

THE Book Collector

ALCHEMY

VICTORIA



DAILEY

Mary Eccles &

Oscar Wilde

The Ballerina

and the Book

MIRJAM FOOT



The Anna

Amalia Library

Lisa Baskin

COCKTAILS

BELTON HOUSE

SPRING 2019

EXHIBITIONS

Lawrence of Oxford
The Old Library, Magdalen College, Oxford
From 7 November 2018 to 1 May 2019

Since 2016 Magdalen College has been systematically consolidating and augmenting its holdings of books, manuscripts and artefacts by and relating to T.E. Lawrence, one of the most celebrated members of the college. The exhibition 'Lawrence of Oxford', curated by Rory McCarthy (a Fellow specialising in the Middle East) and Daryl Green (Librarian), displays to great effect some of these acquisitions together with loans from private collections and institutions – including the manuscript of *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* from the Bodleian Library. It eschews a chronological narrative in order to examine thematically the life, works, and afterlife of its fascinating subject in a series of cabinets arranged around Magdalen's bronze cast of Kennington's celebrated 1926 bust of Lawrence.


Lawrence's upbringing in Oxford and youthful interest in archaeology are represented by an English 16th/17th-century wine bottle, which Lawrence excavated in Oxford and gave to Sir Ernest Barker – a family friend who had first directed Lawrence's historical interests towards the Middle East – in 1904. This bottle was inherited, together with three northern Syrian bronze bowls given to Barker in 1913 (also exhibited here), by Nicolas Barker, who loaned them to the National Portrait Gallery for their landmark exhibition 'T.E. Lawrence' in 1988 and then donated them to Magdalen in 2017. Following an undergraduate degree at Jesus College, Oxford, for which he submitted a thesis on *The Influence of the Crusades on European Military Architecture – To the End of the XIIth Century*, Lawrence applied to Magdalen for a four-year Senior Demyship in 1911 with an application (exhibited here) proposing 'Further study of castles in the Levant and in Sicily, N. Africa, etc.' At the instigation of the archaeologist D.G. Hogarth (an alumnus of Magdalen who would lead the Arab Bureau during World War I) Lawrence was awarded a Demyship, enabling him to participate in the British Museum's excavations at Carchemish and to embark upon his career as a professional archaeologist.

'Mapping the Middle East' presents a remarkable group of items, documenting Lawrence's travels (including a manuscript map of the Hejaz Railway prepared by Lawrence during the Arab Revolt), and his post-Revolt efforts to achieve an equitable division of the territories between nations. Particularly evocative is a map of Northern Syria lent to

LAWRENCE OF OXFORD AN EXHIBITION

7th NOVEMBER 2018 - 1st MAY 2019

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 MAGDALEN COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Lawrence in 1909 by Harry Pirie-Gordon, to whom it was returned some months later with a note apologising for the bloodstains on the map (it transpired that Lawrence had been attacked by Kurds who had taken his clothes, but left the map).

Cases dedicated to 'Lawrence and Translation' and 'Lawrence's Literary Influences' consider him as a literary figure; the former includes editions of

his translation of *The Odyssey* and a volume composed of quires extracted from the first two volumes of Friedrich Dübner's edition of *Epigrammatum anthologia Palatina* (1864–1888). Lawrence acquired this book in 1914 and it then entered the library of the Arab Bureau in Cairo (whose ink stamp it bears), before it was repatriated to Lawrence, eventually becoming part of the Clouds Hill library.

In 2018 Magdalen acquired the research collections and archive of Jeremy Wilson, Lawrence's authorised biographer and the pre-eminent authority on Lawrence. This acquisition not only added a major archival resource to Magdalen's collections, but also significantly increased its holdings of books by and about Lawrence. A number of these pieces are exhibited here, including one of the notebooks into which Wilson transcribed the daily events of Lawrence's life, and editions of Wilson's biography *Lawrence of Arabia*, complemented by biographies spanning the century after the Arab Revolt in the case 'Lawrence and his Biographers'.

The 'Seven Pillars of Wisdom' case houses two great treasures: Lawrence's corrected and annotated manuscript of *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, and Book VIII of the 1922 'Oxford' text of *Seven Pillars*, extracted from one of the eight copies printed for Lawrence and heavily amended and revised by him. The direct influence of *Seven Pillars* can be seen in the adjacent case, which commemorates one of Lawrence's most important successors – Sir Wilfred Thesiger, an alumnus of Magdalen and the recipient of the Founder's Medal of the Royal Geographical Society, the Lawrence of Arabia Memorial Medal of the Royal Society for Asian Affairs, the Livingstone Medal of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, and the Burton Medal of the Royal Asiatic Society. This group of four medals – which has never previously been exhibited – is unique since no other person has been awarded all four, and it is accompanied by a letter notifying Thesiger of the award of the Lawrence of Arabia Memorial Medal and a letter from M.R. Lawrence to the R S A A expressing his delight at the award of the medal to Thesiger. The medals are flanked by two volumes from Thesiger's library: Lawrence's *Minorities* (1971), onto the front free endpaper of which Thesiger has transcribed 'To S.A.' (Lawrence's dedicatory poem to *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*), and Freya Stark's *Seen in the Hadhramaut* (1959), inscribed 'To Wilfred Thesiger with great admiration, from Freya Stark', and with a covering letter praising his *Arabian Sands*.

'Lawrence of Oxford' not only provides a very full account of his life in Oxford, but also offers informed and interesting insights into politics and diplomacy in the Middle East during the century following the Arab Revolt, and chronicles Lawrence's influence on later generations

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of Oxonian Arabists. The catalogue will be published in Spring 2019. A programme of lectures accompanies the exhibition: see <http://www.magd.ox.ac.uk/libraries-and-archives/news/new-exhibition-lawrence-of-oxford/> for further details.

MARK JAMES