

## Provenance Research

The Courtauld Institute of Art has always relied on donations and the foundation of the special collections (CABS) is due, in part, to the bequest of the library of Anthony Blunt, a renowned art historian and Director of The Institute between 1947 and 1974. Blunt was also an art and book collector. His antiquarian collection often had interesting provenance before he owned it, including books owned by the architect John Adam and Charles Viscount Bruce of Amphil, a catalogue of whose library is held in the British Library.

**Searching on the OPAC** – if there is a particular name you are interested in, search the online library catalogue using the Multifield search option and select Former owners, provenance from the drop down menu. In the adjacent field, type the name you are seeking.

THE COURTAULD  
Institute of Art

### BOOK LIBRARY CATALOGUE

Current search base: Catalogue You must fill search field and word or phrase

**Library catalogue**

- Basic search
- Advanced search
- Multi-field search
- Inter-Library loan
- Browse indexes
- Results list
- Previous searches

**Quicklinks**

- Login
- My e-Shelf
- Search tips
- FAQ
- Help
- Contact us
- [Restart session](#)

Multiple-option search

Select field to search

Type word(s) or phrase

Words adjacent? Records

Former owners, provenance   No  Yes

All Words   No  Yes

All Words   No  Yes

Click total number to see catalogue records. Total:

If you wish to restrict your search to items contained in the special collections, select Collection code from the menu and type SPECL or CABS in the adjacent field.

**Browse indexes**

- Results list
- Previous searches

**Quicklinks**

- Cont:
- [Rest:](#)

Multiple-option search

Select field to search

Type word(s) or phrase

Words adjacent? Record

Former owners, provenance   No  Yes 6

Collection code   No  Yes 5223

All Words   No  Yes

Click total number to see catalogue records. Total: 2

There are 2 collection codes used in the special collections. SPECL denotes a large bequest, so any books from the Frederick Antal, Guy Atkins, Anthony Blunt, Thomas S.R. Boase, Count Antoine Seilern, or Johannes Wilde bequests. Other books in special collections have a code of CABS. So, it is best to do 2 searches, one with each collection code, for complete coverage.

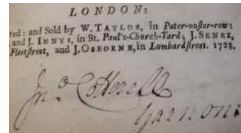
**Accessions registers** – the Book Library has kept all the accession registers for material acquired up until about 1993 (when the library switched to an automated library management system). Although they do not contain a large amount of

information, they will indicate whether the book was a donation (and the donor) or a purchase. Most books and pamphlets acquired before 1993 have a number on the back of the title page that looks something like 36.P24 (24<sup>th</sup> pamphlet acquired in 1936) or 36.24 (24<sup>th</sup> book acquired in 1936). If there is a book in our card catalogue that you think may have important provenance, please ask at the desk, quoting the accession number and we can have a look to see if there is further information contained in the register.

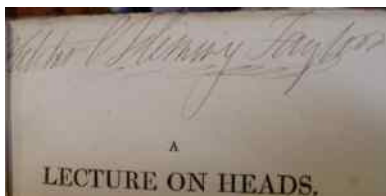
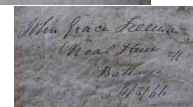
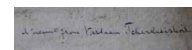
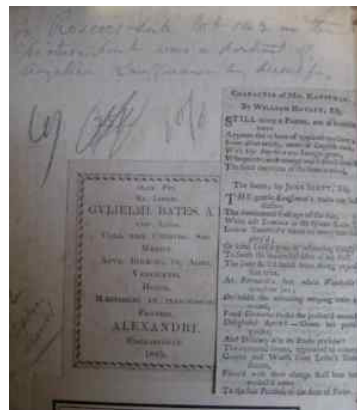
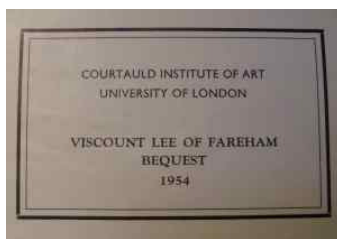
**Names and book plates of interest** – The Book Library has not always recorded the presence of inscriptions or book plates in its books in the card catalogue or on the computer system, although it always recorded donors on our book plates.



However, recently there has been a greater attention to recording non-bibliographic information in the catalogue records in CABS books. Of course the donor has usually been recorded in CABS books, but there is now a greater attention paid to previous owners before the one who bequeathed it to the library. Here are just some of the interesting book plates and inscriptions found in



some of our books.



From left to right starting with Samuel Courtauld book plate in *Paul Cezanne* by Ambroise Vollard, 1914; signed F. Cottrell in *A treatise of architecture with remarks and observations...* by Seb. LeClerc, 1723; armorial book plate Charles Viscount Bruce of Amphill in [*Le*

*magnifique chateau de Richelieu...*] by Jean Marot, 166-?; heraldic book plate John Marten Cripps in *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori, e architettori* by Giorgio Vasari, 1568; Palestine Exploration Fund book plate in *Travels in Asia Minor* by Richard Chandler, 1775; Courtauld Book Library book plate indicating the item came from Viscount Lee of Fareham (one of The Institute's founders) in an album of Italian palazzos, no date; inscription, a book plate for Gulielmi (William) Bates, and a press cutting in *Vita di Angelica Kauffmann*, pittrice by Giovanni Gherardo de Rossi, 1810; Two inscriptions – one John Grace Freeman with his address, the other says “A present from Varlaam Tch...?” in *Trattato della pittura* by Giorgio Vasari, 1619; title page signed W...? Flemming Taylor in *A lecture on heads* by George Alexander Stevens, 1799; and a Latin book plate *Caroli Ac Mariae Lacaite Filiormque Selham Sussex* in *Due lezioni...* by M. Benedetto Varchi, 1549.

**Decorative bindings** – in the early days of printing history, books were usually not bound at publishing stage. Instead, the owner might commission a binder or the publisher to provide them with a binding, often to match other books in their library. They vary from quite simple decorated paper, vellum or parchment over a ‘board’ made of many sheets of wastepaper glued together to stiffen them, all the way to very lavish calf- or goatskin, gold-tooled bindings with armorial decoration. Special Collections has some fine bindings, but probably most of the collection has simpler bindings. We have not always recorded binding information, but have tried to do so with fine bindings, however this is not searchable from the catalogue.