

The image shows the front cover of an antique book, bound in dark brown leather. The cover is heavily decorated with intricate gold-tooled patterns, including a large central diamond shape and various floral and geometric motifs. The Greek text 'ΑΓΓΛΟ ΑΡΧΟ ΝΙΚΟ ΕΒΕ' is visible in the center. The spine of the book is visible on the left side, showing several raised bands.

# CHRONICLE

Issue 15 Spring 2017

## WRITTEN WORD

**Historical Association, Swansea Branch**

Promoting History in South West Wales

# Issue 15 Spring 2017

## The Written Word

“So difficult it is to show the various meanings and imperfections of words when we have nothing else but words to do it with.” —John Locke

3. Editorial

4. **National Library of Wales**

Andrew Green

6. **Dear Diary**

Geoff Mortimer

8. **The Jesus Papyrus and Swansea**

Robert McCloy

11. **Writing**

Peter Read

12 **The Printing Press in Venice**

John Law

15. **From their diaries**

16. **Book Review**

Peter East

17 **Many Arches Well Adorned**

Andrew Prescott

*Plunge into the book as one plunges into water  
for poverty awaits him who doesn't go there.*

**Ancient Egyptian scribal proverb.**



Samuel Pepys painted in 1666  
by John Hayls



Aldus in his printing establishment  
By Francois Flamong 1894



Benediction of Ethelwold

# From the Editor

margaret.mccloy@sky.com

## *FINE WORDS BUTTER NO PARSNIPS*

### **This saying made me think about words**

starting with ‘*In the beginning was the word and the word was with God*’...and all the other words, well at least some of them, up to Microsoft Word. The writers who have contributed to this issue of Chronicle have all thought about very different uses of words. Andrew Prescott delved back to the very early illuminated manuscripts that were written by monks in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Geoff Mortimer has written about diaries, something we have all written at some time, though not many have kept them up to date, except perhaps to note dental appointments and other boring but useful information. Of course, Pepys did an excellent job, even if he did write his diary in code.

Sylvia, a friend of mine, still writes a detailed diary every day and when I make the occasional trip to Sussex, she has already looked up the date of my last visit and tells me just what the weather was like and the exact time I arrived. An ideal person to give me an alibi should I ever need one. Politicians also keep their diaries scrupulously up to date and full of detail, never knowing how a certain meeting might turn out to be extremely significant. No doubt Barack Obama, once he has relaxed, finished sky surfing and playing golf, will be employed full time with his written words.

John Law has delved back into 15<sup>th</sup> century Venice, their great printing machines and the genius of Aldus Manutius. Andrew Green, who has been responsible for the care of Wales’s greatest library of books, tells us of its wonderful collections and how to access them. Robert McCloy has gone further back than



anyone, telling of fragments of early Scriptures found in Luxor written c. 70 AD.

Peter Read has brought us up to date. Peter has experienced the written word in many forms as a poet, dramatist and actor. He kindly interrupted the writing of his latest play to provide us with his article.

So many stories and we haven’t even mentioned newspapers, blogs or tweets (or President Trump). Perhaps we should have another issue sometime on the written word. But...

### **the next issue will be featuring ‘Drink’.**

The ancient Egyptians drank wine and beer. A party in those days was known as a ‘House of beer’. The Romans didn’t drink beer but they loved their wine, watered down in the winter and drunk with added spices. In medieval times, mead was the favourite tippie, or honey wine as it was called. It could be sparkling, sweet or dry. The ‘Gin Craze’ started in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> C mainly in London. ‘Old Tom’ being the favourite drink. Gin made a come-back in Victorian times. dry gin being the favourite. This was drunk mainly in the East End where sellers would shout,

**‘ Drunk for one penny, dead drunk for two’.**

**The Editor would welcome contributions on the theme of ‘drink’. 100-400 words emailed to margaret.mccloy@sky.com Cheers.**

ROTAS

OPERA

TENET

AREPO

SATOR

**Paternoster**

Words chipped into a wall at Cirencester by a Roman

Soldier

# National Library of Wales

**Some years ago research was commissioned to discover what a representative sample of adults in Wales knew about the National Library of Wales ('NLW' from now on). The results were surprising.** Many, though they'd heard of it, could not give its location; some said 'Cardiff', one guessed 'Birmingham'. Only a few had ever been there, and even fewer could give an accurate picture of what NLW did. Historical Association members are famously well-informed, of course, but maybe one or two things in what follows will be new to you.

To begin at the beginning, NLW is indeed a library. Printed matter occupies more cubic metres in its stores than anything else. As one of the UK's five legal deposit, or 'copyright', libraries it has the right to claim one copy of most printed works – books and pamphlets, periodicals and newspapers – published in the UK. The vast majority of these, of course, have nothing to do with Wales, so as a library NLW is universal and contains knowledge on every conceivable subject. In 2013 new legislation allowed the legal deposit libraries to begin collecting not just printed but also digital (mainly online) UK publications. You can use all this material, printed and digital, only within NLW's reading rooms – but you can order them online beforehand, so that they're waiting for you when you arrive.

From its foundation in 1907 NLW has also collected unpublished material – manuscripts and archives – of national and also local Welsh importance. All serious Welsh history researchers, sooner or later, will find themselves using these. Someone interested in the Swansea area, for example, might delve into commercial records, like those of the Ystradgynlais and Swansea Colliery

Company, religious records like those of the Church in Wales and the Presbyterian Church of Wales, the thesis collection (Lesley Hulonce on the Swansea poor law, for example) or personal collections like those of Winifred Coombe Tennant or T.E Nicholas (Niclas y Glais) – some of whose manuscripts were written, incidentally, on toilet paper while he was a guest of His Majesty in Swansea Prison. Nowadays NLW also collects unpublished material in digital form, like word-processed documents and emails.



A fisherman, photo by John Thomas, January 1875 from the collection of NLW .

Visual material of all kinds was also collected early on, and now NLW has huge numbers of maps (printed and manuscript), prints and drawings, and photographs, including early examples by Calvert Richard Jones and the Dillwyn family. There are also large collections of paintings, mainly portraits and landscapes, which document Wales in some way – so NLW is also an art gallery. It houses the National Screen and Sound Archive of Wales, which contains music and other sound recordings, films (commercial and amateur) and radio and television programmes, including the enormous ITV Wales archive acquired in 2013.

NLW is unparalleled among national libraries in the breadth of its collections. One of the advantages is that you can follow a single subject through any number of media represented there. A researcher on the poet and artist David Jones, for example, can read his personal archive and his own library, consult books, articles, films and radio and television programmes about him, and view paintings and letterings made by him – all under the one roof.

So what's the best way of exploring and taking advantage of all these riches? Let's start with the traditional route.

Step 1 is to acquire a reader's ticket, available free to all. That gives you access to the reading rooms, and lets you request any item in the collection for use there. Step 2 is to discover what's available, by using NLW's online catalogue. You can make search across all collections and media, or restrict your search to specific types or period or language. Step 3 is to go to Aberystwyth.



That, you may say, is the difficult bit. I calculate I've made the two hour journey between Swansea and Aberystwyth at least 1,600 times over fifteen years. But I recognise that many Jacks feel that Aberystwyth is as remote as Ultima Thule. Does this make NLW out of bounds? Not necessarily is the answer – there is another, non-traditional route.

Since the late 1990s NLW has put a lot of effort into electronic information services. It's made digital copies of large parts of its Welsh collections – manuscripts and archives, maps and charts, paintings, prints and photographs, and printed books, journals and newspapers – and put them online on its website. Unlike in some other national libraries all this material is available free of charge, and you don't even have to have a reader's ticket. Examples I use every day in my own research are Welsh biography online, the digital equivalent of the Dictionary of Welsh biography, Welsh journals online, a searchable and browsable collection of 50 titles and Welsh newspapers online, which does the same job for 126 titles published before 1920. NLW has also coordinated collaborative digitisation projects like Cynefin, which reproduces all Welsh tithe maps and associated documents.

If you do have a reader's ticket there's another category of online material you can use from home, over 30 commercially available sources NLW subscribes to. These include such essential research tools as the Oxford dictionary of national biography, JSTOR (the texts of select journal articles and books), and House of Commons parliamentary papers. (Some others, like Ancestry library, are available only within the NLW building.)

So there's plenty of value you can get from NLW by staying at home. But I would strongly suggest that you do make a personal visit. The building, inside and out, is magnificent, and you'll be able to take in at least two or three exhibitions, a good shop and café, and maybe catch a talk or concert in the Drwm, the best small auditorium in Wales.

**Andrew Green**

Outside Sun Inn, Marton 1885 NLW J Thomas

# Dear Diary

The counterpart of the power of the written word is the equally powerful urge many people feel to write, for many and diverse reasons, and not infrequently for no definable reason at all. The classic example of the latter is the diary which so many people start, often but by no means exclusively in adolescence, but which few maintain for long once the first flush of enthusiasm has worn off, and it has already become difficult to find something new to set down. Every writer is familiar with what has been called 'the tyranny of the blank page', and most diarists do not persevere beyond it, but enough do so for their efforts to become the subject of academic research.

Historians and literary scholars both have an interest in diaries, but for both they are problematic. For the latter, attempting to define and place boundaries on the genre has resembled wrestling with fog, as the range and scope is so wide. Many diaries are little more than fragments, although perhaps written in a short period of personal or historical importance, while others plough on resolutely – albeit often boringly – for years or even decades.

Content can range from 'what I did today' to sophisticated analyses of the self or the condition of the surrounding world, while motivation can be essentially private and almost confessional, or it can be covertly or even overtly outward-looking with prospective readers in mind, and with the text shaped accordingly. Pepys wrote his famous diaries in a private code, while Goebbels wrote his equally voluminous screeds in the clear expectation that they would be trawled by historians.

It gets worse. At the risk of sounding like a playground joke, when is a diary not a diary? Even in this electronic age the term 'diary' tends to conjure up an image of a daily entry in a little book, perhaps purchased from Smiths with a page a day for the year. But most diarists don't write like that, or not for long. Some days they forget

or are too busy, and as time goes on the omissions get longer. Many just leave the gaps, but others go back and try to fill them in, so that the result is no longer a contemporaneous text but a record written to a greater or lesser extent from memory – ever fallible – at a distance in time unknown to the reader or researcher.

Even worse, some diarists make fair copies of their own work, possibly later in life when time hangs a little heavy. Perhaps the notebooks had become dog-eared over the years, or the script was starting to fade into illegibility. In some cases, particularly for less elevated people writing in earlier centuries, the original text may not have been in a notebook at all, but on odd scraps of – very expensive – paper, some of which may have gone missing, requiring more filling in from memory.



Bookplate of Samuel Pepys

And of course we cannot assume that the diarist copied up the original word for word. He or she may have taken the opportunity to 'improve' the text, or to edit it with the benefit of hindsight, which makes it start to sound more like a memoir than a diary, or if long-term enough even on the way to being an autobiography.



Scottish mercenaries in the Thirty Years war.

Theorists have had enough trouble producing definitions for those three genres even before the boundaries become so blurred. And when does a long-running and outward-looking diary become a chronicle?

Texts of this kind have attracted considerable interest in recent years, particularly among German and Dutch scholars, who have described them collectively as ego-documents, thus emphasising their own particular interest in what they say about the author's self. Historians, however, have tended to focus on the problems outlined above, approaching such texts as sources, as one writer has colourfully put it, 'with the attitude of a prosecuting attorney examining an ageing witness with a record of several convictions for perjury'.

ence I was as much concerned with credibility as with content when I undertook my study of *Eyewitness Accounts of the Thirty Years War 1618-48* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2002). All my sources were personal texts, diaries in the broadest sense, but covering the full range of possibilities described above. At the one extreme was a couple of pages of brief notes written by an unknown soldier, while at the other were diaries – or perhaps they were chronicles! – which the writer began before and continued after thirty years of war. Some contained internal evidence that they were written contemporaneously, at least in the main, one clear pointer being a lack of knowledge in some entries of events and outcomes which were reported in later ones.

Others were equally clearly memoirs written entirely at a later date, and still others combined elements of both, while their focus ranged from a local mayor describing the tribulations of his community and the surrounding area to a businessman bitterly recording and lamenting his personal losses in the war.

One unifying factor was what another writer has described as 'the onset of Historic Events, especially a war, which confer on the diarist the self-important role of eyewitness'. To the historian, however, eyewitnesses are as potentially unreliable as diarists, memoirists and autobiographers, and indeed many of the texts I studied were replete with hyperbole, dubious claims and reports of events which were clearly hearsay rather than personal knowledge or experience. Then why study them, you may well ask?

I asked myself the same question, and I concluded that however unreliable some of the supposed facts might be, these accounts, taken collectively, represent the experience of war as perceived by a generation which lived through what is still today regarded in Germany as one of the most traumatic periods in its history, on a par with the Second World War. History is not – or should not be – concerned just with events, as ultimately it is about people.

**Geoff Mortimer**

# The Jesus Papyrus and Swansea

**Charles Bousfield Huleatt, 1863-1908, had a remarkable life...** discoverer of the oldest fragments of the Christian gospels; player manager of an Italian football club; and curate of Saint Mary's. What more must one do to merit a blue plaque in Swansea?

Education and family connections bore heavily upon future events; so too did his curacy. The former equipped him with knowledge of Egypt and the capacity to interpret what had been dug up, the latter, possibly, with the means, to get there; ships in the docks. His curacy prepared him for his pastoral work in the port of Messina. It might be supposed, too, that as a curate he would have supervised a church football team, characteristic then of large urban Anglican churches, preparation for his role as player manager of Messina Football Club.

Whilst for many curates progression was likely to lead to a senior curacy elsewhere in the diocese or the dreaded prospect for the urbanised of a remote parish overrun by sheep, Huleatt found himself as chaplain in Luxor. An admirer, so we learn, made a gift of three fragments of papyri. The circumstances are unknown. Had they, so to speak, fallen off a travelling donkey? Illicit trading of ancient monuments was rife.

The significance of this find is not to be underestimated. *As will be demonstrated they are the oldest evidence of the earliest Christian gospels and they were discovered by a curate of St Mary's, Swansea.*

We are so used to hearing translated texts read from printed editions that a leap of imagination is necessary to realize that early Christians relied upon what they were told which was then written down by hand, the individual styles differentiating between one writer and another, albeit displaying some common characteristics attributable to mutual influences, as would be the case in any comparison of contemporary hand-writing.

Thus must be viewed Huleatt's discovery: they are not mere surviving scraps of mass produced print:

*the actual fragments originate from when the very first accounts were being written down.*

When first examined, the fragments would not have been recognizable other than as a collection of largely incomplete words in Greek. A detailed examination of the texts was undertaken by Carston Thiede and Matthew D'Ancona [*The Jesus Papyrus*, Weidenfield and Nicolson, London, 1996].

Fragment 1 consists of images in three lines duly deciphered, gaps completed and interpreted, as

**'he was reclining...'**

**'seeing this they'**

**'became indignant'**

This was clearly part of Matthew 26, 7-8: A woman came to Him with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume and she poured it on His head as he reclined at the table. But the disciples were indignant when they saw this and said, 'Why this waste?' That established, it would now have been straightforward to identify the other fragments.

Fragment 2 was in two lines: a single word and a gap supplemented, interpreted as

**'annoy'**

**'woman' 'comply' 'with'**

This was part of verse 10: When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, "Why trouble ye the woman? For she has wrought a good work on me."



Fragment 3 has five lines: as translated

**‘having gone’**

**‘... called’**

**‘Iscariot**

**‘chief priests’**

**‘are you willing’ ‘to me’**

This was part of verses 14 and 15: “Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests, and said ‘What are you willing to give me to deliver him up to you?’ And they weighed out to him thirty pieces of silver”. Each of the three fragments had writing on their reverse sides: on that of fragment 3 there were four lines, duly discerned as verses 22 and 23.

**‘is it I?’**

**‘each asking’**

**‘dippeth’**

**‘hand in...’**

In full, following Thiede’s careful reconstruction, the text reads: They were greatly distressed, each asking him, ‘Not me, Lord?’ He answered ‘someone who has dipped his hand into the dish with me.’

The back of fragment 2 consisted of two lines, verses 14 and 15.

**‘Gallilean’** [an original error for ‘to Galilee]

**‘Peter said to him’**

The back of fragment 1 consisted of remnants of verse 31: ‘You will all fall away from me to-night, for the scripture says...’ The extant images are part of

**‘all’**

**‘fall away’**

A feature of the fragments is the use of abbreviations for holy names. Such a convention would not have been devised by an

individual writer and must have been formally adopted, possibly by the early Church in Jerusalem or Antioch in Syria. This pointed to a period about the time of the fall of Jerusalem when Christians left Jerusalem.

Overall, analysis has been largely based upon comparison with other papyri, with the aid of special microscopes. The Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered in 1947-56 but undisturbed and sealed since 70 AD, revealed in the case of some discoveries, that the formation of *individual Greek letters was similar, as were the incidence of some letters touching one another, horizontal and vertical strokes were equally thick, and certain letters had added hooks and dots*. These were characteristics not found in papyri reliably dated as belonging to the second century or later.

An important aid to identifying missing letters was the discovery that *there was an overall consistency in the average length of lines and the number of letters in each line*. Thus the options as to what might be missing from a particular line were reduced to the number of letters that could be accommodated in the gaps.

What could also be reliably deduced are letters and words added later and not part of the original.

Also found was a potsherd fragment ‘an astonishingly close match’, according to Theide, to Huleatt’s papyri. In Oxyrynchus, in Egypt, papyri dated late first century B.C. or early first century A.D., of Aristophanes’ *The Knights*, displayed in *a round hand medium to small letters drawn carefully between two imagined lines except for the extended phi and psi*, features closely comparable to Huleatt’s papyrus.

Another text, with similarities ‘almost like a twin’, again, according to Theide, found in Oxyrynchus, this time of a letter by a farmer to a civil servant and punctiliously countersigned and dated, as translated, ‘in the year 12 of the emperor Nero [65/6 A.D.]’, convincingly narrows the date to a few years of the Temple’s destruction in 70 A.D.

**Papyri discovered separately from the Hulleatt's fragments were the Barcelona fragments now accepted as having been part of the same document.** They relate to an earlier part of St. Matthew's Gospel [Chapter 3 v.9, 15, and 5. vv.20-2, 25-8.], material relating to John the Baptist and the Sermon on the Mount, compromising a contention that what Huleatt discovered was merely part of a Passion narrative, in existence prior to the composition of St. Matthew's gospel.

Whilst the evidence established the priority and antiquity of Huleatt's text, it also revealed differences between it and later texts. The former included the use of abbreviations for Holy names IS for Jesus [vv.10 and 31], and KE for Kyrie [Lord] [v. 22]; and a subtle but important construction of the language describing the reaction of the disciples to Jesus' accusation [vv. 32-33], emphasising that *each* individual disciple reacted in turn in shock, suggesting that later texts reflected a wish to convey unanimity. In two instances, there would have been insufficient space to accommodate the words 'who' [vv.14-15], and 'of you' [v.31], pointing to an earlier and simpler style of writing.

The implications of all this are profound. For much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries scholarship had increasingly accepted that the gospel texts were much later than the time of Jesus. The new analysis was showing that this was mistaken.

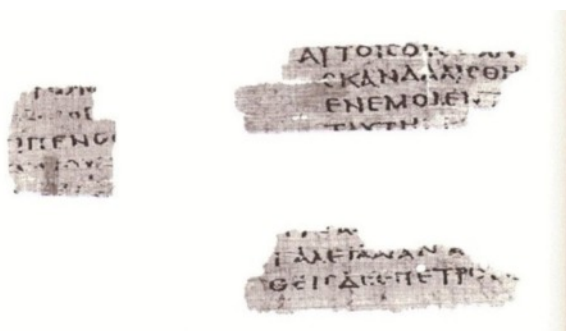
Unravelled Dead Sea Scrolls



Further, since the evidence also demonstrated that papyrus in codex form [as was the Huleatt papyrus] would have been dependent upon an earlier papyrus scroll, the narrative's written narrative had to be even earlier than about the year 70 AD.

Whilst the early Christian church saw itself as part of the Jewish community, making use of the scrolls of the Old Testament and using scrolls to record its own records, this was to cease in about 62 AD on the martyrdom of James, 'the Brother of the Lord', and the rupture with the Jewish community. Thereafter, emulation with Jewish practice was no longer necessary and recourse to the more durable codex became general.

**Since it is also generally held that St Matthew's gospel [and that of St Luke] draws upon St Mark's, there is thus a convincing argument for believing that a recognizable narrative about Jesus existed in written form sometime in the previous decades. That narrative surely included a clear recognition of the beliefs held about him by a generation contemporaneous with the events, that is, by eye witnesses. The essential narrative was not an imaginative fabrication long after the actual events: whatever else, they were composed and read by eye witnesses. It might be objected by to-day's readers that they mistook what they experienced but it cannot be denied that they had the benefit of proximity.**



The Jesus Papyrus

**Robert McCloy**

# Writing

## **At parties I still get the puzzled look.**

Although I've been a full time writer for eleven years, when I answer the question, 'What do you do for a living?' my one word reply 'Writer' is first met with silence and incomprehension. Then they will say something like 'Yes, well, that's your hobby, but what do you do for a proper job?'

Perhaps their confusion is because they have grown up with set images of writers. The anguished looking Virginia Woolfe or long haired writers like Shelley and Byron. Or maybe they're not equipped to meet writers. Aren't all wordsmiths locked in freezing cold garrets, fighting off starvation as they await their Arts Council grant?

While I don't have long hair and usually manage three meals a day, if you are not one of the best sellers there are times when making ends meet is a huge challenge. On the tenth anniversary of my decision to take the plunge, give up the day job and write for the rest of my life, I wrote a short article entitled Ten Years of Not and Just – in other words, ten years of just making a living and not making a living.

So why do I do it and more importantly, what is it that I do? Perhaps it's my escape from a world where the savage side of man still triumphs. The writer can create his own world and go through the wardrobe door to find a personal Narnia.

I can also regularly enter the sumptuous land of words. Words represent a border where it is too easy to turn back to the place where everything is compressed into sound bites and text messages; where the vitality and excitement is squeezed out of communication and compressed into text messages where people tell me 'c.u. in costa. Smile.'

So what is it that makes the written word something people want to read or hear? Robert Frost once said that good writing is the Art of Remembrancing. The writer remembers what has happened to him, or the emotions he has felt in

certain situations. He has written successfully, when the reader identifies with what is written and remembers reacting in a similar way.

A lot of my writing also grows out of eavesdropping. There was a time when it was rude to listen to what people were saying. With the advent of mobile phones, people speak so loudly we can all hear their innermost secrets.

**Travelling from Paddington to Swansea on a crowded train, a young girl was inadvertently telling us all, the lurid aspects of her relationships. As the train pulled into Didcot, the man sitting opposite me said 'If I give you my card will you phone me and let me know how it all pans out?'**

A large part of my life as a creative writer is spent researching for plays and poems. In Winnie the Pooh, Ee Aw, on being asked where has he been, replies 'There and back again.' That sums up the writing enterprise. I go into the world of facts and then back again to share my insights with people reading my work or watching my plays. There is always the danger of going there and never coming back. Equally I must be careful not to come back before I have been.

Despite all my efforts to write startling and never to be forgotten prose, poems and drama, I always remember that when Norman Nicholson, was asked to name the best poem he had ever written, he replied, 'My next one.' And when my freshly written text stares back at me looking bland and unappetising, I always live in hope that my next offering will be the best.

**Peter Read**

# The Printing Press in Venice c.1500

**Printing was not invented in Venice**, but, by the late fifteenth century the city was a principal and highly innovative producer of printed books, remaining in that position well into the sixteenth century. The explanation for this is partly historical and contextual, but individuals also play a crucial part. By the late Middle Ages Venice had become a widely recognized commercial city, acting as an entrepot between the eastern Mediterranean and central and northern Europe as well as operating actively on a more regional and local level in the Adriatic and northern Italy. Venice's heavy reliance on imports to allow the lagoon city to survive and function had implications for the printing industry. Timber, metals, vellum, paper, all had to be imported; for example, trading connections with central Italy gave the Venetians access to the high quality paper produced in centres like Fabriano. With this ongoing, necessary activity came skills that contributed to the development of the printing industry. The dockyards of Venice and, in particular the state run Arsenal, required working with metals, skills essential in the creation of type. Furthermore, trading connections encouraged immigrants to settle in the city: Greeks, Albanians, Slavs, German-speakers from central Europe, Italians from the north of the Peninsula and Jews. This phenomenon was also encouraged by a republican form of government famous for its stability and for its toleration and appreciation of skilled, well-connected immigrants, as well as the ongoing need to foster trade and industry. Trade and immigration were further encouraged by the fact that Venice had acquired two empires, one from the thirteenth century 'overseas' in the eastern Mediterranean, the Balkans and Dalmatia and the other from the fifteenth

century, 'on land' in northern Italy. As regards the former, tension had existed between the Greek Orthodox subjects and Roman Catholic rulers, but this became moderated in the face of the rise of the Ottoman Empire from the fourteenth century. Venice could be seen as a shield of Christendom in the front line against the Ottoman threat. It is for that reason that the Greek scholar and cardinal, Johannes Bessarion (1402-72) left his valuable collection of Greek manuscripts to the Library of S Mark. (1) These were to contribute to Venice's importance as a centre for printing in Greek.

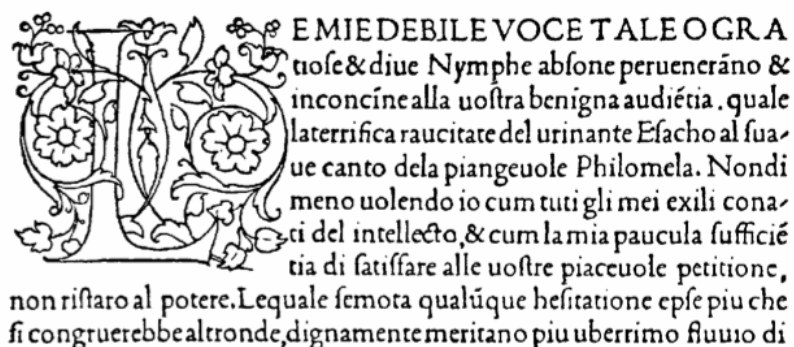


The 'Bessarion bequest' introduces a final but important contextual point. Venice had two state sponsored schools in 'higher education' but it had no university, and was relatively slow to catch up with the 'renaissance' advances made in Florence.

However, in 1405 it had acquired the city of Padua, seat of one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in Europe. This became the Republic's 'state university'. Any Venetian seeking a higher degree was required to attend Padua. The university was also a magnet for ambitious scholars seeking employment and recognition. In summary, by the end of the fifteenth century, Venice was widely acknowledged as enjoying a stable and relatively tolerant government while operating as a market place that drew in merchants, materials and skills both locally and internationally. Quick to perceive the value of new developments when the first printing press was established in the city in 1469, the government declared, 'We must encourage the development of this invention which belongs to our time and which was totally unknown in antiquity'. The Republic granted a monopoly to the printer in question the German Johannes Speyer.

He died within the year, but the 'invention' never looked back, and to illustrate this, attention will now turn to a key individual, Aldus Manutius (Aldo Manutio, 1449-1515). Aldus came from near Rome, and in that city and in northern Italy acquired an education in Latin and in the relatively newer discipline for Renaissance Italy, classical Greek. The growing number of Greek scholars living in exile in Padua and Venice, and the fact that by 1480 there were fifty-four printing houses in the city, drew him there. The patronage of a highly educated Italian prince, Alberto Pio of Carpi in whose court Aldus had previously been attached financed the establishment of a press in Venice in 1490. Other investors soon followed. In Venice, Aldus emerges very much the entrepreneur. The properties traditionally associated with him lie on either bank of the Grand Canal and within minutes of the centre of trade and banking at the

Rialto. Also close was the German quarter of the city, important in terms of investment, the market in printed materials and scholarly contributions. He acquired high quality fonts from a distinguished earlier printing house in Venice, ran by the French printer Nicholas Jenson (c 1420-1480), and he commissioned a new type face, italic, from the Bolognese Francesco Griffo (c.1450-1518). This was based on the hand used in the Vatican chancery and was not only clear and elegant in itself, but lent itself to publishing in octavo - pocket-book size publications. Quite apart from being an entrepreneur with a nose for the market and an appreciation of technical innovation, Aldus was also a scholar. What came to be known as the 'Aldine Academy' in Venice, played a crucial role in disseminating books in classical Greek as well as Latin. A key figure here was the Cretan Marcus Musurus (c1470-1517) who had come to Italy to study with other Greek scholars in Florence, before moving to teach at Padua and joining the Academy in Venice to help create a Greek type and disseminate editions of Greek texts. A colleague in the Academy was the Dutch humanist Erasmus of Rotterdam (c.1466-1536), arriving in Venice in 1508. Later in life Erasmus mocked the grim working and living conditions under Aldus. No comfy student 'hub' here; a meal chez Aldus was 'a morsel of stony cheese garnished with a small lettuce leaf floating in a bowl of rancid vinegar'. However, Erasmus also observed that 'Aldus is building up a library that has no limits other than the world itself'. Not all was for the positive. Rather like the modern internet and 'social media' phenomena, the 'printing industry' was not above criticism and reproach. Sharp practices, plagiarism, shoddy editions and 'down market' publications emerged as well as elegantly produced works of pioneering scholarship.

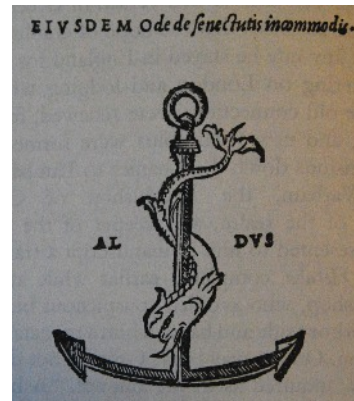


An example of the Italian Antiqua style of Aldus in 1499

**The market for hand written books, manuscripts, lasted into the sixteenth century with some collectors regarding the printed book as ‘cheap’.**

However, it is undeniable as Elizabeth Eisenstein and others have argued, that printing greatly, vastly, increased the affordable availability of material across the traditional disciplines - law and theology for example, as well as newer areas such as the vernacular literatures and the reproduction via woodcuts and engravings of the artistic image. Presses in Venice also acquired a high reputation for publishing music. The recognition that Aldus and his heirs, the Aldine press, continued after his death – and achieved in the Renaissance and beyond shown in the famous emblem that marked their publications, the dolphin and the anchor, derived from a Roman coin. It is generally agreed that the dolphin represented the speed and elegance of Aldine publications, while the anchor represented their reliability and authority. Both, with their marine imagery also can be seen to express the Press’s debt to Venice. The last words go to Erasmus. 'Aldus, making haste slowly, has acquired as much gold as he has reputation, and richly deserves both’.

(1) Born into the Greek Orthodox Church, Bessarion was one of the few Greeks to acknowledge the supremacy of the pope following the Council of Ferrara/Florence (1438-42), He went on to have a distinguished career in the Western Church. A classic account in English of the Venetian press based heavily on archival documents, is Horatio Brown’s *The Venetian Printing Press* (1891). A fine study of Aldus is Martin Lowry’s *The World of Aldus Manutius. Business and Scholarship.* (1979).



The printers mark of Aldus Manutius

## John E. Law

### Contributors

**Dr Geoff Mortimer** studied metallurgy at Swansea University, and - much later - history and German at Oxford. His career took him from the quarry in Cmrhydycierw to lecturing at St Edmund Hall, Oxford, via industrial management in Britain and Germany. He has written a number of books on the Thirty Years War and on Early Modern military history.

**Professor Andrew Prescott** has been appointed as the new Head of the Department of Digital Humanities. At Kings College London. He was employed from 1979-2000 as Curator in the Department of Manuscripts at the British Library, where he acted as British Library co-ordinator for a number of digital projects,

**Peter Read** is an actor, a published playwright and poet. In 2007 he won the John Tripp Award for Spoken Poetry, founded the Young Writers Squad for talented secondary school writers and supports the Dylan Thomas Prize for Young Writers.

**Andrew Green** is a former Librarian at the National Library of Wales and currently Chairman of the Friends of the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery and Museum.

**Dr John Law** is a graduate of the Universities of St Andrews and Oxford and former Reader in Department of History and Classics at Swansea University.

***“A room without books is like a body without a soul.”***  
**— Marcus Tullius Cicero**



Only good girls keep diaries, bad ones don't have time.  
Tallulah Bankhead



*“I never travel without my diary. One should always have something sensational to read in the train.”*  
— Oscar Wilde.

“I love deadlines. I love the whooshing noise they make as they go by.”  
— Douglas Adams.

*“The road to hell is paved with adverbs.”*  
— Stephen King, On Writing.

**“History will be kind to me for I intend to write it.”**  
**— Winston S. Churchill**



*“If I read a book and it makes my whole body so cold no fire can warm me, I know that is poetry. If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry. These are the only ways I know it. Is there any other way?”*

— Emily Dickinson.

**“I can shake off everything as I write; my sorrows disappear, my courage is reborn.”**  
**— Anne Frank**

# Book Review

The 132 pages of *Wolfram Wars* makes a great read and packs a lot into a well-researched, well-illustrated book, all helped by extensive footnotes, glossary and bibliography. To me the book has all the necessary ingredients - history, politics, espionage and titillating references to the glamorous world of Lisbon and Estoril of the 20s and 30s - destination for the well-heeled but discarded royalty following the 1st World War. There were film stars and the idle rich sprinkled with industrial barons, attracted by the climate and the largest Casino in Europe. Sadly to this exuberance and atmosphere, perhaps similar to Berlin a few years earlier, were added, as war approached, many refugees fleeing fascism. Added to the mix of spies and double agents, both men and women arrived acting for the adversaries. The author paints a fascinating picture of people passing through whose names are well known to many of us - Leslie Howard, Kim Philby, Ian Fleming, Graham Green, and Malcolm Muggeridge - all good stuff. One activity is best expressed by the wife of British Embassy official who wrote to her husband:

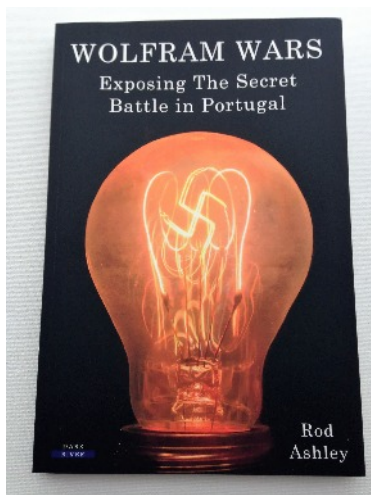
"Your stories are good. Wolfram by day and fornication by night" - colleagues must eclipse in gallantry all other competitors in Dr Salazar's raffish capital.

But what is wolfram? As a scarce mineral sourced in Portugal, it was very much an object of desire by both Germany and the Allies. When refined wolfram becomes tungsten, first generally used for the filaments in light bulbs. With a very high melting point of 3,422 degrees centigrade it was essential, because of the extreme heat generated, to use it in the making of machine tools, drill bits, shells, and indeed for the nozzles of V1 rockets. Its hardening

qualities were vital in creating armour plating for tanks and war ships. No wonder agents were keen to closely monitor the traffic in shipping to establish who was buying and selling goods in and out of Portugal.

Unfortunately as the author describes, Portugal after its glories of exploration and colonisations of earlier centuries, now appeared as a largely agrarian country populated by poor, uneducated and illiterate people without ambition for the future and acceptance of things as they were. As the price of Wolfram rocketed, at one stage increasing from 20 cents to 24 dollars per kilo, there was an effect on the local mining population. Wages rocketed in the local mining areas and social problems followed - alcoholism etc. My review of this book cannot finish without some reference to the Prime Minister Dr Salazar (1932 - 1968) and regarded as Father of a nation that appears to have been a totalitarian state. Educated in a Roman Catholic seminary, he never married and trained in law and economics. Following the overthrow of the 1st Republic in 1926, he joined the Government and subsequently became the Premier in 1932. His mind set clearly was dictated by his faith and moral code, namely the Acceptance of Authority and the Grace of Suffering. This impacted on his people by way of keeping everybody in line by the use of a Secret Service. His principle success was in keeping the country neutral during the war and having an even approach to the supply of wolfram to adversaries. He was able to co-operate with Franco in protecting his borders but at the same time making the Azores available to the allies as a staging post both by sea and air.

## Reviewed by Peter East



If any members have a book that they would like reviewed, please let the editor have a copy.

## The Wolfram Wars

Exposing The Secret Battle in Portugal

Author Rod Ashley

Published by Dark River An imprint of Bennion Kenny



## ‘Many arches well adorned’:

### The Benedictional of St Æthelwold

**Among the most lavishly illustrated manuscripts from the Anglo-Saxon period** is the Benedictional of St Æthelwold, a book of episcopal blessings compiled for the personal use of St Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester from 963 until his death in 984 and one of the leaders of the ecclesiastical and cultural renewal associated with the reign of King Edgar (959-975). Used by Æthelwold when he celebrated mass on special festivals, its close personal associations with one of England’s most influential spiritual leaders give the Benedictional a special resonance. Moreover, every aspect of the Benedictional - its sumptuous decoration influenced by contemporary European art, its beautiful Caroline minuscule script and the way in which its text mixed continental traditions with precocious Latin composition by English monks - reflects the ideology of the remarkable cultural revival associated with Edgar’s reign.

Famously, King Alfred the Great not only led a successful military resistance against the Vikings but also personally initiated a programme to revitalise the love of learning and books. Æthelwold was born at Winchester between about 904 and 909 during the reign of Alfred’s son, Edward the Elder, who successfully continued his father’s policies. Æthelwold’s love of learning attracted the attention of Alfred’s grandson, King Æthelstan, and he was ordained as a priest, on the same day as another young man, Dunstan. It was the beginning of a remarkable partnership.

Dunstan became Abbot of Glastonbury, where he extended the monastic buildings and created a major spiritual centre. Æthelwold was drawn to Glastonbury and his biographer Wulfstan described how Æthelwold ‘profited greatly by Dunstan’s teaching, and eventually received the habit of the monastic order from him, devoting himself humbly to his rule. At Glastonbury, he learned skill in the liberal art of grammar and the honey-sweet system of metrics ...

He was eager to read the best-known Christian writers, and was in addition constant in his vigils and prayer, taming himself by fasting and never ceasing to exhort his fellow monks to strive for the heights’.

Æthelwold became abbot of the dilapidated monastery at Abingdon which he turned into a ‘glorious minster’, where observance was in line with the latest continental practice. This monastic revival received further impetus in 959, when one of the first acts of King Edgar was to appoint Dunstan Archbishop of Canterbury.

In 963, the King appointed Æthelwold Bishop of Winchester. With royal support, Æthelwold expelled the secular clerks who staffed the Old and New Minsters in Winchester, and replaced them with monks. Æthelwold revived the three great monasteries of eastern England at Peterborough, Ely and Thorney, and assisted the reform of monasteries elsewhere, such as Chertsey in Surrey and St Neots in Cambridgeshire. He was the main force behind the compilation of the *Regularis Concordia* (‘Agreement of the Rules’) which sought to standardise monastic practice.

A poem at the beginning of the Benedictional of St Æthelwold, written in golden letters in the florid Latin style characteristic of the tenth-century monastic movement, describes how Æthelwold had commanded Godeman, a monk at the Old Minster in Winchester who afterwards became Abbot of Thorney, to produce this book as a pastoral tool, ‘to preserve Christ’s fleecy lambs from the malignant art of the devil’. The blessings contained in the book were specifically reserved for use by bishops.

In this way, the Benedictional is an eloquent testimony of the way in which monks such as Dunstan, Æthelwold and their ally in Worcester, St Oswald, made use of episcopal power to drive forward changes in church and state. Godeman states that Æthelwold ordered that there should be ‘made in this book many arches well adorned and filled with various figures decorated with manifold beautiful colours and with gold’.

The Benedictional contains twenty-eight full-page miniatures (probably another fifteen are missing), nineteen pages in which the text is surrounded by elaborately decorated frames (apparently two of these have been lost), and two initials decorated with figures.

**These decorations were used for such major feasts as the Annunciation, Palm Sunday, Easter and the Ascension.** Since the open book would have been visible while Æthelwold pronounced his blessing, these decorated pages themselves formed part of the decoration of the church for these festivals.

The eclectic way in which Dunstan and Æthelwold drew on the best aspects of continental practice in reforming the English church is reflected in the way in which the iconography and design of these illustrations is Carolingian, but has been fused with material drawn from Byzantine traditions. Moreover, distinctively English features have been injected into this mix. This process has been succinctly described by the leading authority on the manuscript, Robert Deshman:

The forms of figural style, ornament and script found in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts ante-dating the reform were deliberately suppressed, apparently because they were associated with the earlier decadence of religious life. Replacing them were the more Mediterranean styles from abroad that seem to have carried ideological connotations of the reformed Continental religious practices that Æthelwold and the other monastic leaders introduced into England. These imported figural and ornamental styles were recast according to old Insular decorative principles, perhaps to evoke the ideal of early Insular monasticism that Æthelwold sought to emulate in his own era.

This process of blending continental practice and adding a distinctive English element was also evident in the text. Two major forms of benedictional were current at that time, known as the Gregorian and the Gallican. The text of the Benedictional of St Æthelwold combined in a skilful and systematic fashion two complete benedictionals of these traditions. In addition to this continental material, the Benedictional of St Æthelwold also included a number of blessings apparently composed in England, including one in honour of the East Anglian saint Æthelthryth

which is perhaps the work of Æthelwold himself. This form of hybrid benedictional became very influential.

The compilation of benedictionals became a distinctive activity of the English church, and the benedictionals produced in England were admired abroad.

The Benedictional of St Æthelwold combines both image and text in ways that make powerful statements about an ecclesiastical and culture movement that played a central role in building the English state and thus in shaping modern Britain. Even the handwriting is intended to make an ideological point. The elegant Caroline Minuscule script shows a scribe attempting to emulate the latest European practice, and rejecting the archaic-looking Square Minuscule script favoured in the earlier part of the century.

Cont. Over

#### Further Reading

**Robert Deshman**, *The Benedictional of Æthelwold* (New Jersey and Chichester: Princeton University Press, 1995)

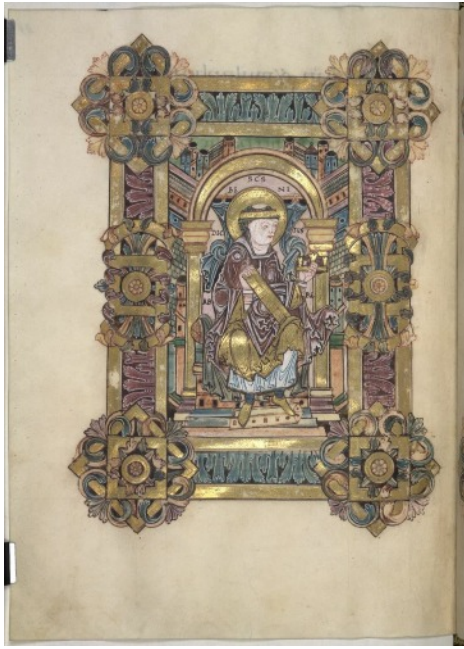
**Andrew Prescott**, *The Benedictional of St Æthelwold: a Masterpiece of Anglo-Saxon Art* (London: The British Library, 2002)

*Bishop Æthelwold: his Career and Influence*, ed. Barbara Yorke (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1988)

*The Life of St Æthelwold* by Wulfstan of Winchester, ed. and trans. M. Lapidge and M. Winterbottom (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991)

**R. Browett**, 'The Fate of Anglo-Saxon Saints after the Norman Conquest of England: St Æthelwold of Winchester as a Case Study', *History* 101 (2016), 183-200

**F. Tinti**, 'Benedictine reform and pastoral care in late Anglo-Saxon England', *Early Medieval Europe*, 23 (2015), 229–251.



St Benedict proceeding the blessing for his feast

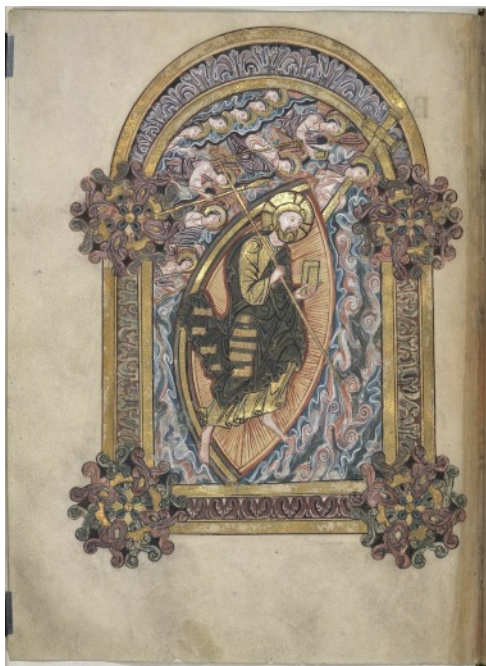


Entry of Christ into Jerusalem

**The illuminated manuscripts of the middle ages** show how the written word can be used as the basis for captivating and thought-provoking art. But these images, and the way in which they link to the texts they illustrate, can also convey important messages about power, culture and society.

This is perhaps nowhere more evident than the way that the Benedictional of St Æthelwold encapsulates the tenth-century movement led by monk-bishops such as Dunstan and Æthelwold, which sought to build a powerful and culturally vibrant English state in touch with the latest currents of European thought and culture.

**Andrew Prescott**



Second coming of Christ

# HA Swansea Branch Programme 2017

Talks on Saturdays at 11.00, National Waterfront Museum, Ocean Room



Portrait by Douglas Granville Chandor 1946

22nd April 2017

Terry Davies

**The Life and Times of Sir Winston Churchill**

20<sup>th</sup> May

Paul Frame

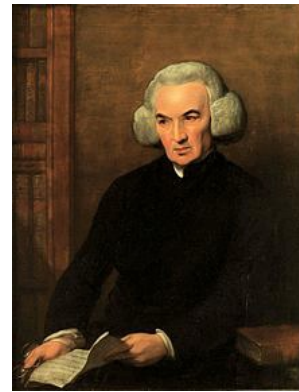
**Richard Price, a Welsh Philosopher and Mathematician**

17<sup>th</sup> June

Dr Dulcie Engel

**Wonderful Things:**

**Ancient Egypt, Cabinets of Curiosities and**



Portrait by Benjamin West 1784

Ancient Egyptian Art from Saqqar



Individual membership: £10

Concessionary membership: £5

Family (household) membership: £15

Student £5

**Membership renewable in March 2017**

**Cheques to Historical Association, Swansea Branch:**

**HA Membership Secretary,**

**Anne Thomas**

**48 Brunswick Street**

**Swansea SA1 4JP**



## Membership Form

Name .....

Address.....

.....

.....

.....

Email.....

**You can now pay by standing order**