from 1.00 pm to 6.00. Not surprisingly, attendance soon waned and in due course the colleges had to pay a 'fortification tax' instead.[1]

From the start of the war Oxford had been required to find room for a host of courtiers, soldiers, administrators and others and the result was that the number of students fell drastically, especially after January 1644, when the king summoned a parliament of his supporters to meet in the city and many of them were billeted on the colleges.

Charles I before the battle at Edgehill (top) and Cromwell after the victory at Naseby, details from two 'history' paintings by Charles Landseer RA (1799–1879). Brasenose, like the rest of Oxford, supported the king and was duly punished by Parliament.

As before, they brought the plague with them, along with smallpox. Nineteen students matriculated at Brasenose in 1641 and seventeen in 1642 but only five and one in the next two years and none in 1645.

Meanwhile, the war went badly for the king. Parliament concluded a treaty with the Scots, promising them that England would turn Presbyterian in return for Scottish military support. In desperation, Charles was forced to seek help from unreliable Irish Catholic former rebels. In July 1644 the royalists suffered their first major defeat at Marston Moor in Yorkshire, largely because some very effective regiments from the eastern counties had been recruited and trained by Oliver Cromwell, a Huntingdonshire squire who now discovered quite late in life that he was something of a military genius. He and his soldiers were not Presbyterians, but independently-minded people who belonged to various radical sects of the Protestant faith and wanted to put an end to feudal methods of government such as Charles represented. Gradually they became known as 'Independents'. Cromwell persuaded Parliament to create a 'New Model Army' purged of moderates and this, commanded by Sir Thomas Fairfax, decisively defeated the royalists at Naseby in June 1645. Charles escaped but surrendered to the Scots in 1646 and they cannily turned him over to parliament in return for £400,000.

Parliament then made the serious mistake of ordering the army to disband without receiving the pay owed to them and another conflict might have broken out between the army and parliament had not Charles escaped to the Isle of Wight and made another treaty with the Scots, promising Presbyterianism for three years in return for their support. This reunited his enemies and Cromwell defeated an invading Scots army at Preston in August 1648. Arguing that Charles had committed treason by encouraging a Scottish army to invade England, Cromwell determined that the king should die. Possible opponents were forcibly excluded from parliament, leaving a 'Rump'. Charles was found guilty in a trial whose legality he did not recognize and in January 1649 he was ceremoniously beheaded in front of a large, though silent, crowd

in Whitehall. The monarchy and House of Lords were abolished and the Rump Parliament assumed control over a new 'Commonwealth' of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

Charles and most of his courtiers had withdrawn from Oxford after Naseby, leaving it to be besieged by Fairfax and his army. By this time Brasenose was used mainly as a barracks and only two rooms in the tower, the hall, chapel and two other rooms were not occupied by the royalist military or administration. The siege began in the spring of 1646 and it was over in June, with the garrison granted the honours of war by Fairfax, who promised to protect the university's libraries and other treasures. Most of the colleges were in a sad state and Brasenose, struggling financially even before the war, made a heavy loss in each of the war years, rising to £1,214 in 1645.[2] Parliament had warned the university that it would be punished for its support of the king and in 1647 they appointed a commission of 'Visitors' to reform it by requiring masters and students to take the Presbyterian oath of the Solemn League and Covenant and the Negative Oath which renounced all connection with the king and his court and administration. Heads of colleges were required to send in the names of all those on their books and the Visitors paid informers to tell them what was going on inside the college walls.

The headquarters of the Visitors was Merton College and in November 1647 Samuel Radcliffe, the Principal of Brasenose, was summoned before them but refused to recognize their authority: he was then told to appear before a parliamentary committee in Westminster the following week, involving a long and tiring journey when he was already in poor health. There he repeated his challenge but was eventually judged to be in contempt of Parliament and on 20 January 1648 he was officially removed from his office as principal. Radcliffe refused to resign or move from the lodgings so on 29 February the Visitors declared that the new principal was Daniel Greenwood, who had been a fellow of the college since 1629, but Radcliffe still

refused to move from the lodgings partly out of stubbornness and partly because he was very ill. The Visitors responded by putting a guard of soldiers around the lodgings, at his expense, and they were still there when on 13 April the chancellor of the university, Lord Pembroke, together with the Visitors, sat down at high table in hall and confirmed that Radcliffe had been deposed in favour of Greenwood. Still Radcliffe refused to move and he died in the lodgings on 26 June, after 34 years in office and he was buried across the road in St Mary's.[3]

On his death the fellows of Brasenose, following the example of their colleagues in Pembroke and New College, refused to recognize the authority of the Visitors, denied that Greenwood's appointment was valid and arranged for a new election to take place in chapel on 10 July. To prevent this the Visitors sent soldiers to arrest the three senior fellows and keep them in a locked room all day. Nothing daunted, the fellows proceeded to an election on 12 July in one of their own rooms and elected Thomas Yate, a fellow of the college since 1623. Eventually the Visitors summoned all fellows and members of the college to appear before them and swear that they would submit to their authority. Eighteen men appeared and most gave vague and evasive answers, which resulted in the gradual expulsion of thirteen of the sixteen fellows and a few undergraduates. The expulsions were announced publicly by an armed guard with beating drums who evicted the men physically if they did not go of their own accord. After the execution of the king in January 1649 an oath of loyalty to the new Commonwealth was required, which resulted in a few more expulsions of those who refused to swear.[4]

The new chapel, library and cloisters, 1649-1666

When the Rump parliament declared England, Wales, Ireland and Scotland to be a united Commonwealth after Charles I's execution the Catholics in Ireland were in revolt and the Scots immediately recognised Charles I's son as Charles II of Scotland. As commander

of the Rump's army, Cromwell crossed to Ireland and defeated the Catholic rebels using ruthless measures at the sieges of Drogheda and Wexford. Then he went up to Scotland and defeated Charles II's army at Dunbar in September 1650 and then again at Worcester a year later, after which Charles fled into French exile and Scotland was put under the control of an English governor. After these successes Cromwell and his Independent supporters urged the Rump to create a new constitution suitable for the times but the MPs proved reluctant to give up power. Losing patience, Cromwell calmly walked into the Commons in July 1653 with a squad of armed soldiers, seized the mace, told the MPs that they were corrupt, self-seeking and unworthy to govern, ushered them out of the House and locked the doors.

It is likely that Cromwell acted on this occasion in a fit of temper and that he did not have a clear idea of what to do next, but as an experiment he convened an assembly of 140 'saintly' men recommended by their local communities for honesty and ability. They proved to be inexperienced and unrealistic and Cromwell asked them to dissolve themselves in December. He then accepted a new constitution, the Instrument of Government, which made him the chief executive with the title of Lord Protector, served by a Council of State and a one-chamber parliament of 460 MPs. To suppress unrest, England and Wales were divided in 1656 into eleven military districts governed by major-generals who were tasked with ensuring loyalty to the government and high moral standards among ordinary people. This inevitably made the regime extremely unpopular and it was denounced by many as a military dictatorship.

Cromwell died in 1658 and his son Richard succeeded him as Lord Protector but did not rise to the challenge and soon resigned, causing chaos as various factions vied for power. General Monck, the governor of Scotland, solved the issue by marching from Scotland with his army and restoring Charles II, who accepted some of the restraints placed on his father's power by parliament up to 1642. Along with the

king, the traditional houses of Lords and Commons were restored, as was the Anglican Church established by Laud. In 1662 an Act of Uniformity was passed requiring all those holding public offices to swear an oath of acceptance to it and this effectively removed Puritans from positions of influence and power, in the universities and elsewhere.

The years from 1649 to 1660 were therefore troubled ones within the nation at large and it is quite surprising that this period was one in which Brasenose College began to be transformed from a relatively modest, rather monastic-looking building into a much larger and more beautiful place. Oliver Cromwell himself assumed the role of chancellor of the university from 1650 until his death and he was keen to see Oxford recover as quickly as possible from the effects of the Civil War. Moreover, Daniel Greenwood, Parliament's choice as principal, proved to be an able and efficient administrator and he was personally recommended by Cromwell for the office of vice-chancellor in 1650 and 1651.

Born in Sowerby, Yorkshire, in 1603 Greenwood studied at Brasenose and was elected a fellow in 1629. He was bold enough to be an outspoken critic of Laud, supported the Presbyterian ambitions of many Puritan MPs and had the reputation of being a strict disciplinarian in the Puritan cause. All the same, Brasenose students rose in number from 29 in 1648 to 59 in 1649 and 91 ten years later and they included William Hulme from Lancashire, who matriculated in 1649 and became a great benefactor of the college and Thomas Traherne, from Hereford, who arrived in 1652, received his BA in 1656 and MA in 1661. Traherne served as a parish priest near Hereford until in 1667 he became the private chaplain to Sir Orlando Bridgeman, one of Charles II's great officers of state. When he died in his late thirties in 1674 Traherne was relatively unknown to contemporaries but in the 1890s a large pile of his manuscripts were discovered by chance and subsequently declared by scholars to be outstanding works of prose and metaphysical poetry comparable with the compositions of John Donne. Another important figure from this period was William Petty, recruited by Brasenose as

The new chapel, built between 1659 and 1666, was designed by John Jackson, an Oxford master mason, and it replaced a much smaller one in the Old Quad (now part of the SCR). Some features, especially the roof, were cannibalised from the chapel of St Mary which once stood on what is now the Frewin site. Over the old hammerbeam wooden roof Jackson ingeniously created a coating of perpendicular style fan vaulting which was originally a plain whiteish colour, as shown in this well-known engraving by John le Keux, dated 1837.

an anatomy instructor in 1651. A man of wide-ranging interests, Petty mapped Ireland for Cromwell, acquired 30,000 acres and a knighthood, became an MP and FRS and founded the line of the earls of Shelburne.

So the academic community, both masters and students, recovered quite quickly at Brasenose but the main achievement during these years was the construction of a new chapel, library and cloisters. This was made possible by the will of the late principal, Samuel Radcliffe. He instructed his executors to sell his estate at Piddington in Northamptonshire within a year, giving one year's income to the poor of Rochdale. He estimated that this would raise £1,500 of which £1,000 should be spent on a new chapel. Completion of a new quadrangle and cloisters might cost another £600 while stone and timber for the building should come from the disused Augustinian chapel of St Mary on New Inn Hall Street which had been in the college's possession since 1580. In fact the sale of the Piddington estate realised £1,850 so there were enough funds for the work to begin but Radcliffe's family contested the will and there were many other delays, so a start was not made until 1656.

The Bursar, John Houghton, was in overall control of the project and his detailed accounts are still preserved in the college. The main practical 'overseer' of the work was a certain John Jackson, who had been a master mason elsewhere in Oxford, notably at the Canterbury Quad in St John's: his first priority was the demolition of Little St Edmund Hall, which had been used since the foundation of the college as accommodation for Brasenose students. Much of St Mary's chapel was demolished and slate and stone as well as most of the valuable wooden roof and some of the windows were brought across to the Brasenose site. Building of the new chapel, library and cloisters went on steadily until the summer of 1659, after which there was a lull for a couple of years.[5]

By this time Charles II had been restored and Daniel Greenwood, who had only been principal because of the intervention of the

parliamentary Visitors, was removed from office in August 1660 by a commission specially appointed to restore any perceived injustices imposed during the Interregnum. Under Greenwood the college had made a good recovery from the Civil Wars and he had embarked upon the new building projects for the chapel and library. He had imposed strict moral values on the college but this did not stop him from a degree of nepotism because he secured a Brasenose fellowship for his nephew, also Daniel Greenwood, soon after his own appointment in 1648. Nevertheless, he was described by a contemporary as 'a profound scholar and divine, and a circumspect governor'.[6] He retired to the rectory of Steeple Aston and left £400 to the college when he died in 1674. He was succeeded as principal by Thomas Yate, who had in theory been the legal principal since his election by the fellows in April 1648, though he had kept a very low profile in the intervening years. Four existing fellows were removed or resigned and three were restored: these were mild changes, in tune with the spirit of compromise that prevailed at the Restoration.

The restored principal, Thomas Yate, was born to a well-established family in Middlewich, Cheshire, in 1603. He matriculated at Brasenose in 1619, as did three of his younger brothers after him, and he was elected a fellow in 1623, becoming rector of Middleton Cheney in Northamptonshire in 1633. He later married Elizabeth, a daughter of Sir Thomas Bartlett and widow of Sir Richard Cave, who had been killed fighting for the king at Naseby. In the years before his restoration as principal Yate had earned his living as a lawyer and he was able to put his legal expertise at the service of the college once in office. He kept a careful check on its financial affairs and began a ledger book which maintained college records. He revived caution money and instituted fees for the taking of degrees. He also made sure that the construction project which he had inherited reached a satisfactory conclusion.

Most of the buildings were ready in outline when work stopped in 1659 but in 1661 contractors came back to complete the interiors,

Samuel Radcliffe, Principal from 1614 to 1648, probably painted by Gilbert Jackson, c1623.

Thomas Yate, Principal 1660–1681. He was able to complete the building of a new chapel and library which had largely been funded by a bequest from Samuel Radcliffe.

Though this view of the Old Quad was painted by William Matthison c1900 it would have looked very much the same during Samuel Radcliffe's time as Principal except that instead of a lawn in the centre there was an elaborate knot-garden.

The new Chapel and Library completed by 1666.

The Hall. This remains in its original location though it was effectively reconstructed in 1683–4 and provided then with the present panelling and furniture and the dominant feature of King Charles II's coat of arms with lion and unicorn. The chimney was installed in 1748, ending the era of the open central fire, and the present curved roof was added in 1751–2.

including marble and wooden panels and carving. The library, of which there is little record regarding the original interior furnishings, received its books in 1664 and the chapel was consecrated by the Bishop of Oxford on 17 November 1666. Beneath the library there was an open cloister with port-hole windows looking on to what became jokingly referred to as the 'Deer Park' (because it was so small). Before the building of the cloisters members of the college who died within its walls were buried in St Mary the Virgin Church but they were now buried in the cloisters, and indeed 25 people were buried there between 1669 and 1689, some of them victims of the plague or smallpox. Oxford was not a healthy place and many Brasenose fellows died during this period around the age of thirty.[7]

The total cost of all the new buildings was probably about £4,000. As to the design of the chapel, it was probably the work of John Jackson without any help (as is sometimes rumoured) from Christopher Wren. It is a mixture of architectural styles, resulting from the fact that many of the windows and the wooden roof came from the demolished St Mary's chapel. The intricate fan vaulting, made of wood and plaster, was almost certainly designed by Jackson to fit over the roof transferred from St Mary's and if it is argued that the perpendicular style had been long out of fashion, then the simple answer is that Jackson happened to like it. The former chapel was divided up into several rooms for fellows and students while the former library was redesigned as a suitable room for a senior fellow in 1678.[8]

The later Stuarts and some notable benefactors, 1666-1710

In October 1665, because of the notorious 'Great Plague' of London, Charles II called parliament to meet in Oxford and the students were sent home in order to make room for all the peers, MPs and their retinues: Principal Yate was asked to find room for the lawyer

Sir Nathaniel Hobart and other notables. Parliament used the main University Schools building, almost next to Brasenose, but that was something of a construction site because Archbishop Sheldon, the university's chancellor, had decided to fund a scheme first suggested by William Laud to build a suitable ceremonial hall for the bestowal of degrees and other university ceremonies: this would replace St Mary's which had been used for this purpose for centuries. Between 1664 and 1669 Christopher Wren constructed an impressive design based on a theatre in ancient Rome and Brasenose College found itself with another architectural masterpiece as a near neighbour.

Soon this Sheldonian Theatre was to be joined by the Ashmolean Museum, the gift to the university of Elias Ashmole. Born in 1617 he was a London lawyer married to Eleanor Mainwaring, many of whose relatives had studied at Brasenose. A royalist during the Civil War, he held a military post in Oxford from 1644 to 1645 and during this time he 'lodged' in the college and pursued a number of studies on his own initiative. His first wife died young and he made a career out of marrying rich, older widows and studying alchemy, among many other things. He also befriended the Tradescant family, who owned a large collection of botanical, mineral and other items. Ashmole paid for a catalogue of this collection in 1659, was appointed Windsor Herald in 1660 and became a founding member of the Royal Society in 1661. The next year the Tradescant collection came to him as a bequest on the death of its childless owner. He went on to write works of local history and genealogy and received a diploma as a doctor of physic from Oxford in 1669, presented to him by Principal Yate of Brasenose.

In 1677, having no children, Ashmole offered the Tradescant collection together with his own to the university on condition that it would be suitably housed and made available to the public. A new building was completed in 1683 on Broad Street very close to the Sheldonian Theatre and it is considered to be the world's first university museum. Ashmole was not formally a student at Brasenose, but it is the

college with which he had the closest personal connection. Sir Arthur Evans, who was certainly a Brasenose man, became keeper of the collection in 1884 and found that much of it had been lost through negligence. Ten years later Evans was able to have it transferred to much larger premises at the University Galleries on Beaumont Street, where he was able to extend the collection of antiquities and painting.

Brasenose itself is very much indebted to Sarah Alston, born in 1631, who was widowed after the death of her first husband, Edward Grimston, a Brasenose lawyer who died at the age of 23 in 1655. In 1661 she married the fourth Duke of Somerset and after his death in 1675 she finally married in 1682 the second Baron Coleraine. Her father, Sir Edward Alston, had been a doctor and president of the royal college of physicians and she inherited great wealth from him as well as all three of her husbands. Having no surviving children of her own she became a generous benefactress, founding a grammar school for boys in Tottenham and making gifts to the Green Coat Hospital in Westminster, constructing almshouses in Froxfield, Wilts, for thirty widows and providing for the poor of Westminster. Her most spectacular donations were to St John's College at Cambridge, and in honour of her first husband, to Brasenose. Scholarships were provided from 1679 at Brasenose for four boys each year, educated in Manchester and preferably born in Lancashire, Cheshire or Hereford and the number was increased in 1686 and 1691 to a total of eighteen Somerset scholars each year. They were provided with accommodation, food, caps and gowns and were required to speak only in Latin on pain of a fine. The income for the scholarships was provided by tenanted farms in Buckinghamshire and Wiltshire. Sarah died in 1692 at the age of 61 and an early eighteenth century copy of her portrait hangs in the college hall.[9]

Released from the straightjacket of Puritanism, almost the whole of England relaxed a good deal during the reign of Charles II and morals entered a looser phase, led in no small degree by the king himself. Coffee-houses spread from Oxford and London, gossip and the

smoking of tobacco became fashionable, and heavy drinking returned with a vengeance. The university provided public lectures given by senior professors and readers but most of an undergraduate's tuition came from within the college. Since 1614 Brasenose had employed in-house lecturers in humanity, Greek, Hebrew and philosophy, to which mathematics was added before the end of the century.

In 1669 a very eccentric ex-Merton College student called Anthony Wood, who had toiled for many years over a history of the university and its colleges, written in English, was offered £100 by the university press for the right to translate his book into Latin and publish it. It appeared in two handsome folio volumes in 1674, one dealing with the university in general and one with the colleges. Wood's entry for Brasenose described in considerable detail who the founders were and also the first benefactors and principals, as well as details of the buildings. In 1691–2 a further two-volume work of Wood's was published in London, entitled 'An Exact History of all the writers and bishops who have had their education in the University of Oxford from 1500 to 1690, together with annals of this period.' These and other works of Wood have left an invaluable record of the university's history up to his time. In his opinion, after the Restoration, former distinctions in the university of age and rank lapsed somewhat and formalities between masters and students and between the students themselves, were greatly reduced.[10] In 1675, one year after the publication of Wood's book, the superb draftsman and engraver David Loggan produced his *Oxonia Illustrata* which contained forty plates of university views, especially drawings of each college. The one of Brasenose is very fine and shows the new library and chapel in all their glory.

After eighteen years of relative peace in England panic spread across the country from 1678 onwards, fuelled by anti-Roman Catholics who feared there was a 'Popish Plot' to kill Charles, put his Catholic brother James on the throne and allow England to be manipulated by the powerful Louis XIV of France. Two parliaments attempted to

introduce a bill excluding James from the succession to the throne in favour of an illegitimate Protestant son of the king and in March 1681 Charles called another parliament in Oxford, not this time to avoid the plague but the hired London mobs used by his opponents to intimidate MPs. Even so it appeared likely that an Exclusion Bill would be passed and to prevent this Charles dissolved the parliament after only a week and never called another before his death in 1685.

This 'Exclusion Crisis' was a period when the two nicknames 'Whig' and 'Tory' began to be used: the Tories supported the king and the royal prerogative while the Whigs championed the authority of parliament.

No doubt the students of Brasenose College were inconvenienced again by the presence of parliament but Thomas Yate was ill in bed throughout March: he died in April 1681 after 21 years in the principal's lodgings and he was buried in the cloister, close to the chapel door. Like Daniel Greenwood before him, he saw no harm in appointing members of his own family to college offices. His brother Jeremiah was made steward of the college and two nephews were elected fellows; one, named William, was considered by Wood as a 'dunce' and unworthy of the office. Yate was one of the governors of the university press which from 1669 was housed in the basement of the Sheldonian, while as an experienced lawyer he represented the university in a number of important legal cases. His main service to the college was undoubtedly the successful completion of the ambitious building programme begun by Greenwood and funded by Radcliffe and he was also helped by adopting a pragmatic approach to the turbulent issues of the time, which kept both him and the college out of serious trouble.[11]

Yate's successor was Brasenose's tenth principal, John Meare, who was destined to hold the office for nearly thirty years. A Cheshire man, like Yate, he matriculated in 1665 and was elected a fellow in 1670, so he was in his mid-thirties when elected. Although the fellows of Brasenose were required to resign when they married, this rule did not apply to

the principals. Meare's wife had the unusual first name of Heath and it is sadly recorded that on 15 September 1685 their infant daughter Elizabeth died and was buried the same day in the ante-chapel. However, they had at least two sons, one of whom became a scholar of the college and another a fellow, as well as two nephews, likewise one a fellow and another a scholar. In addition to being principal Meare held the livings of Great Rollright in Oxfordshire from 1687 and Middleton Cheney, Northants, from 1693 and he was appointed a Canon of Wells in 1703.

After a few years in office, Meare decided that now that the college had a fine new chapel and library, it was time that the hall received some attention. In 1683 the original minstrel's gallery was removed and the roof was rebuilt with more timbers taken from St Mary's chapel, while another bay window was installed in the south wall at the dais end. In 1684, Arthur Frogley, reputed to be the best joiner in Oxford, installed the fine oak panelling that can be seen today and built the tables and benches which have served for over three centuries. A majestic touch was provided to this effectively new hall by John Hugeloot's carving of the dominant royal coat of arms with its magnificent supporting lion and unicorn.[12]

Charles II's speedy dissolution of the Oxford parliament in 1681 outwitted the Whig opposition and his Catholic brother James was well received in Oxford in May 1683 when he visited several colleges, including Brasenose, where his carriage drove along Brasenose Lane and loyal addresses from college officials were made. Shortly after this the Whig-inspired Rye House Plot to assassinate both Charles and James was discovered and this spelt doom for the king's opponents. The works of reformers Hobbes and Milton were ceremoniously burnt in the Schools Quadrangle and the Tories were in high favour. Hence when Charles died in February 1685 without legitimate heirs (though he had at least seven illegitimate sons) his brother succeeded as James II.

James managed to survive a rebellion in England by Charles's son the Duke of Monmouth and in Scotland by the Earl of Argyll

and he increased the size of the standing army. He also gave Roman Catholics dispensations from the Test Act of 1673 which forbade them to hold public office and indeed he claimed, very controversially, to be able to give dispensations against any Act of Parliament. He then proposed to get Parliament to repeal the Test Act and began a wholesale programme of dismissing from office those who opposed this policy. Even in Oxford James meddled with university affairs by allowing Catholics to hold office at Christ Church and University College and he used royal prerogative courts to force the fellows of Magdalen to accept a Catholic as president and expel the fellows who refused to recognise him. Then he tried for seditious libel the Archbishop of Canterbury and six other bishops who opposed his religious policies: they were acquitted, to widespread rejoicing.

When James's second wife the Italian Mary of Modena gave birth to a son and heir on 10 June 1688 his opponents realized that they must act, because the boy would be brought up a Catholic and the entire Anglican religious establishment would be overturned. By his first wife James had two Protestant daughters, Mary and Anne, and a group of Lords and MPs offered the throne to Mary, who was married to the experienced soldier William, Prince of Orange and ruler of the Protestant Netherlands. William accepted the challenge and sailed with an army to England, arriving on 5 November 1688. Many of James's supporters deserted him and he decided not to fight but instead fled to France, where he received the support and protection of his Catholic first cousin, King Louis XIV. Parliament declared that he had abdicated and that William III and Mary II were jointly king and queen. Hence it was claimed that a 'Glorious Revolution' had taken place without bloodshed in which the legitimate ruler had been deposed by Act of Parliament and replaced by a more suitable candidate. This was hailed as a triumph of parliamentary government over rule by 'divine right' and it put the Whig party back into the driving seat.

James did not give up his claim to the throne and sailed with French assistance to Ireland where he was recognized as king by the Irish parliament and sought to establish a permanent regime there, granting religious freedom to both Catholics and Protestants. But William took an English and Dutch army over to Ireland and defeated James at the Battle of the Boyne on 1 July 1690. James fled again to France where he lived in exile until his death in 1701, though this was by no means the end of the 'Jacobite' cause or indeed of religious conflict in Ireland. Meanwhile, public officials, including clergy, were required to swear allegiance to the new monarchs and the Anglican Church by February 1690 or be dismissed from their posts. Many so-called 'non-jurors' felt unable to do this and lost their jobs accordingly.

At Brasenose the most important event of the 1690s, certainly in the long run, was the death of William Hulme in 1691. A member of a Lancashire gentry family which had sent three members to Brasenose, he may have attended Manchester Grammar School and probably matriculated at Brasenose in 1648, proceeding afterwards to Gray's Inn. He made a good marriage in 1653 to Elizabeth Robinson, which brought him a valuable estate and mansion house at Kearsley, near Bolton, and he was also the owner of Hulme Hall in Reddish as well as other estates in the Manchester area. The Hulmes had one son but he died aged 15 and at William's death all his estate was left to his widow and after her death to trustees who were charged with setting up a number of generous benefactions. Initially four Hulme exhibitions were established at Brasenose for the sons of Lancashire clergy so that they could study for the four extra years needed for a master's degree after their BA. These were subsequently increased in number and a lectureship in divinity at the college was also established.

The estates which funded the Hulme Trust were modest in size but as Manchester grew to be a great industrial city the rents they produced became enormously valuable and during the 19th and 20th centuries the trustees were able to be very generous.

They sponsored 641 young men to attend BNC between 1692 and 1881 and in that year an Act of Parliament allowed the trustees to extend their benevolence beyond the strictures of Hulme's will.

Accordingly they founded William Hulme's Grammar School in Manchester and re-founded the Hulme Grammar School in Oldham, as well as supporting Manchester Grammar School, Manchester High School for Girls, Bury Grammar School and Owen's College in Manchester, the forerunner of the university. The trustees also continued to be generous supporters of BNC and when a common room for graduates was established in 1963 (at first in St Mary's Entry) it bore the Hulme name.[13]

As early as 1705 it was clear that Principal Meare was suffering from mental illness and was increasingly incapable of conducting college business. The fellows appealed to the Visitor to replace him but he refused and initially Meare's responsibilities were carried out by the vice-principal, James Smethurst. Then Smethurst died in 1709 and the fellows elected another vice-principal without any involvement from Meare. The Bishop of Lincoln took grave offence at this and declared the election void, which might have led to quite a quarrel had not Meare died in May 1710. He had been vice-chancellor for one year in 1697 but it did not go well and he had serious conflicts with his colleagues: other than this he made little impact on the university. He can be credited with the fine remodelling of the hall at Brasenose but his regime had been light to the point of lax and he was described by his contemporary Thomas Hearne as not being noted 'for learning or anything else'.[14]

In fact it cannot be claimed that Brasenose produced many principals, fellows or graduates in the second half of the seventeeth century who made a significant mark in the wider world. Sir William Petty was certainly a major figure and of other fellows William Ashton was the author of many books on religious subjects, Thomas Hinde became Dean of Limerick, Edmund Entwistle became Archdeacon

Brasenose in 1674, engraved by David Loggan (1634–1692). Though Scottish, he studied his art in Danzig and was employed by the university in 1669 as 'public sculptor'. Over several years he drew and engraved all the Oxford colleges and published the results in his *Oxonia Illustrata* of 1675. His image of BNC shows the extended upper storey and attics in the original quadrangle as well as the new library and chapel quadrangle which had not long been completed.

of Chester and Thomas Frankland, despite being a forger and impostor, wrote important historical accounts of the early Stuarts. As for graduates, Thomas Traherne was a notable writer of prose and poetry, though unrecognised in his day, George Carte was a respected historian and biographer, Robert Eyre became lord chief justice from 1725 to 1735, George Clarke was secretary at war under William III and John Robinson became Bishop of Bristol, lord privy seal and Bishop of London. This is not a long list of notable people. Yet Lawrence Washington, from a family of Northamptonshire squires, matriculated at BNC in 1619 and became a fellow in 1623 and university lector in 1627. Laud appointed him proctor in 1632 and Washington assisted in his policy of purging the university of Puritan priests. The tables were turned during the Civil War and Washington was ejected from his rich living of Purleigh, in Essex. He seems to have died a poor man in 1652 but his eldest son, John, emigrated to Virginia where in due course Lawrence's great-great-grandson George made quite a name for himself.

Chapter Four

The controversial Dr Shippen, 1710 - 1745

At the beginning of the eighteenth century Brasenose was a physically attractive college of medium size and wealth populated by about fifty students who hailed from the grammar schools of the north. A few were sons of northern gentry who returned to run their family estates or had mild political ambitions: the rest studied in the hope of pursuing worthy but generally low-profile careers as Anglican parish priests, lawyers, academics and schoolmasters. The death of the unfortunate John Meare in 1710 left the principal's lodgings vacant and the fellows elected in his place one of their number, Robert Shippen, aged 35. His father had been a fellow of University College then rector of Stockport so Robert, along with several brothers, was educated at Stockport Grammar School. From there he studied at Merton College and was then elected a fellow of Brasenose. In 1705 he was appointed professor of music at Gresham College in London and elected a fellow of the Royal Society the following year. He was very well-connected socially: his uncle Edward emigrated to the American colonies, made a fortune and became the first mayor of Philadelphia while his elder brother William married an heiress worth £70,000 in 1695 and embarked on a political career as MP for Bramber in Sussex in 1707.

In the same year as his election as principal Shippen married Frances, a daughter of Richard Legh, owner of the fine mansion and estate at Lyme Park, Cheshire. She was the widow of Sir Gilbert Clarke and some seventeen years older than Shippen, who was her fourth husband. She continued to call herself 'Lady Clarke' after marriage and according to Thomas Hearne, the Oxford antiquarian and diarist who scarcely had a good word to say about Shippen or his wife, she had an income of £400 a year and they lived grandly in Oxford,

a house in London and a country manor in Berkshire. She was a very proud woman, Hearne thought, much given to drinking and gaming. To accommodate this wealthy and probably demanding wife the fellows allowed the principal's lodgings to be expanded southwards to include rooms between the tower and the library. About this time Shippen was also appointed rector of Great Billing, Northants and rector of Whitechapel in London: he drew the revenues from these but they were run by curates. One of his first moves as principal was to authorise the expensive panelling of a new common room for the fellows: demand for more light in the rooms of the Old Quad also led to the fitting of twenty Georgian sash windows to replace the originals.[1]

Shippen's brother William was well-known at Westminster as a Jacobite – a supporter of the Stuart claimants to the throne. James II had died in exile in 1701 and Louis XIV as well as the pope immediately recognised his son James Edward as the rightful successor. In response, parliament declared him a traitor and forbade the recognition of his royal titles. When William III died in 1702 he was succeeded, as parliament had decreed, by James II's surviving Protestant daughter, Anne, but to High Anglicans her Whig government was unpopular because it tolerated 'Dissenters', who were Protestants who did not conform to Church of England doctrines. At Brasenose Sir Francis Bridgeman, clearly unimpressed by the government's hostility to the Stuarts, left money in 1701 for an annual address to be given at the college in praise of James II.

In 1708, when he was twenty, James Edward made his first attempt to regain the throne by planning an invasion of the Firth of Forth. He received the enthusiastic support of the French because France and England had been at war since 1701, but his fleet was dispersed by a combination of the Royal Navy and bad weather. In November 1709 Dr Henry Sacheverell, a fellow of Magdalen College, caused a sensation when he gave a sermon in St Paul's Cathedral which criticised the government's religious policy and even raised doubts

about the legitimacy of the Revolution of 1688. He was tried at the bar of the House of Commons, by which time 100,000 copies of his sermon had been printed and he had gained many supporters. He was found guilty but punished lightly and the affair helped the High Anglican Tories to return to power in 1710.

It was therefore dangerous and illegal to be a Jacobite, but that did not prevent Oxford from being the centre of English Jacobitism for the next decades and there were few more Jacobite colleges than Brasenose. Shippen, along with many other heads of Oxford colleges, feted Sacheverell in Oxford after his trial and the following year the principal remarked that it was unfortunate that a candidate for Brasenose was a Whig because that 'was against the present humour of the College'.[2] In August 1714 Queen Anne died without leaving children to succeed her and the throne passed, as laid down by parliament, to her next Protestant heir who was George, the electoral prince of Hanover: his mother's mother had been the daughter of James I. The accession of a German prince unknown to English people gave the Jacobites their big opportunity and one of their sympathisers was the Duke of Ormonde, chancellor of the university. He resigned, but Shippen and other senior members of the university voted for his brother, the Earl of Arran, to take his place.

In September 1715 the Earl of Mar and a few hundred Scottish supporters proclaimed James Edward king. By October Mar had nearly 20,000 men and was in control of most of Scotland beyond the Forth but he was an indecisive commander and failed to defeat the government forces, while a smaller army of English Jacobites was beaten at Preston in November. James Edward arrived in Scotland in December but by then the Jacobites were on the defensive and he returned to France in January 1716. Three years later he came back with a few hundred Spanish troops but they and local Jacobites were mopped up at Glen Shiel in the Highlands in June. The 1715 rebellion was the best chance the Jacobites ever had of achieving their aim, but

they did not give up and many in Oxford and Brasenose remained nostalgically attached to their cause.

In 1718 Robert Shippen was elected vice-chancellor and he retained the office until 1722, ensuring that he and Brasenose were prominent in university affairs during this period. According to Hearne, Shippen became very unpopular by using his authority to interfere in university elections and appointments and he gained as much money as possible from the renewal of liquor licences. Hearne suggests that he made as much as £500 on the death of the licensee of one public house in Oxford – this at a time when his salary as principal was probably not more than £100 a year.[3]

There seems little doubt that from the first Shippen had imaginative ideas about the further development of the college because in 1715, 1724, 1727 and 1736 the college acquired the freehold of a total of seven neighbouring High Street properties, which opened up many possibilities. As early as 1712 the well-known architect Nicholas Hawksmoor produced highly ambitious drawings for a central square with St Mary's and the Bodleian at the south and north, All Souls and Brasenose entirely rebuilt in baroque style to the east and west and a round library extension for the Bodley in the centre. Hawksmoor's twin-towered scheme for a new All Souls quadrangle was in fact built between 1720 and 1734 but his designs for the library were set aside in favour of the stupendous 'Camera' conceived by the architect James Gibbs. Funded by the will of wealthy physician John Radcliffe who died in 1714 leaving £40,000, this project went ahead in 1737 and was completed by 1749. Hence for nearly thirty years everyone in Brasenose lived opposite two very busy and noisy building sites as first the towers of All Souls and then the massive dome of the Radcliffe Camera gradually edged into the sky.

Hawksmoor produced a second scheme for Brasenose in 1719 in the grand baroque manner, with two quadrangles, two towers and several pillared porticos. This would have involved the demolition of the

entire existing college and would have cost a fortune as well as causing massive disruption and inconvenience. Clearly it did not recommend itself to the governing body, either because it was too drastic or because no benefactor stepped forward to finance it. In 1734 a less radical plan was put forward by Hawksmoor which retained the existing chapel and library but constructed a new hall and second quadrangle with frontage onto the High Street: this also failed to find favour.[4] However, Shippen did manage to 'modernise' the old quad to some extent by introducing two novel features; a sundial and a central statue.

The sundial (still there) was erected on the north side of the quad in 1719 at the not exorbitant cost of £9. The statue, installed in 1727, was the gift of George Clarke, a former student at Brasenose, fellow of All Souls and MP who held high office, especially at the admiralty, as a Tory under William III and Queen Anne. He was MP for Oxford between 1717 and 1736 and was also active as an architect, responsible for major additions to Christ Church, Magdalen and Worcester and he collaborated with Hawksmoor on the rebuilding of Queen's College. The statue in question was fashioned in lead by a Flemish sculptor, Jan van Nost, who worked in London in the early part of the eighteenth century and it was based on a famous original by Giambologna, another Flemish sculptor who became court sculptor to the Medicis in Florence.

Sculpted in marble in 1562 the original is a dramatic portrayal of a heavily-muscled Samson about to kill a prostrate Philistine with the jaw-bone of an ass. It was intended for a fountain in Florence but instead given to the King of Spain who in turn gave it to Prince Charles when he visited Spain in 1623. It passed through various hands and arrived at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1954, where it can still be seen. Jan van Nost produced several versions of the original, many of which survive: the Brasenose one was less dramatic. In order to show off this acquisition to best effect the existing garden within the old quad (perhaps similar to the one shown in Loggan's drawing

Robert Shippen, Principal 1710–1745, also VC, from a bust in chapel.

A copy of Giambologna's original 'Samson' at Wimpole Hall, near Cambridge. In Jan van Nost's 'Cain and Abel' version that stood in the centre of the Old Quad from 1727 until its destruction in 1881, the murder weapon was closer to its target.

One of many rejected schemes for the rebuilding of Brasenose. This one, c1712, is by Nicholas Hawksmoor, whose later designs for All Souls were accepted.

of 1675) was dismantled and a lawn laid out with the statue standing in the centre on a specially constructed plinth. Because this Nost version was by no means a simple copy of the Giambologna original it was described at the time as portraying Cain's murder of his brother and it was known by generations of Brasenose men as 'Cain and Abel' until it was removed in 1881. The choice of a statue apparently portraying two naked men wrestling as the centrepiece of an academic institution seemed an odd choice to many Brasenose students and over the years it suffered many indignities at the hands of merrymakers.[5]

Robert Shippen died in 1745, the year in which the Jacobite cause had its last hurrah in the rising led by James Edward's young son 'Bonnie Prince Charlie'. His army captured Edinburgh and then defeated government forces at Prestonpans in September, following this with an invasion of England which reached as far as Derby. But the hoped-for support of Englishmen did not materialise and the Jacobites returned to Scotland where they were routed by the government at Culloden Moor in April 1746. Charles fled back to France and this time the highland clans were forcibly disbanded, their estates cleared and the wearing of tartan forbidden.

Shippen's reputation has been comprehensively demolished by Professor J.Mordaunt Crook in the brilliant 'biography' of Brasenose that he published in 2008 in time for the quincentenary of the college. According to Crook Shippen acquired his fellowship by trickery, his professorship at Gresham's was a sinecure, he had no real vocation as a clergyman, he took oaths of loyalty to the successors of James II while being temperamentally a Jacobite, he found jobs for his friends, including a Brasenose fellowship for his nephew and he acquired livings in plurality. As vice-chancellor he was deeply unpopular and exceeded his proper authority, his scholarship was poor, his Latin was bad and he spoke in public unimpressively. After his wife died in 1725 he acquired a reputation for lechery and gave 'the pox' to one of the prettiest women in England, who died as a result. Crook's verdict is

damning: 'Shippen of Brasenose was an intriguer, a trickster, a bully and a womanizer'.[6] Much of the uncomplimentary information about the principal comes from Thomas Hearne's diary, entitled *Remarks and Collections*, but diaries are not necessarily balanced in their views, and Hearne died ten years before Shippen. Moreover, it seems ungrateful that Hearne should have written about Shippen so critically given that while vice-chancellor he shielded the Jacobite Hearne from attacks by Whig critics.

On the other hand, apart from the sundial and Cain and Abel there was little to show for Shippen's thirty-five years as principal, with the important exception of the acquisition of the High Street properties. Moreover, it cannot be said that Brasenose in his time was in any particular way a distinguished college. The discipline was lax, as it was almost everywhere else in Oxford, and both fellows and students were no longer required to work hard at their academic studies. The college was not socially smart, unlike some of the grander colleges such as Christ Church, Magdalen and New College. Most Brasenose men still came from the north, along with their northern accents, and the number of gentlemen commoners was not as large as many other colleges. During Shippen's period in office the fellows, who had generally matriculated at Brasenose, were nearly all quite young clergymen from Lancashire and Cheshire (average age about thirty), few of whom were of gentle birth though several were the sons of parsons. They tended to hold their fellowships for about fifteen years before taking up one of the college's livings, where they worked unpretentiously. Very few were men of academic distinction.

Some improvement, 1745-1785

Shippen was replaced as principal by Francis Yarborough, born about 1696 into a family of minor Yorkshire gentry. He matriculated at University College and was elected to a Brasenose fellowship in 1719,

serving as junior bursar from 1729 and senior bursar from 1730 to 1737. He resigned his fellowship in 1739 on his appointment as rector of Aynho, Northamptonshire, and he moved from the rectory there to the principal's lodgings shortly after his election in December 1745. The Jacobite rebellion was in full swing at this time and there were only twelve matriculations at Brasenose between April 1745 and March 1746, which may have been because young men were responding to the call to fight for one side or the other. But enthusiasm for Jacobitism had been on the wane at Oxford for some time and after the battle of Culloden realists perceived that the future unquestionably lay with the Hanoverian monarchy, the Anglican Church and the Whigs.

The Radcliffe Camera opened in 1749 and Radcliffe Square assumed very much the aspect that it has today. The jumble of houses and tenements that had previously stood on the square were swept away and with them the Brasenose stables, which moved to Holywell. The college now unquestionably had a place at the heart of the university in what became recognised as one of the most magnificent architectural assemblies in Europe and this had a noticeable effect on morale in the college. Proximity to a great library encouraged scholarship and more members of the gentry classes were attracted to enlist at Brasenose.

Yarborough was keen to see improvements within the college, especially in hall, where the smoky open fire in the middle was replaced by a new chimney in 1748, paid for by young gentleman commoner Assheton Curzon, a scion of the famous Derbyshire noble family: any money left over was spent on improving and repairing his own room (number 4 on Staircase III). Three years later the principal personally paid £50 for the glazing of the hall and attic windows and a further £120 for the installation of a fine new stuccoed ceiling in hall and also the gateway and library staircase. He followed this with £30 in 1753 for a new cupola over the hall and in 1756 he presented the library with a bust of Samuel Radcliffe and paid for improvements to the east-end window in chapel: in 1763 he gave £30 for new paving in hall in black

and white marble. Perhaps inspired by the generosity of their principal, in 1752 three gentlemen commoners, Henry Currer, Richard Heber and James Dansie gave £12 each for new furniture in the tower room. In the chapel Thomas Dummer, a gentleman commoner, had already made in 1731 a gift of the fine brass eagle lectern still in use today and this was followed in 1749 by the gift of the two brass chandeliers from another gentleman commoner, William Drake.[7]

In 1756 Britain went to war again with France and it seems that just one Brasenose man was commissioned in the army. There were only thirteen matriculations that year and a record low throughout Oxford as some young men chose a military rather than an academic career. This 'Seven Years War' ended triumphantly in 1763 with Britain gaining Canada as well as several Caribbean islands and Florida: meanwhile in India the French accepted the dominance of the British East India Company. A new young king, George III, succeeded in 1760 and the future looked bright.

In 1767 an attempt was made to enforce a greater degree of discipline at the college. In the early part of the century breaches of rules were seldom punished and the vice-principal's records reveal no attempt to enforce discipline between 1731 and 1767. In that year it was decreed that the college gate would be kept closed until after morning chapel and in 1768 the habit of students riding or taking the coach up to London was forbidden and permission for absence had to be sought from the principal. A list of the vice-principal's power and responsibilities dated 1770 shows that he was the chief disciplinary officer of the college with powers to fine everyone below MA status, especially for absenteeism at meals in hall and services in chapel. Punishments generally consisted of fines or impositions (writing out pages from worthy books) with rustication or expulsion as last resorts.[8]

Dr Yarborough died in Bath in 1770 after a very calm reign at Brasenose during which the college had gradually risen in prestige and wealth as a result of unspectacular but efficient governance. Though he

had no particular claims to scholarship himself, Yarborough possessed a fine library of books on scientific, philosophical and other subjects, valued at £350, which in his will he left to the college. To succeed Yarborough the fellows elected in May 1770 a very promising young man, William Gwyn. The son of a Lancashire clergyman, Gwyn was born in 1736, matriculated at Brasenose in 1751 and was elected a fellow six years later. Three months after his election as principal he travelled to Brighton on Friday 17 August, ordered dinner for 2.00 pm and went for a walk. He never returned. On the following Sunday his body was found by local youths, 'lying flat on his face by the edge of a path-way west of the town close to Brighton churchyard among standing barley'. He had not been robbed or assaulted and 'the principal physician of Brighton' pronounced that 'in his opinion Mr G[wyn] fell in a fit and was suffocated for want of timely assistance'.[9] For their able young principal to die so suddenly aged only 36 was a tragic blow and no doubt a shock to everyone in the college.

Gwyn was replaced by Ralph Cawley, a much older man, whose father had been the master of Wigan Grammar School. Cawley entered the college on the lowest rung of the social scale as a batteler in 1738 but prospered academically and was elected a fellow in 1744. Subsequently he was appointed to the college living of Stepney where he was somehow able to spend £690 of his own money in building a new rectory there, for which he was accorded the official thanks of the college. It may well be that this generosity was a major factor in his election as principal.

By now the number of students at the college was rising and accommodation became scarce. From 1768 gentlemen commoners were no longer permitted to keep servants in college rooms and by 1770 the decision had been taken to move the principal's lodgings from the tower to one of the properties on the High Street that had been acquired by Shippen in 1736. This emerged after alterations as a plain but handsome house in the Georgian style which boasted at

Top left: Francis Yarborough, Principal 1745–1770, from a painting in 1763 by Tilly Kettle, who was doing restoration work on the Sheldonian at the time. Top right: The Principal's Georgian-style Lodgings on the High Street, first occupied in 1771 but demolished in 1887. Left: Between 1779 and 1782 the library was re-modelled by James Wyatt who provided the fine coved ceiling and classic columns of today though the windows on the Deer Park side were blocked in with bookshelves and did not return to their present state until 1954.

least sixteen rooms, including two 'parlours' and two dining-rooms. The Cawleys moved there in 1771 after the college had spent £2,000 on its refurbishment, including £42 spent by Cawley himself on a new coach-house. The vacated premises in and around the tower were converted for the use of the bursar and senior fellows. Cawley continued to be generous, paying £35 for a monument to Bishop Smyth in Lincoln Cathedral and £240 for a new window over the altar in chapel. He also left his library to the college in his will.

There is no doubt that during the 18th century academic life at the university was very slack. There had never been written examinations for the BA and MA degrees, but at least in earlier centuries examination by 'disputation' had been rigorous, with the candidate required to defend a series of propositions against an opponent, rather in the manner of a debating society. In former times students had been required to attend lectures and if they proved themselves after a prescribed course of study to be fluent public speakers, conversant with Latin and well-informed on a wide range of scholarly issues, they could certainly be regarded as well-educated and equipped for professional or public life. By the 1770s, however, serious academic study was more or less voluntary, especially for students on the higher social scales. Hence in some cases BA and MA degrees were awarded after a very casual process of examination. Similar slackness was found among the dons: many professors gave few, if any, lectures and many fellows and tutors neglected their academic duties but enjoyed college social life, especially eating and drinking, sometimes prodigiously. On the other hand, if a minority of academically minded students and fellows wished to pursue their own studies with diligence, there were few better places than Oxford to do so.

One of the first voices that urged a reform of this decayed system was that of John Napleton, who matriculated at Brasenose in 1755, served as vice-principal from 1769 to 1770 and senior bursar from 1771 to 1776. In 1773 he published a book entitled 'Considerations on the

Public Exercises for the First and Second Degrees in the University of Oxford' which criticised the existing system, not least because a brilliant candidate and a dullard were both awarded the same unclassified degree. He also argued that disputations held in private led to gross abuses. His solution was that there should be three classes of degree, effectively first, second and pass and that examinations should be held in public. For a while his arguments fell on deaf ears, but it was this Brasenose man who first proposed what later became accepted practice.[10]

Under Cawley the fellows continued with their attempts to improve the manners and discipline of the students, notably ruling in 1775 that all students when encountering fellows within the college should show some visible sign of respect. Further regulations were produced to deal with a constant problem – the failure of students at all levels, as well as some fellows, to pay their battels (bills for food, drink and accommodation). One Brasenose student in Cawley's time who was not ill-disciplined or lazy was Ralph Churton, an orphan educated at Malpas Grammar School in Cheshire whose education at Brasenose was partly paid for by the rector of Malpas. Born in 1754 he matriculated in 1772 and was elected a fellow in 1778. He took over the college living of Middleton Cheney, Northants, in 1792 and was appointed archdeacon of St David's (Wales) in 1805. He was particularly interested in the history of the college and published biographies of Bishop Smyth and Sir Richard Sutton in one volume in 1800 and the life of Alexander Nowell in 1809: all college historians have been indebted to him and the governing body recognised the importance of his (voluntary) work by the grant of £100 in December 1808.

Churton's contemporary Henry Addington arrived at the college in 1774 (one year after the college decided to number each staircase) by a more privileged route. His father was a medical man who had been physician to the former prime minister, William Pitt the Elder (Earl of Chatham), and Henry went to school at Winchester College. He took his BA degree in 1778, became a barrister, then MP for

Devizes in 1783. He was a popular Speaker of the House of Commons for twelve years up to 1801 when, upon the resignation of William Pitt the Younger, George III made him his prime minister. The wits of the opposition scoffed that 'Pitt is to Addington as London is to Paddington', which was largely true. He negotiated an unsatisfactory truce with Napoleonic France in 1802 and resigned in 1804 when Pitt agreed to resume office.[11]

After his resignation Addington was created Viscount Sidmouth and he was lord president of the council, lord privy seal and eventually home secretary from 1812 to 1822, a very troubled period during which he was obliged to introduce stern and unpopular measures to counter radical movements throughout the country. Until David Cameron assumed the role in 2010 Addington was Brasenose's only UK prime minister, and indeed the college has produced relatively few high-ranking politicians. Christ Church, by contrast, can claim thirteen prime ministers and Balliol four. The dominance of Christ Church in producing very high profile people is partly attributable to the close connection established between the college (a royal foundation of Henry VIII) and two prominent schools, Eton College (founded by Henry VI) and Westminster School (re-founded by Elizabeth I), both of which were patronised by the aristocracy and gentry. Brasenose's association with northern grammar schools provided it with a different intake. Moreover, during this century a shocking decline took place among many of the ancient grammar schools, where headmasters felt it perfectly proper to reduce the number of pupils drastically and enjoy being paid to do relatively little.

Two more men of Principal Cawley's era made a national name for themselves. One was Benjamin Hobhouse, who became an MP and served as a minister under Addington, and the other was John Latham whose career at the university was academically brilliant, leading to his appointment as physician to the Prince of Wales and president of the Royal College of Physicians. By 1776 Cawley was ill and seems to have

lost grip over college affairs because many disputes arose between the fellows over financial matters and the appointment of officials so that an appeal had to be made to the Visitor for a resolution. Soon after this Cawley died in August 1777, still only in his late fifties, and he was buried in the ante-chapel. Six years later, the Reverend George and Mrs Austen entrusted Cawley's widow with the care and tuition of their two daughters, Cassandra, aged nine, and Jane, aged seven. The arrangement was short-lived: the girls found her stiff and formal and, worse still, caught a serious illness from which Jane very nearly died.

Cawley's successor, Thomas Barker, was a good example of how an academically able young man could rise through the Oxford system: his older brother had been a servant of the college, a respected butler, who was living in a small house in Catte Street when his brother moved into the principal's house in the High Street. Barker matriculated in 1745 and was elected to a fellowship in 1750, filling the important office of senior proctor in the university in 1760. Elected principal when he was about fifty, he had a comparatively short run of eight years in office but he made an important donation of £300 in 1781 towards the reorganisation and redecoration of the library.

Principals Yarborough and Cawley had both left a large number of books to the college and more shelves were needed to accommodate them so the advice was sought of the fashionable architect James Wyatt, who had already designed Heaton Hall, a neoclassical mansion near Manchester. He produced a handsome plan for the library which involved closing in the windows on the college side and filling the wall space this created with new bookshelves. The valuable volumes of the Tudor library, which had been among the last in Britain to be chained to their shelves, were released. At either end of the library Wyatt inserted two classical columns and above it he created a coved ceiling. Hence the renovated library was effectively a classical, book-lined open space which could be put to multiple uses, though it was not open to undergraduates until 1879.[12]

A fine etching of the Old Quad by George Hollis, d.1842.

The other important event of Barker's day was the foundation in Brasenose of what is accepted as the oldest college dining club in Oxford. This was started by Joseph Alderson who matriculated in 1779 and in his third year (late 1781 or early 1782) he persuaded three freshmen, Robert Hesketh, James Pemberton and George Powell, to join him in founding a dining club which they may have called the Phoenix Society. Two years later Robert Blencowe and Francis Rodd were admitted but not until October 1786 were firm regulations laid down for a 'Phoenix Common Room' which would consist of twelve members, each paying five shillings a year and meeting on Sunday nights. These original Phoenix members were not drawn from the social elite of the college and contained no gentlemen commoners: if anything, they were academics. Alderson himself became a respectable clergyman in Norfolk and of the fifteen original members a third became Oxford dons. So the Phoenix may have started soberly, but it soon gained a more exuberant momentum and was a significant feature of college life during the next two centuries.[13]

Chapter Five

Top College, 1785-1842

It is remarkable what can be achieved at any institution or organization when it is led by the right people at the right time. Under its next two principals, William Cleaver and Frodsham Hodson, Brasenose emerged, with Christ Church and Oriel, as one of the university's top three colleges in terms of size, wealth and social status. Cleaver was born in 1742 to a father who ran a fashionable private school in Buckinghamshire and he studied at Magdalen College and was elected a fellow of Brasenose in 1762. His first tilt at a big job came in 1768 when he applied to be Bodley's Librarian and received the same number of votes as a rival candidate who was preferred because he was a few months older. His next move was to cultivate an influential patron so he became private tutor to George Grenville, the young son of the prime minister of the same name and nephew of Earl Temple, owner of the magnificent Stowe House and estate in Buckinghamshire. Grenville went on to Eton and Christ Church and in 1779 inherited Stowe and the Temple earldom from his uncle. He was appointed lord lieutenant of Ireland in 1782 and created Marquess of Buckingham in 1784. Meanwhile Cleaver steadily worked his way up at Brasenose from fellow to vice-principal and then to senior bursar.

Buckingham's respect and support for his old tutor seemingly never wavered: no doubt as a result of his help, after a period in nominal charge of the living of Northop in Flintshire Cleaver became a prebendary of Westminster Abbey in 1784 and he was elected to succeed Barker as Principal of Brasenose in the following year. Only two years later he was made Bishop of Chester then Bishop of Bangor in 1800 and of St Asaph in 1806, a post he held until his death in 1815. The annual income of the bishopric of Bangor in 1835 was £4,464 and

of St Asaph £6,301: this made the latter, surprisingly for a remote diocese in North Wales, the fourth richest see after Canterbury, York and London. The salary of the Principal of Brasenose had been £100 in 1749 and £200 in 1770 but under Cleaver it was raised to a minimum of £1,000 plus an allowance for food. The remarkable thing is that until his resignation as principal in 1809, Cleaver's main residence was not the relevant episcopal palace but the principal's house on the High Street.[1]

The link between Cleaver and the Grenvilles was made clear to all when Buckingham's eldest son and heir, Richard, Earl Temple, matriculated at Brasenose in 1791 at the age of fifteen. This was a signal to other members of the aristocracy and gentry that Brasenose was not only an acceptable choice, but a college in high fashion. Meanwhile, Cleaver himself cut a very impressive figure – tall with a stately way of walking, hands clasped on his chest. As a bishop he sat in the House of Lords and was entitled to wear purple gloves and a large wig and be addressed as 'My Lord', which placed him well above other Oxford heads of house. Yet he was not pompous and remained respected and popular within the college. The high reputation of Brasenose is reflected in the fact that only nine undergraduates were admitted to the college in 1785, Cleaver's first year, whereas there were 27 in 1809, at a time when, owing to the French wars, student numbers in the university were generally in decline. Moreover, only one of the nine admitted in 1785 was technically a 'gentleman' unlike about 20 of the intake in 1809.

As well as being increasingly gentrified, Brasenose was becoming rich as a result of the able management of the estates it had received from ancient benefactions. In 1794 a senior fellowship at Brasenose was worth about £200 a year and a junior fellowship £140. Livings owned by the college in London were raised to £350 a year and in the country to £300, while the college income doubled from £4,700 in 1790 to £9,200 in 1810 – less than Christ Church and New College,

but high compared with most other colleges. All this was achieved despite the fact that in Cleaver's second year, 1786, the privileges of gentleman commoners had been significantly reduced because they no longer enjoyed special seats in chapel or were permitted to dine at high table in hall. But they could still wear a distinctive gown, while noblemen were allowed a gown trimmed with gold and a mortar board with a gold tassel.[2]

To this college of young Earl Temple increasingly came undergraduates with grand, though still often northern names such as Fortescue, Egerton, Drake, Moseley, Heber, Cholmondeley and Sykes. Sir Tatton Sykes, famous in his ancestral Yorkshire as a 'John Bull' character, race-horse owner, master of hounds and breeder of sheep, matriculated in 1788 and stayed a few terms. Less admirable was George ('Squire') Osbaldeston who was expelled from Eton but matriculated at BNC in 1805 and proved to be the worst sort of rowdy aristocrat, though he excelled at all sports, which were just becoming fashionable. Later he sat, without enthusiasm, for a 'pocket' borough as MP but gambled his inheritance away and died in poverty. He probably had little in common with Richard Barham, who matriculated in 1807 and later became famous as the (anonymous) author of the very popular collection of myths and stories he called *The Ingoldsby Legends.*

In 1793 Revolutionary France declared war on Britain as well as most other European monarchies and until Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo in 1815 the nation was at war except for two shaky, short-lived truces. Apart from making a respectable contribution to local defence, Brasenose did not produce many serving soldiers and can claim no resounding military names. Far from abandoning their studies to fight, many young gentlemen jostled with each other for entry to the college. Given this increase in the college's students, it was natural that Cleaver and the governing body should be looking for ways to increase its accommodation. Plans were drawn up to build new rooms over the kitchen block but they did not find favour: nor did rather an

ugly scheme of 1804 to replace the attics in the Old Quad with a more formal third storey.

In 1807 the architect Sir John Soane, who had done work at Stowe House, produced a much grander scheme to build a second quadrangle with a classical High Street front which would have looked rather like a smaller version of Stowe itself: three years later an eighteen-year-old architect called Philip Hardwick produced another design for a second quadrangle which had a Strawberry Hill gothic look about it. In the end nothing came of these plans except for considerable bills from the architects concerned: the only work completed was a remodelling in 1807 of the cloisters below the library to provide several extra rooms and in 1810 a new building next door to the kitchen block which contained twelve new sets of rooms.[3]

During Cleaver's later years the work of Napleton and others who had demanded reform of the university's examination system resulted in a series of regulations which abolished the existing system and introduced competitive and public examinations (1801), examination lists (1802) and classified degrees (first and second) in 1809. Cleaver was not opposed to reform and while energetic in recruiting young men from the upper classes, he did not neglect to encourage those capable of outstanding scholarship. In 1807 Brasenose men won the Craven Scholarship and the Chancellor's Prize, while in Cleaver's last year, 1809, the first in which classified degrees were awarded, only three firsts were given in Literae Humaniores (classics) and all three were Brasenose men: then between 1808 and 1810 BNC men achieved a fifth of all firsts.[4]

Among the most impressive of Cleaver's students from an academic point of view were the Heber brothers, Richard and Reginald. Their father, Reginald senior, who was both a Shropshire landowner and a parson, had been a fellow of the college and Richard matriculated around 1790. By the age of twenty he had edited the works of two classical authors in four volumes and was already a committed

book-collector. During his lifetime this interest developed into a fanatical obsession and he died in 1833 the owner of an estimated 105,000 books. He was also MP for Oxford University and a founder of London's Athenaeum Club. His younger brother Reginald matriculated at the college in 1800 and won the Newdigate Prize Poem to great acclaim in 1803. He gained his BA in 1804 and was awarded a fellowship at All Souls, after which he was for sixteen years a country parson at Hodnet in Shropshire where he wrote a large number of very popular Anglican hymns. In 1823 he was consecrated Bishop of Calcutta, which included most of India as well as parts of Africa and Australia. Three years later he died suddenly of shock at the age of 42 having plunged into a cold bath in the intense Indian heat.[5]

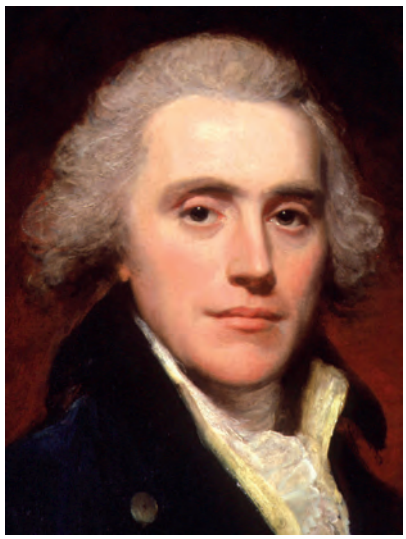
In 1808 Cleaver hosted a low-key visit to the college by the exiled Louis XVIII of France who had been given refuge at Stowe by the Grenvilles. The following year, after what can only be described as an impressively successful career, he resigned as principal though he remained Bishop of St Asaph until his death six years later: he was well respected there for important administrative reforms and the building of new houses for his clergy. In Cleaver's place the fellows elected one of his most gifted students, Frodsham Hodson. Born in Liverpool in 1770 to a clergyman father he was named Frodsham because of family connections with that village in Cheshire. He won a scholarship from Manchester Grammar School to BNC, matriculating in 1787 and graduating BA in 1791. Two years later he was awarded the university English prize for an essay on 'The influence of Education and Government on National Character'. He was elected a fellow of BNC in 1794 and the following year became associated with St George's Church in Liverpool, where he was an absentee chaplain for much of his career, which caused adverse comment there. But in Brasenose he was a very popular and efficient tutor as well as being a chief examiner for the university. In 1808 he was appointed rector of St Mary's Stratford-by-Bow and he was elected principal the following year, aged 39.

Top: JMW Turner painted this splendid watercolour in 1803 when he was 28 and had just been elected RA. It was etched and printed as the frontispiece to the Oxford Almanack of 1805. The original painting, unframed, is currently kept in the print room of the Ashmolean Museum, where it was deposited by the Delegates of the Clarendon Press in 1850. Left: This view by Charles Augustus Pugin was engraved by John Bluck and printed in the publisher Rudolph Ackermann's two-volume History of the University of Oxford (1814) which contains 114 hand-coloured engravings. Over the years many of these have been ripped out of the original books and sold as single items. Ackermann produced a similar volume for Cambridge in 1815.

Bishop William Cleaver, Principal 1785–1809, after John Hoppner RA.

Frodsham Hodson, Principal 1809–1822, also VC, after Thomas Phillips.

Ashurst Gilbert, Principal 1822–1842, also VC, after Thomas Phillips.



Henry Addington, Viscount Sidmouth, Prime Minister 1801–1804, after Sir William Beechey RA.

Cleaver was in many ways a hard act to follow but Hodson was also a fine-looking man with an impressive presence and persuasive manner of speaking. He married in 1808 and had four daughters and one son, whom he named in honour of his Brasenose contemporaries, Grenville and Heber, both of whom proved to be valuable supporters of both himself and the college. He was the university's chief examiner for a second time from 1808 to 1810, vice-chancellor in 1818 and regius professor of divinity, canon of Christ Church and rector of Ewelme, Oxfordshire, all in 1820. Both in the college and the university he was accorded the respect due to a man who worked hard, maintained high academic standards and governed well: he claimed to be proud of answering almost all his letters by return of post. In general he was not pompous or unduly pretentious, yet Mark Pattinson (a later rector of Lincoln College) famously claimed that Hodson drove back to Oxford after a long vacation in a coach and pair but changed to a coach and four for the last leg of the journey on the grounds that 'it should not be said that the first tutor of the first College of the first University in the world entered it with a pair.' This was no doubt a joke. Hodson was not averse to jokes. When he caught Mark Pattinson's father (a BNC undergraduate) sitting on top of Cain and Abel he asked him what he was doing and Pattinson senior replied (in Greek) 'I walk on air and contemplate the sun'.[6]

During his time as principal Hodson was widely regarded as one of the most influential men in Oxford, not only because he was the head of one of its most successful colleges and was himself a scholar of high repute but because he was also an active local politician in the Tory interest. In 1809 he played an important role in the election as chancellor of William, Lord Grenville, who had briefly been prime minister from 1806 to 1807: as well as being a politician, Grenville was a scholar and a bibliophile. Hodson also supported Richard Heber's attempts to be elected as MP for Oxford: he failed in 1806 but succeeded in 1821. It was certainly his friendship with the Grenvilles that ensured

Brasenose played an important part in the visit to the university in the summer of 1814 of the allied crowned heads – the Tsar of Russia, King of Prussia and their host the Prince Regent, who dined in the Radcliffe Camera on food prepared by the Brasenose kitchens and made use of the college hall and library.

With friends in high places it seemed very likely that Hodson was heading for a well-deserved bishopric but he was unlucky enough to suffer for twelve days with an extreme case of bowel obstruction: this sapped his strength and he died in January 1822, aged 51, and was buried in the ante-chapel. The high profile of Brasenose principals was maintained by his successor Ashurst Gilbert, the son of a captain in the royal marines, who won a scholarship from Manchester Grammar School to BNC in 1805. He was one of four men to take a first in 1805, another being the young Robert Peel, and he was elected a fellow in 1809. Although well qualified for this academically, Gilbert also made use of the fact that he was related to the founder, Bishop Smyth, and also the benefactress Joyce Frankland. He was a university examiner from 1816 to 1818, though by his own admission he considered teaching something of a chore: but his colleagues recognized superior administrative qualities in him and elected him principal at the age of 35. No doubt he was helped by the fact that he was physically imposing, tall and with fine features. Soon after his election he married Mary Wintle, a vicar's daughter, and they eventually had eleven children. The third, Elizabeth, contracted scarlet fever in 1829 and lost her sight: this did not prevent her in adult life from being an important pioneer of organizations for the welfare of blind people.

Gilbert was principal for twenty years, filling the post with 'zeal, dignity and kindness' and when he left in 1842 Brasenose was the second biggest college in Oxford after Christ Church with 20 fellows, 26 scholars and 95 commoners. It was three times larger than Merton, five times larger than New College and nine times bigger than Magdalen. The principal was paid £1,725, the fellows between them

£3,640 and the scholars £750. The college's income was twice as large as that of the university and it continued to rise as industrialisation made its property, especially in the cities, more valuable.[7]

It was during Gilbert's period in office that organized competitive sport began to develop into a major feature of university life. For centuries Oxford students had not been encouraged to take part in games, certainly not football, and any exercise taken tended to be in the form of horse riding or individual walks. During the eighteenth century there were still disreputable activities such as bull-baiting and cock-fighting, again not encouraged by the authorities. Then suddenly the proximity of the river Thames (always known as the Isis in Oxford) provided a playground for athletic young men from about 1800 onwards, perhaps because boys at Westminster School and Eton College began to row in the 1790s. In the summer of 1815, a month before the battle of Waterloo, an eight-oared clinker boat from Brasenose and one from Jesus College decided to race home from Iffley Lock after a day on the river: the BNC crew won and this is generally hailed as the beginning of the summer Eights races, which were held regularly after this date.

By 1826 four college crews were taking part and because it was not possible for them all to race side by side, the idea of 'bumping', which had begun informally at Eton, was developed. Under this system crews raced in line astern over a number of days and went up or down in the order depending on whether or not they were physically 'bumped' by the crew behind or whether they were able to bump the crew in front. In 1828 a similar event for college second eights was started and given the name 'Torpids'. In 1829 a crew representing the university raced another from Cambridge and won, but lost the next races in 1836 and 1839. The decision was then made to found the Oxford University Boat Club, with the prized 'blues' being awarded to those who raced against Cambridge.[8]

In the college eights Brasenose established a strong lead, winning in 1822, 1826 and 1827, after which records are lost until the

wins of 1839 and 1840. In 1839 the Brasenose eight rowed 47 miles down to the fine stretch of water at Henley to compete the next day for the Henley Grand Challenge Cup against Oxford Old Etonians, Wadham College and First Trinity, Cambridge (who won), thus starting what became the famous regatta. The Brasenose colours eventually settled as black and gold with black blades and the first VIII's boat was generally named 'The Childe of Hale' in honour of the 17th century giant, John Middleton. His portrait in the college shows him wearing clothing coloured purple, red and yellow and these colours were worn by members of the eight first as a rosette and later as a necktie.[9]

One of Principal Gilbert's main tasks was to deal with the religious upheavals of the 'Oxford Movement' in the 1830s, both in the college and the university as a whole, where he served as vice-chancellor from 1836 to 1840. In 1833 the reforming Whig administration which had just passed the Great Reform Bill turned its attention to the established Anglican Church in Ireland, which it 'modernised' in various ways, such as by reducing the number of archbishops and bishops. This alarmed a number of Oxford theologians led by John Henry Newman, Edward Pusey and John Keble, all sometime fellows of Oriel, who produced a series of 'Tracts for the Times' in which they criticised easy-going Anglican liberals who were prepared to pay lip-service to general religious principles without necessarily being totally committed to them. They were all impressive men and undergraduates flocked to hear their sermons and read their publications, no doubt returning to their colleges to debate far into the night with their contemporaries, many of whom still aspired to a career as priests in the Anglican Church. Newman's ninetieth Tract of 1841 was the most explosive because it claimed that the Anglican Thirty Nine Articles, to which all university men had committed themselves before being admitted, could be interpreted as being compatible with the Roman Catholic religion.

Principal Gilbert was not persuaded by the arguments of the 'Tractarians' and joined with other heads of colleges in denouncing

Tract XC when it was issued. Newman became a Roman Catholic in 1845 and later a cardinal and a saint, but the Anglo-Catholic movement within the Anglican Church survived and flourished: Keble's memorial is the college at Oxford named after him, founded in 1870, while Pusey House was founded in 1884 to continue Pusey's work. In general Brasenose men were not seriously influenced by the Tractarian movement, with the significant exception of Alexander Forbes. He matriculated at BNC at the age of 23 in 1840 and was immediately impressed with the arguments of Newman and others and became a close friend of Pusey, who engineered his appointment in 1847 as vicar of St Saviour's, Leeds, a new church funded by Pusey to serve the Anglo-Catholic community. Only one year later Forbes was appointed, aged 31, to the bishopric of Brechin in the Episcopalian Church of Scotland, where he pursued his Anglo-Catholic agenda until his death in 1875. This led over the years to serious controversy and trials for heresy but Forbes left behind him the pro-cathedral of St Paul in Dundee as well as other churches and educational establishments.[10]

As vice-chancellor of the university Gilbert took a middle course in religious issues, supporting the ideal of 'Church and State'. He favoured neither the Tractarians nor the evangelical wing of the Church and objected in 1836 to the appointment of an evangelical, Dr Renn Hampden, as regius professor of divinity. He encouraged many Brasenose non-resident MAs to take part in a vote of censure against Hampden which was passed but vetoed by the university proctors. The protesters then assembled in Brasenose hall and arranged for a mass petition against Hampden, while Gilbert forbade any Brasenose student from attending his lectures. But Hampden was supported by the Whig government, so he kept his job and was eventually made a bishop. In 1841 Gilbert did manage to prevent the appointment of the Pusey supporter Isaac Williams as professor of poetry in favour of Tory Brasenose man James Garbett.

Perhaps the most important issue during Gilbert's career as principal and vice-chancellor was the growing demand inside and outside the university for its thoroughgoing reform. The changes of 1801, 1802 and 1809 had made the final degree examination much more difficult and as a result the failure rate was very high and many men did not take the examination at all. In 1830 third and fourth classes were added to the 'honours degree', so called because historically it had been taken step by step (i.e. by degrees) and it was considered an honour to be able to study the course. At the same time an easier syllabus was prescribed for a 'pass' degree, which was recognized to be of a lower standard. Even so during the 1830s, of about 160 candidates for the pass exam 60 never took it, 90 passed and 10 were awarded the special distinction of fourth class honours.

The syllabus for the honours course in the first half of the century was still heavily based on Greek and Latin classical texts and there was little or no provision for learning law, medicine or modern languages and only moderate opportunities to study mathematics, physics and chemistry. Only in 1849 was a separate science school established and a joint school of history and jurisprudence in 1850. As principal and vice-chancellor, Gilbert presided, it was generally agreed, with kindness and dignity, but he was not a reformer – though he did allow the college accounts to be presented in English rather than Latin for the first time in 1835.

As for the college over which he presided, it was towards the end of his time admitting about 35 freshmen in some years. In 1837 only seven of these came from the 'great' public schools, though there were four from MGS and five others from Lancashire or Cheshire. Seven were the sons of clergy and twenty became clergymen. The number of sons of gentry was declining, with only about six in this category. Gilbert had inherited a relatively strong college academically from Hodson, but during his time the number of firsts and university prizes gradually declined. What did increase was the college's numbers and wealth.[11]

Jolly boating college, 1842-1886

Gilbert received his reward from the Tories when Sir Robert Peel nominated him for the bishopric of Chichester in January 1842. He was consecrated the following month and on leaving Brasenose he received some handsome silver from a grateful college. He remained bishop until his death in office in 1870 and was in general as much respected in his diocese as he had been in Oxford, though in his last two years he caused a national controversy by refusing permission for one of his clergy to use high church rituals at St James's Chapel in Brighton.

Gilbert's successor, Richard Harington, was a very different sort of man. His father's baronetcy dated back to 1611, he had been to school at Harrow and had studied at Christ Church, where he got a first and was subsequently elected a fellow of Brasenose. He was a mason and three times the master of the university's Apollo Lodge, much supported by Brasenose men. He was interested in church architecture and was president of the university's architectural society and as a recently-appointed fellow at BNC in 1822 he turned up to meetings of the Phoenix dressed in white Turkish trousers and a flowered black velvet waistcoat. But he did not have the reputation of being an impressive tutor, seeming too fond, according to Mark Pattison, of 'sailing his pinnace on the river and dining out too much'. Some undergraduates disliked him intensely for his icy unapproachability and one went so far as to write, throwing delicacy to the winds; 'if the principal was made a bishop I would take the keys of the college, throw them down the bog and bog upon them'.[12] Under him the college, though still large and important, began to lose some of the academic edge evident under his predecessors and began to cast its eyes more and more towards the river.

The college eight had already established a dominance in Gilbert's last years and under Harington the success continued, with BNC head of the river in 1845, 1846, 1852 and 1853 and well placed

in the intervening years. In 1846 BNC acquired for its own use the university's former 'barge', or large houseboat, where rowers could change and socialise. BNC men were also well represented in the 'blue' boat which rowed against Cambridge. The college competed at Henley for the second time in 1846 and in 1847 achieved its first win, beating First Trinity Cambridge in the Ladies Plate. In 1851 the regatta became 'royal', thanks to the patronage of Prince Albert and BNC won both the Visitors' Cup for fours and triumphed over Christ Church in the Ladies' Challenge Plate.[13]

Much of the Brasenose enthusiasm for rowing must have come from its considerable contingent of Old Etonian undergraduates. Eton was the most famous of rowing schools and between 1801 and 1830 BNC recruited 118 men from the school, though in the next thirty years the college clearly fell out of favour with Eton because only 46 men were entered. But from 1861 to 1885 there were 116 Eton entrants, falling off again to 42 from 1886 to 1908. Throughout the period 1801 to 1908 322 Etonians were educated at BNC, far more than the pupils of any other school, even Manchester Grammar, which came second with 211 pupils. Third was Rugby with 196, followed by Harrow (160) and Winchester (155). The best represented of the 'new' Victorian public schools was Marlborough, founded in 1843, with 86 entrants.[14]

For years before 1850 critics had been complaining that Oxford was nothing but a large public school for young men of means and that the colleges had long ignored the intention of their statutes that they should provide an education for poor scholars. Moreover, the numbers attending the university had dramatically fallen: they were half in the 1840s what they had been in 1612. Only 22 out of the 542 Oxford fellowships were available to open competition and the rest were restricted in various ways, such as BNC's dependence on Lancashire and Cheshire. Moreover, the examination system produced only an annual average of 13 firsts throughout the university, while an average of 35 closed fellowships became vacant each year. Many fellows

were elected on grounds of kinship with the founders or benefactors, and since 1509 about a hundred fellows had been elected at Brasenose on this basis.[15]

The Whig government of Lord John Russell appointed a royal commission to make recommendations for reform in 1850 and it spent two years gathering information and writing a report. Harington and several senior fellows at Brasenose were determined to evade the commission if possible and informed it, politely, that the college statutes had served very well and any interference would threaten its independence. Harington also supported the university's official challenge to the constitutional legality of the commission, but the case failed. In the end BNC just refused, again politely, to give evidence to the commission. Not that it had anything particularly to hide: Frodsham Hodson had led the way in avoiding obvious abuses and it was still the case in 1850 that only Christ Church was larger than BNC and only Oriel and Balliol could claim greater academic distinction. After the report in 1852 came further discussion and then legislation in 1854 and eventually implementation of the changes by 1858.

Henceforth the university was to be governed by a Hebdomadal Council consisting of the chancellor, vice-chancellor, two proctors, six heads of colleges, six professors and six others. Grades of commoners were abolished, fellowships and scholarships were to be awarded through open competition and religious oaths were not required, meaning that non-Anglicans could be admitted. Nor had fellows to be in holy orders. More professorships were founded and more academic courses, especially in science, were instituted. At Brasenose the changes did not bring about drastic revolution, as the conservatives had feared. The pay of fellows was modified so that the six senior fellows ceased to receive nearly twice as much as the rest, seven closed scholarships and four fellowships were discontinued and twelve open scholarships replaced them. Also the Camden professor of ancient history became an ex officio member of the fellowship. At the end of the 1850s the central

university authorities emerged more powerful, more modern and better endowed but the colleges were still very largely independent and for the time being still run by fellows who were mostly unmarried.[16]

Principal Harington, who was as old as the century, died comparatively young in 1853 and the fellows chose to replace him a man who was better fitted by temperament to face the future in a university which was bound to see many more changes in the coming years. The new principal was born Edward Hartopp Grove, the second son of the family, in 1810, at Shenstone Park, near Lichfield, where his father owned a considerable estate. A scholar at Balliol, he gained a second in classics after which he was elected to a Brasenose fellowship in 1833 and became ordained, serving as a curate in Stepney and then in charge of a college living in Worcestershire. In 1844 he married the Hon. Harriet Lister, who was one of Queen Victoria's maids of honour and whose sister married the Whig politician, Lord John Russell: Harriet ('Bunny' to her friends) became well-known in her own right as the author of stories in the style of Jane Austen and she was a lively and popular hostess. Russell made Grove a canon of Worcester in 1848 and the following year he changed his name to Cradock in order to inherit an estate from a maternal uncle.[17]

The principals of Brasenose were not authoritarian rulers but more the first among the fellows who constituted the governing body. Hence their impact on the college depended upon a number of factors, not least the strength of their own characters, the respect in which they were held and their ability to persuade the other fellows to follow their way of thinking. In the case of Cradock, who held office for 33 years, his personality was such that the college came to reflect his own philosophy that a Brasenose man was there to benefit the college physically, academically and morally, in that order. He revelled in success on the river and the cricket pitch as much as in the examination lists and he supported entrants who were likely to bring glory to the college one way or the other. He would go down to the

river to cheer the eight and he would support the eleven, inviting successful athletes as well as scholars to dine at his table and bask in the warmth of his congratulations. Generally known as 'The Chief' he was popular among fellows as well as the students and in his day Brasenose was recognised to be the supreme Oxford sporting college. Mid-Victorian BNC men were typically 'civil and plain spoken; loyal to a fault; social but not too smart, churchy but not pious, athletic but not irredeemably philistine.'[18]

Building on previous successes, the Brasenose eight rowed head of the river on thirty nights consecutively between 1852 and 1855 and was also head in Torpids in 1852 and 1853. One of the stars during these years was James Hornby, who was actually a fellow, elected in 1849. He nevertheless represented both the university and the college, winning the Grand at Henley in an Oxford crew, rowing there for BNC and rowing in the head crew of 1852. He was also a keen Alpinist. He was a very popular and successful tutor at BNC for many years until he was appointed headmaster at Eton in 1868 where, of course, he made sure the rowing tradition flourished.

There was something of a dip in the eight's fortunes on the Isis after 1855 but attention focused instead on the achievements of the college at Henley, inspired by Walter Woodgate, who came up to BNC from Radley in 1858. He won the Wingfield sculls (over the Boat Race course in London) in 1862, 1864 and 1867 and the Silver Goblets (for pairs) at Henley in 1861, 1862 and 1863. With his help at Henley BNC fours won the Wyfold in 1861, the Stewards' in 1862 and the Visitors' in 1862 and 1863. In the latter year Woodgate founded what became Vincent's Club, the first meeting of which was held in Brasenose. The intention was that it would be selective and 'should consist of the picked hundred of the university, selected for all-round qualities; social, physical and intellectual qualities being duly considered.' Members were elected for life and the club flourishes today with the undergraduate membership now raised to 150 at any one time.

Woodgate also has the distinction of being the inventor of coxless fours because in 1868 he rigged up an internal steering mechanism in a coxed four and then instructed the cox to jump into the water after the start of a Henley race, which his crew won easily. They were disqualified, but the idea soon caught on. In his last years at BNC Woodgate managed to whip the college eight back into winning form on the Isis and they went head from 1865 to 1867. After going down Woodgate practised successfully as a barrister but remained married to the river. He died in 1920.[19]

Rowing at Brasenose after Woodgate was not as successful and the eight only went head once more (1876) in Cradock's time, though it maintained a high position. But in 1881 the Torpid (second eight) did go head and Cradock authorised a bump supper which got completely out of control afterwards when a large crowd of college men, some of them allegedly naked, danced in tribal fashion round the statue of Cain and Abel in the light of flickering bonfires, banging their college-issue flat-bottomed baths (no staircase bathrooms or showers then) with college-issue pokers. Around midnight pots of many-coloured indelible paint were produced and Cain and Abel were totally plastered and disfigured. This was by no means the first time that the statue had suffered in this way and during the summer vacation the college decided that its time had come. It was sold for scrap to a blacksmith, a decision described by the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* that year as 'an utterly inexcusable act of vandalism'.[20]

In many ways competitive rowing was born at Oxford and Cambridge but cricket was well established in Britain long before it became popular at the universities. County cricket began in the eighteenth century and the MCC was founded in 1787. The first cricket match between Oxford and Cambridge took place in 1827 and a Brasenose man, William Webb Ellis, was a member of this eleven. It is claimed that it was he who founded rugby football in 1823 when, as a boy at Rugby School he caught the ball in a football match and ran with

it. Whether this actually happened or not, the legend still flourishes. In 1835 the only colleges which had their own cricket grounds were Brasenose and Christ Church, followed by Exeter in 1844 and St John's soon after. BNC probably played inter-college matches in the early years but the records do not begin until 1861 and inter-collegiate 'Cuppers' matches did not develop until 1882. Hence a college had to make its mark in the university eleven, which in the 1860s and 1870s Brasenose certainly did. In 1859 there were two BNC men in the eleven, including the captain, F. Brandt. Then RD Walker played from 1861 to 1865, followed by EL Fellowes in 1865, 1866 and 1868. In the latter year he was joined by W. Evetts and E. Matthews, who also played in 1869, as did JH Gibbon. B. Pauncefote played for four consecutive years and captained the side in 1869 and 1870.

Hence in 1868 three members of the eleven were BNC men and four in 1869. The following year there were six, with a remarkable eight in 1871 and 1872 and five in 1873. After that there were just one or two until 1880, the first time for 20 years BNC had no cricket blues. So the Brasenose record during Cradock's time is remarkable, though given the entire period from 1827 to 1900 Christ Church produced the most cricket blues (57), followed by Oriel (33), Trinity (32) New College (31) and BNC fifth with 27.[21] Amongst all the BNC cricket stars the one who shone brightest was certainly the famous Cuthbert Ottaway, former King's Scholar at Eton and an all-round sportsman of great distinction. He played in the university eleven from 1870 to 1873, as captain in the last year, and in addition to cricket he also got blues for association football, racquets, athletics and real tennis. Moreover, he was captain of the first official football international match, played between England and Scotland at Partick in Scotland in February 1872. None of this stopped him getting a first, becoming a barrister and getting married but he died of a respiratory infection aged only 27 and before his wife gave birth to their first child.[22]

Although the university reforms of the 1850s had made important improvements, there were still very many who thought they

had not gone far enough and in 1872 a second Royal Commission, chaired by the Duke of Cleveland, was appointed with a special remit of making an inquiry into the comparative revenues of the colleges and the university. After its report an Act followed in 1877 which declared that the colleges should make far more of a contribution to central university funding and more provision should be made for new courses in both the arts and sciences. Outdated fellowships and scholarships were again suppressed and many new professorships were founded, with their holders under specific obligation to lecture and teach. The education of women was also encouraged and both Lady Margaret Hall and Somerville College were founded for women in 1879. St Hugh's and St Hilda's followed in 1886 and 1893.[23]

In its report to the Cleveland Commission Brasenose gave its total revenues in 1871 as about £16,000, eighth after Christ Church, Magdalen, New College, St John's, Merton, Oriel and Queen's. The college owned in excess of 4,600 acres of land but this was more of a capital asset than an important source of income. In 1861 there were at least 19 college servants and in 1864 fourteen fellows, who earned perhaps twice as much as the senior servants while the principal was awarded a handsome £1,400 a year. The number of undergraduate entrants to the college in Cradock's first ten years averaged 26 a year, rising to an average of 32 in the next ten years and 36 in his last decade. So by modern standards, and even by the standards of earlier centuries, Victorian Brasenose was not a large college. A considerable number of undergraduates still came from Lancashire and Cheshire and most of them were destined for a career in the Anglican Church.[24]

Not, however, Humphry Ward, who studied at the college before becoming a fellow in 1869 and a tutor in 1870. In 1872 he married a 21-year-old dark-haired beauty, Mary Arnold, the granddaughter of the famous headmaster of Rugby and the niece of Matthew Arnold. In 1879 Ward had success with his four-volume anthology *The English Poets* and left BNC for a job on The Times newspaper

in 1881. Meanwhile his wife, using the name Mrs Humphry Ward, developed her talent as a novelist, journalist and literary hostess and eventually produced twelve novels as well as other works. She was also patron from 1908 of the Women's Anti-Suffrage Association.

Brasenose was much better off financially at this time than its neighbour Lincoln which was experiencing serious difficulties. In 1877 the rector, Mark Pattinson, opened negotiations with Cradock concerning the possibility of amalgamating the two colleges, which were separated only by a wall. Plans were discussed for a joint 'Brasenose-Lincoln' college and a majority of BNC fellows were in favour, but not the two-thirds majority required for such a momentous change. The undergraduates of both colleges were opposed and there was no majority among the fellows of Lincoln, so the idea was dropped, though it surfaced again three times in the next century but never received enough support.[25]

One of the Brasenose fellows who opposed this scheme was Walter Pater, elected in 1864 aged 25. He was born into a family of Dutch extraction and educated at the King's School in Canterbury where his aesthetic sensibilities were aroused by the beauty of the cathedral and its surroundings. Then in 1858 he arrived at Queen's College and gained a second in classics in 1862: his election to Brasenose, as the college's first non-clerical fellow, was clearly made on the grounds of promise. In 1865 he travelled to Italy and began his love affair with the Italian Renaissance, at the same time discarding most of his Christian belief. From 1866 he began to publish short essays on literary and artistic subjects, especially Italian masters such as Leonardo, Botticelli and Michelangelo and some of these were published in 1873 in his first book *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*. His second book, which did not appear for another twelve years, was his famous romance *Marius the Epicurean* and this was followed in 1887 by *Imaginary Portraits*, a work of philosophical fiction. Another collection of his critical essays appeared in 1889 and a printed version of his Brasenose lectures on Plato and Platonism in 1894.

The response to Pater's work in the wider world was mixed. Many criticised his evident lack of faith and others suspected the motives for his admiration of beauty, especially when observed in young males. In fact there was a crisis in the early 1870s when Benjamin Jowett, the Master of Balliol, intercepted compromising letters between Pater and a nineteen-year-old Balliol undergraduate who was well-known to his contemporaries as 'The Bugger of Balliol'. Jowett could no doubt have ruined Pater's career but he settled instead for a fierce interview.

What no-one at the time disputed was that Pater was a consummate literary stylist, taking endless pains over every word and producing sentences that were themselves works of art. His delicately decorated college rooms were situated near the library but he also lived with his two sisters in a semi-detached house in North Oxford and later in Kensington. He was a mild, diffident man but his lectures and his way of thinking were an inspiration to many undergraduates and his publications brought him towards the end of his life a degree of national celebrity which set him apart from other Brasenose dons. He mixed with the pre-Raphaelites, he had some effect on Oscar Wilde and the 'aesthetic' movement, he influenced later art historians such as Bernard Berenson, Roger Fry and Kenneth Clark and literary figures such as Proust, Joyce, Yeats and T S Eliot. He died in Oxford of a heart attack at the age of 54 in 1894. The sportsmen of Brasenose do not seem to have made fun of him: they were respectful and in turn he delighted in the achievements of these 'playful young tigers'.[26]

The undoubted sporting successes during the Cradock years did not mean that the college had abandoned academic ambitions. Between 1855 and 1883 BNC gained 59 firsts in classics and the three firsts of 1865 were a quarter of the university's total, the three of 1871 were a fifth and the four of 1875 were a seventh. During the same period eighteen firsts in mathematics were achieved, ten in maths and physics and two in the new school of modern history. One of these went in

A view of the College from Radcliffe Square etched by J.J.Skelton, c. 1830.

The chapel roof was colourfully repainted and gilded by JC Buckler 1859-1861 and a later addition was the present handsome organ, the gift of CB Heberden, who was Principal from 1889 to 1920.

The college barge and eight in 1891 by HJ Brooks and a view of the river from Folly Bridge by AR Quinton.

Edward Cradock, Principal 1853–1886
and very keen on sporting success.

1874 to Arthur Evans, destined to be one of Britain's most celebrated archaeologists. Forty university prizes were won during this period, with four in 1860 and 1872 and three in 1877 and 1879. Balliol and Corpus were thought to be the most academic colleges at this time, but BNC's record was certainly respectable. As for careers, about half of the BNC men of this time became clergymen of one denomination or another. With the rest law was a popular profession, while some young gentlemen, as before, just settled down to run their estates.[27]

Among Cradock's 'lads' at BNC in his last three years was Douglas Haig, from the wealthy Scottish whisky family via Clifton College in Bristol. His ambition was already a career in the army but he came to Oxford to acquire a respectable academic qualification (a pass degree) and also to enjoy himself as a sportsman. 'Ride, sir, ride', Cradock told him, 'I like to see Brasenose gentlemen in top boots'. Being handsome, rich and an excellent polo player, though by no means chatty, Haig had no difficulty in being accepted into the Phoenix, as well as the recently-founded Vampires (1865) and Octagon (1866) and the inter-collegiate Bullingdon as well as Vincent's. He played polo for the university and rode with the Bicester Hunt: his best friends at BNC were seven Etonians and one Harrovian. He passed his exams easily but missed one term through illness and therefore did not qualify to take his degree. He was a man on a mission and his first steps would be passing out first in merit at Sandhurst and representing England at polo in the USA.[28]

Chapter Six

The New Quadrangle, 1887-1911

Principal Shippen had led the way in providing for the college's expansion southwards by acquiring the freehold of seven properties on the High Street between 1715 and 1736 but all of Hawksmoor's grand schemes for building a new quadrangle at that time had been rejected. One of the High Street properties became the principal's lodgings in 1770 and more grand schemes by Soane and others were also rejected at the beginning of the 19th century. Only two very unattractive blocks of accommodation were erected around 1810, one near the kitchen and the other close to the principal's house. By 1874 this house had been extended inwards and properties had also been acquired to the west, where a new bath house and lavatory block had been erected. So the college in that year consisted of the Old Quad, the Chapel Quad and a small 'Back Quad' which was connected to the High Street by the narrow 'Amsterdam' passage.

Before he died Frodsham Hodson had seemingly made the fellows swear that they would not renew the High Street leases when they ran out and by the late 1870s the college was in a good position to make a move: the finances had been well managed by the very able bursar, Alfred Butler, so the money was available and the High Street properties were free for demolition. There was also a suitable architect in the person of Thomas Graham Jackson, a fellow of Wadham College who was a pupil of Sir George Gilbert Scott and a respected scholar in the field of architectural history. In 1876, when he was 41, he was commissioned by the university to design and build the new Examination Schools on the High Street and this no doubt recommended him to Cradock and the Brasenose fellows. At first he was asked to produce a range of new buildings running north-south

from the western end of the Old Quad to the High Street and work began on these in 1881, with the new Staircases X and XI ready for occupation in 1883. By 1886 Staircase IX was ready for use and the entire complex contained 22 sets of rooms for undergraduates, one for a fellow, two lecture rooms and a library for undergraduates. But there were no bathrooms and students had to use the outside lavatory and bathroom block situated on the site now occupied by the Powell and Moya bed-sits.[1]

At this point Principal Cradock died, aged 76, having made his college prominent in the university and launched it on a new building project that would enhance its image even further. The existing principal's lodgings literally stood in the way of the completion of a new quadrangle and despite the fact that the lodgings consisted of a handsome Georgian house, it would have to be demolished. A new principal was needed who was prepared to live elsewhere until new lodgings would be ready as part of Jackson's designs for the High Street front so the fellows elected Albert 'Toby' Watson, a fellow since 1852, who understood what was required of him. He was shy and had already given up teaching: a colleague said of him 'To meet Mr Watson in the street you would think that his one desire was to get past you in safety, and if possible, silence'. Humphry Ward agreed that he was 'shy, shrinking, genial' but that he had an immense fund of knowledge across many disciplines and as for talk, 'he could and did if one knew how to turn on the stream'.[2]

Jackson's first plans for the High Street front included shops on the ground floor, designed to raise rental revenue, but they did not find favour. Then he contemplated an impressive tower topped by a crown of buttresses but this was thought too dramatic as well as expensive. Finally he produced the design which was accepted and the principal's lodgings, together with the unlovely student accommodation next to them were swept away. Work started on the new principal's lodgings, the High Street tower and also staircase XII in 1887 and it was complete

by 1889, though the western section of the High Street scheme still remained on the drawing board, owing to a lack of funds. At this point Watson resigned as principal, though he remained a fellow until his death in 1904. Some said that he did not welcome the idea of living in the new lodgings because of the grandeur of the high-ceilinged rooms and excessive number of quarters for servants.[3]

The first incumbent of the new lodgings was therefore Charles Buller Heberden, the first principal in the college's history not to be ordained, and it was his destiny to guide the college through good times and bad for 31 years. Born in 1849 the son of a Devonshire vicar, Heberden was sent to Harrow and then Balliol and was elected to a fellowhip at BNC in 1872, becoming vice-principal in 1883. He was a classicist with wide intellectual interests, a love of music and high ambitions for his college, where he was very much admired for his 'simplicity, sweetness and kindness'. Keen that music should be part of the chapel service he first introduced a harmonium and towards the end of his life he paid £1,240 of his own money for the installation of the splendid organ. He also bequeathed money to fund an organ scholarship. One of the younger fellows described him as 'the only true saint that I have ever known. … [yet] with all his gentleness and selflessness he was firm and would never through weakness or fear sanction anything which he thought wrong or shut his eyes to what was ugly or unworthy'.[4]

Brasenose was still a very sporty college in 1889 and Heberden found it quite difficult to steer it away from the river and the cricket and football pitches. The first university 'soccer' match with Cambridge was played in 1874, with BNC's Ottaway as captain, and BNC's first college soccer team was formed in 1882. The university's rugby football club was founded in 1869 and the first match against Cambridge was played at Oxford in 1872, with five BNC men in the Oxford side. During the 1880s BNC produced a further six rugby blues by courtesy of the Scottish school, Loretto. But soccer was not strong in the college

and rugby's glory days at BNC had yet to come. The chief college sports at the end of the century were still rowing and cricket.

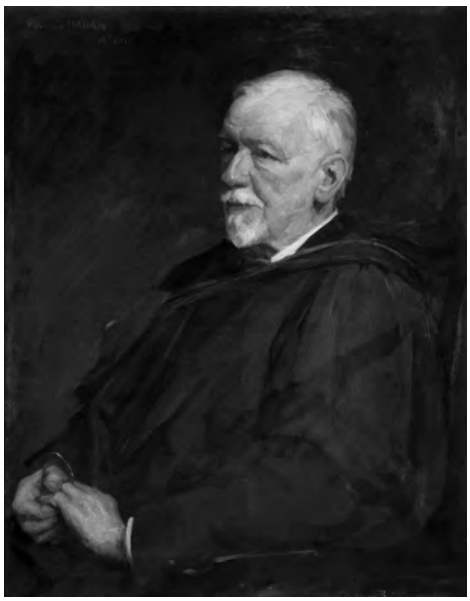
There had been a lull in the fortunes of the eight between 1867 and 1888 with only one head victory in 1876. Then there was a burst of success between 1889 and 1891, while the Torpid achieved the remarkable feat of rowing head in every year between 1886 and 1895. Indeed an undergraduate of that year, John Buchan, was able to claim proudly three years later that 'the number of days [BNC] has been Head of the River is far in excess of the record of any other college'.[5] During the 1890s more than 30% of BNC men rowed in eights or torpids and as for cricket, three BNC men between them got ten cricket blues between 1870 and 1897. The college club colours were fixed as black, yellow and gold in 1881, the 'Hornets' are first mentioned in 1891 and in 1895 the college spent £1,200 on a new cricket ground and pavilion at Grandpont, near the river.

Heberden as vice-principal had already done his best to keep the influence of the athletes and pass men under control and in this he was helped by his colleague Richard Lodge. An outstanding historian from Balliol, Lodge came to BNC in 1878 and proved to be a very popular tutor and lecturer for sixteen years. He left in 1894 to be professor of history at Glasgow, then Edinburgh: ultimately he was knighted for his work in developing the study of history in the UK. After Lodge's departure Heberden relied upon the brilliant but eccentric Frederick Bussell who was vice-principal from 1896 to 1913 and managed to keep potentially riotous sportsmen under control with a mixture of tact and quirky humour.

Under the influence of Heberden and Bussell the college began slowly to change. Fewer pass men were admitted, a pre-matriculation exam was introduced and under Lodge's successor George Wakeling, ten history firsts were achieved between 1894 and 1904. The most impressive undergraduate of the decade was John Buchan who arrived in 1895, aged 20. The son of a Scottish pastor, he studied classics at

Richard Harington,
Principal, 1842–1853

Walter Pater,
1839–1894



Falconer Madan, 1851–1935.
The first editor of *The Brazen Nose.*

John Buchan, 1875–1940

Glasgow University where, as a student, he wrote his first book, an edition of Bacon's *Essays and Apothegms* and a novel, *Sir Quixote of the Moors*. So he was already a published author when he arrived at BNC with a Hulme scholarship in 1895. He won the Stanhope Prize for history in 1897, was elected president of the Union in 1899 and gained a first in Greats.[6]

About this time the publisher FE Robinson planned a popular series of books chronicling the history of all the Oxford and Cambridge colleges and Heberden took the brave decision to ask Buchan to write the Brasenose volume, despite the fact that most of the others in the series were written by more experienced academics. In 1898 Buchan produced a book which he admitted in the preface 'may seem superficial and trifling to graver eyes' and indeed it was subsequently criticised on those grounds, though much of it is a good and lively read. Of its 152 pages of text, 34 are given to a chapter on BNC's 'famous men', including sporting heroes such as Tatton Sykes as well as intellectuals such as Walter Pater, while another 21 pages go to the history of college rowing and cricket. In his conclusion, this 23-year-old future literary prodigy wrote of his college:

> Its history has been the history of a reaction ending in compromise, the conservative without the fanatical. In the best sense of the word it has held a middle place, without at any time descending into mediocrity. It has never fallen into a clumsy, conventional orthodoxy; nor, on the other hand has it gone after strange fashions and crude enthusiasms. It has attained to high distinction, frequently in the schools and almost consistently in sport. If it has been untouched by most of the countless crazes which at intervals agitate Oxford, it is not by any means because the College is a backwater of University life, but because it has better things to occupy its attention.[7]

After Brasenose Buchan pursued a career as a diplomat and MP but above all as a writer of novels such as *Prester John* (1910) and *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (1915), 28 in all. He also wrote 43 works of non-fiction, mostly history; eleven biographies, four books of poetry and six books of short stories as well as editing a further 14 volumes. In 1935 he was created Baron Tweedsmuir on his appointment as Governor-General of Canada, where he was extremely popular but died aged 64 in 1940 of a head injury after suffering a stroke in his official Ottawa residence, Rideau Hall.

The college's 400th anniversary celebrations centred on the laying of a foundation stone for the last stage of Jackson's New Quad (the present Broadgates, Amsterdam and Staircase XII) on 1 June 1909, exactly four centuries after Bishop Smyth had laid the foundation stone of the Old Quad. The presiding official was the Visitor, Edward King, Bishop of Lincoln since 1885 and widely regarded as a living saint, though he was eighty years old and would not survive to see another June. Aided by John Wordsworth, Bishop of Salisbury, King celebrated an early communion in chapel, after which at a special meeting of Convocation in St Mary's Church the vice-chancellor bestowed the degree of DCL on Heberden. After this there was another chapel service when King exhorted the congregation to prepare themselves for living a Christian life for some forty or fifty years after they had left BNC.

At this point rain began to fall and continued for most of the day. Undaunted, the congregation filed out to where the foundation stone had been positioned (to the left of the present Amsterdam) with beneath it some coins and a glass bottle with the college seal attached to a parchment. The Visitor declared the stone laid and the bells of St Mary's rang out. Lunch followed for 112 guests in hall, where Heberden's portrait by Sir William Orpen, paid for by 300 loyal members of the college, hung for all to see. Ten days later there was a celebration dinner in hall for the undergraduates and later still a Commem Ball in Eights week and a celebration lunch for old members in London.[8]

The New Quad, built to designs by the architect Sir Thomas Graham Jackson in three stages: Staircases X and XI 1881-3, Staircase IX and the High Street lodgings, tower and gateway, 1886 -1890. Then the money ran out until the Hulme Trust came to the rescue and the Quad was completed 1909-1911. During the twenty-year interval there was a notable gap, as these photographs show.

Jackson's scheme for the western High Street front, which had been a jumble of shops for the last twenty years, was completed in 1911 and the long-awaited new quadrangle at Brasenose had arrived at last. Its 'Anglo-Jackson' style was in general well received as one of the better additions to Oxford's architectural scene by a man hailed on the day of his honorary doctorate as 'Artifex Oxoniensissime'. Elsewhere he virtually rebuilt Hertford College (with the Venetian bridge) and did major work for Oriel, Corpus, Trinity, Balliol, Somerville and Lincoln. He designed new buildings for his old school, Brighton College, as well as the chapel at Radley and did important work to shore up Winchester Cathedral for which he was rewarded with a baronetcy in 1913. But the Examinations Schools and Brasenose were his most acclaimed Oxford projects. Together with the New Quad and major work at Frewin Hall and in the chapel, it has been estimated that Jackson was paid some £45,000 for his work at BNC, much of which, especially the second phase, was funded by the Hulme trustees. While many colleges had suffered from the decline of agricultural rents in the late nineteenth century, the revenues of Brasenose had steadily increased, thanks in large part to the ownership of city properties and the skill of Alfred Butler, the bursar, whose efforts are commemorated by a plaque on the west wall of the New Quad.[9]

If the new buildings were the physical mark of 400 years of progress, the college's new Register and Quatercentenary Monographs of 1909 set out to chronicle its history with precise scholarship. Heberden himself was responsible for the two-volume register of BNC men while the further two volumes of monographs were edited by Falconer Madan. He came to BNC from Marlborough in 1870 and was elected to a fellowship in 1876. From 1880 he was a sub-librarian at the Bodleian, where he worked on a catalogue of its manuscript holdings and he held the post of Bodley's Librarian from 1912 to 1919. He also became the first editor of a new college magazine, *The Brazen Nose*: it was not the first of its kind – Jesus had *The Druid* as early

Sir Thomas Graham Jackson Bt RA,
the architect of the New Quad and High Street Front (below).

as 1862 though *The Pelican Record* of Corpus in 1891 is generally thought to be the archetype of a college magazine. But over the years many magazines failed while *The Brazen Nose* went from strength to strength and flourishes still.[10]

In the first volume of the BNC monographs, which appeared in June 1909, Madan himself produced sections on the site of the college before 1509, the story behind the original brazen nose and a brief timeline of college history while EW Allfrey from Trinity College produced an admirably clear account of the architectural development of the college site. The bursar, Alfred Butler, wrote four detailed sections on benefactions, the college plate, the college estates and advowsons, and the college pictures.

In the second, even bulkier volume, which came out in December 1909, the early, somewhat legalistic, years of the college were chronicled by another fellow, IS Leadam, while the Tudor period and the eighteenth century were covered by RW Jeffery, the early Stuarts by George Wakeling and the later Stuarts by Sir Richard Lodge. The nineteenth century evidently proved too difficult for anyone to tackle as a whole and instead there were a series of lighter articles on Brasenose rowing, nine Brasenose worthies (by John Buchan), an analysis of the schools from which BNC men had come and what careers they adopted, a short reminiscence of the period 1864–1872 by Humphrey Ward and finally notes on Brasenose cricket and the Phoenix Common Room by Falconer Madan. Though the monographs, which total well over a thousand pages, are of varying quality they provide authoritative information about the college's history up to 1909 and they have proved indispensable to anyone interested in the history of BNC.

Two World Wars, 1911-1948

On the threshold of its fifth century Brasenose seemed very well placed to face the future, with a high reputation within the university, sound

finances and fine new buildings with which to expand its numbers of both undergraduates and fellows. The average annual intake of undergraduates between 1894 and 1897 was 34 and because most of them left after three or four years there would not have been many more than 120 at any given time. As for the fellows, there were about fifteen. From 1910–1913 Heberden served as vice-chancellor of the university, the first Brasenose principal so honoured since 1840. The Pater Society was formed in 1907 to show that the college contained intellectuals as well as hearties and in 1913 the Phoenix hosted a dinner in college for the Prince of Wales, aged eighteen and in theory studying at Magdalen. Brasenose got four firsts in 1914 and a bump supper for winning the university athletics cup, largely thanks to Arnold Strode Jackson, the 1912 Olympic gold medallist.

One of the non-hearties of this period was John Middleton Murry who came up in 1908, got a first in Mods and then became entangled with a New Zealand writer who called herself Katherine Mansfield and was already the author of a collection of short stories. Together they ran an alternative Oxford magazine, fell in love and lived together and became part of the circle of DH Lawrence. They eventually married but the relationship was difficult, especially after Mansfield contracted tuberculosis. She died in 1923 after a prodigious output and he went on to produce over 50 books, mostly non-fiction, as well as establishing himself as an influential editor and literary critic.

Edwardian Oxford, with its men in white flannels, blazers and boaters and elegant girls down by the river was brilliantly satirised in 1911 when Max Beerbohm (formerly of Merton) published his farcical novel *Zuleika Dobson*, a fable about the grand-daughter of a head of college who is so beautiful that all the men of the university fall in love with her and drown themselves in the Isis in despair, while shouting her name. Some critics still consider it one of the hundred best books in English but although it was intended as black humour of the kind found in the work of Oscar Wilde and later Evelyn Waugh it was,

without intending to be, hideously prophetic. Between 1914 and 1918 a large proportion of the men of the university did indeed die, not for the love of an unattainable girl but for the love of their country.

When the university came up in October 1913 there were about 3,400 undergraduates in residence but after the declaration of war with Germany in August 1914 around a couple of thousand Oxford students volunteered for service and only 1,400 started the new term in October. By the end of 1917 there were only 315 undergraduates in residence, most of them foreign students from Asia or men unfit for service: BNC was home to just eight. The Examination Schools and Somerville College became military hospitals and normal teaching came to an end except for scientific research dedicated to military issues, for which the new degree of DPhil was created in 1917. The university death rate average was 18%, higher than the national average of 12% owing to the fact that so many Oxford men were subalterns in the front line. A total of 661 members of the college fought in the war and 114 were killed. Their names are recorded on a memorial tablet by the chapel door.[11]

Despite the fact that prime minister Lloyd George did his best, in his memoirs, to blame Haig for the grotesque death toll of the war, the field marshal was generally considered as a national hero for decades and only in the 1960s did the 'Butcher' image take popular root after the appearance of the brilliant play *Oh What a Lovely War* (1963, filmed 1969), bolstered later by the equally brilliant *Blackadder* series on TV (1983–1989). Military historians of the present century have tended to take the view that in impossible circumstances and despite crushing blows Haig learnt from his mistakes and adapted and persevered until the enemy was defeated. After the war he presented the college with a Union flag to be flown from the tower and in 1922 the college commissioned what turned out to be a splendid painting of him by Sir William Orpen, one of Britain's most famous portrait artists, acclaimed for his superb battlefield portraits of British soldiers, including an earlier one of Haig (1917), whom the artist knew well.

Top left: Charles Heberden, the first lay Principal 1889-1920, also VC, after Sir William Orpen RA (1908). Top right: Field Marshal Earl Haig, also by Orpen, (1920). Left: William Stallybrass, Principal 1936-1948. Known universally as 'Sonners' he was immensely popular with BNC students, most of whom he chose as being people in his own mould. His tragic death while Vice-Chancellor in 1948 was a matter of national concern.

Heberden, who had already been painted by Orpen in 1908, did not long outlast the war, retiring one year before his death in 1921. To succeed him the fellows made a safe choice in Charles Sampson, a long-time fellow and a first class classicist and mathematician. Yet he was very shy and suffered from a speech impediment as well as short sight: his household was firmly run by his wealthy wife, a large and formidable lady, by all accounts. Though he reigned as principal for sixteen years the college was actually under the spell during this time of the remarkable William Stallybrass. His father, the publisher WS Sonnenschein had Moravian Jewish antecedents, while his mother came from Huguenot stock. Born in 1883 the young Sonnenschein moved from Westminster School to Christ Church and got a cross-country half-blue and a first in Mods before being called to the bar at the Inner Temple in 1909 and practising as a barrister for two years. Then he was elected to a fellowship at BNC teaching law (jurisprudence) and he was rapidly promoted to vice-principal in 1913. He had defective vision in one eye and this made him unfit for service during the war, which he spent working at the ministry of munitions, for which he was appointed OBE. In 1917 he changed his name from Sonnenschein to Stallybrass, though he was universally known informally as 'Sonners', and from the end of the war to his untimely death in 1948 BNC might just as well have been re-named 'Stallybrass College'.

Sonners was immensely robust intellectually and physically. He gloried in the achievements, both academic and sporting, of young men of character and for thirty years he did his best to ensure that BNC students were men of this type. He knew their names, he drank with them, very often to excess, he joked with them: yet he could also discipline them when necessary and he taught very effectively. In his own subject he was widely respected as the impeccable editor of four editions of Salmond's *Law of Torts*, the textbook of choice for practising lawyers. His favourite sport was cricket and he founded the Brasenose 'Wanderers' after the war and captained the side until 1923. He saw in

Rhodes scholars the sort of men he wanted in the college and between 1918 and 1944 92 men came to BNC under this scheme.[12]

Immediate post-war Oxford was populated by many mature men who had survived both the fighting and the lethal flu pandemic of 1918–19 and they were allowed to read a shortened degree course: the last thing they wanted to do was to dwell upon the horrors they had witnessed and they threw themselves with enthusiasm into the various events of college life in the 'Roaring Twenties'. Moreover, a critical change took place at the university from 1920 when women were allowed to matriculate and to study for all available courses except theology, which was permitted after 1935. The admission of women was by no means popular at first: the Union in 1926 wittily voted that the women's colleges should be levelled to the ground and the forces of reaction gained a practical victory when a petition of more than 200 MAs persuaded the university in 1927 to restrict the number of women entrants, a restriction not removed until 1956.[13]

By 1920 BNC was the seventh college in terms of wealth and the ninth in terms of numbers, so more accommodation for undergraduates was needed. Accordingly 'The City Arms', a tavern owned by the college in St Mary's Passage was converted for college use and re-named 'St Mary's Entry'. This was followed by the redevelopment of several properties still retained by the college on the High Street which became the labyrinthine Staircases XIV in 1929 and XV in 1931 – fondly though improperly known by generations as the 'Arab Quarter'. This enabled the undergraduate numbers to grow to 201 by 1937. After the great days of the 1890s college rowing had not done too well and in Heberden's last years the eight was bottom of the second division but in the 1920s there was a spectacular resurgence from this lowly position. Five bumps were achieved every year between 1922 and 1925 followed by two years in second place chasing Christ Church and eventually the golden prize of rowing head in 1928, the first time for 37 years. Supremacy was then maintained until 1931, though sad

to say the college has never rowed head since then. By 1934 the VIII had dropped to sixth on the river, stroked by John Gorton, a sturdy Australian whose father had taken out a second mortgage after paying for his education at Geelong to enable his son to cram successfully for entrance to BNC. Gorton repaid the favour to his father and his college by becoming prime minister of Australia from 1968 to 1971.

In rugby there were 21 BNC blues from 1919 to 1938, including the English international Prince Alexander Obolensky, and the college XV of 1931 won cuppers. But cricket was Sonners's favourite sport and in the 1920s and 1930s Brasenose cricket reigned supreme. Thirteen BNC men played 23 times against Cambridge from 1919 to 1930, three of them as captain, and in the nine seasons from 1931 to 1939 eighteen BNC men played 43 times, five as captain.[14]

There were a few exceptions to Brasenose heartiness. Charles Morgan entered the college to read history in 1919, aged 25, having served as a midshipman in the Royal Navy and languished as a prisoner of war. In his first year he published his first novel, *The Gunroom*, which opened a window on the brutality below decks on a warship and attracted the wrath of the admiralty. He directed several undergraduate theatrical productions and served as president of OUDS: eventually he wrote ten novels and several plays before his death in 1958. Even more of an aesthete was Alastair Graham, descended from Scottish baronets, who arrived at BNC from Wellington College in 1923 and soon encountered Evelyn Waugh, who was in his second year at Hertford College. According to Waugh's memoirs, Graham was for three years his inseparable companion, 'the friend of my heart', and they were both members of the famously outrageous coterie of homosexuals which included fellow undergraduates Harold Acton and Brian Howard. Twenty years later Graham took centre stage in Waugh's 1945 novel *Brideshead Revisited*, thinly disguised as Lord Sebastian Flyte – Waugh's last laugh on the Brasenose hearties of his youth. Even John Betjeman, who entered Magdalen in 1925, affected a limp when visiting Brasenose so that the hearties would not set upon him.[15]

A sketch of the Old Quad c1920.

William Golding arrived at BNC in 1930 to read natural sciences but changed to English Literature and Macmillan published a book of his poems in his last year, 1934. His career as a schoolmaster was disrupted in 1940 when he joined the Royal Navy but it was resumed afterwards at Bishop Wordsworth School in Salisbury, founded in 1889 by John Wordsworth, a nephew of the poet, who had been a fellow of BNC from 1867 to 1883 before moving to a theology chair associated with Oriel College. In 1953 Golding managed at last to find a publisher for his first short novel about the incipient savagery of young boys, which as *The Lord of the Flies* sold millions of copies and is still regarded as one of the great books of the century. Golding went on to write another twelve critically-acclaimed novels, including *Rite of Passage* (1980) which won the Booker Prize. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1983 and knighted in 1988. As a Nobel laureate he must be counted among the college's most celebrated literary figures.[16]

Along with a college increasingly filled with hearties went a collapse in academic results between 1926 and 1939 except for Stallybrass's subject, law, where results were consistently good and sometimes outstanding, with BNC taking seven out of the thirteen firsts in law between 1937 and 1939. In 1932 Leslie Scarman got a first and rose to be an influential lord of appeal from 1977 to 1986 and his contemporary George Baker became president of the family division and was the father of BNC law students Scott Baker, who became a lord justice of appeal in 2002 and Michael, a crown court judge. The performance of classics was respectable under Michael Holroyd and Maurice Platnauer, who had achieved 14 alphas in Classical Mods and was elected a fellow in 1923, later publishing well-received editions of Claudian and Euripides. Sir Arthur Evans (archaeology) and Sir Henry Stuart-Jones (ancient history) were professorial fellows whose work was of national importance, though they did little college teaching. Platnauer was a fellow in the Pater mould who enjoyed entertaining and

kept, as a wealthy bachelor, a very fine cellar. Over the years he became a college institution and acquired a loyal following.

Meanwhile the number of blues rose steadily, year on year, with a total of 127, for instance, between 1928 and 1933. Two young history dons appointed soon afterwards should, in theory, have helped to redress the balance: Stanley Cohn gained the top history first at Balliol and became a fellow of Oriel in 1923, specialising in medieval history. In 1933 he moved to Brasenose and played a part in 1935 in the election of 24 year-old Eric Collieu as a junior colleague (unsuccessful candidates included Max Beloff and AJP Taylor). Between them they presided over the teaching of history in the college for thirty years, with less than spectacular results, though while Cohn could be a very difficult customer, Collieu was much liked for his kindly manner. Within a year of Collieu's arrival the fellows in 1936 elected Stallybrass principal, much to the delight of young and old members of the college. As a bachelor Sonners had little use for the extensive accommodation in the principal's lodgings, some of which was converted into the New Staircase and JCR, now the Stallybrass Law Library. He himself occupied rooms in St Mary's Entry.[17]

When a second war was declared against Germany in September 1939, Stanley Cohn went off to supervise flight control operations in Malta and Burma and as before thousands of young Oxford men volunteered for the forces. One of them, Peter Twinn, who read maths at BNC in the late 1930s, was already working with AD Knox and Alan Turing at Bletchley Park to crack the German 'Enigma' Code, which they managed to do early in 1940, thereby making one of the most important contributions to the allied war effort.

Whereas the university had more or less come to a standstill in the first war, it carried on in the second at about half strength, though there was a lot of activity in the science departments where a great deal of important war-related work was done. Although Stallybrass and a few dons remained in residence in BNC the college was mainly

taken over by trainee officers, nurses and other service personnel for whom a Nissen hut was erected in the Deer Park. The undergraduates were transferred to Christ Church where they lived in the Meadow Buildings, dined in Christ Church hall and fielded joint sports teams. Among them were John Mortimer, later a well-known barrister and author of the novels and TV series about 'Rumpole of the Bailey'. Stallybrass wrote many hundreds of encouraging letters to former students who had entered the forces – many in the RAF - and it fell to him to write their obituaries in *The Brazen Nose* after so many were killed in the 1940 Battle of Britain, which largely accounts for the unusually high college death total of 123.[18]

After the war Brasenose was able to reclaim its rightful home and a flood of ex-service men were admitted to short courses. Somewhat incongruously the building immediately next to the chapel on Radcliffe Square had been for many years a shop owned by the college but between 1894 and 1895 a large private dwelling was built there, named Stamford House and used to provide rental income: it was converted into rooms for undergraduates in 1946. Between that year and 1948 eight new fellows were elected, men who would shape BNC's development in the coming decades: Robert Shackleton (modern languages), George Gordon (physiology) John Barltrop (chemistry), Ron Maudsley and Barry Nicholas (law), Nicholas Kurti (physics), Norman Leyland (economics) and Leslie Styler (chaplain). In October 1947 Sonners was inaugurated as vice-chancellor and he set about dealing with the mountain of problems that faced the peacetime university. In May 1948 Princess Elizabeth visited Oxford and had lunch on high table with the principal, having been received at the lodge by the 27-year-old president of the JCR, Robert Runcie MC, a former tank commander. He got a first in Greats and made friends with young Margaret Roberts of Somerville, who as prime minister approved his appointment as archbishop of Canterbury in 1980, after his distinguished career as a parish priest, a Cambridge theology don,

principal of Cuddesdon College and bishop of St Albans. He retired as archbishop in 1991, having been a supporter of the ordination of women.

All this should have marked the pinnacle of Sonners's career but, foreshadowing the dramas of CP Snow's forthcoming novel *The Masters* (1951), a revolt was brewing in the Senior Common Room. It was probably inevitable that the enormous influence that Sonners had exercised over the college for so long should eventually be challenged, especially as conditions in the post-war world under a Labour government demanded radical changes. Established members of the SCR felt strongly that the post-war Brasenose should throw off at least some of its public-school, athletic image, cast the net for entrance more widely and pay more attention to academic achievements.

Sonners was most vulnerable on the issue of finance because between 1930 and 1953 the college's income fell from third place to eleventh compared with other colleges. The SCR managed to reduce the principal's hold over undergraduate admissions by appointing Leslie Styler as Oxford's first tutor for admissions and on 13 October 1948, Hugh Last, a professorial fellow, proposed that an investigation be made into the college's finances since 1922, a potentially damaging move for Sonners. On the morning of October 27 he went up to London on the train for a meeting and returned on the 12.15 from Paddington after dinner in the Inner Temple. Soon afterwards, between Langley and Iver stations an outside door of the train was opened when it was travelling at speed and his dead body was subsequently found by the railway line. He was 65 years old. The inquest returned a verdict of death by misadventure, mindful of the fact that Sonners was well known to be partially sighted, especially at night (and after a few drinks). Conspiracy theorists at the time and ever since have speculated whether it could have been suicide or even murder – a clear case for Inspector Morse, but he was not due on the Oxford scene until Colin Dexter published his first crime novel in 1975.[19]

The reading of the Brasenose Grace by a scholar at dinner in Hall. Etching by Sir Muirhead Bone, c1952.

Oculi Omnium spectant in te, Deus. Tu das illis escas tempore opportune. Aperis manum tuam et imples omne animal tua benedictione. Mensae caelestis nos participes facias, Deus, Rex aeternae gloriae. Amen.

The eyes of all look to you, O God. You give them food in due season. You open your hand and fill every living thing with your blessing. Make us participants at the heavenly banquet, O God, King of Eternal Glory. Amen.

Chapter Seven

Nostalgia and reform, 1948-1973

The sudden vacancy in the principalship was filled after a month of secretive discussions among the fellowship by the election of Hugh Last, who had been Camden professor of ancient history, and as such a professorial fellow of Brasenose, since 1936. The chair was established by the English antiquary and historian William Camden in 1622 with a stipend of £140 and over the years it attracted a mixed bag of applicants, some of whom regarded the post as a sinecure. The university reforms of 1877 re-established the chair with a realistic salary and BNC agreed to elect the holder to a fellowship at the college.

Born in 1894 Hugh Last matriculated at Lincoln College in 1914 where he was one of the few undergraduates resident in college during the war, owing to a weak heart caused by bronchitis. He spent his time well, gained a double first in classics and was elected a fellow of St John's. He was a significant contributor to the seventh and ninth volumes of the *Cambridge Ancient History* but otherwise was not a prolific scholar, though he was an effective, if authoritarian, teacher of his students and an able administrator. He was not in good health when offered the principalship but claimed that his doctor had given him seven years to live, so he accepted. Also a bachelor, he occupied only some of the rooms of the principal's lodgings and some of the rooms in St Mary's Entry.[1]

Last had been elected with several important aims in mind. One was to restore the college's financial position and another was to improve its academic results and reform the college administration so that it could adapt to the changing pattern of university life. After the war the government took the decision to impose compulsory national service on all men between the ages of 17 and 21 and this remained in

force between 1947 and 1960, with the last national serviceman being demobbed in 1963. Most undergraduates at Oxford chose to do their 18 months (increased to two years after the Korean War began in 1950) before coming up to the university which meant that they were mature and in many cases experienced men who had held considerable responsibilities as officers or NCOs. On the other hand, they had learnt to respect command hierarchies and regarded the college authorities to some extent as benign senior officers.

There were 104 entrants to BNC in 1949, one of them being Bruce Kent, who read law, became a Roman Catholic priest and was well known as a leading campaigner for nuclear disarmament. In 1950 there were 82 entrants and the college was the fourth largest in the university, though it came as low as eighteenth in the academic league tables with only two firsts among 100 candidates. After that there was an average of six firsts a year up to the great success of 1955 when there were 13 firsts (four in Greats, three in law, two in English, and one each in PPE, physics, chemistry and zoology) plus three in maths Mods. This put BNC third after Balliol and Magdalen and the results were hailed by *The Brazen Nose* as 'the best in the history of the college'.[2] As it turned out this was a one-off freak result but there was nothing short-lived about the career of Colin Cowdrey who arrived in 1951 from Tonbridge School to read geography and played for the university XI in 1952 and 1953 as well as for Kent. He captained Oxford in 1954 and toured Australia with the MCC, contributing greatly to their victory. One of the most famous English cricketers of his generation, he captained the national side briefly in 1961 and then from 1967 to 1968, becoming the first cricketer to play 100 Test matches in the latter year. He was knighted in 1992 and made a life peer in 1997.

Last could also claim success in the sphere of finance. The increased number of undergraduates together with prudent management led to a small surplus in the accounts for 1952–3 and by 1957 net external income was twice what it had been twenty years

before. By 1958–9 BNC was back in the higher ranks of wealthy colleges at number eight, with an income of £104,000 a year.[3] There were about 10% more bachelor fellows than the average college and they enjoyed a generous allowance for good food and wine as well as the clubbable atmosphere of the SCR, especially after the departure of Last, who was in many ways an austere figure, though it is said that he enjoyed the comedian Tommy Handley's radio programme *It's That Man Again*. He had a particularly strained relationship with his successor as Camden professor, the New Zealander Ronald Syme (later a knight and OM) who between 1949 and 1970 was considered by most people to be the most distinguished scholar living in the college. Feeling the onset of poor health, Last resigned as principal in 1956 and died the following year.

His successor, Maurice Platnauer, was another bachelor who had been a tutorial fellow in classics since 1923 and vice-principal for many years. Under him the principal's lodgings were moved in 1958 back to their historic position in the tower and what was left of the former lodgings was converted into the Heberden Staircase, the JCR and law library and offices for the bursary. The college was brought firmly into the 20th century by the installation of lavatories and bathrooms or shower rooms on every staircase except one and this made possible the demolition of the Victorian bathhouse complex and its daring replacement by a very modern block of 32 bed-sits designed by the prize-winning architects Powell and Moya, which were constructed between 1959 and 1961. This was one of the very first 'modernist' buildings in Oxford and was much acclaimed at the time, leading to a commission for the architects to build an entire college (Wolfson, completed in 1974).

All these important changes made it possible for every BNC undergraduate to spend two years in residence in the college.[4] Platnauer retired after four years but was allowed to stay on in rooms in the Old Quad, partly because as a very wealthy bachelor he had been and was

to be even more a generous benefactor of the college. Each year he would invite the new occupants of his staircase in for drinks, which might very well be a rare vintage of Chateau d'Yquem. His memory lived on in the minds of his pupils, fifty of whom clubbed together to fund a portrait of him by Juliet Wood as late as 2013.

One of the undergraduates in Platnauer's time was JG (Jim) Farrell, an Irishman who arrived to read law in 1956, from Rossall School. Stocky and strong and a good rugby player, he was one of the first to be chosen for the college XV. 'I was the ultimate hearty, the jock, and he was too' said one of his contemporaries. 'There were changing rooms in college, so we cycled back and jumped in the communal bath. Tea would be beer, beer and more beer'.[5] Farrell's hopes of sporting fame were wrecked when he contracted polio in his first term and had to spend time in an iron lung. He survived and came back to college, changing his course to modern languages. Subsequently he wrote six novels, one *The Lung*, based on his polio experiences, but the most famous being his Empire trilogy: *Troubles* (1970), *The Siege of Krishnapur* (1973), which won the Booker Prize, and *The Singapore Grip* (1978). In 1979 he was drowned while fishing off the coast of County Cork, aged 44. *Troubles* was awarded the 'Lost Man Booker Prize' in 2010.

Maurice Platnauer's successor was elected from outside the college fellowship and he was the first BNC principal to be a knight of the realm. Aged 58, Sir Noel Hall was perceived to be an expert in both business and education and therefore the ideal person to take the college forward in changing times. He had enjoyed a very successful career as an undergraduate at BNC, gaining a first in history and a certificate of anthropology with distinction as well as – he was a short, stocky man – playing hooker for the college XV. From 1935 to 1938 he was professor of political economy at University College London, then director of the national institute of economic and social research to 1943. He also served during the war in the ministry of economic warfare and in the

trade department of the British Embassy in Washington. After the war he worked at Princeton University before becoming the founding principal of the administrative staff college at Henley until he took up residence with his American wife in the Brasenose tower in 1960. His election was imaginative and showed that the fellows were capable of thinking outside the box. Even so, it seems that he was second choice to Sir Oliver Franks, who had been British ambassador to Washington and was in 1960 chairman of Lloyd's Bank. Franks is said to have declined because he was hoping to be elected chancellor in 1960 as the university's preferred candidate, but he lost to the prime minister, Harold Macmillan.[6]

The first half of the 1960s were years of calm before a storm descended upon most universities and even schools in the western world. Undergraduates were still sporting tweed sports jackets and were happy to wear their gowns to lectures and tutorials and in the dining hall. Many looked back nostalgically to an Oxford of imagined elegance in the 1920s and lapped up the pages of Evelyn Waugh, especially *Brideshead Revisited*. They were also comfortable with the fact that their beds were made and rooms tidied by a scout old enough (in most cases) to be their father and that they were not allowed to have women in their rooms after the lodge gate had been locked. The dons, too, lived an elegant lifestyle, keeping up a chatty relationship with their pupils and dining in style on high table. Quite a lot of undergraduates at BNC were still regular attendants at chapel and there was a college choir which sang on Sundays. Moreover, in 1956 the UK's Clean Air Act did much to reduce smoke pollution and many of Oxford's great buildings, previously soot-stained and covered in ivy, were systematically cleaned and restored to a honey colour, further enhanced at BNC with window-boxes full of geraniums.

Apart from a significant improvement in the college's financial position and internal accommodation, the further improvements hoped for by the Sonners revolutionaries of 1948 were not achieved. For a start,

it took a long time for the college sporting traditions to fade. Between 1950 and 1965 there were sixteen BNC rugby blues, two of whom were captain, and BNC won rugby cuppers every year between 1950 and 1954. There were also sixteen cricket blues between 1950 and 1972 and BNC won the revived cricket cuppers contest in 1966. The only major college sport that did not hold up well, despite the construction of a brand new boathouse in 1958, was rowing. The eight dropped from fourth to eleventh in 1950 and there were no BNC rowing blues from 1961 to 1993. The crew of 1964, which finished sixteenth, had to look for a last-minute replacement and a relatively inexperienced second year modern linguist called Jeremy Greenland bravely took the vacant seat at bow. There was no lack of enthusiasm for the sport but far fewer entrants to the college came from rowing schools, so freshmen had to be taught to row from scratch. This may not have led to glory on the river but it was a healthy pattern of life that was much enjoyed, along with the black and yellow blazers and boaters, the Childe of Hale tie, juicy training-table steaks in hall and the traditional annual breakfast with the principal.

In 1962 there was an intake of around 110 BNC undergraduates, about half of whom came from independent schools – a lot less than Trinity College, with 80% and Christ Church with 70%. Manchester Grammar and other northern selective schools were still well represented and the college did not have a particularly 'snobby' feel to it. Yet despite efforts to improve academic results they remained much the same as they had been since 1945 and between 1956 and 1964 there was an average of only six firsts a year when the top academic colleges (Balliol, New College and Magdalen) were achieving about eighteen. The most successful results were still provided by the lawyers, under the wise guidance of Ron Maudsley and Barry Nicholas, two very different characters. Maudsley, something of a Sonners clone, was a triple blue as well as a law first and in his early days he captained the Warwickshire XI in the vacations. Nicholas was more the civil service type, imperturbable, highly organized and effective. Also resident in

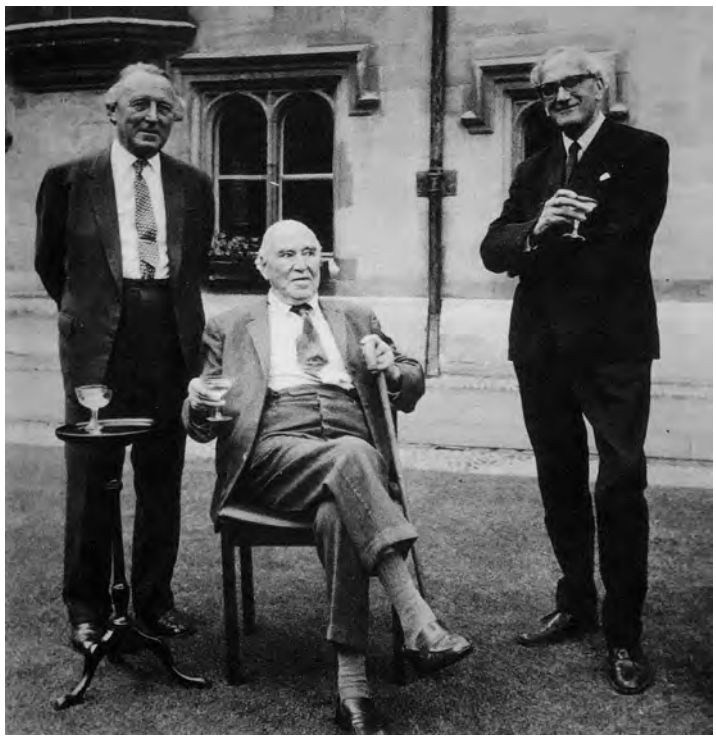
Brasenose as a professorial fellow was Harry Lawson, Oxford's first professor of comparative law (1948–1964), who was succeeded by Sir Otto Kahn Freund (1964–1971).

Among the early-sixties Brasenose students who became very well-known in later life was Jeffrey Archer, who though not a graduate of Oxford or any other university, was officially attached to the college from 1963 while studying for a diploma in education. As he was not a resident undergraduate he was something of a mystery to those who were because he was frequently seen around the college, doing things energetically and telling people how things should be run while almost no-one knew who he was. But Sir Noel Hall knew, and he agreed to host a thank-you party for the Beatles boy-band at Brasenose as part of Archer's scheme to raise a million pounds for Oxfam. Typically, Archer had gatecrashed a Beatles event in Liverpool the previous year and persuaded their manager Brian Epstein to sponsor Oxfam, telling him that Harold Macmillan had also agreed. In 2017 Lord Archer wrote:

> The Beatles visited the college on March 5 1964 and after dining with a group of dons who included Sir Noel Frederick Hall, an eminent economist and then the principal of the college, we all retired to his lodgings for drinks, where we were photographed sitting or standing around his fireplace, chatting. The thing that struck me most was Paul McCartney telling me that he had never gone to university, even though it was clear to me that he would have been perfectly capable of getting a degree at Oxford. He was an incredibly clever guy, as was John Lennon, but it made me realize that many people back then just didn't get the chance to pursue higher education.[7]

Another well-known name from the early 1960s is that of Michael Palin, who counts the 16th century BNC benefactor George

The Beatles at Brasenose, 5 March 1964.



Three Principals:
left to right, Sir Noel Hall (1960–1973),
Maurice Platnauer (1956–1960) and
Herbert Hart (1973–1978).

Palin amongst his forebears. He arrived in 1962 to read history with eight others, one of whom, Robert Hewison, proved to be the perfect foil for Palin's emerging sense of alternative humour and encouraged him to make a career of getting other people to laugh as much as his history contemporaries at BNC. Of these one (like Hewison) became a university professor, three headed large school history departments (including Eton) and one lectured in naval history. When Palin emerged as a central feature of 'Monty Python' in 1969 few of his contemporaries were surprised: they had heard many of the funny voices and the jokes before, over coffee in the 'Arab Quarter'. He went on to make highly acclaimed TV documentaries about his many travels across the globe, served as president of the Royal Geographical Society and was knighted (KCMG) in 2009 for 'services to travel, culture and geography'.

The sort of event that delighted anti-establishment commentators in the 1960s was the massive 'Profumo scandal' of 1963. John ('Jack') Profumo had studied law at BNC under Sonners in the mid-1930s and in 1940 he became the youngest MP while also serving in the army with distinction. Defeated in the election of 1945 he left the army (as a brigadier) in 1950 and was elected Conservative MP for Stratford-on-Avon that year. He steadily rose in the ministerial ranks and was appointed secretary of state for war in 1960. In 1961, despite being married to the glamorous actress Valerie Hobson, he began a short-lived affair with Christine Keeler, aged 19, who was also a lover of a naval attaché at the Soviet embassy, which posed a serious security risk. In March 1963 Profumo denied in the House of Commons that he had been in a sexual relationship with Keeler and when this was proved to be a lie, he resigned in June 1963. The Conservatives were widely accused of scandal and sleaze, which may have contributed to Labour's victory at the polls in 1964. Profumo did the decent thing and spent the rest of his long life working for charities, receiving the CBE from the hands of the Queen in 1975.

In 1963 a government committee headed by the economist Lord (Lionel) Robbins reported on the state of higher education in the UK.

He recommended that the number of universities should be greatly increased and this became the policy of subsequent governments, both Labour and Tory. Robbins also criticised many features of Oxford and Cambridge and to address these Oxford appointed Lord (Oliver) Franks, by now Provost of Worcester College, to conduct an internal inquiry into the university's affairs. Published in 1966, the Franks Report recommended that there should be more graduate and science students and more from the working classes. Also, the richer colleges should subsidise the poorer ones and university administration should be simplified and made more efficient.[8] Another report, recommending improvements in the organisation of Oxford's college and university libraries was produced by Robert Shackleton.

Born in Yorkshire in 1919 Shackleton read modern languages at Oriel and was elected a fellow of Brasenose in 1946, where he was one of the dominant and most popular influences for over thirty years. A specialist on the 18th century French Enlightenment he was a notable bibliophile and amassed a personal collection of over 1,000 volumes by or about the philosopher Montesquieu. He lived in bachelor splendour in the New Quad, surrounded by his library, often entertaining undergraduates on a generous scale. Tall, with a large and nodding head, he spoke with an extraordinary accent that generations of his pupils strove to mimic. He served the college devotedly as fellow, senior dean, librarian and vice-principal, and the university as Bodley's Librarian from 1966 to 1979 and as Marshal Foch Professor of French Literature until his death in 1986.

Life for Shackleton and the other bachelor dons at BNC at this time was undoubtedly comfortable, as one who arrived in his early twenties recalled:

> Dining in Brasenose in the mid-1960s was a delight, even if a challenge to the liver. Almost half the Fellows were single and lived in College. Dinner was normally five courses

> with two wines and followed by 'dessert' with port and Madeira in a separate common room seven nights per week. The bachelor Fellows took it in turn to have a week when they ordered the menu. Prior to one's week, on a Friday evening, the chef would come to the Fellow's room, doff his cap and say 'What shall we have for dinner next week, Sir?' Of course you could let the chef choose or suggest, but there were no cash limits and much serious rivalry, so that some pretty exotic meals were produced, particularly on a Saturday evening, when there was a tradition that only resident dons and their guests dined.[9]

As a result of Robbins's demand for expansion more money was made available to the universities and BNC was able to appoint eight young fellows between 1966 and 1968. Among them were four whose names in due course became well known beyond the college: Laszlo Solymar (engineering) Vernon Bogdanor (politics), Robert Evans (history) and Graham Richards (chemistry). But these were times of unrest among students worldwide as opposition became more outspoken against the West's war against Communism in Vietnam and established institutions and customs were increasingly challenged. Following examples in the USA students at the LSE staged demonstrations against the appointment of an unpopular director in 1968 and sit-ins and obstructive practices became commonplace. In 1967 the BNC authorities lost patience with the antisocial behaviour of the Vampires Club and they were suspended indefinitely.

By 1968 the student uniform for most was blue jeans, long hair and army surplus jackets accompanied by the smoking of marijuana and even harder drugs. Homosexuality was decriminalised in 1967 and the campaign for women's rights took on a new lease of life. Crucially, the legal age of majority was reduced in 1969 from 21 to 18, which meant that university authorities were no longer 'in loco parentis' and

therefore arguably had no business interfering in the private lives or sexual behaviour of students. The liberal outlook of the BNC fellows in the late 1960s is revealed by the fact that in 1967 they voted by a big majority that they would be willing to amend the college statutes so as to be able to admit women, the first Oxford governing body to make this momentous decision. It is possible that one of their motives was the notion that this would help to improve the college's academic league table results which had fallen from sixth in 1964 to 21st in 1968. In 1971 they went further and actually struck from the statutes the clause: 'No woman may become a member of the college'. The following year, to the annoyance of the women's colleges, BNC, together with Hertford, Jesus, St Catherine's and Wadham announced that they would admit women undergraduates in October 1974. Sonners and Platnauer and countless other BNC dons from the past might have spun in their graves but after more than 460 years, Brasenose was about to be transformed.[10]

Girls can stay all night, 1974-1989

After presiding over the deliberations that led to this decision, Sir Noel Hall retired in 1973, still popular with junior members of the college at a time of considerable unrest among students elsewhere. Under him BNC appointed some very able young dons and proved itself capable of moving with the times, though academic results declined. Outside the college Sir Noel was influential in the establishment of the new university at Lancaster and he worked prominently for Oxford hospitals and pharmaceutical provision more widely.

To replace Hall the fellows elected Herbert Hart, aged 66. The son of a prosperous Jewish tailor, he moved from Bradford Grammar School to New College where he got a first in Greats and then practised as a barrister before working for MI5 during the war. In 1948 he was appointed to a teaching fellowship in philosophy at

New College and from 1952 to 1969 he was professor of jurisprudence with a fellowship at University College. His book *Causation in the Law* appeared in 1959 and his most famous work, *The Concept of Law* in 1961. Other works followed and by the time he arrived at Brasenose he was considered to be one of the most influential legal philosophers of his age. He was also highly respected within the university, not least because of his official report in 1969 on relations between the university authorities and junior members. Prompted by the student unrest of the time the report recommended a degree of student involvement in the decision-making processes. Hart's wife was a history fellow at St Anne's College and had in her youth held strong left-wing views: he was also politically inclined to the left.

The first women undergraduates at Brasenose took up residence in October 1974 and among the 120 entrants to the college the following year 27 were women, 30 came from public schools, about 60 from grammar schools and a few from the newly-organized comprehensives. About 20 were postgraduates, mostly from abroad. Of the British entrants, there was still a tendency to favour the north-west. One of the earliest women at BNC, reading PPE, was Kate Allen who became influential in the local politics of London and the long-time partner of London mayor Ken Livingstone: she was appointed the UK director of Amnesty International in 2000. The first female graduates arrived in the summer of 1977 and by the beginning of the October term that year there were 131 women at BNC and 294 men.[11] Hart was not a great admirer of fine living and was uneasy with the fairly lavish menus on high table and the profusion of college feasts. There were also some small but significant changes to the domestic life of the college. By the end of Hart's five-year tenure, most of the male scouts had been replaced by part-time female cleaners and undergraduates were now expected to make their own beds and keep their rooms tidy.

The academic standing of the fellows that Hart had inherited was very high, with eleven who would become FBA and four FRS and

another five emeritus fellows of equal status. When Eric Collieu retired in 1976 he was replaced by Simon Schama, a blazing star who lit up the history teaching for four years before he was lured away with a chair at Harvard. Yet despite the high academic standing of the fellows the academic results of the college remained, by Oxford standards, disappointing. In 1975 BNC came 26th out of the 28 colleges, 21st in 1978 and 27th in 1980: nor did it come to pass that BNC women got more firsts than men for another thirty years. It was generally conceded, however, that co-residence calmed the rowdier elements and made life in the college more civilised.

Hart retired in 1978 and the fellows elected Barry Nicholas to replace him, the first Roman Catholic principal of Brasenose since the Reformation. Born in 1919 he came up to BNC from Downside School in 1937 and just had time to get a first in classical Mods before being shipped out to the Middle East as an army signals officer during the war. Back in BNC after this he got a first in law in 1946 and accepted Sonners's invitation to become a fellow of BNC. From 1949 to 1971 he was All Souls reader in Roman Law and from 1971 to his election as principal he was professor of comparative law. In 1962 he published his classic *Introduction to Roman Law*. His obituary in the Guardian noted that as principal he 'presided over college business with unassertive grace, never using two words when one would do'. As for his stature as a lawyer beyond the college, 'it was always a pleasure to observe, over dinner, judges of distinction, not always noted for their modesty, deferring to their undoubted master'. 'His strongest weapon in argument and persuasion', the obituary concluded, 'was always silence'.[12]

Nicholas was principal for eleven years and during this period the academic improvement that had for so long been hoped for at BNC was to some extent achieved. He and Ron Maudsley had been joined as law tutors in 1971 by Peter Birks, famous for his development of the law of restitution, but he left for a chair at Edinburgh in 1981 and

Maudsley died later that year, to be replaced by John Davies. One of their most impressive pupils was Malcolm Turnbull, a Rhodes scholar who studied for a BCL between 1978 and 1980: after a dazzling career in business and finance he moved into politics and served as prime minister of Australia from 2015–2018. In 1978 Andrew Burrows got the best law first in the university and pursued a highly successful academic career as an expert on contract law.

During the 1980s there were also some excellent results in Politics, Philosophy and Economics (PPE) under the direction of Vernon Bogdanor and his team. Appointed in 1966, Bogdanor produced a flood of publications which made him a recognised expert on the British constitution and a valued adviser to several foreign governments. Between 1983 and 1989 there were 20 firsts in PPE plus another nine in joint-honour courses. The most high-profile achiever of this period was Etonian David Cameron, who graduated in 1988. Despite escapades in the Bullingdon Club with schoolfellow Boris Johnson (Balliol), Cameron got a first while Johnson, claiming, of course, that PPE was much easier than Mods and Greats, got seconds. After a few years in the media industry Cameron was elected an MP in 2001 and with his charm, fluency and natural air of assurance quickly rose to be leader of the Tory party in 2005 and then prime minister from 2010 to 2016, resigning when the Brexit referendum result went against his expectations in that year. Other PPE students of this period were Mark Harper, a minister of state under Cameron and a challenger for the Tory leadership in 2019, and the journalist Camilla Cavendish.

Towards the end of the 1970s BNC decided that the time had come to make more of its ownership of Frewin Hall. As we have seen, the college demolished St Mary's Chapel in the late 1650s but retained the site and rented out the main house. In 1721 this was leased from BNC by Dr Richard Frewin, the leading Oxford physician of his day who was also elected Camden professor of ancient history in 1727. Soon after his arrival he considerably enlarged and refaced the house and

Built above a twelfth century undercroft on a site once occupied by St Mary's College for Augustinian canons, Frewin Hall dates from c1582 and it was extended in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Below: the study, as furnished for the Prince of Wales in 1862.

built a new wing in the early Georgian manner so that the house became known as Frewin Hall, reflecting its increased size and dignity. Frewin had three wives but no children and dying a wealthy man in 1761 he left many generous benefactions to the university, including the lease of the house to successive regius professors of medicine. Late in 1859 it was made ready for occupation by the eighteen-year-old Prince of Wales and his modest entourage and the fine drawing-room and panelled study were provided with furniture specially made by Holland and Sons, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert's favoured cabinet makers. The prince spent two years at Oxford, first attached to Christ Church, then Trinity. In 1875 and 1878 parts of the Frewin garden were sold to the Oxford Union Society so that their new debating chamber could be built, while the house itself continued to be leased to tenants.

These included Charles Shadwell, a fellow of Oriel, who decided that he wanted to enlarge the house even more and in 1887 he commissioned plans from Thomas Jackson, who was about to embark on his construction of the New Quad at Brasenose. In 1888 Jackson replaced the first floor of the original house with a more elegant upper storey, while over the main entrance a sundial was constructed, bearing the date 1888 and Shadwell's coat-of-arms. Shadwell was elected provost of Oriel in 1905 and in 1908 the house was tenanted by the military historian Charles Oman, whose daughter Carola later wrote about it fondly. After 1945 Frewin was converted for the use of a few privileged BNC third-year undergraduates who were able to live like country squires in this mellow mansion in the heart of Oxford.[13]

The 1970s were a time of very high inflation when property became more valuable than cash and under the direction of the bursar, Norman Leyland, a modern extension to Frewin Hall was built between 1975 and 1981 which provided more accommodation for undergraduates. This marked the beginning of a process which would gradually transform the Frewin site from a leisurely oasis enjoyed by a privileged few to a busy second campus. The numbers of students attending the

university grew steadily from 7,294 in 1948 to 8,699 in 1958 and 9,450 in 1964. Then, as a result of the Robbins report, there was a leap to 13,124 in 1986.[14] After Leyland's death late in 1981 the search for a new bursar led to the appointment of Robert Gasser, a physical chemist and fellow of Corpus Christi College who was also an influential university administrator with a high reputation in financial matters. His first years were spent paying for the Frewin extension, countering the effects of inflation and raising extra revenue. Some of this came from hiring out college facilities during the vacations as well as allowing the cameras in to BNC to film many of the early 'Inspector Morse' TV series.

In 1984 Brasenose celebrated ten years of co-residence and it has been argued that:

> … the admission of women turned out in some ways to be a non-event. Manners improved, the quadrangles were quieter, the libraries more full. There were fewer lectures in any case now, and rather more seminars. More generally, the college became socially self-sufficient and – paradoxically – security became for the first time an issue of importance. Locks were placed on bed-sitting room doors. Previously, no student had ever possessed a key. Otherwise, changes were minimal. Examination results did not improve overnight. The Phoenix and the Octagon continued to imbibe. The takings of the beer cellar showed little or no diminution. The Pater and the Ellesmere continued to confabulate. And – as gloomily predicted – team sports continued to decline.[15]

The Boat Club in 1978 did make strenuous efforts to 'stem the decline of Brasenose rowing', as the secretary put it, and in Torpids the first boat got four bumps and the second boat a remarkable seven, for which they were awarded a Bump Supper. Results in Eights Week that year

Barry Nicholas,
Principal 1978–1989.
Portrait by Mark Wickham.

David Hennessy, Lord Windlesham,
Principal 1989–2002.
Portrait by David Cobley.

were not so good and starting from a very low position the first crew went down another two places. Rugby fared little better and in 1981 the first team sank to the third division, something unheard of. There were ups and downs in all college sports over the years, but on the whole the results were not at all what they had been in the past.

The arrival of women failed to dim BNC's enthusiasm for 'Ale Verses', a long-standing tradition of writing and reciting rather bad poems in honour of some contemporary college member or event. Until 1886 the college had its own brewery and in the early days the tradition grew that on Shrove Tuesday the butler would formally present a verse or verses in praise of ale to the principal in return for a sum of money. Thomas Hearne discovered a few BNC Ale Verses for the year 1709 but the practice is certainly much older than that. A fairly continuous sequence of verses was preserved between 1826 and 1889 when the tradition ceased for a while after the closing of the brewhouse but the publication of *The Brazen Nose* in 1909 gave the verses a new lease of life and they gradually became a regular feature of the magazine.[16]

Chapter Eight

Expansion: St Cross and Frewin, 1989-2003

Barry Nicholas retired as principal in 1989 when he reached the age of 70 and the fellows picked another winner to succeed him. The Rt Hon. David Hennessy, third Baron Windlesham PC, CVO, brought to the college a huge range of experience as well as a courteous and fair-minded disposition. Born in 1932 and educated at Ampleforth and Trinity College Oxford, where he read law, he embarked on a promising political career, soon becoming chairman of the Conservative Bow Group and a member of Westminster City Council and in 1959 MP for Tottenham. His father died prematurely in 1962 and he was required to take his hereditary seat in the House of Lords. He was first a minister of state at the Home Office in the Heath government of 1970 and then lord privy seal and leader of the House of Lords, with a seat in the cabinet from 1973-4.

After the fall of the Tories in 1974 Windlesham switched to his second career in the media. He had already been managing director of Grampian TV from 1967 to 1970 and he became managing director of ATV in 1975 and chairman in 1981. From 1982 to 1988 he was chairman of the Parole Board and produced four volumes on penal policy between 1987 and 2001, for which he was later awarded the Oxford degree of DLitt. When the hereditary peers were removed from the Lords in 1999 he was created a life peer as Baron Hennessy. He also held many other influential posts such as chairman of the trustees of the British Museum (1986-1996), the Oxford Preservation Society and the Oxford Society.

The real educational revolution in the latter part of the century was the spectacular growth in the number of British universities, resulting from the Robbins Report of 1963. By 1992 there were about

50 universities but the Education Act of that year created a further 42 universities, most of them former polytechnics. This did not mean that the pressure for entry to Oxford and Cambridge at undergraduate level grew less because there had also been an expansion of sixth form teaching and 'Oxbridge' was still perceived by many pupils to be the ultimate academic goal. But the number of graduate students from the many other universities at home and abroad wishing to pursue higher degrees at Oxford and Cambridge also increased dramatically. In 1950 there were about 6,000 undergraduates at Oxford and by 2015 the number had roughly doubled but the 1,000 or so graduates of 1950 rose to over ten thousand by 2015 and showed no sign of slowing down.[1]

Between 1945 and 1990 university education had been free and supported by means-tested grants but the great increase in the number of British universities had the result that the state could no longer afford to pay for all students and in 1990 the government introduced student loans and then in 1998 imposed tuition fees, initially at the modest level of £1k a year, though they were steadily raised. Foreign graduate students became a very attractive proposition to a university starved of funding because they paid substantial fees and as early as 1992 Brasenose was home to graduate students from 22 different countries.

Another important feature of this period was the development of technologies that changed the way people lived and worked. Mobile phones (at first the size of bricks) appeared in the early 1980s and became steadily more sophisticated. Microsoft launched their 'Windows' computing system in 1985 and by 1988 there was one official computer in BNC, used by two of the fellows. Sir Tim Berners-Lee (who got a first in physics at Oxford in 1973) launched the world-wide-web in 1990 and Google arrived in 1996, followed by Wi-Fi in 1999. Apple produced their Mac computers in 2001, Facebook arrived in 2004, YouTube in 2005, Twitter in 2006, iPhones in 2007 and iPads in 2010. All these inventions together resulted in the era of 'social media', with revolutionary consequences.

Given the rise in student numbers the main imperatives for Brasenose in the 1990s were to raise money in order to finance the building of more accommodation for all students and it was to these twin objectives that the bursar, Robert Gasser, gave his full attention. To raise money he took the bold decision to recover possession of Oxford City Football Ground which had been built in the previous century on land owned by BNC between the Abingdon Road and Marlborough Road. Oxford City had played there since 1900 and were shocked by this move but in 1988 the High Court upheld the college's claim that the club had acted contrary to the terms of the lease for several years and ordered it to vacate the ground. Not surprisingly, this did not make BNC popular in football circles and the college and the bursar took a good deal of flak from the local and national press.

City councillors loyal to the club resisted the granting of planning permission for a while but the pressing need for more housing in Oxford led to permission being granted on condition that the college made a substantial contribution to a new ground elsewhere for Oxford City. With this settled, the big question was whether the college should then sell the land at a profit or develop it itself – a more arduous though even more profitable proposition.

The latter was chosen and about a hundred retirement homes and 44 town houses, as well as a nursery school, vicarage and church hall were eventually built under the auspices of 'Richard Sutton Developments Ltd', a company set up by the college with Bernard Rudden, professor of comparative law and a fellow of BNC, as chairman and the bursar as managing director.

Even though this project coincided with a downturn in the property market in the first half of the 1990s, the bursar calculated that, after all the dust had settled, the college made twice as much from developing the land as they would have made from selling it and investing the money. *The Brazen Nose* hailed the project as 'the biggest financial coup in the history of the college' but it involved a great deal

Modern additions to the Brasenose accommodation.

Top left, the Powell and Moya bedsits, 1960:
top right, the St Cross buildings, 1996:
bottom left, the Frewin extension, 1981 and
bottom right, Hollybush Row, 2008.

of time and hard work and many of the bursar's college duties were delegated to other members of the bursary staff.[2]

In 1988 the government abolished housing benefit for students and at a stroke this made living in rental properties very much more expensive. Many Oxford colleges sought to provide increased in-house accommodation and BNC put forward proposals for further building on the Frewin site but these plans were rejected by the planners. Then an opportunity occurred when St Cross College wished to build accommodation on land it owned near St Cross Road but could not afford to pay for it. So a deal was done by which in return for the site BNC agreed to pay most of the cost of building two blocks of around fifty bed-sits, one for St Cross and one for BNC. There were prolonged difficulties in achieving planning permission but eventually the project went ahead and the first occupants, all postgraduates, moved in during September 1996.

Almost at once the next project began, this time at Frewin, where the planners had been persuaded to accept another scheme to provide twenty-five rooms on the former car park area. Despite the somewhat petulant complaints of existing Frewin residents who had to live on a building site for several terms the scheme went ahead and the new buildings were opened by Lord Runcie in the autumn of 1997. The overall cost of the St Cross and Frewin buildings was £3.5 million, £300,000 of which was raised by the Brasenose Society. The result was that BNC could now accommodate all students who wished to spend the whole period of their undergraduate study in college, a factor which helped to attract good candidates for entrance. Robert Gasser retired in 2000, leaving the colleges finances, as he put it, 'respectable upper second class' compared with other colleges. *The Brazen Nose*, in tribute, calculated that when he took office in 1982 the college endowment was £10 million and he left it worth about seven times as much.[3]

During the 1990s PPE continued to be very strong and Vernon Bogdanor attracted a large number of high profile politicians to speak at

BNC including two prime ministers, two home secretaries, four cabinet secretaries and the heads of MI5 and MI6. College rugby returned to something of its former dominance, carrying off the cuppers trophy in 1995, 1996 and 2000. In 2001 it was won again, according to the secretary 'with an even headier mixture of arrogance and flair than the previous year'. Cricket did equally well, winning cuppers in the same years. Between 1995 and 2002 there were six BNC blues, in rugby, cricket and rowing. One of them, Andrew Lindsay, was captain of OUBC, won a gold for GB at the Sydney Olympics and in his spare time got a first in geography.

Moving into the new millennium BNC scored a major success in the academic league tables in 2001 with thirty firsts, which helped to produce a record result of third overall. There were 527 students at the college that year, 385 of them undergraduates and 142 graduates, and of the undergraduates about half by now were women, though the proportion of entrants from independent schools had actually risen to about 56%. This was because many former grammar schools had been forced by government policies to become independent and because many comprehensive schools did not have strong sixth forms. By 2007, for instance, nearly 45% of those achieving A grades in mathematics were educated at independent schools. The most popular subjects studied at BNC were law, medicine, PPE and economic management and by 2003 the college was admitting as many medics as lawyers.[4]

Towards the Quincentenary, 2003-2010

With all these firsts and blues, an increased number of students, a spectacular increase in the college's endowment and the construction of two important annexes at St Cross and Frewin, Lord Windlesham retired in 2002 at a high point in the fortunes of BNC. Of the 35 fellows on the foundation at this time about a third were scientists and the search for his successor, led by Vernon Bogdanor as acting

principal, ended with the election of the first scientist to hold the post, Professor Roger Cashmore FRS, who moved to BNC in 2003, aged 59. He read his first degree at Cambridge and researched his doctorate at Oxford where he became a fellow and tutor at Balliol then professor of experimental physics in 1991, head of particle and nuclear physics from 1991 to 1996 and head of the physics faculty from 1997 to 1999. In the latter year he was appointed director of research and deputy director-general of the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN), positions he held until 2004, when he was appointed CMG in recognition of his services.

There had been a strong internal candidate for the post of principal in the person of Graham Richards, who came to BNC with a scholarship in 1958 and after a first in chemistry became a research fellow at Balliol before his fellowship at BNC in 1966. He was appointed professor of chemistry in 1996 and ran the university department from 1997 to 2006. According to the Royal Society he was one of the pioneers of computational chemistry, introducing techniques such as molecular graphics and organizing the Screensaver Lifesaver project which linked 3.5 million personal computers in 200 countries in the search to find antidotes for cancer, anthrax and smallpox. He also had very considerable entrepreneurial flair and founded the Oxford Molecular Group and was closely involved with Oxford University Innovation, IP Group and Oxford Drug Design, all of which were multi-million pound businesses. On top of all this he had been a dedicated and popular college tutor for decades and the personal friend of generations of undergraduates. In 2011 he wrote a memoir entitled *50 Years at Oxford* in which he said:

> The Brasenose post is not particularly attractive for a principal, not least because there are no grand lodgings, much less a garden, but also at the time the 500th anniversary of the foundation was looming up with the

> inevitable appeal and fund-raising campaign. In fact I had, when Senior Tutor, protected the previous principal, Lord Windlesham, from going for an appeal on the grounds that we should wait for the quincentenary. Having raised £64 million to fund a laboratory and brought in over £100 million to the University I was pretty confident that, being an old member and knowing most of the most powerful alumni personally, I could guarantee raising at least £20 million. In the event, the Fellows did not support me, instead electing my good friend Roger Cashmore: a wise choice and only a mild disappointment to me as there are many downsides to the job.[5]

Richards also mentioned in his book that he was 'very cross' not to have been elected a FRS, a situation that was rectified in 2018.

One of the new principal's first initiatives was to hasten the appointment of a director of development at BNC, a move that reflected the growing awareness among universities (and independent schools) that they needed to tap the loyalty of their alumni with greater efficiency. In the newly established alumni relations office a database was compiled which made it possible to contact former members through email as well as a lavishly produced newsletter, full of coloured illustrations and wittily entitled *Brazen Notes*. Year group leaders volunteered to keep in touch with their contemporaries and the Brasenose Society held regular drinks parties in London and elsewhere. The new concept of an annual fund was introduced through which regular donations could be made and the first of these raised a promising £230,000 in 2007. In addition, the Alexander Nowell Circle, for alumni who pledged a bequest to the college, was rejuvenated and extended.

The most important building project of this first decade was the construction of 42 rooms for graduate students at Hollybush Row. Though sited some way from the college, near to the railway station,

this was an important addition to the BNC facilities because it meant that all graduate students could be offered college accommodation in their first year and it opened in September 2008, a year in which the college admitted more graduates than ever before. Great attention was given to making the building energy-efficient, with solar panels and rainwater tanks for flushing the lavatories and a high level of thermal and acoustic insulation. Academic results were not particularly impressive at this time, with 21st place in the Norrington Table in 2007 and 26th in 2008, though the men's rugby XV reached the final of cuppers that year.

The looming quincentenary had been to the forefront of college thinking for some years but it was overshadowed by the global financial crisis that began to be noticed in the UK early in 2008 and which eventually drastically reduced the value of investments and income streams. Modified celebrations went ahead, starting in December 2008 with a reception held at Goldsmiths Hall in London to launch a new history of the college written by Professor Joseph Mordaunt Crook, CBE FBA. In 1958 he gained what he later described as the only BNC history first in 30 years of peacetime and embarked on a career as a distinguished architectural historian. The book, handsomely produced by OUP runs to 646 pages of text, footnotes, illustrations and appendices yet despite this weightiness, it is a marvellous read and amply justifies its title *Brasenose: The Biography of an Oxford College* because it supplies vivid insights into the personalities of hundreds of the people who have figured prominently in the life of the college over five centuries.

For many years the college had hosted some of the Tanner lectures on human values which had been founded in Cambridge in 1978 and were given annually at a number of venues. In February 2009 a special forum was arranged at BNC in which college alumni Kate Allen, Lord Justice Scott Baker, Sir Nicholas Bratza and George Monbiot discussed issues of the day with fellows and students. In March there was tea in

Principal Roger Cashmore escorts HM the Queen
on her visit to the college to mark its Quincentenary,
2 December 2009.

UK Prime Minister David Cameron formally declares
'Project Q' completed, September 2013.

the Long Room at Lord's and in June the XI held the MCC to a draw. The Quincentenary Ball in May took over the whole of Radcliffe Square and there were special Eights Week parties and also BNC alumni dinners in many foreign countries. The main UK dinner for alumni was held at the college in September and at the end of that month there was an anniversary weekend with a chapel service, entertainments and a pageant. In November David Cameron, by now the leader of the Conservative Party, spoke in the Sheldonian to a very large BNC audience and chatted afterwards to students in the college. Finally, the Queen herself arrived on 2 December and after officially re-opening the Ashmolean after its massive renovation, she came on to Brasenose and met several students and fellows – one of whom had been present when she first visited the college in 1948. Her Majesty was treated to a '500 years in ten minutes' pageant in chapel and then a celebration lunch in hall.

Another main feature of the year was an exhibition staged by Elizabeth Boardman, who had been appointed college archivist in 1988 and had a useful contact in that her husband, Carl, was both a BNC man and also Oxford county archivist. He was able to help with display cases and the exhibition opened in the college on May 5 for five weeks before transferring to the Oxfordshire record office for a further three months. The first person to sign the visitors' book, appropriately enough, was Bishop John Saxbee of Lincoln. There were a great many items of interest in the exhibition, especially the foundation charter of Henry VIII, a 13th century manuscript Bible which had belonged to Bishop Smyth and a rare missal, printed on vellum, owned by Sir Richard Sutton. Other items included JMW Turner's 1803–4 watercolour of the Old Quad, a bust of John Buchan, William Golding's Nobel Prize diploma and a collection of 'noses'.[6] In response to a special Quincentenary Appeal, 444 members of the college raised a total of £640,000.

The college made the bold decision to spend its 501st year undertaking an ambitious scheme dubbed 'Project Q' which would

transform its catering facilities, even though it would involve considerable disruption to daily life for five terms. The first part of the upgrade, the laying of a new under-floor heating system in hall, was completed in time for the start of term in October 2010 but students returned to the probably unwelcome sight of a large marquee in the Old Quad, equipped as a temporary kitchen, while the New Quad was effectively a builder's yard. The imaginative scheme moved the old kitchens to a new site created in the little-used area between the Old and New Quads and the Lincoln wall and constructed a new 'Medieval Dining Room' where the kitchens had been. All this would enable the college to provide 350 meals a day during term time and up to 700 a day during the conference season in the vacations, a vital time for generating revenue.

Roger Cashmore's seven years as principal saw big changes in three respects: a major drive to engage with alumni, an increase in the number of graduates and the building of Hollybush Row to accommodate them, and the launching of Project Q. In July 2010 he was appointed part-time non-executive chairman of the UK Atomic Energy Authority and the college granted him research leave for the academic year 2010-11, naming Professor Alan Bowman FBA as acting principal. In December 2010, aware that he had critics on the governing body, Cashmore announced that he would retire at the end of the academic year and in the summer of 2011 Professor Bowman was elected as his successor. A farewell dinner was held in hall in September for the retiring principal, who resumed his scientific research and responsibilities with UKAEA, where he remained chairman until 2018.

Project Q and the Greenland Library

In olden times Alan Bowman would have had a claim to be a fellow of BNC by right since he was born in Lancashire close to where both founders of the college had seen the light of day. Moreover, he was a

pupil at MGS before moving on to Queen's College Oxford and the University of Toronto, after which he was appointed a tutorial fellow at Christ Church in 1977. His main academic interest was the social and economic history of the Roman Empire and in 1996 he co-edited Volume 10 of the *Cambridge Ancient History* (second edition), moving to Brasenose on his appointment as Camden professor in 2002. Living in the principal's lodgings from 2011 he and his wife surveyed an Old Quad which housed temporary kitchens, while the New Quad was still a builder's yard as work continued on Project Q. The disruption lasted five terms in all, though the work was finished on time and on budget and by the summer term of 2012 the quads had returned to their former state of verdant serenity. Some time after the new facilities had been in use they were formally opened in September 2013 by BNC's second UK prime minister, David Cameron, who told his audience:

> Every time I come back to Brasenose College I have only one request which is that I could start my three years here all over again, as they were the happiest and most interesting moments that I've spent. I think it was here that I really learnt who I was and what I wanted to do, and the brilliant teaching that you get here, the fantastic tuition, the one-on-one attention, is just a remarkable thing …[7]

It was an even more remarkable thing when Cameron was an undergraduate in the mid-1980s because the state paid most of the costs of tuition. But by 2012 students had to pay £9k a year for tuition with an additional estimated cost of £8k to live and eat at a time when the income for the average UK household was less than £40k a year. Hence the university and colleges set up a bursary scheme which aimed to provide free education to householders with gross income less than £17k – which was thought to apply to 7% of BNC students. The bursary scheme cost the college £180k a year and the alumni office was tasked with appealing

to old members to shoulder some of this burden. By 2012 the college endowment had recovered to some extent from the global economic crisis of 2008-9 and stood at about £90 million, 70% of which was invested in equities and hedge funds. Half of the rest consisted of commercial property and the other half of agricultural land totalling 2,358 acres, a thousand acres of which was centred on an estate near Leominster which had first been donated to the college in 1531. The recently-established annual fund was raising about £150k a year, which went some way towards meeting the cost of the bursary scheme.[8]

There was general rejoicing and some bemusement in 2012 when BNC came second in the academic league tables, though like similar feats in the past the glory was short-lived. Doubtless aware of this, the college's official response was: 'Brasenose does not aim to maintain any particular place in the Norrington Table. This is simply a ranking of Oxford's colleges, all of which provide an outstanding education for undergraduates'.[9] The rugby club were the university men's sevens champions in that year while the boat club entered upon an energetic phase, buoyed up by the realisation that BNC has a claim to being one of the oldest boat clubs in the world. In 2009 they launched an '1815 Club' to raise funds for a resurgence before the imminent bicentenary and in 2013 this began to show results when the women's crews did well in Torpids and the men's crew got four bumps in Eights for the first time in 25 years: the second crew got their blades as well.

BNC had a blue in the winning men's crew of 2014 and in 2015 the women's college eight got four bumps and moved back into the first division, the men's second eight got four bumps and the first crew kept its place towards the top of the second division. It was therefore an upbeat boat club that re-rowed the 1815 contest against Jesus on the Isis in 2015 in period boats and period kit. As in the original race, they won. Rowing had become very popular with women and not only at Oxford – official statistics showed that across the UK there were actually more women rowing by now than men. Principal Bowman was

recognised by the boat club as one of their supporters and a 'Bowman Boat Club Fund' was established to raise funds with the long-term aim of getting the men's eight to the head of the river before 2035 – the centenary of its last triumph.

The year 2014 marked 40 years since the admission of women to Brasenose and though numbers of men and women students were roughly equal, this was by no means the case among the fellowship. When Dr Abigail Green was elected to a tutorial fellowship in history in 2000 she was, with Dr Sarah (Sos) Eltis, one of only two women fellows. Three more soon followed but after they moved on, Green and Eltis were in 2015 still the only two. But of all the BNC women graduates many had achieved distinction in their subsequent careers and the students decided to commission 20 portrait photographs of some of them, which were hung in the JCR.

Alan Bowman's last year as principal was dominated by an ambitious project to improve the facilities of the college library, which many students considered to be overcrowded. An appeal was launched for a scheme envisaged by Tim Lee, an architect who read for an MLitt in architectural design theory and history at BNC in the early 1990s and it found favour with three former members in particular, venture capital investor Duncan Greenland CBE, James Del Favero, a senior member of Goldman Sachs, and investment manager Gerald Smith, who together donated a large portion of the total cost of £4 million. The rest came from sponsorships of chairs, tables and bookshelves by present and former members of the college. The scheme involved the refurbishment of the upper library and a total reconstruction of the ground floor and cloister area to create a larger reading room with windows to Radcliffe Square as well as the Deer Park. Work began early in 2015 and inevitably involved the digging up of the Deer Park (again), but all in a good cause.

In tribute to Alan Bowman on his retirement in 2015 *The Brazen Nose* suggested that he had been able to 'harness the consensus without

Distinguished BNC alumnae, top down, left to right:
Kate Allen, Andrea Brand, Jules Chappell; Emma Garth, Rachel Harrison,
Mania Hutchinson; Ceri Hutton, Harini Iyengar, Fay Schlesinger;
Kate Shand, Mary Stokes, Valerie Worth.

ever letting the college feel it is being harnessed (or bridled or lassoed)' and that through academic distinction coupled with modesty and lack of self-importance, he had restored 'the friendly atmosphere that seems so intrinsic to Brasenose'.[10] He was elected an emeritus fellow of the college and continued to serve as a vice-president of the British Academy until 2017. Possibly for the first time, representatives of students and staff from all parts of the college were included in the search for his successor and consideration of 'a range of excellent candidates' concluded with the election of John Bowers QC, aged 59. Hailing from the north-east, he studied law at Lincoln College, became a barrister in 1979, a silk in 1998, a recorder in 2003 and a deputy high court judge in 2010. An authority on employment law, he is the author of 14 books on legal matters and has three children with his wife, Suzanne.

The excellent BNC Norrington Table result of 2012 was achieved because nearly 43% of the candidates (41 out of 96) got a first and nearly everyone else got 'two-ones'. Until 1986 Oxford held out against the division of the second class, which had long been part of the Cambridge system and had been adopted by almost all other universities in the UK. Though there were exceptions, it was unusual up to 1960 for many more than 10% of candidates in any given subject to get a first and at Cambridge and other universities there were plenty of 'two-twos': but by 2014 the average percentage of Oxbridge firsts reached 24%.

The fact that such a large number of candidates had been getting firsts and two-ones in the 21st century naturally led to a debate about whether there had been a notable grade inflation at all universities (as there had been in A level candidates in schools), linked to the fact that students were now paying for their own education and expected to see good results. At BNC the 2012 Norrington result was not sustained, with 34% of the year group getting firsts in 2013, 28% in 2014 and 30% in 2015. The next three years saw a significant rise, with 38% in

2016 and 40% in 2017, which put the college at seventh in the league in both years, and an even better 41.5% in 2018. In that year all the finalists in biology, fine art and maths got firsts, as did seven of the lawyers. In 2019 41% got firsts, with seven out of ten for history and joint courses, five out of seven for physics and two out of three for biochemistry.

Also on the way up was the college endowment, to some extent a result of the vigorous campaign which aimed to encourage former members of the college to see themselves as part of an extended family. The generous practice of inviting alumni to a 'Gaudy' every seven years or so was well established by the early 20th century but this was taken further with invitations to other Brasenose events up and down the country under the auspices of the Brasenose Society. Founded in 1937 with Lord Tweedsmuir (John Buchan) as its first president this had provided the college with a steady degree of support, moral and financial. After the millennium it took on a more proactive role as Oxford and its colleges increasingly decided to seek financial support from alumni on the well-established model of the great private universities in the USA. In 2016–17 Philip Parker, the BNC bursar, was able to show that the college's endowment had risen to £138.8 million, with donations running at £10.5 million over three years and in 2019 it stood at £158.4 million, just putting it in the top third of Oxford's 38 colleges.

In 2016 Brasenose celebrated another Nobel Prize winner, the physicist Professor Michael Kosterlitz. Born and educated in Scotland he read his first degree at Cambridge, completed his doctorate as a postgraduate student at BNC in 1969 and taught at Birmingham University before moving to Brown University in the USA. His specialism has been condensed matter theory and he was awarded the prize for work in this field jointly with his colleagues David Thouless (who died in 2019) and Duncan Haldane. Another notable achievement came with the announcement in 2019 that Professor Andrew Burrows,

an honorary fellow of the college, would become a member of the UK Supreme Court in 2020. He studied law at BNC and got the best first of his year in 1974 before lecturing in commercial law at Manchester and Oxford. In 2021 he was joined on the Supreme Court by Dame Vivien Rose who read her first degree at Cambridge and a post-graduate degree at BNC.

By the summer of 2017 the hoarding round the Deer Park had long gone and BNC students had already been using the splendid facilities of the refurbished library. On May 5 there was a formal opening ceremony attended by the Chancellor, Lord Patten, and performed by the celebrated novelist Sir Philip Pullman CBE, a living example of the fact that getting a third at Oxford (Exeter College) is not necessarily a bad thing. The main change in the new library was the incorporation of the former cloisters, complete with the underfloor burial sites of previous college residents, into a new reading room named after Gerald Smith, while the upper reading room was named in honour of James Del Favero.

It was the wish of Duncan Greenland that the library as a whole should be named after his elder brother Jeremy, who died in 2005 after living with a serious illness for several years. Jeremy came up to BNC with an award to read modern languages in 1962, rowed bow in the 1964 Ist VIII and later received a doctorate in education. He was a practising Christian and had a lot of college friends as well as female admirers, and he married soon after completing his first degree. His career was spent in education and in particular working for the Aga Khan Foundation in creating educational opportunities for underprivileged people in developing countries. He was not a prime minister or a Nobel laureate but he was loved by his family (two sons and one daughter, all Oxonians) and admired by his friends and he lived a creative and productive life which brought benefits to many people. If all BNC men and women can do that, they will do well. Sad to say, Jeremy's elder son Sam, who matriculated at BNC in 1993 to read

Jeremy Greenland (left) and friends at the Brasenose Ball, 1966.

Part of the newly-named Greenland Library.

chemistry and proved in his subsequent career to be an outstanding debater and teacher, fell a victim to cancer and died in 2019, aged 45.

The big move of 2018 was the college's deal with Aviva, the owners of the impressive Lloyds Bank premises on Carfax, by which the college bought the property while Lloyds remained the tenants. Designed in an elaborate Renaissance style by Stephen Salter, a local architect, the complex was originally built in four stages between 1900 and 1926 as the business steadily grew: then it was further extended and rebuilt internally in the late 1970s. By this purchase the college could hope to receive an impressive rent (£535k pa in 2008) with the potential to redevelop upper floors of the building as college accommodation.[11]

A further improvement to the college facilities came in December 2019 when the former Lecture Room XI was re-opened as the reconstructed Amersi Foundation Lecture Theatre, which increased the former seating capacity of about 40 to about 120. This was achieved thanks to a grant from the foundation established by Mohamed Amersi who was attached to BNC when he studied for an Executive MBA at the Saïd Business School in 2004. A successful entrepreneur in the telecoms sector, he is also a philanthropist who has funded many charitable causes, including the fight against modern slavery, and in recognition of this the lecture theatre was opened by former prime minister Theresa May, also a crusader in that cause.

The retirement of college steward Alan Bennett in 2018 after 38 years threw into relief the remarkable role played by generations of men and women in the service of the college. Alan's father Stan worked as a scout at BNC for 18 years and Alan arrived in 1980 when, according to him 'It was like Dickens', with many fellows living in college and being served meals by the butler. At first he was a junior butler but he was promoted to head butler at the age of 23 and college steward in 1991, overseeing all meals and functions.[12] In the early centuries of the college's history much of the serving at table had been done by the most lowly grade of students, the battelers, but as these were phased out in

Alan Bowman,
Principal 2011–2015.

John Bowers,
Principal from 2015.

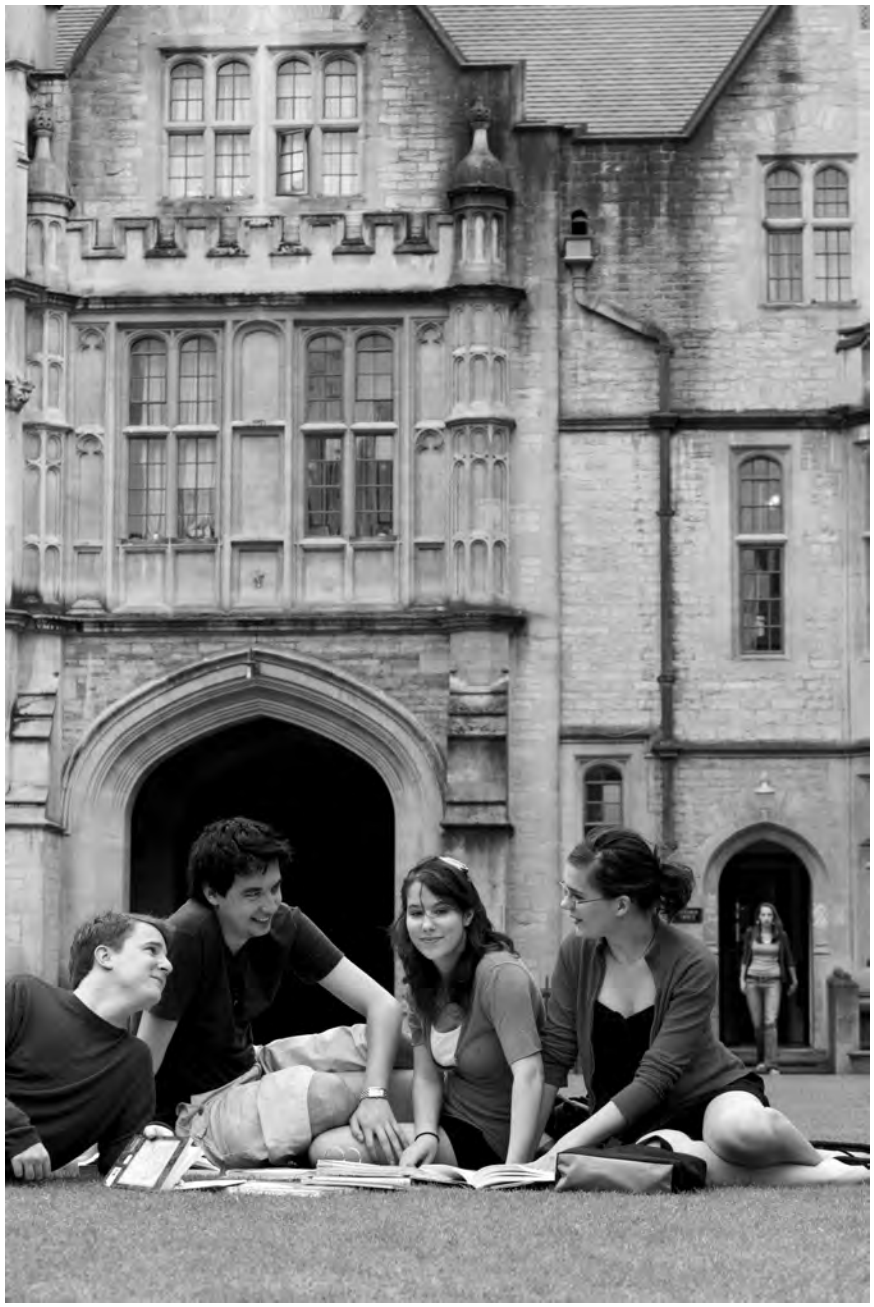
Former Prime Minister Theresa May opens the
Mohamed Amersi Foundation Lecture Theatre, December 2019.

the nineteenth century, they were replaced by paid servants, many of them local men who were often formidable characters. The British writer Sir Henry Newbolt recalled in his memoirs that when he went up to Corpus as an undergraduate in the early 1880s, his scout informed him 'in tones of absolute mastery that he was my servant'.

Rather like hardened sergeants in the army nudging young subalterns in the right direction, the best college servants managed to be wise mentors while maintaining a distance. No doubt at BNC some came and went but the number who stayed for decades is remarkable and their impact on the college and its members has been very great. Inevitably, as the college has grown, so has the number of ancillary staff. Nineteen posed for a group photograph in 1862 but in 2019 there were about 134 in all, twelve of them lodge porters, headed by a former chief inspector of police.

In 2020 there were also about 100 academic staff attached to the college, though only the 26 tutorial fellows, four professorial fellows and a few others were members of the official governing body. Most of the rest were either lecturers or research fellows. In recent times the college has established junior and senior research fellowships in two categories: William Golding fellowships in the arts, named in honour of the Nobel prizewinning novelist, and Nicholas Kurti fellowships in the sciences. Born in Hungary in 1908 Kurti studied physics in Berlin and fled to England during the 1930s, where he was based at the Clarendon laboratory in Oxford. During the war he worked on the production of nuclear weapons and after it he was elected a fellow of Brasenose and served as professor of physics at Oxford from 1967 to 1975. He lived to be ninety and throughout his long association with BNC he was a very popular teacher and colleague and also a notable cook.

The Golding and Kurti fellows (13 altogether in 2020) receive no stipend but have dining rights and are encouraged to use the college's facilities to pursue research. Of the entire academic staff in 2020 about 30% were women and about 35% held the title of professor. During the



Hard at work in the New Quad, early 21st century.

1990s Oxford decided to bestow the title of professor on academics who had reached a recognised level of distinction. This was to give Oxford staff parity with universities across the globe which were often very free with their distribution of the title. The honour carries no stipend, unlike the long-established historic chairs at the university.

In 2015 Dr Jeffrey Cheah, the founder of the giant Malaysian Sunway Group and chancellor of Sunway University pledged to fund two professorial fellows from BNC who would lecture at Sunway University each year as well as two postgraduates from Sunway who would undertake research at BNC for four weeks a year.

A modern plague, 2020-2021

While BNC students were enjoying their Christmas holidays in December 2019 an unusual coronavirus disease was identified in the Chinese city of Wuhan. The Hilary term at Oxford began as usual in the middle of January 2020 but the Chinese authorities, experienced in dealing with the SARS epidemic of 2003, put Wuhan and its eleven million citizens into total lockdown on 23 January. SARS had infected 8,422 people in 2003 and 11% had died but even so total lockdown was initially seen by European countries as an overreaction. The World Health Organization declared the disease a public health emergency of international concern on 20 January and gave it a name, Covid 19 (for coronavirus disease 2019), in February. In the UK the Foreign Office advised first against travel to Wuhan and then all of China and on 31 January two cases of Covid were confirmed in the UK. By 8 March there were 273 cases with three fatalities and the following day the FTSE 100 fell 8% as news spread that Italy had been very badly affected and it fell a further 10% on 12 March.

By this time it was clear that Covid was chiefly a threat to elderly people and the UK government advised those over 70 to isolate themselves at home. A call went out for the production of ventilators

while theatres and other public venues were closed on 16 March. By this time the Hilary term at Oxford was over and most BNC undergraduate students had gone home. The seriousness of the situation was made clear on 24 March when 87 people died in one day, bringing the total fatalities to 422. Two days later the UK went into formal lockdown, initially for three weeks, closing non-essential businesses and requiring people to stay at home unless they had a good excuse.

In the light of this, Brasenose effectively closed down on 27 March and made use of the government's furlough scheme to protect the jobs of college staff. There were no redundancies and, as so often happens, the crisis brought out the best in many members of staff. On 16 April another three week lockdown was announced as UK deaths from Covid approached a shocking 15,000 and further government restrictions prevented the return of students during the whole of Trinity term. For the first time since the Second World War the BNC campuses saw little action throughout the summer, with only about 60 students in residence, either because they were from overseas or for welfare reasons. Academic staff and the great majority of students had to face the very challenging prospect of online teaching and learning based at home, while office staff also worked from home and even the university degree examinations were conducted online. This was, of course, unprecedented. On 17 May it was announced that Oxford University, recognized as a world leader in vaccine research, had entered into partnership with the pharmaceutical company Astrazenica to manufacture an effective Covid vaccine.

On 13 July the lockdown rules in England were lifted in most places after a dramatic fall in the number of Covid cases and deaths. Most schools opened for the autumn term at the beginning of September, though with protective measures such as social distancing and face coverings but an unwelcome steady rise in cases became apparent and limited restrictions were again imposed by the government on 24 September. There was considerable debate about

whether students should be allowed back to universities but they were and BNC opened for the Michaelmas term on 11 October, though with many restrictions. Students were arranged in 'households' based on staircases and were not permitted to socialise outside these. There was a mix of in-person and online teaching but social distancing rules meant that the capacity of the hall was reduced from 120 to 43 and spaces in the library from 90 to 30 while the senior common room numbers were restricted to ten. A marquee was put up on the New Quad to provide extra social space.

Optimism about the future was dashed when a much more aggressive mutation of the virus was detected in Kent and numbers of cases and deaths began to rise dramatically. Government regulations required Oxford students to leave at the end of November, a week before the scheduled end of term. Some students were reluctant to go home in case they spread the disease and 80 were permitted to stay in college throughout the Christmas period, with takeaway catering provided. Another national lockdown began on Boxing Day and the Hilary term of 2021, scheduled from 21 January to 13 March, saw a much reduced number of about 200 students in college, mostly following practical courses or permitted subjects such as biochemistry and scientific research. Other courses were taught and studied from home, online. National restrictions began to be relaxed in April and with more than 30 million people vaccinated in the UK there were hopes that the Trinity term might look rather more normal.[13]

However long it might take for the effects of Covid to be brought under control, the show must go on and in March 2021 the college announced that it had received planning permission for a third building project on the Frewin Hall site, following the first additions of 1975–1981 and the more ambitious new complex of 1997. The first phase, scheduled to be completed by September 2023, will be the construction of a block of 30 student rooms, a kitchen, a living area and two music practice rooms. The second phase will be the restoration of the splendid

Artist's impression of the new Frewin development.

historic ground floor rooms in Frewin Hall itself, once thought grand enough for a Prince of Wales, and the careful conservation of the unique Norman undercroft. The additional new accommodation will make around 196 rooms available for undergraduate students on the new Frewin site, which is more than the 160 or so provided in the college itself. So after more than 440 years it is time to congratulate Principal Richard Harris for his foresight, or perhaps opportunism, in acquiring St Mary's College in 1580, which over the centuries has provided BNC with a fine chapel roof and now an increasingly impressive second campus.

The Principals of Brasenose College

Until Heberden in 1889 all the principals were in holy orders and most of them were awarded doctorates of divinity by the university *ex officio*. Those asterisked, with dates in italics, also served as vice-chancellor, a position which until 2004 was held by a senior Oxford college head for a relatively short period.

1512–1548	Matthew Smyth
1548–1565	John Hawarden
1565–1574	Thomas Blanchard
1574–1595	Richard Harris
1595	Alexander Nowell
1595–1614	Thomas Singleton* *1598–1599, 1611–1614*
1614–1648	Samuel Radcliffe
1648–1660	Daniel Greenwood* *1650–1652*
1648 and 1660–1681	Thomas Yate
1681–1710	John Meare* *1697–1698*
1710–1745	Robert Shippen* *1718–1723*
1745–1770	Francis Yarborough
1770	William Gwyn
1770–1777	Ralph Cawley
1777–1785	Thomas Barker
1785–1809	Bishop William Cleaver
1809–1822	Frodsham Hodson* *1818–1820*
1822–1842	Ashurst Gilbert* *1836–1840*
1842–1853	Richard Harington

The Principals of Brasenose College

1853–1886	Edward Cradock
1886–1889	Albert Watson
1889–1920	Charles Heberden* *1910–1913*
1920–1936	Charles Sampson
1936–1948	William Stallybrass* *1947–1948*
1948–1956	Hugh Last
1956–1960	Maurice Platnauer
1960–1973	Sir Noel Hall
1973–1978	Herbert Hart
1978–1989	Barry Nicholas
1989–2002	David Hennessy, third Baron Windlesham
2003–2011	Roger Cashmore
2011–2015	Alan Bowman
2015–	John Bowers

Appendix

Cold Norton Priory

This was a modest community of Augustinian canons founded c1150 near Chipping Norton in Oxfordshire and it owned lands in the area spread over 21 parishes. When the last prior died in 1507 there were no other residents and the priory reverted to the Crown which sold it to the Dean and Chapter of Westminster. From them it was bought in 1513 for 1150 marks by Bishop Smyth and conveyed to Brasenose College as an endowment worth about £50 a year. Lying about 20 miles north-west of Oxford and consisting of a chapel, a main house and several other buildings, it was often used as a retreat by the principal and fellows, especially during times when the plague was a threat in Oxford. During the eighteenth century the main house was converted into an inn, visited by Dr Samuel Johnson and James Boswell in March 1776, the occasion when Johnson proclaimed that 'There is no private house … in which people can enjoy themselves so well as at a capital tavern'. The college eventually sold the priory lands in 1872. (QM VI, pages 6–8).

Has the development of Cambridge University been very different from Oxford?

The short answer to this is No. After a number of masters and students from Oxford migrated to Cambridge in 1209 the academic community developed in much the same way as at Oxford, with masters supervising small student hostels under the authority of a chancellor and with similar conflicts between students and townsfolk. Peterhouse (1284) was the first college and there were fourteen by 1600, including the grand royal foundations of King's (1441) and Trinity (1546). The medieval curriculum was very similar to Oxford's though both universities submitted to the religious changes required by Tudor and Stuart governments and gradually adapted to the classical 'new learning'. During the Civil War Cambridge was predominantly royalist but it was unable to help the king effectively because of strong support for parliament in the surrounding counties. About half the 400 fellows were evicted, though many were restored in 1660. In contrast to Oxford, where classics reigned supreme, mathematics steadily became the most prestigious course during the eighteenth century though, as at Oxford, overall student numbers and academic standards declined. A series of reforms similar to Oxford's after 1850 made much needed improvements, including the establishment of Girton and Newnham colleges for women in 1869 and 1871 and the introduction of new courses, especially in science. As at Oxford, numbers and academic standards increased dramatically during the twentieth century despite similar disruption during the world wars. Currently, both universities have about 24,000 students (nearly half of them postgraduates), with 31 colleges at Cambridge and 39 at Oxford. The main difference academically is that at Cambridge the undergraduate exams are taken and classed in two parts. Over the years Oxbridge colleges have 'twinned' and since 1932 BNC's sister college has been Gonville and Caius, where Joyce Frankland was also a benefactress.

Acknowledgements

Principal John Bowers QC and the officers of the college kindly gave their permission for this project to go ahead and Helen Sumping from the college archives cast a critical eye over the first draft and made some helpful suggestions. Dr Liz Miller, Dr Julia Diamantis and James Fletcher from the alumni and development office provided information and encouragement, while at a very busy time for him, Matt Hill, the domestic bursar, was able to give me details of the college during the Covid outbreak. Toby Matthews of the Holywell Press was very patient in dealing with requests regarding the layout of the book and the front and back covers.

Sources of Illustrations

Illustrations on pages 6, 11, 40, 54, 60 (Hawksmoor drawing) and page 66 (library and High Street) are taken from the BNC Quatercentenary Monographs, Vol I, No3. Those on pages 25, 26, 43, 66 (Yarborough), page 78 (Cleaver, Hodson, Gilbert), page 96 (Cradock) and pages 111, 139 are images derived from the BNC collection of portraits and paintings via ArtUK online. Pages 44, 60, 128, 149, 155, 159, 161, 163, 167 are images in the possession of BNC and pages 71, 105, 115, 120 are taken from the author's collection, as are the front and back covers. Other images derive from the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, p34; the National Trust (Cain and Abel) p60; the Ashmolean Museum Oxford (Turner) p77; the National Portrait Gallery, London, (Addington) p78; the Bodleian Library, Oxford, (Madan) p102; the Royal Collection Trust, p136, and items in the public domain. Photographs: the Brazen Nose (p6), Beth Naught; the Chapel and Library (p44), Steve Daniels; BNC alumnae (p155), Bill Knight, OBE; Alan Bowman (p161), Richard Wakefield; Amersi and May (p161) Ian Wallman.

Unattributed paintings

Page 26. The portraits of Alexander Nowell, Joyce Frankland and the Childe of Hale are by unknown hands. The portrait of the Duchess of Somerset is by Thomas Gibson, who copied it in 1728 from an original by an artist who signed 'TMQ'. Page 43, Thomas Yate: not known. Page 97, Edward Cradock: Frank Holl RA. Page 102, Falconer Madan: Percy Bigland.

Front and back covers

The front cover is taken from a painting by William Matthison (1853–1926), a prolific watercolourist, as was his contemporary and rival Alfred Quinton (1853–1934), who painted the view of the Old Quad on the back cover. Their work was well-known through mass exposure on postcards.

Sources

There are two main sources for this short history. They are:

Brasenose Quatercentenary Monographs, ed. F. Madan, two vols. OUP 1909

Volume I

I The site of the College before its Foundation, including Brasenose and Little University Hall, by F. Madan (fellow of BNC, later Bodley's Librarian)

II The Name and Arms of the College, including the Brazen Nose and the Stamford Migration, by F. Madan

III The Architectural History of the Buildings, by E.W. Allfrey (fellow of Trinity College)

IV The Benefactions bestowed on the College, by A.J. Butler (fellow of BNC and bursar)

V The College Plate, by A.J. Butler

VI The College Estates and Advowsons, by A.J. Butler

VII The College Pictures, by A.J. Butler

VIII Brief Annals of the College, with a list of books relating to it, by F. Madan

Volume II

IX The Early Years of the College, by I.S. Leadam (fellow of BNC)

X History of the College, 1547–1603, by R.W. Jeffery (fellow of BNC)

XI History of the College, 1603–1660, by G.H. Wakeling (fellow of BNC)

XII The College under the Later Stuarts, by Sir Richard Lodge (fellow of BNC)

XIII History of the College, 1690–1803, by R.W. Jeffery

XIV The Nineteenth Century
Brasenose Rowing, H.C. Wace (BNC chaplain and bursar)
Nine Brasenose Worthies, John Buchan
The Schools, University Honours and Professions of Brasenose Men, A.J. Jenkinson
Brasenose, 1864–1872, T. Humphry Ward (fellow of BNC)
Notes on Brasenose Cricket, F. Madan
The Phoenix Common Room, 1782–1900, F. Madan

The second major source is:

Brasenose: the Biography of an Oxford College by Professor J. Mordaunt Crook, OUP 2008

Other sources:

Books

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Churton, Ralph, *The Life of Alexander Nowell*, Oxford 1809. online at archive.org

Fallows, IB, *William Hulme and his Trust*, Phillimore 2008

Green, VHH, *A History of Oxford University*, Batsford 1974

Richards, Graham, *50 Years at Oxford*, Authorhouse 2011

Victoria County History, Oxfordshire Vol III: *The University of Oxford*, London 1954

Wood, Anthony, *The history and antiquities of the colleges and halls in the University of Oxford,* ed. John Gutch, Clarendon Press Oxford 1786–96

Articles by Elizabeth Boardman in 'The Brazen Nose' college magazine

The development of the college buildings, Vol 35 p28

Women Benefactors Vol 37 p54

BNC during the World Wars Vol 39 p117

College Food Vol 40 p109

College Rogues Vol 41 p105

The Quatercentenary of BNC Vol 42 p109

The Quincentenary Exhibition Vol 43 p93

Brasenose Royal Connections Vol 46 p86

A Year in the life of BNC, 1785, Vol 47 p84

BNC Archives, a brief history, Vol 47 p102

Other articles in 'The Brazen Nose'

Bowers, John: Elias Ashmole at BNC, Vol 51 p89

Dawson-Bowling, Paul: The Brasenose Society, Vol 52 p138

Gasser, Robert: Reminiscences of a bursar, Vol 35 p41

Green, Abigail, Memories of BNC, Vol 49 p103

Unsigned: *The Brazen Nose:* A trip down memory Lane, Vol 17 p51

Richards, Bernard: *Brasenose: The Biography of an Oxford College.* (review) Vol 43 p104

Richards, Graham: The admission of women, Vol 49 p88

Walsh, David: Public Schools, BNC and the First World War, Vol 48 p92

Further articles

Blair, John, et al: 'Frewin Hall, Oxford: A Norman Mansion and a Monastic College' *Oxoniensia* 1978 (online)

Dhudia, Anu 'A History of Oxford College Rowing' (online)

Morgan, Llewellyn, 'Brasenose, a history' online at llewellynmorgan.com 19.8.2017

O'Chee, William, 'Brasenose College and the Origins of Oxford Rowing' online at www.academia.edu

Sheehan, Nicholas J, 'The Brazenose Site in Stamford' online at stamfordlocalhistorysociety.org.uk, 2013

Woolley, Liz and Jenkins, Stephanie: *A Short History of Lloyds Bank, 1-5 High Street Oxford*, October 2019. (online)

The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, OUP 2004, 60 vols. Entries as cited in the Reference Notes.

Those wishing to look beyond these sources should consult the very detailed and authoritative *History of the University of Oxford* published by the Oxford University Press in eight volumes between 1984 and 2000 and written by a team of Oxford historians. The volumes sell at between £242 and £290 each but are available in libraries across the university and elsewhere.

Reference Notes

This book is based on secondary sources so the reference notes are limited and mainly intended to point the way towards further information.

Abbreviations

QM: *Brasenose Quatercentenary Monographs*, Numbers I to XIV, two vols OUP 1909

JMC: J. Mordaunt Crook, *Brasenose: The Biography of an Oxford College* OUP 2008

ODNB: *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edition.

BNose: *The Brazen Nose,* BNC college magazine.

BNotes: *Brazen Notes,* BNC college newsletter.

Ibid: short for Latin 'Ibidem', in the same place.

Chapter One

1 For general accounts of the medieval history of the university see the Victoria County History of Oxfordshire Vol 3: *The University of Oxford*, under British History Online. Also Brockliss, pp 3-124. For a more detailed account see *The History of the University of Oxford,* Vols I and II, OUP 1984 and 1992.
2 Brockliss, pp 731-732
3 QM No 1 p14 and Nicholas Sheehan, 'The Brazenose Site in Stamford'.
4 QM No 1 pp 12-17

Chapter Two

1 ODNB Bishop William Smyth
2 ODNB Sir Richard Sutton
3 QM III pp 7-10; ODNB Sutton
4 QM IX p12
5 Ibid pp 39-44
6 Ibid p113, JMC p23
7 ODNB John Foxe, Alexander Nowell
8 JMC, p29
9 Ibid. p34

10 QM X p9,10
11 Ibid. pp 45,46
12 John Blair 'Frewin Hall, Oxford' especially p82, and QM VI pp 33,34
13 QM VI pp 33,34
14 Churton p382
15 QM XI p7
16 Ibid. pp 8–11
17 Ibid. pp 16,17
18 Ibid. pp 18–19
19 See 'About Brasenose' online under Childe of Hale.
20 See QM III pp 11–13 for the date of the dormer windows.

Chapter Three

1 QM XI pp 32,33,35
2 Ibid. pp 38,39
3 Ibid. pp 45–48
4 Ibid. pp 50–54
5 QM III pp 14–22
6 QM XII p5
7 Ibid. pp 12,13
8 QM III p24
9 ODNB Sarah Alston and JMC p118
10 ODNB Anthony Wood, QM XII p14 and Wood, Colleges and Halls etc.
11 ODNB Thomas Yate
12 JMC pp 82,83
13 ODNB William Hulme. See also I.B.Fallows, 'William Hulme and his Trust' and BNotes 2018 p14 for details of the rediscovery of Hulme's will on eBay and safe transfer to the college archives.
14 JMC p124

Chapter Four

1 ODNB Robert Shippen and JMC p126
2 QM XIII p12
3 JMC p131

4 QM III pp 47-51
5 Ibid. p41
6 JMC pp 123,124
7 QM III pp 42,43,23,29,30
8 QM XIII pp 40,41
9 Ibid. p24
10 Ibid. pp 25,26
11 ODNB Henry Addington
12 JMC p 155
13 QM XIII p61 and QM XIV 2 pp 93-98

Chapter Five

1 ODNB William Cleaver and QM XIII p60
2 JMC pp 162,163
3 QM III pp 53-56
4 JMC p169
5 ODNB Richard Heber and Reginald Heber
6 ODNB Frodsham Hodson, JMC p165
7 ODNB Ashurst Gilbert, JMC p205
8 See A. Dhudia, A History of Oxford College Rowing, 2000, online and John Buchan, Brasenose College, pp 96-97.
9 Buchan pp 98,99
10 ODNB Alexander Forbes
11 JMC pp 203,206,209-10
12 Ibid pp 204,205
13 Buchan pp 99-103
14 QM XIV 2 p68
15 JMC pp 227,228
16 Brockliss pp 354-360
17 See his Guardian obituary (1886), online.
18 JMC p253
19 Buchan pp 103-106, ODNB Walter Woodgate
20 JMC pp 297-299
21 QM XIV 2 pp 81-86
22 ODNB Cuthbert Ottaway
23 Brockliss pp 361-367
24 JMC p252

25 Ibid p286
26 ODNB Walter Pater
27 JMC p260
28 ODNB Douglas Haig

Chapter Six

1 QM III pp 56-62
2 QM XIV 2 p76 and JMC p299
3 BNose Vol 35 pp 35,37
4 ODNB Charles Heberden, JMC p311
5 Buchan p114
6 ODNB John Buchan
7 Buchan pp 143,144
8 BNose Vol 39 pp 117-120
9 ODNB Thomas Graham Jackson and JMC p295
10 BNose Vol 42 pp 110,116
11 Brockliss pp 430,431; JMC pp 320,321
12 ODNB William Stallybrass
13 VHH Green, A History of Oxford University p189
14 JMC pp 343-345
15 ODNB Charles Morgan, Alastair Graham
16 ODNB William Golding
17 BNose Vol 35, p37
18 BNose Vol 39 pp 120-125,
19 ODNB Wiliam Stallybrass

Chapter Seven

1 BNose Vol 35 p37
2 JMC pp 397, 398
3 Ibid p386
4 BNose Vol 35 p37
5 Lavinia Greacen: J.G.Farrell, Bloomsbury 1999, p77
6 JMC p387
7 Express Online 10.12.2017
8 Brockliss pp 564-571

9 Graham Richards in BNose Vol 49 p88
10 JMC p420
11 Ibid p422
12 Guardian Online March 2002
13 QM VI pp 33,34; ODNB Richard Frewin; John Blair, Frewin Hall, Oxford.
14 Brockliss p760
15 JMC p423
16 Buchan pp 72–75

Chapter Eight

1 Brockliss pp 762,763
2 BNose Vol 35 p42
3 Ibid p9
4 Ibid pp 14–16, 21–22
5 Graham Richards, 50 Years at Oxford, pp 69,70
6 See Elizabeth Boardman on the Quincentenary Exhibition in BNose Vol 43 p93.
7 BNotes No17
8 BNose Vol 46 pp 36–39
9 BNotes No15
10 BNose Vol 49 p7
11 Liz Woolley and Stephanie Jenkins, A Short History of Lloyd's Bank.
12 BNotes No25 p4
13 The complex administrative arrangements for dealing with the Covid crisis in BNC were largely the responsibility of the domestic bursar, Matthew Hill, who kindly helped with these details.

Index

Illustrations are indicated in bold print.

Index

Brasenose College was jointly founded in 1509 by a powerful bishop and a wealthy lawyer on the footprint of the medieval Brasenose Hall, a small student hostel named after its 12th century doorknocker. Both founders were born in the north-west of England and the college maintained very strong northern connections. Originally just a modest quadrangle with a tower it was increased in size and beauty by a new chapel and library, completed in the late 1660s. A second quadrangle, built between 1881 and 1911, brought the college to its present size. Brasenose rose to prominence after 1785, when it was for many years ranked among the top three Oxford colleges in student numbers, wealth and social standing. During the 19th century the college became a byword for masculine sporting prowess yet in 1974 it was one of the first colleges to admit women. It has also had its fair share of famous alumni and good academic results.

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