

Vol. 2, issue 2 –

OCTOBER 2022



ARCHIVIUM

Blundell's School Archive Newsletter



Postcard of Blundell's CCF; early twentieth century

NEW ACQUISITIONS

- Paintings and photos
- Russell Cup
- 'Educating an Englistanee'
- Lorna Doone Drawing



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Autumn leaves on Campus

WELCOME TO THIS MONTH'S EDITION

I'm writing this on Halloween; as you might imagine it has been a typically wet and soggy return from the Half Term Break here on campus, with the students enjoying spooky seasonal fun and games. Nonetheless it has been a pleasure to be back in the Archive today continuing to deal with various enquiries from Old Blundellians and academics alike. With it having been Half Term the last week and a half my time in the Archive during October was comparatively short. That said, it has still been a very productive and busy couple of weeks! Above is a wonderful postcard from the early twentieth century, showing the School's CCF in action. With Remembrance Day soon, it seemed an appropriate image for this month's edition.

CELF

NEW ACQUISITIONS

Donations this month have included a copy of Charles Leigh's *Educating an Englistanee*; a series of anonymously donated photographs from the 1960s and some early twentieth-century paintings of cricketing scenes on Big Field. I also received a silver cup belonging to HL Owen for winning the Russell. Finally, I have safely received from Scotland a very exciting Lorna Doone image from Anne Williamson on behalf of her late husband Richard L. Calvert Williamson (P, 1949-52), an OB with a longstanding connexion to the school, who asked for this particular drawing to be return home to Blundell's. I will not spoil its grand presentation at Kate Lord-Brown's winter lunch, but needless to say it is a very exciting addition to our collection, and we are very grateful to Anne and Richard Williamson for their generous gift.

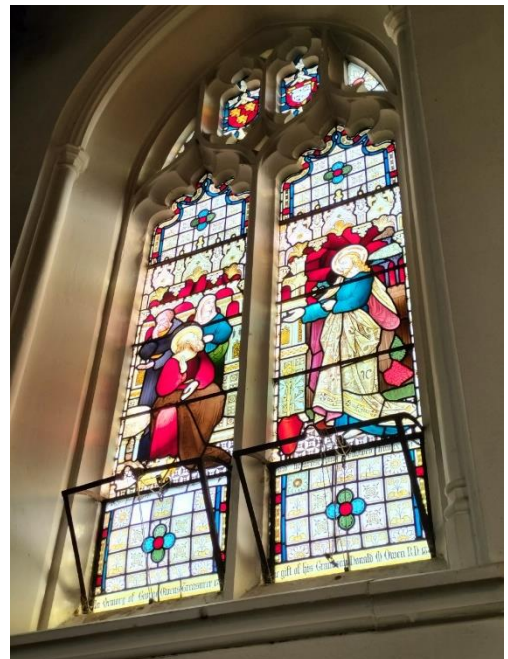


Left: the wonderful painting of cricket on Big Field that we received this month

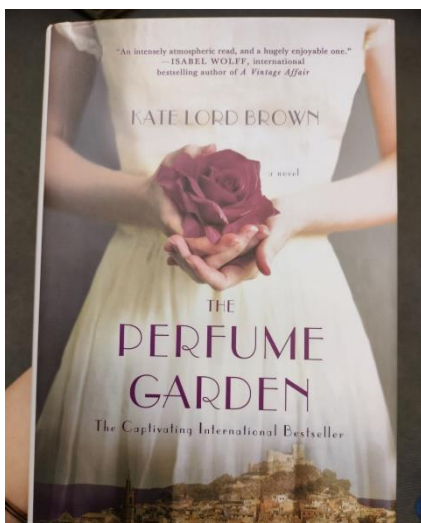
NEWS FROM THE ARCHIVE THIS MONTH

As some of you may well remember I took on two wonderful girls last year, Elsie and Bella, who were doing their Volunteer Work as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award. They did such a marvellous job helping me sort through various unsorted boxes that I have agreed with Miss Johnson to take on another **two Year 9 Duke of Edinburgh volunteers this term. Wilbur and Owain have been with me for the past couple of weeks and have been a great help** going through a box of Ted Crowe's old cricketing photos and organising them ready for me to catalogue them. Meanwhile, **Toria in Year 13 has continued her weekly visits**, and has made some good progress scanning in some materials for on-going projects.

I had a very enjoyable afternoon a couple of weeks back with a lady who is **doing research into her family's connection to Blundell's**. I often get little genealogical enquiries from OB's and their families but what I was not expecting when I started digging into it for her was the extent of the family's connection! As one of the Owen family, the school is steeped in connections going back into the mid-18th century (and presumably beyond) to the present day and so we focussed the visit not on the Archive but all the various plaques, boards and other Owen memorabilia (or sometimes Owens – the s seems to have been dropped on and off depending on the whim of various generation!). Beyond making an amateur genealogist incredibly happy, I found it a really useful exercise for learning more about the School's rich history particularly during the Victorian period and a newfound appreciation for stain glass windows. **This one in the chapel was donated by the Rev. Donald Millman Owen (OB, 1840-48) in memory of his grandfather, George Owens who later went to Balliol and sent his seven sons (Montague, John, Percival, Donald, Hugh, Edmund and Richard) to Blundell's between 1883 and 1900.**



Above: The Owen Family Window in the Chapel



Above: Kate's kind gift to the Archive

The beginning of the last week of term started well with a **delightful chat with award winning author, OB and current parent, Kate Lord-Brown (GH, 1987-9)** about the literary history of the School. We had a great time looking through the signed copy of Blackmore's *Lorna Doone* and Arthur Graeme West's *Diary of a Dead Officer* (with poems and accounts of his time in the trenches of the Great War) as well as more modern works. Kate was very generous to donate a signed copy of her book *The Perfume Garden* (2012) for the collection and will be giving a talk as part of the **OB Winter Lunch on the 7th of December entitled - 'Literary Blundell's - 150 years after the publication of Lorna Doone.'** Further details and the booking link can be found here if you wish to attend <https://www.trybooking.co.uk/BSTO>

Finally, **Pippa Griffith, Curator at the Tiverton Museum of Mid Devon Life** kindly came to visit just before half term to examine our collection of **Tiverton Gazettes** from the late 19th and early 20th centuries to fill in gaps in their collection / replace substandard copies. Rehoming these with another institution was a last request left to me by my predecessor as he retired and is standard practice among archives for items which do not fit our collection policies (which is why we always encourage you to be in touch before donating items to the Archive!). Not only have we been able to help a fellow Tivertonian institution but the space freed will allow for new shelving to be put in to store our recently acquired collection of early 20th century science equipment which were rescued from the Physics Department Loft last summer.

Can you help?

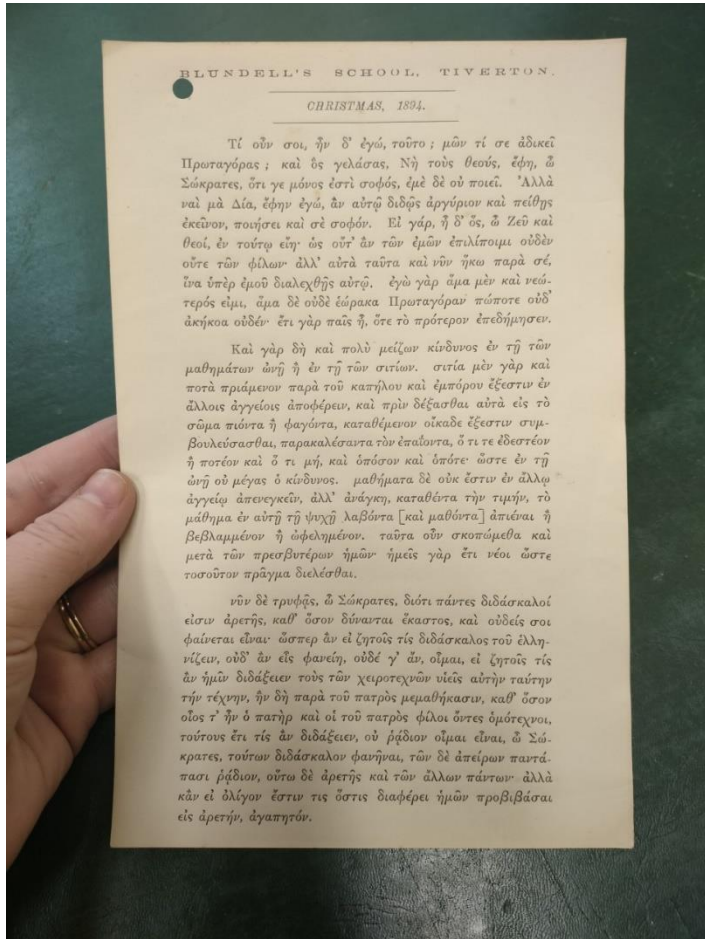
I have a few things I need help with this month...

- 1) **I am looking for any school photos or photo albums from 1905-6 in your lofts that may have an image (or images) of one or both of the Wong Brothers.** Siew Qi Wong and Siew Yuen Wong both attended Blundell's at the time from Singapore and were noted for both their academic achievements and the fact their hair was in queues (i.e. braided into a single pigtail) as ordered by the machus of China. Both had fond memories of the school and were connected to the OB Club until their deaths in the early 1970s. As you can see from my photo of my former student and OB, Paco Chow (OH, 2015-19), delightedly examining their names in the school registers today, these early Chinese students are an important part of our heritage here and demonstrate for our Chinese student community that they are part of a long and rich tradition of students from the Far East studying at Blundell's. Any help here would be very much appreciated.



Above: Paco examining the School Register

- 2) **I am also looking for any school photos that may include Cyril Alington who was here 1928-1933 or alternatively a photo of the Bisley Shooting Team from 1932.** Cyril went on to have a career as an enthusiastic aviator and founding member of the Throttle Benders' Union. A new book is coming out on the subject and the author would like to include an image of Cyril if there is one (and with it such an exciting subject, we would love one for the Archives too!).
- 3) And finally, I have talked to many of you at various events and have really enjoyed your stories of your time at school. **I am planning on starting an oral history project after Christmas** to preserve some of these amazing tales for posterity. I've still to finalise the details but if you are interested in being interviewed for this – could you kindly take a minute to fill out this short form to show interest here <https://forms.office.com/r/z9DxVmD7qw> or drop me a quick email at archive@blundells.org



Above: one of our Victorian examination papers

CURIOSITY OF THE MONTH

As the famous saying goes: “It’s all Greek to me” and I can now where this comes from! Fancy ending your term in 1894 with this wonderful Greek Translation, one of many Ancient Greek and Latin examination papers recently rescued from the Japes Room? We are rightly proud to continue to uphold the venerable tradition of offering Ancient Greek to our students up to A-Level if they choose 128 years later so these old examination papers are precious indeed.

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Autumn Evenings on Campus

“I love to see the shaking twig
Dance till the shut of eve
The sparrow on the cottage rig
Whose chirp would make believe
That spring was just now flirting by
In summers lap with flowers to lie”

- John Clare