



Cambridge Society for the Application of Research

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Lives and Letters (the Robert Hooke portfolio) Professor Lisa Jardine CBE

Centenary Professor of Renaissance Studies, Queen Mary, University of London

7.30 p.m., Monday 19th November 2007

The Wolfson Lecture Theatre, Churchill College, Storey's Way, Cambridge

Lisa Jardine writes:

"What has come to light was a body of long-lost work by the seventeenth-century experimentalist, astronomer, microscopist, engineer, architect and surveyor, Robert Hooke, from the period when he served as the Royal Society's Secretary, after the death of Henry Oldenburg in 1677. A public appeal was launched by the President of the Royal Society to secure funds to acquire the 'Hooke folio'. At the end of March 2006 The Society was successful in purchasing the manuscript and returning it to its archives."

Taken from 'The return of the Hooke folio', by Robyn Adams and Lisa Jardine, *Notes and Records of the Royal Society* (2006) **60**, 235–239.

The *Guardian* described it thus:

"A long-lost 17th century manuscript charting the birth of modern science has been found gathering dust in a cupboard in a Hampshire home. Filled with crabby italics and acerbic asides, the 520 or so yellowing and stained pages are the handwritten minutes of the Royal Society as recorded by the brilliant scientist Robert Hooke, one of the society's original fellows and curator of experiments.

The notes describe in detail some of the most astounding and outlandish scientific thinking from meetings of the society between 1661 to 1682. There is the very earliest work with microscopes, confirming the first sightings of sperm and micro-organisms. There is correspondence with Sir Isaac Newton and Sir Christopher Wren over the nature of gravity, with the latter's proposal to fire bullets into the air to see where they might drop. And there is a page that lays to rest the bitter controversy over who designed the watch that would eventually lead to the first measurements of longitude."

Ian Sample, science correspondent

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About the Speaker:

Lisa Jardine CBE is Director of the Centre for Editing Lives and Letters and Centenary Professor of Renaissance Studies, at Queen Mary, University of London. She is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and Honorary Fellow of King's College, Cambridge and Jesus College, Cambridge.

Dr Jardine holds honorary doctorates from the University of St Andrews, the Open University and Sheffield Hallam University. For the academic year 2007-8 she will be seconded to the Royal Society as Advisor to its Collections.

She has published over fifty scholarly articles in refereed journals, and seventeen full-length books, both for an academic and for a general readership, including *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance*, *Ingenious Pursuits: Building the Scientific Revolution*, and biographies of Sir Christopher Wren and Robert Hooke. Her forthcoming book on Anglo-Dutch reciprocal influence in the seventeenth century (published March 2008) is entitled "Going Dutch".

Coffee will be available, as usual, in the foyer outside the lecture theatre, from 7pm onwards.

Richard Freeman
CSAR Organising Secretary

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For those who would like to become full members of the CSAR, Individual Membership costs £25 for the academic year. Family Membership costs £35 and enables the Member to bring a guest or member of their family to any meeting or visit.

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