

*Oxford
and its University*

Oxford

1. a historic city in Oxfordshire

2. a short name for Oxford University

Position



Oxford is a county town of Oxfordshire (Oxon), southern England.

Its industries include printing, steel and engineering.

Position



Oxford stands about 40 miles south-east of Stratford, on the hills where the River Cherwell meets the Thames.

Oxford means "a ford for oxen".

With more than a thousand years of recorded history, this beautiful city is a popular tourist centre.

A bird's-eye view of Oxford



When we walk along its clean streets we see at once that this is an ancient city. It has existed since 912.

There are buildings of different architectural styles there, but there is no contrast in their size and material because nearly all of them are built of the same soft grey limestone and have the same arrangement.

Oxford High Street



The centre of Oxford thrives today as it has for many centuries. The lovely cobbled streets are lined with shops.

The picture of the high street was taken from the Carfax Tower, right at the very heart of the city centre.

Magdalen Bridge



This charming structure was designed by John Gwynn and built between 1772-1779. Set against the backdrop of the parks and trees, the arched bridge with its gold and grey brickwork makes a picturesque complement to the scenery, and is a popular place for those enjoying the landscape from the punts and boats.

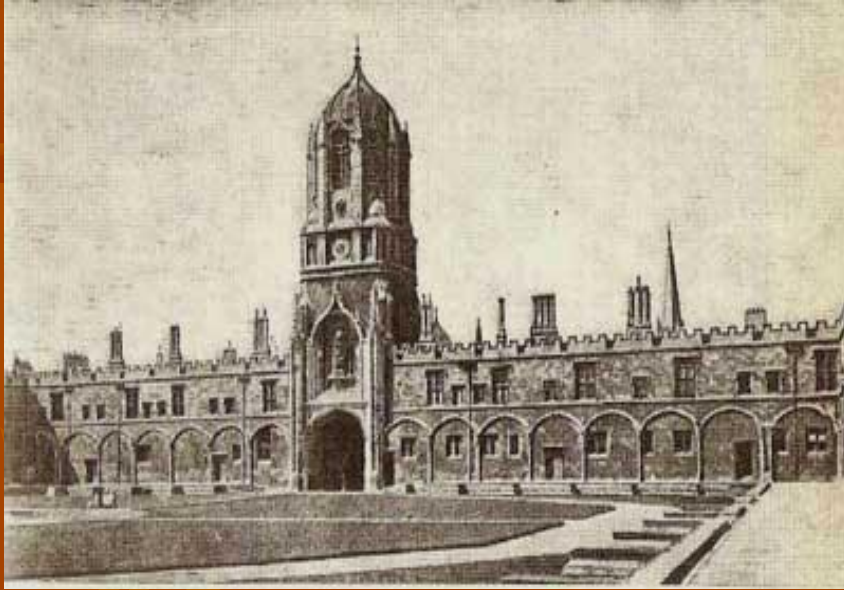
Oxford University



But it is due to the university that the name of Oxford is known throughout the world. Oxford University is one of the two oldest, most prestigious and most aristocratic British universities. It was created in 1249 when students expelled from the Sorbonne in Paris came to Oxford city monasteries to study.

Over 130 nationalities are represented among students.

Studying at Oxford



Oxford is a collegiate university. It consists of 39 self-governing colleges:

- 29 colleges for men,
- 5 colleges for women,
- 5 colleges for both men and women members.

Each college has its own hall, chapel and library.

The university has about 10,000 students.

Christ Church College

The first college, **Merton**, was founded in 1264.

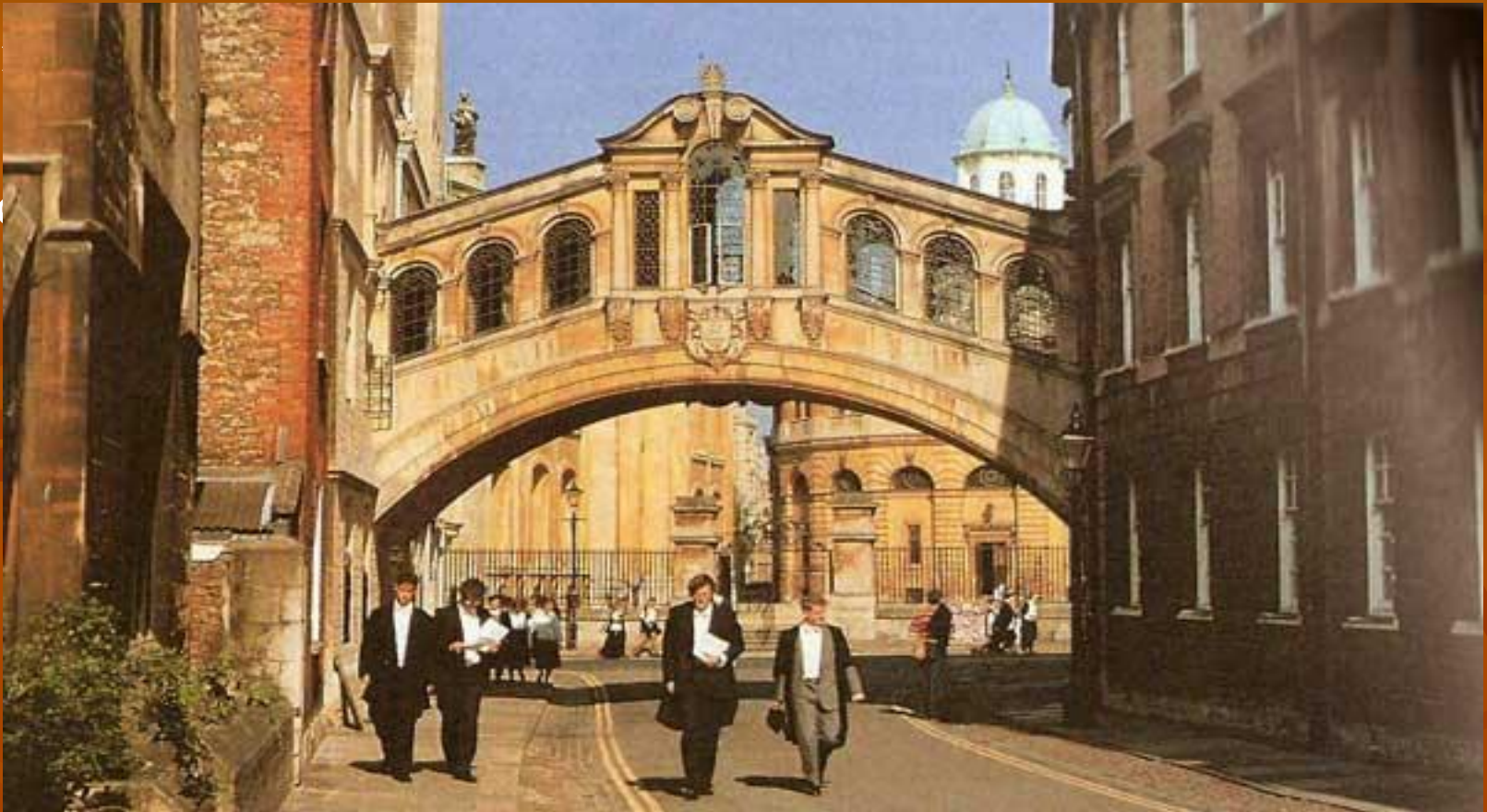
The largest of Oxford University's colleges is **Christ Church**, founded in 1525. Here everything is on a grand scale. Its great quadrangle is the biggest in Oxford.

The twelfth century church is amongst the oldest buildings in Oxford. It is also the only church in the world to be both a cathedral and a college chapel. The College bell, known as "Great Tom", gives signal every night at 9.05. for the closing of the college gates. "Great Tom" weighs over seven tons, and peals a curfew of 101 strokes – the original number of students (from Tom, a traditional name for a large bell).

Christ Church College



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British students do not have to pay to go to university, but do need money to live away from home while they are studying.
Some students whose parents do not earn a lot of money are given a grant (money) from the local education authority.

The Academic Year

The academic year in England has three terms.

Examinations take place at the end of each term. If a student fails in an examination, he may be allowed to take the exam again. Only two re-examinations are usually allowed.

The university of Oxford has a tutorial system of education: every student has a tutor (= teacher) who plans his work. Each week some students come to see him, they discuss different questions connected with their studies, they tell their tutor about the work they have done. Only the universities of Oxford and Cambridge have this system of education.

Living at University



This photo is of Oxford. Most of the colleges are built around courtyards, called quads, with lawns in the centre.

Oxford is rather far from London (100 km) and other large cities. Therefore the students have to live in the university hostel or in a private room.

There are at present 9,000 students in residence.

The red buildings of the women's colleges are new. The men's colleges are beautiful grey old buildings.

Traditions of the past



A characteristic feature of Oxford is that it keeps to the traditions of the past (the Middle Ages). All the students wear long black gowns and students' caps. Without his or her gown no student is allowed to call on a tutor, to have dinner in the college dining-room or attend a lecture.

Degree ceremony



The usual course for a bachelor's degree is 3 years, but in classics and chemistry it is 4.

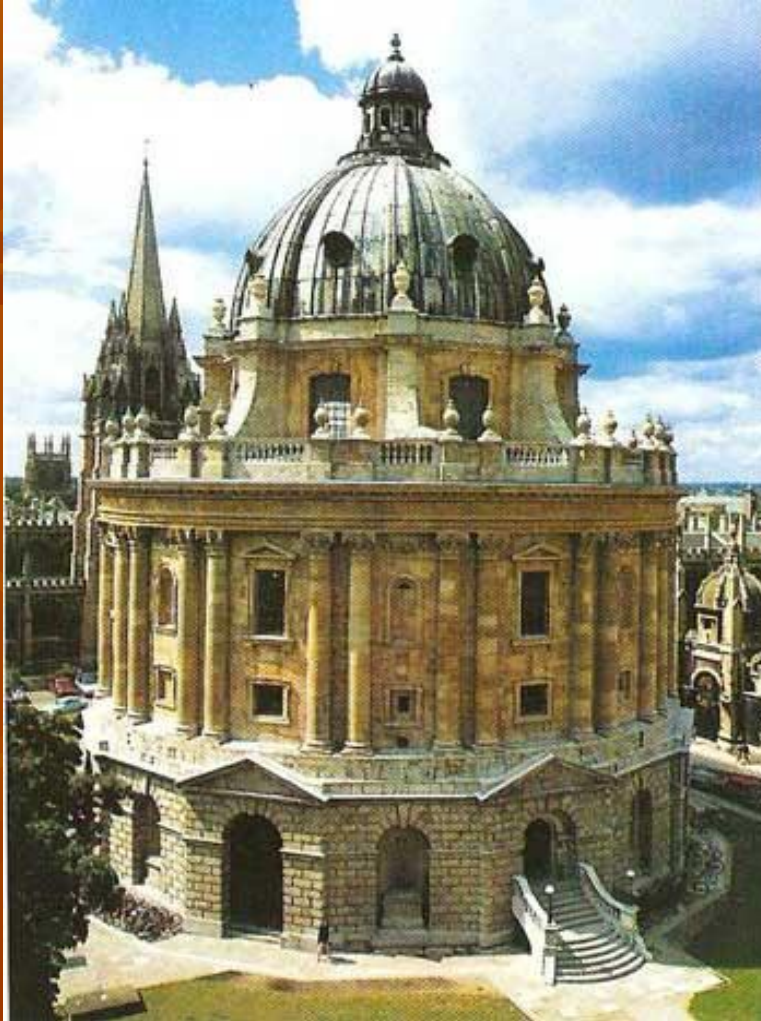
The degrees are awarded at public degree ceremonies. Degrees are conferred on graduates of Oxford University in the Sheldonian Theatre.

Oxford houses **the Bodleian Library**. It is one of the most important libraries in the world with its 3,000,000 books and 50,000 manuscripts. There is the Radcliffe Camera, a classical rotunda now used as a reading-room for the Bodleian.

The Ashmolean Museum is filled with priceless archaeological treasures and famed for its pictures of the Dutch School.

The Oxford University Press, established in 1478, is one of the largest and most prestigious university publishers in the world.

The Radcliffe Camera

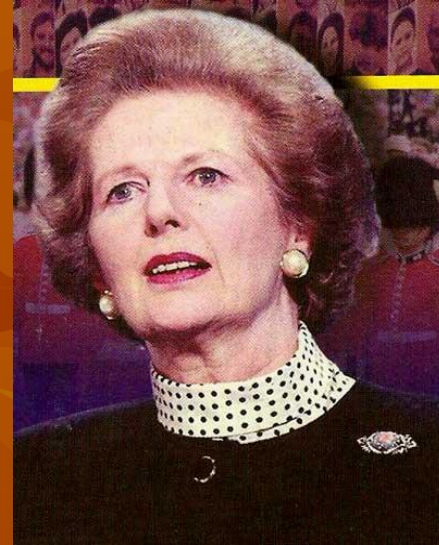


Today, it is still used for its original purpose, as part of the world-famous Bodleian Library.

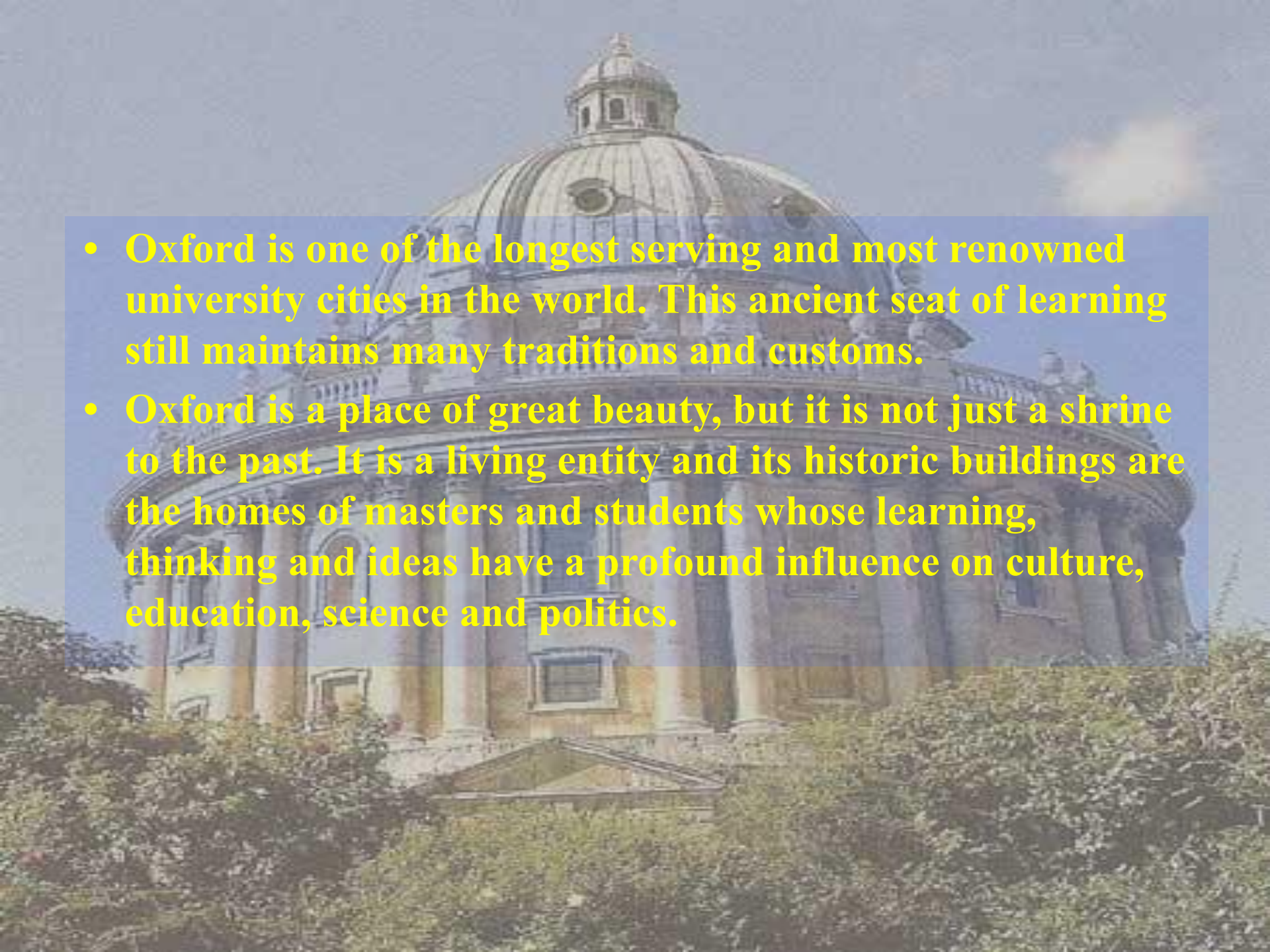
This unusual piece of architecture lords over its own square – Radcliffe Square. It is Baroque in style, with remarkable octagonal base, and topped by a marvelous dome.

"Camera" here is used in the basic sense of "vaulted room".

The great names of Oxford



Oxford has been associated with many of the greatest names in British history. Many eminent world-known scholars and scientists have been educated at Oxford. All the graduates of Oxford never forget "spirit of Oxford".

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- **Oxford is one of the longest serving and most renowned university cities in the world. This ancient seat of learning still maintains many traditions and customs.**
 - **Oxford is a place of great beauty, but it is not just a shrine to the past. It is a living entity and its historic buildings are the homes of masters and students whose learning, thinking and ideas have a profound influence on culture, education, science and politics.**