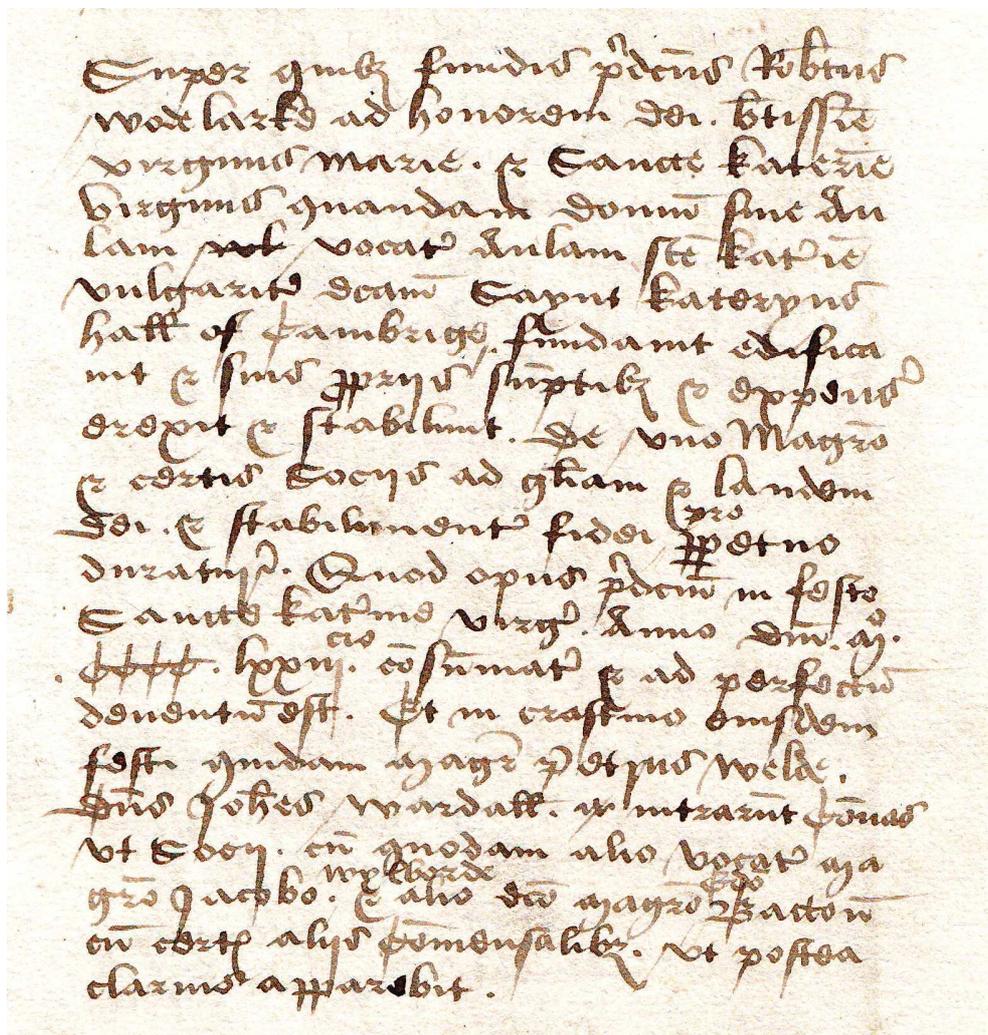


Founding St. Catharine's College

Robert Woodlark [also spelt Wodelark or Wodelarke] founded St. Catharine's College in 1473. His account of the reasons for founding the College can be found in a document he is believed to have written called the *Memorial Nigrum* (The Black Remembrance), which is still in the possession of the College today. Although the *Memorial Nigrum* can be dated to the late 15th Century, it is impossible to say for certain that it was his notebook or that it contains his handwriting. However without it, our knowledge about Woodlark's motivation for founding the College would be much poorer. The paragraph in which he describes the foundation can be seen below:



Woodlark's account of the foundation of the College, as recorded in the *Memorial Nigrum*

Transcription:

Super quibus fundis prædictus Robertus Wodelarke ad honorem Dei, beatissimæ virginis Mariæ et Sanctæ Katerinæ virginis quandam domum sive aulam, vocatam aulam sanctæ Katerinæ, vulgariter dictam Saynt Kateryn's Hall of Cambrige, fundavit, edificavit, et suis propriis sumptibus et expensis erexit et stabilivit de uno magistro et certis sociis ad gloriam et laudem Dei et stabilimentum fidei pro perpetuo duraturam. Quod opus prædictum in festo sanctæ Katerinæ virginis anno Domini MCCCCLXXIII consummatum et ad perfectum deventum est. Et in crastino ejusdem festi quidam magister Petrus Welde, dominus Johannes Wardall intrarunt communas ut socii, cum quodam alio vocato magistro Jacobo Wylborde et alio dicto magistro Edmundo Bacton, cum certis aliis commensalibus, ut postea clarius apparebit.

Translation:

'Upon which site the aforesaid Robert Wodelarke, to the honour of God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and St Catharine, founded, built and at his own costs and expenses erected and established a certain house or hall commonly called 'Saynt Kateryns Hall of Cambridge', for a master and certain fellows to remain in perpetuity to the glory and praise of God and the establishment of faith. Which aforesaid work was consummated and brought to perfection on the feast of St Catharine the Virgin in the year of our Lord 1473. And on the morrow of the same feast a certain Master Peter Welde and Ds John Wardall entered commons as fellows, with another person called Master James Wylborde and another called Master Edmund Bacton, with certain other fellow-commoners, as hereafter more plainly will appear.'