St Hugh’s Hall is founded and, in the early years, occupies properties in Norham Road, Norham Gardens and Field Road.

In 1886, St Hugh’s Hall moved to 17 to Norham Gardens and a library is established.

The first Library Committee meeting is held in 1896. The Librarian, Miss E.M. Venables, reports that the Library owns more than 1,000 volumes. In 1899, Miss Hayes-Robinson is appointed Librarian for one Term. She is succeeded by Miss D. Wylie.

The First Library Committee meeting is held in 1896. The Librarian, Miss E.M. Venables reports that the Library owns more than 2000 volumes, mostly on History, English and Science. Miss H.C. Deneke is appointed Librarian in Trinity Term 1904.

Dame J. Evans is appointed Librarian. In 1919, the Library Committee contacts the University of Louvain to offer two books for the restoration of their University Library after the First World War.

In 1920, Miss E.M. Thomas is appointed Librarian.

The College’s new main building is constructed including The Mordan Library, named after the College’s benefactress Clara Evelyn Mordan. In 1917 Miss E.M. Thomas is appointed Librarian.

In 1922, Miss W.M. Mammatt is appointed Librarian.

By 1932, the Library has over 12,000 books. The Librarian, Miss B.M. Hamilton Thompson insists that the accommodation situation has become acute.

In 1936, the College receives an important bequest from Mary du Carroy, Duchess of Bedford. This is a collection of Natural History volumes, with special reference to Ornithology.

An important bequest is made by Mary Church who gives her father, Dean Church’s collection to the college. The books from this bequest were mainly on the topics of Theology, History and English Literature.

In 1936, Miss M.F. Perham is appointed Librarian. In 1929, Miss E.E.S. Procter replaces her for a year before Miss B.M. Hamilton Thompson is appointed Librarian in 1930.

For the College Jubilee, a new Library is designed by Herbert Buckland, the architect of the main building, who mirrors the interior design of the Mordan Library. The new spacious Library, is named the Moberly Library after the first Principal.

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During the Second World War, St Hugh’s is requisitioned as a Military Hospital treating head injuries. The Librarian, Philippa Hesketh-Williams, writes that “The Library was kept open as usual for students… it was also open to the whole hospital.”

Dr Ady donates to the library a collection of music books. This bequest started a new Library policy on the provision of music “and coincided with the purchase of a nucleus music collection (biography and criticism).”

The Library is reorganised and three rooms are added: The Fulford Room, the Periodicals Room and a Stack Room.

Ms Deborah Quare is appointed Librarian. The college introduces the position of Library Fellow to liaise between the Library and Governing Body.

New subject areas of Engineering and Computing are added to the library collection.

The centenary fundraising appeal provides the Library with generous gifts that bring the number of volumes in the collection to 58,000.

A third stack room is added on the ground floor together with a Rare Books Stack.

In 1996 OLIS (Oxford Libraries Information System), the computerised cataloguing system, is introduced by Oxford University. St Hugh’s College Library introduces an automated circulation system and from 1998 the library holdings are shown on OLIS.

Following a major gift from his parents, the Library is refurbished and renamed after the late Howard Piper, a St Hugh’s alumnus, who matriculated in 1995.

The College appoints its first professional archivist to catalogue and manage its historical records.

BETTY BOOTHROYD AT THE DEDICATION OF THE HOWARD PIPER LIBRARY

Ms Laura Wilkinson is appointed as Librarian. A major refurbishment of the lobby area is carried out and a new self-issue, security and stock management system is installed. The Law Library is moved from No.82 Woodstock Road into the Main Library. New collections are introduced including DVDs, Broader Reading and Books by Fellows of St Hugh’s College.

The Library features on the new College webpage.

Ms Deborah Quare is appointed Librarian.

The Law Library is created to house the lawyers’ books and periodicals in the Large Lecture Room in No.82 Woodstock Road.

The Library is refurbished. A new room, The Science Reading Room, is inaugurated by Professor E.P. Abraham on 14 February 1978 and named after him. The Law Library is created to house the lawyers’ books and periodicals in the Large Lecture Room in No.82 Woodstock Road.

Isabel Aspin is appointed as the first professionally qualified librarian at St. Hugh’s. In 1952, J.G. Russell is appointed Librarian and will stay in post for 27 years.

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Treasures of the library: During the war, five of the most precious books owned by the library were sent to the Bodleian and housed in a bomb-proof shelter.