

And yet Bernard was a disorganised man, probably because his interests were so many, as were the pressures on his time, such that like many a scholar before and since, he found it easier to start projects than to finish them. His unforthcoming edition of the Jewish historian Josephus became something of a joking matter, and the few projects he did manage to bring to publication still exude a sense of mental clutter and constipation, such as his handbook on ancient weights and measures, which we shall encounter below. Bernard was also a friend of Peter Mews, head of the school of divinity at Bath and Wells; and when Mews presented Bernard with the rich living of Brightwell, just outside Oxford, Bernard, who with his very High Church sentiments had probably found the Williamite Revolution of 1688 a strain on his conscience, at once resigned his professorship, and embraced the quiet life.

What of Bernard and New College? The first evidence of direct contact we have is an entry in the college's fragmentary lending register from the period: Edward Bernard est socius Joh: Baptistae habet Homerum in Graeco. I have explained the significance of this technically extra-statutory allowance elsewhere.² Bernard was, we can infer, helping Fell edit the *Iliad*, of which an Oxford edition appeared in 1676, and it is pleasant to reflect that the first Oxford edition of any part of Homer in Greek was assisted by a New College manuscript.²

His next appearance in the college's register is in 1686: EDWARDVS BERNARD | Sanctae Theologiae Doctor, et Astronomiae Professor | DD | A Commentary on the prophecy of Hosea | by | Edward Pococke | Hugonis Grotij Epistolae. Fol. | IDEM VIR CLARISSIMUS | & erga Wicchamicos Amicissimus | OPERA SUA D.D. viz. | Dissertationem de Mensuris et Ponderibus Hebraeorum. | Dissertationem de Mensuris et Ponderibus Hebraeorum. | Dissertationem de Mensuris et Ponderibus Hebraeorum.



New College Library, Oxford, Bacc_ d. 129

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As so frequently with this register, the details are not quite accurate, and the whole entry cannot truly belong to 1686, but is rather a composite of several donations, the first probably indeed made in 1686, the following ones later. BYfbUFX dfYgYbhX PcWzW_YfjVca a YbHUmVYWU gy JhZYUhi fYd an appendix by Bernard himself, his first attempt at a study of ancient weights and measures. If we turn to the volume itself, still in the collections today, we find rather ornate material by Bernard inserted before his own appendix. First, he places a dedication inscription: D/V. CC. [i.e. *Viris Clarissimis*] | Collegii Novi Sociis, | quibuscum vitæ meæ partem non poenitendam ac sacram dcg], p E 1 c / 1 4 >

New College Library, Oxford, BT3.141.5

This epistle ends with a typical Bernard promise: he will shortly set out his world chronology co-

BYfbUFXĭ bYI h []Zh k Ug U W dmcZ hY fy]gYX U

What these gifts when considered as a group show is that Bernard went out of his way between 1685 and 1690 to mark presentation copies of books to New College with inscriptions that suggest

I have no certain answer to this question so far.⁵ Bernard studied mathematics for a time privately with John Wallis, who as we saw lived in New College Lane from 1672, but there is no suggestion Bernard lodged there, which might just have explained his gratitude to the college.⁶

Ad T.C. amicum suum ex paucis
ingeniis; perpolitum.

*Doctus es interpres, Crech, castusque; piusque,
Et Caro quicquid carius esse potest.
Ut nocet ingeniis non docti mos Epicuri,
Vita tui vatis morsque inhonesta probant.*

E. Bernardus.

(You're a good interpreter, Creech, chaste and godly;
And whatever else can be dearer than Carus.
That the Epicurean way can damage the wits of the unlearned