

A visual 'note': New College from an unusual angle

It is difficult to find novel perspectives of New College, but one such has emerged serendipitously in the last few months. It is now hanging in the staircase of the Warden's Lodgings.

It is a pen, ink and watercolour depiction of the College seen from a rooftop of a house on the High Street in 1818. For the first time to our eyes the south side of our Great Quadrangle presents itself as a façade, with the chapel roof rising above it, the absence of the intruded residence of the Provost of The Queen's College, together with the high elevation of the viewpoint, allowing it to be seen *in toto*.

The work is 12 x 17 7/8 inches, and is inscribed on an original washline mount, 'G. Hollis 1818'. Written on the original backboard are the words 'bequeathed to Wootton Rectory by William Blackstone Lee who died May 31st 1920'.

Wootton St Mary has been a New College living since 1647. Lee was from a family who claimed to be Founder's Kin and who had held it twice as Rectors in the nineteenth century (from 1825-36 and from 1836-74).

Hollis was born in Oxford. He is best known as one of the leading engravers of his time, especially of architectural subjects. A fine example of his skill, for instance, is his etching of J. M. W Turner's St Mark's Square in Venice, a particularly challenging subject to interpret. He completed a series of plates of Oxford Colleges and Halls: one such is a more conventional view of New College from the garden (1815), after a work by his collaborator, John Buckler.

This 'off piste' view was found by Nicholas Bagshawe, an old member and my contemporary at the College; and it provides a pleasing counterpart to the views of the College with which we have become so familiar.

The Warden

