



# CHRIST'S COLLEGE

## UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

*Christ's was first established on the site of King's College in 1437 by William Byngham, before being refounded and rebuilt at its current site in 1505 as Christ's College by Lady Margaret Beaufort.*

### Lady Margaret Beaufort

- The richest woman in Medieval England
- Used her wealth to finance educational, charitable, and religious projects, including University lectureships at Oxford and Cambridge, early printing, and the rebuilding of Great St Mary's (the University Church)
- When she was in Cambridge, she lived on the upper floor of the Master's Lodge

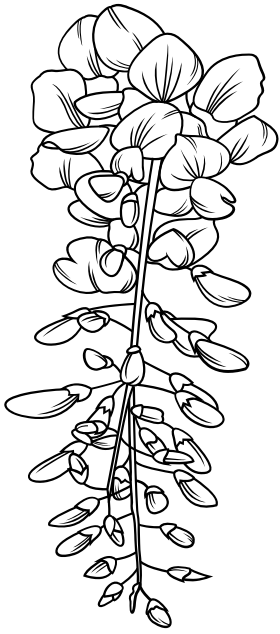


Christ's has the only  
circular lawn in any of  
the Colleges of  
Cambridge!

### Great Gate & First Court

This is the oldest part of College, dating from its foundation in 1505.

The Great Gate's oak door is original, but was cut to be shorter to match the rising ground level of St Andrew's Street. The stone façade (dating to the 1700s) was repainted in a four-year-long restoration project which was completed in 2018.



## The Master's Lodge

The wisteria on the Master's Lodge is thought to be around 200 years old, and it flowers in April each year.

Lady Margaret Beaufort lived on the upstairs floor of the Master's Lodge when she was in Cambridge. She had windows installed which looked into the Hall to control scholars at dinner, and into the Chapel to partake in services (being a woman in an exclusively male environment). The Chapel is accessible from First Court and open to visit.

## The Old Library

The Old Library houses a collection of 50,000 early-print books and manuscripts, with materials written in English, Latin, Greek, Arabic and Sanskrit. Highlights of the collection include:

- Tudor playing cards (1515)
- Historic wallpaper fragments discovered in the Master's Lodge (1509)
- First edition of Copernicus' *On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres* (1543)
- The first book-length work about beekeeping written in English - Charles Butler's *The Feminine Monarchie* (1634)
- Six first edition copies of Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667)



Construction of the New Working Library is planned from Summer 2026. This will replace the current working library (built in the 70s) with a building that is more space-effective and environmentally conscious.

# The Darwin Room

To celebrate the centenary of Darwin's birth in 2009, his College room was reinstated as accurately as possible to its early 19th century condition. Darwin's name was added to the list of names at the bottom of the staircase, although this is slightly anachronistic as the staircases were not lettered in this way originally.

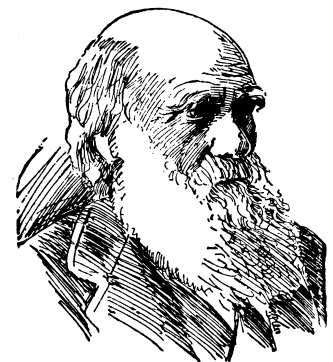
Paint analysis was used to discover the original paint colour and the room was repainted using brushes rather than rollers. The current carpet was ordered to a pattern that was in production in 1828.

Apart from the furniture, Darwin is known to have had the following objects in his room: looking glass, double-barrelled percussion gun, shot flask, insect sweeping net, Cary-Gould microscope, beetle collection, beetle cabinet, and his dog Sappho.

Darwin would have hired a bedder/housekeeper and a gyp/valet from the College, and the room would have been lit with oil lamps and candles, since gas lamps were not used in the colleges until later in the century.



- Born in 1809.
- Initially studied at Edinburgh University to become a physician but decided to become a clergyman instead, which is why he came to study at Christ's.
- Darwin spent a lot of time with his cousin William Darwin Fox at Christ's (they would eat breakfast together each day), and it was William who introduced Darwin to Professor Henslow.
- Professor Henslow taught Darwin a lot about science, and recommended Darwin as a naturalist for the survey ship HMS Beagle.
- The HMS Beagle surveyed much of South America, the Galapagos and Pacific Islands, and some of New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa over 5 years. It was on the Beagle that Charles started to develop his theory of evolution, which he would later publish in *On the Origin of Species* (1859).
- The Darwins have continued to have a close relationship with Christ's:
  - William Erasmus (Charles' son) studied here in 1858
  - Francis (his other son) was made a Fellow in 1888
  - Sir Charles Darwin (his grandson) was Master of the College in 1936-9



## Second Court

The Fellows' Building was built in 1642 with two thirds of its funding coming from donations from Old Members of College.

*"We do not envy others their wealth or grandeur. We desire only a certain grace, salubrious rooms and appropriate elegance. It must be said that we have not failed ourselves: for what funds were available we have spent on the decoration of the chapel, library, hall and other places, when practical need demanded it. But we are collapsing under the great burden that oppresses us, and although our minds aspire to a finer establishment, poverty is weighing upon them. All that keeps our spirits up is the hope of support.*

*Among others we approach you, great philanthropist that you are, sure of your affection and good will."*

## Fellows' Garden

The Fellow's Garden is accessible through the archway in the Fellow's Building. As well as being an oasis for members of College, this part of College has a rich history.



The ancient Mulberry Tree at the back of the garden is known as Milton's Mulberry Tree. Legend says that it was planted by Milton himself, though it was actually originally planted in the year of his birth (the current tree was regrown from a root of the original tree).

The tree was likely planted as part of James I's initiative to create a thriving English silk trade by increasing the number of silk worms in England (they feed on mulberry trees).

You may also spot five beehives - the honey harvest from these bees is large enough to give each of the Fellows a pot of honey each year.

This swimming pool is thought to be the oldest outdoor pool in the country. It dates to the mid-17th century, and was originally fed with water from Hobson's Conduit. It fell into disuse as the water was green and murky, but in 2010 was restored and renamed the Malcolm Bowie Bathing Pool.

# John Milton

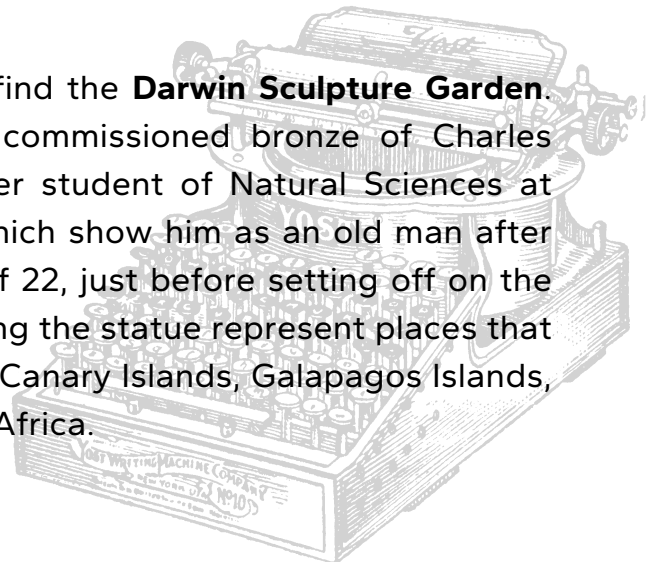
- Born in 1608.
- Milton came to Christ's (at the age of 16) to study a five-year course of rhetoric, logic, and philosophy. He remained in residence for seven years, with his studies interrupted by periods of plague.
- Milton's working title of *Paradise Lost* was *Adam unparadiz'd*.
- He later wrote *Paradise Regained*, a text about Christ's temptation in the wilderness.
- After the execution of Charles I, a text called *Eikon Basilike* (image of the King) was published and attributed to Charles himself, heavily depicting him as a martyr. Milton wrote a text in response, called *Eikonoklastes* (breaker of images), which was enough to ensure his arrest and imprisonment when the monarchy was restored in 1660. He was released soon after due to the intervention of powerful friends.



## New Court and the Typewriter

Coming out of the Fellows Garden into New Court, you are immediately brought face-to-face with the Typewriter, designed by modernist architect Denys Lasdun and completed in 1970.

A little further past the Typewriter, you will find the **Darwin Sculpture Garden**. This was opened in 2009 and contains a commissioned bronze of Charles Darwin, sculpted by Anthony Smith, a former student of Natural Sciences at Christ's. Unlike many depictions of Darwin which show him as an old man after years of illness, this depicts him at the age of 22, just before setting off on the HMS Beagle expedition. The plants surrounding the statue represent places that Darwin visited during his voyage, such as the Canary Islands, Galapagos Islands, New Zealand, Australia, Tasmania, and South Africa.



## Fourth Court and Yusuf Hamied Court

On the other side of the Darwin Sculpture Garden is Fourth Court, the newest part of College, which includes Yusuf Hamied Court on the left. This was funded by Yusuf Hamied, Christ's alumnus who as the chair of Cipla has worked to make antiretrovirals affordable to people in sub-Saharan Africa with HIV and AIDS. Behind this is the Todd Building, formerly the Cambridge County Hall.

## Darwin Portico and Hobson's Conduit

Heading through the car park, you will come to the Darwin Portico, which contains a bronze bust by William Couper (1909), donated by the American Museum of Natural History in New York. There is also some further information about Darwin's time at Christ's, and his family history.

Next to the Portico is a section of Hobson's Conduit. This old watercourse, was constructed from 1610-1614 to divert fresh water from the Nine Wells Nature Reserve to the city centre. Much of Hobson's Conduit is now underground, but it surfaces at Christ's in the Master's Garden and here at the Portico. More of the conduit can be seen in the gutters of Trumpington Street.



## Third Court

Walking along the left of Hobson's Conduit, you will come into Third Court. The oldest building in this court is the Stevenson Building (constructed 1889), with the other two buildings on either side of it (The Blyth Building and Y Building) constructed in the 1950s.

From Third Court, you can head back into Second Court and retrace your steps to find your way out of College. Feel free to stop on the way out for a drink or some food at the Buttery!

**Thank you for visiting!**



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