

The Changing Face of Main Court

The site of St. Catharine's College, bordered by Trumpington Street, King's Lane, Queens' Lane and Silver Street, has changed beyond all recognition since Robert Woodlark, the College's founder, started buying up tenements here in the 1450s and 1460s.

This article shows the changing face of the College's Main Court through the years.

Main Court can be seen through the iron gates on Trumpington Street. The Trumpington Street entrance to College, via the Porters' Lodge, is now the main entrance to College. However, this was not always the case. Originally, the main entrance was from Queens' Lane, through the archway at the far end of the Main Court which can be seen in pictures 2 and 3. The change in orientation came in the late 1750s with the completion of the Ramsden Building, shown on the right of the Main Court in picture 1.



1. Engraving of the Main Court, c. 1860, taken from 'Memorials of Cambridge, a new edition' by C. H. Cooper, 1860, p. 336. Archive Reference: PHOT/3/2/56.

The College has a wide selection of engravings, prints and photographs of the College site and these are available to researchers to come and view if they make an appointment.



2. A view of the Main Court towards the Chapel, undated, c. 1980s.
Archive Reference: PHOT/3/2/17



3. A view of the Main Court from Trumpington Road, taken 13th January 2011.

If you would like to view any of the College's photographic collection please contact the Archivist:

College Library, St. Catharine's College, Cambridge. CB2 1RL.

Telephone: +44 (0) 1223 338343

Email: archivist@caths.cam.ac.uk