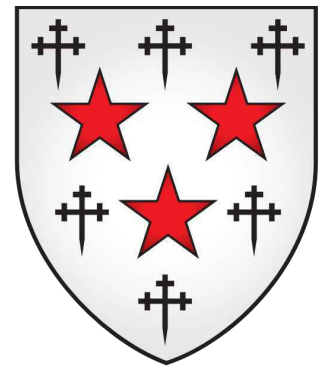


Somerville College



# Vulnerable Books Conservation Guide

## Help us save treasures from the college library!

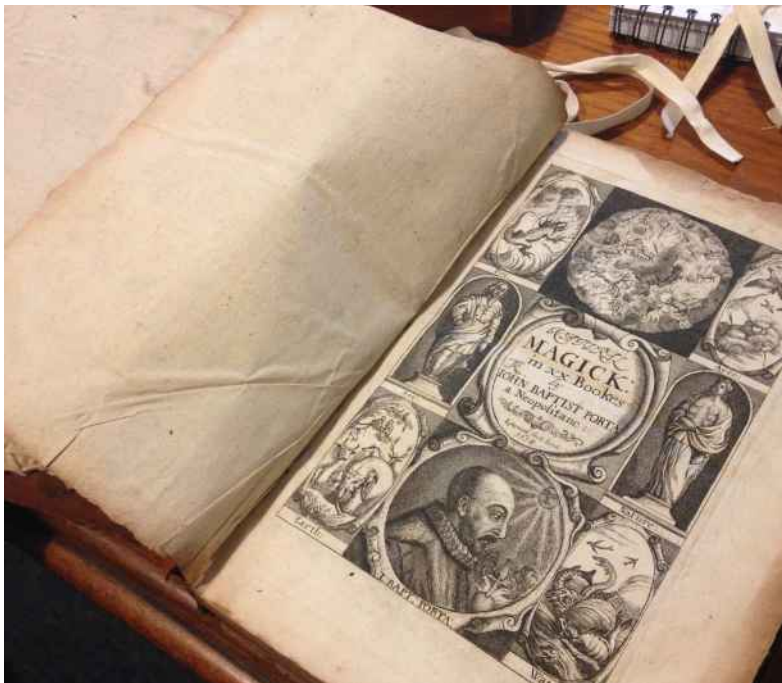
The Somerville college library is full of hidden treasures, from exquisite manuscripts to delicate paraphernalia. These items reflect the college's rich academic history and could be amazing resources for current students, but some of the rarer books are too delicate or age-damaged to be openly available to readers.

We are raising money to bring these items back into college life and conserve them for future students. Help us protect Somerville library's hidden treasures before it's too late!

### Which books will be conserved?

Among the items for which we are fundraising are:

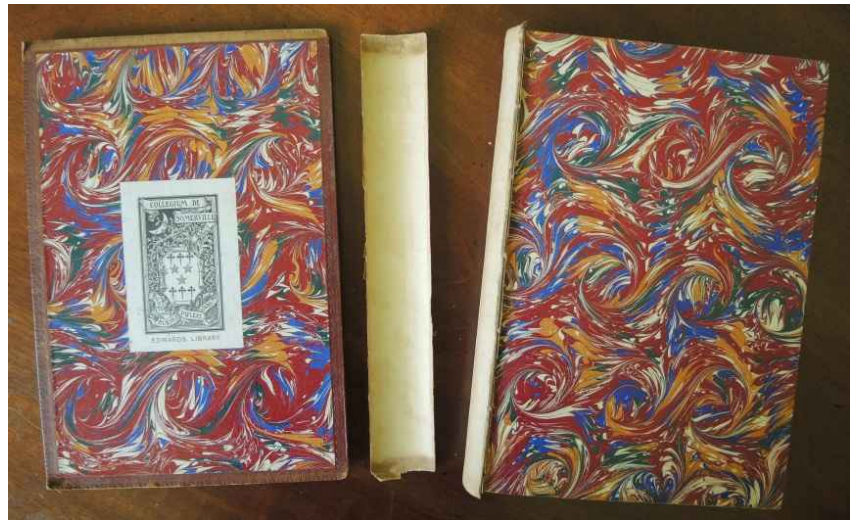
**Giambattista della Porta's 1658 'Natural Magick'** - printed in London for Thomas Young and Samuel Speed this is a translation of *Magia Naturalis*, a Latin work first published in Naples in 1558. A book of popular science (Porta demonstrates that the workings of the natural world are not in fact magic) which covers cosmology, geology, optics, plant products, medicines, poisons, and much more...





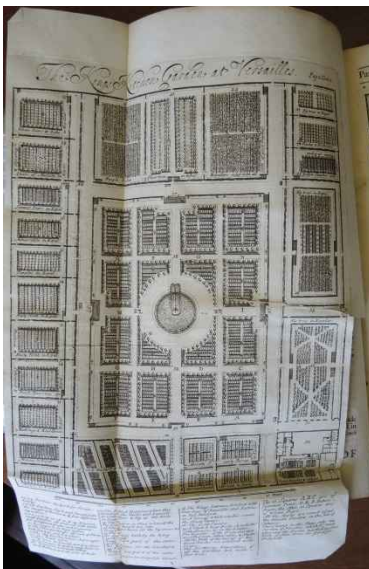
A first edition of **Gustav Doré's** illustrations to **Dante's 'Inferno'** - one of the few manuscripts produced in the first ever print run of Doré's dark and elegant engravings, from the limited 1861 publication by Hachette.

A 1578 print of **Dante's 'Divine Comedy'** with beautiful woodcuts and an extensive 15th century commentary.



A 1550 copy of **'The workes of Geffray Chaucer** newly printed, with dyuers workes whiche were neuer in print before' printed in London by N. Hill for Wyllyam Bonham. From the bequest of Amelia B. Edwards.

A copy of **John Evelyn's, 'The Compleat Gard'ner; or, Directions for cultivating and Right Ordering of Fruit-Gardens and Kitchen-Gardens'**, printed in London in 1693.



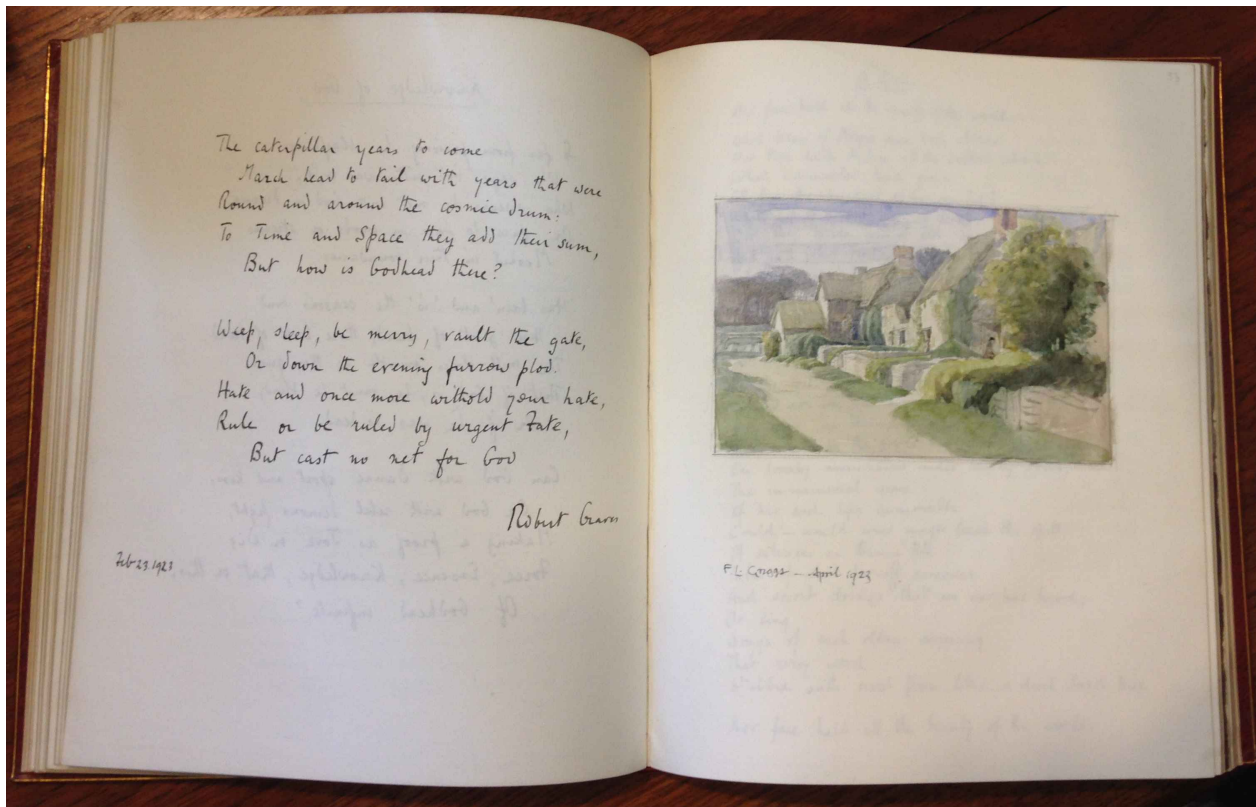
## Where will the money go?

With our minimum target of £10,000 we would be able to pay for half a day a week of conservation time, sending the items to the Oxford Conservation Consortium (OCC) for much needed, expert attention.

If we reach £15,000 we will also be able to digitise of a very special item from the collection, a wonderful graphic novel called ***Mrs Rolistons Travelling Adventures*** drawn in early 1800s by an incredibly important, early support of Somerville, the novelist, journalist, traveller and Egyptologist, **Amelia Edwards** who left her books, papers and watercolours to the college.



With our top target of £20,000 we would be able to pay for a full day a week of conservation time and to digitise another rare and marvellous treasure: ***A Paradise of Dainty Devices***, an absolutely unique book donated in the collection of **Percy Withers**, whose wife and daughter were Somervillians, which contains poems and sketches in the hands of the glitterati intelligentsia of the 1920s, including A E Housman, Walter de la Mare, Robert Bridges, WB Yeats, Paul Nash, Max Beerbohm, Robert Graves, and Wilfred Gibson.



Page with a poem in the hand of Robert Graves from *A Paradise of Dainty Devices*

## Sponsorship of conservation materials:

If we pass our minimum of £10,000 but don't reach £15,000 we will also invest in general conservation and display equipment for the college library including:

New Bespoke Book Display Cases — standard £1600, large £1800

Board book boxes — average cost £15

Book shoes — average cost £20

Cloth boxes — cost of made to measure £390

Foam book supports — cost of a medium set £40



## Who are we?

We are a team comprised mostly of Somervillians: PhD student in Italian studies (Rebecca Bowen), the excellent Somerville Librarian (Anne Manuel) and her assistant librarian (Sue Purver), the resident Somerville fundraising guru (Heather Weightman), and the expert team at the Oxford Conversation Consortium (represented in this project by Jane Eagan and Nikki Tomkins).

## What is the OCC?

'The Oxford Conservation Consortium takes care of the preservation and conservation of 17 Oxford college library and archives. We work on a range of material from bound volumes to parchment scrolls and large maps. The main objective is to ensure that objects can be accessed and handled by researchers, for example: by repairing tears in pages, reattaching boards to spines, and fixing broken sewing in bindings. Alongside our treatment work we can also be found monitoring the environments where collections are stored, and keeping an eye on pests. Lately we've been working on the John Stuart Mill collection at Somerville College: this is a working nineteenth century library, full of the damage caused by a 150 years of constant use.' - Nikki Tomkins, OCC

## Help us succeed!

To kick-start this hugely important project, we have kindly received a matching fund donation of £5,000 from an generous alumna. This gift will match pound for pound up to that amount, making your gift go even further!

To make a gift either go to the Somerville online giving page at <https://www.alumniweb.ox.ac.uk/somerville/page.aspx?pid=3588> select 'Annual Fund' and write 'Library crowdfunding project' in the comment section. Or head to our crowdfunding page at <https://somerville.hubbub.net/p/somerville-books> where you will find a donate button and information on the specific rewards available for each donation.