New College Notes 16 (2021), no. 7

science and antiquarianism were in this period often cultivated by the same scholars. Indeed, in this case, Musgrave started off his career at New College with a pronounced interest in the new experimental science; but in his mid-thirties he moved to provincial Exeter, where he practised with great success as aphysician, and devoted his leisure to the study of local antiquities. Eventually he published in Exeter four beautifully produced octavo volumes on his local researches. These he presented to his old college, and turning the pages of these works of archaeology, epigraphy, and philology, it is startling to reflect that the author is the same man who, while still a young resident fellow of New College, had in the 1680s also served as second Secretary to the Royal

Philosophical Transactions, today the oldest still-running scientific journal in the world. It is not often remembered that this icon of the scientific revolution was therefore, at least for a dozen issues² in the mid-1680s, edited from New College, Oxford.

Musgrave was born in Nettlecombe, Somerset, and went on a scholarship to Winchester College in 1669. He followed the usual path to New College, where he was admitted as a scholar in 1675, confirmed as a full fellow two years later, and remained on the fellowship until 1692, a rather long collegiate stretch in those days. This was partly because Musgrave did not go into the Church, and so there was no easy promotion to a college living for him. Instead, he trained as a physician, and indeed he appears in the matriculation register for the University of Leiden in March 1680, and so spent a season

returned to New College, and graduated as a Bachelor of Civil Law in mid 1682. This may seem surprising, but in fact the law degree was a well-

the most ⁴ Later in life he would contribute the considerable sum of £55 to

residential wings erected to house a new and suitably wealthy category of New College student in

tant Robert Hooke,

and the various scientific clubs of Oxford and London that had been springing up since the 1640s. The major event in this respect

Museum in 1683, and it is around that institu career forming.

The Ashmolean Museum (now the building on Broad Street occupied by the History of Science Museum) was a new kind of institution, because it combined on its top floor a permanent, staffed museum based on the collections of the Tradescants as inherited and augmented by Elias Ashmole, on its middle floor r lecturing and the maintenance of a library, and in its basement a well-equipped laboratory.

Musgrave was not the only New College fellow we can detect among the early Oxford Philosophical Society. Among the original attendants, the antiquary Anthony Wood listed not only

elaborate donation inscriptions, and a librarian or reader perhaps in the 1690s has also gone through each volume, including the Musgrave volumes, adding a careful manuscript contents table to each.

A volume of the *Philosophical Transactions* donated to the college library by the Oxford bookseller Richard Davis New College Library, Oxford, BT3.214.14 note the manuscript contents table too

A volume of the *Philosophical Transactions* donated to the college library by Musgrave New College Library, Oxford, BT3.215.1 note the manuscript contents table in the same hand that this came directly from Musgrave, or possibly his executors, too. Hopefully in some future in the 1680s, and also his in