

Peterhouse

THE WHITTLE BUILDING



Introduction



THE OPENING

This booklet is intended to celebrate not only the opening of the Whittle Building but also the refurbishment of Fen Court, which together will provide outstanding accommodation for 22 students. They used to say that change was unusual in Peterhouse but here we are with a handsome new building – the first such building on site for half a century.

On behalf of the College, I would like to thank all those who have contributed so handsomely to the venture in whatever shape or form. This includes everybody from generous benefactors to skilled architects, engineers and craftsmen; from friends who have cajoled others to help through to the College staff and others who have coped so well with the moderate turmoil during the building works. Everyone has played their part.

Clearly, these new facilities are terrific; they embrace increased and enhanced student and Fellows' accommodation, a new College bar and JCR (the Junior Common Room has been colloquially known as the Sex Club ever since our sexcentenary celebrations!), new music rooms, a conference room, a gym, as well as a renovated sickbay. The Whittle memorabilia provide additional interest. We and future generations of Petreans are lucky indeed.

The opening of this new building marks a truly triumphant conclusion to the late Neil Plevy's original appeal, which has been so admirably continued by Saskia Murk Jansen and our previous and current Bursars. Thanks to everyone's hard work and your generosity, this new Whittle Building and the refurbishment of Fen Court will have been paid for out of the appeal and various surpluses. Thus, we will be one of the few Colleges in Cambridge to put up such a building without having to raid endowments. We are enormously grateful and it is pleasing to acknowledge so many people whose names will be for evermore associated with various rooms in the new building and Fen Court. Thank you one and all.

PROFESSOR ADRIAN DIXON
MASTER



NEIL PLEVY (M. 1978; 1959–2010)

The new bar in the Whittle Building has been named The Plevy Bar in memory of Neil Plevy. It is thanks to the Development Campaign launched by Neil in 2004 – and the funds that it raised over the following ten years – that the Whittle Building and other major refurbishments have been possible.

Neil came up to Peterhouse in 1978 from the High Arcal School in Sedgley, West Midlands, having won an entrance scholarship to read History. He was, by all accounts, a distinctive and sociable undergraduate with a close circle of friends, enjoying many a lively evening on D Stair or at The Little Rose across the street. His file refers to a “generally relaxed attitude” towards academic work and he proudly claimed never to have crossed the threshold of the University Library. He did, however, find Maurice Cowling, Edward Norman and Martin Golding (who was also his Tutor) inspiring teachers and took a First. He also served as Secretary of the Peterhouse History Society and, in a sign of things to come, apparently reinstated the practice of taking full minutes of each meeting.

After graduation, Neil joined the Civil Service as an Administrative Trainee with the Ministry of Defence, in hindsight an unlikely pairing. Neil's employer did not appreciate his habit of whistling the national anthem of the Soviet Union on MoD premises, nor his prompt response to a circular seeking volunteers for early retirement only three weeks into the job. The following year, Neil was posted to Germany. Compulsory participation in a training exercise in order to bond with the troops was not a success, while the inadvertent photographing of a military installation led to a friend being deported.



The late Neil Plevy (Development Director at Peterhouse from 2000–2010) and Richard Grigson (Bursar at Peterhouse from 2003–2012) studying architectural plans.

After three years, Neil decamped to the more conducive environment of the London School of Economics, initially as Administrative Officer in External Relations. He was also a columnist for the LSE Magazine, writing trenchantly on politics and current affairs. Later he became Assistant Director of the LSE Foundation, acquiring the skills and experience that in due course would enable him to return to Cambridge.

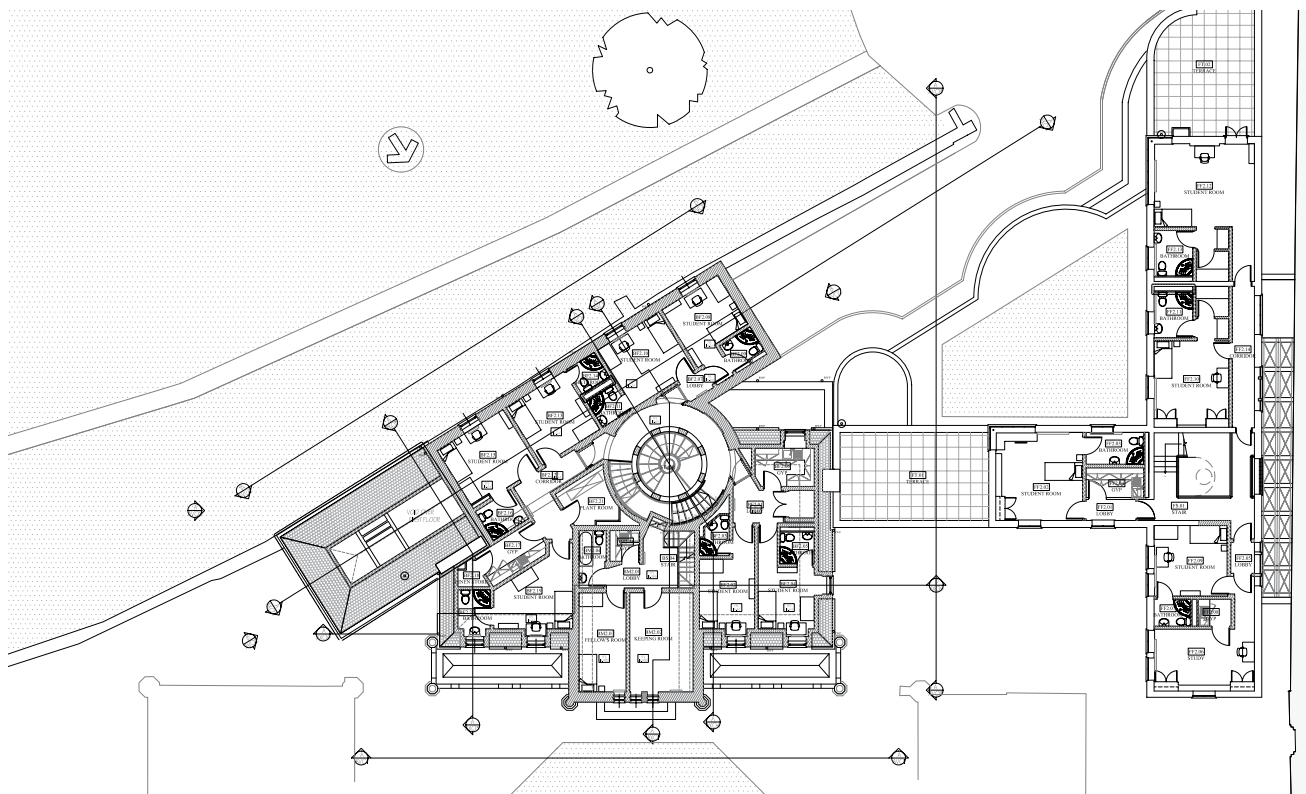
Neil was Development Director at Emmanuel from 1995–2000 and at Peterhouse from 2000–2010. In each case, he was effectively the first Development Director and was responsible for putting in place the infrastructure and laying the groundwork from which both Colleges are benefiting today. He turned an initiative viewed with some suspicion and even scepticism into an integrated and trusted part of both institutions.

He was hard working and meticulous, the consummate professional. He took a wide view of his brief and was generous with his time in collaborating with colleagues. Copious notes and extensive minutes were a speciality. Briefing papers for Masters and Committee Chairmen left nothing to chance, including the names of their spouses and a reminder of their own dietary preferences. His attention to detail when it came to proofing the annual Newsletter, preparing seating plans for Feasts and organising events was unparalleled. Above all, he was patient, straightforward, sincere and courteous in his dealings with donors and potential donors.

One is however reminded of the traditional definition of a gentleman as someone who is never rude inadvertently. Neil had a short temper and could be ferocious when roused. Particular targets included those he felt were wasting his time – usually but not exclusively

connected with the University – the self-interested, the pompous, the politically correct, the interfering, those who used his Christian name without invitation and anyone ‘signing’ their emails in an elaborate and colourful font.

Beneath an exterior that might seem rather dour, Neil had a great sense of humour, and a truly memorable laugh. Known in



undergraduate days as the Ron roar – after his middle name – Neil, upon striking a rich vein of humour, would literally laugh until he cried. His friends recall one such collapse while on holiday in India shortly after graduation, on a stationary train with the locals crowding around the window to see what on earth could be producing this extraordinary sound. His humour ranged from the basic schoolboy variety through to extensive satirical emails, usually triggered by and sending up some official communication deemed either pompous or feeble. Thanks to his rich vocabulary and deft control of language, quick and witty one-liners were never far away – no good deed goes unpunished was, unfortunately, a favourite. Nor did he take himself too seriously, as evidenced by his pub karaoke renditions of UB40 or his earlier role as Maid Marian in the LSE staff panto, a terrifying cross between Grayson Perry and Jan Morris. Neil often said that he had learnt his management skills from Basil Fawlty – this acquired new meaning when, the morning after a Feast at Emmanuel, the Head Porter announced: “Excuse me sir, but I’m afraid we lost one during the night”; to complicate matters, it turned out that the deceased had come accompanied by someone other than his wife. Needless to say, Neil took everything in his stride.

Although in many ways a complex character, Neil liked simple pleasures and enjoyed them to the full. Claret from College cellars was all well and good, but you couldn’t beat a pint or two, or indeed five or six, of lager. Neil was a regular at several distinguished licensed premises around town and his facility for downing pints was matched only by his generosity in buying them for others. It was not unusual for groups of unsuspecting Peterhouse undergraduates to find that they had been stood a round by their College Development Director in the interests of future alumni relations. He was unfailingly good company.

Neil's year revolved around holidays at his father's house in Spain. He loved the weather, the people and the fiestas, and watching the fishing fleet leaving and entering harbour. Closer to home, he took boat trips on the Broads with friends – with appropriate stops for refreshments – and kept lists of the wildlife seen en route. He liked dogs, tropical fish and, above all, hamsters, a succession of which he kept in his rooms in College. In another vignette worthy of *Fawlty Towers*, one particularly intrepid hamster escaped not once but twice, reaching Old Court on one occasion and a Fellows' Guest Room on another, before, fortunately, being recognised and returned to captivity.

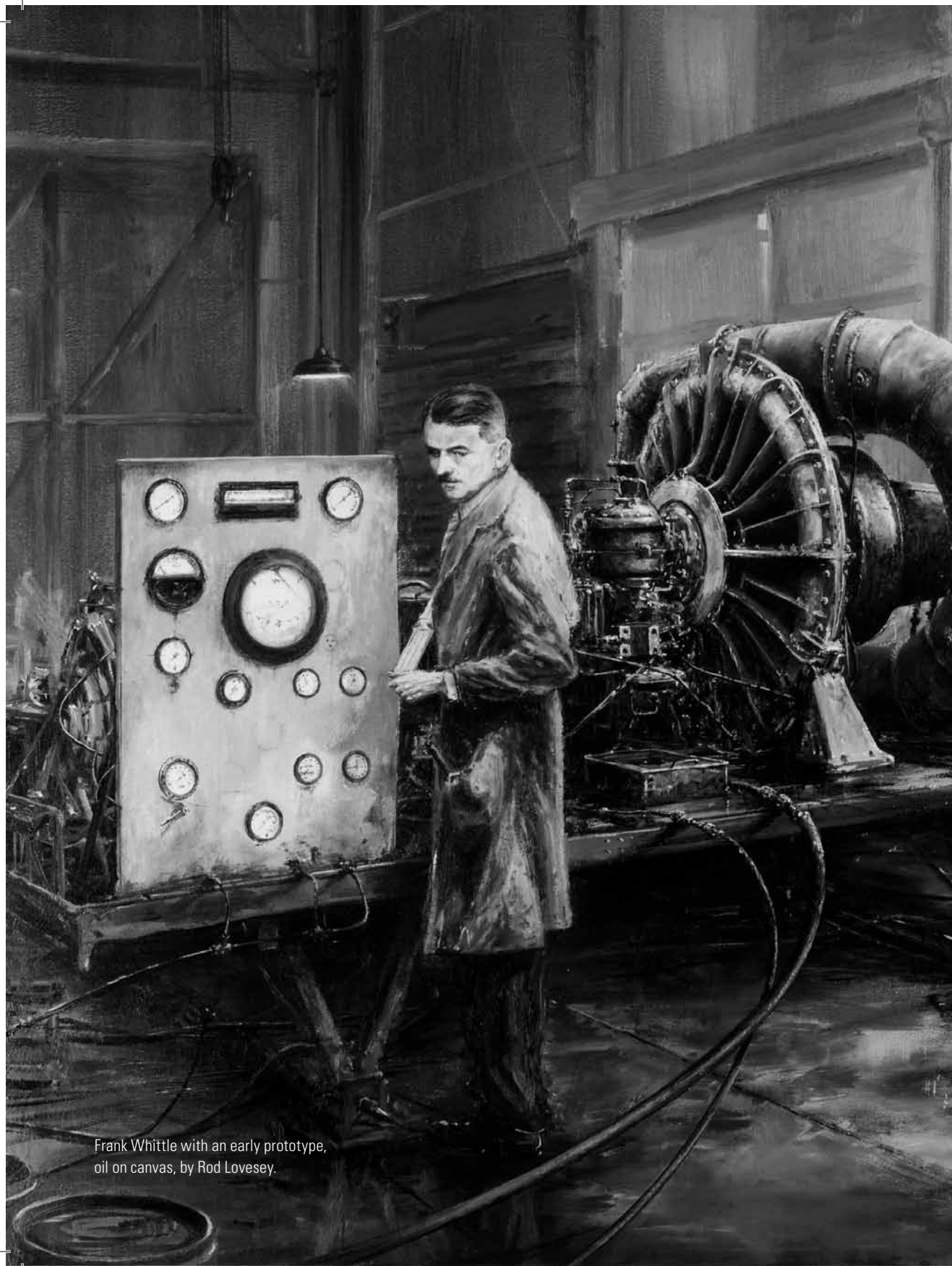
Neil also liked organ and early classical music; was widely read in history, politics and religion; had been a National Trust member since his teens; enjoyed *The Simpsons* and watching football from the terraces; and was a doughty opponent at dominoes.

Last but not least, he enjoyed living in, as the traditional bachelor don. He believed deeply in the concept of the College “as a place, as a community of people and as a home of education and intellectual life”, to quote his own development brochure. He derived particular pleasure from those projects intended to enhance the physical beauty of the gardens, buildings and contents of his two Colleges. He also understood and appreciated the contribution made by the staff across the various aspects of College life – he expected commitment and high standards, but was ready in return with praise, thanks and indeed assistance. Neil's readiness to lend a helping hand was one of his defining characteristics. His concern for others also came to the fore during the course of his tragic illness – bravely borne is a well-worn phrase, but in this case it is surely appropriate: he repeatedly

said that he did not wish to be a pain or a bore, nor, as he worked on as best he could, to leave things in a shambles.

Neil had a clear vision of what mattered and what made the grade, often referred to by him as “the real thing”. Emmanuel, for example, for its seriousness of purpose; the Captain of Boats who also took a First; the eminent and engaged Supervisor; the Tutor who was firm but fair; the member of staff who went the extra mile; the understanding and supportive donor. Each of these was for him the real thing. Whether he realised it or not, Neil Plevy was himself very much the real thing to his family and friends, colleagues and alumni.





Frank Whittle with an early prototype,
oil on canvas, by Rod Lovesey.

FRANK WHITTLE (M. 1934)

Frank Whittle was born in Coventry in 1907. His father, Moses, was a very practical and inventive engineer and, having purchased a small engineering company, moved to Leamington Spa in 1916. Frank spent a lot of time helping in the works from a young age, developing practical engineering skills and showing great interest in the gas engine that powered the lathes. He won a scholarship to Leamington Spa College, where he excelled in chemistry and maths. He was an avid reader, especially of scientific and engineering subjects.

An early interest in aviation made him determined to join the Royal Air Force and hopefully become a pilot. Initially he failed the medical, mainly because of his small size but, with great determination, he reapplied until, aged 16, he was accepted as an engineering apprentice at RAF Cranwell.

Although he resented the harsh discipline of service life, he excelled in academic and practical subjects, and in the aircraft modelling society. At the end of the three-year course, he was selected by the Commanding Officer for officer training at the RAF College Cranwell. This was a major step up for Whittle; he would achieve his dream of learning to fly. He became an accomplished pilot,

although he was frequently in trouble for his daredevil exploits, especially in low flying. At the same time, he became engrossed in the science and theory of flight. In 1928, the year the RAF High Speed Flight regained the Schneider Trophy for Britain at 281 mph, Whittle wrote a thesis entitled 'Future Developments in Aircraft Design'. He showed that the piston engine and propeller had a finite limit in speed and altitude. Some kind of rocket or gas turbine would be required to extend the speed and range of aircraft. At the end of the two-year course, at the age of 21, he passed out second, received the Aeronautical Science Prize, and failed to receive the flying prize only because he was disqualified for dangerous flying in performing a spectacular manoeuvre, which had already been approved by his flying instructor.

In August 1928, he joined No. 111 squadron at Hornchurch. His daredevil flying exploits continued to get him into trouble and he only narrowly escaped court martial for low flying. He managed to charm the complainants into withdrawing their evidence. The following year he was posted to Wittering for a flying instructor's course. In his spare time, he had continued to develop his ideas for high-speed flight. His initial proposal of using a gas turbine to drive a propeller was not an original idea. He then realised that, by using much higher pressures, the turbine could produce a jet and dispense with the propeller, which was simpler and lighter. Gas turbines had been considered before, but rejected as impractical. Whittle was the first to realise that their efficiency would increase dramatically at higher speed and altitude. Pat Johnson, one of the flying instructors at Wittering (and a former patent agent), was impressed with Whittle's ideas and encouraged him to file a patent, which was granted in April 1931. Group Captain Baldwin, the Commanding Officer, agreed to take the ideas to the Air Ministry. They were

sceptical but agreed to Whittle meeting Dr A A Griffith, who was working on the principle of gas turbines driving propellers. Griffith failed to appreciate the advantages of Whittle's engine, probably seeing it as competition to his own ideas, and it was rejected as "impractical". As the Air Ministry was not interested, the patent was not declared secret and the Germans used the principles to achieve jet flight before the British.

In 1930, Whittle married his fiancée Dorothy Lee and was posted as flying instructor to RAF Digby. Together with a fellow instructor, he developed a competition-winning crazy flying routine that they performed at the RAF Pageant at Hendon.

In 1931, he was posted to the Marine Aircraft Experimental Establishment at Felixstowe as test pilot on float planes, despite the fact that he could not swim. He was interested in naval strategy and, while at Cranwell, in an essay entitled 'Sea Power in the Pacific' he had suggested the possibility of a surprise Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour. He flew many types of aircraft and was involved with early trials of deck catapult launching. Meanwhile, he continued his interest in jet turbines, trying to get private companies involved in the development, but without success.

After four years in the RAF, he was required to specialise; he chose engineering and was posted to the Officers' Engineering Course at Henlow. He scored 98% in the entrance exams, and the examiners were so impressed that he was put straight onto the senior course. A year later, he passed with distinction in every subject and his Commanding Officer proposed that the Air Ministry should send him to Cambridge to study the Mechanical Science Tripos.

At the age of 27, Flight Lieutenant Whittle arrived at Peterhouse to attend a three-year engineering course. However, his work at Henlow exempted him from the first year. As he was married, he lived in a small house in Trumpington, and only had to dine in Hall once a week. Although in 'statu pupillari', he was able to walk in Cambridge without academic dress, as the Proctors and Bulldogs did not recognise him as an undergraduate. As a member of the University Air Squadron at Duxford, he was able to keep his hand in, flying Avro Tutors.

With his practical experience, he found the course very helpful in explaining phenomena that he had already come across, especially in aeronautical engineering. He obtained a First in the May exams, was made a Senior Scholar of Peterhouse and won two College prizes. In January 1934, his jet engine patent had become due for renewal. But, discouraged by the lack of interest from the RAF and industry, and unable to afford the £5 fee, he had let the patent lapse. The Air Ministry had also sent him a letter saying it had no intention of paying the fee.

That month (May 1935), out of the blue, he received a letter from an erstwhile cadet at Cranwell, Rolf Williams, who had been very impressed with Whittle's ideas. With Colingwood Tinling, another ex-officer, they proposed a partnership to gather finance to develop the jet design. Whittle was introduced to investment bankers Maurice Bonham-Carter and Lancelot Whyte of OT Falk and Partners. After the meeting, Whyte stated: "The impression he made was overwhelming; I have never been so quickly convinced, or so happy to find one's highest standards met. This was genius not talent. Whittle expressed his ideas with superb conciseness. Reciprocating engines are exhausted. They have hundreds of parts jerking to and fro, and they cannot be made more powerful without

becoming too complicated. The engine of the future must produce 2000 hp with one moving part, a spinning turbine and compressor".

In January 1936, a four-party agreement between OT Falk, the Air Ministry, Whittle and Williams and Tinling together created Power Jets Ltd. With £2000 of funding raised, Whittle managed to get the steam turbine manufacturers British Thompson-Houston (BTH) to agree to provide a workshop and manufacture parts on a cost-plus arrangement at their Rugby factory. Whittle arranged all this during the winter of his second year at Cambridge, which interfered with his academic studies. He enlisted the help of his fellow undergraduates in designing the compressor, including Arnold Hall, who later became Chairman of the Hawker Siddeley Group. Three weeks before the Tripos exams, Whittle stopped working with Power Jets to revise full time. Working all hours, and at some cost to his health, he nevertheless achieved a First. At the end of his Cambridge course he would normally have had to return to RAF duties. His Tutor at Peterhouse, Roy Lubbock, believed in the Whittle engine and had influenced the Director of Education at the Air Ministry, W M Page, to take a benevolent interest. Lubbock managed to persuade the Air Ministry to allow Whittle an extra year of postgraduate research work. Fortuitously, it was the Air Member for Personnel, Sir Frederick Bowhill, having been so impressed with Whittle's work at Henlow, who had approved his posting to Cambridge. He was finally able to devote his full attention to the jet project. He was promoted to Squadron Leader in December 1936.

A jet engine consists of a compressor at the front, which forces air into a combustion chamber, which heats it up. The expanded air passes through a turbine. This extracts enough energy to drive the compressor and the exhaust gases expelled through the jet

pipe produce a reaction that provides the thrust. Whittle was now faced with the practical problems of sourcing suitable materials to withstand the high temperatures in the combustion chambers and the turbine. With the help of Laidlaw, Drew and Company for the combustion chambers and High Duty Alloys for materials, these problems were gradually overcome. Despite serious funding problems, the experiments proceeded, producing so much smoke, noise and smell that the workshop was moved to a small factory at Lutterworth.

This experimental engine was first run in 1937. There were several alarming incidents, as the engine tended to run away, due to excess fuel accumulation. A lot of work had to be done experimenting with the delivery of fuel to the burner and developing the compressor, bearings and turbine. The combustion chamber was a particular problem. At one time, over 30 different types of fuel vaporiser were tried in an effort to get the fuel to burn evenly. All this was done on a shoestring budget, putting great strain on Whittle and his staff.

In July 1937, Whittle finished at Cambridge and the RAF released him to work full time on the engine. BTH put some money into the project and in March 1938 funds arrived from the Air Ministry, but it was still not enough to speed up progress. Another problem was the quality of the castings made by BTH who were used to making massive turbines for generating electricity. Relations were not helped when Whittle worked out that their turbines were not designed for the most efficient gas flow. This caused great resentment among senior staff but Whittle was proved correct. By June 1939, the engine was running up to 16,000 rpm and Dr Pye, the Director of Scientific Research at the Air Ministry, who had been a sceptic, was finally convinced. A contract to produce a flight engine was signed with Power Jets and the project was made secret.

In February 1940, the Air Ministry placed a contract with Gloster Aircraft Company, a part of the Hawker Siddeley Group, to produce an experimental aircraft, the E28/39, to flight test the engine. George Carter, Gloster's chief test designer, was an admirer of Whittle, and the two got on well. The factory was producing Hawker Hurricanes and then Typhoons during the War, but the design office had the spare capacity to do the work. About this time, Whittle had met Stanley Hooker of Rolls-Royce who, as a fluid-flow specialist, had dramatically increased the power of the Merlin engine by improving its supercharger. Hooker introduced him to Rolls' General Manager, Lord Hives, who was so impressed that he agreed to supply key parts to help the project. Rolls also provided a Wellington bomber, so that a Whittle engine could be installed in the rear as a flying test bed.

Early in 1940, the Air Ministry felt that Power Jets would not have the capacity to go into the production of engines and should therefore remain only in charge of design and development. Whittle did not want one of the major aircraft engine companies involved, as he felt that they would take over completely. It was agreed that the Rover Car Company would take over production. This was not a satisfactory arrangement. The quality and speed of production was not to Whittle's liking and Rover interfered by introducing unauthorised changes to the design. The problem was not resolved until late in 1942. Spencer Wilks of Rover met Hives and Hooker over dinner at the Swan and Royal pub in Clitheroe and, with a gentleman's agreement, exchanged Rolls-Royce's tank engine factory for the Rover jet factory at Barnoldswick. This immediately speeded up testing and development.

By April 1941, an experimental engine was installed in the E28 at Glosters and, in taxiing trials at Brockworth, the aircraft, piloted by chief test pilot Gerry Sayer, left the ground in a series of hops. The flight engine was then installed, and the first full flight took place at Cranwell on 15th May. During a series of flights, the aircraft and engine performed well – and the top speed of 370 mph exceeded not just expectations but that of the contemporary Spitfires.

Whittle's designs were shared with other manufacturers, De Havilland and Metropolitan Vickers in Britain, and General Electric in the USA, and in mid-1942, Whittle was sent to the USA to assist in the development of their version of his engine.

During 1940, George Carter, realising that it would take longer to develop a more powerful engine than to build a suitable airframe, proposed a twin-engined fighter. This was the F.9/40, which became the Meteor. In November, Glosters received an order to produce 12 aircraft for experimental purposes. This was increased in June 1941 to full production. In July 1942, the prototype undertook taxiing trials on Newmarket Heath but the engines were not ready for flight. In fact, the first flight did not take place until March 1943 and, due to production problems put in train by Rover, the second-generation Whittle engines were not ready and the aircraft first flew with De Havilland engines. The first-production Meteors were delivered to 616 Squadron at Manston in July 1944. They were primarily used to intercept V1 flying bombs (or 'doodlebugs') as their extra speed gave them a distinct advantage over piston aircraft. For security reasons, they were not used in aerial combat over Germany. The Germans had developed the Messerschmitt Me 262, which had some success against bombers. However, their jet engines with relatively rudimentary axial compressors were much less reliable than

Whittle's, which had the more conservative but proven centrifugal compressor. Over 200 German pilots were killed in accidents, a situation that as a pilot Whittle would have been appalled by.

During 1943, the position of Power Jets was becoming more difficult. The government wanted it to be just a research organisation, but Whittle naturally wanted to be involved in production. Development had been partially funded by private subscription, but production contracts went to other companies. Under Stafford Cripps, Power Jets was compulsorily nationalised in January 1944. Whittle received £10,000. He was now a Group Captain and was awarded the CBE. However, the strain of overwork and difficult negotiations meant that he spent six months in hospital, from March to August, suffering severe exhaustion. Power Jets was merged with the gas turbine division of the RAE Farnborough to form the National Gas Turbine Establishment. Whittle resigned from Power Jets in January 1946. At the time of the break-up, Power Jets were working on a turbo-fan engine in which extra cold air bypasses the combustion chambers. This makes the engine quieter and more fuel-efficient. It is now adopted by all airliners but did not come into service for another 20 years. They were also working on a small but powerful engine boosted by reheat (burning extra fuel in the jet pipe). This was to power the Miles M52, an experimental aircraft way ahead of its time, designed to fly supersonic at 1000 mph. It was cancelled without explanation by the Labour government in February 1946... within a few months of flying.

Whittle had never been given the facilities his project deserved and he should also have been given much greater responsibility as Chief Engineer to coordinate the various subcontractors. Since the first flight of the W1 engine, Power Jets had trebled the thrust of its

engines with no increase in size, only a 70% increase in weight and improved fuel consumption. They had pioneered the use of high-tensile steels and sophisticated welding techniques. But the firm was broken up and the baton handed to Rolls-Royce and De Havilland.

Whittle embarked on a series of gruelling lecture tours in Europe and America. In late 1946, he went to receive the US Legion of Merit and the Daniel Guggenheim Medal. Here he had another nervous breakdown. Found unfit for flying duties, he decided to resign from the RAF with the rank of Air Commodore in 1948. His first loyalty was always to the RAF and his driving ambition was to provide it with the best equipment.

In 1948, his contribution was recognised by the award of £100,000 from the Royal Commission on Awards to Inventors and he was made a Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire (KBE).

He subsequently worked for BOAC (British Overseas Airways Corporation) as a technical advisor, for Shell as a Mechanical Engineering Specialist – developing a down-hole drill driven by a turbine running on lubricating mud and avoiding a rigid pipe, and for Bristol Aero Engines.

In 1976, his marriage to Dorothy was dissolved. He married an American lady, Hazel Hall, and moved to the USA where he accepted a Research Professorship at the United States Naval Academy. He regularly returned to the UK for reunions and lectures. He died in 1996, having made as great a contribution to life in the 20th century as anyone. He received numerous awards, including Companion of the Order of the Bath (1947), Order of Merit (1986),

Fellow of the Royal Society (1986) and Honorary Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society (1986).

To quote Sir Stanley Hooker: “Whittle had an unrivalled grasp of the fundamentals of thermodynamics and he never did anything until he had given it the deepest and most logical consideration. As I came to understand his work, I realised that he had laid down the performance of jet engines with the precision of Newton, a feat whose magnitude he never appeared to appreciate. For the preceding 30 years, the performance of piston engines in flight was known only to a very rough approximation, based on inaccurate empirical formulae, yet Whittle had predicted what a jet engine would do before he had ever made one. Today, 40 years later, his formulae are used unchanged. They are of such precision that it is more accurate to calculate the performance of jet engines, including the most modern fan engines, than it is to attempt to measure it in flight or in costly ground test plants. This is true from take-off to the speed of Concorde and beyond. Indeed the pen really is mightier than the spanner.”

KINDLY WRITTEN BY RICHARD GREENWOOD (M. 1958), SON OF
ERIC GREENWOOD, CHIEF TEST PILOT AT GLOSTER AIRCRAFT COMPANY

SOURCES

Ian Whittle, personal communication

Jet (1996) by John Golley [a re-issue of the 1987 book *Whittle: The True Story* by John Golley and Bill Gunston]

Gloster Aircraft Since 1917 (1971) by Derek N. James

Frank Whittle's 1945 James Clayton Memorial Lecture 1945 entitled 'The early history of the Whittle jet propulsion gas turbine'

March 15 1934

PETERHOUSE,
CAMBRIDGE.

Dear master,
could you possibly take one R.A.F.
officer in the College from next
October? although the air ministry
scheme for sending officers to Cambridge
is namely at an end they are
still proposing to send an occasional
officer whom they consider exceptional and
who has not already got a degree.
This one is Flight Lieut. F. Whittle.
He began as an aircraft apprentice,
1923 - 1926 : obtained a cadetship

at Cranwell and was there 1926 - 1928
commissioned 1928. He took the
R.A.F. Engineering course at Hendon
and did very well there. I
am told that he has received
the thanks both of the air Council
and of the Admiralty for technical
suggestions which he has forwarded.

I am sorry to say that he
is married. But that may
perhaps make it easier to accept
him if the pressure of numbers
is great. If it is possible
to take him I will have the
papers sent to him.

Yours sincerely

Roy Lubbock.

The development of the Whittle Building and M Staircase and the refurbishment of Fen Court was made possible by the support of many Petreans. The memories of Peterhouse on the following pages are from those who have been especially generous and whose names are recorded in various places in the buildings they helped to develop.

TUDOR BROWN (M. 1976)

Looking back, I have to confess that one of my few regrets about my whole Cambridge undergraduate experience is that I had very little to do with College life. Despite spending three years at Peterhouse, I never lived in College itself, as I was in St Peter's Terrace during my first year, and then in Fitzwilliam Street for my second and third years. Moreover, my friends at the time were all from other Colleges, so it is perhaps no wonder I have few recollections of day-to-day student life at Peterhouse. One thing I do remember was that beer in the Sex Club was 26p a pint, which I thought was far too much money!

My father (Geoffrey Brown), on the other hand, who was at Peterhouse in the 1940s during the War, has vivid memories of the time, and here are a few of his anecdotes which illustrate how much times have changed within one generation. An unforgettable memory was the celebration of V-E Day, when all restrictions went overboard in College and in the town. He was one of the pioneer residents in St Peter's Terrace (No. 6) and well remembers how the rooms were set up with wartime 'utility' furniture. He recalls how he travelled to Cambridge by train from Buckfastleigh, a small market town in Devon where he lived, which included a very insecure final stage from King's Cross; this link still used old carriages with individual

closed compartments so that the only escape was when the door could be opened at a station. Coal fires were the only heat source in College rooms, and a weekly ration of coal had to be collected from a College store and carried in buckets to individual rooms (up staircases if necessary). Food rationing was handled efficiently by the kitchen staff and, despite all the wartime restrictions, Peterhouse kept up its reputation for providing the best 'Hall' in Cambridge. The Deer Park was turned into a vegetable garden.

Communication was essentially only by longhand written letters. Anything urgent was sent by telegram. The telephone was a newfangled device, not in common use, but he remembers how when he once tried to make a telephone call home from a phone, which was actually installed in College, after giving the name of the town, the operator apprehensively replied "I'll try and get it"!

One of my motivations for contributing to this development project was that Peterhouse served both my father and me very well, and I feel fortunate to be in a position to contribute on behalf of us both. It is good to know that, thanks to the success of the Development Campaign and opening of the Whittle Building, all future undergraduates will have the opportunity to be housed within College – and thus come away with the benefits of not just a degree from Cambridge but also the 'full Peterhouse experience'.

STUART MARCHAND (M. 1970)

I arrive in October 1970. Before the Freshers' Feast, I have the choice of attending a service in Chapel or sherry with Hallard Croft. Not being religious, I choose the sherry, and Hallard explains that he has a competition with the Chapel every year. This year the split is about 50:50. The sherry is served in large glasses and, unlike one of my fellow freshers who isn't quite so restrained, I restrict myself to just the one and survive the feast unscathed.

I am an exhibitioner, and I am picked out to say Grace at my first Hall. "One volunteer is worth 10 pressed men", says the Porter or whoever it was. Latin not being my strong point, I stumble through, somewhat embarrassed. Subsequently, I am appointed as Grace speaker for a week and learn it thoroughly so that I can say it in one breath. I can still remember it to this day!

Spring arrives. I am living in 5 St Peter's Terrace and walk through the Deer Park for lunch and dinner, passing by the superb *Montana Clematis* on the wall around the Fitzwilliam Museum, which emits a pleasant scent in the evenings. There is also a bed of lily of the valley just before the Deer Park and, of course, lots of daffodils.

In 1970, Peterhouse is a men's College. My friend is asked to host a friend of a friend called Alex. No problem, he organises a put-you-up from College in his room. It is a bit of a surprise, then, when Alex turns out to be a girl and arrives too late to change the arrangements. I do not think the College found out.

Gates are locked at midnight and if you are out later than that you are supposed to go through the Porter's Lodge and sign in.

This is a drag if you are coming from the south. It is easy to walk off the Fen right at the end of the waterway where someone has kindly left a plank. Climbing over the gate into St Peter's Terrace is also not too difficult.

As a lover of old buildings, I find the College beautiful. The Dining Hall is especially fine and the food excellent. I have all of my lunches and dinners there – and my future wife sometimes joins me for Evening Hall. As I tend to be out doing various activities in the evenings, I usually go to Informal Hall. Sunday lunch is not available in College and I discover a variety of eating establishments, and often frequent the Spread Eagle pub as it is an easy walk from College.

When I return to College after a winter walk or evening activity, I am often hungry. But being an engineer, I have discovered that a bent paperclip hung on the grill in front of the electric fire turns it into an excellent toaster of crumpets.

I left Peterhouse in 1973 with a First in Engineering, a fiancé and lots of happy memories.

RICHARD GREENWOOD (M. 1958)

I was at Peterhouse for seven years from 1958 to 1964, reading Veterinary Medicine. My academic career was fairly undistinguished, but I received an excellent training (we were only 17 in my year, including just two ladies). Although I spent too much time following horse racing, it stood me in good stead for my subsequent career in Newmarket.

As National Service had just finished, it was an interesting time to go up. Straight from school, one was mixing with men who had spent two or three years in the services and travelling the world. The College had to expand numbers to take the two intakes, so the downside was that I never had a room in College. But living in licensed digs close to College with an obliging landlady who would give you a key gave greater freedom. In those days, unless you had an exeat, you had to be in by midnight. So I never had to climb into College, but often had to climb out over the revolving spikes behind Fen Court.

I played some coarse rugby with the College second XV. University rugby was extremely strong and I made regular visits to Grange Road where the blues played against the country's top club sides, and one year went to the Varsity Match unbeaten. Latterly, I rode in point-to-points for local farmers without much success. The best result was coming second in the undergraduates' race at Marks Tey. In my final year, I had a lot of fun with a racing greyhound, winning a few races on the local flapping (unofficial) tracks around East Anglia.

I did, however, have the good fortune to join the University Air Squadron and benefit from first-class instruction on the De Havilland Chipmunk at Marshall's Airfield. During my six years at Peterhouse,

I somewhat surprisingly never realised that Frank Whittle was a Petrean. Therefore, I am particularly delighted that the College has chosen to recognise his achievements by naming the new building after him.

As chief test pilot at Glosters my father Eric Greenwood did fly the early Whittle-engined F9 prototype Meteor but his main task was the development of the Mk4 Meteor. The Meteor went on to be the RAF's main front-line fighter and large numbers were exported.

I grew up on a farm alongside Glosters' factory and had maximum exposure to the early days of jet aircraft. We used to gallop our ponies on the airfield alongside the runway. As a boy, I had always wanted to be a pilot, but my father actively discouraged me saying all the fun and freedom had gone out of an aviation career. Instead, I became a veterinary surgeon but never lost my interest in aviation.



NIGEL KEEN (M. 1965)

Peterhouse has been part of my life for as long as I can remember, as my father was a Petrean and the walls of his study were tiled with pictures of College boat crews showing him as a young man. It was always assumed that I would follow in his footsteps both at school and then going on to study at Peterhouse – and fortunately it turned out that way.

I remember well coming to Peterhouse for the first time when I sat the scholarship exam; being given a place was wonderful and a prelude to the three memorable years I spent in the College. The very fabric of the buildings seemed to breathe learning to me, and to meet Nobel Prize winners when walking across the Courts was invigorating for a young man. The teaching in Peterhouse was always special. Danny Taylor (my Tutor) was an inspiration to me with his easy-going Irish approach to life, and Jacques Hyman and Chris Calladine supervised me; what could be better to stimulate thinking for a young engineer?

Peterhouse being a small College, I had friends in many other disciplines. Mark Griffiths, a classicist who went on to head the Classics Department in the University of California, Berkeley, was instrumental in developing my love of classic cars, which continues today. Mark's father, a Don in Caius, owned a 1932 Rolls-Royce whose engine needed open-heart surgery. Rebuilding the engine provided a practical counterpoint to the theory we addressed daily in the Engineering Department.

My father came annually to dine with me in Cambridge, providing a unique opportunity for me to know him outside the home

environment. This is a tradition that was repeated with my own son who, although a Cambridge engineer, is not a Petrean.

These early experiences provided the foundations for my career, which has involved leading some of the UK's important science-based engineering companies, and more recently focusing on taking science-based ideas from the bench through to commercial realisation particularly within healthcare.

In recent years, it has been good to reconnect with the College as the Development Campaign has taken shape; and now that it is in the later stages, it is a privilege to be able to support the work with a donation to commemorate my family's association with Peterhouse and Cambridge.



MICHAEL BOYCOTT (M. 1933; 1915–1987)

Michael Boycott went up to Cambridge from Wellington College in 1933, and he was very keen for his two sons, Tim and Peter, to follow him up to Peterhouse – and they duly did some 30 years later.

TIM BOYCOTT (M. 1963; 1943–2013)

Tim Boycott took the Mechanical Science Qualifying Exam (MSQE) in 1960; he was interviewed by Danny Taylor and offered a place to start in 1963. In September 1961, Tim went to Britannia Royal Navy College (BRNC) Dartmouth; after two years at sea in the West Indies and the Far East, he went up to Peterhouse and moved into digs in Fitzwilliam Street. He lived in College (C2) in his second year, and in the William Stone Building for his final year. Tim played for the Peterhouse XV and tried out for Seniors Rugby at Grange Road.

He then completed his naval professional training and joined *HMS Antrim*, which was being built in the Fairfield Shipyard in Glasgow. Tim was in charge of the Sea Slug Missile Guidance Radar (GWS 2). After a successful trials programme at Aberporth in Wales, the ship went on a 90-day patrol in the Iceland–Faroes Gap. He also served on *HMS Ardent* as the Weapons Officer until six months before the Falklands War (during which she was sunk in action) and on *HMS Andromeda* as the Squadron Weapons Engineer Officer for the 8th Frigate Squadron. Tim also held several shore appointments including Underwater Trials, Naval Information Systems and Naval PR and was on the staff of the Joint Service Defence College, Greenwich. His final three years were spent helping British defence companies sell their naval equipment in

the Far East as part of the Defence Export Services Organisation. He retired in 1996 after a 35-year career in the Royal Navy.

During his retirement, Tim was a long-serving Secretary of the Flyfishers' Club in London. He also took on the organisation of the Peterhouse Gathering in 2000 and 2001; the addition of the families' day on the Fellows' lawn on the Sunday provided the inspiration for the current Family Days.

PETER BOYCOTT (M. 1963; 1944–2014)

Peter Boycott, Tim's younger brother, was also at Wellington and took the MSQE in December 1961, which by then included a general paper and a translation paper. He, too, was offered a place to study Mechanical Sciences starting in September 1963. During his gap year, he travelled in Russia and studied in Spain, before in early 1963 joining a sandwich industrial engineering course sponsored by ICI Ltd, with the view to joining ICI when he left Cambridge. While at Cambridge, Peter was awarded an exhibition and played both rugby and football for the College.

On graduating in 1966, Peter decided to change careers and went into the City, and in 1969 qualified as a chartered accountant at Cooper Brothers and Company. He then worked as Finance Director and Founder Shareholder of several retail, property and private investment companies, positions that included involvement with several engineering and manufacturing companies supplying thermal process systems to major mining groups in Europe and North America. Later in his career, Peter became a Director of several quoted mining companies in Australia and Canada. In the early

1990s, he became a shareholder in Anglo Pacific Group PLC – a mining royalty company with a market capitalisation of some £300 million – and in 1997 was appointed its Chairman.

Tim and Peter both firmly believed that the numerical and problem-solving skills intrinsic to the engineering disciplines taught at Peterhouse served them well throughout their naval and business careers. And according to Tim, his father, Michael, once told him – as they were standing in the Engineering Laboratories at Cambridge – how his fellow engineering student Frank Whittle had often challenged the theories that were being taught at the time.

To have a set of rooms named after Tim, Peter and Michael in the new Whittle Building will be a real privilege for the Boycott family.



Michael Boycott (back row, 3rd from left) rowed Bow in the 1st Lent Boat in 1934

GEORGE ADAMS (M. 1981)

Two things are closest to me from my time at Peterhouse. Firstly, the friends I made and who today, 30 years on, are amongst my very closest – all as predicted by the Head Porter on the very first dinner in Hall!

Secondly, I was part of the team that organised ‘The 700th’, a ball to celebrate the 700 years of the College. As it was the first ball to be held by the College for probably 15 years, we wanted to hold the largest white tie event that year – no lack of ambition. In the end, we sold almost double the number of tickets predicted.

The stories of the evening are legion, ranging from us receiving a Bank of England cheque from a Petrean who was the head cashier, Petreans flying in from South Africa to attend, through my despatching a drunk security guard from the premises, to demolishing part of the walls and moving a tree that had been planted nearby to mark the Queen’s Silver Jubilee – all to make way for dodgems!

It was an absolute triumph of teamwork, imagination, hard work but mainly innocence. We did not know what we were letting ourselves in for! The evening was good, too! In the leaflet we produced to promote the event, a friend used the words “a depth of quality” to promise a wonderful evening. A phrase that perfectly describes Peterhouse to me.

THE MUNIA AND CYNTHIA POSTAN MUSIC ROOM

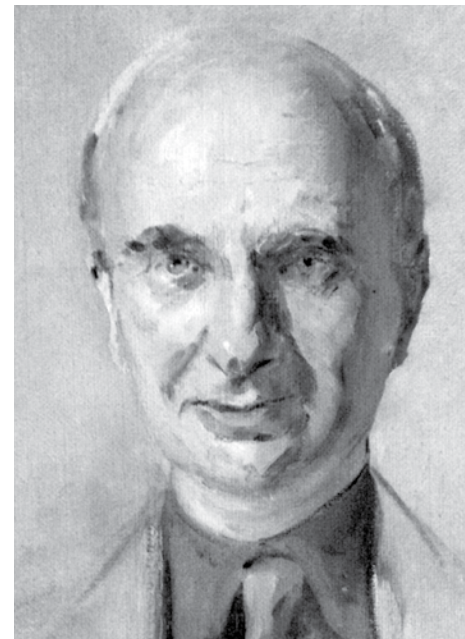
One of the two new music rooms has been named The Munia and Cynthia Postan Room after Professor Sir Michael and the Lady Cynthia Postan, both of them passionate music lovers, especially of opera.

After leaving Russia following the Revolution, Michael Postan ('Munia' to all who knew him) taught at University College London and the London School of Economics. In 1935, he became a Fellow of Peterhouse, and was appointed Professor of Economic History in 1938. He remained an Honorary Fellow and continued to teach until his death in 1982. He was noted as one of the best lecturers and *most* influential teachers at Cambridge, for his wide historical and intellectual perspective, and for his deeply felt and closely argued anti-Marxism. He was knighted in 1980.

Although Postan coincided briefly with Whittle at Peterhouse, it was not until later in the War that he and his wife, then still the Lady Cynthia Keppel, got to know him well. Postan was then working in the Cabinet Offices, and as his assistant Lady Cynthia wrote the definitive study on 'The Development of Jet Propulsion and Gas Turbine Engines in the United Kingdom', which Whittle described as "a remarkable piece of work... a very considerable achievement". A copy of her annotated original typescript is on display in the Whittle Building. She later became the Technical Editor of *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe* and of *The Economic History Review*, both edited by her husband.

He gave the Pietà in the Chapel to the College in memory of his first wife Professor Eileen Power, who died in 1940. Lady

Cynthia has been keenly interested in the life of the College for 70 years, and has been a supporter of the Development Campaign since the beginning.



Munia and Cynthia Postan, circa 1945, at the time they knew Sir Frank Whittle.

MICHAEL ALLEN (M. 1959)

My time in Fen Court and M Staircase as an undergraduate at Peterhouse passed as if in a dream. Each day one was overawed by the legends of the College and University – both dead and alive. Reading Natural Sciences and Physics Part II brought us into daily contact with Newton, Maxwell, Thompson, Pippard, Evans, Kendrew (my Nobelist Senior Tutor of Studies) at the time when the DNA helix was taking shape in the minds of Crick and Watson in a mobile laboratory in the Cavendish car park. It was intimidating and, I realise on reflection, profoundly inspirational.

Cambridge was not only about earning a good grade in the final exams (unless you had academia in mind), but was also about choosing your field of endeavour, learning it and then transforming it. I chose management (not Britain's long suit in the mid-1960s – as J J Servan-Schreiber highlighted in *Le Défi Américain*) and entered what was then called operations research and subsequently management science. It led me through computer simulation of a South Wales steel plant to consultants McKinsey & Company, where we confronted the British postal unions' three-hour workday, and on to New York to investigate what was going wrong with the ossifying financial management systems of one of the world's corporate giants, Thomas Edison's General Electric.

At age 30, I was still precocious enough to suggest that their model of management excellence and innovation was broken! Together with my colleague Roderick Carnegie, we proposed and put in place a new outward-looking structure based on the SBU (strategic business unit) concept and, shortly afterwards, I became the Head of Corporate Strategy for GE, inventing in the process the 'nine-

block' matrix for multidimensional evaluation of resource allocation priorities among businesses. Ironically, one of the GE businesses given top priority for strategic investment was aircraft jet engines. Following GE's leadership, US and global CEOs changed their game from financial control to strategic leadership and priority setting. I authored this transition to 'strategic management'. After these '15 minutes of fame', I founded the Michael Allen Company and a lucrative consulting career followed which has enabled me to give back to our College and University some of what they had given me.

Peterhouse and Cambridge gave me the priceless gifts of intellectual bravery, the courage to challenge the established order and thereby create progress. As I learned in my first tutorial, anyone could be challenged – even Newton!

Frank Whittle also received these gifts, and today we honour the brilliant use he made of them.



KISHAN DE SILVA (M. 1971)

My father was a civil engineer who built irrigation and hydroelectric power dams in Ceylon, now Sri Lanka. Having seen these fantastic schemes rise from the ground, I knew from an early age that I wanted to be an engineer. At the age of about 16, I was surprised when my father suggested that I should study engineering at Cambridge. In addition to all that the University offers, he thought that the concept of an 'arts' degree in engineering was quite fascinating. Being of 'a certain age', I considered a BA in engineering to be odd and unacceptable. That and other obstacles, such as the entrance exam, were in due course overcome, and I was delighted to arrive at Peterhouse in October 1971.

Roger Lovatt was the Senior Tutor and was also responsible for my personal welfare. Chris Calladine was my Director of Studies. We got up to all manner of mischief and the Fellows of the College dealt with us firmly but with humour; they had a wonderful turn of phrase and to this day I remember Chris' report on my first-year exams which started with the line: "I am sure you will share my disappointment in a result that could have been better"! In any event, I hugely enjoyed three years of the Engineering Tripos, the interaction with a large circle of friends reading a wide variety of subjects and, most importantly, extensive involvement in many sports including rowing, cricket, table tennis and badminton.

In 1974, I moved into the real world of engineering consultancy in London. Although many who studied engineering alongside me at Cambridge moved on to other fields of work, notably the financial sector, I have remained in this field – and continue to enjoy my work immensely as an engineer. It has taken me to many parts of the world

including the Far East, Middle East and Africa, and I have learnt a little about their diverse cultures, all as a part of 'my work'.

My thanks go in particular to the engineering Fellows and Supervisors at Peterhouse who guided and nurtured my interest in the subject.

ANDREW MCINTYRE (M. 1974)

Andrew was an Organ Scholar and read Med. Sc. and Music. He has been the Treasurer of the Peterhouse Society since 2003.

JOHN PLANT (M. 1943; 1925–2012)

John read Law and had a career as a court advocate. His generous legacy helped complete the building.

DAVID ROSS

David Ross is the co-founder of Carphone Warehouse Plc and Talk Talk Plc. Continuing his family's long-standing commitment to the wider community; he is a passionate philanthropist, dedicated to developing opportunities for young people. He is responsible for the sponsorship of academies in the East Midlands via his education trust DRET (David Ross Education Trust) and the development of a wider national philanthropic programme focussed on education. In 2006 he established the David Ross Foundation which aims to help young people discover their strengths by offering them a wide range of world class educational opportunities. Peterhouse has been working with the Foundation in support of these aims.



MANNY DAVIDSON

The new Junior Combination Room (JCR) in the Whittle Building is to be named The Davidson Room.

Manny Davidson has asked that the Manny and Brigitta Davidson Family Charitable Trust's generous sponsorship of the new JCR be dedicated to the memory of all those children whose lives have been blighted by terrorism.

ROGER SEELIG

"The main reason for contributing to the Peterhouse Development Fund was that I saw it as an opportunity to enhance Peterhouse by the addition of a fourth side that will physically endure."

Roger Seelig has had a successful career in the city as a corporate financier and adviser, and director of Morgan Grenfell & Company and other public companies.

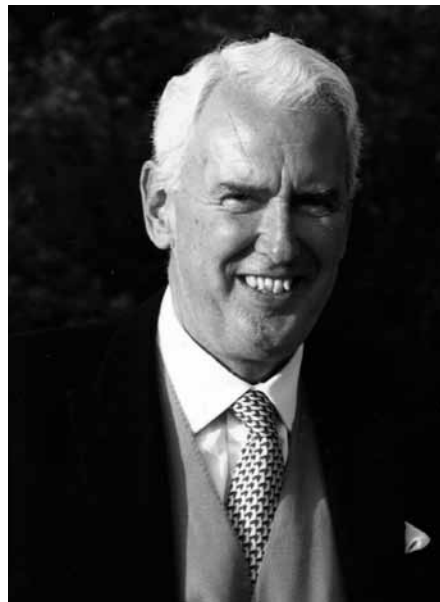
DAVID C ORD

"Having got to know Peterhouse over the last few years, we were delighted to support the exciting development of Fen Court. Peterhouse is a very special place and deserves the best."

David Ord is the Managing Director of the Bristol Port Company and a member of the Society of Merchant Venturers.

RICHARD MARRIOTT (M. 1958; 1937–2013)

Richard Marriott grew up in Eversley, Hampshire. After leaving school, he attended Wellington College. After officer training at Sandhurst, he went up to Cambridge in 1958 to study Mechanical Engineering at Peterhouse. He then served as an Officer in the Royal Engineers and the Gurkha Engineers in the Far East before becoming Aide-de-camp to the last Governor General of North Borneo. Richard then spent 20 years at IBM and 10 years at BT. On his retirement in 1998, he became chairman of the Board of Governors at Westonbirt School.



EDWARD REED (M. 1960; 1938–2013)

Born in Northallerton in July 1938, Edward Reed was one of seven children and grew up on the family farm in North Yorkshire. After leaving Northallerton Grammar School, he decided to join the army and attended Welbeck College and then Sandhurst. In 1960, Edward went to Peterhouse to read Engineering. He then left the army, and went on to complete a PhD at Leeds Polytechnic, where he became a Lecturer.



DILIP CHANDRA (M. 1965)

On graduating from Peterhouse, it had been my intention to return only when I had something to contribute to the place where I had spent so many happy days.

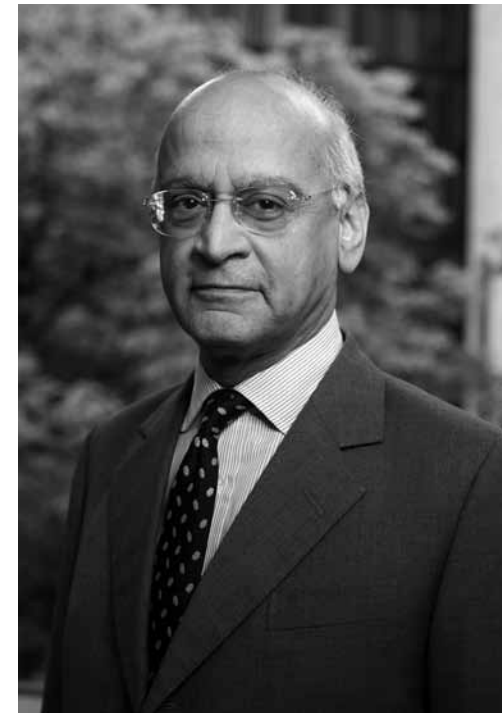
The delights of the Scholar's Garden and the Deer Park, of Old Court in the summer with its window boxes of pelargoniums, of reading the newspapers in the Sexcentenary Club (which was up D Staircase then) or of playing vinyl records from the music library after lunch on a Sunday afternoon, all remain vividly clear in my memory.

Other things, equally vivid, are not as sustaining: the walk to The Birdwood with sponge bag and towel, across Old Court, being wary of the dust van and other traffic as one gingerly crossed from Gisborne Court into the Bath House, the early morning cacophony of delivery vans if one was incarcerated in Sick Bay (Fen Court), a somewhat draughty Music Room, all these held few charms.

How delighted I was when I contacted the College, sometime in 1999, professing a wish to help in its future, only to be told of a Development plan that invited participation, and not only that, one which would decisively improve undergraduate accommodation, remove the dreadful Birdwood, revitalise the Ward Library, the Theatre and Fen Court and, best of all, close Gisborne Court to traffic.

It has taken a while for all this to come about, enabling me to make giving to Peterhouse a habit. Being able to do one's little bit to sustain this oldest of colleges is a rare privilege, not given to many,

and one which honours and cheers me greatly. I suspect all Colleges grow in buildings as the years pass. Our Peterhouse has grown within its gates, bringing all undergraduates into one community: a fitting milestone for its eighth century.



FRASER HOWIE (M. 1989)

A college travel bursary partly covered my first trip to Asia. It was in August 1991: a visit to Hong Kong to stay with a friend from Girton who, like me, was in the University water polo team.

The Qantas flight to Hong Kong required a change of plane in Bangkok and I distinctly remember stepping off the plane at Bangkok airport was like stepping into a sauna: it was very hot and humid – and vastly different from what I was used to. As soon as I arrived in Hong Kong I was hooked – this was where I wanted to be. The whole place just buzzed with the energy of a place alive with possibilities; the heat and humidity only added to the energy. What most interested me was the written language; if nothing else, I was annoyed that here were all these signs that the locals could read but I couldn't! Not that I had any linguistic ability, as French and German were a torture to me at school, but the mysterious characters I encountered in Hong Kong were endlessly fascinating. That visit changed my life.

I returned to Cambridge for my final year knowing that I had to get out to Asia and learn Chinese. Like all too many undergraduates, I took a job in finance that focused on Asia, and by 1994 was permanently living in Hong Kong. Just after the handover of Hong Kong to China, I moved to Beijing to formally study Chinese; I stayed for about six years and eventually married a local Chinese woman. We moved back to Hong Kong and then later to Singapore which was more convenient for raising a family. After more than 20 years of studying China and having written three books about Chinese finance, the country still has a strong hold over me.

Since graduating and moving to Asia, I had had little contact with the College but the untimely death of a College friend prompted me to re-establish ties just at the time that the redevelopment of Gisborne Court and the Whittle Building was starting. Having lived in Gisborne Court during my final year, I was delighted to support the new building to remind me of my time at Peterhouse and the role it played in bringing me to Asia.



Cocoa Tree Club, June 1992

I was the steward of the club that year and am seated front row centre with between Imre Leader (now Director of Maths at Trinity, then the sponsoring Fellow for what was always a rowdy evening) and Ed Lipman, (then soon to be JRF at P'house but now sadly deceased). Rob Fielder (P'house 1989) very obligingly served as a foot stool.

ANTHONY NIGHTINGALE (M. 1966)

I remember my days at Peterhouse as a golden time. It started well on the first evening in the beautiful hall when I was amazed to see what was for dinner. The schools I had attended prior to Cambridge were fine places in many ways but good food was not one of their attributes. Peterhouse then had the reputation for the best kitchen in Cambridge and it deserved it!

The rather faded photo (indicating how long ago it was, 1969 to be precise) shows me in Gisborne Court where I spent 3 very comfortable years, moving not very adventurously from one corner of the courtyard to the other. But my rooms on I staircase were very pleasant: a small bedroom and a sitting room complete with gas fire, essential for warmth in the winter and useful for toasting crumpets.

I was studying Classics and by the third year the sessions with my supervising tutor were spaced about a week apart. I enjoyed my Classics but there were many other attractions in Cambridge then and somehow the week sped by with little progress evident on the assignment. Consequently all too frequently most of the night before I was due to meet the tutor was spent in that comfortable sitting room scribbling away without the aid of a word processor or the vast store of information at our fingertips through the Internet today.

After Peterhouse I went directly to Hong Kong to join the business world. I knew nothing of Hong Kong and nothing of business, but found them both fascinating, a feeling that has remained with me ever since. Most of the 1970s I lived in Japan, which at that time had the most dynamic economy on earth. It was an exciting time and I learned a lot.



I also spent 5 years in Saudi Arabia giving me an abiding interest in the politics and the cultures of the Middle East. But the largest part of my life has been spent in Hong Kong engaged in the countries of East Asia. There have been huge changes over the past 45 years, which I have been very lucky to observe.

Like many undergraduates of my generation, maybe of most generations, I had no clear idea of where my future life would lead. If I had, I would probably have chosen to spend my 3 years at Peterhouse studying Japanese and Chinese, saving me a lot of time and effort later on. But I never regretted the Classics with its surprisingly varied disciplines of language, literature, history and philosophy.

More important than the formal study, however, was the freedom, the time and the right atmosphere to develop ideas and opinions on a wide range of subjects and to test them in discussion with exceptional people, some of whom became my friends for life.

It is marvelous to see how Peterhouse has flourished in recent years and I wish all who study and work there all success and good fortune in the years ahead.

JOHN RICHARD WOOD (M. 1937; 1919–1942)

ALAN MUIR WOOD (M. 1940)

Robert Muir Wood (m. 1970) has named a room in honour of his father, Alan Muir Wood, and his uncle, John Richard Wood. Alan Muir Wood came to Peterhouse to read Mechanical Sciences in 1940. During his time here he played hockey and was President of the Sexcentenary Club. On graduating he joined the Navy as an Engineering Officer. After the war he specialised in the design of tunnels and pioneered a new approach to their design and construction while working on the Cargo Tunnel just 7m below an operating runway at Heathrow in the 1960s. He led work to investigate the construction of the Channel Tunnel and was knighted for services to Engineering in 1982. It is therefore especially appropriate that he should be remembered in a building that features a tunnel! He was elected an Honorary Fellow of the College in 1981.

His brother John Richard Wood came to Peterhouse to read Mechanical Sciences in 1938. On graduating he likewise joined the Navy as an Engineering Officer. He served on the Prince of Wales and survived when the ship was attacked and sunk on December 10th 1941. As Singapore fell he escaped but he died shortly afterwards in a celebrated suicide attack on Japanese naval forces on February 14th 1942. He was 22, married six months, and his death was not finally confirmed until the end of the War.

JENNY GEALL (NÉE ROPER; M. 1990)
& MARC GEALL (M. 1990)

Marc and Jenny Geall both came up to Peterhouse in 1990 to read Engineering. They met in the bar during their first week – and have been together ever since!

Marc has had a career in the finance sector, and is now working in Germany for SAP. Jenny has had a career in consulting, and recently set up her own business advising in the financial sector.

Marc and Jenny got married at Gleneagles in August 1998, and now have two children, Zoe (12 years) and Amy (10 years), who are already working hard to follow in the family tradition and study at Peterhouse!



ARJUNA GAMAGE (M. 1992)

In 1992, I came to Peterhouse to study Natural Sciences, having completed my secondary education at the British School of Paris. My parents moved from Sri Lanka in the 1960s, first to Britain, and then to France, where they remain today.

My time at Cambridge was divided between lectures, sport and cultural activities. I loved my introduction to rowing and played regularly in the football, rugby, table tennis and tennis teams, acting as College Captain for tennis during my final year. The family-like atmosphere at Peterhouse and the numerous University-wide societies of which I was a member have given me lifelong friends.

In 1995, immediately after graduating, I started my career in finance as a salesperson in the nascent European equities division of investment bank CS First Boston. The years that followed were exciting: the Eurozone took form and, with the advent of the Internet, I experienced my first stock market boom and subsequent bust. In early 2000, with CSFB holding the global number one position in European equities, I was promoted to Director, one of the youngest people to hold such a position at that time.

In late 2000, aged 26, I left the banking industry and, together with two colleagues, set up a hedge fund – Halkin Capital – focusing on European equities. We started marketing our fund in late 2001 just as global geo-political events forced all investors to retrench. After a successful year of trading, we decided to close the fund at the end of 2002 owing to a lack of critical mass.

I then went to work alongside the founder of the established hedge fund Trafalgar Capital, where I spent eight years, which included periods of substantial instability in the financial markets. Despite this, when I left in 2011, our investors had received positive returns every year.

As the world had become increasingly driven by macro-economic events after the financial crisis of 2008, I decided to move to Caxton Associates. Founded in 1983, Caxton is one of the world's oldest and most successful macro hedge funds. I remain there today, managing a team that invests in developed world stock markets.

I live in central London with my wife Melissa, a barrister and former news presenter and journalist, and our two-year-old son Amias and baby daughter Aria.



DAVID WRIGHT (M. 1963)

It is curious in early 2014 to look back 50 years and realise those are the years that have passed since I was in my freshman's year at Peterhouse. In 1964, did one ever conceive of being nearly 70 years old and able to look back on half a century since those first formative years at the College? And it was shortly after the beginning of 1964 that an overenthusiastic venture onto the squash court behind my room in St Peter's Terrace resulted in my further tearing a cartilage in my right knee, which had already been operated on following a rugby injury a year previously. It was, thus, concluded that I should return home for consultation with the surgeon who had performed the first operation.

The prospect of attempting this journey by train, which necessitated a transfer between King's Cross and Euston stations, was forbidding. And it was at this point that benevolent Peterhouse stepped in. A taxi was summoned to collect me from College and then deposit me 120 miles to the west at home in Wolverhampton. A further operation on my right knee was unfortunately required, and since then I have also had cartilage removed from my left knee by arthroscopic surgery, and then four hip replacement operations. So I am an orthopaedic disaster zone – though one in which the scars from the operations performed on my right knee in the 1960s are still the ones that attract attention in terms of the legacy they have left of surgical techniques long since past.

So in recognition of the College's generosity over this accident, my wife (whom I met while at Peterhouse) and I decided we wished to make our contribution to the Whittle Building and Fen Court

construction by financing the refurbishment of the College sickbay. Though naturally we hope that few will have recourse to its facilities!

And after more than 50 years of both diplomatic life and now a banking career, it is still the fact that I can position myself for friends, clients and contacts as having been the beneficiary of a Cambridge academic education. One is an heir to one of the finest brands in the entire world, which has resonance everywhere. "Which university did you attend?" is a question that has been put to me in a host of global centres. A reply of not just "Cambridge" but also at the oldest college "Peterhouse" evokes a combination of recognition, approval and esteem tinged with an element of envy.



CATHRYN O'HARE (NÉE GOULDING; M. 1991)
& MARTIN O'HARE (M. 1990)

Martin came from Northern Ireland to study at Peterhouse in 1990, while I was from Kingston, Surrey and matriculated a year later. We met in the autumn of 1992, when Martin was beginning his final year. I had returned to College to start my second year some two weeks late, and in a wheelchair as a result of a motorbike accident in the Greek islands during the summer. Martin noticed me being briskly wheeled around Old Court at speed by some enthusiastic friends – not much fun over the cobbles, but at least it caught the attention of my future husband!

After graduating with a First in Economics (under the guidance of Dr Solomou), Martin spent two years at Oxford where he gained an MPhil in Economics at Balliol. After having read Law (with Dr Munday), I took the Legal Practice Course at Nottingham Law School. Postgraduate studies completed, we both started working in London in 1995: Martin at Morgan Stanley in investment banking, while I started a solicitor's training contract, and ultimately specialised in employment law at Reynolds Porter Chamberlain. We married in 2000, and had our first child in 2002. We live in Wimbledon and I am kept busy looking after four children and working as a consultant at a local firm of solicitors, and Martin has recently been involved in setting up a new investment fund.

We both have very special memories of Peterhouse, and the three years that we spent there have had a huge impact on the rest of our lives. Apart from meeting each other, it provided us with wonderful and unique opportunities and experiences – and enduring friendships. We have very fond memories of the fun social times at College

balls, dining and sporting societies, particularly the Law Dinners, Peacock Dinners, Cross Keys Society and Cocoa Tree Club. Also, as enthusiastic participants in College sporting fixtures, we remember how much we enjoyed representing Peterhouse at men's and ladies' football, cricket, basketball, pool and darts – albeit not always with great success. Martin, in particular, was a prominent member of the Peterhouse football team during his time at College and was President of the Cross Keys Sports Society.

We are both delighted to be able to support the College in this exciting new development, and look forward to seeing the completed Whittle Building and the positive impact it will no doubt have on the lives of future Petreans.



CARMEN BLACKER (1924–2009)

As a teenager, Carmen Blacker conceived a passionate interest in Japan that she never lost, and later received training in its language from a general who had served as military attaché and could never believe that the Japanese would act – or had acted – in any way that was not honourable and praiseworthy. During the Second World War, Carmen served at Bletchley Park, where its authorities failed to make use of her linguistic ability and intellectual talents. To advance her comprehension of Japan and its culture, she took a degree in the subject at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London; anxious to widen her education, she then read for a degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Somerville College, Oxford.

Japanese studies were initiated in Cambridge shortly after the war and, after some hesitation, Carmen accepted an appointment as Assistant Lecturer in 1955, with the intention of staying for perhaps five years. In fact, she then held the post of University Lecturer until retirement in 1991. In the early 1950s, she spent two years working for a PhD at Keio University in Tokyo, and the fruits of that research were published under the title of *The Japanese Enlightenment* in 1964. Focusing on one of the leading Japanese intellectuals of the 19th century, the book showed how some of the leaders of Japanese thought were reacting to the impact of Western ideas as they affected the government of a country and its social structure.

Carmen's second book, *The Catalpa Bow* (1975), sprang from her interest and fascination with Japan's religion and folklore. It described practices in which she had taken part, such as pilgrimages to remote holy sites on the mountains. She willingly endured the privations that befell a visitor who was anxious to witness these age-

old traditional rites, as yet shielded from the public eyes of journalists and television crews. Her last book, *The Straw Sandal* (2008), is a translation of a 19th century novel – a tale that is peppered with the mysteries of the occult, and also displays the niceties of correct behaviour, warning readers of the results of their neglect.

As one of the three Lecturers and one Lector who were responsible for seeing undergraduates through the Tripos, Carmen took her share of teaching language, reading texts and guiding her pupils' interests in Japan's cultural heritage. She was Director of Oriental Studies at Peterhouse (1974–1975) and remained actively involved until 1991. She deeply appreciated and enjoyed the company that she met at high table, relishing her contacts with colleagues in subjects other than her own and enjoying their friendship. At times, she would be concerned that she could not respond adequately to a recondite subject that was under discussion, such as the scale of recusancy in Essex. For its part, the College welcomed her company in Hall, fascinated in its turn by the glimpses that she gave of another world.



ANTHONY LLOYD (M. 1953)

In the spring of 1952, I was in my last year at Trinity reading Law, when out of the blue I was asked to have lunch in the Lodge at Peterhouse with the Master, Paul Vellacot, and Mrs Vellacot. The only possible explanation was that my sister Rosemary was married to Brian Wormald, later to become Senior Fellow and a much-loved History Tutor. So I assumed that the Master must have heard of my existence from them, and was short of a man for his lunch party.

Much to my astonishment, I was the only guest. The setting was elegant, and lunch included a delicious piece of salmon. But instead of a fish knife and fork to eat it, I found just two forks. This must have been the critical test. Happily I did not comment on the forks, and over coffee the Master offered me a Research Fellowship for three years (there was only one in those days) teaching the half-dozen undergraduates reading law. The only condition: I was to get a First in the Tripos.

The examiners were kind, and in October I moved into a splendid set of rooms on the first floor of the Hostel. So started three of the happiest years of my life. It was difficult to believe that I could be paid for doing what I most enjoyed. Admittedly the salary was only £300 a year. But it was riches enough, as I had no expenses.

My teaching duties were very light, not more than six hours a week. Some of my pupils have achieved great things. John Alliot became a High Court Judge. Ian Harland became Bishop of Carlisle; Martin Thomas became Lord Thomas of Gresford, a distinguished QC and Liberal Democrat Peer; and David Nelson became a very senior judge of the Court of Appeals in the United States. Years later, they

gave me a dinner at Peterhouse to celebrate. As for my research, I was busy enough keeping one week ahead of my pupils, as well as reading for the Bar in my spare time.

In those days, there were only 12 Fellows. It would be difficult to name a more distinguished bunch including: David Knowles (Regius Professor of Modern History, 1954–1963) and Herbert Butterfield (Regius Professor of Modern History, 1963–1968; Master, 1955–1968) among the historians; Keith Guthrie (Lawrence Professor of Ancient Philosophy, 1952–1973; Master of Downing 1957–1972) and Ted Kenney (Kennedy Professor of Latin, 1974–1982) among the classicists; and John Kendrew (Nobel Laureate for Chemistry in 1962) among the scientists. These men were giants in their fields. To dine with them in Hall at night could have been an alarming experience for a 22-year-old. But I soon found that the conversation was mostly about the food – unless, of course, guests were present, and then I kept quiet.

It was in my third year that the Master died. There was at once the question as to who should succeed him. Was it to be one of the several very strong internal candidates? Or should we look outside? I remember well the evening when we gathered in a semicircle around the fire in the Parlour. For many minutes we sat in silence, nobody wanting to be the first to speak. It was David Knowles who came to the rescue. “Would it help”, he asked in that gentle voice, “if I described how they proceed when electing a new Pope at the Vatican?”

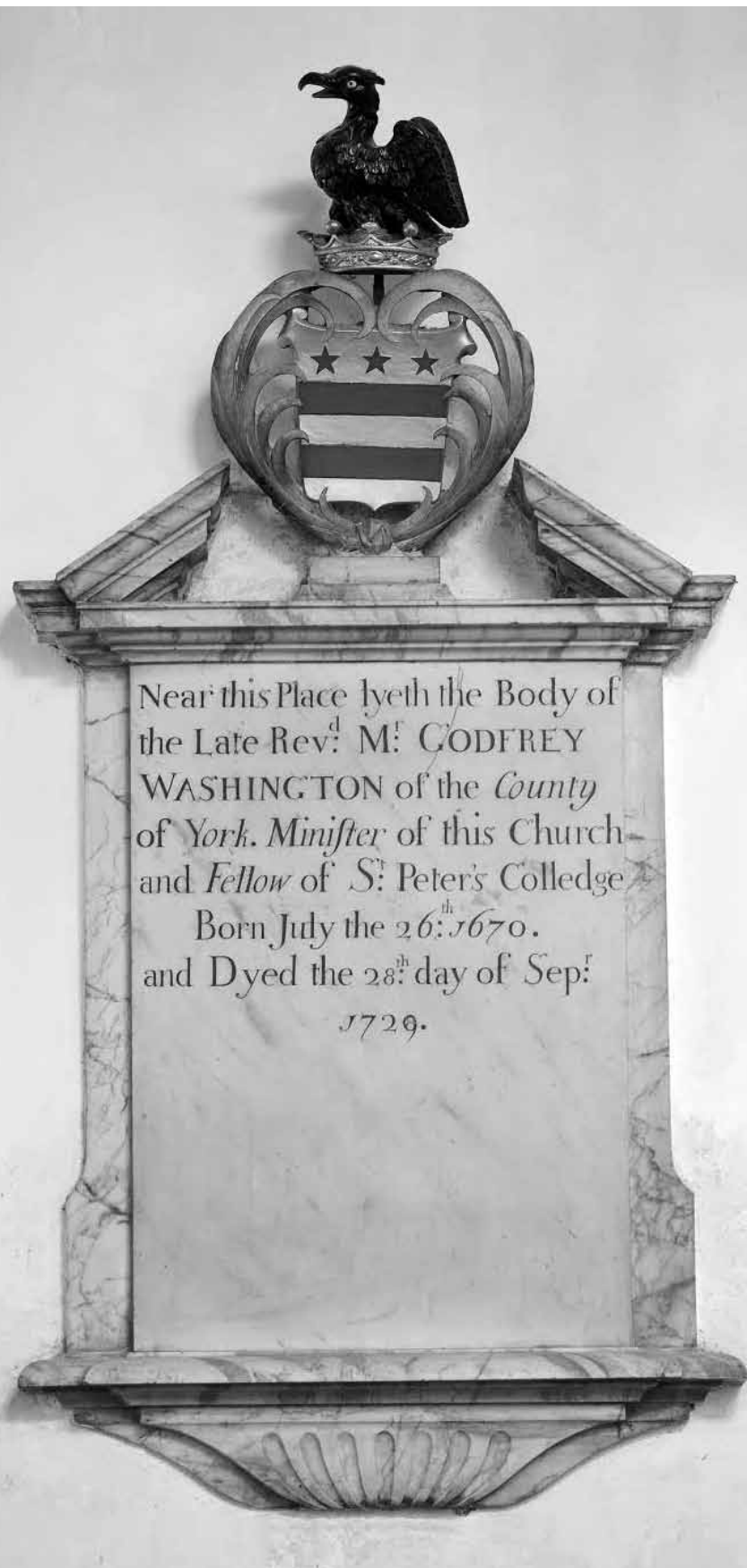
As I was by far the youngest Fellow, I had a marvellous time acting as a sort of general confidant and go-between. But I am not sure after more than 60 years whether I can distinguish between my memories

and what I recollect of *The Masters* by C P Snow. In the event, we were all agreed on choosing Herbert Butterfield.

Another of my duties was to pay an annual visit to the elderly William Stone. He was known as the ‘Squire of Piccadilly’ and was the owner of many sets of chambers in Albany. He was a bachelor, with no heir apparent. He had been at Peterhouse but also had some connection with a College at Oxford, as well as the Oxford and Cambridge Club in London. It was my job to keep the memory of Peterhouse fresh in his mind. He was a dear old man, and I much enjoyed my trips to London, and having tea with him in his chambers. I do not suppose that he remembered me from one visit to the next. But at least I did not deter him from becoming perhaps the most generous benefactor the College has ever had.



Peterhouse and the United States



The Reverend Godfrey Washington (1670–1729) was the great-uncle of the first U.S. President, George Washington. His memorial is to be found in Little St Mary's Church, on the north wall close to the main door. The Washington family coat-of-arms, a black eagle atop a shield of red stars and stripes, adorns the tablet. It is from this coat-of-arms that the 'Stars and Stripes' of the U.S. National Flag, and the U.S. black eagle emblem, are said to derive.

WILLIAM BREWSTER (M. 1580; C. 1566–1644)

William Brewster was born in Scrooby, near Retford, Nottinghamshire, the son of William Brewster (Senior) and his wife Prudence. He became the leader of the Pilgrim Fathers and sailed on the *Mayflower* in 1620, the first Petrean to reach America.

Brewster entered Peterhouse in December 1580, aged about 14; the last reference to him in the College's records occurs in December 1581. After Peterhouse, in 1584, aged about 18, he entered the service of William Davison, one of Queen Elizabeth I's secretaries of state, and accompanied him on a diplomatic mission to Holland. After Davison fell from favour (owing to the execution of Mary Queen of Scots), Brewster returned to Scrooby and served as postmaster like his father. He was one of the original members of the religious Separatist congregation in Scrooby that became the nucleus of the Pilgrim church. When the community first attempted to immigrate to Holland in 1607, Brewster and several others were jailed for a short time. He was released and successfully emigrated in 1608. After his arrival in Holland, Brewster served as Elder of the Pilgrim Separatist congregation.

When the Pilgrim community immigrated to America in 1620 on the *Mayflower*, their pastor John Robinson remained behind in Leiden. In

the absence of an ordained minister, Brewster was the much-loved and respected religious leader of Plymouth Colony. He retained his leadership role until a Pastor, Ralph Smith, arrived in 1629. After the arrival of Smith, Brewster continued to preach occasionally until his death on 10th April 1644 in Plymouth. His inventory of several hundred books in both English and Latin attests to his scholarship, his deep love of learning and his spirituality.

A number of US-based Petreans contributed to a fund to name a room in the Whittle Building after William Brewster the first Petrean to reach the US. Their names are listed on a board adjacent to the room.

ALAN POWER (M. 1949)

It is clear that our special Collegiate form of University has to be paid for privately and will surely always depend on generous endowment revenue from past graduates. On this subject, we owe Richard Grigson a big debt for his untiring work as Bursar of Peterhouse (from 2003–2012) in reducing College costs and reorganising its investments, so turning the Endowment Fund from a sad state to a healthy one.

I was very fortunate in gaining a place at Peterhouse in those rather austere years. So, out of simple gratitude for those halcyon days (thankfully we tend to forget the grey ones) and useful learnings gleaned during my time at Peterhouse, the least I can do is to give back as best as I can.



JEREMY ISENBERG (M. 1962)

Professor Buneman said: “I think you should apply to Peterhouse. You will enjoy life there more than at a large College”. And so, lounging in his Stanford office, Oscar Buneman hinted that perhaps a few pleasures of his 10 years as a Peterhouse Fellow, Mathematics Lecturer and University Gliding Club member might also be open to me. When I crossed the worn threshold stone outside the Porter’s Lodge on a sunny October day in 1962 to find myself expected, it seemed he might have been right.

In the early 1960s, Americans in Britain were considered a bit exotic, more than a bit overconfident and wildly overpaid. The Fulbright Scholarship staff tried preparing us to be good visitors but only experience, sometimes bruising, could teach one how to deal with the weather, the College Office and the prerogatives of Senior Members. We Americans instinctively believe that all are created roughly equal and, in many practical situations, we tend to behave accordingly. This belief did not serve me well, and it was not until my third year that I learned to keep within the invisible lines.

My relations with undergraduate Petreans benefited from my being two or three years older. Also, I brought southern California tennis and swimming skills to Cuppers and, as Captain of the University basketball team, gained a little status by becoming a member of the Hawks. Other skills, now lost to time and better sense, included the ability to consume large quantities of Guinness in any given evening.

However, my status in College may have been traceable to a party at which another member ran a roulette wheel for his own profit. Near the midnight lockdown, my randomly placed bet won about

£12, the equivalent of a month’s rent in those days. I tried to return it, intending to avoid any appearance that I – the presumed wealthy American – was plundering County Council grants. An entire gang of Petreans refused to allow this, saying that the owner of the wheel had previously got the money from them and as an instrument of justice I lacked standing to return the money. And so I bought rounds of drinks in Hall for weeks afterwards, riding fortune to new status and acceptance.

The anxieties of unstructured research student life and the loneliness of the expat – ironically deepened by Alistair Cooke’s broadcast *Letter from America* – were softened by gracious moments in College life. The Deer Park daffodils, gathering of friends for drinks before Hall, breakfast before a coal fire, recitals by Britain’s prominent organists to mark the restoration of the Chapel organ, and sherry parties in the College Garden come to mind. Memory is not completely nostalgia’s fool, and I am grateful to have these things to recall.



1 & 2: The endless winter of 1962.

3: Jeremy Isenberg and fellow American and Petrean James Beattie playing croquet in the College Garden in 1963.

KEVIN QUINN (M. 1984)

I wasn't sure what was in store for me as a visiting student from Columbia University, in New York City. Columbia's urban setting – like those of most city colleges – overwhelmed the student life. Such places afford a certain anonymity. Peterhouse and Cambridge offered a very different experience.

In 1984, I was lucky enough to matriculate at Peterhouse. Its small size and its intimate and beautiful buildings and grounds were a welcome distinction from the Upper West Side of Manhattan. At the time, Peterhouse was essentially all male, as 1984 was the first year of female matriculation at the graduate level. Thus, there was playful toughness and political incorrectness to the place. That said, Peterhouse and its students embraced a broad set of individuals – athletes, academics, poets and, yes, even a few Americans.

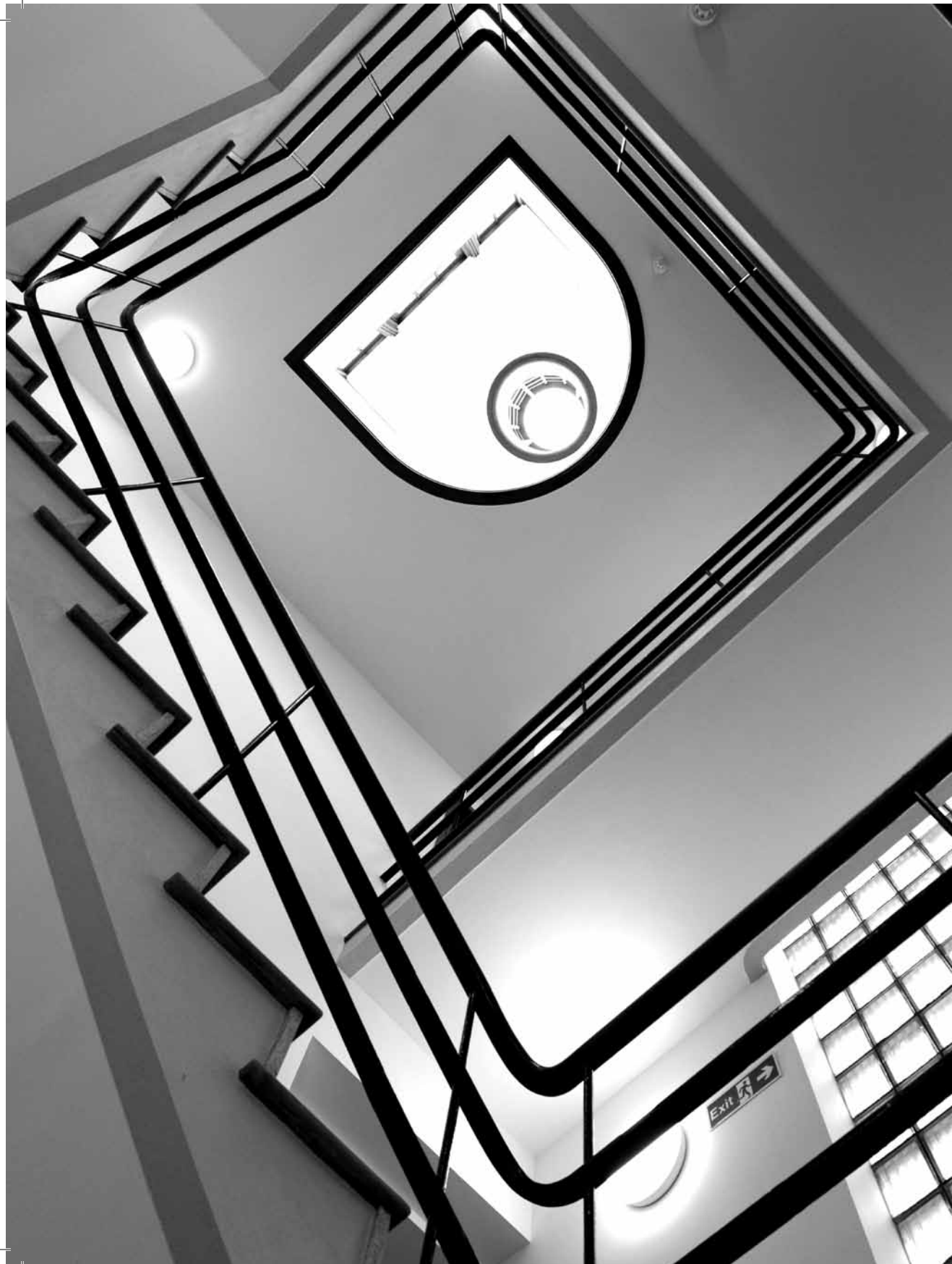
The intimacy of Peterhouse was reflected in its various clubs, athletics and Dining Hall. The social life of the College was centred in its newly constructed bar – a place where everyone knew much more than just your name. Though the specifics escape me today, I have great memories of spirited discussions, loud, late-night singing and an overall sense of community.

After a year at Peterhouse, I left Cambridge with a wonderful collection of memories, experiences and, most importantly, great friendships which have largely been sustained. In 2011, I was fortunate to visit Peterhouse with my family. It was so important to me to be able to share with them my special place that I hold so dear.

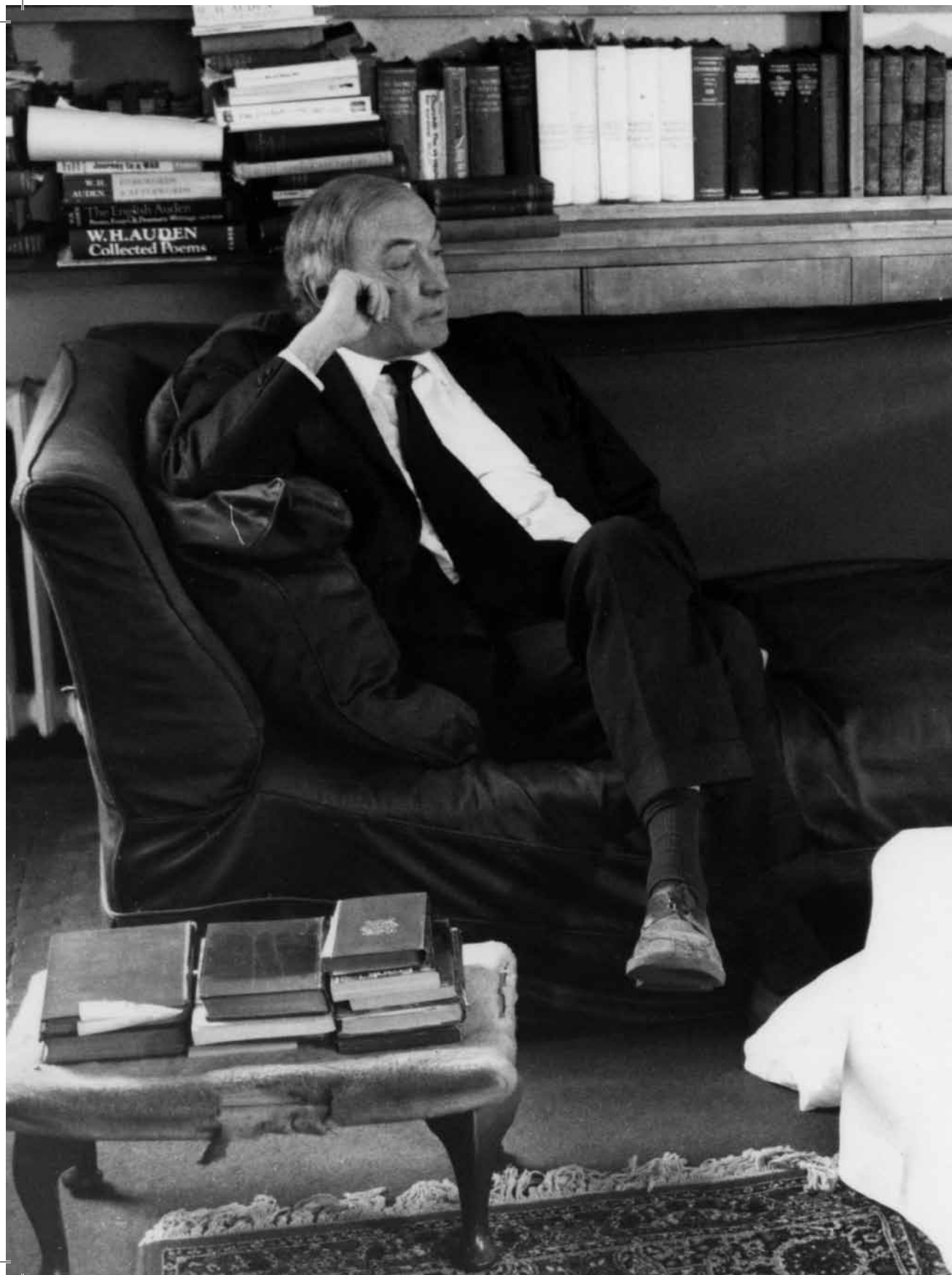
Thank you, Peterhouse and my fellow Petreans, you gave me something that I had been missing – a sense of belonging.



- 1: A hapless Peterhouse student being covered in kitchen slop (an annual event that used to occur in Michaelmas in the autumn).
- 2: Spring 1985, car in amongst the punts on the River Cam behind King's College – thanks to prank by University engineering students.
- 3: Spring 1985, Garden Party at Peterhouse, Rowers, May Bumps, Peterhouse Rugby Boat.
Standing (left to right): Richard Gomme, Thorp Davis, Matthew Eberlin, Steve Rogerson, Matthew Peacock, Kevin Quinn.
Kneeling (left to right): Matt Adams, Julian Martin, Roger Thornton, Duncan Hunter.



*The Cowling Rooms,
Fen Court*



MAURICE COWLING
(M. 1963; 1926–2005)

At the suggestion of several Petreans, the new student rooms where Maurice Cowling's Fellow's Set used to be have been named the Cowling Rooms in his memory. An eminent – if somewhat controversial – historian, Maurice Cowling was elected to a Fellowship at Peterhouse in 1963 and taught many students during the ensuing 30 years.

A good many of Cowling's former students and other historians generously contributed to the fund to refurbish the rooms (although too numerous to mention here, the names of all those who donated to the fund are listed on the board in the corridor to where Cowling's Set used to be).

Moreover, some of those who have donated to the Cowling Rooms have also kindly contributed personal recollections and reminiscences – a selection of which follow and reveal why many of his students held him in such high esteem.

MICHAEL PORTILLO (M. 1972)

During my final year at Peterhouse, I shared the popular double set known as Noah's Ark 1 with a very good friend. It was a great space for entertaining, and every day was fun because people knew they could come in, knew there'd be a drink – and thanks to my friend, we had a table groaning with bottles. And I'm afraid to say, we sometimes took drink and then took to the parapet – and occasionally made a 'full circuit'. Of course, even 40 years ago such roof-clambering activities were forbidden. I also recall the practice of 'removing rooms', especially when a man was out on a date with a girl. His carpet, sofa, chairs, bed, everything would be moved outside to the middle of Old Court. On returning, possibly half-cut, the most stylish of men would simply get into bed.

Having come from a grammar school, I was a bit worried about keeping up with the public school boys, and mostly worked hard. I was also very twitchy about making the most of my time, and remember thinking midway through my first term I'm one-eighteenth through. I came up as a scholar but was demoted to exhibitioner (having got a 2:1 in Part I). It was humiliating, so I worked quite hard in my last year and was delighted to get a First. Looking back, it is perhaps surprising that I didn't speak at the Union or get involved in student politics.

However, during my undergraduate years and afterwards, I became very fond of Maurice Cowling – and a fan. Political correctness did not rule in the early 1970s. When I appeared for my entrance interview, Maurice left the room to get another bottle of whisky and missed some questions put to me by Dr Hinton. When he returned,

Maurice fixed me with his squint and demanded: "Just how Italian are you, Mr Portillo?"

At my first supervision, I'd read only one sentence of my essay when he yelled: "Stop. Read that again". I did. He winced. "Oh God. I thought so. Stop". This turned out to be a very good way of teaching me to write!

On my last day at College, I climbed the stairs to Maurice's Fen Court set, as ever strewn with dusty books, dirty plates and empty bottles. I craved his benediction as I ventured out into the world beyond the academic cloister, and to this day I recall his valedictory words to me: "Bugger off!"

After a few months, I was unhappy in my job in a shipping company and I went to see Maurice again for advice. He greeted me as ever: "Whisky?" When I told him of my predicament, he said: "It's a pity you're not interested in politics. You could have joined the Conservative Research Department". With his help, I then did; but his comment gives the lie to the myth that he groomed and indoctrinated undergraduates with his Conservative politics. He did not. Unconsciously, he passed on his scepticism, and in my case I perhaps absorbed too much of it to be a successful politician. As I climbed the greasy pole, I used to visit Maurice occasionally. Time produced no change in the debris in his Fen Court set. I had discovered that Maurice's observation of what mattered in politics, set out in the introduction to his *The Impact of Labour*, was correct. It really was about the interactions, actions and reactions of only about a hundred people close to the top of the pole. As he wrote: "High politics [is] primarily a matter of rhetoric and manoeuvre".

ROBIN ANGUS (M. 1974)

Although I was never taught by Maurice Cowling, he was a memorable and stimulating presence throughout my time at Peterhouse (1974–1977), and we were as proud to speak of him to those outside the College as we were happy to enjoy his hospitality and hang on his words within it.

It might be said that he book-ended my College career; my first memory of him is of his tolerance of my falling down his stair in Fen Court after I had enjoyed a Feast too enthusiastically, while shortly before I left the College he held out to me the only academic post in history that I was ever to be offered. It was a six months' placement at the University of Birmingham in Alabama, acting as locum for a Petrean who was coming to Cambridge on sabbatical. Although impending marriage made me opt for the financial world instead, I was immensely touched that he had thought of me and offered it to me, and have sometimes wondered since how my life might have turned out had I accepted such a toehold in the world of academic history.

Being able to support the development of the Cowling Room gives me great pride and pleasure, and lets me show in a tangible way something of the gratitude and affection I owe to the College and to those I knew there.

JAMES MCNAUGHT-DAVIS (M. 1978)

Maurice taught me to think clearly, not just with respect to the history of political philosophy but more broadly. Although his supervisions – usually several hours long – could be challenging to the point of intimidation as he interrogated me and as I struggled to define the terms of my argument more clearly, with his help I always managed to reconstruct my argument to his liking! It was helpful that he always made sure that I had a comforting glass of whisky and soda in my hand before my weekly ordeal began!

By the end of my three years at Peterhouse, I had grown to think of Maurice as the paternalistic and sometimes inspirational leader of the College's historians rather than as simply the grumpy history Don who had intimidated me into better-articulated argument during my first Summer term.

NICHOLAS JOICEY (M. 1991)

He was an inspirational figure to me as a young historian – of decidedly unsound liberal views!

CHRISTOPHER MINTER (M. 1986)

I went up to Peterhouse in 1986, and it occurs to me that, to an undergraduate matriculating in 2014, the distance is the same as that between my own year group and those of the 1950s. But whilst the differences between undergraduates of the 1950s and those of the 1980s were most marked by the social upheavals of the 1960s and consequently mores and manners (even if perhaps less so at Peterhouse than at other Colleges), the differences between my own generation and those of today will undoubtedly be communications. I recollect that my room-mate in our set in Gisborne Court, unusually, had an Amstrad word processor and, although we had a telephone line installed, that was the limit of information technology. My own essays were penned longhand.

What of the culture and atmosphere of Peterhouse in the mid-1980s? The College had ceased to be men-only a year before I came up, but its reputation for cliquishness, eccentricity and heartiness (albeit the latter to a lesser degree than Magdalene) survived. The Fellows numbered some of the more eccentric individuals in Cambridge at the time, and the College's wine cellar was legendary. Madeira seemed to be served at practically all events: supposedly, the Wine Steward had ordered 60 cases of the stuff rather than 60 bottles, and it had to be consumed.

An exception to the Madeira-imbibing majority was Mr Cowling, who will forever be associated with the bottles of whisky that seemed so essential to the proper discussion of Hobbes' *Leviathan* at a 10.00 pm supervision.

What did I learn from these legendary supervisions? Apart from a basic grounding in the key political philosophers, surely it was

independent thought, a willingness to propound the unfashionable and not to be afraid of stating the bleeding obvious – however it might conflict with *bien pensant* academic consensus.

I do hope that in the future the Cowling Rooms will, from time to time, house fully signed-up members of the awkward squad, and that they will occasionally raise a glass of whisky to the shade of Maurice.



Christopher Minter (R) with his joint-master of the Trinity Foot Beagles: Dr Pattenden refused to countenance "those dogs" in the Deer Park, and hence the photograph was taken on Coe Fen.

JEREMY BARBER (M. 1985)

Why make a contribution to the Cowling Rooms? The answer for me was simple: Maurice Cowling and my time at Peterhouse helped forge my identity as an American and shape my future career.

In the autumn of 1985, when I arrived at Peterhouse in a black cab from Heathrow (no comment necessary), I was a middle-class kid from New York City. I had three earrings in my left ear, a flat-top haircut from Astor Place and was totally unprepared for what I was about to experience.

Nothing I encountered reflected the world I knew. A porter sent me to a pigeonhole – neither of which existed back home. Someone called Snorter wanted to bash my face in on principle (he may have been right to want to do so). Roasted meat and boiled vegetables were served to gown-clad students and Dons at long, candlelit oak tables in a William Morris Hall. Gates closed at midnight. Electric/gas heaters, which also doubled as toasters, had to be ‘fed’ 20p pieces. You all know these things, but not, perhaps, how exotic they appeared to this American.

I rang my girlfriend in New York to tell her that I had made a terrible mistake in coming without having first checked out the place and was going to return home. Of course, I stayed (initially for a year, but almost immediately thereafter to pursue a degree in History).

Then I arrived at Maurice Cowling’s rooms for my first tutorial. I stood on a stone landing atop a narrow circular staircase and rapped on his door. Plum-faced, he answered, blinked and emerged from his dark rooms packed with stacks of books. A mischievous smile

formed on the corners of his lips as he invited me in. I think he must have immediately recognised in the odd American standing there an opportunity for naughtiness, fun and possibly some shaping. I promptly became one of his projects or maybe protégés.

My first tutorial did not start off well. I naively began by asking about attending University lectures (as we did in the States). Maurice dismissed the notion, wondering why I would waste my time listening to someone drone on about some rubbish that since the “invention of the printing press, I could more easily read”.

I quickly tried to recover by producing my essay, which I’d typed on a laptop and printed out. Maurice both chuckled and scoffed at the sight of it. He elucidated that typing was too facile a process and bypassed the grey matter in my fingertips and the more meditative thought that would occur by writing something out longhand, as we ultimately would in our Tripos exams. He then took my work, replete with footnotes and quotation marks, and rejected it as a ridiculous American exercise, simultaneously trashing my well-indoctrinated fear of plagiarism. Maurice looked at me somewhat sympathetically and said: “My dear boy, I will know where these quotations come from and what matters is not annotation, but appropriate argumentation”.

This misadventure (and the vagaries of the seemingly yawning chasm between the American and English system) was only the teaser for the indignity that was to follow as I began reading my essay.

“Mr Barber, what do you mean when you say...” interrupted Maurice almost immediately. I stopped and stuttered and then retorted: “What do you mean, what do I mean?” I had no idea what I meant;

I had mindlessly copied and was now reading aloud text from a book Maurice had referenced. I wanted to get on with the things that interested me, rowing, acting, having tea with my mates, sitting in the pub drinking pints of bitter, etc. It hadn't occurred to me to have any intentionality about what I wrote down. Nor did I imagine that someone who mattered would be listening closely and challenging me to have some forethought. From that moment on, I began taking both what I said and did more seriously. Maurice, who was, at least on some level, very serious – and thus had little business taking me seriously – had done so, and thus I had better do the same.

After a while, I found my footing and things improved. With Maurice's tutelage, I learned how to select a fine wine, hold a witty and charming conversation for several hours whilst eating and drinking in dark and warm, oak-panelled rooms –and not fall over or pass out in a state of complete inebriation. These social skills have probably been more valuable during my career than any others.

Beyond such life lessons, loads of fun and mischief was had at Maurice's hand. He was happy to have a Yank to lob at some of the stodgier traditions and Dons found around the place. He also wrote me a reference that was so ironic and succinct that it pretty much condemned my efforts to secure a place at a top American law school (little did I realise at the time the valuable service Maurice was attempting to provide – caveat emptor and all). In fairness, I'm sure my hard-earned 2:1 didn't help either.

Put simply, Maurice introduced and welcomed me to the strange and wonderful world that is and was Peterhouse. He then helped me navigate through it whilst challenging me to be intentional and thoughtful about what I said, and to know what I mean when I say it

– all, of course, with a little twinkle of mischief in my eye, a healthy dose of irony in my voice and a belly full of delicious sybaritic excess.

Today, I am a 49-year-old partner of a Beverly Hills talent agency; the father of Hudson (10), Daisy (eight) and Upton (six); and husband to Tonia, my wife of 12 years. I represent many English actors, writers and directors, in no small part so that I can continue to come to London, meet my friends from College for a jolly dinner and stay in touch with those folks who helped form me all of those years ago.

And, strangely, I think the greatest gift I was given during my time in Cambridge, over and above lifelong friendships and intentionality, was that I somehow figured out how to be the American I wanted to be – one with a normal haircut and no earrings – ironically at the most English of places and under the tutelage of the most English of Dons: Peterhouse and Maurice Cowling.

Jeremy Barber
in 1985 when
he arrived at
Peterhouse.



NICK HEWSON (M. 1977)

As I have re-told this anecdote so many times, I cannot be sure that what follows is exactly what happened; although some of it might be embellishment, I am pretty sure about its key elements.

A good place to start is the date! I was sure it was summer term 1978, but it must have been 1979. It was my term of political thought for the History Tripos Part I, and Maurice Cowling was my Tutor. One tutorial was on a Sunday evening after supper, so sometime around 8 pm. It was light outside, so it must have been April or May, because it couldn't have been June; but then if it was 1979, I suppose it was before the May election!

Maurice was sitting in the corner of his room in Fen Court; there were windows on both sides of him, and a mass of books and files covering the shelves on the other two walls. I was sitting facing him trying to understand something about Hobbes, or rather trying to explain the little I had read of *Leviathan*. Maurice had already informed me that he had remembered my entrance papers: illegible due to my left-handedness, barely intelligible due to my dearth of academic talent, but just enough to secure one of the few places – a dozen, I believe – that were on offer to read History in 1977. I got a strong impression that I might have been 13th, and given a bye!

I came from the North, which had seemed to interest him, as had my particular views about wine (never had it), newspapers (never read them), and I probably had a definite accent in those days, and when pressed, and stressed, something of a stammer. So it was, that I was enduring the nasty, brutish and not-quite-short-enough tutorial when the phone rang.

Maurice looked surprised. I was certainly surprised. There were no mobile phones in those days and none of our rooms had phones of any kind, so even the ring of the phone was something that I was not used to hearing at Cambridge, and never before in a tutorial. Maurice picked up the receiver with his right hand (odd how I can remember some bits very well) and put it to his ear and listened. He then put his finger to his lips as if to indicate that I should be silent. I was. In fact, I was nothing if not well behaved in his presence.

He indicated to his caller that he was able to speak. He pointed at me and then to the sideboard. I stood up and went over to the bottle-laden sideboard, and as I pointed at a whisky bottle, he gave me a nod and then put his left hand up in the air showing two fingers, which I didn't understand at first, but I soon "clicked" and poured some whisky into a glass and took it over to him. He looked at me, raising his eyebrows and pointing at the bottle as if to say "Did I want one?"

I poured myself two fingers, which probably explains why I am pretty sure, but not absolutely certain, that he spoke about the possibility of a revolution of the British working classes against the state if certain trade union laws were to be dramatically altered to the disbenefit of the union movement. I got the distinct impression that Maurice was of the view that a government in office should curtail union power drastically and take the consequences. I remember being surprised not just by the possibility of street revolt, never having even considered it, but also by Maurice's views.

Listening to one half of a conversation had been very interesting. I remember that much. I did not realise who Maurice had been speaking to until he told me when the call finished. It turned out to

be Keith Joseph, who was busily writing the guts of what became Conservative party policy leading up to Margaret Thatcher's victory in the May 1979 election.

Looking back now, I suppose we had either just endured, or were about to endure, the Winter of Discontent, and so there was probably a certain appetite among voters to curb the power of the unions. Indeed, the anti-union legislation that the Tories subsequently introduced became the source of some of the bloodiest conflict on home soil, with our police forces pitted against striking miners, which went some way beyond civil unrest. We will never know whether it might have escalated into something even more serious had legislation been harsher.

RAYMOND GODSON (M. 1962)

I have two particular memories of Maurice in his capacity as my Tutor. The first is the reference that he wrote for me when I applied for a job with the Thomson Group, which owned the *Times*. He wrote: "Colourful writer – would make an excellent journalist – more *Daily Mirror* than *Sunday Times*".

And the second was after some nocturnal and inebriated perambulations on the College roof had caused a significant amount of damage to the Chapel roof. I was summoned to see Maurice and he said: "I am told you are the most likely man to have done this. Was it you?" When I denied it, he then said: "Well, I am also told you are the most likely person to know who they were". He was, of course, right but I think it is still too soon to reveal the names. I cannot remember how I responded.

JOEL POZNANSKY (M. 1976)

I first met Maurice Cowling in 1975 when I came for an interview to read History. I felt moderately nervous waiting in the ante room; another candidate, who was clearly from a good public school, seemed far more at home. We sat and chatted while Maurice and Dr Hinton were interviewing another student in the next room. Suddenly we heard a crash, and a few minutes later, two Porters calmly ignored us as they went past into Maurice's living room. They emerged carrying the interviewee, who had passed out!

My fellow candidate was immediately invited in – apparently unfazed. I now sat shocked and apprehensive. What on earth could cause an interviewee to collapse? What terrifying question could Mr Cowling and Dr Hinton have asked? I ran through in my mind every answer I had rehearsed – from the causes of the Russian revolution to Machiavelli's political philosophy. The student I had been sitting with emerged 20 minutes later still completely unflustered. At least he hadn't had a medical emergency. "How was it?" "Piece of cake." "What questions did they ask?" "Easy stuff. What book had I read recently?"

Oh my God, I hadn't prepared for that question. As Maurice opened the door and invited me into the inner sanctum, I could not think of a book I had read recently, or even any book I had ever read. I have no idea why but *Alice in Wonderland* was the only one that came to mind. Fortunately, when I sat on the couch, Dr Hinton offered me a cup of tea and Maurice, after offering me a doughnut, asked: "To what extent do you think the First World War caused the Russian revolution?"

I have no idea whether my answer was any good, but by happy coincidence both my fellow candidates and I were all admitted. I'm sure, like all his other students, I owe him an enormous debt for the answers he taught me, but I clearly owe him a special debt for his skill of asking the right questions.

During the late 1980s, I moved to New York City but continued to travel back and forth to England. On a flight back from London, for no good reason, I had picked up an old copy of Kingsley Amis' *The Old Devils*. And, as I read it, I kept thinking of Maurice. Absurd then that, after the long flight, as we all stood up in the aisle ready to leave the plane... no, it couldn't be? That man with his back to me. I must be hallucinating. On a plane? Visiting America of all places? Impossible. Too ridiculous a coincidence. But it was him.

He had, I think, accepted a short Fellowship at Columbia, and we got together often. I think he surprised himself by liking my American wife and was amused by what I was doing. On one of his visits over dinner, he presented me with a strange, unsolicited essay that I had asked him to look at over 10 years earlier about a relatively obscure American poet who had been chosen as poet laureate by President Carter. An essay I had forgotten about and had assumed was either buried somewhere among the pile of papers in his room or had been otherwise appropriately disposed of. He presented it to me, together with a far more useful set of whisky glasses, as a wedding present.

JOHN LLOYD (M. 1967)

I was at Peterhouse from 1967 to 1970. I came from Lewisham in South East London and – although I had been a scholarship boy at Christ’s Hospital – I arrived at Cambridge cheerfully well aware that many (but not all) of my contemporaries came from prosperous backgrounds. My politics, like those of many contemporaries, were of the left; I had been enraged by the junta in Greece (incidentally, following Brian Wormald’s encouragement, Peterhouse played a small but uplifting role by giving a dismissed Greek professor sanctuary), distressed by Vietnam and unhappy about the then Labour government’s difficulties in getting to grips with changing the country.

All of that meant that Maurice, a philosophical and libertarian Conservative, found me easy meat (not least when he had his pal the journalist George Gale visit, sit up all night with us after a College dinner and then report every word to him the following morning!) Despite my strong ‘Labour’ upbringing and background, I quickly grew to detest the revolutionary student societies that attacked the Labour government more relentlessly than they attacked Ted Heath and his friends. So my time at Peterhouse (including a year as elected President of the Sexcentenary Club from April 1969 – April 1970) was spent waiting for, what we would call today, ‘Trots’ to attack me from the left and Maurice to attack me from the right.

My first anecdote comes from my interview in November 1966. I sat myself down and waited for the first question. Maurice said: “Good morning, Lloyd” (he never once called me by my Christian name, however cheerful we were later when talking about anything at all). “What English history have you been doing at school?” The answer was 1688–1914, but trying to impress, I chirruped: “From

the Glorious Revolution to the First World War”. His eyes sparkled as he sweetly said: “Interesting. What was *glorious* about the 1688 revolution?” Collapse of stout party as far as I was concerned. Not for the last time, I learnt from Maurice that being ‘clever’ was not an altogether useful skill!

In the Long Vacation Term of 1969, the College sought to raise fees rather peremptorily, and I had very civilised discussions with the Master and others on behalf of the students. I sent a circular to everyone explaining how wicked the College was being, but that we were dealing with it. Maurice popped a note in my pigeonhole that read: “Just seen your most recent call to the people – 9 out of 10 for rhetoric – 1 out of 10 for content!!”

He was writing *The Impact of Labour 1920–1924* at the time (which was published in 1971). He spent a lot of time explaining to me how his Tory forebears really disdained the emerging Labour party while getting stuck into destroying the Liberals, in general, and Lloyd George, in particular. He showed two or three of us the papers for the book – all arranged in neat annotated piles, all over what I presume was originally a dining table. He had been walking round the little piles of notes and documents, talking quietly into a Dictaphone. When he stopped, he said: “No-one writes anymore – everything is dictated like this. Such is the modern world for a historian”.

When I left Peterhouse in 1970, he took me for a stroll round the Deer Park to discuss my 2:1, which I was very happy with. I had achieved a reputable degree from the best university in the world, especially for history, played football and cricket, been involved in College and University student politics and also the Cambridge Labour Club, and enjoyed a lively social life – perfect! Maurice,

however, did not think that was good enough. My finals papers were apparently all over the place – some terrific, a few pretty awful, so much so that he had been embarrassed at a meeting of examiners that one of his students should be so erratic. As we strolled on round the Park in the sunshine, he suddenly said in a friendly but irritated voice: “Well, Lloyd, apart from you not getting a First, I am stuck with another disappointment in you. I have failed. You arrived at Peterhouse a wishy-washy Fabian, and you leave me as a wishy-washy Fabian”.

Years later, I was delighted, if somewhat surprised, to be invited to his retirement party on 25th October 1993. Michael Portillo had booked a room at Church House in Westminster, and Maurice bounded up the steps to greet me on his arrival. I nervously shook hands. He grinned, swept his arm over the huge hall packed with Tory government dignitaries and said: “Good of you to come, Lloyd. I’ll introduce you to some interesting people. Let me see... there must be at least two or three other Labour voters here!”

Maurice Cowling taught me so much. He made me think, respect others’ views without having to agree with them, gave me a feel for the variety of thought throughout British politics and gave me confidence in my own political convictions that withstood – just – his penetrating, amusing and always intelligible insights into a naughty world. All of which stood me in good stead for my career as a trade union official for almost 40 years.

PHILIP VIRGO (M. 1965)

The head of history at Dulwich told me I was the first student for some years ‘suitable for Peterhouse’. I later discovered he meant suitable for Maurice Cowling. The ‘high’ of my Cambridge life was when he thought that my essay on Cromwell was worthy of a tutorial after Hall.

I had the Armagnac and a Romeo and Juliet cigar (more potent than anything I smoked elsewhere in Cambridge) and argued that Cromwell was an honest man doing what he thought was right. Maurice went for the jugular. At some point in the early hours, he called a halt – I was getting ragged in my answers but had been able to counter sufficient of his attacks to demonstrate he had not been completely wasting his time on me.

He had a profound impact on the way I think, particularly with regard to evidence that appears to support a case in which I believe.

JOHN ALEXANDER (M. 1965)

I suppose that 50 years ago, schoolboys going up for their College interview in the hope of securing a place fell into two categories: the nervous and the cocksure. I fell into the latter category. Cowling interviewed me. Again, I suppose that there was no set format for such interviews – maybe there is now. Making the candidate feel at home, and then probing – which Cowling assuredly did. I doubt if I'd prepared myself at all, and even if I had, preparation would scarcely have been effective. It was a test of ability, one that was impossible to fudge. But I was proud of my skills in French. Perhaps these might help.

What was I reading? I told him. Novels that were part of a 27-volume cycle written by Jules Romains, a now well-nigh forgotten author whose main claim to fame was to have written a farce (and not a very good one) that had the dismal distinction of becoming a set A-level text. I said I was thinking of reading the entire cycle. I don't remember how Cowling phrased his response. Rather nicely (in both senses), I suspect, as otherwise I would still remember it. But I do remember a certain laugh that said it all: how absurd to think of spending so much time on a single set of novels. That was my first tutorial with Cowling. Before I went up.

There's another point. In his 2010 biography of Hugh Trevor-Roper, entitled *An Honourable Englishman*, Adam Sisman performs a hatchet job on Cowling, whose positive qualities are made to vanish into insignificance. After noting Michael Portillo's observation (which I and, so I believe to this day, my contemporaries shared) that undergraduates found Cowling's teaching style – which was so much at odds with received thinking

– shocking and exhilarating, Sisman impliedly links this to an atmosphere among the Fellows (with Cowling as “the dominant figure”) that was, so Sisman writes, boorish, xenophobic, anti-black and anti-Semitic around the time that Trevor-Roper (by then, of course, Lord Dacre of Glanton) became Master (1980). In the closing words of his the relevant chapter, Sisman ascribes to Cowling “characteristic malice” (pp. 490, 491, 488 and 507 of the US Random House edition). That was long after I had graduated but of one thing I am certain: as an undergraduate tutored by Cowling, I never sensed any anti-Semitism in him. Vigorous in language, always prepared to swim against the tide, intolerant of cant and received thinking: for sure. Boorish, xenophobic, anti-black, anti-Semitic or characteristically malicious: no.

ARNOLD SHERMAN (M. 1964)

I always found Mr Cowling to be irascible if not cantankerous, and we were very far apart politically. I am proud to think of myself as progressive or liberal, and he was equally proud of his strong conservative ideas, but we worked well together nevertheless. He also struck me in many ways as the ‘form of the ideal Oxbridge don’ because of his somewhat eccentric behaviour. He often served sherry or some other form of alcohol during our tutorial sessions, and seemed to love shooting the corks across the room when he opened the bottles. One of the more interesting and exciting things he had me read for my History of Political Thought paper was Karl Popper’s critique of Plato, and my subsequent use of ‘form of the ideal’ amused him. On a more personal level, Mr Cowling was also very supportive when I did not perform as well as we had both hoped in my Prelim to Part I of the Tripos at the end of my first year.

I would not have missed out on my two years at Peterhouse for anything, and left in June 1966 to pursue a PhD at Yale. When Susan and I married in July 1968, we came back to the UK so that I could do some research for my dissertation, which was successful. During the 13 months we lived in London, I brought Susan to Peterhouse and we visited Mr Cowling. We still vividly remember two things: those flying corks (he opened champagne or some kind of sparkling wine for us); and the wallpaper in his rooms, which had white, red and gold stripes, and seemed to shimmer after a glass or two – a very strange experience that felt like being inside a Christmas parcel!

It is true to say that he was not good for my writing. He tended to make it verbose rather than terse – which I later had to unlearn with the help of my mentor at Yale. In his book on the 1867 Reform Bill,

we found several very long and convoluted sentences (one of the longest had 167 words). At the same time, Mr Cowling taught me to think broadly as a historian, and for that I will always be grateful. I felt more intellectually alive and excited under his mentoring in the weeks before I took the Tripos than I have at most times in my life. For that, I will always remember him fondly, despite our political differences and his not-always-positive effects on my written style.

JACK MALAN (M. 1973)

Like those of others who studied History at Peterhouse, my memories of three years as an undergraduate at Cambridge are closely associated with being taught by Maurice Cowling. He left a strong and enduring imprint on many of us. By the mid-1970s when I went to Peterhouse, Maurice Cowling was already pretty well established as a leading historian in his field but this was not, for me at least, the main reason why he left such a mark. Like others, I had supervisions with quite a few dons at Peterhouse and other Colleges, and in common with most of them, Cowling was undoubtedly a first-class academic and Supervisor.

But Maurice Cowling was more than just a fine scholar and was in many respects not a typical Cambridge don – and it was not just the 10 pm whisky-fuelled supervisions that made him different. For him, it seems to me, the pursuit of scholarly activity was not an end in itself but instead a means to an end that had as much to do with Westminster as it did with Cambridge. In addition to writing books about ‘high politics’ in Britain, I think he saw his role in more practical terms as being to supply the British establishment with people who were – in a Cowling sense – fit to govern. Cambridge has, of course, fulfilled this sort of function over the centuries but Maurice Cowling imbued his protégés with a very specific sense of purpose along with the intellectual tools to fulfil it.

I found Maurice Cowling more worldly and down-to-earth than most of the other dons I came across at Cambridge. Perhaps this was also because he had done other things – serving in the British Army towards the end of the Second World War and working as a journalist – before settling down in academia. Maurice Cowling seemed in many

respects an outsider, which appealed to somebody like me who went up to Cambridge from a minor public school and who came from a family with military rather than academic traditions. Towards the end of my time at Cambridge, he wisely discouraged me from further scholarship and sent me off instead to talk to shadowy people in London who claimed to work for the Foreign Office. In the end, I probably didn’t fulfil the sort of role he had in mind (although he might have approved of some of my more disreputable activities) but he nevertheless set me off on the right track.

GUY BLACK (M. 1982)

Like many school pupils in the 1980s before the Internet made research easy, I approached the choice of which Cambridge College I should apply to in complete ignorance. As I knew nothing about any of them, I sought the opinion of a history teacher who knew me well. “Peterhouse will suit you,” he replied, after only a little thought. I trusted his judgement, which was one of the best things I ever did. Peterhouse did, indeed, suit me down to the ground. I had three memorable years there, made lifelong friendships, cut my teeth on politics – and owe the College everything in the way it fashioned my mind, my outlook and my career.

Years later I asked my teacher why he had made the recommendation. He had two words: “Maurice Cowling”. And he has been right, because being taught by Maurice in his dressing gown – always after dinner and often late at night, the bottle of whisky on the table, papers strewn everywhere – changed my life. I also remember one or two supervisions being interrupted so he could watch *Hawaii Five-o*.

In view of his formidable reputation, I ascended the stairs to the top of Fen Court during the first term of my second year in trepidation. And that feeling was not misplaced. My essay on Hobbes did not meet with favour. We didn’t get much beyond the first page before Maurice ripped it up and told me to go away and redo it. “And if you mention any of that democratic balls again,” he warned, “I shall reach for a pistol and shoot you dead”. The essays improved week by week as Maurice trained me in the school of Tory Marxism. To this day I adhere to its central tenet that the real political enemy is liberalism.

I graduated into a job in banking – this was, after all, the 1980s – which I hated. A year on, though, I received a letter from Maurice suggesting I apply to a friend of his (fellow Petrean Alistair Cooke, now Lord Lexden) for a job in the Conservative Research Department. I did, and was successful. Maurice had rescued me – and it was the start of an entire career in politics and the media.

On a return visit to Fen Court a few years later, I visited Maurice to express my thanks – probably in terms that were too sentimental. I sensed he might (metaphorically) be reaching for the pistol. But he just told me to “Bugger off”; the greatest compliment from a unique individual. I am in no doubt that Maurice’s great mind – and his cynicism – inhabits a generation of grateful undergraduates, and I hope his benign ghost long stalks Fen Court in its refurbished glory.



MARK SLATER (M. 1988)

Maurice Cowling was a legendary figure both before I arrived at Peterhouse and throughout my time at the College. However, at my interview I was confronted by a very different figure to the ogre I was expecting. Although he appeared rather austere and gruff, he was amused, but not in a patronising way, by my attempts to wrestle with his questions. He was relentless and robust but kind. Although I felt I had stumbled and left him unconvinced by my answers, I was surprised to find it enjoyable, even fun.

I was fortunate to be taught by Maurice as an undergraduate. I had the ‘late slot’, which meant that, with no other students coming after me, supervisions often overran for an hour or two. Supervisions started with me reading my essay though I was quickly interrupted with an “Oh God!” or even a “Bugger off!” after which Maurice would lead a wide-ranging discussion that could veer significantly off-piste. He wanted his students to think, and not just about the weekly topic, and to do so with a sense of mischief.

THE AUGUSTUS AND FRANCES NEWMAN FOUNDATION
has been a generous supporter of biomedical initiatives within the College for many years, including a hardship fund for medics. They have specifically funded the provision of rooms suitable for disabled access in the Whittle Building and in Fen Court. In recognition of their generosity these rooms have been named after three of their Trustees, the late Sir Rodney Sweetnam (1927–2013, m. 1945), Lord Rathcavan and John Williams.

THE KIRBY LAING FOUNDATION *generously sponsored the provision of a lift in the Whittle Building to provide disabled access to the public rooms.*

