

## CLARE COLLEGE - THE VIEW OF ONE MEDICAL DOCTOR

Mark Agius

Department of Psychiatry University of Cambridge, South Essex Partnership University Foundation Trust,  
Clare College Cambridge, UK

### SUMMARY

*This short Paper presents Clare College Cambridge, its history and its Medical and other Traditions to the participants in this symposium.*

**Key words:** history - university

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### Introduction

Working at Clare College, teaching psychopharmacology to second year medical students over the last year has been an exciting experience and a great privilege.

### History

Clare is the second oldest of the colleges of Cambridge University. It embodies traditions going back to the 1326, when it was founded as University Hall by a Richard de Badew, a Catholic Priest who was also Chancellor of the University, as University Hall. It was the first pioneer of the Collegiate system, where students and teachers lived and worked as a single community, becoming the model for all Oxford and Cambridge Colleges. It was then endowed by Lady Elizabeth de Clare, grand-daughter of Edward the First, king of England in 1326. She re-named it Clare Hall - it later became Clare College - and provided it with statutes in 1359.

Elizabeth's statutes provide for the maintenance of fifteen 'scholars' or 'Fellows', of which no more than six were to be in Holy Orders, and ten 'poor scholars', the students, who were to be maintained by the College till the age of twenty.

The statutes were clear about the aim of education in order to benefit both the scholars who acquired knowledge and society and the state. They stated 'the knowledge of letters ... sendeth forth its students, who have tasted of its sweetness, fit and proper members in God's Church and the State, to rise to diverse heights, according to the claim of their deserts'.

Its most famous fellow is Hugh Latimer, who was burnt at the stake for his protestant beliefs during the reformation, but Clare seems to embody the balance between the catholicity of its Founders and the protestant ethic of its most famous son, both of which are graphically portrayed in the stained glass windows of its chapel, where Hugh de Badew offers the College to the Virgin Mary while Hugh Latimer embraces the Cross of Christ ... and it is that very balance which

seems to make of Clare a beautiful environment in which to work and study.

### Environment

That environment is enhanced by the magnificence of its great Hall, the beauty of its gardens, which flank both sides of the river Cam, the intimacy of the senior common-room, and the good taste of the Henry Moore sculpture in Memorial Court.

The environment gives a sense of quiet wisdom and continuity. So one remembers that here we have a tradition of Centuries, linked with statutes which encourage the education of students with the aim that they should find their place in the society of their time so that they should contribute according to their talents to the improvement of the state and of the world.

### Ethos

This aim that Clare Students should be persons who will be able, as a result of their education, to influence for the better the State and the World is what influences Clare College's ethos to this day. It influences our selection of students, who come from all parts of British and International Society, and it influences the research that members of the College do. The annual Clare Research Symposium showcases the research done in all departments of the University by members of Clare College, and is a day long event which covers all subjects from anthropology and archaeology to neuroscience.

Clare is a forward looking College. It was the first College to open its doors to women in 1972. It was the First College (in 1999) to make its selection processes for new students public and transparent. It is a friendly environment to work in, and the quality of the students is very impressive. Both Clare's Clinical and Preclinical Medical Students are impressive in their versatility, and one thing which attracted the present writer to Clare is the number of Clare Students he has published with over the last five years. Many receive distinctions in their final Medical Exams.

## Alumni and Fellows

No less impressive is the Quality of the Fellows. Clare boasts four Nobel Prizes. Two are in Medicine, and one of these, James Watson, 1962, is for the discovery of the structure of DNA. The other is Tim Hunt in 2001, for discovery of the cyclin molecule which regulates the cell cycle. Neuroscience, Psychiatry and Psychology, as well as Endocrinology are very well represented in the research undertaken by our fellows.

But Clare has excelled in other fields as well. Olympians, such as W.R Seagroave and Nicola Boyes, have been Clare Alumni. Writers such as Siegfried Sassoon and Thomas Merton are alumni of Clare. We count a Peace Prize, Mohan Munasinghe, an expert on energy, sustainable development and climate change, as well as Norman Ramsey inventor of the separated oscillatory field method, which had important applications in the construction of atomic clocks, among our Nobel prize winners. There are also Journalists, like Mathew Parris, Famous Naturalists, including David Attenborough, whose TV Nature Documentaries are well known world wide, and Musicians, such as the Conductor Roger Norrington and the Composer John Rutter are all Clare Alumni.

## Being a Clare Research Associate

A Clare Research Associate is very involved in the supervision system in which we give students individualised tuition in order to ensure that they receive adequate teaching over and above that given in lectures. Such small group and individual teaching is intellectually challenging and very rewarding. One gets to know the students individually, and it becomes possible not only to ensure they know their coursework but also that they can develop their aptitudes in order that they can become persons who can contribute to society.

It is also very intellectually stimulating to participate in the cross fertilisation of ideas which is consequent to belonging to a multidisciplinary college.

It has been extremely interesting to meet with other Clare Research Associates after a formal Dinner in The Thirkill Room, and discuss research over a glass of Port. The discussion can move rapidly from Neuroscience to the Meaning of Life and the ever extant rivalry between Plato and Aristotle, a tension between two conflicting but in many ways complementary views of life which continue to be an endless source of debate between academics ...because within that argument is the meaning of what we are ourselves as persons ...and that is core to why we all come to study at Clare.

It has also been exciting to discuss, with the backdrop of the Clare Research Symposium, what happens in the brain when children are exposed to the adversity of War, and to seek evidence that such adversity may affect future generations as a result of epigenetics, and then to work with the politics department what the implications of this in World Policy may be, and later to take the time to understand the implications of War Crime Trials, and the psychological and politico/historical implications thereof. Thus Clare maintains the tradition of encouraging interdisciplinary work in order to both develop new ideas and to shed new light on older concepts.

This has been one year in Clare College. It has been worth it.

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*Correspondence:*

Mark Agius, MD  
SEPT at Weller Wing, Bedford Hospital  
Bedford, Bedfordshire, MK42 9DJ, UK  
E-mail: ma393@cam.ac.uk