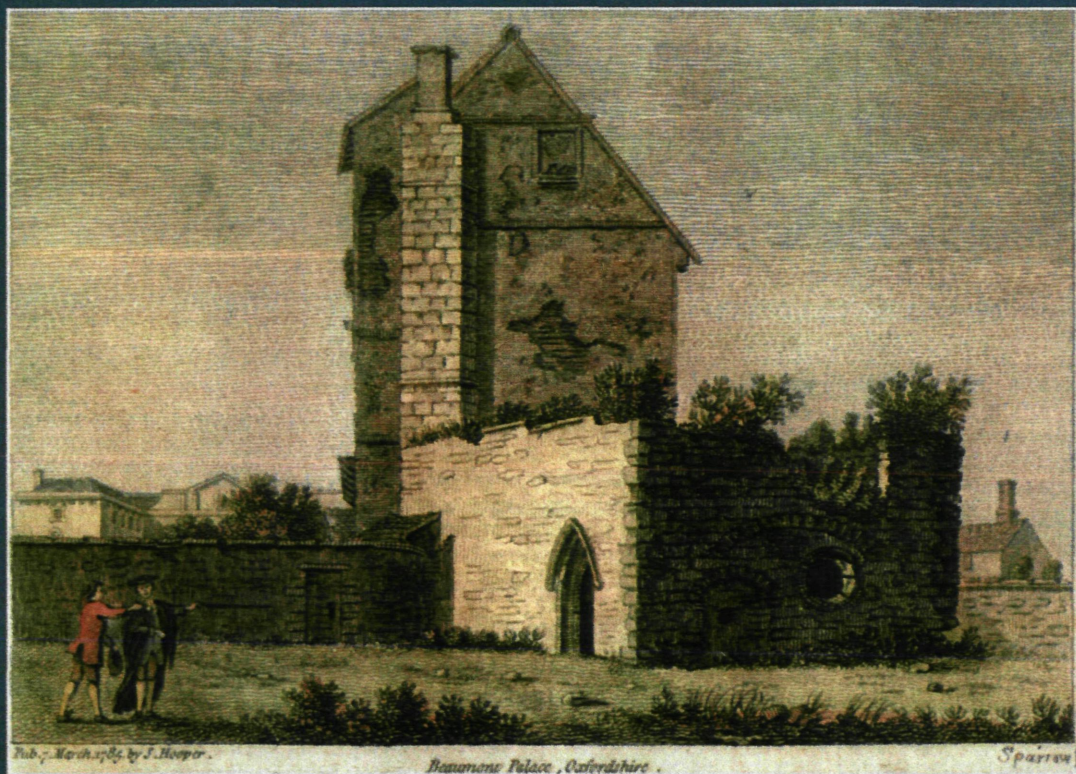


**BEAUMONT PALACE AND
THE WHITE FRIARS:
EXCAVATIONS AT THE
SACKLER LIBRARY,
BEAUMONT STREET, OXFORD**

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The construction of the new Sackler Library for the University of Oxford provided an opportunity to investigate the former site of the royal palace at Beaumont, the birthplace of both King Richard I (Lionheart) and King John. This report describes the archaeological excavations by Oxford Archaeological Unit, which took place in 1997-8.

The first elements of the site to be examined were the back gardens, pits and privies of the fine stone houses built along St. John St and Beaumont St by 19th-century property speculators. Records from that period show that burials were uncovered both during the construction of the houses, and during the building of Beaumont St itself in the 1820s. These burials were from the cemetery of the White Friars, or Carmelites, who occupied Beaumont in the later medieval period after being granted the site by King Edward II. Despite long years of later dereliction when the buildings were largely destroyed for their stone, the 1998 excavations traced the remains of at least two major structures, one of which may have been the church used by the friars. Parts of these buildings date back to the royal palace, and evidence for a plantation from this period was also found. Painted window glass from both the royal and monastic occupations is reported on in detail in this volume, together with the many other finds left behind by the site's occupants, such as pottery and writing instruments.

Finally, underlying the medieval remains, was a Bronze Age barrow or burial mound some thirty metres in diameter; its circular ditch presaging the rotunda of the new library which was to be built more than 3000 years later. The excavations, the analysis of the results and the publication of this report were funded by the University of Oxford and by Dr Mortimer K. Sackler, Hon. KBE.

