



AS IT IS

Charles Darwin's Notebooks Returned to Cambridge University after 20 Years

April 05, 2022

The Cambridge University Library in Britain received a “gift” in early March.

Someone left a pink gift bag near the building with a note: “Happy Easter, X,” it read. In this case, “X” was in place of a person’s name.

Inside the bag was the gift: two small notebooks from the famous British naturalist Charles Darwin. He is credited with the theory of evolution which says living things change over large periods of time.

One of the notebooks has a famous drawing in it called the “Tree of Life.” Darwin made the drawing in 1837.

The university talked about the incident on Tuesday.

Cambridge believes the notebooks were taken 20 years ago. They were first thought to be missing inside the building after they were taken to be photographed. But, after searching through 10 million books, maps and documents, the university reported the notebooks stolen to police in 2020.

British investigators notified police around the world, and a search began. The notebooks are valued at millions of dollars.

They were returned, however, in good condition.

Darwin's notebooks contained writings about his famous trip around the world on the ship H.M.S. Beagle. The research led to his book on evolution called *On the Origin of Species*.

Cambridge University Librarian Jessica Gardner said she was relieved to see the notebooks. But she said her true feelings are “**profound** and almost impossible to **adequately** express.”

Gardner said the notebooks will go back into the Darwin Archive. The library is also home to the works by scientists Stephen Hawking and Isaac Newton.

The notebooks will be on display later this year in a Darwin show at the library.

Local police said they are continuing to look into who may have taken the notebooks and asked for help from anyone who has information about the case.

I'm Dan Friedell.

Dan Friedell adapted this story for VOA Learning English based on a report by the Associated Press.

Where do you think Darwin's writings were for the last 20 years? Let us know. Write to us in the Comments Section and visit our Facebook page.

Words in This Story

profound -*adj.* very strongly felt

adequately -*adv.* enough for some need or requirement
