THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF

LIBRARIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

VOLUME II

TO 1640

EDITED BY

ELISABETH LEEDHAM-GREEN

AND TERESA WEBBER

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF

LIBRARIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

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VOLUME II
1640–1850

This volume charts the story of libraries from the Civil War to the time of the Chartist riots by way of the French Revolution. The social impact of these historical changes affected libraries and their users, for example in the damage caused to libraries in the Civil War and the formation of a 'mass reading public'. Two important themes are the establishment of libraries 'for the people' (for example, circulating libraries, and Sunday school and parish libraries) as well as for the privileged (for example, proprietary subscription libraries and gentlemen's clubs) and the consolidation of national reference collections for the academic community, such as the British Museum. The volume also pays attention to British libraries abroad, to serve British settlers, garrisons and merchants. The period saw great changes in the size and uses of libraries, with many private libraries being incorporated into public and academic collections, and this volume provides the most comprehensive overview available of the riches of early modern library history up to the 1850 Libraries Act.

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THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF

LIBRARIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

General Editor
Peter Hoare

Libraries pervade the culture of all literate societies. Their history illuminates that culture and many of its facets – the spread of literacy, the growth of scholarship, changes in educational practices – as well as reflecting changing social and political philosophies and practices. As a result, they have often developed in ways which could not have been foreseen by their founders.

The fundamental principle, of collecting for immediate and future use and enjoyment, has usually been combined with a social aim, the sharing of books and information among a wider group, which has become one of the characteristics of libraries today. This is one reason why libraries cannot simply be seen as a discrete phenomenon: throughout their history they must be considered part of the society they serve. This context includes the whole reading environment, the vital connection of libraries with social or cultural development, and the political framework which has become increasingly important in the past hundred years; economic and commercial aspects have also become more significant, as they have for the history of the book. The profession of librarianship has matured, especially in the last century, and has in turn affected the development of libraries: indeed it is the interaction of librarians and users that has provided much of the dynamic for that development. Changing methodologies of scholarship and the vicissitudes of private reading, too, affect the way libraries have developed.

Libraries vary enormously in form, in size and in purpose, and their nature has inevitably changed over the fifteen centuries encompassed in these volumes. In consequence the three volumes have different emphases and reflect different approaches to the historical record, but they share a common theme. This has inspired the project since its first inception on the initiative of Professor Robin Alston (whose library history database has been invaluable to many contributors), and under the aegis of the then Library History Group of the Library Association and its former Honorary Secretary Graham Jefcoate. Notwithstanding these differences in approach, the history of libraries is a continuum, and the divisions between the three volumes of what is essentially a single work are less precise than the volume titles may indicate. Developments for some years around the mid-seventeenth century may be treated in both Volume I and Volume II, though often in different contexts; and a similar overlap for the mid-nineteenth century exists between Volume II and Volume III. Readers concerned with these periods should be sure to consult both volumes.

The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland does not set out to be an exhaustive history of individual libraries: it is, rather, a general history charting the various trends and patterns of development, which studies different types of libraries and individual libraries as part of that broader view. In this way it aims to illuminate not only libraries and their users but also the wider history of the British Isles. Only in understanding their purpose and their context can the role of libraries be properly comprehended.

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF LIBRARIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

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VOLUME II
1640–1850

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Edited by
GILES MANDELBROTE
and
K. A. MANLEY

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1

Introduction: the changing world of libraries – from cloister to hearth

GILES MANDELBROTE AND K. A. MANLEY

In 1846 *Punch* expressed concern at one of the many inconveniences of modern metropolitan life – traffic congestion in public thoroughfares. Rather than introduce a congestion charge, Mr Punch proposed a novel (in more ways than one) expediency: the construction of a large omnibus, two or three storeys high, in which commuters could pass the time spent in traffic jams usefully. There would be compartments for letter-writing, hair-cutting, shaving (during dead stops, of course), and:

> There will be a refreshment-room in connection with the boot, and a circulating library near the top, so that a passenger on entering may subscribe either for the whole or a portion of his journey.[1]

The variety of library facilities available to the man (and woman) on the Clapham omnibus of the mid-nineteenth century was becoming bewilderingly diffuse. Libraries existed to cater for all tastes and communities, from common circulating libraries to London clubs, from parish lending library to cathedral library, from local literary society to university. All classes read, whether for amusement or instruction, and at all possible opportunities. *Punch*'s plan for an omnibus library was really very sensible.

One hundred and twenty years earlier, in 1728, Revd Robert Wodrow (himself a former librarian of Glasgow University) had vigorously deplored the social implications of the foundation of Britain's first circulating library by the elder Allan Ramsay:

> profannes is come to a great hight, all the villanous profane and obscene books and playes printed at London by Curle and others, are gote doun from London by Allan Ramsey [*sic*], and lent out, for an easy price, to young boyes, servant weemen of the better sort, and gentlemen, and vice and obscenity dreadfully propagated.[2]

1 *Punch* 11 (1846), 73.
2 R. Wodrow, *Analecta*, Maitland Club 60 (Edinburgh, 1843), vol. 3, 515–16.

This portrayal of library-based depravity contrasts with a more therapeutic initiative of half a century earlier. In 1684 Dr Thomas Tenison, vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields, Westminster, set up a public library explicitly to tempt young curates and chaplains out of the taverns and coffee-houses where he had found them wasting their time and substance.[3] (A similar motivation, though not directed at young clergymen, was found again in the public library movement of the later nineteenth century.) Libraries have, indeed, been seen more often as beneficial than as a malign influence, but Wodrow's outburst reminds us that their history is not one of unsullied sweetness and light, nor of steady progress towards a utopian goal.

Thus the world of libraries changed dramatically during the two centuries covered by this volume, with the focus moving from ecclesiastical and academic cloister to public arena (such as the British Museum) as well as cottage hearth. By 1850 any person could borrow any kind of literature and read it in his (or indeed her) own domestic space, or use an institutional library and socialise with like-minded people. The scholar enjoyed far better facilities than ever before. In 1849 Benjamin Disraeli, in a memoir attached to a new edition of Isaac D'Israeli's *Curiosities of literature*, recalled how in the 1820s his father had been denied access to the State Paper Office for research. No longer, proclaimed the book's reviewer in *The Times*:

> The difficulties interposed in the way of Mr Disraeli when he commenced his operations, nearly 60 years ago, are inconceivable to the student of to-day, to whom the libraries of the world fly open, and who, so far from imploring admittance to the shrine of knowledge, is now earnestly invited to enter and freely to choose of the wealth before him . . . The reading-room of the British Museum, in which diggers and miners now congregate with a zeal and numerical strength rivalled only by the better rewarded groups assembling about Californian rocks and rivers, was, 60 years since, the peaceful and unknown retreat of some half-dozen pious souls, unwilling that the memorable deeds and fruitful lives of generations dead and gone should pass away from the earth unregistered and unbeloved.[4]

The present volume charts the story of how libraries developed between two revolutionary periods, by way of two centuries of profound change – from the Civil War to the time of the Chartist riots, by way of the religious controversies of the 1680s and the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and, a century later, the French Revolution and its philosophies. All these events had a social

3 J. Evelyn, *Diary*, ed. E. S. de Beer (Oxford, 1955), vol. 4, 367.
4 *The Times*, 9 January 1849.

impact which directly affected libraries and the people who used them – for example, the damage caused to cathedral and college libraries in the Civil War, the rise of a readership for the radical and revolutionary writings of the 1790s (which inspired George III to demand registration of the printing press), and the formation of a reading public who wanted access to the latest publications about the events of the day as well as the provision of books for leisure, but who could not necessarily afford (or did not desire) to buy books themselves.

In Scotland, the violent religious conflict of the 1690s had its effects on libraries (where library promoters such as James Kirkwood and Andrew Cranston were forced to flee to England), as did the florescence of the Scottish Enlightenment over the next hundred years and the Disruption in the Church of Scotland in the 1840s. And in Ireland sectarian and political divisions were felt, as so often, across the whole spectrum of library provision, even extending to the execution for high treason of the librarian of the Linen Hall Library, Thomas Russell, in 1803.[5]

The eighteenth century saw many advances in library services, with a widening of access, a growth in collections and the development of new models of library provision – not to mention some spectacular examples of library architecture. By the early nineteenth century, two key themes are first the increasing establishment of libraries 'for the people' (for example penny circulating libraries, Sunday school and parish libraries, mechanics' institutes) as well as libraries for the privileged (for example proprietary subscription libraries, in which members bought shares, and gentlemen's clubs), and secondly the consolidation of national reference collections for scholars, such as the Bodleian Library (only half a century old at the beginning of this volume) and the library of the British Museum, founded at about our mid-point. And British libraries spread abroad, principally to serve settlers in the colonies but also for the benefit of British merchants, soldiers and sailors (and convicts).

The period of this volume also saw a marked shift in the history of personal libraries, in terms of the extension of personal book ownership at many levels of society, the growth of formally organised sales of libraries, with printed catalogues, and the fashionable development of book-collecting. Other significant private collections were to become components of the British Museum and other academic libraries. Many smaller collections were being built up for future transformation into publicly available assets, while burgeoning country houses contained libraries increasingly intended for social rather than purely intellectual purposes.

5 J. Killen, *A history of the Linen Hall Library 1788–1988* (Belfast, 1990), 45–6.

A division has been made within the volume at the year 1750. In many respects this is an artificial break, chosen partly because the development of particular kinds of libraries over two centuries, e.g. in universities, cannot easily be related in a single chapter. But the 1750s was a significant decade, witnessing the first appearance of proprietary subscription libraries (a significant milestone in the spread of general libraries outside London) and most notably the coincidental foundation of the British Museum in 1753. Although the latter's influence was not to be visible for several decades, this event was an important step in inaugurating a national library service. It would, though, be an exaggeration to suggest that the founders of the British Museum were specifically planning a national library, since the provision of books was an integral part of the larger objective of housing a collection of diverse curiosities. Many of its earliest librarians and keepers were scientists; in a parallel development, this period saw the foundation of many scientific and medical libraries within learned colleges and societies.

Although the crucial privilege of legal deposit – without which no truly national library could prosper – was deemed to have passed to the Museum with the arrival of the Royal Library in 1757, this was not codified in law until 1842. Only then did the British Museum begin to regard itself as having an imperial role befitting the country's status as a colonial power. This led to a long period of impressive growth in the library until its policies changed as Britain's place in the world changed, and by the end of the twentieth century its successor, the British Library, settled down to a more limited role which had become relatively much closer to that of other European national libraries.

The real pioneers of a national library were the individuals responsible for the original collections in the decades before the foundation of the British Museum – Cotton, Harley and Sloane. By the mid-nineteenth century the prime force in the library's progress was Antonio Panizzi, and his energetic involvement in library matters is an object lesson in another theme of this volume – that the history of libraries is not primarily about institutions, but about the individuals behind them. Four walls and a few bookshelves do not make a library, only a repository; a library has to be exploited to serve any kind of purpose, but its accessibility and usefulness depend entirely on the people responsible for its existence and maintenance – and particularly the often unsung compilers of catalogues! Similarly all kinds of libraries – such as parish and school libraries, and even the Inns of Court libraries – often owed their growth to individual benefactors, men like Humphrey Chetham, Narcissus Marsh, Daniel Williams or the Marquess of Dorchester.

'Public' libraries, as we know them today, did not exist before 1850. Like the influence of the British Museum, the effects of the Public Libraries Act of 1850 (where this volume leaves off) only became obvious to later generations. The present volume traces the rise of different kinds of libraries which were to culminate in that overwhelming pressure for Parliament to legislate to enable everyone to have free access to a municipal library. All played their part in creating a need for 'popular' local libraries as well as influencing the demand for 'free' education which was not realised through legislation until two decades after the first Public Libraries Act.

This volume is not a dictionary, not a gazetteer and not an encyclopedia. It does not aspire to provide a history of every library which ever existed during two hundred years; many libraries, particularly circulating libraries, began with a flourish but are never heard of again. Rather, the aim is to produce a 'social' history of a vital movement in British cultural history, in particular how libraries – essentially 'private' when the volume opens – moved inevitably and inexorably into the truly public domain.

At the beginning of the period, ordinary persons read, and read voraciously, the products of the press, whether pamphlets, broadsheets or newsletters. But they did not borrow books, except amongst themselves. Libraries were the preserve of the élite and were seen as institutions for the preservation and consultation of books. At the Bodleian, both King Charles I and Oliver Cromwell were refused permission to borrow volumes. The librarian, Thomas Barlow, explained the rule:

> The Library is a magazine which the pious founder hath fix'd in a publick place for a publick use; and though his charity to private persons is such that he will hinder none (who is justly qualify'd and worthy) to come to it, yet his charity to the publick is such that he would not have it ambulatory, to goe to any private person. And sure 'tis more rational that Mahomet should go to the mountaine, than that the mountaine should come to Mahomet.[6]

Bodley's ideal of the institutional library as a reference library for serious study is one of the main strands of this volume because it was a model for others. But there were other patterns too. Two hundred years later, libraries of one type or another were in every town and village, and the need for home-lending libraries had become an equally important and vibrant strand in library history. An imposing library building might make a strong impression, but libraries are more than specimens of architecture; their strength and importance does not just lie within their physical environment. Many subscription libraries were

6 W. D. Macray, *Annals of the Bodleian Library*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1890), 99–100, 109–10, 117.

contained within shops or town halls or merely members' homes; circulating libraries, often operating from bookshops, offered a diverse range of other attractions, such as patent medicines (to give just one example). What was important was the literary treasure contained on their shelves and the community which made this accessible. This volume attempts to explain the spread of such treasure-houses of knowledge.

PART ONE

*

THE EXPANSION OF BOOK COLLECTIONS 1640–1750

2

Ancients and moderns: cross-currents in early modern intellectual life

JOSEPH M. LEVINE

When Jonathan Swift decided to take stock of the intellectual culture of his time, he did so by taking sides in the great quarrel between the ancients and the moderns that had been gradually coming to a head for more than a century. It was natural for him to adopt the cause of his patron, Sir William Temple, and see what could be done to defend the allegiance to antiquity that Temple had argued in a brief but provocative essay that started the argument in 1690. What Temple had done there was to assert that every great cultural achievement lay in the past and that the best hope of the moderns was simply to acknowledge and imitate them. This was an old argument but it was especially provocative after a tumultuous century of modern accomplishment and Temple was answered at once, particularly by William Wotton and the defenders of the new science in the Royal Society. Thus began the battle of the books which Swift described and resumed in his own little work – and which he set appropriately enough in a library.[1]

To make sense of that noisy quarrel, one must look past its more frivolous moments to discover its foundation in a clash of cultural ideals, deeply rooted in European history. In particular, there were reflected in it two different attitudes that had come into conflict almost from the beginning of ancient times and which were often to be resumed in later generations. On the one hand, there was a philosophical / theological ideal that taught that the highest end of culture was to understand the unchanging principles of the natural and supernatural worlds. On the other hand, there was a more mundane notion that all that was necessary was to discover and teach only what was immediately

1 Swift's little work, *The battle of the books*, was added as an appendix to *A tale of a tub* (London, 1704), in which he had already satirised the learning of the moderns; the text has been edited with a full apparatus by A. C. Guthkelch and D. Nichol Smith, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1958). Temple's essay appeared first in his *Miscellanea*, part 2 (London, 1690), and was answered by Wotton in his *Reflections upon ancient and modern learning* (London, 1694): J. M. Levine, *The battle of the books: history and literature in the Augustan age* (Ithaca, NY, 1991).

useful in human affairs. The first was a contemplative ideal that exalted reason; the second an active one that required eloquence. Both proponents organised schools to transmit these rival notions of *paideia*; both set out their competing views in compendious treatises that described and defended their practice; and both exemplified their teaching in works of philosophy and science in the one instance, and in the rhetorical arts – oratory, literature and history – in the other.[2] Plato, above all, had represented this argument in many of his dialogues, in which he exalted the culture of dialectic and set Socrates deliberately against the sophists and their rhetoric; while the sophists, led by Isocrates, retorted with their own educational schemes and schools, which were elaborated later for the Romans by Cicero and Quintilian among others.[3] In this way, classical culture was transmitted to later times, not as one consistent whole, but rather in two parts and in rivalry.

For early modern England it was only after the Renaissance and the Reformation that this ancient antithesis was fully resumed. The middle ages had known some ancient philosophy, especially Aristotle, and used it to advantage in the universities for the philosophical/theological culture of scholasticism. The period had also known something of classical rhetoric, although it had confined its interest largely to peripheral matters. During the 'twelfth-century renaissance' there had been some modest resumption of the age-old rivalry between the logical and rhetorical arts; but it was only with the revival of civic life and learning, first in Italy, then in the rest of Europe, that the two cultures of antiquity were fully restored.[4]

As far as philosophy is concerned, despite the immediate hostility of the Reformation, medieval scholasticism did not die, and the Aristotelian corpus was resumed in the universities for its use to a reformed theology – although it was now an Aristotle freshly studied in Greek and extended to include

2 See, above all, W. Jaeger, *Paideia: the ideals of Greek culture*, trans. G. Highet, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1945), and H. I. Marrou, *A history of education in antiquity*, trans. G. Lamb (Madison, WI, 1982).

3 A. Dacier, *The works of Plato abridg'd* (London, 1701), vol. I, 145–50.

4 J. Paetow (ed.), *The battle of the seven arts: a French poem by Henri d'Andeli* (Berkeley, CA, 1914). That there was a medieval humanism is now well agreed, but in the words of one its advocates, 'There was no time for artistic representation or literary elegance': R. W. Southern, *Medieval humanism and other studies* (New York, 1970), 48. Charles Homer Haskins's view that 'ancient rhetoric was chiefly concerned with oratory, medieval rhetoric with letter-writing' may have to be extended (to preaching, for example), but still embodies a basic distinction. Cicero's rule-book, the *De inventione* and the spurious *Ad herennium*, were thus preferred to his *De oratore*, which was hardly known: Haskins, *Renaissance of the twelfth century* (Cambridge, 1937), 128, and various works by J. J. Murphy, including *Rhetoric in the middle ages* (Berkeley, CA, 1974).

his commentators.[5] At the same time, the rest of ancient philosophy (largely forgotten in the middle ages) was also recovered. Above all, Plato was retrieved and a fresh neo-platonism invented and revivified. In England this culminated in the seventeenth century in a formidable group of theologians at Cambridge University led by Henry More and Ralph Cudworth, who included among their pupils the young William Temple.[6] Eventually, even the ancient sceptics and those dangerous materialists, Lucretius and the Epicurians, also began to circulate. It was Thomas Stanley's *History of philosophy* (1655–62) that was the first to tell this whole tale in England – and incidentally help to invent a new genre.[7]

But while the philosophers were renewing and extending their ancient rivalries with one another, for the most part they still continued to nourish their ancient contempt for sophistry, resisting as far as they could any reinstatement of the humanities in the universities and insisting on the primacy of logic over rhetoric. So the Chancellor Sir Thomas More at the very beginning of the period had had to intervene in a battle between 'Greeks' and 'Trojans' at Oxford, and try to enforce an uneasy truce between the two sides that was to linger perilously for many years.[8] And the age-old controversy between the life of contemplation and the *vita activa* that had been set out memorably in Cicero's *De officiis* and resumed by the Italians – where it could be read in English in Castiglione's popular *Courtier* – was still being argued in England late in the seventeenth century, as in the polite exchange between John Evelyn and George Mackenzie.[9] Meanwhile the 'new' philosophers were no more hospitable to poetry and oratory and the faculty of imagination than the old.

5 C. B. Schmitt, *John Case and Aristotelianism in Renaissance England* (Kingston, Ont., 1983); W. T. Costello, *The scholastic curriculum at seventeenth-century Cambridge* (Cambridge, MA, 1958).

6 The best overview remains: E. Cassirer, *The Platonic renaissance in England*, trans. J. P. Pettegrove (Edinburgh, 1953). The most impressive work of the platonists was R. Cudworth, *The true intellectual system of the universe* (London, 1678).

7 For the historiography of philosophy at this period, see C. B. Schmitt and others (eds.), *The Cambridge history of Renaissance philosophy* (Cambridge, 1988).

8 The two sides were the traditional scholastic theologians and the new humanist exponents of the Greek language and letters. The latter, More points out, involves the study of the ancient poets, orators and historians and was invaluable among other things for teaching prudence in human affairs. See volume 15 of the Yale edition of the *Complete works of St. Thomas More*, ed. D. Kinney (New Haven, CT, 1986), 139.

9 The exchange occurred in 1665–6 and is reproduced in B. Vickers (ed.), *Public and private life in the seventeenth century: the Mackenzie–Evelyn debate* (New York, 1986); J. M. Levine, *Between the ancients and the moderns: baroque culture in Restoration England* (New Haven, CT, 1999), 8–10. For the *Courtier* in English, there was an early and popular translation by Thomas Hoby (London, 1561), and another by Robert Samber in 1724.

So John Locke, it was remembered later, typically 'effected to despise poetry and depreciate the ancients'.[10]

Still it was the Italian humanists, not the philosophers, who brought about the most complete and deliberate revival of antiquity and refashioned the grammar schools of the literate classes. By the sixteenth century, they had, with their northern followers, captured the education of the courts and cities throughout Europe and refashioned the curriculum for their aristocratic and civic patrons. They brought back into circulation as models for practical use all the ancient classics of rhetoric, poetry and history that had once comprised Cicero's *studia humanitatis*. For the humanists, it was the art of speech that once again became the capstone of secular education, and they insisted that their young students be brought up on an exclusive diet of the ancient Greek and Latin works in the original languages. Tudor educators like Erasmus and Roger Ascham, whose works were still being read in the eighteenth century, laid out the purposes and strategies of the new curriculum, while the grammar schools put them into practical use, where they lasted undisturbed until recent times.[11] Their express aim was always to prepare the aspiring young orator-statesman for public life – for which neither formal philosophy nor theology seemed of much use.[12] As a result, logic was either downplayed or reformed under the influence of rhetoric (as in the influential works of Peter Ramus), while the rest of the philosophical curriculum, with the exception of moral philosophy, was pretty much ignored, except by those who continued to aim at a career in religion.[13]

Yet even as this revival of the classics was occurring, it was accompanied in England by another deliberate resumption of antiquity: by the Protestant Reformation. Whatever disagreements the reformers may have had among themselves, they were all agreed that the best models and dearest wisdom of Christianity lay in the Bible and/or the early church, and that the 'modern' ideas and practices of Catholicism had been corrupted over time. Thus

10 J. Warton, *An essay on the genius and writings of Pope*, 2nd edn (London, 1806), vol. 2, 271–2. For a more nuanced view of Locke on imagination, see J. G. Buickerood, 'Empiricism with and without observation', in R. C. Leitz and K. L. Cope (eds.), *Imagining the sciences* (New York, 2004), 291–337.

11 Ascham's *Scholemaster* appeared first in 1570; there was an edition in 1711; and Samuel Johnson, who admired it, wrote a life and blurb for Ascham's *English works* in 1761. A good modern account may be found in L. Ryan, *Roger Ascham* (Stanford, CA, 1963), 250–86. For the continuing tradition of the grammar schools, see M. L. Clarke, *Classical education in Britain 1500–1800* (Cambridge, 1959).

12 J. M. Levine, 'Thomas Elyot, Stephen Hawes, and the education of eloquence,' in Levine, *The autonomy of history: truth and method from Erasmus to Gibbon* (Chicago, 1999), 53–74.

13 W. J. Ong, *Ramus, method, and the decay of dialogue* (Cambridge, MA, 1958), 336–601; A. Grafton and L. Jardine, *From humanism to the humanities* (Cambridge, MA, 1986), 160–200.

the reformers joined the humanists in looking backward for inspiration.[14] Together, they asked for nothing less than the resumption of the whole culture of antiquity, adding Hebrew and early Christian teaching to the pagan Greeks and Romans in a sometimes uneasy alliance.[15]

But for that purpose a whole new enterprise had to be created. It was soon perceived that all the ancient works needed to be discovered, edited, explicated and printed, before they could be usefully employed. In short all the disciplines of modern scholarship, or what were then called philology and antiquities, had to be created and elaborated, including palaeography, diplomatics and epigraphy, numismatics and archaeology.[16] By the end of the seventeenth century, after many generations, the libraries were full of ponderous tomes in Latin displaying this new learning, as well as vernacular digests that were meant for schoolboys and popular consumption. One grand series of works, begun in the late seventeenth century by the Dutchmen Graevius and Gronovius, was extended eventually to fill some thirty-nine volumes in folio; while another by a single author, the Frenchman Montfaucon, took fifteen more.[17] And of course the classics themselves had to be reissued again and again with an ever more cumbersome surrounding of explanatory notes and commentaries. The ancient works were old, but the scholarship was new – collaborative, cumulative and progressive – thus furnishing (like natural science, which in this way it resembled) an unexpected ground for the claims of modernity.

Now, it was in the face of all this *ancienneté* that the moderns began to assert their many claims, and it was the philosophers, especially those who were concerned with nature, who led the way. The 'scientific revolution' was aimed in the first place against Aristotle and ancient science – the science of Ptolemy,

14 The Calvinists preferred the Bible; the Anglicans, the Fathers; and this furnished one of the grounds for controversy between the Puritans and the Arminians that began under Charles I and continued for the rest of the century. Nevertheless both sides agreed to dispute the 'modern' inventions of Roman Catholicism for what they insisted was an older and better authority.

15 Milton is still defending pagan books against Christian censors in the *Areopagitica* (London, 1644).

16 A good introduction to the subject is L. D. Reynolds and N. G. Wilson, *Scribes and scholars*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1974). E. J. Kenney remarks on the slow development of Renaissance philology in 'The character of humanist philology', in R. R. Bolgar (ed.), *Classical influences on European culture A.D. 500–1500* (Cambridge, 1971), 119–28. Anthony Grafton has done much in recent years to illuminate the whole subject; besides his magisterial study of Joseph Scaliger, see his *Defenders of the text: the traditions of scholarship in an age of science* (Cambridge, MA, 1991). For the antiquaries, see A. Momigliano, 'Ancient history and the antiquarian', in his *Studies in historiography* (New York, 1966), 1–39; J. M. Levine, 'The antiquarian enterprise 1500–1800', in Levine, *Humanism and history: origins of modern English historiography* (Ithaca, NY, 1987), 73–106.

17 Montfaucon's *Antiquité expliquée* appeared first in ten volumes in 1719, and five more in 1724. It was almost immediately turned into English.

Galen and Pliny the Elder – which was found to be increasingly inadequate.[18] In England it was Francis Bacon who led the way, challenging most of the ancient works as misguided and proposing a new experimental method for the advancement of learning. Eventually, and after much skirmishing, the Royal Society adopted this essentially Baconian posture and designed a deliberate programme of scientific progress that could only provoke the defenders of antiquity into combat. But while its early publicists, such as Sprat and Glanvill, were making the Baconian case for modernity, it was probably the actual works of discovery by Hooke, Harvey, Boyle and their many colleagues, and most emphatically by Isaac Newton, that did most to win the cause.[19]

In 1690, however, the case was still in doubt. Temple, who had been educated at Cambridge (though he did not pay a lot of attention), remembered that according to his neo-platonic teachers almost everything that was valuable in contemplative knowledge had been transmitted already from the earliest times through an ancient wisdom or *prisca theologia* long before Aristotle and the Greeks. According to them it was such pre-classical philosophers as the Egyptian Hermes Trismegistus and the Persian Zoroaster, not to say the Chaldeans, Brahmans and Hebrew Kabbalists, who had anticipated the most basic principles of human knowledge, which they transmitted only later to Pythagoras and Plato and their modern followers.[20] At the same time, there were many who continued to believe that Adam and Moses had preceded even those early sages as the ultimate sources of wisdom.[21] Such new-fangled theorists as Hobbes and Descartes shocked the world with their pretensions to modernity but did not easily persuade the world of their value, while Locke's great essay was only just about to appear. Furthermore, it was not yet clear just how much of a practical payoff the new science could claim, whatever its

18 For a survey of recent literature, see M. Osler, 'Rethinking the scientific revolution: new historiographical directions', *Intellectual News* 8 (2000), 20–30.

19 This episode is the centrepiece of R. F. Jones, *Ancients and moderns: the rise of the scientific movement in seventeenth-century England*, 2nd edn (St. Louis, MO, 1961), chapters 8–9. To what extent the Royal Society had a general programme is discussed by M. Hunter in *Establishing the new science* (Woodbridge, 1989), chapter 2, and 'The early Royal Society and the shape of knowledge', in his *Science and the shape of orthodoxy* (Woodbridge, 1975), 169–79.

20 J. M. Levine, 'Sir Walter Ralegh and the ancient wisdom', in B. Kuntze and D. Broutigam (eds.), *Court, country and culture* (Rochester, NY, 1992), 89–108, and 'Latitudinarians, neoplatonists, and the ancient wisdom', in R. Kroll and others (eds.), *Philosophy, science and religion in England 1640–1700* (Cambridge, 1992), 83–108. In general, see C. Schmitt, 'Perennial philosophy: from Agostino Steuco to Leibniz', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 27 (1966), 505–32; D. P. Walker, *The ancient theology* (Ithaca, NY, 1972); F. Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the hermetic tradition* (1964, repr. New York, 1969).

21 D. B. Sailor, 'Moses and Atomism', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 27 (1966), 3–16.

intentions. Temple was thus not really naive when in his little essay he insisted on the ancient claims to all philosophical and theological knowledge.

Nevertheless, it was with the humanities that Temple felt most secure in his *ancienneté*. Was there anyone in 1690 who would defend modern literature against the ancient poets, orators and historians? As a writer, politician and man of the world, Temple had no doubt about the superiority of the ancients in that regard, and of his own competence to judge. Even some of the members of the Royal Society were inclined to allow something to Temple on that point. The ancients, they admitted, had excelled in almost all of literature and the fine arts, although they remained steadfast in their defence of the moderns in science and philosophy. Thus upon reading Temple, the great naturalist John Ray wrote immediately to a friend in the Royal Society and grudgingly allowed that the ancients had indeed excelled the moderns in 'acuteness of wit and elegancy of language in all their writings, in their poetry and their oratory'. He believed that that was simply the result of devoting all their energies to cultivating them while neglecting all the natural history and experimental philosophy that Ray preferred and which the moderns had so far developed. The arts of language, he asserted flatly, 'are by wise men censured as inferior to the study of things. words being but the picture of things; and to be wholly occupied about them, is to fall in love with the picture, and neglect the life'. In the case of oratory, which he recognised as the best of the humanistic arts, Ray was altogether contemptuous; it was 'but a kind of voluptuary one, like cookery, which sophisticates meats and cheats the palate, spoiling wholesome viands and helping unwholesome'.[22]

Meanwhile, for the contemporary poets and orators, it is perhaps enough to say that they went on about their business pretty much in disregard of modern philosophy and science and the strictures of such as Ray; and they were, if anything, even more devoted to ancient literature than before. Augustan writers, like Alexander Pope and his friends (including Swift), had few qualms about advocating the ancient superiority and continued to draw on classical authority for inspiration, whatever doubts Dryden and others may have occasionally expressed in an earlier generation.[23] It was the eighteenth century,

22 John Ray to Tancred Robinson, 15 December 1690: E. Lankester (ed.), *Correspondence of John Ray* (London, 1848), 229. Ray also believed that the moderns could vie with the ancients in geometry, arithmetic and history, and surpass them in astronomy, geography and chronology. More controversially, he was willing to contest ancient superiority in the fine arts, as well as politics and morality. For Ray, see C. E. Raven, *John Ray, naturalist*, 2nd edn, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1950).

23 For Dryden's ambivalence, see Levine, *Between the ancients and the moderns*, 33–109. The classic text is Dryden's *Essay on dramatic poesie* (London, 1667), where the issue is debated.

after all, that saw the triumph of neo-classicism. And it is no coincidence that the golden age of English oratory – of Pitt, Burke, Fox and the rest – should occur coincidentally with the triumph of the ancient arts and architecture, and that English politicians should imagine themselves re-enacting in their own senate the unrivalled performances of Cicero and Demosthenes.[24]

Yet it would be too easy simply to divide the field and leave it at that. Even though there were doubtless two distinct cultures in early modern times, with different origins and appeals, not everyone was satisfied with this bifurcation, and the two forms of classical *paideia* were not ever watertight compartments. Curiously it was Francis Bacon, who had inspired so much modernity, who probably made the most influential attempt to bridge the two cultures. Bacon had encountered both humanists and scholastics in combat during his own education at Cambridge, and he responded by trying to reform contemporary philosophy and bring it down to earth from its high contemplative ideal, making it inductive and practical.[25] He borrowed from the rhetorical arts the notion that historical examples could be collected and assembled and generalised to provide the rules for life and conduct, and he advocated their practical use in the world. A new philosophy was thus both possible and desirable, but it must be a philosophy whose chief task would be to unlock the secrets of nature and put them to work, and it must be collaborative and progressive. In thus transforming philosophy into a practical matter he hoped to make it acceptable, along with letters, to the man of affairs. In canvassing the arts and sciences of his time, Bacon continued to look generally backward for inspiration in the humanities, but decidedly forward to the progress of natural science. It was this alternative, somewhere between the two poles of ancients and moderns, that appealed so much to those moderate 'moderns' like William Wotton, and which allowed them to grant the humanities to the ancients, while rejecting Aristotle for the new philosophy.[26]

To some extent the men of affairs responded affirmatively. Natural philosophy required means and leisure, and the advancement of learning needed the activity and patronage of the upper classes. Bacon himself had set the example as both philosopher and lord chancellor, and it was sometimes recalled that he

24 J. M. Levine, 'Why neoclassicism? Politics and culture in eighteenth-century England', *British Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies* 25 (2002), 75–102.

25 For what follows see J. M. Levine, 'Natural history and the new philosophy: Bacon, Harvey, and the two cultures', in Levine, *Humanism and history*, 123–54.

26 It is thus no accident that it was just when the authority of Aristotle as a scientist and metaphysician was coming under attack that the humanist Aristotle of the *Rhetoric* and the *Poetics* came into his own.

had given his life to investigating a frozen chicken by catching pneumonia and prematurely dying as a martyr to science. When later the aristocratic Robert Boyle dedicated his career to propagating the experimental science in word and deed, he provided an example of enormous importance.[27] Throughout Europe a vast 'republic of letters' developed to expedite exchange among the proponents of science. Correspondence, periodicals and learned societies were some of its prominent new institutions.[28] Yet it still seemed preposterous to many like Swift and the author of the *Transactioneer* (who made so much fun of the activities described in the official *Transactions* of the Royal Society) to find, at the end of the seventeenth century, a savant on hands and knees collecting rocks and studying worms.[29]

Even so, it was not only secular learning that became a battleground between ancients and moderns. Bacon, it is true, had tried to separate natural science from religion, but for many of his followers (for Boyle and Newton for example) knowledge of nature could be used to reinforce or prove the truths of theology. Increasingly, however, in the seventeenth century, it was to history that religious polemic turned. Before long nearly every Christian text and every Christian heresy was resumed by one party or another in the internecine religious controversies that marked the era. The whole of Christian history was recalled for polemical purposes and the early church Fathers underwent something of the same revival as their classical secular counterparts.[30] Even the text of the Bible was newly edited, translated and explicated.[31] And once again, the modern disciplines of classical philology were called upon to restore the ancient sources of Christian belief. No wonder perhaps that varieties of

27 S. Shapin, 'Who was Robert Boyle? The creation and presentation of an experimental identity', in his *A social history of truth: civility and science in seventeenth-century England* (Chicago, 1994), 126–92.

28 A. Goldgar, *Impolite learning: conduct and community in the republic of letters, 1680–1750* (New Haven, CT, 1995); J. M. Levine, 'Strife in the republic of letters', in H. Bots and F. Waquet (eds.), *Commercium litterarium: forms of communication in the republic of letters* (Amsterdam, 1993), 301–19.

29 R. Lund (ed.), *The Transactioneer (1700)* (Los Angeles, 1988); J. M. Levine, 'The virtuoso satirised', in Levine, *Dr. Woodward's shield: history, science, and satire in Augustan England*, 2nd edn (Ithaca, NY, 1991), 114–29.

30 Sir Henry Savile, translator of Tacitus (Oxford, 1591), was also the editor of the magnificent Greek version of St Chrysostom (Eton, 1610–13), as well as Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* (Eton, 1613).

31 The story begins with Erasmus' edition of the Greek New Testament (Basle, 1516) and culminates with Brian Walton's *Biblia sacra polyglotta* (London, 1657) and John Mill's edition of the Greek (London, 1707); see H. Todd, *Memoirs of the life and writings of Brian Walton*, 2 vols. (London, 1821); A. Fox, *John Mill and Richard Bentley: a study of the textual criticism of the New Testament 1675–1729* (Oxford, 1954).

scepticism should also begin to recur and that deists and socinians should turn up later in the century to help provoke that remarkable apologetical literature which for a time seems to have dwarfed almost every other form of publication. Strangely enough it was the orthodox Anglicans (Wotton among them) who first glimpsed the notion that the progress of knowledge could be extended to theology as well as to secular learning and that the moderns would show some advance over antiquity there too.[32]

But how was it possible to assimilate all this learning, both ancient and modern, literary and scientific? Few tried, put off (as Pepys complained apologetically) by the more pressing business of ordinary life.[33] But for someone like John Evelyn, who was blessed with health, long life and sufficient means, it seemed necessary to sort out the possibilities, although the difficulty of the project was growing more obvious with every passing year. The seventeenth century admired those hearty spirits who tried to take all knowledge for their province, and called them *virtuosi*, although, to be sure, they also suffered much satire.[34] Thus Evelyn was early compared to that consummate continental virtuoso Peiresc, whose life was presented to the world by the philosopher Gassendi as *The mirrour of true nobility and gentility* and translated into English in 1657. Peiresc, according to his translator (who dedicated his book to Evelyn), had 'a sprightful curiosity [which] left nothing unreacht into in the vast all-comprehending Dominions of Nature and Art'. From him, the English gentleman could learn 'that knowledge, which is the highest perfection of Man, by which he differs from the Beasts, must needs be the principal accomplishment of a Gentleman; and that the compleatly knowing man, must be Janus-like, double-fac'd, to take the cognizance of Times past, as well as the late-past, or present times, wherein he lives'.[35] Evelyn gave it a try, devoting himself first to literature, which however he gradually abandoned, and then to all the practical arts and sciences, from etching to gardening, architecture to numismatics, making many useful contributions, some of which appeared first

32 R. S. Crane, 'Anglican apologetics and the idea of progress', in his *The idea of the humanities and other essays* (Chicago, 1967), vol. 1, 214–87; J. M. Levine, 'Deists and Anglicans: the ancient wisdom and the idea of progress', in R. D. Lund, *The margins of orthodoxy* (Cambridge, 1995), 219–39.

33 'Being (God knows) not only noe pretender to, much lesse Professor of, any of the learned Facultys, but on the contrary, a Person known to have pass'd the greater and more doable part of my life, in an uninttermitted Cours, or rather Tumult of Businesse, I have had very little Self-leisure to read': Pepys to Arthur Charlett, 6 August 1694, in R. G. Howarth (ed.), *Letters and the second diary of Samuel Pepys* (London, 1933), 243–6.

34 W. E. Houghton, 'The English virtuoso in the seventeenth century', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 3 (1942), 51–73, 190–219.

35 W. Rand, introduction to Gassendi's *Mirrour of true nobility and gentility* (London, 1657), A3v–A4. G. Cahen-Salvador, *Un grand humaniste: Peiresc 1580–1637* (Paris, 1951).

in the *Transactions* of the Royal Society, which as a founding member he never failed to support, as well as separately in a score of books.[36] At the same time he studied art and antiquities, like Peiresc, both in his travels abroad and later at home. Nor was he by any means indifferent to the worldly need for ancient rhetoric, for the need for 'a more ornate and graceful manner of speaking'. A proper education in the classical authors, he wrote, 'would not only grace and furnish the bar with excellent lawyers, but the nation with able persons fit for any honourable employment, to serve and speak in Parliaments and councils; give us good magistrates and justices for reference at home in the country; able ambassadours and orators abroad, in a word qualified patriots and pillars of state'.[37] He saw the importance of sound new editions of the classics and even proposed a scheme for publishing them to his old friend, the earl of Clarendon.[38]

As a consequence, Evelyn bought everything he could of both ancient and modern learning and was consumed by the problem of organising and utilising his remarkable library. He translated Gabriel Naudé's *Instructions concerning erecting of a library* (1661) and left a catalogue of his books with a 'Method for a Librarie According to the Intellectual Powers': i.e. memory (which included philology, history and works of the imagination) and judgement (which included mathematics, philosophy and theology), setting out locations for all the shelves and presses.[39] He also wrote another unfinished piece about collecting and using manuscripts.[40] And he proffered endless advice about bibliography to those who needed help, like his friend Pepys, who was writing a history of navigation, and William Nicolson, who was putting together his *English historical library* (1696–99) as a guide to all the sources of

36 G. Keynes, *John Evelyn: a study in bibliophily with a bibliography of his writings*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1968).

37 Evelyn to Nicolson, 10 November 1699, in J. Evelyn, *Diary and correspondence*, ed. W. Bray (London, 1902), vol. 3, 378–9. He had also once written a small tract to show the utility of the modern languages, which he had hoped to publish but which somehow got lost. 'There is in it', he told Pepys, 'a usefull rescention of good authors, and a method of reading them to advantage': 6 December 1681, in J. R. Tanner (ed.), *Private correspondence . . . of Samuel Pepys* (London, 1926), vol. 1, 16–17.

38 Evelyn to Clarendon, 27 Nov. 1666, in his *Diary and correspondence*, ed. H. B. Wheatley (London, 1906), vol. 3, 346–8.

39 Keynes, *John Evelyn*, 14–17, Evelyn's library was finally dispersed and sold at Christie's in 1977–8.

40 The unfinished tract is given in Evelyn's *Memoirs*, ed. W. Bray, 2 vols. (London, 1818), 333–48. One should not, he remarks there of the search, 'disclaime the rummaging sometimes of the most neglected corners of Shops, and other obscure places, however cover'd with dust and cobwebs'. As Geoffrey Keynes (who shared the passion) remarks, 'this breathes the true spirit of the game' (*John Evelyn*, 7).

British history.[41] Yet even he sometimes found himself in despair at the increase of learning which already threatened to overwhelm even the most indefatigable of the virtuosi with the problem of too much knowledge. Nor did he find an easy way to reconcile the two ancient forms of *paideia*. Late in life he wrote to his friend Pepys, imploring that someone might bring order out of chaos and select only such books as were most necessary.

> What a benefactor were he that were able and willing to give us a catalogue of authors as were only, and absolutely, and fully effectual to the ascertaining of such a competency of practical, usefull, and speculative knowledge too, as one might hope to benefit by within the ordinarie circles of one's life, without being bewildered . . . I am still persuaded that this were not impossible, and that lesse than a hundred authors, studied in proper method, would go a great way towards this end. I do not meane by excluding any of the Classics, which in a very few yeares may all be read, together with the Greeke and Latine Historians, from Herodotus downwards. But I speake of the subsidiarie arts and other faculties, as far as to accomplish one that did not intend a profession.

Evelyn even proposed a candidate for the job in his new young friend William Wotton.[42]

Indeed there was probably no one who was better equipped in his generation to take on the task. Wotton had received an extraordinary education in the classics from his father, who had taught him the languages and read him the works of Greece and Rome and ancient Israel, while still a child. Less obviously, he had become interested in the new world of natural science, and soon entered the Royal Society as its youngest member. To Evelyn and his friends there was no one who was better prepared to take on the superficial essay of Temple and provide a proper measure of contemporary learning. When the *Reflections on ancient and modern learning* appeared, Pepys praised it at once for its learning, 'through all the dimensions of it, length, breadth, and depth'.[43] Wotton had taken each of the disciplines one by one and judiciously and patiently assessed their present state. He accepted the traditional division of the field and generally rewarded the ancients for their achievements in literature and the arts and the moderns in science and philosophy. And although this did not immediately conclude the battle, this was the view that was generally accepted in the eighteenth century.

41 These were corrected and enlarged in 1714, and brought together with a Scottish (1702) and an Irish part (1724) in 1736: J. M. Levine, 'William Nicolson, virtuoso', in C. Jones and G. Holmes, *London diaries of William Nicolson* (Oxford, 1985), 11–17; Levine, *Battle of the books*, 288–90.

42 Evelyn to Pepys, 2 September 1694, in Howarth, *Letters*, 248–50.

43 Pepys to Evelyn, 10 August 1694, in Howarth, *Letters*, 246–8.

For the moment, however, Temple and his party were not convinced. They had little to say about natural science, in which they were frankly not interested, and preferred to make fun of it. Their preferred weapon was satire, and, like the brilliant rhetoricians that they were, they tried ably to distract their readers from the substantive issues. On one point alone were they specially concerned. Among other modern achievements, Wotton had claimed philology and had set aside a whole chapter in the *Reflections* to praise the many advances in scholarship which he believed allowed the moderns to know more about the past than even the ancients themselves. He was able to back up this claim in the second edition of his work by including a whole new contribution from his friend and fellow modern, the great philologist Richard Bentley. Bentley showed there how the allegedly ancient *Epistles of Phalaris*, which had been praised by Temple as an example of ancient superiority in prose writing, was actually a late and clumsy fraud. This was disturbing and fraught with consequences for a proper appreciation of ancient letters. What was true about Phalaris might easily be extended to Homer – and perhaps even to the Bible! Temple and his friends responded in a fury by deriding Bentley's methods and conclusions, claiming their own special competence to judge as practising authors and men of the world. Their satire was effective enough to postpone a reckoning for a time, even though Bentley enlarged his arguments pretty conclusively in a masterful separate work that both disposed of Phalaris as a classic and showed the full possibilities of the new scholarship for reading and understanding the ancient writings.[44]

In short, it seemed to the proponents of *ancienneté* that the moderns wished to take away just what they most desired: the immediate practical value of the classics to polite society. By requiring an intimate knowledge of the ancient languages with all the arcane disciplines that might contribute to their meaning, they were putting the classics beyond the range of ordinary people, who needed to get on with their lives and had not the skills and leisure for scholarship. By insisting on the necessity of learning, the moderns were (however inadvertently) distancing the ancients from contemporary life and making them less immediately accessible. 'It is a pretty poem', Bentley is supposed to have said to Alexander Pope on his translation of the *Iliad*, 'but it is not Homer'. But that was just the version that Swift and the eighteenth century really wanted – a Homer, bereft of the massive erudition that (for example)

44 Wotton's second edition with Bentley's appendix was published in 1697; it was answered by a collaborative satirical work attributed to Charles Boyle and known popularly as 'Boyle against Bentley' (1698); and then by Bentley in his *Dissertations on the letters of Phalaris* (London, 1699).

surrounded Barnes's edition of the Greek (1711) in two volumes and nearly 2,000 pages, one that simply reflected their own eighteenth-century values, rather than the primitive values of early Greece.[45]

So Swift had no hesitation in the *Battle of the books* in giving a resounding victory to the ancients over the moderns, to Temple and his friends over Wotton and Bentley, both of whom were thoroughly disgraced and defeated in the mock struggle at the end of his little work. Nevertheless, the quarrel went merrily on for a long time unresolved, and Swift did not gain the simple victory that he envisaged. For the most part, the defenders of antiquity continued to exert their authority in the ensuing neo-classical age in literature and the arts, while the moderns, just as Wotton had forecast, reaffirmed and extended their victory in modern science and technology. Nevertheless, when at last the quarrel subsided, it left at least one legacy in the continuing question about the relationship of past literature to modern life and the rôle of modern scholarship in serving or obstructing the practical value of the classics. For the book-collector and librarian, then as now, it remained an open question just how much of all this learning, how many of these books about books and books about things, was necessarily to be encouraged and absorbed within the practical confines of bulging shelves, narrow budgets and straitened time.

45 J. M. Levine, 'The battle of the books and the shield of Achilles', in Levine, *Autonomy of history*, 75–108; Levine, *Battle of the books*, 222–3.

3

Libraries, books and learning, from Bacon to the Enlightenment

PAUL A. NELLES

When Francis Bacon wrote that 'books must follow sciences, and not sciences books', he voiced an increasingly dominant view of the role of the book in early modern intellectual life.[1] This had important consequences for the role of the library as an institution of learning. Over the previous century, the library had shed its Renaissance image of a store-house of books and treasure-chest of knowledge to become regarded as an institution equal in status to the learned societies and academies, colleges and universities, museums and laboratories which dotted the contemporary intellectual landscape. Its purpose was not only to serve as an archive of learning, but also to assist in the active dissemination of knowledge. The library had come to have rules, protocols and a cultural ethos all of its own. It was a place of social interaction, polite conversation and intellectual exchange. Libraries, even humble ones, were frequently hodgepodge collections not only of printed books but also of pamphlets, printed ephemera and manuscripts of all kinds; of sketches, woodcuts, engravings and paintings; of natural, 'artificial' and historical rarities. Books and objects were expensive, and a well-stocked library meant deep pockets on the part of institutions and patrons. Consequently the libraries of wealthy collectors and well-funded institutions could be ornate and even pompous affairs, meant to dazzle the beholder. But so too, libraries were hard-working tools of learning. Carefully catalogued and indexed, working libraries served contingents of scholars from a variety of intellectual backgrounds.

What intellectual and cultural roles did the library play in the century preceding the foundation of the British Museum? How did libraries reflect and shape the world of learning of which they were part? Between the Renaissance and the Enlightenment the library was called upon to interact with a diffuse manuscript legacy, a print culture which frequently threatened to drown its

1 F. Bacon, 'Proposition . . . touching the compiling an amendment of the Laws of England', in J. Spedding (ed.), *Works of Francis Bacon*, vol. 13 (London, 1857), 67.

audience, and a host of noisily competing intellectual communities.[2] No wonder, then, that if anything unified discussion of the library in seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Britain, it was a loose appropriation of the greatest of early modern chameleons, Francis Bacon.

Early modern observers of the library scene offered extended excursuses on the role of the library as an instrument of 'the advancement of learning'. Three principal Baconian themes guided discussion of the relationship of libraries, books and learning: the importance of institutional support for the new programme of learning; the necessity of collaboration and communication between members of an intellectual community; and the need to catalogue and evaluate the fruits of learning both past and present. Ironically, libraries had found little favour with Bacon himself. Bacon looked agreeably enough upon texts as evidence of the ingenuity of the human mind. None the less in the *Novum organum* (1620) he remarked that, though the great variety of books in a library might be widely admired, eventually admiration would turn to astonishment at the poverty of subjects to which the human mind had been directed.[3] Elsewhere Bacon opined that books found in a library 'containeth (for the far greater part) nothing but iterations, varied sometimes in form, but not new in substance'. The devastating result was that 'opinion of store was a cause of want'.[4] The library in Bacon's view symbolised the stagnant learning of the universities, the compilatory nature of Renaissance culture, and an intellectual ethos which privileged authority and admiration over impartiality and critical judgement.

None the less, subsequent generations repeatedly looked to the library as a new Solomon's House. Bacon himself had greeted the foundation of the Bodleian Library as 'an Ark to save learning from deluge'.[5] So too, one of the chief functions of the 'Merchants of Light' described in Bacon's *New*

2 There is a sparse literature on the subject of library economy for the British Isles. See D. McKitterick, 'Bibliography, bibliophily, and the organization of knowledge', in D. Vaisey and D. McKitterick, *The foundations of scholarship: libraries and collecting, 1650–1750* (Los Angeles, 1992), 29–61; W. H. Sherman, *John Dee: the politics of reading and writing in the English Renaissance* (Amherst, MA, 1995); I. R. Willison, 'The development of the British Library to 1857 in its European context: a tour d'horizon', in P. Raabe (ed.), *Öffentliche und private Bibliotheken im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert* (Wolfenbüttel, 1977), 33–61. For European developments, see L. Balsamo, *La bibliografia*, new edn (Milan, 1995); H. Zedelmaier, *Bibliotheca universalis und bibliotheca selecta* (Cologne, 1992); R. Chartier, *The order of books: readers, authors, and libraries in Europe between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries*, trans. L. Cochrane (Cambridge, 1994); F. Géal, *Figures de la bibliothèque dans l'imaginaire espagnol du Siècle d'Or* (Paris, 1999).

3 F. Bacon, *The advancement of learning*, in *Works*, vol. 3, 318; Bacon, *Novum organum*, in *Works*, vol. 1, 192; cf. p. 125.

4 F. Bacon, *Filum labyrinthi*, in *Works*, vol. 3, 497; cf. *Cogitata et visa*, in *Works*, vol. 3, 593.

5 F. Bacon to T. Bodley, in *Works*, vol. 3, 253.

Atlantis was to bring books as well as scientific instruments and specimens into Solomon's college, a part of Bacon's fable which reflected the general ethos of early modern collecting up to the foundation of the British Museum in 1753.[6] And Bacon's call for a 'just history of learning' in *The advancement of learning* (1605) would provide a focal point for many of the library's ancillary activities over the course of the next century. Bacon had demanded that the history of learning 'recover out of the records what doctrines and arts flourished in which regions and ages of the world . . . The most distinguished authors and outstanding books should be noted, schools, successions, academies, societies, colleges, the orders, and finally everything else which bears upon the condition of learning.'[7] Eventually, library catalogues, bibliographies, sale catalogues and periodicals all claimed to take part in this collaborative 'history of learning'. Bacon's iconic status as the founder of a new intellectual programme meant that discussion of books and libraries would evoke this Baconian ethos well into the eighteenth century. Disparate intellectual communities within British society repeatedly looked to the library as Bacon had not – as an institution for the advancement of learning and a centre of intellectual collaboration and exchange.

The library's most dramatic break with its Renaissance past came amidst the political tumult and intellectual sea change of the 1640s and 1650s. The period witnessed a number of projects and proposals for educational institutions and research colleges along Baconian lines. Several proposals for libraries were produced within the circle around Samuel Hartlib, a self-appointed 'intelligencer' or facilitator and promoter of knowledge.[8] These schemes voice many of the usually unspoken assumptions about the role of the library. Hartlib himself was an avid collector of modern manuscripts of all sorts – he hotly pursued the remaining papers of Francis Bacon, for example.[9] One plan by the young inventor William Petty is typical. Petty outlined a scheme for a college intended to address some of the lacunae in contemporary intellectual institutions which

6 F. Bacon, *New Atlantis*, in *Works*, vol. 1, 164.

7 Bacon's account of *historia litterarum* is much longer and more detailed in the *De augmentis scientiarum* than it is in the *Advancement*. Cf. Bacon, *Advancement*, in *Works*, vol. 3, 330; *De augmentis scientiarum*, in *Works*, vol. 1, 503.

8 See in general C. Webster, *The great instauration: science, medicine and reform 1626–1660* (London, 1975); G. H. Turnbull, *Hartlib, Dury and Comenius: gleanings from Hartlib's papers* (London, 1947); M. Greengrass and others (eds.), *Samuel Hartlib and universal reformation: studies in intellectual communication* (Cambridge, 1994).

9 S. Clucas, 'Samuel Hartlib's *Ephemerides*, 1635–59, and the pursuit of scientific and philosophical manuscripts: the religious ethos of an intelligencer', *The Seventeenth Century* 6 (1991), 33–55.

Bacon had noted in the *Advancement of learning*. Petty's college included a *Nosocomium Academicum*, or scholarly hospice, which in turn embodied several other institutions, notably a botanical theatre, facilities for housing animals, birds and fish, a museum or 'repository' for natural and ancient rarities and mechanical curiosities, an anatomy theatre, an observatory and a chemical laboratory. The goal was to furnish an 'Epitome or Abstract of the whole World'. Not surprisingly, a library was an essential part of the plan. Indeed, the entire plan was dependent upon a preliminary textual survey of the state of learning as a whole, redolent of Bacon's plan for a 'history of learning'. The idea was to shore up foundations for future knowledge by ascertaining 'what is well and sufficiently done already', and by 'exploding whatsoever is nice, contentious, and merely fantastical; all which must in some Measure be suppressed'. Clear 'Directions' for reading would establish a common method. All books would be read separately by two readers in order to prevent mistakes and deviation from the 'Directions'. 'Real or Experimental Learning' would be excerpted, and notes made on mechanical inventions. From this process one single book 'or great Work' was to be made. The final product would consist of several volumes, furnished with indices, tables and other finding aids – nothing short, in other words, of a fully digested library of human achievement.[10]

The communication of knowledge was as crucial as its accumulation. The library occupied a central place within Hartlib's plan for an 'Office of Address for Communication', sketched in collaboration with John Dury. It envisaged a Warden 'authorized to have and keep . . . all manner of Registers, Inventaries, Catalogues and Lists containing the Peculiar Objects wherof he should furnish Information for addresse to such as shall desire it'.[11] The idea, plainly of Baconian inspiration, was to create a clearing-house for all kinds of practical and speculative knowledge for the general advancement of learning: the 'Office of Communication should be made a Center and Meeting-place of Advices, of Proposalls, of Treaties and of all Manner of Intellectuall Rarities freely to bee given and received'. Among others, the Warden of the Office of Communication was to correspond 'with the Chiefe Library-keepers of all

10 W. Petty, *The advice of W. P. to Mr Samuel Hartlib, for the advancement of some particular parts of learning* (London, 1648), reprinted in *Harleian miscellany*, vol. 6 (London, 1745), 1–13 (here, 3–5). On the general excerpting and epitomising tendencies of the period, see S. Clucas, 'In search of "The true logick": methodological eclecticism among the "Baconian reformers"', in Greengrass, *Samuel Hartlib*, especially 64–8. In their institutional nature these excerpting programmes differ from those described by A. Moss, *Printed commonplace-books and the structuring of renaissance thought* (Oxford, 1996).

11 *A brief discourse concerning the accomplishment of our Reformation* (1647), in C. Webster (ed.), *Samuel Hartlib and the advancement of learning* (Cambridge, 1970), 131.

places, whose proper employments should bee to Trade for the Advantages of Learning and Learned Men in Bookes, and M.S'.[12] And what better location for the Office than Oxford? The main attraction was the Bodleian: its book resources, its status as a magnet for scholars, and the participation of its Keeper made it an ideal hub for the undertaking.[13] It is no surprise, then, that when the position of Bodleian Librarian became vacant in 1652 Hartlib was urged to apply for the post.[14]

Hartlib's aide-de-camp, John Dury, was keeper of books and medals of the Royal Library at St James's Palace from 1650 to 1652. In 1650, Hartlib printed a memorandum by Dury on the role of the library as a centre of 'intelligence' – described by Hartlib as among 'the fruits of som of my Solicitations and Negotiations for the advancement of Learning'. Dury's methodological treatise, the *Reformed librarie-keeper*, embodies his lifelong ambition to bring about a general reformation of learning under a pan-Protestant banner. Librarians, Dury argued, should properly become 'Agents for the advancement of universal Learning'. It was only thus that a library could be transformed from 'a dead Bodie' and become 'animated with a publick Spirit . . . and ordered . . . for publick service'.[15] Thus, the true end of a librarian 'is to keep the publick stock of Learning, which is in Books and Manuscripts, to increas it, and to propose it to others in the waie which may bee most useful unto all'.

One of the chief tasks of Dury's librarian would be to enter into correspondence with 'those that are eminent in everie Science'. It was thus that the 'private stock of knowledge' would be brought into the public domain. The library would become an entrepôt for the traffic in knowledge: the librarian 'should Trade with those that are at home and abroad' in order 'to multiplie the publick stock' of learning, of which the librarian 'is a Treasurer and Factor'.[16] Once a year the librarian should be made to render an account 'of his Trading and of his Profit in his Trade' to a university committee comprised of leading scholars from each faculty.[17] Dury's target in all of this was of course the Bodleian, the most 'considerable for the advancement of Learning, if rightly improved and Traded withal for the good of Scholars at home and abroad'.[18] In England at mid-century, the library was envisaged as an active site of intellectual engagement. It occupied its rightful place alongside zoos and experimental farms, laboratories and museums. Indeed, the library could

12 *Ibid.*, 132–3. 13 *Ibid.*, 136.
14 Turnbull, *Hartlib, Dury*, 30; Webster, *Great instauration*, 205.
15 J. Dury, *The reformed librarie-keeper with a supplement to the Reformed-school* (London, 1650), 17.
16 *Ibid.*, 19–20. 17 *Ibid.*, 21–4. 18 *Ibid.*, 25.

claim a certain priority over all of these, as it functioned as an archive and clearing-house for the collation and exchange of information of all kinds.

Proposals for libraries and new institutions of learning were not restricted to the radical vanguard of the mid-seventeenth century.[19] Just before the Restoration, the virtuoso John Evelyn had proposed a 'college' scheme for a research institution to Robert Boyle, which along with a laboratory, gardens, and a 'repository for rarities and things of nature' would also contain a library.[20] Two years later, Abraham Cowley's proposal for a 'Philosophical Colledge', long considered a possible blueprint for the Royal Society itself, described a 'Librarie-keeper' who also served as 'Apothecary, Druggist, and keeper of Instruments, Engines, etc.'. Cowley's library would be joined with a gallery of paintings or statues of 'all the Inventors of any thing useful to Humane Life'.[21] At Oxford, John Aubrey proposed a not dissimilar plan.[22] Perhaps most akin to the pre-Restoration schemes, however, was an anonymous 1674 proposal for the reformation of the Royal Society which argued for the appointment of a 'Curator for Books; whose business should be, to make a diligent search & particular collection, of all that is, or may hereafter be published, of the History of Nature or Art, by any person, at any time, in any Country of Language whatsoever'.[23]

Yet if ever England had a grand theorist of the library, it was John Evelyn.[24] Evelyn had experienced the great libraries of Paris and Rome at first hand during his Grand Tour in the 1640s and those of Paris again during an extended stay in Paris from 1648 to 1652. The cultivation of learning and the cultured accumulation of books and other objects of study formed part of a distinct seventeenth-century ethos of nobility. More than any other figure of the second half of the seventeenth century, Evelyn most fully embodied the figure of

19 In general, see Webster, *Great instauration*, *passim*; P. Wood and M. Hunter, 'Towards Solomon's House: rival strategies for reforming the early Royal Society', in M. Hunter, *Establishing the new science* (Woodbridge, 1989), 185–244.

20 Evelyn to Boyle, 3 September 1659, in W. Bray (ed.), *Diary and correspondence of John Evelyn* (London, 1906), vol. 3, 261–7.

21 A. Cowley, *A proposition for the advancement of experimental philosophy* (London, 1661), 15, 23.

22 M. Hunter, *John Aubrey and the realm of learning* (London, 1975).

23 Printed in Wood and Hunter, 'Towards Solomon's House', 228.

24 On Evelyn, see G. Keynes, *John Evelyn: a study in bibliophily*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1968); M. Hunter, 'John Evelyn in the 1650s: a virtuoso in quest of a role', in M. Hunter, *Science and the shape of orthodoxy: intellectual change in late seventeenth-century Britain* (Woodbridge, 1995), 67–98; M. Zytaruk, '"Occasional specimens, not compleate systemes": John Evelyn's culture of collecting', *Bodleian Library Record* 17 (2001), 185–212.

the virtuoso collector. In 1661 he published an English translation of one of the most influential continental treatises on libraries and librarianship, the *Advis pour dresser une bibliothèque* (1627) of Gabriel Naudé. In the *Advis*, Naudé had championed the idea of a universal library open to all, representing all disciplines of learning in all languages. Evelyn prefaced the *Instructions* with a dedication to Lord Clarendon, patron of the recently established Royal Society, in which he praised the Baconian principles of the new 'philosophic assembly'. Though at first glance misdirected, Evelyn's evocation of the Royal Society in a treatise on libraries was by no means inappropriate. Naudé was an indefatigable supporter of the *novatores* in natural philosophy, and in the *Instructions* he repeatedly quoted Bacon in support of modern learning. Naudé's Baconianism is more than evident in Evelyn's translation. Thus, any collector of books 'who has not a design to devote and consecrate them to the publick use, or denies to communicate them to the least, who may reap any benefit thereby' largely defeats the purpose of a library in the first place.[25] And it was Naudé who first considered the library the institution most suitable to undertake 'what has been so long wished for', Bacon's history of learning. In the *Instructions*, Naudé claimed that it was only a well-organised library which could furnish materials for 'An ample and particular History, both of Letters and of Books; the Judgement and Censure of Authors, the Names of the best and most necessary in each Faculty; the Scourge of Plagiaries, the Progresse of the Sciences, the Diversity of Sects, the Revolutions of Arts and Disciplines'. Such a critical catalogue of intellectual endeavour could only be founded upon the sceptical principle of 'the ignorance of all men'.[26]

Evelyn's involvement with the early Royal Society was extensive. In 1667 Evelyn persuaded Henry Howard to donate the famous Arundel collection of books and manuscripts to the Royal Society when the Society temporarily moved into Arundel House following the Great Fire.[27] It was in fact Evelyn in the *Instructions* who christened the Royal Society. Hitherto it had been called by its members simply a philosophic 'club' or 'assembly'.[28] Perhaps

25 G. Naudé, *Instructions concerning erecting of a library*, trans. J. Evelyn (London, 1661), 87. On Naudé's appropriation of Bacon, see P. Nelles, 'The library as an instrument of discovery: Gabriel Naudé and the uses of history', in D. R. Kelley (ed.), *History and the disciplines: the reclassification of knowledge in early modern Europe* (Rochester, NY, 1997), 41–57.

26 Naudé, *Instructions*, 93–4.

27 M. B. Hall, *The library and archives of the Royal Society 1660–1990* (London, 1992), 2–9; L. L. Peck, 'Uncovering the Arundel Library at the Royal Society: changing meanings of science and the fate of the Norfolk donation', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London* 52 (1998), 3–24.

28 Hunter, *Establishing the new science*, 16–17.

most significantly, it was from the *Instructions* that the Royal Society claimed its motto of 'Nullius in verba'. The reference is to the Horatian epithet of intellectual independence quoted by Naudé: 'Nullius addictus jurare in verba Magistri / I am not bound to the dictates of any master.' This too was unpacked amidst fine Baconian sentiments. The properly stocked library, when 'received in[to] a spirit that is docile, universal, and disingag'd from all interests', would render the individual able to 'speak to the purpose upon all subjects' and 'cure the admiration which is a perfect signe of our weaknesse'.[29]

Evelyn's translation of Naudé's treatise no doubt aimed to establish a working library for the Society. And Evelyn may have viewed the Society as an appropriate vehicle for installing a major public library in London on the continental model. It can hardly be doubted that Evelyn did not privately envisage the Royal Society's design, 'in no way beneath that of . . . Solomons House', as containing a library, perhaps funded by the Society's patron, Clarendon himself: 'as your Lordship has design'd the Instruments (and may in time, the Materials)'.[30] A library must have seemed essential for such an undertaking.

From its inception the Society's 'Repository' had included books together with natural curiosities and artefacts. None the less, historians have only recently begun to allocate books a significant role within the intellectual life of the early Society.[31] Evelyn furnishes solid evidence that for many within the Society a functioning library was crucial. The same year Evelyn published his *Instructions* he drafted a subject classification scheme for the Society's library, apparently at the request of its President, Robert Moray. A specialised plan intended to meet the scientific needs of the Society, Evelyn's 'Designe for a Library' begins with dictionaries and reference works, moves on to natural philosophy (divided into physics and medicine, each further subdivided), the 'Arts Liberall' of arithmetic, geometry, optics and music, and then to the 'Arts Illiberall and purely Mechanick'. The scheme concludes with 'bookes treating of the universe', books on household and rural economy, physical exercise, military techniques, pneumatics and magic. Even bearing in mind the Royal Society's scientific remit, the absence of theology is striking. None the less, Evelyn's scheme remains thoroughly hierarchical: the natural world has pride of place after propaedeutic works, and is subdivided according to 'Men, Birds,

29 Naudé, *Instructions*, 29. On Evelyn's role in choosing a motto for the Royal Society, see Hunter, *Establishing the new science*, 17, 41–2; A. Johns, *The nature of the book: print and knowledge in the making* (Chicago, 1998), 478.

30 Evelyn, dedication to Clarendon, in Naudé, *Instructions*, sig. A3R–A4V.

31 M. Hunter, 'Between cabinet of curiosities and research collection: the history of the Royal Society's "Repository"', in his *Establishing the new science*, 123–55; cf. Johns, *Nature of the book*.

Beasts, Fishes, Insects, Monsters, Stones, metalls Water Earth &c'.[32] The plan vividly reflects the Society's early preoccupation with practical knowledge and technical improvement. Not even treatises on magic were to be excluded, fully in keeping with the *Instructions*, where Naudé had advocated collecting occult works of all kinds for whatever bits of useful knowledge they might contain.[33] Evelyn's scheme for the library of the Royal Society also reflects the widespread interest in Bacon's proposal for a 'History of Trades'. Evelyn himself had worked sporadically on such a compendium of technical knowledge since the early 1650s. In January 1661 he finally presented his 'Circle of Mechanical Trades' to a meeting of the Society.[34] The theme is amply represented in his classification scheme for the library of the Royal Society.

The library described in the *Instructions* had a broad mandate – it held collections not only of books, but also of globes and maps, prints and drawings, natural rarities and antiquities.[35] In a postscript to Bodley's Librarian, Thomas Barlow, Evelyn expressed the hope that the text would incite 'the Gentleman of our Nation . . . to imitate those gallant and renon'd Genius's' such as Bodley, Cotton and others in England and Henri de Mesmes, Jacques-Auguste de Thou and the Dupuy brothers in Paris.[36] For Evelyn, the ideal of the gentleman-collector was not restricted to books alone. This becomes more than evident when the *Instructions* is placed alongside Evelyn's other publications of the period, notably his 1662 *Sculptura*, a history of engraving, and his translations of two works by the French author Roland Fréart, which appeared as *A parallel of the ancient architecture with the modern* (1664) and *An idea of the perfection of painting demonstrated* (1668). Evelyn thus attempted to give expression to a programme of taste, judgement and knowledge which described the world of the collector and connoisseur of books, fine art and artefacts. When more than twenty years later Evelyn began to contemplate a second edition of the *Instructions*, he drafted two appendices of his own to render the work more complete – one on manuscripts and one on medals. 'On manuscripts' is undated, but was

32 Keynes, *John Evelyn*, 17–18; the plan is at Royal Society, CP, xvii, i. What appears to be an earlier version of the 'Designe' can be found among Evelyn's papers in BL MS Add. 78344(4) d.

33 Naudé, *Instructions*, 30; cf. Nelles, 'The library as an instrument of discovery', 50–1.

34 Hunter, 'John Evelyn', 74–84; cf. Keynes, *John Evelyn*, 116. See further K. Odis, 'The Royal Society of London's history of trades programme: an early episode in applied science', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London* 39 (1985), 129–58.

35 On the nature and purpose of such collections, see P. Findlen, *Possessing nature: museums, collecting, and scientific culture in early modern Italy* (Berkeley, CA, 1994); O. Impey and A. MacGregor (eds.), *The origins of museums: the cabinet of curiosities in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe* (Oxford, 1985).

36 Naudé, *Instructions*, 96.

written at least after 1681: Jean Mabillon's great palaeographical manual, *De re diplomatica*, which Evelyn recommends, was first printed in that year. Naudé had stated in the *Instructions* that 'it is the very Essence of a Library to have a great number of Manuscripts; because they are at present in most esteem, and less vulgar'.[37] Evelyn hoped that his supplement to 'what the learned Naudeus has publish'd' on the topic 'might neither be unacceptable or unwellcom to the Curious, and such as would inrich and addorne their Libraries with that which has ever been esteemed the most valuable and precious furniture'.[38] Evelyn's treatise on metals directly targeted 'Gentlemen who are lovers of Books and Antiquities'.[39] It eventually assumed a life of its own, and was published in 1694 as *Numismata: a discourse of medals*. Similarly, in his long letter of 1689 to Samuel Pepys, in which he surveys contemporary London libraries, Evelyn discusses books along with paintings, prints, medals, statues and inscriptions. Thus, a library was considered part of a wider collection of related objects. When Evelyn explained to Pepys that 'men curious of books and antiquities have ever had medals in such estimation, and rendered them a most necessary furniture to their libraries', he was clearly voicing a commonplace.[40]

The social exclusivity of the library type described by Evelyn might mask the aspirations of Evelyn and others for the library as a critical institution of the Republic of Letters. Evelyn remarked to Pepys that Paris alone had more libraries than existed in 'all the three nations of Greate Britaine', and complained bitterly that London 'has scarce one library furnish'd and indow'd for the publiq'. This led Evelyn to propose establishing a public library 'more communicative and better furnish'd with good books' at St Paul's. The library would house an academy devoted to the 'Art and Improvement of speaking and writing well', based on continental models such as the Accademia della Crusca in Florence and the Académie Française in Paris. Its aim was to promote the 'noble and usefull conversation of learned gentlemen'.[41] It is no wonder, then, that Evelyn was among the more avid supporters of Richard Bentley's 1697 plan for a public library in London. More than a decade before he was attacked in Swift's *Battle of the books*, Bentley had proposed a radical transformation of the Royal Library into a great public institution of learning on the continental model. As with Evelyn's proposal for St Paul's, it too would

37 *Ibid.*, 53.
38 J. Evelyn, 'On manuscripts', in W. Bray (ed.), *Memoirs*, 2nd edn (London, 1819), vol. 2, 323.
39 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 324. Here and in several letters Evelyn mentions his work on medals as being a supplement to the *Instructions*; see Evelyn to Godolphin, 8 February 1697/8, in *Diary and correspondence*, vol. 4, 16.
40 Evelyn to Pepys, 12 August 1689, *Diary and correspondence*, vol. 3, 448–9.
41 Evelyn to Pepys, 12 August 1689, *Diary and correspondence*, vol. 3, 449, 454.

serve as a meeting place for learned societies. 'The Royal Society is a noble Instance in one Branch of Knowledge; what Advantage and Glory may accrue to the Nation, by such Assemblies not confined to one Subject, but free to all parts of good Learning.'[42] Medals, inscriptions, antiquities and the like were thus essential for Bentley's revamped Royal Library. It was clear to all that the library would most completely fulfil its purpose when it assumed its role within the public life of the Republic of Letters.

The Enlightenment in Britain was a loose construction of social practices, institutional initiatives, and the description, analysis and communication of ideas and physical objects of all sorts. The question of how the library is implicated within the general configuration of Enlightenment culture deserves detailed study. The ideals of critical judgement and a unified system of knowledge acquired through vast reading were as recognisable intellectual ideals as the sense experience and reason of the experimenters. In the *Instructions*, Naudé had claimed that a well-stocked library rendered its user 'Cosmopolitan, or Habitant of the Universe', and that through the library 'he might know all, see all, and be ignorant of nothing'. Amazingly, the library was numbered among the many contemporary short-cuts to learning: 'without contradiction, without travail, and without pains, he may instruct himself, and learn the exactest particulars "Of all that is, that was, and that may be / In Earth, the farthest Heavens, and the Sea"'.[43]

The 'order' to be found in libraries of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, while frequently far from obvious to modern eyes, is representative of this ideal. One of the most important collections in London in the first half of the eighteenth century was that of Sir Hans Sloane. One of Sloane's manuscripts bears testimony to the structured chaos of his mind and his collection. The volume is a miscellany of lists of artefacts, natural curiosities and books. Thus we find a list of '2 Coco shells, 1 Calabash, 1 Calabash bowl, 3 Indian nutts, 1 Indian paper reed with writing on it, a parcel of Corals very small, 7 small Conches' jostling alongside 'Part of an Index of Indian Rarities . . . in Ye Gallery at Ye Physick Garden at Leyden'. Notes on the feeding habits of bees and on hive construction precede 'A Catalogue of several sorts of oars from Different Countrys'. The volume also contains priced book lists, and the

42 R. Bentley, *A proposal for building a Royal Library, and establishing it by Act of Parliament* (London, 1697), in A. T. Bartholomew, *Richard Bentley, D.D.: a bibliography* (Cambridge, 1908), 95. See Evelyn to Bentley, 25 December 1697, promising support for the proposal, *Diary and correspondence*, vol. 4, 14–15.

43 Naudé, *Instructions*, 10–11.

number of books in the library of the bishop of Ely (apparently 30,755, including manuscripts) and in the 'Kings Library as in the Time when the Catalogue was made', some 9,289, and later, 'if I have counted them rightly', a moderately increased figure of 9,989. The volume also contains a list of desiderata for Sloane's own library, a plan (evidently never fulfilled) for 'A Table Shewing the Place of each Book in my Library', and an 'Account of Books lent to Severall Persons', complete with crossings indicating returns.[44] Within Sloane's collections, there was no finite boundary between natural and man-made artefacts, his collections of pressed flowers, the volumes of botanical and other drawings, his manuscripts of *materia medica* and chemical 'receipts', and printed books. Sloane shared with his contemporaries the view that books are used best when used in conjunction with other parts of the world of learning. In bequeathing his collection – 'in all its branches' – to the nation, Sloane's goals were public access, public utility and the advancement of knowledge.

The library not only served as an engine for knowledge and discovery, but was an essential organ for the cultivation of taste and judgement across the arts and sciences. The truly 'polite' or 'civil' citizen of the Republic of Letters in Enlightenment Britain at least pretended to aspire to universal knowledge and experience. The interdependence of these varied cultural strands is caught in Joseph Addison's description of the *Spectator* in 1711: 'It was said of *Socrates*, that he brought Philosophy down from Heaven, to inhabit among Men; and I shall be ambitious to have it said of me, that I have brought Philosophy out of Closets and Libraries, Schools and Colleges, to dwell in Clubs and Assemblies, at Tea-Tables, and Coffee-Houses.'[45]

Enlightenment culture viewed the library and related institutions, whether real or imagined, as a hub of learning which spanned all disciplines and which brought books, objects and people into continually shifting spheres of interaction. Yet some ambivalence was also exhibited towards the library. Samuel Johnson was more aware than most of the dangers as well as the many advantages of contemporary print culture. Thus, in the *Rambler* in 1751, Johnson would write:

> No place affords a more striking conviction of the vanity of human hopes than a public library; for who can see the wall crouded on every side by mighty volumes, the works of laborious meditation, and accurate enquiry

44 BL, MS Sloane 4019, fols. 48r, 130r, 133r, 161r, 163r, 166r, 178r, 201r.

45 D. F. Bond (ed.), *The Spectator* (Oxford, 1965), vol. 1, 44 [*Spectator*, 10–12 March 1711], quoted in L. E. Klein, 'Making philosophy worldly in the London periodical about 1700', in J. Marino and M. W. Schlitt (eds.), *Perspectives on early modern and modern intellectual history: essays in honor of Nancy S. Struever* (Rochester, NY, 2001), 404.

> now scarcely known but by the catalogue, and preserved only to encrease the pomp of learning, without considering how many hours have been wasted in vain endeavours.[46]

The sentiment, of course, is unadulterated Bacon. Yet if the library could exhibit all the symptoms of the ills of the period, so too was it considered part of the cure. Together with William Oldys, Johnson had compiled in 1743 the prodigious sale catalogue of the printed books of the Harleian Library. 'By the means of Catalogues only can it be known', Johnson and Oldys wrote in their introduction, 'what has been written on every Part of Learning, and the Hazard avoided of encountering Difficulties which have already been cleared, discussing Questions which have already been decided and digging in Mines of Literature which former Ages have exhausted'.[47] Despite its evident hazards, the library in mid-eighteenth-century Britain was still viewed as the natural locus for evaluating and communicating the shared intellectual culture of the age.

46 S. Johnson, *The Rambler* 106 (March 1751), 200, quoted in P. Keen, *The crisis of literature in the 1790s: print culture and the public sphere* (Cambridge, 1999), 107–8.

47 *Catalogus bibliothecae Harleianae* (London, 1743), sig. A2r.

4

Opportunities for building collections and libraries

JULIAN ROBERTS

What happened to collections and to libraries in the later seventeenth century was affected by far wider social and intellectual currents: an enormous political upheaval, the scientific revolution, an improvement in standards of editing the classics, the development of antiquarian studies (in particular that of palaeography in both France and England), the growing confidence in English as a language of learned discourse, the rise of publication in periodical form, and what would now be called the 'bibliographical control' over the publishing of new books and journals.

The benefactions of Richard Holdsworth and John Selden, however ambiguous in intention and execution, securely established the libraries of the two English universities as large institutions of wide secular learning, whose very mass gave a sense of permanence. Selden may indeed be seen as the Commonwealth's unofficial guardian of libraries, guiding the library of Lambeth – temporarily – to Cambridge, with an additional role, only now becoming apparent, in the preservation of papers from Lambeth, 'keeping an eye' on the Royal and Cottonian libraries, and himself making modest gifts to the Royal College of Physicians and to Cambridge.[1] In the capital, the library of Sion College was very much the darling of the City of London (though that library and that of St Paul's Cathedral were to suffer in the Fire of 1666), while Westminster Abbey's (another episcopal refoundation) remained intact. In the absence of a university, the needs of the learned professions in the capital were served by the Inns of Court and the College of Physicians. The Inner Temple was considered by Selden's executors as a possible home for his books. Narcissus Luttrell briefly thought of Gray's Inn as a home for his, while the College of Physicians received as a bequest the very general library of the marquess

1 Friends of Lambeth Palace Library, *Annual report* (1988); Lambeth Palace Library, *Annual review* (1996).

of Dorchester (1606–80), a nobleman with medical pretensions, after its own library was destroyed by the Great Fire.[2]

Although English libraries had benefited in the early seventeenth century by such enterprises as Henry Fetherstone's importation of the Barocci manuscripts, the duke and duchess of Buckingham's purchase of Erpenius's manuscripts, and the pressure exerted by Laud and others on merchants and travellers in the Orient, opportunities for the acquisition of manuscripts were, until the early years of the next century, largely domestic, and the manuscripts were typically historical, topographical and genealogical. Support for Anglo-Saxon studies came from the Bodleian's acquisition of the manuscripts of Christopher, Lord Hatton in 1671 and those of Francis Junius in 1678. A wider quest may be linked to the flourishing of the bibliophilic instinct, then as now the preserve of private, wealthy individuals. Neil Ker remarked in 1942 that 'the active period in the migration of manuscripts to the modern collections was coming to an end in the middle of the seventeenth century. Bernard's *Catalogi librorum manuscriptorum Angliae et Hiberniae* published in 1697 allows us to take stock of the situation in that year.'[3] The central thesis of Ker's stock-taking is unlikely to be upset by the ambitious expansion of libraries, particularly American, after the date at which Ker wrote.

Nevertheless, a divergence between the aims of institutional libraries and those of private collectors is perceptible at the end of the seventeenth century, and is particularly clear in the collecting of manuscripts and early printed books. One of the consequences of the Revolution of 1688 may have been a loss of momentum in the universities and their colleges, and a greater intellectual vitality in metropolitan society, and among non-jurors and dissenters. There was some compensation for the universities (and for entirely secular institutions) in that they were able to rely ultimately on the efforts of collectors such as Bishop John Moore or the Harleys, or upon the loyalty of non-jurors like Richard Rawlinson, or Thomas Baker the '*socius ejectus*' of St John's College, Cambridge, or Archbishop Sancroft.

A change is also perceptible in the sources used for manuscripts and early printed books. The traditional sources – and methods – employed by Bishop Moore in his quest for manuscripts and records were noted with disapproval

2 MS catalogue, *Bibliotheca marchionis Dorcestriae* (1664), in Royal College of Physicians Library; E. Boswell, 'The library of the Royal College of Physicians in the Great Fire', *Library*, 4th ser., 10 (1930), 313–26.

3 N. R. Ker, 'The migration of manuscripts from the English medieval libraries', *Library*, 4th ser., 23 (1943), 1–11.

by his contemporaries.[4] The nature and time of the change appear very clearly from the Wrights' edition of Humfrey Wanley's *Diary*. By the 1720s 'the sales of libraries of English origin were slight affairs'; 'the main initiative in the search for fresh material is passing out of the hands of Edward Harley and his Librarian into those of the booksellers and dealers and their agents operating abroad'.[5] Katherine Swift in her thesis noted the same phenomenon in the collecting of Harley's great rival, Charles Spencer, 3rd earl of Sunderland: 'the final phase . . . seen after about 1718, is represented by the move to tap sources in Italy'.[6] Sunderland was pursuing early printed books rather than manuscripts. The appetite of English booksellers for acquiring books and whole libraries in continental Europe had existed in the late seventeenth century;[7] what was now new was the drive of aristocratic collectors, coupled with English financial power taking advantage of relative economic weakness in Europe.

In contrast to the exotic books and manuscripts targeted by Harley, Sunderland and their agents are those sought by Richard Rawlinson, 'whose collections in the Bodleian Library defeat the most persistent attempts at analysis'.[8] The contemporaneity and indeed ephemeral qualities of Rawlinson's collections link them to the omnivorous printed collections which are now considered.

The nature of the printed books that might be accepted and housed by libraries was changing. Sir Thomas Bodley's disapproval of English books, not disputed by his librarian, Thomas James, was reversed by James's successor, John Rouse, in his selection of books from Robert Burton's library in 1640. Although the universities had their presses, these were not, before the later years of the seventeenth century, remarkable for their academic vigour, and most learned books had to be imported; on the other hand, the indigenous English language press, stimulated by religious and political dispute, flourished and diversified into the production of pamphlets and, most notably, periodicals and newsbooks. Collectors and institutions responded, and the contrast with earlier acquisitors is marked. John Dee was unusual not only in collecting,

4 D. McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library, a history: the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries* (Cambridge, 1986), 67.

5 C. E. Wright and R. C. Wright, *The diary of Humfrey Wanley* (London, 1966), vol. 1, xlvi.

6 A. K. Swift, 'The formation of the library of Charles Spencer, 3rd Earl of Sunderland (1674–1722): a study in the antiquarian book trade', unpublished DPhil thesis, University of Oxford (1986).

7 J. Roberts, 'The Latin trade', in J. Barnard and D. F. McKenzie (eds.), *Cambridge history of the book in Britain*, vol. 4 (Cambridge, 2002), 141–73.

8 B. J. Enright, 'Richard Rawlinson and the Chandlers', in G. R. Tashjian, D. R. Tashjian and B. J. Enright, *Richard Rawlinson: a tercentenary memorial* (Kalamazoo, 1990), 121–32.

but in recording many slight English news pamphlets. His copies have not survived, and a number of titles have vanished completely.[9] Only Humphrey Dyson seems to have had a similar, and keener, appetite for the ephemeral[10] – an appetite which Selden and Holdsworth do not seem to have shared. Yet the systematic accumulation of relatively ephemeral material in English, and its careful preservation, represent a radical change in English collecting and librarianship. This change is symbolised, though not with complete accuracy, by the name of George Thomason.

Thomason was by profession a bookseller, brought up in and heavily involved in the Latin trade, and was thus fully conversant with the significance and value of learned, imported literature.[11] Yet the collection always associated with his name consists of over 22,000 tracts, all in English or of English origin, many slight and many voicing opinions which, to the Presbyterian Thomason, would have been repugnant.[12] It was a collection of pamphlets (a term fairly loosely interpreted by Thomason) and 'such exact care hath been taken that the very day is written upon most of them that they came out'.[13] At the time of his death in 1666, negotiations were in hand for the acquisition of the collection by the Bodleian Library, and it was entrusted to Thomas Barlow (formerly Bodley's Librarian), to Thomas Lockey, his successor as Librarian, and to John Rushworth.

The novelty of Thomason's achievement stands out; his collection was very large, it was in English, and it was designed for 'the use of succeeding ages' through preservation in a library.[14] This aim was not realised until the collection was acquired for the recently founded British Museum in 1762.

Thomason was not, even in his own day, unique in his intentions. John Rushworth (*c.*1612–90), to whom the collection had been entrusted, with Barlow and Lockey, is best known for his *Historical collections*, published from 1659 to 1701. These were based upon a collection of pamphlets, which was dispersed after his death; but remnants of it were identified while the library built up by

9 J. Roberts and A. G. Watson (eds.), *John Dee's library catalogue* (London, 1990).

10 W. A. Jackson, 'Humphrey Dyson's library', in W. H. Bond (ed.), *Records of a bibliographer: selected papers of William Alexander Jackson* (Cambridge, MA, 1967), 135–41.

11 Roberts, 'Latin trade'.

12 A disputed figure, given by G. K. Fortescue, *Catalogue of the pamphlets . . . collected by George Thomason (1640–1661)*, 2 vols. (London, 1908).

13 L. Spencer, 'The professional and literary connexions of George Thomason', *Library*, 3rd ser., 13 (1958) 102–18, and 'The politics of George Thomason', *Library*, 3rd ser., 14 (1959) 11–27. Spencer prints in full Thomason's description of his collection.

14 The notion of comprehensiveness in Thomason's collection has been challenged by J. Raymond, *Pamphlets and pamphleteering in early modern Britain* (Cambridge, 2003); in particular his section 'The interests of George Thomason', 192–6, demonstrates his lack of interest in covenanting propaganda.

the 12th Lord Fairfax was on deposit at the Bodleian. Frances Henderson, who identified Rushworth's sometimes heavy annotations, believed that the original collection was 'on a par with his friend George Thomason's collection . . . In some cases the runs of newsbooks are even more complete than Thomason's.'[15] Another large library of contemporary pamphlets was created by Sir William Clarke (1623?–66), who had perhaps been known to Rushworth in his early years in the Army Secretariat. As secretary to Cromwell and to Monck in Scotland, he was able to collect (and annotate) Scottish pamphlets, in addition to his English collection. The condition of some English pamphlets suggests that Clarke collected retrospectively, before binding them up and listing them meticulously at the end of each volume.[16] His death in a naval battle prevented his designating a home for his library, but his son George left the collection (with his own) to Worcester College, Oxford.[17]

Two recent studies, of the Anglican controversialist John Squier and of Sir Thomas Cotton, both emphasise the ubiquity of pamphlet collecting at this time.[18] Squier's 'prison library' was acquired in part by Edward Waddington, bishop of Chichester, and bequeathed with his own library to Eton College; Cotton's accumulation of newsbooks does not seem to have survived.

Although there were personal links between members of the first generation of pamphlet collectors, it is less apparent that they influenced the later group of omnivores, which included Anthony Wood (1632–95) and Narcissus Luttrell (1657–1732). Wood, with his principal focus upon Oxford University and Oxfordshire, can hardly have been unaware of the presence of Thomason's collection in the Provost's lodgings at Queen's College (probably as late as 1674). Wood's own highly idiosyncratic library has been studied in great and highly rewarding detail by Nicolas K. Kiessling, and what follows is deeply indebted to Kiessling's work.[19] Although Wood lived in Oxford, he held no university or college post, and his two great works, the *Historia et antiquitates universitatis Oxoniensis*, in two volumes, 1674, and the *Athenae Oxonienses* of 1691–2, were

15 F. Henderson, 'Posterity to judge – John Rushworth and his "Historicall collections"', *Bodleian Library Record* 15 (1996), 247–59.

16 The presence of bound volumes of Civil War pamphlets in the library of a collector of a later generation, William King, archbishop of Dublin, suggests that such were available on the London market; see R. S. Matteson, *A large private park: the collection of Archbishop William King 1650–1729*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 2003).

17 C. H. Wilkinson, 'Worcester College Library', *Oxford Bibliographical Society Proceedings and Papers* 1 (1927), 263–320.

18 T. Connor, 'Malignant reading: John Squier's Newgate prison library, 1642–6', *Library*, 7th ser., 7 (2006), 154–84; J. Peacey, 'Sir Thomas Cotton's consumption of news in 1650s England', *Library*, 7th ser., 7 (2006), 3–24.

19 N. K. Kiessling, *The library of Anthony Wood* (Oxford, 2002).

those of a devoted outsider.[20] Intensive accumulation by Wood of books and pamphlets seems to have begun in 1655, and he made use of the widening range of 'bibliographical aids' available in the form of newsbooks, publishers' lists and catalogues, and auction catalogues. His collection was heavily annotated with details of publication, date and authorship; he had few foreign books, and largely relied for substantial (and therefore expensive) volumes, upon the Bodleian Library. Kiessling notes his interest, in addition to items bearing upon Oxford and Oxford University, in biography, history and contemporary politics, and in theology. He is accurately bracketed with Pepys (as he should be with Luttrell) as a preserver of popular and 'low' literature; these were hardly relevant to the concerns, and history, of the seventeenth-century university. The destination of his library preoccupied the last years of Wood's life. He sold some manuscripts to the Bodleian and to Jesus College in 1691 and after. Further sales, either to the Bodleian or to the bookseller Christopher Bateman, were proposed and abandoned, and Wood finally chose the new Ashmolean Museum to house his collection, alongside those of other antiquaries. The Bodleian Library was more hospitable to pamphlets and similar ephemera, by 1860, when Wood's library was transferred. The Popish Plot occurred in the later years of Wood's career as antiquary and collector, and he owned and annotated heavily the three catalogues of 'all the stitch'd books and single sheets'.[21]

The lapse of the Licensing Act in 1679 bore abundant fruit for the collectors of such pamphlets, and the Popish Plot catalogues were a welcome guide and probably a stimulant to them. F. C. Francis suggested[22] that they were a trigger for the greatest collector of all, Narcissus Luttrell. Luttrell, who was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1673, entered St John's College, Cambridge as a fellow-commoner in 1674, and took an MA in 1675. J. M. Osborn considered that he began to collect books actively in 1679, and his earliest interests seem to have been those of an antiquary; perhaps the manuscripts inherited from him by his great-nephew Luttrell Wynne are evidence of this.[23] Some were given to All Souls College, Oxford in 1786.[24] Luttrell seems not to have owned the first Popish Plot catalogue of 1680, or the reissue of all three, the *General*

20 For subsequent additions and corrections to these, see *ibid.*, xi.

21 *Ibid.*, nos. 1599, 1600, 1601.

22 *Narcissus Luttrell's Popish Plot catalogues* (Oxford, 1956), introduction by F. C. Francis.

23 J. M. Osborn, 'Reflections on Narcissus Luttrell (1657–1732)', *Book Collector* 6 (1957), 15–27; S. Parks, *The Luttrell file: Narcissus Luttrell's dates on contemporary pamphlets, 1678–1730* (New Haven, CT, 1999).

24 Oxford, All Souls College MSS 117–20. Osborn refers to his own purchases from the Pendarves sale of 4 May 1936.

catalogue of 1680, with its title page bearing the highly significant words 'Very useful for Gent. that make Collections' – if he did, his copies have vanished. However, his copies of the *Continuation* and the *Second continuation* have been edited from the British Library copies.[25] By the time that Luttrell acquired the list of Humphrey Dyson's books made earlier in the century, at the Richard Smith sale in 1682, he was already a confirmed collector, and probably needed no exemplar.[26] He was still acquiring at the time of his death in 1732, and his son Francis (d. 1740) seems to have shared this solitary passion.

The range of Luttrell's acquisitions is, thanks to the dispersal of his collection to libraries all over the world (and the failure of some custodians to recognise his distinctive marking), difficult to summarise. But the evidence from dated pamphlets, assembled by Stephen Parks,[27] points to minute concentration and annotation of publications from the beginning of January 1680 – the date given in the *Continuation of the compleat catalogue*. Such evidence as there is points to a lack of interest in foreign books. Luttrell's diary published in 1857 as *Brief historical relation of state affairs, &c.* commences in 1678; daily (though intermittent) entries start on 12 October. Neither he nor his son, Francis, took much thought for the destination of the collection, though Osborn quotes a note of Narcissus, in which he envisages his books going 'to some public Library, as that at Grayes Inn'.[28] The fact that this did not happen was noted with regret by Joseph Haslewood.[29] Some notable items did, however, pass in 1786 into Edmond Malone's library, now in the Bodleian, and the presence of Luttrell's newspapers in the Burney collection in the British Library and in the Nichols collection in the Bodleian has hardly been noticed.

The surge in pamphleteering, both literary and political, that was provoked by the Popish Plot, and encouraged by the temporary lapse of the Licensing Act, also made a collector of a member of the Verney family of Claydon, Buckinghamshire. John Verney, a London merchant, perhaps inheriting some pamphlets from other members of his family, collected purposefully – though on a smaller scale, and over a shorter period than Luttrell. The collection was bought by Cambridge University Library in 1987.[30] The collection of about 1,500 items is uniformly bound in thirteen volumes, each with a handwritten list, detailing the price (which does not normally appear on individual items) and the total expenditure. Verney worked – apparently without the aid of the

25 Francis, *Popish Plot catalogues*. 26 Oxford, All Souls College MS 117.
27 Parks, *Luttrell file*. 28 Osborn, 'Reflections', 20.
29 Francis, *Popish Plot catalogues*, 9.
30 P. Hopkins, 'The Verney Collection of Popish Plot pamphlets', *Bulletin of the Friends of Cambridge University Library* 9 (1988), 5–11.

printed catalogues – most intensively in the years 1679–85, often amplifying the date of publication and filling out personal details, particularly of those connected with the City of London. Although he was no longer collecting avidly, he continued to add notes until well into Queen Anne's reign. John Verney apparently destined no home for his collection beyond the family residence, to which he succeeded in 1696.

The first of the Popish Plot catalogues also appears (no. 1750) in the *Catalogue of the tract collection at St David's University College Lampeter*, probably as part of the library of Thomas Bowdler, the second of that name (1661–1738).[31] Bowdler was a colleague of Samuel Pepys in the Navy Office, up to 1689. Like many non-jurors, he collected books, inheriting a collection from his uncle of the same name (d. 1700), and bought two more collections. He was, as the *Catalogue*'s editor, Brian Ll. James, points out, obsessively active in a period of particular concern to non-jurors – 1709–18 – and the pamphlets are annotated and catalogued with minute care. Bowdler's son (also Thomas) wrote to Richard Rawlinson – a most appropriate correspondent – that his father 'was very curious and made Collections from his Youth'.[32] The collection of over 11,000 pamphlets remained with the family, until it was given to Lampeter in the early nineteenth century.

The engagement of such collectors with the almost daily manifestation of the religious, political and social process in the pamphlet press, by dating it, pricing it and attributing it to authors, emphasises the fact that this was also the age of the diarists, Pepys and Evelyn, and of the annalists and diarists Wood and Luttrell. The parallel rise of the newspaper press and its more specialised counterparts, together with the circulation of manuscript newsletters, gave further expression to these interests, while the development of coffee-houses, where the day's news could be discussed and newspapers were available, provided a social impetus and a semi-public context for collecting of this sort.[33]

These massive accumulations of ephemera in English were, for collectors and their institutional heirs, a venture into territory largely uncharted. Professional and scientific interests provided another focus for this activity. The library formed by the physician Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753), for instance,

31 Edited by B. L. James (Lampeter, 1975).

32 James, *Catalogue*, xiv, and Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson D.923, fol. 290.

33 H. Love, *Scribal publication in seventeenth-century England* (Oxford, 1993), 203–7; J. Sutherland, *The Restoration newspaper and its development* (Cambridge, 1986), 220–3; M. Harris, 'Newspaper distribution during Queen Anne's reign', in R. W. Hunt, I. G. Philip and R. J. Roberts (eds.), *Studies in the book trade in honour of Graham Pollard*, Oxford Bibliographical Society, new ser., 18 (Oxford, 1975), 139–51.

although better known as possibly the greatest and the last of the encyclopedic scholarly libraries, also systematically preserved hundreds of advertisements for medical and pseudo-medical services in the form of handbills, 'Quacks' bills', which would have been given away on the streets of London. Sloane formed large collections of ephemeral material relating to the professionalisation of medicine, to commerce and trades, inventions, public policy and projects, natural phenomena and disasters. He owned long runs of newspapers, almanacs, ballads, trials, petitions, publishing proposals and book trade catalogues from all over Europe.[34]

Guidance for collectors in more traditional areas was to be had from booksellers' catalogues, intermittently available in the latter half of the seventeenth century; some earlier examples of these, such as Fetherstone's 1628 catalogue, George Thomason's of 1636 and 1647, and Robert Martin's series from 1633 to 1650, were international in scope, and some later catalogues were indeed, while bearing the names of English booksellers, of foreign origin.[35] Guidance on new books came from the growing practice of booksellers' insertion of lists of their publications – or of works by the author of the book – at the end of each publication. Pollard devoted a chapter to 'Catalogues in books' and linked it to the appearance of advertisements in early newspapers.[36] The practice of including catalogues took two forms; that of printing an author's or publisher's list on spare pages at the end, or that of inserting an entire, bibliographically separate, catalogue. Pollard provided tables of such, though severely limited by date. Nicolas Kiessling provided an appendix of 140 book advertisements in Wood's library.[37] Most of these were printers' or publishers' rather than authors' lists; some show signs of use by Wood.

For the collector, there were also, from 1676, the catalogues of English auctions.[38] Surviving copies of these are sometimes annotated with the names of buyers and with prices, though these notes may reveal only the names of agents.[39] Bishop John Moore of Ely, for example, employed his chaplain

34 M. A. E. Nickson, 'Books and manuscripts', in A. MacGregor (ed.), *Sir Hans Sloane* (London, 1994); G. Mandelbrote, unpublished conference paper on Sloane as a collector of ephemera (2003).

35 Roberts, 'Latin trade', appendix, 173.

36 G. Pollard and A. Ehrman, *The distribution of books by catalogue* (Cambridge, 1965), chapter 8.

37 Kiessling, 711.

38 A. N. L. Munby and L. Coral (comps.), *British book sale catalogues, 1676–1800: a union list* (Ilkley, 1977).

39 T. A. Birrell, 'Books and buyers in seventeenth-century English auction sales', in R. Myers, M. Harris and G. Mandelbrote (eds.), *Under the hammer: book auctions since the seventeenth century* (New Castle, DE, and London, 2001), 51–64.

Thomas Tanner (later to become a major collector himself) as librarian, and agent at sales.[40]

The late seventeenth century also saw the beginning of separately published bibliographical listings.[41] Robert Clavel published four editions of his retrospective catalogue of books printed since the Fire of 1666. The third edition (1680) listed foreign books, while the fourth edition (1696) claimed progress in the compilation of a list of Latin books printed in Europe, utilising the 'Lipsic Transactions' and other sources. These *Term catalogues* provided, for the buyer of English books, a classified list of new books from 1668 to 1709 (with an issue for Easter 1711).[42] Issues of the *Term catalogues* are, particularly in the early years, fairly rare.[43] Their survival is noticeable in Oxford, and to a lesser extent Cambridge, libraries, and this may suggest that they were in contemporary use there. Rarity, and a short span of publication, is a feature of most of the lists reprinted in *English bibliographical sources*, and this may in turn suggest that their commercial success was limited until general-interest magazines such as the *Gentleman's Magazine*, *London Magazine* and *British Magazine* began to carry lists of books, from the 1730s.[44]

The limitations of learned publication in England at this time were keenly felt, and British scholars, like those of other nations, sought information about the 'state of learning' and about books published elsewhere in Europe. Robert Clavel made some attempt to meet this need, as did Abel Roper in the *Bibliotheca annua* (1699–1703).[45] The fulfilment of this need in the form of the international discussion of books coincided with the phenomenon of the 'Republic of Letters', and the principal agents of it were the Huguenots of the diaspora that followed the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes on 17 October 1685.[46] This resulted in the influx of (among others) journalists and booksellers; even more extensive immigration followed into Holland, into the Protestant parts of Germany and into the more tolerant areas of Catholic Europe. The publication of many journals flowed from this migration, typically discussing intellectual and academic subjects, and consisting largely of 'extraits' or reviews,

40 McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, 61–6.

41 D. F. Foxon (ed.), *English bibliographical sources* (London, 1964–7), hereafter *EBS*.

42 Reprinted as *EBS*, 2.3–6. That for Michaelmas Term 1695, hitherto unknown, was published as *The 'missing' Term catalogue: a facsimile of the Term catalogue for Michaelmas Term 1695, with a list of identified books*, Oxford Bibliographical Society Occasional Publication 20 (Oxford, 1987).

43 C. Nelson and M. Seccombe, *British newspapers and periodicals, 1641–1700* (New York, 1987).

44 *EBS*, 1.6–8.

45 *EBS*, 1.4.

46 A. Goldgar, *Impolite learning: conduct and community in the Republic of Letters, 1680–1750* (New Haven, 1995).

and briefer notices of books. There seems to be as yet no adequate study of the distribution and use of these journals in Britain, but Anne Goldgar, following a study of journals located in private collections in France,[47] gives a list of those most frequently found.[48] A similar study of British libraries would certainly reveal the widespread collecting of these journals, and that one of the most popular was the *Nouvelles de la république des lettres*, edited from 1684 by Pierre Bayle and his followers.[49] (The Bodleian Library has four sets of it, from various sources.) Many of the journals were published in Holland; in England, the genre was represented by the *History of the works of the learned* (1699–1711), and by the attempts of the Huguenot refugee (and Anglican convert) Michael de la Roche, who, in several journals from 1710 to 1731, reviewed English writing for Europe and European writing for the English.[50]

47 D. Mornet, 'Les enseignements des bibliothèques privées (1750–1780)', *Revue d'Histoire Littéraire de la France* 17 (1910), 449–98.

48 Goldgar, *Impolite learning*, 60.

49 For example in the library of Archbishop William King (above, note 16) or in the catalogue of the Harleian printed books (1747), issued by the bookseller Thomas Osborne.

50 'Michael de la Roche', in *Oxford dictionary of national biography* (Oxford, 2004).

5

Libraries for school education and personal devotion

IAN GREEN

Among the most regular users of books on a daily basis were schoolchildren and those pious adults who read the Bible and other 'godly books' at home. The two groups were linked by the strong emphasis in contemporary education on Christian knowledge and behaviour, as reflected in the text which a well-drilled Scottish child inscribed on a blank space in the local kirk-session minutes: 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.'[1] Not only did libraries available to these groups increase in number and expand in size in all three kingdoms in this period, but in many cases the books were made available to wider circles of readers. Moreover, although the educational and ecclesiastical patterns of each country were very different in 1640, there was a tendency for educational and devotional libraries to become more homogeneous by the mid to late eighteenth century.

This period was characterised by a huge increase in the production of printed school-books, especially in England and Scotland, as a growing number of schoolmasters and ex-schoolmasters published textbooks which were sold in job lots to their own and other schools, and as publishers commissioned further works to feed an obviously growing market. In addition, contemporary theorists stressed the importance of students having access to a wide range of books, and some of them, such as Charles Hoole, indicated exactly which titles should be available. In *A new discovery of the old art of teaching schoole* (London, 1660), Hoole seems to have had a three-tier system of book storage in mind: each boy should have a box for essential texts used all the time; each class should have a 'little library' of subsidiary books, kept under lock and key; and 'every school of note' should have a library 'furnished with all sorts of grammars, phrase-books, lexicons, dictionaries, orators, poets, histories', etc. for the benefit of the master, and for the senior students to consult. He also advocated a gallery for maps and globes, and 'rarities' stored in drawers or

1 T. C. Smout, *A history of the Scottish people 1560–1830* (London, 1972), 83.

shelved cupboards.[2] However, when we look at the content and management of the school libraries of the period, the picture that emerges is not what these theorists might lead us to expect.

If we look, first, at England, and at the base of the educational pyramid there – the thousands of elementary or 'petty' schools set up by freelance teachers, such as parish clerks and 'dames', and beneficed clergy taking a few students into their home – we find virtually no evidence of libraries as such. This was partly because these schools were for the most part temporary arrangements which disappeared when the individual instructor gave up teaching, and partly because the works the teachers used were in most cases so flimsy that copies were literally worn to pieces. We can be fairly confident from official prescriptions and the millions of copies sold of basic texts such as *The ABC with the catechism* and *The primer and catechism* that the teachers of such schools made regular use of these cheap little tracts to impart basic literacy and numeracy to far more students than passed through the lower forms of endowed schools; but of a stock or store of copies of such books there is little evidence. Even in those charity schools whose accounts show how many copies of which books were bought, and whose students were exposed to more substantial bestsellers such as Allestree's *Whole duty of man*, we know little of how such works were deployed or stored when not in use.

If we turn to the middle of the English pyramid – the hundreds of grammar schools that were created or re-created between the Reformation and the Evangelical Revival – and then to the dozen or score of élite institutions that at a given moment formed its apex, such as Eton, Westminster, St Paul's and Winchester, we find endowed institutions which in many cases had the resources to buy and the space to store books.[3] A few of these school libraries still survive, though sadly many more were lost in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when teachers and governors left older books to rot or actually destroyed them, except for a few valuable items which were kept or sold. Fortunately, in a number of these cases we are at least able to reconstruct their content where contemporary catalogues survive, and what is immediately clear from surviving libraries and catalogues is that they do not present a mirror

2 C. Hoole, *A new discovery of the old art of teaching schoole*, ed. E. T. Campagnac (London, 1913), xvii–xxiv, 131–2, 144, 155, 171, 182–4, 187, 193, 200, 204–5, 224–5, 289–92.

3 J. E. Vaughan, 'The grammar school library in the late seventeenth century', *School Librarian* 10 (1960–1), 511–17; C. A. Stott, 'Schools and school libraries over two centuries', *School Librarian* 19 (1971), 15–23, 101–7; D. K. Shearing, 'Aspects of seventeenth-century grammar school librarianship', *School Librarian* 22 (1974), 305–9, and 'School libraries and librarianship in the early seventeenth century', *Aspects of Education* 31 (1984), 66–81.

image of the detailed advice on school syllabuses offered by contemporaries or of the patterns of textbook sales. There are two main reasons for this.

First, we need to distinguish between books which teachers insisted that all students had to read from cover to cover, and supplementary texts which students would only consult when there was time. The compulsory works used in the lowest forms of a grammar school normally consisted of a simple grammar, usually Lily's, plus basic Latin texts such as Cato's *Disticha de moribus*, Aesop's *Fables*, and *Sententiae pueriles*, and a bible, prayer book or psalter, and an elementary catechism. All of these were regularly republished in cheap editions, and copies were either owned outright by students or lent to successive students in turn, as we can tell from inscriptions in the isolated copies that have survived the wear and tear. In the upper forms, students were again likely to buy (or, if poor, be loaned) the works of Cicero, Terence, Ovid, Justin and others which they would study page by page, to help them polish their prose style, rhetorical and poetic skills, and knowledge of ancient history, plus the more advanced catechisms of Nowell, Boughen or Hammond. Between classes such essential works were presumably kept in a student's box, known as a 'scob' at Winchester; and masters were urged to check that they were kept safe and clean, and had the user's name written in the middle as well as on the front and rear covers. Loan copies were probably returned to a closet for use by the new intake the next year. By contrast, the books most likely to be considered to comprise a school 'library' were supplementary texts, to be consulted to help explain or flesh out the set texts: alternative grammars, less common classical texts, both old and new commentaries and anthologies, and more specialised dictionaries, thesauruses and lexicons, such as Thomas Cooper's *Thesaurus linguae Romanae et Britannicae* (London, 1565) and Henry Estienne's *Thesaurus Graecae linguae* (Paris, 1572) – both regularly found in school libraries over a century later. Some of these subsidiary titles may have been made available in the smaller class libraries that Hoole suggested, but many of the works we can identify as belonging to specific schools were either rare or more advanced works, and probably of most use to the master and senior students, and so much more likely to be confined to a single school library, where if numerous enough they would also be catalogued.[4]

4 For school textbooks, see T. W. Baldwin, *William Shakespere's 'small Latine and lesse Greeke'*, 2 vols. (Urbana, IL, 1944); I. Green, *'The Christian's ABC': catechisms and catechizing in England, c.1530–1740* (Oxford, 1966), chapter 4. See also: Shearing, 'School libraries', 78–82, and for education in general: R. O'Day, *Education and society 1500–1800* (London, 1982).

However, many of the smaller grammar schools with few students in the upper forms were in practice less likely to need, let alone afford, such a library, as Christopher Wase found in the 1670s when he circulated a questionnaire to all grammar schools. Of the schools which replied to his question on the existence of a library in the school or in a nearby town, over half said there was no such library; just under 10 per cent said they had access to a library in a nearby city or cathedral (some teachers doubled as cathedral librarians), and 15 per cent admitted to having a few dictionaries or other large books, but only 20 per cent said they had a library as such, and that often quite small.[5] When Nicholas Carlisle published *A concise description of the endowed grammar schools in England and Wales* in 1818, he reported that many older schools had either ceased to operate altogether, or had shed the upper tier, in which students had been taught Latin, and retained only the lower tier, in which English, writing and arithmetic were taught – subjects which did not require libraries.[6]

The second reason why in practice school libraries did not always match contemporary theory is that they were the product of at least two processes of acquisition. One, predictably, was the deliberate purchase of extra dictionaries, new editions of familiar texts, and specialist supplementary works – at the master's suggestion. But the other reflected the often very different preoccupations and reading habits of those who, with the best of intentions, donated books to the school: ordained clergy who had acted as teachers or governors, local gentry who gave copies of works they no longer needed, old boys who had moved into other professions such as the law or medicine, and sometimes local town councillors who wanted the school library to double as a public library.

All this having been said, scores of school libraries can be shown not only to have existed in England, but also to have undergone significant changes in the period: in the size of their holdings, the genres of works they contained, and the way in which they were stored and used. The most generously endowed or the longest-established schools did not necessarily have the best libraries, nor did those closest to London and the universities. Much depended on the initiatives of key figures, usually a particularly energetic and able teacher or, less often, a patron, but also on the generosity of governors, parents and former pupils, whether giving money to buy books or build new premises,

5 Wase papers, Corpus Christi College, Oxford, CCC390/1–3; see also C. Wase, *Considerations concerning free schools, as settled in England* (1678); P. J. Wallis, 'The Wase school collection: a neglected source in educational history', *Bodleian Library Record* 4 (1952), 78–104; W. Vincent, *The grammar schools: their continuing tradition 1660–1714* (London, 1969), 82–6.

6 N. Carlisle, *A concise description of the endowed grammar schools in England and Wales*, 2 vols. (London, 1818), *passim*.

or bequeathing their own books. Nevertheless, there was some correlation between the longevity or wealth of an institution and the quality of its library provision.

Libraries in some older schools housed much more specialised collections than existed in most grammar schools. The fellows' libraries at Eton and Winchester, for example, were more akin to that of an Oxbridge college or cathedral chapter. Eton's not only doubled in size during the provostship of Sir Henry Savile (1596–1622), but by 1708 had more than doubled again to perhaps 2,250, often expensively bound or rebound volumes. (By contrast, an experiment at creating a library for the boys at the end of the seventeenth century proved short-lived.) From 1729 the fellows' library at Eton was housed in a brand-new building that cost £3,200 and was capable of holding over 20,000 volumes – space soon needed when a further 5,500 volumes arrived in three separate bequests between 1731 and 1751. By then the character of the fellows' library was also changing rapidly from a relatively conventional academic library, dominated by the classics and divinity, many in continental editions, to one characterised by a much greater variety of format – broadsheets, pamphlets, prints and drawings as well as manuscripts and books – and of subject matter, including science, medicine, geography, contemporary history and philosophy.[7]

But the libraries of other pre-Reformation foundations expanded much later than Eton's. There had been a modest library at Westminster School in the 1580s, but this was vastly enlarged in the 1650s when a collection of 450 volumes, dominated by the classics and built up over several decades by its famous, and long-serving, headmaster Richard Busby, was housed in a specially built library erected at his expense. Many of the books in the nearby St Paul's School library were destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666, but the library was re-established in 1670, and numbered 454 volumes in 1697, and 830 by 1730, predominantly Latin and Greek literature. Other urban grammar schools founded in the middle ages underwent a similar experience: Manchester Grammar School received a large donation of books in the 1640s, and its library continued to expand and diversify; the library of Hull Grammar School was transformed by the efforts of two masters – John Catlyn (1664–76) and John Clarke (1716–32); while Abingdon School had a new library founded by subscription in 1740, and was regularly supplemented by gifts from former pupils.[8]

7 R. Birley, *The history of Eton College library* (Eton, 1970), 18–44, 70–7.

8 L. E. Tanner, *Westminster School* (London, 1923), 31–3; Wase papers, CCC390/2, fol. 247; A. A. Mumford, *The Manchester Grammar School 1515–1915* (London, 1919), 51–2, 522–6; J. Lawson, *A town grammar school through six centuries* (London, 1963), 75, 94, 115–17, 144–54.

Of the hundreds of *new* schools founded after the Reformation, we inevitably know most about the libraries of those that prospered. At Bury St Edmunds, about 860 books were given by successful old boys in a steady stream between 1550 and 1761; while at Sherborne, also founded in 1550, 400 volumes were listed in the 1695 catalogue, half of them classical studies and divinity, but by then history, travel, geography and natural science as well. Shrewsbury School, created in 1578, spent over £110 of its own and benefactors' money between 1600 and 1634 on works of divinity, classics and philology, and by 1634 owned nearly 700 books. But by 1736 this had grown to nearly 1,500, and by 1766 to 4,500, with a wider subject coverage reflecting the varied interests of donors, including two physicians.[9]

A similar pattern of major expansion and some diversification in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century can be found in the smaller provincial schools set up under Elizabeth and the early Stuarts. At Wakefield in 1686, for example, the headmaster, Revd Edward Clarke, raised money for a new library building, 'being persuaded that the gentlemen and other learned persons here educated would in a few years furnish us' with as many books as the best provided of nearby schools owned, 'had we but a spacious and commodious room wherein to place them'. When in the early 1720s Daniel Defoe visited St Bees School in Cumberland (founded in 1583 by Archbishop Grindal), he found the library 'very valuable and still increasing' through generous donations from local gentry and clergy. And at Gresham's School at Holt, Norfolk, in 1729 the new master, John Holmes, persuaded its governors, the Fishmongers' Company, to spend over £100 providing 'a valuable and useful Library of the best Latin and Greek authors now used in the most celebrated schools in England with a pair of globes'.[10]

In view of the damage inflicted on a number of school libraries during the Civil War, it took resolve as well as resources to set up a new school and library in the 1640s and 1650s, but there are some examples. In 1652, with the help of the Leathersellers' Company, Abraham Colfe refounded a school in his parish of Lewisham, adding to the library the best of his own books, to be chained in

9 A. T. Bartholomew, 'On the library of King Edward VI School, Bury St Edmunds', *Library*, 3rd. ser., 1 (1910), 1–14; P. Currie, 'Reflections on a bookseller's bill of 1687', *Antiquarian Book Monthly Review* 14 (1987), 208–14; J. B. Oldham, 'Shrewsbury School library: its earlier history and organization', *Library*, 4th ser., 16 (1936), 49–60, and 'Shrewsbury School library', *Library*, 5th ser., 14 (1959), 81–6.

10 M. H. Peacock, *History of the Free Grammar School of Queen Elizabeth at Wakefield* (Wakefield, 1892), 167; D. Defoe, *A tour through the whole island of Great Britain*, 2 vols. (London, 1962), vol. 2, 273; P. J. Lee, *A catalogue of the Foundation Library* (Holt, 1965), 7.

the upper room over the school for general use. In the more stable conditions prevailing after the Restoration, scores of new schools were founded both by conformist clergy and laity, and by dissenters and later the Methodists. Their relative newness meant that where these schools had a library it tended to be smaller than those of longer-established schools, or to reflect the main interests or prime aims of its founder. The library set up in the new grammar school at Witney in the early 1660s by its founders, Henry and Mary Box, consisted of his fine personal collection of sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century works. The libraries in the schools set up by Thomas Tenison in St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, and Thomas Plume in Maldon, Essex, were intended for use by local clergy and interested laity as well as masters and scholars; Plume donated his pictures and a large map of the world as well as his books. Similarly, the library at Kingswood School, near Bath, founded by John Wesley in 1748, contained many works from his own collection as well as extracts and summary versions of works that he prepared for use in the school.[11]

The dozens of dissenting academies founded after 1662 to educate the sons of dissenters were in a different position: masters without an episcopal licence to teach were likely to have their academies closed at short notice, and those rich enough to have a personal library risked having it confiscated. Until 1730, endowed, institutional libraries were thus impossible, and students were almost entirely reliant on borrowing books from a teacher or a local chapel or public library, or more commonly from the collections of richer or better-supported dissenters. Oliver Heywood in the north, James Forbes in Gloucester and Lazarus Seaman and Thomas Seaman in London all generously allowed their personal collections to become virtual circulating libraries for ministers, tutors and students. Only with the founding of an endowed library by Dr Daniel Williams in London in 1729, and an institutional library by Philip Doddridge in the academy which he set up in Northampton in 1730, did dissenting libraries become more settled; in succeeding decades many more academy libraries were set up, usually around the core of the existing library of a minister or tutor, but supplemented by other books and apparatus specifically requested by the current tutors. Even then, many of these libraries migrated when the founder of an academy died and its trustees tried to ensure it went to a similarly useful purpose elsewhere. The quality and breadth of

11 Shearing, 'Aspects', 307–9, and 'School libraries', 70, 83–4; M. A. Fleming, *Witney Grammar School 1660–1960* (Oxford, 1960), 1–5, 15–20; A. G. Ives, *Kingswood School in Wesley's day and since* (London, 1970), 11–18, 245–9.

the education provided in many academies is all the more remarkable given the shortages of books often faced by tutors and students.[12]

By the early eighteenth century there was a major change in the housing of more valuable or regularly consulted books in more conventional school libraries. The chaining of large books was becoming less common by the 1690s, and at Eton in 1719 the chains were removed from all books except the founder's manuscripts. When several dozen chains were removed at Shrewsbury in the 1730s, £1 7s was obtained for the scrap iron. Chaining should, however, be kept in perspective. Only books published in the largest format, folio, and solidly bound quartos could be chained effectively: at Shrewsbury such books were stored in a closet.

The rise and fall of chaining does, however, confirm the point made earlier about how school libraries were used at the start of our period, and highlight the changes by the end. The classification of the chained books at Shrewsbury in the mid-seventeenth century had been alphabetical: from A (bibles) and B (patristic writings) to T (dictionaries). But only P to S (Greek historians and dictionaries, and Latin poets and prose-writers) reflect what we know to have been the standard teaching fare of the day – grammatical exercises, translation into and out of Latin and Greek, writing elegant letters and verse, and polishing rhetorical skills. Those expensive chained folios in classes A–O at Shrewsbury were presumably meant to be used by teachers and abler or more advanced students destined for university, and also by local clergy and interested laity, many of whom would be personally known to the head teacher.[13]

Perhaps the physical space provided by a school – or a parish church – was too important not to use flexibly, especially in places some distance from the capital or a university, or where the local clergy and governors thought that spreading the gospel and defeating ignorance and 'popery' were more important than maintaining strict demarcation lines between institutions. When the cathedral library was taken from Winchester Cathedral by parliamentarian forces in the 1640s, it was placed in Winchester College 'for public use' (though in the 1660s it was restored to the newly built Morley Library in the cathedral, where most subsequent readers were clergy again). Colfe's library at Lewisham was also intended as a public library for local ministers and gentlemen and 'all the godly students that will frequent it'. Similar thinking may have influenced Thomas

12 D. L. Ferch, '"Good books are a very great mercy to the world": persecution, private libraries, and the printed word in the early development of the dissenting academies, 1663–1730', *Journal of Library History* 21 (1986), 350–61; and see H. McLachlan, *English education under the Test Acts: being the history of nonconformist academies 1662–1820* (Manchester, 1931).

13 Oldham, 'Shrewsbury School library' (1936), 55, and (1959), 86.

Hall, curate at King's Norton, Warwickshire, from 1640 to 1662: in his will he gave 300 of his most valuable books for the clergy of Birmingham to use, and asked for a further 750 to go to a library at King's Norton for the clergy of three local parishes and the two schoolmasters in King's Norton itself, and a final 270 volumes of 'school books and philosophy' to the grammar school there.[14]

In 1677 Edward Lewis, vicar of Chirbury, Shropshire, bequeathed his collections of theological works and biblical commentaries to the parish, to be chained in the schoolhouse in the churchyard, for the use of the schoolmaster or any other parishioners with a desire to read them. The new libraries in Leeds (in 1692), Maldon (1704), Nottingham (1744) and Tamworth (in 1786) were housed in local schools. Shrewsbury School's most impressive library was by the late seventeenth century being called 'Biblioteca Salopiensis', and in the eighteenth 'the Public Library of Shrewsbury School', just as the town library set up by Coventry corporation in the town's grammar school in 1602 was later in the century called the 'public Library at the Free School'. The borrowers' registers at Shrewsbury from 1737 to 1826 show that the school's own teachers were the most frequent borrowers, and that classics was the single genre most often borrowed, but also that scores of local clergy, gentry and citizens borrowed books regularly, and that aids to Bible study, history, antiquities, biography and geography were popular too.[15]

In short, in the case of many 'school' libraries in England, we should be aware, as Christopher Wase clearly was, of the permeable membranes between compartments labelled 'school', 'cathedral', 'town', 'parish' or 'public'. In so far as libraries designed and maintained primarily for use by teachers and schoolboys stood apart, they normally had a significantly higher proportion of works on the classics than other types of library. But in other respects, such as genre and function, they often overlapped considerably with those created for a wider readership. Much work still needs to be done on the extant catalogues of libraries based in English schools in this period, and on the evidence of use that can be gleaned from inscriptions and marginalia in surviving copies, to try to tease out exactly how these libraries operated at the time.

The Christian doctrine and morality which formed an integral part of English schoolchildren's education were also clearly reflected in the collections of books, however small, that growing numbers of them acquired as adults. In his *Christian directory* (London, 1678), Richard Baxter offered detailed advice

14 T. Kelly, *Early public libraries* (London, 1966), 71, 80; Carlisle, *Concise description*, vol. 1, 584.
15 Kelly, *Early public libraries*, 71, 74, 82, 91, 94.

on what books of divinity should be found in the 'poorest or smallest library of all', in a slightly larger library, and in a library that was larger again but still came far short of a 'rich and sumptuous library'.[16] Baxter was also one of a number of individual clergy and laity, both conformist and dissenter, who tried to ensure that free copies of bibles and improving works were given to children and householders who could make use of them, and from the 1690s this became institutionalised in the work of the SPCK and other charitable organisations. From anecdotal and probate evidence it is clear that a wide variety of households possessed a bible and either a prayer book or psalter, or an improving handbook, tract or broadsheet. Moreover, at least some of these were used regularly: to teach the art of reading to those who could not attend school; or for edification on Sundays, as in the household of the man to whom the future bookseller James Lackington was apprenticed in 1761 – an Anabaptist shoemaker who owned just seven books.[17]

Though most women were denied opportunities for prolonged formal education, they often played a special rôle in domestic devotions and instructing the young. They also penned many devotional works of their own, and had many more didactic or devotional works dedicated to or targeted at them, or bequeathed them by male relatives. While few detailed records survive of collections built by women (as opposed to shared with male partners), there is an abundance of suggestive material in diaries, commonplace books, funeral sermons, inventories and other sources. The books owned by Lady Anne Southwell, who had a reputation for learning and wrote poems as well as making notes on the writings of St Augustine and others, filled three trunks when she changed residence in the 1630s, and were supplemented by her second husband, Captain Henry Sibthorpe, who inherited them in 1636. Over a third of their books consisted of devotional works, sermons, theological treatises, religious verse by Southwell, Donne and Herbert, and some polemic. Then there is the 'great library' of 'pious books' which Alice Lucy of Charlecote had hunted down before her death in 1648, and the large collection inherited and acquired by Frances Wolfreston, the wife of a Staffordshire gentleman from 1631 to 1677. Her fondness for her own little 'godly books' is reflected in the religious verses of Francis Quarles she copied into a number of them and her care in disposing of them in her will.

In her later diary Lady Anne Clifford recorded that during her troubled life she 'made good books and virtuous thoughts my companions'. When

16 R. Baxter, *Christian directory* (1678), part 3, 191–8.

17 J. Lackington, *Memoirs of the first forty-five years* (London, 1794), 46; I. Green, *Print and Protestantism in early modern England* (Oxford, 2000), 79–96, 407–8, 614–15, and *passim*.

she commissioned a triptych on her own and her family's history, about 1646, she had herself represented as the owner of at least forty-four named books (another nine are mentioned in her diary). These include the Bible, a paraphrase of the Psalms, Augustine's *City of God*, sermons, and the religious verse of Salluste du Bartas, Donne and Herbert. But whereas on the left panel (where she is depicted as a young woman) the titles reflect the accomplishments expected of a young noblewoman by her parents and others, on the right (as a widow) several works are more meditative or introspective, or focus on the mortality of mankind.[18] Similarly, when Anne Childe died in 1659 at Blockley, Gloucestershire, she was commemorated on a marble monument in the parish church, depicted with all her books shelved behind her, and underneath a verse including the lines:

> How seasoned was my soul with heaven's kind looks
> When I comparing was with text my godly books.

Those aristocratic women who wrote and in some cases published private family prayers or meditations, such as Lady Elizabeth Delaval and Anne Douglas, countess of Morton, also had a bible and some improving or uplifting works at hand to act as inspiration or quarries. In their turn copies of *The Countess of Morton's daily exercise*, which passed through at least seventeen editions between 1666 and 1696, and the *Meditations and prayers to be used before, at, and after the receiving of the sacrament*, attributed to Elizabeth Percy, duchess of Northumberland, and printed at least six times between 1682 and 1715, became part of the devotional collections of other women. *The ladies calling* by Richard Allestree was only one of a number of works offering advice to or by women on their domestic rôles, and extolling the particular virtues associated with their sex. But this particular work sold perhaps sixteen editions between 1673 and 1727, and also circulated widely among the well-born and the upwardly mobile.[19]

Gentlemen too were offered appropriate advice, as in Clement Ellis's *Gentile sinner* (perhaps ten editions 1660–90) and Allestree's *The gentleman's calling* (over two dozen editions between 1660 and 1717). The gentry can also be seen not

18 J. C. Cavanaugh, 'The library of Lady Southwell and Captain Sibthorpe', *Studies in Bibliography* 29 (1967), 243–54; P. Morgan, 'Frances Wolfreston and "hor bouks": a seventeenth-century woman book-collector', *Library*, 6th ser., 11 (1989), 197–219, and cf. 12 (1990), 56; M. E. Lamb, 'The agency of the split subject: Lady Anne Clifford and the uses of reading', *English Literary Renaissance* 22 (1992), 347–68; R. T. Spence, *Lady Anne Clifford* (Stroud, 1997), 189–94; cf. D. McKitterick, 'Women and their books in seventeenth-century England: the case of Elizabeth Puckering', *Library*, 7th ser., 1 (2000), 359–80.

19 D. G. Greene (ed.), *The meditations of Lady Elizabeth Delaval*, Surtees Society 190 ([Durham], 1978); Green, *Print and Protestantism*, 272, 293, 355–6, 584–5.

only generously supporting the charitable and educational movements of the day, but also subscribing to new publishing ventures such as Samuel Wesley's illustrated bible stories in verse and Philip Doddridge's *Family expositor*. The collections of gentlemen included the well-respected sermons and devotional works of the day, together with some polemical works, as in the case of the parliamentarian Sir Edward Dering and the many royalists' libraries seized in the 1640s. Later in the century, William Coe, an East Anglian gentleman, owned and read closely Thomas Comber's *Companion to the altar*, Jeremy Taylor's *Great exemplar*, Simon Patrick's *Devout Christian instructed* and Sir Matthew Hale's *Contemplations moral and divine*.[20] The room designated a 'library', which became a fashionable feature of many noble and gentry houses in the eighteenth century, often housed bibles and commentaries alongside improving essays and the sermons of fashionable preachers.

Lower down the social ladder, Thomas Sandes, a manufacturer in Kendal, had a fine collection of about 270 volumes, mainly religious, which in his will he gave to the Bluecoat School he founded in the town in 1670, for the use of the master and 'men of learning and quality' in the area. Thomas Turner, a Sussex shopkeeper, prized Tillotson's sermons so much that he read them out loud to his neighbour, a shoemaker, on Sunday evenings, and he also found comfort in William Sherlock's *Practical discourse concerning death*.[21]

We can be fairly confident that Catholic gentry also owned small collections of what Nicholas Blundell in early eighteenth-century Lancashire called 'spiritual books' of the sort he sometimes read after supper: primers, devotional 'companions' such as the *Manual of devout prayers* and Challoner's *Garden of the soul*, and spiritual guides such as Gother's *Instructions*, as well as some saints' lives, and catechisms for the young. By the eighteenth century Catholic works were being published regularly inside England, and in greater numbers and a wider range of titles, though devotional works remained the single largest group. Sadly, hardly any recusant libraries still exist. One that does is the library which accumulated at Harvington Hall in Worcestershire, mainly through the zeal of Lady Mary Yate (1616–96). Annotations and inscriptions show that this collection, including many rare and unique works, was used by the family as well as their chaplains, until it was transferred to Oscott College when it was

20 Green, *Print and Protestantism*, 124, 159–60, 355, 412–13, 570–5; I. Roy, 'The libraries of Edward, 2nd Viscount Conway, and others: an inventory and valuation of 1643', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 41 (1968), 35–46.

21 A. Elliot and J. Bagnall, *Short-title list of the Sandes Library (Kendal Grammar School)* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1969); Green, *Print and Protestantism*, 572–4, 579–80.

founded in 1794. In the same decade the collection of the English Jesuits at Liège was brought over to Stonyhurst for safety.[22] Persecution at home and abroad could not prevent the acquisition and preservation of libraries if the desire for uplifting books was strong enough.

The patterns of school and devotional libraries in Wales were somewhat different, owing mainly to the difference in language, the relatively low level of literacy in Wales at the outset – perhaps only 15–20 per cent in the early seventeenth century – and the limited range and not inconsiderable price of the few titles published in Welsh before the 1620s and 1630s. This meant that relatively few lay people outside the ranks of the gentry would have had regular access to books before then. Moreover, the disruptions caused by the civil wars were severe in places: Carmarthen Grammar School had acquired a large library by 1642, but by the Restoration not a single book survived. In the late 1640s Wales was deemed to be one of those 'dark corners of the land' that, like the far north of England and Ireland, required not only more clergy but also new schools, though only a third of the sixty then set up may still have been in existence at the Restoration owing to the problems of finding teachers willing to stay in often remote locations.[23]

Between 1660 and the late eighteenth century, much would change. The majority of Welsh men and women of all ranks continued to be Welsh-speaking, but not only was there a significant upsurge in literacy and in the scale and variety of texts published in Welsh, there also is good evidence that a significant number of libraries were set up, and a wide range of Welsh men and women bought devotional works, from titled nobility to craftsmen.

A number of grammar schools fared well, both old such as Carmarthen, and new or revived such as Cowbridge and Swansea. The library at Carmarthen was reconstituted by a zealous teacher, Nicholas Roberts, who solicited books and money from the local gentry; and, although the increasingly anglophone greater gentry of south Wales preferred to send their sons to schools in or near London, they proved willing to give valuable books to Cowbridge's school

22 J. Bossy, *The English Catholic community 1570–1850* (London, 1975), 119, 171, 272–5, 364–8; G. F. Pullen, 'The Old Library at St Mary's College, New Oscott', *Open Access* 16 (2) (1968), 4–7; F. Courtney, 'The New Library at Heythrop College', *Bulletin of the Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries* (September 1966), 15; and in general, F. Blom, J. Blom, F. Korsten and G. Scott, *English Catholic books 1701–1800: a bibliography* (Aldershot, 1996).

23 G. Williams, *Renewal and Reformation: Wales, c.1415–1642* (Oxford, 1993), 323, 433–7, 476–7, 483; G. H. Jenkins, *The foundations of modern Wales: Wales, 1642–1780* (Oxford, 1993), chapter 2; Wase papers, CCC390/3, fol. 26.

library.[24] Moreover, the shortage of elementary schools and edifying literature in Wales prompted both individual efforts such as those of Thomas Gouge in the early 1670s, and joint ventures like the Welsh Trust, the SPCK and the Charity School movement. The Welsh Trust consisted of leading episcopalians and dissenters who in the late 1670s co-operated in securing the distribution of thousands of Welsh books among 'poor people that could read Welsh'. Scores of charity schools were set up over the next few decades, with the usual emphasis on children mastering approved texts, and many of those in the anglicised market towns of Wales flourished. Libraries with a broader range of works were also set up for laity and clergy, in the dioceses, parishes, and even prisons, helped by the veritable explosion of publication of books in Welsh from 1660 to 1730, first in London, but then increasingly within Wales itself and in Shrewsbury.[25]

The most frequently reproduced texts in Welsh were bibles, psalters, prayer books, catechisms and catechetical expositions, but a growing proportion consisted of translations into Welsh of 'practical works of piety, couched in plain, intelligible language' that had proved popular when published in England by both 'godly' and conformist authors, together with sermons and some doctrinal treatises. Evidence from subscription lists and probate records shows that not only aristocrats and gentry, and conformist and dissenting clergy, but also professional men, rich merchants and entrepreneurs, yeoman-farmers, and even craftsmen and artisans and their spouses, all had a growing appetite for pious literature of this sort. While the libraries of the gentry contained a wide range of doctrinal and practical works (as well as much else), that of Thomas William, a weaver in the mid-eighteenth century, consisted of a number of Welsh books – a bible, a prayer book, three editions of the psalms, several devotional books, translations of John Bunyan's works, and five catechisms – as well as English devotional works, and some novels and popular works.[26]

Some areas remained poorly served, such as north Cardiganshire, where the Richard family set the local school at Ystradmeurig on a more secure basis, and built a library in 1761 to house Edward Richard's own substantial and expanding collection of grammars and classical texts, devotional and edifying works,

24 P. Jenkins, *The making of a ruling class: the Glamorgan gentry 1640–1790* (Cambridge, 1983), 218–21.

25 G. H. Jenkins, *Literature, religion and society in Wales, 1660–1730* (Cardiff, 1978), 252–3, 279, 298; Jenkins, *Foundations*, 198–202.

26 Jenkins, *Foundations*, 204–10; Jenkins, *Literature, religion and society*, 257–91; see also M. I. Williams, 'A general view of Glamorgan houses and their interiors in the 17th and 18th centuries', in *Stewart Williams's Glamorgan Historian*, vol. 10 (Barry, 1974).

biblical commentaries, sermons and ecclesiastical history, and some poetry, prose, history and geography, and legal studies. The library was intended for use by teachers, students and parishioners, but, when enlarged by the many books donated by local landed families and clergy, by former pupils (including eminent teachers, clergy and authors) and by admirers further afield, it soon became (in one historian's view) the 'Bodleian of Wales'.[27]

Scotland was different again, in being heir to different traditions of schooling and ecclesiastical practice, as well as to sharp contrasts between the English-speaking Lowlands and the Gaelic-speaking Highlands and Islands. The national system of elementary schooling in 'godliness and good manners' at parish level envisaged at the Reformation took many decades to achieve, and the quality of the education provided varied considerably: the more prosperous lowlands were better provided than the poorer highlands, towns were better provided than the country, and the centres of the typically large Scottish rural parishes better than the outlying hamlets. Moreover, most children were expected to do no more than learn the kirk's *Shorter catechism* by heart, memorise some prayers and graces, attend church on Sundays, and learn how to read the Bible – the only English reading text approved; only the older and more able children would be taught grammar and Latin, if their parents could afford to let them stay on. As a result, neither average parish schools, nor the short-term private schools set up to supplement them, nor the schools set up in the Highlands after 1709 by the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge (which taught practical subjects, and not Latin) required, let alone were able to afford, libraries as opposed to stocks of certain basic texts.[28]

Grammar schools in the larger towns, which had curricula similar to their English counterparts, were much more likely to have libraries of the larger books needed by teachers and senior students. That of Edinburgh High School was either set up or reorganised in 1658, with money from the town council, which paid for presses and shelves, and from teachers, citizens and former pupils. By 1849 it contained 6,400 volumes, including 'the best Greek and Latin lexicons, the best editions of the classics, several encyclopaedias', and many other valuable works. That of Aberdeen Grammar School was built around a donation of books by George Robertson in 1659; an inventory of Glasgow Grammar School's library was ordered in 1682, as was a new press; and the magistrates of Montrose not only erected a library in the town's grammar

27 W. F. Howells, 'The library of Edward Richard, Ystradmeurig', *Ceredigion* 9 (1982), 237.
28 Smout, *Scottish people*, 81–4; R. A. Houston, *Scottish literacy and the Scottish identity* (Cambridge, 1985), especially 98–101, 110–17, 124–7.

school in 1686, and gave £10 sterling to buy books, but also kept a close eye on its contents and ensured further funds, so that by 1735 it contained 600 volumes. In 1711 Dunfermline town council gave £10, and urged others to give, towards providing 'a competent foundation' of new books for the grammar school library there.[29] Other examples include a library for the girls in the Trades Maiden Hospital in 1758. The silence of the records for other schools may reflect either the absence of a library – George Watson's College admitted its first students in 1741 but does not appear to have had a library until the early nineteenth century – or a decline in their fortunes by the time of the detailed educational surveys of the nineteenth century. But the libraries that are known, like those in England, reflect the shifts in educational philosophy towards wider and more practical curricula.

Literacy and the habit of reading books were thus acquired in widely varying environments in the Scotland of the Enlightenment, and the result was a wide range of adult readers, from those landowners who were adding a library to their new country houses, through dedicated clergy and teachers, and curious townsmen, to working-class subscribers. Growing numbers of Scottish readers had access to edifying works through subscribing to a local library or buying one published in parts over a number of weeks or months, such as the *Family expositor* produced by the English nonconformist Philip Doddridge.[30]

Ireland presents another variation, with the Presbyterian minority looking to Glasgow and Edinburgh for a lead, while the episcopalian élite looked to Dublin and London, and the leaders of the Catholic majority looked to the continent for education and printed material. Indeed, there are some parallels to the Highlands of Scotland in the restrictions placed on schooling for Catholics, and the insistence of many Protestant laymen and clergymen on the use of English as the medium of education and conversion, rather than the language of the local majority.

For the Protestant landed and commercial élites, there was access to good schools, such as Swift's and Congreve's alma mater, Kilkenny College, and the Bluecoat School in Dublin, though there were complaints from tutors at Trinity College, Dublin about the standards in some schools. For a while, some bishops and lay officials turned a blind eye to dissenting initiatives, such as the use of Presbyterian catechisms in schools in Ulster, the setting up of a divinity school in Antrim, and efforts by the Society of Friends to

29 J. Grant, *History of the burgh and parish schools of Scotland* (London, 1876), 436–8.
30 R. H. Carnie, 'Working class readers in 18th-century Scotland', *Scottish Tradition* 7/8 (1979), 77–94.

set up their own schools. The significant number of catechisms and primers ordered or printed locally suggests these schools survived subsequent hostility from the authorities. Prompted by the political scares of the late 1680s, and by Pietist influence, there were also reforming initiatives in elementary education among the supporters of mainstream Protestantism. From the 1690s to the 1720s, nearly 200 charity schools were set up in towns and on landed estates, to encourage piety and provide basic literacy and some practical skills: as in Britain most of these did not need or acquire full-blown libraries, unless through gifts, as in the case of the library of the Greencoat School in Cork. The same can be said of two other initiatives: the attempt to reinvigorate the parish schools set up in the first century after the Reformation, and from the 1730s the setting up of Charter Schools to offer vocational training.[31]

Catholic works had for long been regularly smuggled into Ireland. Simpler works such as primers, catechisms and printed images were given away, while longer handbooks or saints' lives came into the hands of the upper and middling laity, and more advanced treatises into the hands of the clergy: by the 1690s Franciscan friaries in Galway had libraries containing dozens of works of Counter-Reformation theology. Presbyterians and Quakers used their networks of meetings to distribute books brought in from Scotland and England. And from the 1690s many bishops and landowners gave away free copies of bibles, prayer books, pre-communion handbooks, godly living handbooks, sermons and pamphlets, printed in London or, later, increasingly in Ireland.[32]

Anecdotal and probate evidence shows many people owning bibles and improving works such as Bayly's *Practise of pietie* or Allestree's *Whole duty of man*, and illustrates the way in which different denominations (as well as different countries) borrowed each other's best ideas. In the late seventeenth century, devotional works could comprise a quarter to a third of the collections of the landed élite: the first duke of Ormond not only owned many such works, but also wrote prayers for his own use before taking communion. In the next century subscription lists show strong support for the publication of edifying and devotional works in small formats, especially among female readers; and

31 J. G. Simms, 'The Restoration, 1660–85', in T. W. Moody and F. X. Martin (eds.), *New history of Ireland*, vol. 3 (Oxford, 1991), 136–7; D. Hayton, 'Did Protestantism fail in early eighteenth-century Ireland? Charity schools and the enterprise of religious and social reformation, c. 1690–1730', in A. Ford, J. McGuire and K. Milne (eds.), *As by law established: the Church of Ireland since the Reformation* (Dublin, 1995), 166–87; R. L. Greaves, *God's other children: Protestant nonconformists and the emergence of denominational churches in Ireland, 1660–1700* (Stanford, CA, 1997), 153–4, 246–7, 351–3, 446 note 119.

32 R. Gillespie, *Devoted people: belief and religion in early modern Ireland* (Manchester, 1997), 9–12, 26, 40, 45, 53, 68–9, 74–6, 99–100, 153–8.

we know the reading of Mary Delany, Maria Edgeworth, Alicia Synge and the duchess of Leinster included improving works.[33]

By the mid to late eighteenth century, the range of subjects reflected in many school and private libraries in Britain and Ireland was more diverse than a century earlier, and in many cases books were made accessible to readers outside the school or household. But the new titles and borrowing patterns in such libraries continued to reflect the enduring attractiveness of both the classics and edifying literature, and a trend towards the stocking of the same titles in all three kingdoms.

33 R. Gillespie, 'Lay spirituality and worship, 1558–1750: holy books and godly readers', in R. Gillespie and W. G. Neilly (eds.), *The laity and the Church of Ireland, 1000–2000* (Dublin, 2002), 133–51; B. Cunningham and M. Kennedy (eds.), *The experience of reading: Irish historical perspectives* (Dublin, 1999), chapters 2, 4, 5; R. C. Cole, 'Private libraries in eighteenth-century Ireland', *Library Quarterly* 44 (1974), 231–47.

6

Libraries for the parish: individual donors and charitable societies

W. M. JACOB

By the 1680s many English and Welsh parish churches had small collections of books, for reference, often chained to a book press or desk, for security. These are usually designated 'desk libraries' to distinguish them from slightly larger collections, designated 'parochial libraries'. The term 'parochial library' came into use in the last decade of the seventeenth century, but is imprecise. In attempting to define and categorise libraries in parishes Kelly distinguished between 'parochial libraries' under the control of the 'parochial authority' and 'parish libraries' designed for the use of the inhabitants,[1] and Canon Fitch suggested 'parochial library' should be applied to libraries in parish churches or parsonage houses, reserved, by the terms of a gift or bequest, for exclusive use by clergy. Fitch distinguished three categories of library: personal libraries bequeathed for the use of incumbents of parishes in perpetuity, usually housed in the parsonage house; libraries built up by donations, housed in churches; and libraries presented to a parish.[2] For most 'parochial libraries' the distinctions are unclear. They were often also town, school or deanery libraries. Sometimes they were intended for reference only, or only for the use of the parish clergy; sometimes borrowing, by a restricted constituency, was permitted. They were almost always formally established by trust deed, bequest or formal rules.

In 1680 sixty-nine parochial libraries are recorded in England and Wales, two 'town' libraries in Scotland, at Edinburgh and Aberdeen, and none in Ireland. By 1760, 267 libraries are recorded in England, thirty-seven in Wales, eighteen on the Isle of Man and one in Ireland, and seventy-seven libraries had been distributed to Scottish parishes and presbyteries. Why was there such a burst of activity in providing books for parishes in the British Isles?

1 T. Kelly, 'Historical introduction', in *Catalogue of books from parochial libraries in Shropshire* (London, 1971), viii.
2 J. Fitch, 'Historical introduction', in *Suffolk parochial libraries: a catalogue* (London, 1977), ix.

Three factors contributed to this significant increase in parochial libraries: books were increasingly available; there was a movement to raise standards of pastoral care and teaching provided by the clergy of the established churches; and there was increasing literacy at all levels of a society with a considerable interest in theology.

By the second half of the seventeenth century the clergy, members of the professions and most gentry were literate, as were two-thirds of the commercial élite, and most of their wives and daughters.[3] The expiry of the Licensing Act in 1695, which had restricted printing to London, Oxford, Cambridge and York, encouraged a rapid expansion of provincial printing and publishing. The book trade in provincial England showed a strong market in bibles and devotional books among lay people, and a vast market for chapbooks and ballads, as well as catechisms and schoolbooks. The stocks of provincial bookshops were dominated by religious works.[4]

From the 1670s bishops and leading clergy and laity of the restored Church of England were working to complete the reform of the ministry of the church begun in the sixteenth century, by improving the learning of the clergy and the quality of their pastoral care and teaching.[5] Establishing parochial libraries, especially in poorer benefices and in outlying, and economically less developed, areas of the British Isles, was part of this initiative. Establishing libraries was also an aspect of a major philanthropic movement during the period, motivated by a desire to improve the position of the Church of England, which also included founding charity schools to teach the children of the poor to read and the Catechism; distributing suitable devotional and improving tracts for this new readership; establishing trust funds for the benefit of the poor; and major programmes to repair and refurbish parish churches, and building new churches.[6] There was a strong desire to create a godly nation and a learned clergy.

An outstanding example is Thomas Plume, vicar of East Greenwich, rector of Merston and archdeacon of Rochester, who rebuilt St Peter's church at Maldon, his birthplace, to house the grammar school and a public library with an endowment to pay and house a clergyman as librarian. He bequeathed his library of 7,130 titles and his pictures to the library 'for the use of the

3 D. Cressy, *Literacy and the social order: reading and writing in Tudor and Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1980), 122–31.

4 See J. Feather, *The provincial book trade in eighteenth century England* (Cambridge, 1985).

5 See J. Gregory, 'The eighteenth-century reformation of the pastoral task of Anglican clergy after 1689', in J. Walsh, C. Haydon and S. Taylor (eds.), *The Church of England* c.*1689*–c.*1833* (Cambridge, 1993).

6 W. M. Jacob, *Lay people and religion in the early eighteenth century* (Cambridge, 1997), 174–6.

minister and the clergy of the neighbouring parishes who generally make this town their place of residence on account of the unwholesomeness of the air of the vicinity of their churches'. He directed that 'any Gentleman or Scholar who desires, may go into it, and make use of any book there, or borrow it, in case he leave a vadimonium with the Keeper for the restoring thereof fair and uncorrupted within a short time'. Plume's will of 1704 also provided for a weekly sermon at All Saints, Maldon, and for a priest to read Morning and Evening Prayer daily in church, and augmented the benefice income; he endowed a charity school and an exhibition for a boy from the grammar school to Christ's College, Cambridge; he left £20 to Chelmsford Grammar School, where he had been educated, to establish a library; he built four almshouses in Dartford; he bequeathed £100 to the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK); and he endowed a Professorship of Natural Philosophy and Astronomy at Cambridge.[7]

Most libraries were established for the benefit of clergy, whether as parish priests or as masters of grammar schools, where future clergy were educated. At Chirbury in Shropshire in 1677 the vicar, Edward Lewis, bequeathed his library to be placed in the schoolhouse he had built in the churchyard 'for the use of the Schoolmaster or any other of his parishioners who shall desire to read them'. At St Leonard's, Bridgnorth, Hugh Stackhouse, master of the grammar school and rector of Oldbury, bequeathed his library of 1,500 or so volumes to 'the Society of Clergyman in and about Bridgnorth'. In 1680 Richard More of Linley, a leading member of the local gentry, presented a library to More church 'for the use and benefit of the inhabitants of the same and especially for the encouraging of a Preaching Minister there'.[8]

In London Thomas Tenison, vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields, in 1684 commissioned Sir Christopher Wren to design a building adjacent to St Martin's as a grammar school and public library. Tenison was motivated by the discovery of

> twenty or thirty Young Men in Orders in his Parish either Governors to young Gentlemen or Chaplains to Noble-men who, being reproved by him upon occasion for frequenting Taverns or Coffee-houses, told him they would study and employ their time better if they had books.[9]

Until the 1680s parochial libraries were primarily an urban phenomenon. Market towns were the focus of economic and social life, and centres for local clergy. Libraries located in market towns were available to clergy from the

7 W. J. Petchey, *The intentions of Thomas Plume* (Maldon, 1985), 2.
8 Kelly, 'Historical introduction', ix.
9 E. S. de Beer (ed.), *The diary of John Evelyn* (Oxford, 1955), vol. 4, 367.

surrounding area, and members of the local urban élites, and country gentry. In boroughs they had a civic identity. At Newark Thomas White, a former vicar, bequeathed his books to the 'Mayor Aldermen and Vicar of the Town of Newark' for their use and that of the inhabitants.[10] At King's Lynn the common council paid the library-keeper and arranged for a committee periodically to inspect the library, and also built a new library, adjoining the parish church, in 1714, having sought contributions from the leading local politicians, Sir Robert Walpole and Viscount Townshend, which together with contributions from 'Townsmen, Gentlemen, Clergymen and others' raised over £300.[11] At Wisbech the Capital Burgesses from 1714 paid the Library Keeper 40 shillings a year. At Doncaster the mayor was *ex officio* a trustee of the library, established in the 1720s primarily for the use of the clergy.[12] At Bristol a 'Library House' was rebuilt at St Mary Redcliffe, at the instigation of the recorder of the borough in 1738.[13] At Newcastle upon Tyne in 1735–6 Sir William Blackett of Wallington Hall, the mayor, built, next to the church, a new building for the library which had been greatly augmented by his friend Robert Thomlinson, rector of Wickham. This became 'a place of great resort for the literary gentlemen of the town'.[14]

Where there was not a separate building, or an aisle or chapel of a church separated off for the purpose, the library was frequently lodged in a room over a porch, usually on the south side of the church, as at Newark and Grantham, where presumably the books might be free from damp, there was considerable security, and the sun would provide some warmth. It seems likely that books were read *in situ*. At Doncaster in 1722/3 tables, pens, paper, curtains and coal were bought for the library.[15] At Sunderland, when the new parish church was built in 1714, a fine apartment, at first-floor level off the gallery staircase, was provided for a library, lined with shelves, and with a bureau for reading and writing.

Clergy were often prime movers in initiating libraries. At Wisbech in 1712, a group of clergy and laymen formed a society, and agreed to pay 20 shillings

10 B. M. Park, *The Bishop White library of Newark parish church* (Newark, 1999), 4.

11 B. Mackerell, *The history and antiquities of the flourishing Corporation of King's Lynn* (London, 1738), 88. The library building has disappeared, but two early eighteenth-century book presses stand in the south transept of St Margaret's church, having been recovered from the grammar school.

12 G. Best, 'Books and readers in certain eighteenth century libraries', unpublished Loughborough University PhD thesis (1985), 37.

13 J. Latimer, *The annals of Bristol in the eighteenth century* (Bristol, 1893), 210.

14 Quoted in M. Perkin (ed.), *A directory of the parochial libraries of the Church of England and the Church in Wales*, rev. edn (London, 2004), 297.

15 Best, 'Books and readers', 239.

each to buy books. At Doncaster ten clergymen arranged to meet on the first Thursday of the month with the 'design and purpose' of 'the improvement of one another in Christian Knowledge'. In 1722 they obtained information about the library at Bedford where, in 1700, members of the gentry and clergy had settled by deed a library for the use of the rector and his successors, and present and future benefactors, to the value of 10 shillings, managed by 130 trustees. In 1725 the Doncaster trustees again sought information, via a London bookseller, about the public library at Reigate established by the vicar, Andrew Cranston, with forty-four trustees. Eventually in 1726 the Doncaster library was conveyed to twenty-three trustees, comprising thirteen clergy, nine gentry and the mayor.[16]

Collections were varied – mostly strong on theology, history and the classics – and sometimes reflected practical aspects of a parish priest's role, including books on agricultural topics, gardening, bee-keeping, wine-making, herbs and law, as well as the interests of donors or benefactors, including, for example, travel, entomology, maths, science, theatre, poetry, and foreign languages. A Shropshire library included an Arabic grammar, and the Reigate library a Turkish grammar. There was no distinction between sacred and secular knowledge. A high proportion of books were in Latin, and there were also volumes in Greek and French. At Maldon, Plume's library covered most of the intellectual interests and disputes of his day.[17] Reigate held a large collection of tracts against Quakers to enable readers to contend with and correct the supposed errors of the substantial number of Quakers in the locality.[18]

At Reigate and Hatfield Broad Oak, in Essex, founders solicited donations of books from individuals. At the latter George Stirling, vicar from 1684 to 1728, gave some of his own books, and attracted others from local benefactors, eighty-five of whom are named in fly-leaf inscriptions, including Henry Compton, bishop of London, and fourteen women. At Doncaster 122 people, including at least forty clergy and seven women, contributed 149 works in 222 volumes, and £56 was donated to buy books. Most books donated by laity were on religious or theological subjects.[19] In general purchases and donations suggest an interest in contemporary theological controversies, with a bias towards orthodoxy. Controversialists and defenders of orthodoxy sometimes sent books to the library. Members of the Doncaster society corresponded

16 *Ibid.*, 41–6; K. A. Manley, 'The SPCK and English book clubs before 1720', *Bodleian Library Record* 13 (1989), 231–43 (here 237–9).
17 Petchey, *Thomas Plume*, 3–5.
18 M. Roth, 'The Revd Andrew Cranston', in A. Taylor (ed.), *People of Reigate at St Mary's from 1500–1930* (Reigate, 1988), 58.
19 P. Kaufman, *Libraries and their users* (London, 1969), 97–8.

with Daniel Waterland, and in 1721 thanked the earl of Nottingham for his 'excellent answer to Mr Whiston's letter'.[20]

Little provision was made for developing libraries. Tenison left no endowment to buy further books for his library at St Martin-in-the Fields. Thomas Plume left only £1 a year for new books, and the design of his library did not allow for books to be added.[21] At Holy Trinity, Hull, only £2 a year was budgeted for buying books for the library.[22] Libraries were sometimes augmented by gift or bequest as at Rotherham, where a bequest of £100 by Mrs Frances Monsell in 1728 provided a substantial addition of 'the Best Authors on Divine Subjects'.[23] In 1735 the perpetual curate of All Saints, Maidstone and twenty-five subscribers raised £50 to buy 559 volumes from Thomas Bray's own library to augment the parochial library.[24] At King's Lynn the bequests of Thomas Thurlin, rector of the neighbouring parish of Gaywood, of 441 books and of Robert Barker MD of 273 books, in 1714, precipitated the need to build the new library, and in 1732 John Horne, master of the grammar school, left 387 books.[25]

In some libraries, including some founded in the early eighteenth century, borrowing was prevented by chaining books to presses. Borrowing, when permitted, was hedged around with elaborate precautions. At Reigate, borrowers were required to leave a deposit equivalent to the value of the book. At Newcastle only octavo volumes of more than 500 pages might be lent to prospective authors. Six books might be borrowed for two months, and in exceptional cases, by special licence signed by the archdeacon and the lecturer, ten books for ten weeks, after depositing twice the value of the books.[26] Frequently only donors or contributors were permitted to borrow books. Opening hours of town libraries probably reflected weekday service times, when local clergy may have attended church. At Witham, Wisbech and Rotherham Wednesdays and Fridays were the most popular days for borrowing.[27]

Fifteen eighteenth-century borrowers' registers survive. Unfortunately, records of loans may merely reflect the diligence of library-keepers. At Wisbech the register was not kept systematically but young clergy were frequent borrowers in the months before being ordained priest and for a few years

20 Best, 'Books and readers', 151–2.
21 Petchey, *Thomas Plume*, 14.
22 K. J. Allison (ed.), *A history of the county of York, East Riding*, vol. 1: *The city of Kingston upon Hull*, Victoria County History (London, 1969), 290.
23 Best, 'Books and readers', 55–6.
24 N. Yates, 'The parochial library of All Saints Maidstone and other Kentish parochial libraries', *Archaeologia Cantiana* 99 (1983), 168–9.
25 Perkin, *Directory*, 254.
26 T. Kelly, *Early public libraries* (London, 1966), 96.
27 Best, 'Books and readers', 47, 184.

afterwards. Some local clergy were also fairly frequent users: Edward Cross, rector of Walsoken, borrowed twenty-six books during eleven months. The town bailiffs and some local gentry, and four women, were also borrowers.[28] The Reigate register between 1711 and 1788 records 427 books borrowed by 136 borrowers, two-thirds of whom were women. Borrowers included local clergy, the keeper of the Swan Inn, two apothecaries and a tailor. The most popular titles were Wall's *Infant baptism*, Tillotson's *Sermons* and Drelincourt's *Against the fears of death*; other popular works were *Don Quixote*, Plutarch's *Lives* and White Kennet's *Parochial antiquities*.[29] At Doncaster between 1715 and 1717 thirteen members borrowed sixteen books over twenty-seven months, the most popular book being Bingham's *Antiquities*. Between 1715 and 1776 there were seventy-five borrowers, of whom at least thirty-four, and possibly forty-one, were clergy. Lay borrowers included mayors of the town, and three women. Historical works were popular among clergy, and biblical commentaries and collections of sermons.[30] At Rotherham there were twenty-four loans in 1730, but none in 1739. Schoolmasters were more frequent borrowers than parish clergy between 1730 and 1757 but lay users far outnumbered clergy and included fourteen women. Lack of clerical interest may have been due to the larger libraries at Sheffield and Doncaster, and four other nearby parish libraries.[31]

Management of libraries was an important issue. Management by a large group of trustees was generally thought the most satisfactory method, and was adopted in other contemporary philanthropic initiatives, such as charity schools. It had the advantage of involving significant numbers of prominent people who might be expected to give books or money, some of whom might be watchful in the interests of the public good. Bedford had 130 trustees, and at Reigate Andrew Cranston secured forty-four trustees, including notables and local tradesmen, some of whom gave their services: Russell the blacksmith made the bars for the library windows, and Henry Ware, the waggoner, was 'prevailed with to carry parcells for the library from London gratis'.[32] Continuity was ensured by requiring the churchwardens and freeholders of the parish, being summoned by public notice, to make rules for the library and nominate new trustees, and appoint a library-keeper, who was required to give a bond of £500 to preserve the books 'from embezzlement'. Such arrangements did not necessarily make for satisfactory management, once the first flush of

28 *Ibid.*, 91–109.

29 D. Williams, 'The establishment and maintenance of the English parochial library: a survey', unpublished MA thesis, University of London (1977), 62–3.

30 Best, 'Books and readers', 115–52.

31 *Ibid.*, 173–84.

32 Roth, 'Andrew Cranston', 57.

enthusiasm had passed. In 1744 a committee appointed by the vestry to inquire into the parish charities reported that all but two of the original trustees were dead. Subsequently at a vestry in 1784 it was noted that nothing had been done following the 1744 report, and new trustees were appointed.[33]

When libraries were established by bequest, management was often placed in the hands of local officials. At Marlborough, William White, rector of Pewsey, bequeathed a library to the mayor and corporation, for the use of the vicar of St Mary's, and required them to keep a catalogue.[34] At King's Lynn the borough common council's committee inspected the books, ordered the binding of those needing repair, called in books that had been lent out, and, in 1708, were asked 'to consider the Methods for better looking after them'. Further committees were appointed in 1721 and 1737 to inspect the books and make recommendations for the disposal of duplicates and recommend 'books which they shall think proper to be placed in the said Library to and for the use of the Mayor and Burgesses'.[35] In an unincorporated town a library might be in the hands of the incumbent and churchwardens, as at Swaffham, where Sir Clement Spelman bequeathed his library in 1679, with a legacy of £199 for the purchase of 'choice books', and in 1690 the churchwardens paid £2 14s 9d for fitting up the library. In 1737 it was catalogued by the vicar, and bookplates were affixed to the books with the churchwardens' names.[36] Some town lending libraries, as at Doncaster and Bridgnorth, developed from societies or clubs of clergy. At St Philip's, Birmingham, the first rector in 1733 bequeathed 550 volumes for the use of Anglican clergy in the town and neighbourhood.[37] Local clerical societies were part of the reform of pastoral ministry encouraged by bishops and reformers from the 1690s.

The first example of providing books for poor clergy was in 1684 when Barnabas Oley, rector of Gransden in Huntingdonshire, prebendary of Worcester and archdeacon of Ely, and the editor of George Herbert's *Remains*, who, like Plume, was a multiple philanthropist – endowing a school and almshouses, and leaving '100 marks English' to Clare College, Cambridge to build a library – bequeathed his books to be sold and the proceeds given to the bishop of Carlisle to buy books for poor parishes of his choice in his diocese. Collections of thirteen books were distributed to ten parishes.[38] When Bishop

33 W. Hooper, *Reigate* (Guildford, 1944), 63–5.
34 Williams, 'Establishment and maintenance', 23–4.
35 King's Lynn Borough Archives KL C7 12 and 13, Hall books 1684–1731 and 1731–61.
36 Perkin, *Directory*, 365.
37 Williams, 'Establishment and maintenance', 66.
38 D. Williams, 'The use and abuse of a pious intention: changing attitudes to parochial libraries', in *Library Association Study School: proceedings, Nottingham, 1979* (London, 1980), 35.

Nicolson conducted a visitation in 1703, he carefully noted the condition of the books, and was disappointed with what he found.[39]

The outstanding worker for the improvement of clerical learning and teaching and preaching during the period was Thomas Bray, perpetual curate of Lea Marston, vicar of Over Whitacre and rector of Sheldon (all in Warwickshire), the bishop of London's commissary in Maryland (north America), and vicar of St Botolph's without Aldgate, and one of the founders of the SPCK and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts. Bray was concerned by the poverty of many clergy, and their inability to acquire basic books to refresh their learning and to help them in preaching and catechising children to guard their parishioners, and especially children, against the errors of dissent and Roman Catholicism.[40]

Bray, along with reforming bishops, identified rural deaneries as units for supporting and sustaining the work of the clergy. He envisaged a library in every deanery, with lockable purpose-built bookcases, the key to be deposited with the rural dean, or the schoolmaster or incumbent of the local market town. Books might be borrowed and returned on market days, and libraries should be funded by local subscribers, and available to lay people as well as clergy. In his *Memorial on the institution of rural deans* Bray recommended monthly meetings of clergy to discuss the books they had read, and ways of developing their pastoral and catechetical work. Abraham de la Pryme, curate of Holy Trinity, Hull, in the diocese of York, noted in 1697, 'I was at the visitation the other day . . . There is a project come out of a lending library in every deanery. I subscribed 5s. towards the first trial of it.'[41] At Nantwich, the library donated by William Day, who attended the first meeting of the SPCK in 1698, was established in 1704 for the use of the clergy of the deanery.[42]

In the 1690s Bray put forward a comprehensive scheme for providing small libraries for parochial clergy, initially in the north American colonies, where, as the bishop of London's commissary for Maryland, he had observed the poverty and isolation of clergy.[43] In his *Bibliotheca parochialis* of 1697 he set out a lengthy list of books, including philosophy, mathematics, antiquities and civil law, which he regarded as essential for clergy. The subsequent influence of this book is demonstrated by its presence in many parochial libraries.

39 R. S. Ferguson (ed.), *Miscellany accounts of the diocese of Carlisle* (London, 1877), Carlisle, *passim*.

40 H. P. Thompson, *Thomas Bray* (London, 1954).

41 C. Jackson (ed.), *Diary of Abraham de la Pryme*, Surtees Society 54 (Durham, 1869), 133.

42 Perkin, *Directory*, 291.

43 C. T. Laugher, *Thomas Bray's grand design: libraries of the Church of England in America 1695–1785* (Chicago, 1973).

Bray enthusiastically put his ideas into practice. On his way to Maryland in 1699, he set up small libraries with book boxes in Gravesend and Deal and set in process a reform of the existing library in Plymouth. From 1695 he was raising money to establish libraries, and by 1699 had made twenty-six small grants totalling £107 10s for libraries in England and Wales.

In 1705 Bray, along with Sir Humphrey Mackworth, Robert Nelson, Henry Hoare and Samuel Brewster, all of whom were closely involved with the SPCK, established Trustees for Erecting Parochial Libraries, to establish and maintain libraries for poor clergy in rural areas. This was paralleled by a scheme steered by, among others, Bishop Burnet of Salisbury, a contributor to a parochial library in Scotland, for augmenting endowments of poor livings; the scheme was established in 1704 as Queen Anne's Bounty. Bray and his associates drew up proposals to raise funds to give small collections of books to parishes of which the endowments were reckoned to be worth less than £30 a year. Bray and Nelson produced a list of books, to the value of £12, and considered how to protect the books for the use of future incumbents of the parishes. Brewster drafted a bill, which Archbishop Sharp of York agreed to support, and Nelson sought the support of Sir Peter King, the Lord Keeper. In February 1709 the bill was revised to deal more fully with alienation of books; it passed both Houses and received the royal assent on 21 April 1709.

The passage of this legislation triggered a rapid increase in the establishment of libraries. Between 1700 and 1709 thirty libraries were established and in the following decade, from 1710 to 1719, sixty-three libraries were established. Prior to the Act donors and founders had made elaborate precautions to protect libraries. Thomas White at Newark, for example, had required the room in which his books were kept to be locked and the key 'kept by the Vicar of the Towne for the time being, hee first giving security of a thousand pounds to the Mayor and Aldermen never to Embezzl the said Bookes nor to take out or lend any booke out of the Library, either to his own house or to other'. The mayor and aldermen were required to supervise an annual audit of the library; if any books were missing the vicar was to pay for them, or to surrender the key and be sued. If he failed in his duty the schoolmaster was to be given the key, on the same conditions.[44] At Wimborne a potential donor to the library, founded in 1686, had refused to give any books until they were chained to the book presses.[45] John Tomkyns (d. 1703), vicar of Snitterfield in Warwickshire,

44 Park, *Bishop White library*.
45 H. Hixson, *Chains of knowledge: Wimborne Minster chained library* (Wimborne, n.d.).

left his books to the minister of Bilston, desiring that a catalogue of them should be 'registered in parchment . . . that a view might be made upon the removeall of every Minister that they may not be alienated from the uses intended'.[46] The Act answered most of the needs expressed in these elaborate security arrangements, placing libraries within the jurisdiction of the diocesan administration and the courts.[47]

From 1680 or so a steady trickle of people, mostly clergy but also gentry, bequeathed their books to their successors, or to the local incumbent. In Suffolk, Thomas Alston of Assington (d. 1680) bequeathed to his successors 280 books, listed in his will, which he required should be stamped 'T A' on the spine and on the cover, hoping that 'worthy and charitable persons' in succeeding generations would add to their number, which they did. In 1703 William Burkitt, rector of Milden, left his 'Library of Books to be set up in the studdy at Milding Parsonage. And my will is that they never be sold but goe along with the Studdy for the benefit of succeeding Incumbents, every Incumbent having power to exchange what he pleases of the Books.'[48]

The Act encouraged donations of libraries by individuals for the use of clergy. The will of Richard Forster, rector of Crundale, Kent, from 1698 to 1729, headmaster of Sutton Valence school from 1681, rector of Bickley in Sussex from 1682 and vicar of Eastgate, Sheppey from 1699, dated 15 November 1728, clearly illustrates the intention of many donors of parochial libraries. He noted that the revenues of the living of Crundale

> are not likely to enable an Incumbent decently to maintain himself and Family and likewise purchase many useful books, I do therefore give and bequeath all my books not otherwise dispos'd of, with my Chronological Tables as a Parochial Library under the Protection of the Statute of ye Seventh Year of Queen Ann for the Use of all succeeding Rectors.

A catalogue of the 850 books was produced at the archdeacon's visitation by Forster's successor on 8 May 1729.[49] Often such libraries were the accumulation of the books of several generations of incumbents. At Stanton in Cleveland, the library bequeathed by Richard Lumley in 1694 represented the libraries of three preceding incumbents dating back to 1622.[50]

The Act allowed the Trustees for Erecting Parochial Libraries to pursue their objects, confident that libraries given to poor parishes would have legal

46 Perkin, *Directory*, 138. 47 For the text of the Act see Perkin, *Directory*, 439–42.
48 Fitch, 'Historical introduction', xiv–xv. 49 Yates, 'All Saints Maidstone', 163.
50 Williams, 'Pious intention', 36.

protection. As soon as it was passed in 1709, Henry Newman, the secretary of the SPCK, was also appointed secretary to the Trustees for the Provision of Parochial Libraries,[51] and Bray distributed *A proposal for erecting parochial libraries in meanly endowed cures throughout England*. The Trustees subsequently proposed that libraries should only be provided for livings with an income of £30 or less a year, 'for reference only, so as to ensure they were not dissipated or used for other purposes'. Most of the work was done by Newman, who explained to the bishop of Bangor:

> The founders had rather return the money than recede from the rule of not allowing any books to be lent. These libraries consist of a collection adapted to the use of a country clergyman that is destitute of books or ability to buy them; and if the collection be not kept entire they will not be useful to him, and if lending were allowed they would be in danger of being embezzled.

The trustees required 'that an incumbent receiving a library' must 'make a catechetical discourse every Lord's Day or to catechise the children or expound the Catechism', which contributed to an increase in catechising in English parishes.

Bishops were asked to nominate poor parishes to receive libraries and the patron of a parish was asked to pay a premium of £5. Libraries were dispatched by sea, whenever possible, in a wainscot box with four shelves, which could be used as a book press. Libraries comprised seventy-two or sixty-seven volumes, plus a catalogue of the books and a copy of the Act and Bray's *Proposal*. Two further copies of the catalogue were included, for signature by the incumbent in the presence of the churchwardens and the principal inhabitants, one copy to be returned to the secretary of the Trustees and the other to be sent to the bishop to be deposited in the diocesan registry. Bookplates were pasted in every book. Newman noted that

> the libraries may be sufficient to furnish a man with the knowledge necessary to undertaking a parochial charge, and it must be owned that the narrowness of their funds has obliged themselves to content themselves with an essay which they hope may occasion an accession that may hereafter make amends for all deficiencies in the beginning.

By 1712 the first supply of books had been exhausted, and the Trustees sought benefactors to fund further libraries for distribution. By 1727 sixty-two libraries

51 L. W. Cowie, *Henry Newman: an American in London 1708–1743* (London, 1956).

had been distributed. In 1727 Bray proposed amalgamating the Trustees with the D'Alone charity, founded in 1723 to assist in the education of negroes in the plantations, and in 1730 they merged as the Associates of the Late Reverend Dr Bray, continuing to fund libraries for poor parishes.

The geographical distribution of libraries established by individual benefactors is relatively indiscriminate, except that the poorer northern dioceses of Carlisle, Chester and York received sixty-eight of the libraries established in England between 1680 and 1760, including twenty-one during the decade from 1750 to 1759.

The emphasis on meeting the needs of poor benefices was also a priority in parallel initiatives for Wales, Scotland and the Isle of Man. During the 1690s Thomas Bray had made grants for nine libraries in Montgomeryshire, although little came of these grants.[52] In 1705 the SPCK had established a committee to consider promoting libraries in Wales, including a lending library in each diocese, and in 1707 proposals were published and distributed throughout England and Wales announcing plans for lending libraries in market towns, and parochial libraries for the benefit of poorer ministers in each impoverished living in Wales.[53] Twenty-four parochial libraries were established in Wales between 1690 and 1730. In another major initiative in the 1760s, the SPCK distributed a further forty-four parochial libraries in Wales.[54] The SPCK supported a country-wide renaissance of interest in religious teaching and reading in Wales through its libraries, its support for schools, and printing and circulating books in Welsh as well as English.[55]

In the Isle of Man, Thomas Wilson, consecrated bishop in 1698, noted in 1699, 'By the encouragement and assistance of my worthy friend Dr Bray I began this year a foundation of Parochial Libraries in this Diocese.'[56] Wilson personally selected books for the libraries, and persuaded authors to donate copies of their books. He donated copies of his own *Course of lectures on the Church catechism*, *Catechetical lectures*, *Baptismal covenant*, *Catechism in Manx and English*, *Lord's supper* and *Instruction for Indians*, and Sherlock's *Practical*

52 Kelly, *Early public libraries*, 110.

53 For Welsh diocesan libraries, see M. Clement (ed.), *Correspondence and minutes of the SPCK relating to Wales 1699–1740* (Cardiff, 1952), 267–70, 273, 276; M. Clement, *The SPCK and Wales 1699–1740* (Cardiff, 1954), 43.

54 Perkin, *Directory*, 410–37.

55 W. M. Jacob, 'The Church in Wales 1660–1780', in *The Church in Wales from the Reformation to disestablishment* (Cardiff, forthcoming, 2007).

56 Quoted in J. P. Ferguson, *The parochial libraries of Bishop Wilson* (Douglas, 1975), 3, upon which the following paragraphs are reliant. For a list of Manx libraries see Perkin, *Directory*, 405–9.

Christians. Bishop Burnet gave copies of his *Pastoral care*; Bishop Wake copies of his *Concerning swearing*; the Bishop of Chichester his *Brief exposition of the Church catechism*. The SPCK gave *An account of the societies for the reformation of manners in England and Ireland*; James Bonnell's widow gave *The life of James Bonnell*; William Patten of London gave George Herbert's *Country parson*; 'Mr Hoare' gave Pearson *On the creeds* and Bishop Hopkin's *Works*; Robert Nelson gave his *Feasts and fasts*; Joseph Hayward gave Fox's *On the New Testament*; Edward Harley gave his *Abstract and harmony*; and Stephen Hales gave William Law's *Christian perfection*. They were essentially practical books, with no reference to current theological debates.

Wilson checked the libraries during parochial visitations, and required the archdeacon to do likewise. His convocation of 1731 required new incumbents to catalogue the libraries they inherited, and send a copy to the bishop. This was confirmed by an Act of Tynwald in 1734. The libraries were regularly supplemented, so that by 1735 every parish library had thirty-four books, and by 1740 thirty-seven books. The libraries were to be kept in vicarages, for the use of the incumbent. Between 1707 and 1710 Wilson also built a public library in Castletown, the seat of government, at a cost of £83 5s 6d, of which £14 6s 3d was subscribed. The ground floor was used by the House of Keys of the Tynwald, and the upper floor was the library.

In Scotland before 1680 there were town libraries in Edinburgh and Aberdeen, and a parochial library was established by Norman Leslie at Saltoun in East Lothian in 1666, where Gilbert Burnet was then minister. Burnet contributed to the library, and bequeathed £2,000 to trustees for educating children and maintaining the library and buying more books.[57] In 1683 a landowner and burgess of Kirkwall bequeathed 'eight score' volumes to the minister of Kirkwall and his successors, as a public library,[58] and a public lending library was established at Innerpeffray near Crieff in 1694.[59] There was concern that few ministers, especially in the Highlands, could afford to buy books and that divinity students had few books available to them when, in considerable blocks of time between sessions in the divinity hall, they were often employed as schoolmasters or tutors, under the oversight of the presbytery, and expected to continue their reading and studies.[60]

57 E. Edwards, *Memoirs of libraries* (London, 1859), vol. 2, 42.

58 Kelly, *Early public libraries*, 99–100.

59 *Innerpeffray Library, Crieff* (n.d.).

60 For an account of ministerial training in the Church of Scotland during this period, see J. C. Whytock, 'The history and development of Scottish theological education and training: kirk and secession (c.1569–c.1850)', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Wales Lampeter (2002).

The moving force in providing libraries for the use of Church of Scotland ministers was James Kirkwood who, like Andrew Cranston who established the library in Reigate, had declined to take the Scottish Test Act and had migrated to England, becoming rector of Astwick in Bedfordshire, and SPCK's corresponding member for Scotland. In 1699 Kirkwood published *An overture for forwarding and maintaining the Bibliotecks in every parish throughout this Kingdom* (ScotIand), noting that 'complete and free libraries are absolutely necessary for the improving of the arts and sciences and for advancing learning among us'. He proposed to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland that ministers should give their books to the parish library, where they should be catalogued and valued 'so that on removal to another parish he, or on his death, his heirs, shall have first call on the stipend of the parish to the amount so valued'. He proposed a printed union catalogue of the libraries, to be circulated to the libraries, and that each should have one copy of every valuable book extant. The reader or schoolmaster was to be librarian, and books were only to be lent to responsible persons. He recommended that there should be a bookbinder for every presbytery, with a house and the tools of his trade, and a small yearly stipend; alternatively the librarian's or the minister's servants might be taught bookbinding. He recommended that each library should have the same method of shelving books so when ministers or students moved they would know where to find books. Kirkwood also proposed a fund for buying and printing books, old and new, English and foreign, raised by levying a month's cess or rate on heritors and ministers in every parish, in return for which each parish would receive a copy of every book printed. He reckoned the levy would raise £72,000 Scots yearly. He claimed printing and binding books would promote employment; students need not buy foreign works or travel to foreign universities; gentlemen would be attracted to spend their time in reading and prevented from gaming and drinking; and the manufactory would draw in the printing trade from the rest of Europe. He claimed that within two or three years libraries would be so full that 'the most famous and magnificent libraries in the world shall not outdo the meanest library in any parish of this Kingdom for number of valuable and useful books'.[61]

Kirkwood pursued his campaign, and in 1703 a pamphlet noted that 'Mr Kirkwood and others in London have lately collected upwards of 12,000 Merks in Books and Money for erecting Libraries in these places [the Highlands].' He worked closely with the SPCK, some of whose members were among the

61 J. Minto, *A history of the public library movement in Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1932), 28.

trustees and treasurer for his scheme. His schemes were closely modelled on Bray's schemes, but more rigorous.[62]

In 1704 the General Assembly passed an Act 'anent libraries in the Highlands', thanking the SPCK for their support in providing thirty-one libraries in poor presbyteries, approving the scheme, and empowering 'the commission to apply to the Lords of the Treasury for assistance' in transporting the books from England, and distributing them to the presbyteries. In 1705 a second Act appointed a committee of management, and allocated nineteen presbyteral libraries and fifty-eight parochial libraries. In 1706 a third Act instructed the committee how to distribute the books, urging them to send books where they were most needed; rules provided for borrowing books and limited borrowers to two books at a time, on payment of a quarter of the value of the book, recorded in the catalogue. Books might not be kept for longer than six weeks. Each presbytery was required twice a year to inspect the libraries within its bounds. The Assembly distributed libraries to Dumbarton presbytery (1), Dunblane (2), Ross (3), Sutherland (1), Caithness (2), Orkney (1), Shetland (1), Moray (4) and Dunkeld (4). Twelve libraries were given to the Synod of Argyle to distribute as they deemed appropriate. In addition fifty-four parochial libraries were distributed to Shetland (2), Orkney (3), Caithness (2), Sutherland (2), Ross (4), Inverness (3), Aberdeen (2), Abernethy (1), Alford (1), Kincardine (2), Synod of Angus and Mearns (3), Auchterarder (2), Dunblane (2), Dumbarton (2) and Synod of Argyle (23). The libraries should be located where the representatives of synods and presbyteries should 'find most convenient'.[63] Between 1704 and 1708 seventy-seven libraries were distributed to presbyteries in the Highlands and Islands.[64] In 1709 the General Assembly passed another Act, commending the establishment of a library in every presbytery, and recommending presbyteries which had not already had any of the books from London to contribute among themselves to establish a library at every 'presbytery seat', and procure voluntary contributions from parishes for this purpose.

The libraries in the Highlands suffered from depredations during and after the 1715 Rising. In 1720 the General Assembly instructed the Agent for the Church to 'concur in a process of spuilzee of the presbyteral and two parochial libraries taken away out of the manse of Ainess' and ordered the expense to be borne from public funds. There were repeated instructions between 1720 and 1740 to synods and presbyteries to report on the state of libraries, and calling

62 For details of Kirkwood's schemes, see Thompson, *Thomas Bray*, 103–4.
63 Whytock, 'Scottish theological education', 120.
64 For a catalogue of a Scottish library, see Whytock, 'Scottish theological education', 482–6.

ministers to account in that matter, 'failing which they will be complained of to the next Assembly'.[65]

Efforts made to promote parochial libraries in Ireland were modest except for the magnificent library established in Dublin in 1701 by Narcissus Marsh, archbishop of Dublin, in a splendid building designed by Sir William Robinson.[66] Other Irish bishops established diocesan libraries at Kilkenny, Cork, Derry, Raphoe, Cashel and Waterford, but the only parochial library was endowed in 1730 by Archdeacon John Pomeroy in Cork.[67]

The movement to establish deanery or presbytery and parochial libraries in England, Wales, the Isle of Man, Scotland and Ireland, and the north American colonies between the 1680s and 1760s was an impressive contribution to developing clerical learning and promoting higher standards of pastoral care and teaching and preaching, as well as making books more widely available to lay people, especially in towns. The efforts of Barnabas Oley, Thomas Bray and Henry Newman, Thomas Wilson, and James Kirkwood, and many others, brought useful books within the reach of many poorer clergy, while the efforts of numerous benefactors and groups of clergy and lay people made significant collections of books available to clergy and laity.

The efforts of Bray, Kirkwood and others also ensured that there was legislation in place to protect books and libraries from neglect and 'embezzlement'. The decade following the passage of the Act through the Westminster parliament saw a burst of activity in establishing libraries in England and Wales, and the Act continued to be invoked in succeeding generations to protect libraries. In 1715 William Brewster of Hereford in bequeathing his library to the parish of All Saints in the city directed that his library should be subject to the visitation and direction of the bishop.[68] Conscientious bishops kept the legislation in mind when conducting visitations. In 1750 Thomas Secker, bishop of Oxford, was pursuing the vicar of Henley on Thames 'after repeated Admonitions for twelve years past' for having failed to give him 'security for the Preservation of your parochial Library' and not having given him 'a Catalogue of it as the Law directs'.[69]

65 Only one Scottish SPCK library survives, at Dumbarton.

66 For Archbishop Marsh's Library, see M. McCarthy, *Archbishop Marsh's Library, Dublin* (n.d.), and M. McCarthy and R. Whelan, *Ancient bestsellers: Archbishop Marsh's Library, Dublin* (Dublin, 1989).

67 For the libraries of the Church of Ireland, see M. Tallon, *Church of Ireland diocesan libraries* (Dublin, 1959).

68 F. H. Mountney, *All Saints Church Hereford: the chained library* (Hereford, 1962).

69 A. P. Jenkins (ed.), *The correspondence of Bishop Secker*, Oxfordshire Record Society 57 (Oxford, 1991), 195.

Unfortunately little provision was made for responding to future expansion of knowledge, and adding new volumes. Although basic books, such as Pearson *On the creeds* and Wheatly *On the common prayer*, continued to be used from the late seventeenth century until well into the nineteenth century as texts for ordination candidates, during the second half of the eighteenth century the contents of parochial libraries may have come to seem old-fashioned and less useful.

7

Endowed libraries for towns

MICHAEL POWELL

The libraries described in this chapter are diverse: they include libraries that were established and managed by municipal authorities; libraries that were freely accessible to the public but which were privately funded and managed; libraries that were privately founded and which remained privately managed; libraries that were established by the municipal authorities but which were organised on a subscription basis; and libraries that were run by municipal authorities for the benefit of only a handful of citizens within that municipality. Traditionally these libraries were simply described as 'public' in the sense of libraries for the use of the public (irrespective of finance) but, as Paul Kaufman pointed out many years ago, few terms in library history have been so loosely used.[1] In this chapter we follow Kaufman's definition of 'public' to mean those institutions which were supported by some secular body for the use of any responsible person. We therefore exclude libraries that were maintained under predominantly ecclesiastical control, as well as libraries that were housed in schools for the use of the institution but also open to inhabitants of the town. We thus omit a number of libraries that either saw themselves, or were seen by contemporaries, as accessible to the public without cost.[2]

By this definition, public libraries in this period number no more than a couple of dozen in total and fall into two main categories: libraries that were either established or managed by municipal authorities, and libraries that were privately endowed and managed by a body of trustees. Of the first group, pride of place goes to Norwich, founded in 1608 by the Norwich

1 T. Kelly, *Early public libraries: a history of public libraries in Great Britain before 1850* (London, 1996), 13; P. Kaufman, 'The community library: a chapter in English social history', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, new ser., 57 (7) (1967), 38.

2 The two most obvious omissions are the libraries of York Minster and Shrewsbury School, both of which appear to have been described as public and freely used by the public. For York see E. Brunskill, *18th century reading: some notes on the people who frequented the library of York Minster in the eighteenth century, and on the books they borrowed*, York Georgian Society Occasional Paper 6 (York, 1950). For Shrewsbury, see Kaufman, 'The community library', 44–5.

Municipal Assembly, transformed into a subscription library for members in 1656 and turned into a lending library in 1716.[3] If Norwich can justify the rather awkward if not contrived claim of being the country's oldest public library, a number of others were not far behind. Bristol library was established by a gift of Robert Redwood, who in 1615 gave his lodge adjoining the town wall to be converted into a 'Librarye, or place to put bookes for the furtherance of Learninge'.[4] In 1634 the original building was extended at a cost of £35, but in 1740 a new building was erected at a cost of over £1,300. It was maintained by the Corporation, but it was agreed in 1772 that a Library Society be formed to take over and administer the library on a subscription basis. The town library of Leicester was established in 1632, supplementing and effectively replacing a parochial library at St Martin's church dating from 1587.[5] At Ipswich in 1612 the town council took responsibility for a library founded in 1599 by the bequest of a collection of books of William Smart, alderman and MP.[6] The collection was moved to Christ's Hospital, which also housed Wolsey's Grammar School. At Wisbech the town library was established about 1654 by 'several of the more scholarly and studious . . . of the neighbourhood' and was housed over the church porch that was furnished and shelved with monies provided by the ten Capital Burgesses of the town.[7] After a period of neglect, the neighbouring clergy and gentlemen agreed to make an annual contribution of 20 shillings each to buy books, thus turning the library into a book club or society. At Newcastle a library was established at St Nicholas's church, now the cathedral, as early as 1597.[8] In the 1670s it was restored by a bequest of £80 from

3 G. A. Stephen, *Three centuries of a city library: an historical and descriptive account of the Norwich public library established in 1608 and the present public library opened in 1857* (Norwich, 1917); P. Hepworth and M. Alexander, *Norwich public libraries, Norfolk and Norwich Record Office* (Norwich, 1965); D. F. Keeling, *Norwich public libraries: a select bibliography* (London, 1966).

4 C. Tovey, *The Bristol City Library: its founders and benefactors its present position . . . and its future prospects . . . with a catalogue of the books belonging to the citizens* (London, 1853).

5 C. Deedes, J. E. Stocks and J. L. Stocks, *The Old Town Hall Library of Leicester: a catalogue with introduction, glossary . . .* (Oxford, 1919); F. S. Herne, *History of the town library and permanent library* (Leicester, 1891); J. M. Lee, 'The history and development of libraries in Leicester before 1871', unpublished MLS thesis, Loughborough University (1982); J. M. Lee, 'From chains to freedom: libraries in Leicester from the middle ages to the opening of the Free Library', in J. Hinks (ed.), *Aspects of Leicester* (Barnsley, 2000), 125–42; J. Hinks, 'The history of the book trade in Leicester to c.1850', unpublished PhD thesis, Loughborough University (2002).

6 J. Blatchly, 'Ipswich town library', *Book Collector* 35 (1986), 191–8, and *The town library of Ipswich provided for the use of the town preachers in 1599: a history and catalogue* (Woodbridge, 1989).

7 *A catalogue of books in the parochial library at Wisbech* (1718); Kelly, *Early public libraries*, 98; Kaufman, 'The community library', 40–1.

8 *The Cathedral Church of Saint Nicholas, Newcastle upon Tyne* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1932), 37–8.

Alderman John Cosins towards furnishing it with books. In the 1730s and 1740s Robert Thomlinson, rector of a neighbouring parish, bequeathed a collection of over 4,000 volumes.[9] The Bedford town library was established in 1700 by contributions from the gentry and clergy. Its management was vested in sixty-two trustees, later increased to over one hundred and thirty![10] The library was originally housed in the vestry of St John's church, but in 1708 a new building was created next to St Paul's for the library and register office with a forty-year lease from the Corporation. After the lease had expired the building was let for a shop and the books were transferred to the church.[11] A library at Barnstaple in Devon was founded in 1664 with a gift of 1,100 volumes. The library was housed in a chamber adjoining the church and was administered by the Mayor and Corporation.[12] At King's Lynn a lending library was founded in 1631 to be located in St Margaret's church, but belonging to the Corporation.[13] This was primarily a church library under municipal control, similar in many ways to the library at Colchester, which was founded in 1631 by a bequest to the Corporation of the town from Samuel Harsnett, archbishop of York, for the use of the clergy of the town and other divines.[14]

Of the second group of libraries, those that were bequeathed or endowed by private individuals and managed by secular bodies of trustees, the library in Manchester established by the will of Humphrey Chetham, a wealthy textile merchant and landowner, which was managed from the outset by a self-electing body of up to twenty-four feoffees, remains the largest and best-known example of this type of institution, but there are others no less noteworthy.[15]

9 W. J. Haggerston, 'The Thomlinson Library, Newcastle-upon-Tyne', *Monthly Notes of the Library Association* 3 (1882), 69–72, 89–91; S. Jeffery, *The Thomlinson Library: an introduction* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1981).

10 T. G. Elger, 'A history of the Bedford Literary and Scientific Institute and General Library', *Our Columns*, 21 March 1891, 8–12.

11 *The library story: a history of the library movement in Bedford* (Bedford, 1958).

12 Central Council for the Care of Churches, *The parochial libraries of the Church of England* (London, 1959), 65–6.

13 Kaufman, 'The community library', 42–3.

14 G. Goodwin, *A catalogue of the Harsnett Library at Colchester in which are included a few books presented to the town by various donors since 1631* (London, 1888); G. H. Martin, 'Archbishop Samuel Harsnett, 1561–1631 and his library at Colchester', in K. Neale (ed.), *Essex 'full of profitable things'* (Oxford, 1996), 35–53.

15 S. J. Guscott, 'The formation of Chetham's Library, Manchester 1650–1700: a study in seventeenth-century learning', unpublished MA thesis, University of Sheffield (1996); A. F. Maclure, 'The minute books of Chetham's Hospital and Library, Manchester', *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society* 40 (1922–3), 16–42; A. Rothapel, 'Philanthropy and a seventeenth-century charitable institution in Manchester: a study of Chetham's Hospital 1653–1684', unpublished MA thesis, University of Manchester (1998); D. R. Evans, 'The five parochial libraries founded by Humphrey Chetham in 1653', unpublished MA thesis, Manchester Metropolitan University (1993).

The library of Skipton in Yorkshire was founded by Sylvester Petyt, principal of Barnard's Inn, who began making gifts of books to the parish church library in 1705 and eventually left £100 for the maintenance of the institution by trustees.[16] At Maldon in Essex, the Revd Dr Thomas Plume, vicar of Greenwich, left on his death in 1704 a large collection of books to be kept in a building erected by the founder on the site of the parish church.[17] In London, where the provision of libraries was remarkably poor, a library for public use was founded at St Martin-in-the-Fields in 1684 by the vicar Thomas Tenison, who went on to be archbishop of Canterbury, in a building in the churchyard designed by John Evelyn.[18] Last but not least is the library of Narcissus Marsh, archbishop of Dublin, founded in 1701 and incorporated by Act of Parliament in 1707 as a public library forever.[19]

Some of the institutions mentioned above have been categorised by other scholars as parochial in terms of their management and administration.[20] Arguments about the precise nature of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century town libraries are not unimportant; they are relevant, for example, to questions of access and use. Accounts of the operating activities of such libraries are, however, often little more than anecdotal. We lack reliable figures for the number of people using library collections in this period, a problem exacerbated by the fact that many libraries did not maintain the loan registers and registers of readers essential to any analysis of usage.[21]

By 1700 libraries were a significant feature of the urban landscape (see Table 7.1). Almost all of the major urban centres of population were equipped with a library that was in some sense accessible to the public. There were some notable exceptions, including emerging centres of population such as Liverpool, Nottingham and Sunderland, where libraries were slow to develop,

16 *A catalogue of the Petyt Library at Skipton, Yorkshire* (Gargrave, 1964).

17 S. G. Deed, with J. Francis, *Catalogue of the Plume Library at Maldon, Essex* (Maldon, 1959); W. J. Petchey, *The intentions of Thomas Plume* (Maldon, 1985).

18 W. Lee, 'Archbishop Tenison's Library', *Notes and Queries*, 3rd ser., 8 (1865), 322–4; E. F. Carpenter, *Thomas Tenison, Archbishop of Canterbury, his life and times* (London, 1948); P. Hoare, 'Archbishop Tenison's Library at St Martin in the Fields, 1684–1861', unpublished Dip.Lib. thesis, University of London (1963).

19 M. McCarthy, *Marsh's Library: all graduates and gentlemen* (Dublin, 2003); M. McCarthy and C. Sherwood-Smith (comps.), *'This golden fleece': Marsh's Library 1701–2001, a tercentenary exhibition* (Dublin, 2001); M. McCarthy and A. Simmons (eds.), *The making of Marsh's Library: learning, politics and religion in Ireland, 1650–1750* (Dublin, 2004).

20 Kaufman, for example, sees the libraries of Bedford, Newcastle, Maldon and Colchester as parochial: 'The community library', 42.

21 A collection of seminal importance is P. Kaufman, *Libraries and their users* (London, 1969). For an attempt to uncover usage at Chetham's Library, Manchester, from diaries, see H. S. A. Smith, 'Readers and books in a seventeenth-century library', *Library Association Record* 65 (1963), 366–9.

Table 7.1. *The largest English provincial towns in 1700 and their libraries.*

Town	Population	Date of library	Type of library
Norwich	30	1608	Municipal
Bristol	21	1613	Municipal
Newcastle	16	1597	Parish / municipal
Exeter	14		Cathedral
York	12		Cathedral
Yarmouth	10	1631	??
Birmingham	8–9	1661	Parish
Chester	8–9		Cathedral
Colchester	8–9	1631	Municipal
Ipswich	8–9	By 1614	Municipal
Manchester	8–9	1636	Parish / municipal
Plymouth	8–9	Before 1700	Probably parish, refounded by Bray as lending in 1700
Worcester	8–9		Cathedral
Bury St Edmunds	5–7	1595	Parish
Cambridge	5–7		??
Canterbury	5–7		Cathedral
Chatham	5–7		??
Coventry	5–7	1601	School / municipal
Gloucester	5–7	1658	??
Hull	5–7	1665	Parish
Leeds	5–7	1692	Lending
Leicester	5–7	1633	Municipal
Liverpool	5–7	1715	Parish
Lynn	5–7	1631	Parish / municipal
Nottingham	5–7	1744	School
Oxford	5–7		??
Portsmouth	5–7		??
Salisbury	5–7		Cathedral
Shrewsbury	5–7	1596	School
Sunderland	5–7		??
Tiverton	5–7	1715	Parish

Approximate populations are given in thousands.
The data are based on the largest English provincial towns in 1700, in P. Slack, 'Great and good towns 1540–1700', in P. Clark (ed.), *The Cambridge urban history of Britain*, vol. 2: *1540–1840* (Cambridge, 2000), 347–76, esp. table 11.1, 352.

or some traditional towns based on a single trade or industry, of which the ports of Portsmouth and Chatham are representative. Admittedly some of the largest towns in the country were poorly equipped: for most of the seventeenth century many small market towns in England could offer a far better library service than say Birmingham or Hull, where parish libraries founded respectively in 1661 and 1665 were effectively all that was on offer. Whilst most of the main centres of population, and in particular the regional capitals – Norwich, York, Bristol – were furbished with libraries, significantly less than one-third of the main thirty towns had libraries that either were established, or that operated, under municipal influence or control. Libraries were almost invariably created after other types of public service – grammar schools, lectureships, workhouses – had been established, and were only one of a number of social institutions that provided a town with an indication of civilised behaviour.[22]

There is some evidence to show that libraries were often regarded by contemporaries as important symbols of municipal growth and civic pride. The benefactors' book of Leicester, for example, claimed that the library would be to the everlasting fame, honour and renown of the Corporation, whilst the 1732 catalogue of Norwich stated that the usefulness and necessity of a public library in a city is very evident.[23] A decade later the library of Newcastle was hailed as a place of great resort for the literary gentlemen of the town.[24] Possibly the most striking demonstration of a library's civic worth is that of York, where in 1641 the citizens attempted to petition the Long Parliament that a third university should be housed in the city. One of the reasons advanced for York, as opposed to other claimants such as Manchester, was that it already had a library, 'sometimes the most famous in Europe, but being burnt about the time that the University of Paris was founded, it may now again be made to flourish by the help of charitable persons'.[25] The Civil War put an end to this proposal, but the moral is that the citizens of York used the Minster Library as a means of promoting the town as a whole, of advancing its educational and cultural institutions, and of increasing its civic status.

22 Slack, 'Great and good towns 1540–1700', in P. Clark (ed.), *The Cambridge urban history of Britain*, vol. 2: *1540–1840* (Cambridge, 2000), 367; J. Brewer, *The pleasures of the imagination: English culture in the eighteenth-century* (London, 1997), 182.

23 J. Nichols, *The history and antiquities of the county of Leicester* (London, 1795–1815), vol. 1, pt 2, 505; F. Kitton (comp.), *Catalogus librorum in Bibliotheca Norvicensi: a catalogue of the books in the library of the city of Norwich in the year M.D.CCC.LXXXIII* (Norwich, 1883).

24 E. Mackenzie, *An historical and descriptive account of . . . Newcastle-upon-Tyne* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1827), vol. 2, 493, quoted in Kelly, *Early public libraries*, 74.

25 B. Barr, 'The Minster Library', in G. E. Aylmer and R. Cant (eds.), *A history of York Minster* (Oxford, 1977), 487–539 (here 503–4).

The idea of a library as the object of civic pride, in the words of John Dury 'an ornament and credit to the place where it is', was slow to take off, however. Many of the libraries founded in towns in this period had less to do with the interests of books and scholarship than with the promotion or advancement of religious and political beliefs. The main centres of the country for town libraries, the east of England and the north-west, were traditional strongholds of the Puritan movement and a number of studies have attempted to identify a connection between the early endowed libraries and a Puritan ideology.[26] Many of the libraries set up by municipal corporations and those endowed by individuals were established in order to improve the education of the clergy and laity. The town library of Norwich, for example, was at least partly founded to increase the amount and standard of preaching within the city; the order of 1608 establishing the library specified that it was intended to provide accommodation and books for preachers visiting the city.[27] Elsewhere in the east of the country, Samuel Ward's library at Ipswich was founded to serve his needs and those of his fellow preachers, whilst Archbishop Harsnett bequeathed his library in 1631 to the Corporation of Colchester for the benefit of the clergy and other divines. The town library of Leicester was founded largely as a result of the desire of John Angell, the town lecturer and schoolmaster, to improve the standards of the town preachers. Archbishop Tenison's Library, though given for public benefit, was especially created for the benefit of the vicar and lecturer of the parish of St Martin-in-the-Fields.[28] When in 1640 Tobias Matthew left a great portion of his books to the merchants and shopkeepers of Bristol, he did so not to increase the educational attainments of the citizens of the town but with the specific aim of founding a library of sound divinity and other learning.[29]

Whilst many of the town libraries of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were established as a means of ensuring a learned ministry, for those prelates and preachers, identified by Edward Waterhouse, 'whose breasts and brains by constant reading and meditation become Christ's libraries', it would be wrong to identify that aspiration as exclusive to Puritanism.[30] For one thing, many libraries in this period were either formed or augmented by

26 T. Kelly, 'Norwich, pioneer of public libraries', *Norfolk Archaeology* 34 (1966–9), 215–22; Petchey, *Thomas Plume*, 26; J. Tilley, *A catalogue of the donations to Norwich City Library 1608–1656*, Libri pertinentes 6 (Cambridge, 2000). For libraries in the north-west see R. C. Christie, *The old school and church libraries of Lancashire*, Chetham Society, new ser., 7 ([Manchester?], 1885).

27 Stephen, *Three centuries*, 4.

28 Deed of settlement of 1697 quoted in P. Hoare, 'Archbishop Tenison's Library', 39.

29 Tovey, *Bristol City Library*, 12.

30 Quoted in Petchey, *Thomas Plume*, 25.

the collections of Anglican bishops and by ordained clergy of the established church.[31] A number of library founders and benefactors saw themselves as repairing the physical, cultural and intellectual damage caused by the political upheavals of the 1640s. Chetham's Library was built in no small part on the attempt of James Stanley, heir to the earl of Derby, to establish a library for the town of Manchester, centred on the parish church, a plan devised in 1636 but interrupted by the Civil War and by the execution of Stanley in 1649.[32] His governors, established in his will of 1651, included Anglicans and Presbyterians, monarchists and parliamentarians, all of whom were expected to put aside their own beliefs in the interests of the common good, the development of Chetham's charity. Plume's library was an equally bold attempt to ensure that the clergy in the Maldon area and the gentry of eastern Essex might be as learned as they had been in the years before the Civil War, whilst John Cosin's bequest to Newcastle was a deliberate attempt to restore the fortunes of the town library which had been destroyed by the ravages of the Scots in the Civil War.[33] In this sense libraries and their collections were part of a healing process, to bring an end to religious division and not to promote further separation.

Studies of library provision need to take into account a much broader picture of charitable provision as a whole and a more particular awareness of educational provision in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England.[34] Archbishop Tenison's Library was founded alongside a grammar school; Archbishop Harsnett's alongside two schools at Chigwell; and Humphrey Chetham's alongside a hospital school for forty poor boys from the Manchester region, and five parochial libraries of godly English books for local churches and chapels. Thomas Plume's will of 1703 made provision for funds towards the restoration of Rochester Cathedral, gave money to Chelmsford Grammar School to buy books, and allocated funds for the continuation of weekly lectures by visiting clergy in All Saints church, Maldon.[35]

Furthermore, evidence suggests that some founders of libraries were themselves influenced by their own personal experience of other public collections.

31 In addition to archbishops Matthew, Harsnett and Tenison, three of the four collections that made up Marsh's Library in Dublin came from bishops. See D. Pearson, 'The libraries of English bishops, 1600–40', *Library*, 6th ser., 14 (1992), 221–57.

32 Christie, *Old school and church libraries*, 5–19.

33 Petchey, *Thomas Plume*, 30.

34 W. K. Jordan's monumental but flawed study of charitable provision in England at least attempted to examine the library provision within the context of educational provision in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: *Philanthropy in England 1480–1660: a study of the changing pattern of English social aspirations* (London, 1959). Subsequent historians, including many critics of Jordan, have unfortunately restricted their accounts of charitable provision to the relief of the poor, whilst educational provision has been similarly confined to the foundation of schools, or to the creation of scholarships to universities.

35 Petchey, *Thomas Plume*, 29.

Plume, for example, may have derived his scheme for a library from that of Thomas Tenison in London. Tenison himself had been a generous donor to the library of St Peter Mancroft in Norwich and a user of the town library.[36] In making provision for his library to be preserved in the town of Colchester, Archbishop Harsnett was certainly influenced by the example of Tobias Matthew, his predecessor but one in the see of York, whose books became the foundation of the Bristol City Library.[37] As we have seen, Humphrey Chetham was motivated by a failed attempt in the town to establish a parochial and municipal collection, a fact noted by the commentator on libraries, Samuel Hartlib, who in 1655 wrote in his diary, 'One of the fellows of Manchester gave his library to that town which occasioned a Tradesman afterwards to give a thou[sand] lb for the encreasing of that library.'[38]

The way that these libraries developed subsequently did not always reflect the intention that lay behind their foundation.[39] At Manchester, for example, the decisions concerning the acquisition and adaptation of a building, the furnishing of a library, the rules, the book selection and, most importantly, the creation of an endowment to buy books and to employ a librarian were taken by the governors of Chetham's foundation and not by the founder himself. Elsewhere regulations for the organisation and management of libraries were often drawn up well after the collections of books began to arrive. The case of Norwich is no less illustrative. In 1608 the Municipal Assembly ordered that three rooms in the Hew Hall in St Andrew's parish should be equipped for a library. For the next forty years or so, however, it appears that the books donated to the library were simply allowed to accumulate without any regulations for their use and safe-keeping.[40] In 1655 John Carter, Presbyterian rector of St Laurence's, Norwich, claimed that the library had been locked up and is 'never like to be of publique use again'.[41] The following year the library was reorganised as a reference library to be used only by members who paid a quarterly subscription to cover running costs. A library-keeper was elected by members and given the task of chairing meetings, to be the custodian of

36 Hoare, 'Archbishop Tenison's Library', 1; Tilley, *Catalogue of the donations*, 29.

37 N. Mathews, *Early printed books and manuscripts in the City Reference Library, Bristol* (Bristol, 1899), 7–8; Martin, 'Archbishop Samuel Harsnett', 45.

38 S. Hartlib, *Ephemerides*, 1655, Sheffield University, H50 29/5/3A. I am grateful to Professor Mark Greengrass of Sheffield University for this reference.

39 P. S. Morrish, 'Dr Higgs and Merton College library: a study in seventeenth-century book-collecting and librarianship', *Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society, Literary and Historical Section* 21 (2) (1988), 131–201 (here 164).

40 Stephens, *Three centuries*, 5.

41 Quoted in D. Stoker, 'Doctor Collinges and the revival of Norwich City Library 1657–1664', *Library History* 5 (1980), 73–84.

books, to purchase books, and to represent the library to the city. In addition, an underkeeper was appointed, as a paid employee who acted as caretaker or clavor for the library.[42] From the outset the library was stocked almost entirely by donations and even after reorganisation money to buy books came largely through bequests.

At Norwich we see a municipal authority that attempted at various times to exert control over the town library. Elsewhere authorities failed to maintain interest in the libraries that were entrusted to their care. At Ipswich, books were regularly borrowed and lost because of inadequate supervision; it was not always clear who exactly was responsible for the library – the *classis* ministers or the masters of the grammar school.[43] At Colchester the Corporation readily accepted Harsnett's collection and his stipulation that they provide a suitable room for the books; in 1655 they appointed a keeper and ordered that a catalogue be made of the collection. Within a generation, however, the room allocated for the library was let for other purposes and the books were transferred to the free school. Almost from the outset the collection of Harsnett, a noted Arminian, had been an object of indifference to the Puritan radicals of Colchester. In 1654, for example, the books had actually been mortgaged.[44] Similarly at Newcastle, where the Thomlinson bequest made the library a place of great resort, within a few years the Corporation had lost interest in and control of the library and the collection was allowed to fall into neglect and disuse.

Clearly the burden of maintaining a library was often heavy, certainly for corporations where other services and institutions competed for funds and for accommodation. Indeed, the buildings could turn into considerable financial liabilities. Both Tenison's Library and the town library of Ipswich show an almost constant level of expenditure on glass as if the buildings were regularly under assault.[45] Of the town libraries established in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries only three were purpose-built: Tenison's, Plume's and Marsh's in Dublin. All of the others simply adapted buildings and rooms in buildings that had become vacant, or which had been made available by founders, or which were available for purchase.[46] In post-Reformation England many buildings ostensibly devoted to spiritual purposes had their functions permanently changed.[47] The town library of Ipswich, for example, together

42 Stephen, *Three centuries*, 6–7.
43 Blatchly, *Town library*, 38.
44 Goodwin, *Catalogue*, xxv, quoted in Martin, 'Archbishop Harsnett', 45.
45 Blatchly, *Town library*, 37.
46 A number of other libraries, notably Bristol and Bedford, were of course completely rebuilt during their lifetimes. See Kaufman, 'The community library', 42–3.
47 M. Reed, 'The urban landscape 1540–1700', in Clark, *Cambridge urban history*, vol. 2, 289–313.

with the grammar school, occupied rooms in the Hospital, an institution for the relief of the elderly and sick and the education of poor children, that was housed in buildings formerly belonging to the Blackfriars. The building purchased by Humphrey Chetham's executors to house his Hospital and Library was only available because its owner, the earl of Derby, had forfeited the property to the Parliamentary Sequestrators a few years previously. Before that the building had been used to provide accommodation for the clergy of Manchester Collegiate Church, up to the dissolution of the college by Edward VI in 1547. Leicester town library was also housed in accommodation originally used for the chantry priests, in the guildhall, which had been the living quarters of the priests employed by the Guild of Corpus Christi, the predecessors in authority of the Corporation.[48] Colchester provided a room in the east end of the old cloth hall for Harsnett's collection; Bristol's town library was in rooms given specifically for the task by Robert Redwood, the town's swordbearer.

Expenditure on building maintenance was only one of a number of financial constraints involved in the management of libraries. Libraries required librarians, whose duties and responsibilities varied from institution to institution. Tenison's Library, for example, like the town library of Norwich, seems to have been established without a member of staff, even though an endowment was created to provide for the salaries of the library-keeper and the schoolmaster. In 1697, when the rules were set up for managing the collection, a librarian was appointed on a salary of £10.[49] At Leicester in 1628 Francis Pecke was appointed keeper on a salary of 20 nobles. A decade later when the Corporation added the post of library-keeper to the responsibilities of John Angell, the public preacher and schoolmaster, he was given a salary of £6 13s 4d. By the following century the salary had fallen to only £3.[50]

For the most part library-keepers were not professional or even exclusive posts and were often combined with other duties and employment. At Colchester the Corporation appointed a barber as librarian on an annual salary of 40 shillings, although this was later reduced to 20 shillings.[51] At some libraries, such as the Thomlinson Library in Newcastle, the post was honorary, to be filled by one of the local curates.[52] At Norwich persons who refused to accept the honorary post could be fined.[53] At Ipswich the librarian was invariably master of the grammar school.[54] Elsewhere the practice of supplementing

48 Kaufman, 'The community library', 39.
49 Hoare, 'Archbishop Tenison's Library', 38–43.
50 P. G. Lindley, *The Town Library of Leicester: a brief history* (Upton, 1975), 17, 23.
51 Goodwin, *Catalogue*, xxiii.
52 Jeffery, *Thomlinson Library*, 2.
53 Stephen, *Three centuries*, 44.
54 Blatchly, *Town library*, 29ff.

income with other work was discouraged. The first librarian of Chetham's in Manchester was dismissed from his post only two years after his appointment on the grounds that he had supplemented his salary of £20 plus food and lodging by taking on work in local churches. His successor was given warning that he should not engage in other employment without the express permission of his employers.[55] At least the post of librarian at Chetham's was seen by the governors as suitable for a graduate, as was the case at Bristol, and also at Plume's where the librarian had to be at least an MA and a clerk in holy orders. Plume's librarians certainly landed on their feet, financially speaking, with a salary of £40 and free accommodation on top of other income that they could make as preachers or masters of the grammar school.[56]

As for duties, these were hardly onerous. At Leicester or Maldon, for example, the keeper was charged to keep open the library for certain hours, usually fewer in winter as the days shortened.[57] Seldom were librarians given responsibility for spending money on new books. At Manchester, where from the outset considerable sums were bequeathed and then subsequently generated for acquisitions, the task of buying books fell to the governors. Librarians of this period could not be described as the 'Factor and Trader for helps to Learning' of John Dury's *Reformed library keeper*: they were invariably defensive appointments whose prime responsibility was to maintain the stock and to prevent loss.[58] Keepers of town libraries were often required to give security for the books in their custody on appointment, paying in some instances bonds as high as £200.[59] Security was reinforced by the creation of catalogues, the compilation of which invariably fell on the librarian. At Chetham's the first librarian was instructed to take charge of the books and to make a particular catalogue of the books, though as no more than a stock inventory.[60] The settlement deed of Tenison's Library ordered that two copies of the catalogue should be kept and signed 'to prevent any imbezelment of the said

55 Maclure, 'The minute books', 22–3.

56 Petchey, *Thomas Plume*, 13–14.

57 See, for example, the elaborate rules about hours adopted by Leicester in 1667, quoted in Lindley, *Town Library*, 30.

58 J. Dury, *The reformed librarie-keeper* (1650), 18. For problems at Norwich City Library, see Stoker, 'Dr Collinges'.

59 £200 was the bond for Chetham's in Manchester, Plume's in Maldon and Tenison's in London, although it appears that in the case of the latter only one librarian ever paid it: Hoare, 'Archbishop Tenison's Library', 57. The unfortunate librarian was Thomas Taylor, appointed in 1724.

60 On the catalogue as a defensive measure see N. Barker, 'Libraries and the mind of man', in N. Barker (ed.), *A potencie of life: books in society* (London, 1993), 179–94. An exception to this idea was the 1706 catalogue of Norwich, the preface of which states that 'the great motive, and main end of Publishing this Catalogue' was to encourage donations to the library: Stephen, *Three centuries*, 47.

bookes'.[61] Leicester town library, like Manchester, brought out a range of manuscript shelf lists and inventories and catalogues, whilst others, such as Bedford and Norwich, were quick to publish catalogues.[62]

The need to ensure that library collections remained intact involved both physical and intellectual constraints. At some, notably Bristol, Dublin, Leicester and Manchester, security measures included the chaining of books.[63] At Chetham's the instruction to chain books came from the founder; significantly the Chetham's governors took the instruction seriously and chained all of the books, including manuscripts and even the small formats, octavos and smaller, from the 1650s until the 1740s when the practice was abandoned and gates were placed between the presses. At Marsh's, books were chained although the spines and not the foredges of books were shelved to face outwards.[64] There, small formats were not chained but were placed behind gates. At Leicester the practice continued right up until the 1820s; even so chaining did not prevent either loss of books or damage. During the eighteenth century books were destroyed by pupils of the neighbouring grammar school whilst the librarian was reported as tearing leaves out of manuscript bibles to give as keepsakes to visitors.[65] At others the practice of chaining was not adopted. Tenison's books were shelved spine outwards, and evidently many of the books were double-banked, whilst at Ipswich, for example, chains were not used even though the books were shelved with the foredges facing out.[66] Those libraries that did not chain, mainly because they provided a form of lending service, often took strenuous steps to prevent theft and devised elaborate rules and regulations for staff and for readers. At Newcastle visitors to the Thomlinson Library were requested to wear white shirts and neckties and were expected to sign an undertaking not to damage either the books or the furniture.[67] The dress code clearly indicates that all visitors and users would be males. At

61 Hoare, 'Archbishop Tenison's Library', 69.

62 *A catalogue of the books in the library of the city of Norwich* (Norwich, [1706]); *A new catalogue of the books in the public library of the city of Norwich, in the year 1732* (Norwich, [1733]); *A catalogue of books, in the library at Bedford. The foundation whereof was laid in the year 1700 by the contributions of the gentry and clergy* (London, 1706). Norwich also had at least four manuscript catalogues in use at various times: Stephen, *Three centuries*, 45–50; Stoker, 'Dr Collinges', *passim*.

63 B. H. Streeter, *The chained library: a survey of four centuries in the evolution of the English library* (London, 1931) is still indispensable.

64 McCarthy, *All graduates and gentlemen*, 51.

65 *Notes and Queries*, 19 July 1862, 50–1, quoted in Lee, 'History . . . of libraries in Leicester', 27.

66 Blatchly, *Town library*, 33.

67 Kaufman, 'The community library', 43; Jeffery, *Thomlinson Library*, 2. For the elaborate borrowing regulations at Newcastle, see Kelly, *Early public libraries*, 96–7.

Bedford, where the librarian was expected to supervise the lending and return of books on Saturdays, borrowers were required to deposit the cost of the book in advance of a loan. Alternatively, on receipt of a book, the borrower entered into a bond to buy for the library a perfect copy of the best edition in case of the book's loss or damage. The Bedford library-keeper had also to mark the title pages of every book in the library with the words 'this book belongeth to the public library in the town of Bedford', the name of the donor and the cost of the book.[68]

There are interesting differences between the three purpose-built libraries of Plume's, Tenison's and Marsh's, which were constructed at much the same time. At Maldon, Plume's books were shelved on high peninsula presses with no provision for desks for readers; the idea being that the library was a book-stack, a store for a definitive collection.[69] Tenison's books were arranged on twenty presses around a rectangular room, the shelves being numbered from the bottom up.[70] Marsh's Library was designed by Sir William Robinson, in two galleries, which in design and organisation looked back to Duke Humphrey's.[71]

What then can we say of the size and nature of these libraries? Here a distinction needs to be made between those libraries intended essentially as static collections and those that were clearly intended to grow. Plume's Library in Maldon is a good example of the former: the purpose-built accommodation providing a book store for a definitive collection, not the nucleus of an expanding one. Even though Plume endowed the library by the gift of his farm, his trustees were only allocated £1 a year for buying new books.[72] Petyt's at Skipton was also a closed collection, as was Harsnett's at Colchester, whilst Tenison's Library consisted essentially of the founder's own collection with little funding made available for accessions. Marsh's Library, though purpose-built, expanded to take in new collections. Established with the founder's own books, and those of the first librarian Dr Elie Bouhéreau, the building was adapted after only a few years to accommodate the collection of Bishop Edward Stillingfleet, bought in 1705, and later the bequest of John Stearn, bishop of Clogher, which was given in 1745. Marsh's Library remains, however, a homogeneous collection made up of four seventeenth- and eighteenth-century collections.[73]

68 H. M. Walton, 'The old Bedford Library', *Library Association Record* 37 (1935), 516–19.
69 Petchey, *Thomas Plume*, 14.
70 Hoare, 'Archbishop Tenison's Library', 12–15, 52.
71 McCarthy, *'This golden fleece'*, 146.
72 Petchey, *Thomas Plume*, 14.
73 McCarthy, *'This golden fleece'*, 6.

Those libraries that were expected to grow were seldom provided with the necessary funds to buy books. Most town libraries – Norwich, Leicester, Bristol and Bedford, for example – had to rely almost entirely on donations. At Leicester there was initially strong backing from the gentry and nobility, but gradually the number of books and the amount of money given for book purchases dried up almost entirely.[74] The same pattern is repeated at Norwich, where in 1655 a bequest of books was revoked on the grounds that the books 'are devoted to wormes, dust and rotteness, to the dishonour of God, the damage of the ministry and the wrong of the benefactors the dead and the living &c'.[75] Even when the library was reorganised as a reference library in 1656 to be used and paid for by members and their guests, no provision was made for the purchase of new stock.

The exception to this pattern of donation and neglect was Chetham's, where the sheer size of Chetham's bequest enabled his executors and governors to invest the residue of his estate in land in 1661 to provide a regular income for the library.[76] Chetham's bequest consisted entirely of cash; his own small collection of books did not form the basis of the public library of Manchester, and the lands purchased by his trustees were intended to provide an annual income of over £120, sufficient to pay for a librarian, to cover expenses and to provide for a respectable book fund. The income enabled the library to grow rapidly and, perhaps more importantly, allowed the governors responsible for acquisitions a far greater degree of control over the books added to the stock, rather than having to rely on donations.[77]

However much Chetham's remains a special case, many of the endowed and town libraries of the period were sizeable collections and certainly bear comparison with many of the college libraries of Oxford and Cambridge. Petyt's library given to Skipton in 1719 numbered 2,024 volumes, Harsnett's in 1631 about 2,000 volumes, and Plume's amounted to about 7,400 titles when they reached Maldon in 1705. Tenison's in 1684 had over 2,000 volumes, Bristol about 900 titles, Leicester in 1650 about 870 volumes and Newcastle over 4,600 volumes by the mid-1740s. Marsh's comprised over 25,000 volumes by the middle of the eighteenth century.

Some libraries, notably Harsnett's, were intended solely for the use of the clergy; others such as Tenison's and Chetham's were established primarily,

74 Lee, 'History . . . of libraries in Leicester', 17. 75 Stephen, *Three centuries*, 5.

76 Kelly rightly identifies this decision as crucial: *Early public libraries*, 79.

77 Guscott, 'Formation of Chetham's Library', 51–3; A. C. Snape, 'Seventeenth-century book purchasing at Chetham's Library, Manchester', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 67 (1985), 783–96.

though not exclusively, for them. Those libraries that relied largely on donations found that many of the donors were clergymen – at Leicester clergy account for a quarter of all donors, at Norwich one in every five.[78]

More work needs to be done, in terms of analysing these theological collections, if we are to avoid falling into the trap of an early nineteenth-century visitor to Leicester, who described the collection as consisting simply of musty divinity.[79] Many of the libraries displayed unexpectedly eirenic, not to say ecumenical, tastes, attempting at least to construct model collections of scholarship which incorporated comprehensive histories of religion. What we see is far more than a narrow polemical impulse to promote Puritan ideas by refuting conflicting views; rather we can identify a much more inclusive approach to religious scholarship. The shelves of Plume's Library were stocked with theological works by Jesuit scholars, and books by cardinals, bishops, monks, philosophers of Germany, Spain, Italy, France and the Netherlands, side by side with Calvinist and Lutheran works from European printing houses.[80] At Manchester the very first parcel of books bought in August 1655 contained works of Lutheran theology, that would have been inimical to most of the Puritan divines who read in the library, alongside Presbyterian texts and, more alarmingly, alongside major Jesuit writers. The eight-volume Lutheran polemic, *Magdeburg centuries*, purchased at a price of £3, was shelved adjacent to the twelve volumes of Cardinal Baronius, purporting to provide a complete, irrefutable history of the Catholic church.[81] Tenison's Library in London was no less tolerant, with its strength in English church history and a large number of ecumenical works, whilst Ipswich town library was similarly well equipped with the major anti-Protestant writings of the day and contained surprisingly few of the Protestant rebuttals to the Romanist claims.[82] Ipswich is typical in that its theological collection was essentially concerned with biblical exegesis, as one might expect of a library founded to serve the needs of noted preachers, rather than with systematic and doctrinal exposition. Bibles and commentaries

78 Lee, 'History . . . of libraries in Leicester', 17; Tilley, *Catalogue of the donations*, 21.

79 R. Phillips, *A personal tour through the United Kingdom* (London, 1828), vol. 1, 75, quoted in Lee, 'History . . . of libraries', 56.

80 Plume Library leaflet, text by W. H. Petchey. Also available at http://www.basinsites.co.uk/maldon54.htm.

81 Guscott, 'Formation of Chetham's Library', appendix 1: folio editions delivered to Chetham's Library, 2 August 1655.

82 Hoare, 'Archbishop Tenison's Library', 17. Ipswich did contain works by Jesuit authors and, like Chetham's, balanced the *Magdeburg centuries* with Baronius. See especially N. Cranfield and A. Milton, 'The preacher's choice of books', in Blatchly, *Town library*, chapter 14.

on the scriptures were the largest categories of almost all the libraries discussed here. Ipswich and Colchester showed a marked preference for Latin works with only a very few Greek texts. By contrast, Chetham's, Plume's and Marsh's, though dominated by Latin works, included a large number of books in other languages, including books printed in Greek, Hebrew, other Semitic languages and modern European languages.

Not all of the books found in these town libraries were especially useful to the local clergy. The first printed catalogue of Norwich of 1706, for example, claimed that the library was deficient even in divinity.[83] Norwich had only a few humanities books, hardly any law and virtually none of the sciences. For much of the eighteenth century, Leicester town library continued to spend what little funds it had available for books on theology at the expense of other subjects, but most urban and endowed libraries were certainly well stocked in other fields. Ipswich, for example, was well equipped with books that were historical or antiquarian in scope; Tenison's included good collections of history and topography and some science and literature, including works in French. Over half of the books at Bristol could be classed as arts and sciences, whilst Bedford town library again had a good collection of French books, although little in the way of literature. Here such works as John Heywood's *Parable of the spider and the flea*, *Don Quixote* and Richard's edition of Palladio stand out from the crowd.[84]

A number of libraries, notably Chetham's, Marsh's, Tenison's and Norwich, had good collections of manuscripts including important medieval works, and some also contained collections of curiosities. Plume's Library showed a preference for Latin and English translations of original French editions, was weak in music and in atlases, but unusually strong in history, biography and in books on warfare. Petyt's Library in Skipton contained a large number of political works, including many parliamentary papers.[85] Not surprisingly the largest and broadest collections of books were to be found in the two endowed libraries of Archbishop Marsh and Humphrey Chetham. Whilst the former seldom had much in the way of an annual book fund, the collections that made up the library covered the whole range of human knowledge, ensuring its usefulness from the outset.[86] Archbishop Marsh had wide interests in music, mathematics, science, astronomy and architecture and both he and

83 Stephen, *Three centuries*, 26.

84 *Catalogue of books, in the library at Bedford*.

85 *Catalogue of the Petyt Library*.

86 The book-purchasing fund of £20 was apparently never increased: McCarthy, *'This golden fleece'*, 147.

John Stearne, whose collection was added in 1745, were keen collectors of Irish books and manuscripts. The library of Edward Stillingfleet was regarded as the finest private library in England and was particularly rich in scientific and medical works, including editions of Newton's *Principia*, Gilbert's *De magnete*, Harvey's *De motu cordis*, Boyle's *Memoirs for the natural history of human blood*, Aldrovandi's *Quadrupeds* and Willoughby's *Ornithologiae*. At Chetham's the growth of the collection was less sudden, but a steady stream of income enabled the governors to acquire almost any book that took their fancy. The glory of the library is its holding of scientific books, impressive by the standards of any contemporary library.[87]

The income from Chetham's endowment enabled the library to grow and to adapt itself to changing needs. No other urban and endowed library, not even Marsh's, could manage this so well. Indeed most libraries of the period found themselves unable to adapt to new tastes and new ideas, given their reliance upon benefactions. Not surprisingly readers looked to more dynamic forms of lending facilities, the book club and the commercial circulating library.[88] As one commentator said of Leicester, 'The idea of a "town library" is almost enchanting, but the interest created by the vision, expires like the dream of morning, when it is discovered that there is nothing contained in the library which one hundreth part of the population care to peruse.'[89] The opinion of Chetham's expressed by the Puritan scholar John Worthington – 'a very fair library of books (where I might pursue my studies) better than any college library in Cambridge' – was sadly exceptional.[90] Some, like Norwich and Bristol, transformed themselves into subscription libraries, others, such as the Thomlinson Library, or the Bedford Library, simply fell into decay.

With the exception of Tenison's Library, the books of which were sold at auction in 1861, the other public and endowed libraries remain, some in their original homes, some as collections of books absorbed into other libraries.[91] That they survived into the age of a mass-reading public and into the era of the rate-supported public library is perhaps the most striking feature of all.

87 H. S. A. Smith, 'A Manchester science library: Chetham's Library in 1658', *Library History* 8 (1989), 110–15: N. Barker, 'Chetham's Library: an appeal', *Book Collector* 44 (1995), 300–17.

88 Brewer, *Pleasures of the imagination*, 133.

89 T. Cook, *Guide to Leicester* (1843), quoted in Lee, 'History . . . of libraries in Leicester', 57.

90 R. C. Christie (ed.), *The diary and correspondence of Dr. John Worthington*, Chetham Society, old ser., 114 ([Manchester?], 1886), 326.

91 [*A sale catalogue of the collection of Archbishop Tenison: sold by auction by S. Leigh Sotheby & John Wilkinson on 3 June 1861 and five following days*] (London, 1861); *Catalogue of a highly valuable collection of manuscripts, formed by Archbishop Tenison . . . which . . . will be sold by auction, by Messrs. S. Leigh Sotheby & John Wilkinson . . . on Monday the 1st day of July, 1861, etc*. (London, 1861).

They survived in spite of the fact that most of their founders failed to make effective provision for their future and those responsible for their care and management generally failed to carry out their duties and responsibilities. The most successful libraries considered in this chapter have been those that were privately funded and managed by bodies of trustees. It was to be some time before a municipal authority could provide effective management and it would require legislation to bring this into force.

8

Libraries in university towns

CHARLES BENSON

The period between the end of the English Civil War (and its associated conflicts in Ireland and Scotland) and the mid-eighteenth century has not generally been regarded as one of great intellectual distinction in the universities of these islands.[1] Their number remained the same throughout the period, showing no increase on those in existence at the end of the sixteenth century. There were Oxford and Cambridge in England; the newly founded (1592) Trinity College, Dublin, in Ireland; and in Scotland the fifteenth-century foundations of Glasgow and St Andrews, the recent (1582) Edinburgh, and in Aberdeen King's College and Marischal College, which were united in one university in 1641 and separated just after the Restoration in 1660.

Twentieth-century commentators have been caustic about the situation in England and Ireland. V. H. H. Green describes the period 1660–1800 in Oxford as 'the university in decline'.[2] Cambridge was not much better: 'The university of Cambridge in the eighteenth century has been convicted of violating its statutes, misusing its endowments and neglecting its obligations. It is impossible to dispute the essential justice of this verdict.'[3] Nor were matters much better in Ireland. Trinity College, Dublin, was severely disrupted by the events following the rebellion in 1641. No new entrants were recorded between 1645 and 1652; a military occupation followed in 1689.[4] The college reached a low point in the early eighteenth century. McDowell and Webb remark that 'it must be confessed that few of the Fellows of the time showed evidence of even a blighted promise or of intellectual creativity',[5] and from 1722 to 1753 they could not trace 'a single publication written by anybody who

1 I am grateful to Peter Hoare for his helpful advice on several aspects of this chapter.
2 V. H. H. Green, *A history of Oxford University* (London, 1974), 85–109.
3 D. A. Winstanley, *Unreformed Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1935), 3.
4 J. V. Luce, *Trinity College Dublin: the first four hundred years* (Dublin, 1992), 22, 33.
5 R. B. McDowell and D. A. Webb, *Trinity College Dublin 1592–1952: an academic history* (Cambridge, 1982), 38.

was at the time in possession of a Fellowship'.[6] Although the Scottish universities suffered a decline in numbers of students, they showed some intellectual vitality: in Aberdeen Colin MacLaurin promoted mathematics from 1717 and in Edinburgh the medical faculty gained an international reputation in the early part of the eighteenth century. The libraries were one part of the universities which showed considerable improvements. The period was marked by an abundance of bequests and donations along with irregular purchases. Numerous catalogues were published; several imposing buildings were constructed and many others extended, and legal deposit legislation was introduced.

Probably more collections came to the Bodleian Library and the libraries of the Oxford colleges than to any other institution. The first large bequest was from John Selden, who died in 1654, leaving his Greek and Oriental manuscripts and Talmudical and Rabbinical books to the Bodleian and the rest of his books to his executors who in 1659 agreed with the university to give the 8,000 printed books on condition of the collection being kept together, to be catalogued and chained within twelve months and duplicates to be returned to the executors for disposal.[7] In the 1670s the Bodleian received the important collection of medieval manuscripts bequeathed by Thomas Lord Fairfax, who died in 1671, and the manuscript collection of Francis Junius, died 1677, dealing with medieval England and northern European languages. The university made some remarkable purchases of manuscripts, including 112 medieval ones from the collection of Christopher Lord Hatton in 1671, and 420 Oriental ones for £800 in 1692 from the widow of Edward Pococke, who had in early life been chaplain to the Levant Company at Aleppo. In the same year it paid Robert Huntingdon over £1,000 for some 600 manuscripts which he had collected while in Aleppo as chaplain in the 1670s. These purchases were enhanced by Oriental works in the bequests of Thomas Marshall in 1685 and Archbishop Narcissus Marsh in 1713, both of whom, like Pococke, had been supplied with manuscripts by Robert Huntingdon.[8] Marsh began serious collecting of Oriental works in the early 1690s with the intention of bestowing the collection on Oxford.[9] His greatest purchases were made at the auction of Jacobus Golius's manuscripts in Leiden in 1696 where Edward Bernard acted as his

6 *Ibid.*, 39.

7 I. Philip, *The Bodleian Library in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Oxford, 1983), 47–8. Ian Philip's book, reproducing his 1980/1 Lyell Lectures, is the principal source for much of what follows, where not otherwise referenced.

8 G. J. Toomer, *Eastern wisedome and learning: the study of Arabic in seventeenth-century England* (Oxford, 1996), 288.

9 C. Wakefield, 'Archbishop Marsh's oriental collections in the Bodleian Library', in M. McCarthy and A. Simmons (eds.), *The making of Marsh's Library* (Dublin, 2004), 83–4.

agent.[10] Golius, Professor of Arabic at Leiden from 1625 until his death in 1667, had amassed one of the best private collections both on his extensive travels in the Middle East and through agents. In 1697 the university paid £340 to Edward Bernard's widow for books and manuscripts, including many containing classical works.

The eighteenth century brought fewer bequests to the Bodleian as they tended to go to individual colleges, but the various gifts over the years of John Hudson and Sir Hans Sloane amounted to over a thousand volumes each. The major bequest, which arrived in 1736, was the collection of manuscripts, now in 467 volumes, and the printed books, about 900 volumes, of Thomas Tanner, bishop of St Asaph. Tanner had bought a large portion of the papers of Archbishop Sancroft as well as items collected by John Nalson, and the collection was of exceptional importance for the history of the English Civil War. The major acquisitions apart, the Bodleian had periods of extensive purchasing, spending £125 a year between 1667 and 1672, and £134 in 1687 on books from Robert Scott's *Catalogus librorum ex variis Europae partibus advectorum*. Thereafter the level of purchasing fell to about £10 a year in the 1690s, reviving in the period 1715 to 1725 to average nearly £40 a year but falling to £7 a year in the 1730s and not recovering until after 1750.

Among the Oxford colleges, four received very large collections.[11] All Souls received the Codrington bequest of books and money in 1710. Balliol was bequeathed 2,000 volumes by T. Wendy in 1673 and its choice of books from Nicholas Crouch's library in 1689. Christ Church was particularly richly endowed with the remarkable collection of Henry Aldrich, its Dean, in 1710, which contained 3,000 printed volumes, 8,000 pieces of music and 2,000 engravings. Lewis Atterbury gave his pamphlet collection of over 3,000 items covering English life in the seventeenth century in 1722. Two general libraries, nearly 5,000 volumes left by William Stratford and the library of Charles Boyle, 4th earl of Orrery, arrived respectively in 1729 and 1733 and were soon followed by the 5,000 volumes and manuscript collection of Archbishop William Wake which arrived in 1737 shortly after his death. Queen's College was the beneficiary of Thomas Barlow's library in 1691 and soon afterwards that of Sir Joseph Williamson.

Cambridge University Library received two principal bequests in the 1660s. The larger, the library of Richard Holdsworth (1590–1649), an ejected Master of Emmanuel College and prisoner in London from 1643 to 1645 for his royalist

10 Toomer, *Eastern wisedome*, 288–9.

11 For details of these and other benefactions, see P. Morgan, *Oxford libraries outside the Bodleian: a guide*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1980).

views, amounted to over 10,000 volumes, more than half on divinity. It took fifteen years from his death for the complications of his will and additional 'directions for my executors' to be settled. Included in his conditions was the return to London of the Lambeth Palace Library which had been made over to Cambridge by Parliament in 1648. Holdsworth's condition was matched by a call from Archbishop William Juxon for the return, reinforced by his successor, Gilbert Sheldon, and the return was made in 1664.[12] Shortly before the arrival of Holdsworth's books, the University Library received the bequest of Henry Lucas of about 3,600 volumes. Lucas had had an administrative career in the employment of Henry Rich, earl of Holland, from the early 1630s to 1648 and his collection reflects interests in contemporary history, travel and genealogy.[13] The only other relatively large bequest was of 1,000 volumes of divinity, history and literature by John Hacket, bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, who died in 1670.[14]

The most spectacular acquisition at Cambridge University Library was the enormous collection of John Moore, bishop of Ely, whose library was purchased by King George I for £6,450 and presented in 1715 and subsequently known as the Royal Library. Its 28,965 volumes of printed books and 1,790 volumes of manuscripts dwarfed the contents of the university's collection, which had stood at 15,639 printed books and 658 manuscripts in 1709.[15] Moore's vast library was described by William Nicolson in 1714 as 'the best furnish'd of any' in the possession of a contemporary clergyman, the owner having been 'particularly diligent in collecting the fairest editions of the Greek and Latin Classicks, Fathers, Councils, Ecclesiastical and Civil Historians, Law-writers, Confessions of Faith and Formularies of Worship, in all languages, Ancient and Modern, Books of Physick, Surgery, Mathematicks'.[16] Nicolson goes on to extol the strength of the holdings of English historical manuscripts, and the collection is also remarkable for the abundance of early English printing. This acquisition presented problems of accommodation and organisation that it would take the library thirty years to solve. In the remaining years to 1750 there were gifts of some hundreds of books from John Worthington, some in 1725 and others in succeeding years,[17] and of Oriental manuscripts and

12 J. C. T. Oates, *Cambridge University Library, a history: from the beginnings to the Copyright Act of Queen Anne* (Cambridge, 1986), 314–26.

13 *Ibid.*, 359–63. 14 *Ibid.*, 400–3.

15 D. McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library, a history: the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries* (Cambridge, 1986), 147–52. See also J. Ringrose, 'The Royal Library: John Moore and his books', in P. Fox (ed.), *Cambridge University Library: the great collections* (Cambridge, 1998), 78–89.

16 W. Nicolson, *The English historical library*, 2nd edn (London, 1714), xii.

17 McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, 225–7.

curiosities from George Lewis, archdeacon of Meath, in 1727, a collection made when Lewis was chaplain at Fort St George in India between 1692 and 1714.[18] There was some money available for spending on books in the late seventeenth century with bequests of £100 from James Duport, died 1679, and Robert Mapletoft, died 1677.[19] Two further legacies came in the 1690s but the general level remained low well into the eighteenth century.

Important bequests also came to the college libraries at Cambridge.[20] Among the largest were that of about 1,000 volumes by John Cosin, bishop of Durham (died 1672) to Peterhouse, where he had been Master between 1635 and 1644 and had refurbished the library,[21] the more than 6,000 volumes left by Archbishop William Sancroft to Emmanuel College in 1693,[22] and, best known of all, the 3,000 volumes bequeathed to Magdalene College by Samuel Pepys.[23]

In Scotland, donations were smaller, the most important being the largely theological library of James Nairne, minister at Wemyss, Fife. This collection of 1,838 volumes was bequeathed to Edinburgh in 1678 and the university promptly published a catalogue of it.[24] The university collection numbered over 11,000 volumes in 1695. (The university benefited from the close supervision given to financial matters by the town council. It set rates for contributions by students when matriculating and when graduating which became part of the library's income.[25]) Donations to the other Scottish universities were rather less generous. At St Andrews, gifts and bequests to St Leonard's College were made by the regent Mungo Murray (1670), Sir John Wedderburn (1679) and Archdeacon William Moore (1681), though none of these was very extensive.[26] The library at Glasgow had been described by the Visitors in 1664 as 'but verie small for ane Universitie and having no considerable ways to better the samen

18 *Ibid.*, 231. 19 Oates, *Cambridge University Library*, 428–9.

20 A. N. L. Munby, *Cambridge college libraries: aids for the research student*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 1962) gives details of many other bequests.

21 Cosin's major benefaction was to the bishopric of Durham, where the 'public library' he founded in 1668 still flourishes. See A. I. Doyle, 'John Cosin (1595–1672) as a library maker', *Book Collector* 40 (1991), 335–57.

22 H. Carron, 'William Sancroft (1617–93): a seventeenth-century collector and his library', *Library*, 7th ser., 1 (2000), 290–307.

23 *Catalogue of the Pepys Library, Magdalene College Cambridge*, 11 vols. (Cambridge, 1978–94).

24 C. P. Finlayson and S. M. Simpson, 'The history of the library 1580–1710', in J. R. Guild and A. Law (eds.), *Edinburgh University Library 1580–1980* (Edinburgh, 1982), 43–66 (here 51).

25 *Ibid.*, 51–3. Similar arrangements were in place at Glasgow, where the level of contribution depended on the student's rank: W. P. Dickson, *The Glasgow University Library* (Glasgow, 1888), 47–9.

26 B. C. Bloomfield (ed.), *Directory of rare book and special collections in Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland*, 2nd edn (London, 1997), 662–4.

by the Universities awen care', but apart from John Snell's gift of *c.*1670 it too received no major gifts at this time until the 1690s. It was estimated to have had 3,299 volumes in 1691 and 5,643 in 1760.[27]

Trinity College, Dublin, on the other hand, benefited from some large bequests. It was fortunate to be given the 10,000 volumes of Archbishop James Ussher in 1661: the collection, which probably doubled the size of the library, had been purchased from his heirs by the Council of State in 1657 and was intended for a proposed new foundation in Dublin, a project frustrated at the Restoration.[28] About the same time, Henry Jones, bishop of Meath, presented the Book of Kells and the Book of Durrow. In 1670 Sir Jerome Alexander bequeathed his 'books and manuscripts of Common, Civil Law and Statutes; of Divinity, History and of and concerning all other arts, and sciences whatsoever', except those dealing with 'physick or chirurgy' which he left to his daughter. Alexander had come to Ireland to make his fortune after being disbarred from practice as a lawyer in England for intimidation of witnesses. He ended his life as second Justice of Common Pleas and a landed proprietor. His collection included much law and politics and 125 collected volumes of pamphlets published during the English Civil War. He also left £600 to build a separate library and lodgings for the librarian.[29] There were smaller gifts of books to the value of £200 given by Rachel, countess of Bath, in 1671, and of books to a similar value by Charles Willoughby in 1691 and £500 in 1698/9 from Thomas, earl of Pembroke and Montgomery.[30]

Three substantial collections came in the first half of the eighteenth century. The college was given its choice of works from Archbishop William Palliser, who died in 1726, and 4,000 volumes were taken. The largest of all the bequests was the 13,000 volumes left by Revd Claudius Gilbert in 1743, a former Vice-Provost, whose intention of endowing the library was known as early as 1735. His library was rich in political and scientific works as well as having a substantial theological content. The third was of 4,000 pamphlets from the library of Bishop John Stearne, transferred in the early 1740s. The latter collection, while containing a good quantity of sermons, also contained a large number of works on political and economic matters of the preceding half-century.

27 Dickson, *Glasgow University Library*, 10–12, 31.
28 T. C. Barnard, 'The purchase of Archbishop Ussher's library in 1657', *Long Room* 4 (1971), 9–14.
29 V. Teehan, 'The Alexander Collection in the library of Trinity College, Dublin with special reference to the law books', unpublished M Phil thesis, University of Dublin (1987), 35–6.
30 E. Boran, 'The function of the library in the early seventeenth century', in V. Kinane and A. Walsh (eds.), *Essays on the history of Trinity College Library, Dublin* (Dublin, 2000), 39–52, esp. 43–4.

In 1662 a possible new source of stock for the libraries of Oxford and Cambridge came into being with the passing of the Licensing Act. This Act and its successors remained in force between 1662 and 1679 and again between 1689 and 1695. These provided for the licensing of all publications, and their registration at Stationers' Hall, and for three copies of each to be delivered to the Master of the Stationers' Company for the use of the Royal Library and the two universities. The first Act and its successor in 1664 suffered from a major weakness in that no responsibility was specified for dealing with the publications once deposited at Stationers' Hall. This was rectified in the 1665 Act which laid printers under a penalty of £5 a copy for non-compliance in deposit and the Master of the Company under a similar penalty in case of failure to forward the books within ten days of receipt. Compliance with the deposit provisions was limited despite formal reminders being issued in 1668 and 1670 by the Beadle of the Company.[31] Cambridge used the Beadle as its agent and in 1671/2 paid him four years' salary at the rate of 13s 4d a year.[32] That the compliance continued to be unsatisfactory is shown by the agreement of the universities to co-operate in 1674 to produce a catalogue of the books which had been published and which were not in their libraries and then to threaten some of the larger printers with prosecution. The measure had some effect. Cambridge has a list of titles published between 1664 and 1678 which amounts to about 800 titles (the numbers 1 to 124 are missing).[33] During the brief revival of the Act between 1689 and 1695, Cambridge and Oxford employed a joint agent, John Jenny, and had some success in claiming copies. There are binders' bills in Cambridge for books sent by the Stationers' Company[34] while at Oxford the Registrum B has several lists of books supplied at dates between 1692 and August 1694.[35]

The concept of legal deposit reappeared in the Copyright Act which came into force in 1710, and which marked a move away from censorship to the protection of property. The Act provided protection through registration at Stationers' Hall but also for the supply of copies registered to the Royal Library, and the libraries of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, Sion College, the four universities in Scotland and the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh. Despite an initial rush to register copies, the number registered soon dwindled for there was no penalty for non-registration. In the opinion of one librarian, the booksellers 'enter such English Sermons, Histories, Poems and Pamphlets, as they are apprehensive will quickly be reprinted by others in

31 Philip, *Bodleian Library*, 53. 32 Oates, *Cambridge University Library*, 420.
33 *Ibid.*, 422–4. 34 *Ibid.*, 463–4. 35 Philip, *Bodleian Library*, 55.

cheaper Paper and Character'.[36] The more scholarly and solid works having less popular appeal were at less risk of piracy. The number of copies registered fell from 734 in the first nine months of the Act being in force to 53 entered in 1725.[37] This left the provisions of the Act nearly useless to the libraries. None the less, the Act caused a major dispute in Aberdeen as King's College and Marischal College argued as to which should benefit as the University of Aberdeen, a dispute not finally settled in favour of King's College until 1738 by decision of the Court of Session in Edinburgh.[38] Shipping of books to Glasgow University was supposed to occur twice a year but in September 1744 its London agent wrote that none had been sent since Lady Day 1741. Quantities were small: a list of books sent in 1731 contains only ninety-seven items.[39]

John Durie offered a reasonably advanced model of the task of a librarian in *The reformed librarie-keeper* (London, 1651). He believed that a librarian should 'keep the publick stock of learning, which is in books and manuscripts to increase it', that he should be a guide to reference works, informing himself of new publications at home and abroad, and be accountable for his activities to a committee of scholars: Durie had a high notion of the worth of such a man – to be paid £200 a year plus his expenses. John Evelyn's 1661 translation of Gabriel Naudé's *Instructions concerning erecting of a library* also implies high objectives in collecting, for besides obtaining the standard works, 'we neglect nothing which is worth the reckoning, and which may be of use, be it either to ourselves or others; such as are *libels, placarts, theses, fragments, proofs*, and the like', which ought to be grouped together in quantity, 'otherwise, it ordinarily comes to pass, that whilst we despise these little books . . . we happen to lose a world of rare collections and such as are sometimes the most curious pieces of the whole library'.[40] Naudé calls for the construction of an alphabetical author catalogue as well as a subject one in which the books 'should be so precisely dispos'd according to their several matters and faculties, that one may see & know in the twinkling of an eye, all the authors which do meet there upon the first subject that shall come into one's head'.[41]

36 W. Reading, *The history of the ancient and present state of Sion College* (London, 1724), 38, quoted in McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, 31.
37 J. P. Chalmers, 'Bodleian copyright survivors, 1710–1726', unpublished BLitt thesis, University of Oxford (1974), 22, quoted in Philip, *Bodleian Library*, 79.
38 J. R. Pickard, *A history of King's College Library, Aberdeen, until 1860* (Aberdeen, 1987), vol. 2, 203.
39 A. Nairn, 'A 1731 copyright list from Glasgow University Archives', *Bibliotheck* 2:1 (1959/62), 30–2.
40 G. Naudé, *Instructions concerning erecting of a library*, trans. J. Evelyn (London, 1661), 57.
41 *Ibid*., 90.

The varieties of tenure and appointments in the universities were large. In the case of the universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, the town council took an interest in the office. When the post of University Librarian was established in Edinburgh in 1635, the town council laid down onerous regulations. The library was to be open to all matriculated students, in the winter from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with a two-hour break for lunch, from Monday to Saturday, and from March to July the library was also to be open from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. The librarian was to compile press, subject and author catalogues, list accessions and fetch books. In return he had a decent salary of 400 merks.[42] During the 1650s and early 1660s there was a succession of short-term holders of the office, until in 1667 the town council contracted with the new appointee, William Henderson, to stay for six years. In fact he stayed for seventeen and was succeeded by his son Robert, whose remarkable tenure lasted from 1684 until 1747.[43] In Glasgow, control was divided between town council and university. The 'moderators of the Colledge' proposed on 23 September 1651 to supplement the pay of the librarian by 100 merks provided that the Town Council agreed to each body having alternate presentation to the office.[44] The appointment was for a period of four years, although attempts were made in 1735 to alter this to tenure *ad vitam aut culpam*, the proposed change being justified by one of its promoters who claimed that 'by experience it is found that in the former way of changing every four years the library keeper spends half of that time at least before he is well acquainted with his office or can discharge it as he ought'.[45] None the less a number of young men held the post briefly and went on to higher things, including John Simson, later Professor of Divinity, and the prominent theologian Robert Wodrow.[46] The times of attendance laid down in 1643 corresponded to those in Edinburgh. Appointments followed a less regular pattern at King's College, Aberdeen. The expectations were less and the 'bibliothecary' was only required to open the doors of the library for two hours a day for divinity students. Here Andrew Massie was librarian from 1662 to 1675 but was followed by a series of short-term appointments.[47]

Trinity College, Dublin, presented a complete contrast to the other institutions. Here the post of librarian was an annual office under the statutes of 1637

42 Finlayson and Simpson, 'History of the library', 48–9. 43 *Ibid.*, 51–2.

44 *Munimenta alme Universitatis Glasguensis* (Glasgow, 1854), vol. 3, 321. See also P. Hoare, 'The librarians of Glasgow University over 350 years: 1641–1991', *Library Review* 40:2/3 (1991), 27–43 (here 29).

45 R. Renwick (ed.), *Extracts from the records of the Burgh of Glasgow*, vol. 5: *AD 1718–38* (Glasgow, 1909), 443–7; Hoare, 'Librarians of Glasgow University', 33.

46 Hoare, 'Librarians of Glasgow University', 31; both librarians appear in *DNB*.

47 Pickard, *King's College library*, vol. 1, part 2, 142, 145.

which ordained that the librarian was to be chosen from among the junior fellows or scholars or, failing a candidate there, from among the masters. Attendance at the library was to be from 8 to 10 a.m. and from 2 to 4 p.m.[48] The job generally became the lot of the most recently elected junior fellow. A revision of the statutes in 1734 altered the status from annual officer to election whenever a vacancy arose.[49] Between 1661 and 1750 a total of fifty different people held the post, the longest tenure being that of Edward Hudson, who held office from 1731 to 1740 in his second term. It does not seem to have been a respected or well-paid post, the salary remaining constant at £8 between 1676 and 1722.[50] On 2 November 1705 Thomas Hearne noted disparagingly that the library 'is quite neglected & in no order, so yt 'tis perfectly useless, the Provost & fellows of yt College having no Regard for Books or Learning'.[51] George Berkeley, elected in November 1709, referred to the misery of the cold in 'that wretched mansion, to the keeping of which, I was this day sennight elect'd under an inauspiciary planet'.[52] Berkeley, however, came to the office when a new building was being planned, and one of his complaints was that some of the books were nailed up in boxes.

In Cambridge new regulations for organising the library came into effect in 1659.[53] These called for the establishment of two posts, those of Chief Library-Keeper and Under Library-Keeper, the former to be of at least MA standing. These officers would hold their post subject to the satisfactory performance of their duties. Tenure of the post of Chief Library-Keeper tended to be lengthy even if great merit were not shown. Cambridge was unfortunate in some of its choices. Isaac Dobson, Chief Library-Keeper from 1661 to 1668[54] and Robert Peachey, holder of the office from 1668 to 1684, were both clearly incompetent and were eventually persuaded to resign.[55] Cambridge structures remained unchanged until 1721 when the post of Proto-Bibliothecarius was created in a belated response to the problems of dealing with Bishop John Moore's massive collection.[56] The post went to Conyers Middleton, who displayed an initial interest in the management of the library, advocating a number of reforms in the housing, classification and borrowing arrangements in his *Bibliothecae*

48 Trinity College Dublin, *A translation of the charter and statutes . . .*, by R. Bolton (Dublin, 1749), 89.
49 P. Fox, 'The librarians of Trinity College', in Kinane and Walsh, *Essays*, 11–24 (here 12).
50 L. Ferguson, 'Custodes librorum: service, staff and salaries, 1601–1855', in Kinane and Walsh, *Essays*, 25–83 (here 26–7).
51 C. E. Doble (ed.), *Remarks and collections of Thomas Hearne* (Oxford, 1885), vol. 1, 62.
52 A. A. Luce and T. E. Jessop (eds.), *The works of George Berkeley, bishop of Cloyne*, vol. 8 (London, 1958), 24.
53 Oates, *Cambridge University Library*, 295–6.
54 *Ibid.*, 383–7.
55 *Ibid.*, 453–5.
56 McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, 166–8.

Cantabrigiensis ordinandae methodus in 1723. He did not, however, have much stomach for the daily practicalities. Indeed, having spent six weeks at the task of cataloguing in 1734 he complained to Lord Hervey of the drudgery of the work.[57] The credit for imposing a new order on the library and organising Moore's collection is due to John Taylor, who succeeded Samuel Hadderton as Chief Library-Keeper in 1732. Although he only held the post until 1734, when he took on the better-paid job of University Registrary, he continued to work on the collection with a variety of junior assistants. Taylor was succeeded as Librarian by Thomas Parne, who remained in office until his death seventeen years later in 1751. McKitterick wrote that he 'was undistinguished as a librarian and played scarcely any part in the everyday life of the collections of which he found himself in charge'.[58]

Oxford fared rather better in its choice of Librarian. Thomas Barlow held office from 1652 until he became Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity in 1660 (he was later bishop of Lincoln). His successor Thomas Lockey lasted only five years but began work on the catalogue of the Bodleian which was published in 1674. Thomas Hyde, Librarian from 1665 until 1701, displayed great energy in pushing forward the cataloguing project but the later years of his tenure were marred by numerous complaints about his management, particularly in respect of lending practices and the failure to revise catalogues and shelflists. He also showed hostility to Edward Barnard's work in compiling, with others, the *Catalogus manuscriptorum Angliae* which was published in 1698, though the imprint is dated 1697.[59] This catalogue, which listed manuscripts in the possession of institutions and individuals in Britain and Ireland, was a landmark in making collections known to scholars. Hyde's letter of resignation stated that on many occasions shortage of money had prevented him from making the purchases that he desired and that he was 'weary of the toil and drudgery of daily attendance all times and weathers'.[60] Following Hyde's resignation, the office of Librarian was held by only three people in the succeeding forty-six years. John Hudson, his immediate successor, was more of an entrepreneur than a librarian, for, with two others, he bought the entire stock of the University Press Warehouse in 1713.[61] Although the matter of the urgent need for a new catalogue exercised the minds of the curators and a specimen proposal was accepted by the Delegates of the University Press in 1714, nothing further was achieved. Revision of the catalogue had been started by Thomas Hearne when he became an assistant in 1702, and a six-volume transcript of

57 Quoted in *Ibid.*, 183. 58 *Ibid.*, 201. 59 Philip, *Bodleian Library*, 62.
60 W. D. Macray, *Annals of the Bodleian Library, Oxford*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1890), 170–1.
61 Philip, *Bodleian Library*, 85.

this revision was prepared for public use in 1708.[62] Under Hudson's successor, Joseph Bowles, further revision was required consequent upon the movement of several thousand volumes to make more economical use of space, and in fact printing did not begin until 1727. Bowles died in 1729 and the work was continued by Robert Fysher, Librarian from 1729 until 1747, and completed in 1738.[63]

The printed catalogues of the Bodleian were influential. The *Catalogus impressorum librorum Bibliothecae Bodleianae* compiled by Thomas Hyde and published in 1674 is a monument to his scholarship and industry. The library had grown in size from 15,975 volumes in 1649[64] by the addition of the Selden collection of about 8,000 volumes which arrived in the autumn of 1659. Ian Philip praises Hyde for the features which made the catalogues a lasting, useful bibliographical tool, such as making the title-entry from a transcription of the title and the extensive use of cross-references, including from translators, though he regrets Hyde's innovation of entering anonymous works under subject headings.[65] The 1674 catalogue was widely used by other libraries as a substitute for their own: several interleaved copies survive from Oxford colleges.[66] The 1738 Bodleian catalogue had no successor for a century and even served, in an annotated, interleaved copy, as the catalogue for Cambridge University Library. Trinity College, Dublin, published a catalogue of its library *c.*1715. The entries in this are terse and minimal and the amount of interest in the development of the collection is perhaps illustrated by the lack of any entry under the name of George Berkeley, one of few Fellows who published anything and who had been Librarian in 1709–10. At Edinburgh University the bequest of about 1,850 items by the Revd James Nairne in 1678 was marked by the publication of a catalogue preceded by an extensive account of the benefactor.[67]

Benefaction registers record the generosity shown to colleges at both Oxford and Cambridge, though their evidence is not wholly reliable given their hidden purpose of attracting further gifts by example.[68] Apart from books, many colleges received substantial gifts of money. John Warner, bishop of Rochester,

62 *Ibid.*, 87. 63 *Ibid.*, 89. 64 Macray, *Annals*, 107.

65 Philip, *Bodleian Library*, 50.

66 I. G. Philip and P. Morgan, 'Libraries, books and printing', in N. Tyacke (ed.), *The history of the University of Oxford*, vol. 4: *Seventeenth-century Oxford* (Oxford, 1997), 659–85 (here 678).

67 M. C. T. Simpson, 'The special collections', in Guild and Law, *Edinburgh University Library*, 140–62 (here 141–2), 211.

68 J. B. Bengtson, 'Benefaction registers in Oxford libraries', *Library History* 16 (2000), 143–52, includes a list of such registers extant in college archives.

gave £1,000 after 1660 to Magdalen College, Oxford, to be spent on books.[69] Samuel Cosens bequeathed £120 to Exeter College in 1668 for the same purpose, while William Grimbaldson left £1,000 in 1725 to Brasenose College. Many of the colleges continued the custom whereby a member upon graduating should give a volume or the price of one. From 1735 New College, Oxford, was spending an average of £100 a year derived from degree money while at Brasenose the custom between 1650 and 1764 was for the 'determining bachelors' to combine to present a volume. The first college library catalogue to be printed was that for Magdalen Hall, Oxford in 1661. At All Souls a book fund was started in 1674 and augmented in 1713 when it was agreed to apply the 5 pounds paid for taking a master's degree to the purchase of books.[70]

Provision for undergraduate use was not generally part of a university library's remit: indeed access by anyone other than senior members of the university was often difficult. An unusual venture at Edinburgh was the establishment in 1724 by the Professor of Natural History, Robert Stewart, of a physiological library for the students, of which a catalogue was published in 1725.[71] Glasgow University also started a loan collection for students in the Humanities class at much the same time, when a sum not exceeding £25 was given to be spent on editions of Cicero and Livy. 'Similar small libraries were constituted for the other Arts classes, as well as in connection with those of Anatomy and Medicine', and a theological library, run by the students of the Divinity Hall, was begun *c.*1744.[72]

Arrangements at Oxford and Cambridge were necessarily more elaborate than at the other universities. Specialist subject collections had begun much earlier in Oxford, for instance, with a collection for the use of the Savile professorship of astronomy as early as 1619 and another for botanists in the physic garden in 1621.[73] All the colleges had their own libraries for the benefit of senior members but by the 1680s many were also making separate provision for undergraduates, with student libraries being set up in some Oxford colleges such as Queen's, Trinity and Balliol.[74] At Cambridge, Trinity College established a 'scholars' library' in 1700, to be shelved alongside the Fellows' Library (and to be funded by a levy on students at the time of admission to

69 Morgan, *Oxford libraries outside the Bodleian*, provides details of many of the donations referred to below.
70 Sir E. Craster, *The history of All Souls College library* (London, 1971), 64–5.
71 Finlayson and Simpson, 'History of the library', 56.
72 Dickson, *Glasgow University Library*, 25–7.
73 Philip and Morgan, 'Libraries, books and printing', 676–7.
74 I. G. Philip, 'Libraries and the University Press', in L. S. Sutherland and L. G. Mitchell (eds.), *The history of the University of Oxford*, vol. 5: *The eighteenth century* (Oxford, 1986), 725–55 (esp. 749–52).

the College).[75] At Oxford in 1668, according to Anthony Wood, 'the Christ Church men, yong men, set a library in Short's Coffee House in the study ther', with books of a more recreational kind – probably not the only example of extra-mural provision.[76]

The expansion of collections forced universities and colleges to extend their accommodation. Quite apart from the many internal rearrangements, five major buildings were constructed: one in Cambridge, the library of Trinity College; three in Oxford, at Queen's College, at All Souls and the Radcliffe Library; and the last at Trinity College, Dublin. At Cambridge Sir Christopher Wren designed an elegant single-storey long chamber over an eleven-bay arcade.[77] Preparation of the design was already well advanced by January 1676 when an appeal for money was launched so that construction could begin in February. The first three years of the appeal raised £6,632 and a further £2,000 was added in the succeeding three years.[78] The library was designed in thirteen bays with high windows on both sides, providing excellent illumination. The bookcases lined the walls and projected out, giving privacy for study, the first appearance of the alcove which became such a tradition in library design. Wren took particular care with the details of the design and fittings, down to the reading-tables and rotating book-rests.

Of the great library buildings put up in this period, that at Queen's College, Oxford, was one of the most elegant. The college had received Bishop Thomas Barlow's bequest of his library in 1691, the scale of which necessitated a new building. Begun in 1693 and completed in 1698 to a classical design over an open loggia with traverse bookcases between the windows, it was furnished to a high standard of decoration, with an elaborate plaster ceiling and plaster modelled festoons above the windows.[79] In the early eighteenth century All Souls College was contemplating major rebuilding work for which it had retained Nicholas Hawksmoor as architect.[80] In 1710 a new library became a necessity following the bequest by Colonel Christopher Codrington of his books. Codrington, who had become a Fellow of All Souls in 1690 but spent little time there, had amassed a collection of about 12,000 volumes, mainly using Alexander Cunningham as his agent. These he left to the college, as well

75 P. Gaskell and R. Robson, *The library of Trinity College, Cambridge: a short history* (Cambridge, 1971), 24–5.

76 Philip and Morgan, 'Libraries, books and printing', 676.

77 For details of the design and financing, see D. McKitterick (ed.), *The making of the Wren Library, Trinity College Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1995).

78 *Ibid*., 11.

79 Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, *An inventory of the historical monuments in the City of Oxford* (London, 1939), 99–100.

80 The following account is taken mainly from Craster, *All Souls College library*, 66–81.

as £10,000, of which £6,000 was to be spent on a library building and £4,000 on books. Hawksmoor's design was accepted and the building contract with the local builder William Townesend was signed on 12 March 1716. The shell of the building was completed by 1721 but work appears to have been at a standstill until 1729 for financial reasons. It was not until 1751 that books were placed in the library, organised by a subject classification with alphabetical and class catalogues. The building was the longest room in Oxford, with an internal measurement of 195 feet and a width of 30 feet and a deep wide recess on the north side. The bookcases were arranged along the north side on two levels, and on one level on the south. The cost of the building totalled £12,101 and a few pence, double the amount bequeathed for the purpose by Codrington.[81]

The third great library to be erected at Oxford was the Radcliffe Library (better known as the Radcliffe Camera) which opened on 13 April 1749, thirty-five years after the monies for it became available.[82] Its genesis was John Radcliffe's bequest in 1714 of £40,000 to be paid to trustees in equal instalments over ten years for the construction of a library, with the provision of £150 a year for a library-keeper and an annual bookfund of £100. The library-keeper, who was to be of MA standing, was to be chosen by a committee of worthies who included the archbishop of Canterbury, the Chancellor of the university and the Lord Chancellor. By the mid-1730s the trustees were in negotiation with two architects, Nicholas Hawksmoor and James Gibbs. Following Hawksmoor's death in 1735, Gibbs was asked to refine Hawksmoor's concept and he duly produced a baroque design of a circular building, the foundation stone of which was laid on 17 May 1737. The project was described in J. Gibbs's *Bibliotheca Radcliviana, or, a short description of the Radcliffe Library at Oxford* (London, 1747).[83]

In many respects, the building at Trinity College, Dublin, was the most ambitious of all. The original library formed part of the buildings constructed in the last decade of the sixteenth century occupying the length of one quadrangle at first-floor level. It was described by John Dunton in 1699 as 'but an ordinary pile of building'. Internally two parts were segregated, with the collection given by the countess of Bath at the east end and Archbishop James Ussher's

81 H. E. Salter and M. D. Lobel (eds.), *The Victoria history of the county of Oxford*, vol. 3 (London, 1954), 191.

82 S. G. Gillam, *The building accounts of the Radcliffe Camera* (Oxford, 1954), vii–xxviii.

83 The concept of the circular library, including the Radcliffe Camera and Wren's abortive circular design for Trinity College, Cambridge, is discussed by R. Becker, 'Theorie und Praxis – zur Typologie in der Bibliotheksarchitektur des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts', in C.-P. Warncke (ed.), *Ikonographie der Bibliotheken* (Wiesbaden, 1992), 235–69.

library at the west end.[84] The collections had endured various vicissitudes: during the 1680s the books had been displaced when the library was brought into use as a dining hall while rebuilding of the hall took place: 'this is the true reason why the College Library was rendered utterly useless for some years'.[85] Some damage had also occurred during the military occupation of the college in 1689.

Discussion on constructing a new building must have occurred more than a decade before building began, for John Dunton mentioned it in his 1699 polemic and believed that the House of Commons had voted £3,000 towards it.[86] Work began in 1711 to a design by Thomas Burgh, Surveyor-General of Ireland, and funded by a parliamentary grant. The House of Commons in Dublin on 1 June 1709, in appreciation of the college's action in expelling Edward Forbes for 'aspersing the glorious memory of his late Majesty King William the third' and 'for the encouragement of good literature and sound revolution principles', asked for £5,000 to be given to the college for creating a public library.[87] This and further applications in 1717 and 1721 were accompanied by fervent expressions of political loyalty. The building overran its budget of just over £7,000 and by the time it was completed in 1732 the costs had risen to £20,000.[88] It was designed to serve several functions. Running rather unusually on an east–west axis, it had three-storey pavilions at each end and in the centre a two-storey chamber built over an arcade. The east pavilion had the philosophy school on the ground floor and the manuscripts room above. The west pavilion had the grand staircase leading to the Long Room (202 feet in length), the librarian's room, and on the top floor the astronomical school. In the Long Room the traverse bookcases were only on the lower level and the gallery was without bookcases. The amount of shelving provided plenty of room for expansion for when the library was opened in 1732 rather less than half of it can have been occupied by the collections. The donated collections of Archbishop James Ussher and Archbishop William Palliser were placed on the south side, to be joined in 1743 by the 13,000 volumes of Claudius Gilbert's collection. On the north side, books were placed in a subject arrangement as they had been in the former library, although it seems likely that they were placed with the

84 J. Dunton, *The Dublin scuffle* [London, 1699], ed. A. Carpenter (Dublin, 2000), 242–3.

85 N. Marsh to T. Smith, 19 January 1705/6 (Bodleian Library, Smith MS 45, fols. 121–5), cited in R. Gillespie (ed.), *Scholar bishop: the recollections and diary of Narcissus Marsh 1638–1696* (Cork, 2003), 59.

86 Dunton, *Dublin scuffle*, 243.

87 *Journals of the House of Commons in Ireland* (Dublin, 1796), vol. 2, 596. Cf. B. Grimes, 'The library buildings up to 1970', in Kinane and Walsh, *Essays*, 72–90 (here 72–3).

88 The following account is taken mainly from E. McParland, *Public architecture in Ireland 1680–1760* (New Haven, 2001), 145–58.

spine outwards rather than the earlier arrangement of the fore-edge facing out.

Dublin was exceptional among the university cities in that a public library was founded there in the early eighteenth century. Its founder, Narcissus Marsh, the archbishop of Dublin, had noted the lack of access to scholarly books for those unconnected with Trinity College. Writing to his friend Dr Thomas Smith on 4 May 1700, he announced his intention of leaving his Oriental manuscripts to the Bodleian Library and using the rest to found a 'library for publick use'.[89] Construction of the building to the design of the Surveyor-General, Sir Thomas Robinson, was completed in 1703 but an extension was almost immediately called for as in 1705 Marsh acquired the large library (10,000 volumes) of Edward Stillingfleet, bishop of Worcester.[90] The contents of this collection reflected its owner's strong interest in polemical theology and church history. Thomas Hearne deplored that it 'was sufferd to go out of ye nation to the eternal scandal and Reproach of it'.[91] Marsh had earlier persuaded Elie Bouhereau, a Huguenot refugee, to deposit his books in the library and to become his librarian. The governance of the library was settled by an Act of Parliament (6 Anne cap. 19 Ireland) passed in 1707 notwithstanding opposition from some clerical members of the House of Lords.[92] The Act provided for a distinguished board of governors who included the archbishop of Dublin, the dean of St Patrick's Cathedral and the Chief Justice. It also gave details of the security arrangements, with 'iron-chains, rods and clasps for the better preservation of the larger books, and close lattices, with locks, for the safe keeping of the books of the smaller size', and laid out the duties, income and emoluments, and the procedure for the dismissal of the librarian. The regulations for the library were based on the rules of the Bodleian and its use was open to all graduates and gentlemen.

Another Dublin foundation, though more restricted, was the Worth Library, containing about 4,500 volumes, established under the will of Dr Edward Worth (died 1733), as a separate trust in Dr Steevens' Hospital 'for the use, benefit and behoof of the physician of the time', but arguably having wider availability as the testator required that copies of the catalogue be kept in Marsh's Library and Trinity College library. This was far from being purely a medical library, having also extensive holdings of classical and modern literature as

89 R. Mant, *History of the Church of Ireland* (London, 1840), vol. 1, 111–12, cited in M. McCarthy, *Marsh's Library, Dublin: all graduates and gentlemen* (Dublin, 2003), 41.

90 McCarthy, *Marsh's Library, Dublin*, 51–2.

91 *Remarks and collections of Thomas Hearne*, vol. 1, 62.

92 D. Hayton, 'Opposition to the statutory establishment of Marsh's Library in 1707', in McCarthy and Simmons, *The making of Marsh's Library*, 163–86.

well as science, mathematics and travel. Worth collected fine bindings[93] and commissioned many himself.[94] The Scottish university towns also benefited from the presence of medical libraries, notably those of the Royal Colleges (as they later became), whose collections like Worth's were not restricted to medicine. In Edinburgh the College of Physicians, founded 1681, quickly acquired a gift of 200 important volumes from Sir Robert Sibbald, while their neighbours the Surgeons established a library in 1696, again with significant donations. The Glasgow physicians and surgeons formed a single college dating back to 1599, but its library began only in 1697, with gifts from members and others, including theology and general history which were subsequently discarded.[95]

Two libraries were founded in Edinburgh to cater for the needs of lawyers. The first was instituted in December 1680 by a decision of the Faculty of Advocates, the second in 1722 by the Writers to the Signet. The speech of Sir George Mackenzie for the inauguration of the former, published in 1689, states that the original intention had been only to house legal books and books useful to lawyers, but the evidence of the first printed catalogue, published in 1692, proves that the collection had gone far beyond such limits, with only some 56 per cent of works listed being law books.[96] Policy decisions taken by the Faculty during the 1680s empowered the Treasurer to purchase historical manuscripts and the Keeper to buy public papers printed since 1660. There was an initial flurry of enthusiasm by donors but this had petered out by 1683 and there is only evidence of thirteen donors in the succeeding twelve years. In 1695 the Advocates' Library was given 870 volumes from the collection of Lord George Douglas after his early death: these were largely legal books but there was a substantial amount of Italian literature and classical literature and antiquities.[97] A reckoning in 1703 showed that the stock had increased by some 2,000 volumes since 1692 although the amount being spent was lower, with one exception, than in the preceding decade. This exception was the expenditure of £1,800 Scots on the manuscripts of Balfour of Denmilne. Instructions issued on

93 M. McCarthy, 'An eighteenth century Dublin bibliophile', *Irish Arts Review* 3:4 (1986), 29–35.

94 V. Kinane, '"The dark and delicate style" of Parliamentary Binder A: a group of bindings in the Worth Library, Dublin', *Book Collector* 48 (1999), 372–86.

95 A. J. Bunch, *Hospital and medical libraries in Scotland* (Glasgow, 1975), 17–36.

96 B. Hillyard, 'The formation of the library, 1682–1728', in P. Cadell and A. Matheson (eds.), *For the encouragement of learning: Scotland's national library 1689–1989* (Edinburgh, 1989), 23–66 (here 24–6). This is the principal source for what follows, except where otherwise cited.

97 W. A. Kelly, *The library of Lord George Douglas (ca. 1667/8–1693?): an early donation to the Advocates Library* (Cambridge, 1997).

28 February 1699 show that the Faculty's concept of the scope of its library had become broader. These dealt with the security of manuscripts and prohibiting lending, and were intended to encourage potential donors.

The status of the Advocates' Library was underlined by its inclusion as a legal deposit library in the Copyright Act of 1710. As was the case with the university libraries, the intake of deposited material was small to begin with, being recorded as 688 items for the period 1711–25 when 2,154 entries were made in the Stationers' Hall register (though there is a suspicion that 688 items is an underrecording of items received). In addition to the works received under legal deposit, the library continued its collecting of non-legal and foreign books. In 1707 the botanical books, 305 items in 269 volumes, of James Sutherland, Keeper of the Royal Botanical Garden, were acquired. In 1723 there were large-scale purchases of historical books and of manuscripts at the auction of Sir Robert Sibbald's library and of over 700 items from the collection of James Anderson. The great expansion of the library in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries led to repeated demands for a new catalogue. Work was well advanced on this by the early 1730s but delays due to the discovery of deficiencies in the work postponed the completion of printing until 1742, nine years after the contract for printing had been given to the Library Keeper, Thomas Ruddiman, and his brother Walter, an Edinburgh printer. The catalogue did not contain entries for works published after 1732. A much needed supplement was published in 1772.[98] The Advocates were fortunate to have in their service the remarkable Thomas Ruddiman first as Assistant Keeper from 1702 to 1730 and then as Keeper from 1730 to 1752. In his spare time he was also a teacher, book auctioneer, printer and newspaper proprietor.[99]

As was the case with the Advocates' Library, the Signet Library began as a purely professional library following a decision of the Society of Writers to the Signet to buy all the Scots law books in print as well as Acts of Parliament published before and after the Union and any that should be published in the future.[100] The Society was comparatively small, having somewhat over 100 members, and the venture of starting a library nearly foundered in 1740, for a proposal was made that the members of the Society should be allowed to use the Advocates' Library subject to certain payments and that the Signet Library

98 P. Wellburn, 'The living library', in Cadell and Matheson, *For the encouragement of learning*, 186–214 (here 194–5).

99 B. Hillyard, 'Thomas Ruddiman and the Advocates' Library, 1728–52', *Library History* 8 (1990), 157–70. Cf. also A. P. Woolrich's article in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), vol. 48, 82–3.

100 G. H. Ballantyne, *The Signet Library Edinburgh and its librarians 1722–1972* (Glasgow, 1979), 28.

be sold off to pay for it.[101] Nothing came of this and during the second half of the eighteenth century the library expanded considerably, a printed catalogue being produced in 1792.

In the period under review the demands placed on libraries were, in general, not arduous. Readers were comparatively few in number, the hours of access limited. The most marked feature was the flow of private collections into institutional care, more by gift than by sale, for in most institutions there was not a consistent pattern of purchasing. The private benevolence of the donation of collections was matched in many cases by institutional ambition to create architectural splendours. The effect of the establishment of legal deposit was small; its impact was not felt until the nineteenth century, when the pace of scholarship picked up in the universities.

101 *Ibid*., 29.

9

Ecclesiastical libraries: libraries for the higher clergy

SHEILA HINGLEY

For the oldest ecclesiastical libraries, the libraries of the Anglican cathedrals, the events of the 1640s and 1650s were as traumatic as those of a century earlier, when the Reformation of the church in England had caused the dispersal of a number of large and famous cathedral libraries. The century since 1540 had seen the revival of most cathedral libraries but often on a smaller scale than before, with losses in manuscript books being, to some extent, made good in printed books, so that on the eve of the Civil War most cathedrals had a library of some kind.

'In 1641, when the English Parliament began to dismantle the regime of Charles I, the most systematic and ferocious attack was not upon the political and legal agents of Stuart tyranny, but upon the Church of England.'[1] Amongst prime targets for reform were the higher clergy. For them the years 1640 to 1660 encompassed ejection, exile and, in the case of the archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud, execution. Episcopacy was abolished in October 1646 and in April 1649, a few months after the execution of Charles I, so also were deans and chapters. For many cathedrals this last piece of legislation described a *fait accompli*, since the estates of many chapters accused of supporting the king had already been sequestered. There are accounts of the general vandalism and iconoclasm carried out in cathedrals by Puritan sympathisers, but few direct references to what happened to cathedral libraries in the 1640s and 1650s, so much of the evidence has had to be deduced from the accounts of what had to be rebuilt in the decades after the Restoration.

Exeter Cathedral library, having suffered some damage by Puritans in the 1640s, was demolished in the 1650s when the cloister was sold to be used for a market. The books were dispersed but a good number were saved by a local physician, Dr John Vilvaine, who furnished the Lady Chapel as a library out of his own pocket.[2] Lichfield was besieged more often than any other cathedral

1 J. Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646–1689* (New Haven, 1991), 3.
2 L. J. Lloyd, *The library of Exeter Cathedral* (Exeter, 1967), 14.

in the Civil War except Carlisle. In 1642, after a long siege, the books in the cathedral library were burned, St Chad's Gospels and a few other precious volumes being smuggled out by the precentor.[3]

At Chichester after the siege of 1642 books belonging to the dean and chapter, bishop and 'other delinquents' were dumped in the roofless deanery. In 1651 the County Committee for Sussex asked for permission to sell the books in London.[4] In some cathedrals such as Winchester, attempts were made to rescue the books from destruction. Some books, including the Winchester Bible, were stored in Winchester College, others were sold in London during the Interregnum, but these were recovered and restored to the library in 1677.[5] At Lincoln about 600 volumes were returned to the cathedral by the city council in 1662 from the Greycoat School.[6] Books in the library at Wells Cathedral suffered a similar fate. About 200 books were removed for safe storage to St Catherine's church in Wells and in 1661 were reclaimed by the cathedral chancellor.[7]

The fate of three of the larger cathedral libraries, Canterbury, Durham and St Paul's, was somewhat different. After the abolition of deans and chapters, the documents of a number of cathedrals were gathered centrally in Gurney House in London, for the information on land and property that they contained. In 1646 it was ordered that the books from Durham Cathedral should also be sent to London. This order was ignored and, despite damage to the library building, the books survived to become the property of the short-lived Cromwell's College established in the Precincts, 1657–60.[8] The order for Canterbury's books to be transported to Gurney House was given in 1650 by the Committee for Compounding. The books did not go there but instead were sent to the care of Mr George Griffith, minister of the Charterhouse.[9] The books belonging to St Paul's library were also sent away, to Sion College in 1648, by decree of the lord mayor. Some books remained there until the Great Fire of London in 1666 when unfortunately most were

3 S. E. Lehmberg, *Cathedrals under siege: cathedrals in English society 1600–1700* (Exeter, 1996), 60.

4 M. Hobbs, 'The cathedral library', in M. Hobbs (ed.), *Chichester Cathedral* (Chichester, 1994), 171–88.

5 F. Bussby, *Winchester Cathedral library* (Winchester, 1975), 2–5.

6 N. Linnell, 'Michael Honywood and Lincoln Cathedral library', *Library*, 6th ser., 5 (1983), 135–6.

7 L. S. Colchester, *Wells Cathedral library*, 3rd edn (Wells, 1982), 3.

8 C. Stranks, *This sumptuous church* (London, 1992), 57–8; D. Pearson, 'Elias Smith, Durham Cathedral Librarian 1633–1676', *Library History* 8 (1989), 67–70.

9 N. Ramsay, 'The cathedral archives and library', in P. Collinson, N. Ramsay and M. Sparks (eds.), *A history of Canterbury Cathedral* (Oxford, 1995), 382.

destroyed in the flames, only three manuscript and twenty-four printed books surviving.[10]

A few cathedral libraries did not fit the common pattern and suffered almost no losses during the Civil War and Interregnum. In 1640 the medieval library at York was flourishing and in 1660 it was still flourishing, having been protected by Ferdinando, Lord Fairfax, who with his son, Sir Thomas Fairfax, was in command of the Parliamentarian forces that captured York in 1644. The library continued to function throughout the Commonwealth period and it was to 'the Publique Librarie in York Minster' that Christopher Cartwright in 1658 bequeathed a Hebrew Bible.[11]

At Hereford, the cathedral suffered less from iconoclasm than others and the cathedral library remained virtually untouched in the Lady Chapel for the whole period.[12] Gloucester Cathedral library also emerged from the Interregnum in good heart, having been taken over and developed by the mayor and burgesses of the city. In 1646 they petitioned parliament to allow them to set up a 'Publique Library' in the chapter house of the cathedral. A benefactors' book recorded gifts from donors, who included officers in the Parliamentarian army.[13] Worcester Cathedral library, too, seems to have been well cared for during the Commonwealth by a library-keeper appointed by the County Committee.[14]

The restoration of Charles II in May 1660 was closely followed by the re-establishment of the Church of England. There were bishoprics to fill as well as ordinary livings and cathedral stalls. The clergy appointed to cathedrals faced an uphill task to restore the buildings in their care. In the early 1660s Charles Dallison, Recorder of Lincoln, wrote that 'most of the Cathedrals escaped totall destruction, yet many of them [were] miserably rent, torn and defaced'.[15] The sums needed to carry out repairs were enormous. At Durham the costs of restoration totalled £14,120, which would translate as over £1 million today. It was only after the fabric and services of the church had been restored that other matters could be addressed. For cathedral libraries

10 W. M. Atkins, 'St Paul's Cathedral: a short history of the library and archives', *A Record of the Friends of St Paul's* 5 (1957), 16; N. Ramsay, 'The library and archives to 1897', in D. Keene, A. Burns and A. Saint (eds.), *St Paul's* (New Haven, 2004), 418–20.

11 C. B. L. Barr, 'York Minster library', in G. E. Aylmer and R. Cant (eds.), *A history of York Minster* (Oxford, 1977), 503–5.

12 J. Williams, 'The library', in G. Aylmer and J. Tiller (eds.), *Hereford Cathedral* (London, 2000), 521–2.

13 S. E. Eward, *A catalogue of Gloucester Cathedral library* (Gloucester, 1972), vii–viii.

14 I. Atkins and N. R. Ker, *Catalogus librorum manuscriptorum bibliothecae Wigornensis* (Cambridge, 1944), 15.

15 Linnell, 'Michael Honywood', 134.

there was reconstruction of both buildings and collections to be undertaken. Some libraries were rebuilt very soon after 1660; others had to wait until the new century dawned. In most cases the restoration was led by one or two individuals within a cathedral community.[16]

Canterbury's library was one of the earliest to be rebuilt, in 1664, within the ruins of the old Prior's Chapel. Books which had been returned in 1661 from the Charterhouse were put on its shelves, supplemented by new acquisitions. John Warner, a former canon now bishop of Rochester, and William Juxon, archbishop of Canterbury, both contributed money towards the rebuilding.[17] Durham owed its library rebuilding to its dean, John Sudbury. He financed the construction of a library in the ruins of the old refectory. By the time of his death in 1684, he had already spent £1,000 and in his will his executors were instructed to finance the completion of the building.[18] At Exeter, Dr Vilvaine's rescued library was supplemented in 1672 by the bequest of 1,200 volumes from the cathedral treasurer, Dr Edward Cotton.[19]

At Wells the instigator and financier of repairs to the library building in 1670 and 1685 was Dr Richard Busby, headmaster of Westminster School as well as the canon treasurer. He also gave books, to add to the 200 books stored in St Cuthbert's church during the Commonwealth.[20] In 1677 Dean Robert Mapletoft bequeathed his book collection to Ely Cathedral, with £100 to be divided between book-buying and fitting up a library.[21] The stock of books was further built up by the efforts of Bishop Simon Patrick and Bishop John Moore.[22] The library at Chichester, whose books had been sold off in 1651, was brought back to life with the bequest of the books of John King (son of Bishop Henry King) in the 1670s.[23] At Lichfield the library was revived with the donation in 1673 by the duchess of Somerset of the library of her late husband, William.[24] At Salisbury, Bishop Seth Ward's bequest in 1689 of 300 volumes sat alongside smaller donations in a revived library.[25] At the Restoration, the dean and chapter of Gloucester took over the new library created in 1648 by the mayor and aldermen.[26]

16 Lehmberg, *Cathedrals under siege*, 58–60, 63.

17 Ramsay, 'Cathedral archives and library', 383.

18 Stranks, *This sumptuous church*, 64.

19 Lloyd, *Library of Exeter Cathedral*, 14.

20 Colchester, *Wells Cathedral library*, 3.

21 D. Owen, *The library and muniments of Ely Cathedral* (Ely, 1973), 5–6.

22 N. Ramsay, 'The library and archives 1541–1836', in P. Meadows and N. Ramsay (eds.), *A history of Ely Cathedral* (Woodbridge, 2003), 259–79.

23 Hobbs, 'Cathedral library', 174.

24 Lichfield Cathedral Library, *A catalogue of the printed books and manuscripts in the library* (London, 1888), v–vi.

25 S. M. Eward, 'Salisbury Cathedral library', typescript (1973), 4.

26 Eward, *Catalogue*, viii.

Two men who were exiled on the continent in the 1640s and 1650s played an important role in the refounding of cathedral libraries, and this has given an interesting slant to those collections. Bishop Stephen Morley of Winchester gave 2,000 books to Winchester Cathedral library in 1667. Of these, more than half were printed outside England.[27] Michael Honywood went into exile in the Netherlands and returned in 1660 with a large library collected during his exile. He became dean of Lincoln and masterminded the restoration of the cathedral and its precincts, but probably his greatest achievement was the rebuilding of the library in 1675, to a design by Sir Christopher Wren. It housed Lincoln's medieval manuscripts and Honywood's donated library.[28] Sir Christopher Wren was also responsible for the new library within the west towers of St Paul's Cathedral. The very few books which survived the Civil War and the Great Fire were augmented by donations of money and books from Archbishop Thomas Tenison and Sir Nicholas Stewart.[29] An important collection of biblical editions, formed by Humfrey Wanley, was purchased in 1710, and the library was transformed by the bequest in 1713 of half of the library of Henry Compton, bishop of London.[30]

After 1660 cathedral libraries began to be more formally organised. Regulations for library use were introduced, librarians were appointed and catalogues were produced. In Canterbury in 1672, regulations governing the running of the library were promulgated and two library-keepers were appointed.[31] The catalogues made in the mid-eighteenth century provide visible proof that cathedral libraries were flourishing. Canterbury's first printed catalogue, published in 1744, revealed that the cathedral library contained about 5,000 titles.[32] At Exeter, too, 5,000 titles were listed in the catalogue in 1752. Of these only twenty had been listed in 1506.[33] Durham did not just rely on gifts to increase its stock; books were bought at regular intervals. Durham also had an exemplary librarian in Thomas Rud from 1717 to 1726. In a number of cathedrals, funds were earmarked for library acquisitions; for example, the custom of making a payment to the library on the installation of a canon was used to ensure a regular income.[34]

27 Bussby, *Winchester Cathedral library*, 6.
28 D. N. Griffiths, 'Lincoln Cathedral library', *Book Collector* 19 (1970), 23–4; Linnell, 'Michael Honywood', 137–9.
29 Atkins, 'St Paul's Cathedral', 16–17.
30 Ramsay, 'Library and archives to 1897', 420–1.
31 Ramsay, 'Cathedral archives and library', 385.
32 *Ibid.*, 388.
33 Lloyd, *Library of Exeter Cathedral*, 14.
34 N. R. Ker, 'Cathedral libraries', in A. G. Watson (ed.), *Books, collectors and libraries* (London, [1985]), 295–6; Barr, 'Minster Library', 506.

The Welsh experience of Civil War was more traumatic, but again the Restoration saw revival. St David's Cathedral library suffered losses after the Reformation and also in the Civil War but was built up again after the Restoration. Bangor's library was destroyed in the Civil War, and that of Llandaff was removed to Cardiff Castle for safety. Whilst there, the books were burnt by the Parliamentarians when they captured the castle in 1655, but this library too was revived after the Restoration, being set up in a room above the chapter house by Bishop Francis Davis in 1670.[35]

Amongst ecclesiastical libraries of the period which were not based in cathedrals, a few stand out. One of these was the library of Sion College in London, built in 1630 as an addition to the college for clergy and the almshouse endowed by Thomas White in 1624. Unlike other ecclesiastical libraries, Sion College library actually expanded during the Civil War, despite damage to the college buildings and struggles between rival parties to gain control of the Court of Governors. The college tried to buy the library of James Ussher, archbishop of Armagh, who died in 1656, but were thwarted and Ussher's library went to Dublin. John Spencer, Librarian 1631–80, published a printed catalogue of the library in 1650, the first for any collection in London, and personally donated several hundred volumes between 1631 and 1658. The books from St Paul's Cathedral library were added to their collection by a decree of 1647 by the lord mayor of London, who thought they should be available to a wider public. These books remained in Sion College until the Great Fire of London in 1666, when they were taken by cart to the Charterhouse outside the walls in the hope that they would be saved. Unfortunately a third of the Sion collection and most of the St Paul's library were burned. Although over 860 volumes survived from the Sion library, the college and almshouse were destroyed.

By means of donation and loans the complex was rebuilt and the books were returned to the library. In the period 1698–1712 the library received six large benefactions, which brought the total number of volumes to 10,000. These included the Jesuit library, seized at Holbeck, Nottinghamshire, in 1679, and the bequest of Thomas James, printer, who died in 1711. Sion College library was a genuine public library, being open to anyone on the recommendation of one of the Fellows of the college. Its importance was recognised in 1710

35 M. Tallon, *Church in Wales diocesan libraries* (Athlone, 1962). The Welsh libraries are well covered in B. C. Bloomfield (ed.), *A directory of rare book and special collections*, 2nd edn (London, 1997), 667–89, including those now in the National Library of Wales.

when it was granted the right to a deposit copy of any book printed. Another catalogue was published by the librarian William Reading in 1724.[36]

For the library of the archbishops of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace, the Civil War and Commonwealth proved a difficult time. When Archbishop William Laud was arrested and Lambeth Palace was taken over in 1642, the library was protected by decree of a House of Commons committee headed by John Selden. In 1646 the University of Cambridge petitioned the Commons to give the books to the university, which they agreed to do in 1647. In May 1662 Archbishop William Juxon began negotiations to get back the library. These were continued by his successor, Gilbert Sheldon, and the books were finally moved back to Lambeth probably early in 1665. The books were set up in the cloisters at Lambeth, where they remained until 1828 when they were transferred to Great Hall, which had been rebuilt in the early 1660s by Archbishop Juxon.[37]

A cluster of libraries were set up for the use of clergy after the Restoration. John Cosin (1595–1672), bishop of Durham, set up a library for the benefit of the clergy and other educated members of his diocese in a building at the gate of his residence, Durham Castle, in 1669. The building was furnished with shelving along the walls in the French style. Cosin had spent the Commonwealth period in exile in France and had returned to England in 1660 with a large collection of continental books. Almost 600 of the 3,600 books he gave to the library were in French, and of contemporary printing.[38]

In Wales the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, in which senior Welsh clergy were prominent members, played an important part in the growth of Welsh ecclesiastical libraries in this period. Diocesan lending libraries were set up for the use of parish clergy, schoolmasters and other educated people, in 1708 in the diocese of St David's at Carmarthen, in the diocese of Bangor in 1709, and in the dioceses of St Asaph and Llandaff in 1711.[39]

36 H. Dijkgraaf, *The library of a Jesuit community at Holbeck, Nottinghamshire (1679)* (Cambridge, 2003); E. Edmondston, 'Unfamiliar libraries IX: Sion College', *Book Collector* 14 (1965), 165–77; Bloomfield, *Directory*, 366–9; E. H. Pearce, *Sion College and library* (Cambridge, 1913).

37 M. R. James, 'The history of Lambeth Palace Library', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 3 (1959–63), 1–31; A. Cox-Johnson, 'Lambeth Palace Library 1610–1664', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 2 (1955–8), 105–26; Bloomfield, *Directory*, 274–9.

38 A. I. Doyle, 'John Cosin (1595–1672) as a library maker', *Book Collector* 40 (1991), 355–7; C. E. Whiting, 'Cosin's library', *Transactions of the Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland* 9 (1939), 18–32.

39 Tallon, *Church in Wales diocesan libraries*.

One library, founded by an archbishop, could be classed as a parochial library, but it was much more than that. Thomas Tenison in 1684 proposed to the vestry of St Martin-in-the-Field, of which parish he was then vicar, that he should found a public library in the parish at his own expense. His intention was to give a place of study and a collection of books to the young clergymen in his parish who were tutors or chaplains to the gentry and allow access to other interested readers. He consulted Sir Christopher Wren on the building design. The library contained between 4,000 and 5,000 volumes on a wide variety of subjects, and it seems likely that a high proportion of these books were from Tenison's own collection: a catalogue of the manuscripts was published in 1692. Donations from a wide range of people in the first half of the eighteenth century added to the library.[40]

In Ireland, there were several important episcopal library foundations in the period after the Restoration. In Dublin, Narcissus Marsh (1638–1713), archbishop of Dublin and later of Armagh, founded the first public library in Ireland in 1701. It was very similar to Tenison's foundation in intention, being genuinely open to the public. An Act of 1707 was passed which settled and preserved 'a Publick Library for ever'. Prominent dignitaries and officials in Ireland were made governors. The founding collection was that of Edward Stillingfleet (1635–99), bishop of Worcester, whose library of 10,000 volumes was bought by Marsh in 1705. Dr Elias Bouhéreau (1642–1719), a French Protestant, was appointed as the first librarian. Marsh bequeathed his own books, as did Bouhéreau and John Stearne (1660–1745), bishop of Clogher.[41]

In 1690 William King, then bishop of Derry, bought the library of his predecessor, Ezekiel Hopkins. When King was translated to the archbishopric of Dublin in 1703 he left behind these, with other books he had given for the creation of a diocesan library in Londonderry. By 1709 this was housed in the newly built Old School, probably combined with the remnants of an older cathedral library; a catalogue was created and a librarian appointed. The Raphoe Diocesan Library was established in 1737 by Bishop Nicholas Forster and was housed in the Diocesan School at Raphoe until its removal in 1881 to join with the Derry Diocesan Library. Cashel Cathedral library was established in the 1730s by Theophilus Bolton, archbishop of Cashel 1730–44. In 1734 he had

40 P. Hoare, 'Archbishop Tenison's Library at St Martin in the Fields, 1684–1861', unpublished Dip. Lib. thesis, University of London (1963). I am grateful to the author for the use of several of his unpublished papers.

41 M. McCarthy, *All graduates and gentlemen: Marsh's Library* (Dublin, 1980; 2nd edn, 2003).

purchased about 4,000 volumes from the library of William King, archbishop of Dublin 1703–29, and these, with his own library of about 6,000 volumes, formed the core of the collection, bequeathed to his successors and the clergy of the diocese.[42]

James Ussher, archbishop of Armagh, died in 1656. His library had followed him to England after 1641, coming to rest at Lincoln's Inn. Ussher wanted to bequeath it to Trinity College, Dublin, but his poor finances meant that he left it to his only child as his most valuable asset. His daughter's husband, Sir Timothy Tyrrell, put the library up for sale. The Bodleian Library and Sion College were interested in buying it, but instead £2,500, the amount offered by Sion, was raised by Cromwellian soldiers in Ireland to buy the library for a projected second college in Dublin, to act as a Protestant seminary. Ussher's library was a working collection ideal for a theological institution. Agreement was reached with Tyrrell and the books were shipped to Dublin in 1657. Before the Cromwellian college could be founded, Henry Cromwell, the main instigator, was recalled to England and the project fell through. Charles II decided to give the library to Trinity College, after his Restoration in 1660.[43]

In Cork St Fin Barre's Cathedral library was founded in 1720 by Bishop Browne. It included the collections of Archdeacon Pomeroy and Bishop Crow of Cloyne, incorporated in 1725 and 1727 respectively. St Canice's library in Kilkenny was founded in 1693 by Bishop Otway, with the bequest of his own books. This was joined in 1756 by the books of Bishop Maurice. Bishop Charles Este of Waterford bequeathed his collection of books in 1745 to form Waterford Cathedral library. All these libraries numbered between 2,000 and 3,000 volumes and contained a wide range of subjects in addition to large collections of theology.[44]

In Scotland, there are fewer library foundations to record. Church government and the provision of education were different from those in England, Wales and Ireland, and the existence of several long-established universities with their attendant libraries must have influenced this development. The

42 R. S. Matteson, 'Archbishop William King's library: some discoveries and queries', *Long Room* 9 (1974), 7–16; R. S. Matteson, 'The early library of Archbishop William King', *Library*, 5th ser., 30 (1975), 303–14; R. S. Matteson, *A large private park: the collection of Archbishop William King, 1650–1729*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 2003); Bloomfield, *Directory*, 596–8; F. Alderson, 'Unfamiliar libraries xiv: Cashel Cathedral', *Book Collector* 17 (1968), 322–30; M. Tallon, *Church of Ireland diocesan libraries* (Dublin, 1959), 7, 11–12.

43 T. C. Barnard, 'The purchase of Archbishop Ussher's library in 1657', *Long Room* 4 (1971), 9–14.

44 Bloomfield, *Directory*, 598–9, 615, 617.

main exception was the Leighton Library at Dunblane, which was founded for the clergy of cathedral and diocese by the will of Robert Leighton, archbishop of Glasgow, who died in 1684. The library was built in 1686–7 and was opened in 1688. It was turned into a subscription library in the middle of the eighteenth century whilst still serving as a diocesan library.[45]

For those outside the Church of England, the period was also a time when libraries were founded and flourished. For nonconformists, the library of Dr Daniel Williams became the central source of books. Williams died in 1716 and by his will he bequeathed the bulk of his fortune to charitable purposes, administered by trustees. The establishment of a library for the use of the public was dealt with almost as an afterthought. The books were Williams's own collection, augmented by the library of his friend William Bates which he had purchased in 1700. A catalogue was printed in 1727 before the opening of the library in 1729 in Red Cross Street, Cripplegate. Williams's intention, laid out in his will, was that the library should be available to any member of the public approved by the trustees. Within a very short time its circle of readers narrowed and it lost its interdenominational character. In 1731 it was ordered that all pastors of the three denominations of dissenters, the Presbyterians, Independents and Baptists, should be admitted and it became a working library for the use of these ministers, known as the Dissenters' Library.[46]

Although the Recording Clerk of the Society of Friends began to collect, from 1673, two copies of every work printed for the Society and one copy of every anti-Quaker work, this collection did not become a library until a long time later. For the exiled French Huguenots, their main church in Soho Square in London had a library from the early seventeenth century.[47]

'Until the close of the seventeenth century virtually the only libraries which were in any degree accessible to the public were religious libraries.'[48] This statement is probably even more true of the first half of the eighteenth century, although the concept of a public library at this time was very different from a public library today. Paul Kaufman's study of borrowers' registers for eight cathedrals in the eighteenth century is the nearest to a picture of reading and borrowing habits we can have. His conclusions support the idea that cathedral libraries were well used by a proportion of learned clergy

45 *Ibid.*, 624, 628.

46 *Ibid.*, 426–33; R. T. Herford and S. K. Jones, *A short account of the charity and library established under the will of . . . Daniel Williams* (London, 1917), 47–53.

47 Bloomfield, *Directory*, 215–16.

48 T. Kelly, *Early public libraries* (London, 1966), 58.

in cathedral closes and also by external scholars introduced by members of the clergy. Nigel Ramsay has shown that Canterbury Cathedral library was used by scholars Henry Wharton and Robert Plot. The manuscript and archives in cathedrals were also known and used by scholars in this period.[49]

It is hard to know how these readers used the library. The majority of the books used were what Kaufman regards as of professional interest, that is, they were on theology, church history or the Bible. A strong second was history and antiquarian studies, followed by the classics and travel literature. Philosophy, natural philosophy and English literature also showed in the ratings. As to borrowers, these were primarily the cathedral clergy with a scattering of diocesan clergy, and some secular users, between 10 and 15 per cent, including about twenty women unrelated to cathedral clergy.[50]

What is clear is that use of the libraries caused problems of security. At Canterbury the locks were changed several times in this period and Marsh's Library suffered from the 1730s from thefts of whole books. Others 'were abused and rendered imperfect by having whole tracts, Maps, Pictures etc., tore out of them'. The result was that cages were created in the gallery of the library in which the manuscripts were stored for greater safety.[51]

The period covered by this chapter falls conveniently into two halves. For those ecclesiastical libraries in existence in 1640, with a few exceptions, the Civil War and Commonwealth period from 1640 to 1660 was one of disruption and turmoil. But the second half of the period was a time of remarkable growth. Libraries which had been destroyed or neglected were brought back to life, whilst new libraries were founded at a great rate. This growth has been attributed to a number of factors. Undoubtedly a new spirit of piety manifested itself in the founding of religious societies such as the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and the establishment of thousands of charity schools. Libraries founded in this period were often set up specifically for the use of local clergy, and some of those already in existence looked to this group for its main readership. To look higher than the parish clergy, the clergy installed in cathedrals, or elevated to bishoprics, in the post-Restoration period were a well-educated group, who supported and encouraged learning. At the turn of the seventeenth century, religious books still formed the largest single category of published works, and amongst the higher clergy could be found a

49 Ramsay, 'Cathedral archives and library', 385–7.

50 Kaufman, 'Reading vogues at English cathedral libraries of the eighteenth century', *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* 67 (1963), 643–72.

51 Ramsay, 'Cathedral archives and library', 387; McCarthy, *All graduates*, 50–1.

large number of writers, such as Lewis Bayly and Richard Allestree, authors of best-selling books of devotion, bought and read enthusiastically by lay people. Ecclesiastical libraries satisfied the needs of the growing reading public until other kinds of libraries, such as subscription libraries, began to increase in number, and until the mid-eighteenth century they were effectively the only public libraries.

10

Libraries for antiquaries and heralds

NIGEL RAMSAY

Antiquarian studies in England in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries began to move away from the generalities of monastic chroniclers, and, in a lawyer-like way, towards the verifiable specifics of archival references.[1] The records of the crown emerged as the ideal references for an antiquary. The same zeal for what John Milton was later to call 'written records pure' affected the making of family pedigrees by the crown's appointed officials, the heralds of the College of Arms. In the 1560s Lord Treasurer Winchester had dismissively written of the heralds that they 'maketh their books at a venture and not by the records',[2] but now, in the early seventeenth century – following the pioneering work of such men as Robert Glover, Somerset Herald, and William Camden, Clarenceux King of Arms – this was changing, and even the standard heraldic visitation format for each county included record material. The heralds had become antiquaries.

The primary sources that were housed in the crown's record offices – scattered across London and in several castles or strongholds in the provinces – were enormous in quantity, almost wholly unprinted, and not easily comprehended. The heralds' salaries from the crown were little more than token annual payments, and their income from their part in heraldic visitations and the ordering of funerals was irregular and precarious. They did, however, possess the expertise necessary for the exploitation of the crown's ancient records, and since the keepership of a record office was sometimes lucrative[3] it is hardly surprising to find that they quite often secured such posts for themselves. The heralds' court connections made them accomplished wooers of patrons.

1 This chapter has been much improved by the critical comments and suggestions of Giles Mandelbrote, Andrew Watson and Robert Yorke.

2 *Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1547–80*, 291; Winchester's letter was printed, with modernised spelling, by T. Hearne, *Joannis Lelandi . . . collectanea*, 2nd edn (London, 1774), vol. 2, 655.

3 The keepership of the records in the Tower of London was thought to be worth £160 to £200 a year, *c.*1615: G. E. Aylmer, *The King's servants* (London, 1961), 223.

A remarkable assemblage of materials, including many public records, was also to be seen in one private library – that formed by Sir Robert Cotton (1571–1631) and inherited by his son Thomas. Comprising nearly a thousand codices (often made up of dozens of separate papers or treatises) and over a thousand charters (mostly kept loose, although a few hundred were bound into books), it was – and is – the most remarkable collection of English historical materials ever put together. Thomas Cotton continued his father's policy of readily granting access to readers.[4]

It can hardly be said that there was yet any substantial or fundamental body of printed books for the antiquary or herald to acquire. In topography there was little beyond such general works as William Camden's *Britannia* (1586; translated into English by Philemon Holland, 1610) and William Lambarde's *Perambulation of Kent* (1576 and later editions). John Stow's *Survey of London* (1598 and later editions) stood alone as a work of urban history, until joined in 1640 by William Somner's *Antiquities of Canterbury*. On inscriptions there was only John Weever's *Ancient funerall monuments* (1631), of modern writings on medieval ecclesiastical history there was only a handful, such as the Roman Catholic Clement Reyner's *Apostolatus Benedictinorum in Anglia* (1626) and John Selden's still more contentious *Historie of tithes* (1618), and of medieval chronicles only two or three dozen – principally those printed by Archbishop Parker, Camden and Selden. On heraldry and the peerage there were a very few substantial works, the most notable being Thomas Milles's *Catalogue of honor* (1610), Selden's *Titles of honor* (1614) and Augustine Vincent's *Discouerie of errours in the first edition of the Catalogue of nobility published by R. Brooke* (1622). In general, however, antiquaries' and heralds' writings still circulated in manuscript rather than in print. It is striking that among the 350 books (containing about 750 works) that belonged to the assiduous Oxford antiquary Brian Twyne (d. 1644) – with many that had belonged to his grandfather, the Canterbury antiquary John Twyne – there are very few that could be categorised as of antiquarian scholarship or as concerned with heraldry or genealogy.[5]

4 For Sir Robert Cotton's manuscripts, see C. E. Wright, 'The Elizabethan Society of Antiquaries and the formation of the Cottonian Library', in F. Wormald and C. E. Wright (eds.), *The English library before 1700* (London, 1958), 176–212; K. Sharpe, *Sir Robert Cotton, 1586–1631* (Oxford, 1979), chapter 2; C. Tite, *The manuscript library of Sir Robert Cotton* (London, 1994); and for his coins, Roman inscriptions and other non-book collections, see C. J. Wright (ed.), *Sir Robert Cotton as collector* (London, 1997). Early lists of loans of Cotton's manuscripts are printed in C. Tite, *The early records of Sir Robert Cotton's library: formation, cataloguing, use* (London, 2003).

5 R. F. Ovenell, 'Brian Twyne's library', *Oxford Bibliographical Society publications*, new ser., 4 (1952 for 1950), 1–42; cf. comments by D. R. Woolf, *Reading history in early modern England* (Cambridge, 2000), 147–53, 161–2.

Private and institutional libraries, *c.*1640

In 1640 the library of the heralds' corporate body, the College of Arms, probably contained no printed books. The College did indeed possess a valuable library, of which the foundation had been laid by Thomas Benolt's bequest (1534) of his registers, rolls of arms and other books concerning the 'Office of Arms' to successive Clarenceux kings of arms.[6] Further accessions had increased its value, but a catalogue made in 1618 still mentions no printed books.[7] Notes in the minute-book of the college's chapter meetings, in 1631, of 'the Stamp of the office for bookes' being brought in 'by the bookbinder that had it' and of the decision at the same time to 'call for such office bookes as are now in mr Haggets hands' can be taken to refer only to manuscript volumes, of the college's official heraldic records.[8] Individually, too, the heralds possessed libraries of manuscripts rather than of printed books – or at least, it will have been the former that they valued most. When Ralph Brooke (d. 1625), York Herald, claimed in 1622 that he had enlarged his *Catalogue and succession of the Kings, Princes . . . of England, since the Norman Conquest* 'with divers good notes and records', he actually meant only that he had drawn on other heralds' notes, he himself 'having gotten into my custodie the collections of most [of] the principall Heraulds deceased before and during my time'. But Brooke's claim that his library was better furnished than that of the College of Arms was rightly scorned by Augustine Vincent (d. 1626), Rouge Croix Pursuivant and formerly a clerk in the Tower of London record office, who asked if Brooke's library was 'better furnished with ancient and authenticke records than the Office at the Tower'. Derisively, he remarked that 'experience cannot make you skilfull in Records, unlesse you came where they were . . . and come fitlie prepared and qualified by your breeding, to understand the language they speak'.[9]

The Tower of London had been used as a repository for Chancery records since the middle ages. Domesday Book, bundles of fines (land transactions) and other Exchequer Treasury of Receipt materials were kept at the Tally Office; the Pipe Rolls (with sheriffs' accounts) were in the Pipe Office; monastic charters and other materials were in the Augmentation Office; indentures of service

6 A. R. Wagner, *Heralds and heraldry in the middle ages*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1956), 110.

7 A. R. Wagner, *Records and collections of the College of Arms* (London, 1952), 53.

8 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawl.D.766 (*S.C.* 13536), fol. 14.

9 A. Vincent, *A discoverie of errours in the first edition of the Catalogue of nobility, published by Raphe Brooke, York Herald, 1619* (London, 1622), prefatory address to Brooke, sig. ¶3v–4.

to the crown were in the Pell Office; and the Red Book of the Exchequer and several other books were in the King's Remembrancer's Office.[10] These and other repositories were seen – unlike the State Paper Office, the store of the crown's more recent diplomatic and politically charged papers – as public offices of record, which their custodians were obliged to make available to searchers. A fee would of course be charged, perhaps for access, and certainly for any official transcripts that were requested; the fee for access, however, was sometimes remitted for historical enquirers. The offices were expected to be self-financing in some measure, but their nominal keepers or their acting custodians could afford to be generous to antiquaries since the great majority of searchers were lawyers' clerks and other men with legal concerns to pursue. It was for such men, too, that the first guides to the offices' contents had been published: Thomas Powell's *Directions for the search of records* (1622) and the same author's *Repertorie of records* (1631; published anonymously), which incorporates Arthur Agarde's catalogue of the Tower records.[11]

The years of the Civil War, Interregnum and Commonwealth had little direct impact on the record offices in London. For a time, the riches of London's archival stores were increased, as the archives of the suppressed bishoprics and cathedral deans and chapters were removed from around the country to Gurney House, in the Old Jewry (1649), and then to Excise House (1654).[12] Outside London, however, the picture was bleaker. Some of the castles where records were stored fell victim to the war's military operations, and quantities of documents were lost. The greatest disaster was at York, where the mining of St Mary's Tower (a bastion in the city's walls) in 1644 caused the instant destruction of most of the innumerable records of the medieval Yorkshire monasteries that had been placed there for safe keeping.[13] It was a tragedy that

10 See Dugdale's 'Directions for the search of records, and making use of them', in *Select papers chiefly relating to English antiquities published from the originals in the possession of John Ives* (London, 1773), 34–7; R. B. Wernham, 'The public records in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries', in L. Fox (ed.), *English historical scholarship in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries* (London, 1956), 11–30; E. M. Hallam, 'Nine centuries of keeping the public records', in G. H. Martin and P. Spufford (eds.), *Records of the nation* (Woodbridge, 1990), 23–42.

11 Cf. D. M. Stenton, 'The Pipe Rolls and the historian, 1600–1883', *Cambridge Historical Journal* 10 (1950–2), 271–92 (here 275–7).

12 N. L. Ramsay, 'The cathedral archives and library', in P. Collinson, N. L. Ramsay and M. J. Sparks (eds.), *A history of Canterbury Cathedral* (Oxford, 1995), 341–407 (here 382–3).

13 B. A. English and C. B. L. Barr, 'The records formerly in St Mary's Tower, York', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 42 (1967–70), 198–235, 358–86, 465–518 (here 213–14); B. A. English and R. W. Hoyle, 'What was in St Mary's Tower: an inventory of 1610', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 65 (1993), 91–4.

was piquantly ironic, for one of the Yorkshire parliamentary commanders leading the siege of York was Ferdinando Fairfax, preserver of the Minster library and father of Thomas, later Lord Fairfax, who saved the Bodleian Library from being plundered and was the generous patron of the Yorkshire antiquary Roger Dodsworth. Three months later, Dodsworth commenced the compilation of a *Monasticon boreale*, bringing together his and other men's transcripts of monastic charters from York and London record offices in an attempt to make good some of the loss.

Private libraries, *c.*1640–1700

The dissolution of the monasteries had thrown onto the market – or at least into the hands of uninterested land-purchasers – several thousand manuscripts that might interest the antiquary.[14] In the early seventeenth century there were still many manuscripts to be picked up in villages and towns close to where the monasteries had been, but London was developing into the centre of the nascent antiquarian book market; a few booksellers, such as Laurence Sadler (d. 1664) and Cornelius Bee (d. 1672), seem to have specialised in selling medieval manuscripts, as early as the 1640s.[15] London was also the place where most antiquaries chose to live, and so it offered sociability, while for the serious scholar it had the further advantage that it was here that it was easiest to obtain new publications, especially those from the continent. Sir Henry Spelman, who in 1640 had the highest scholarly reputation of any English antiquary, had in about 1612 (when aged nearly fifty) made the decision to leave Norfolk, let his country estate and settle in London. There 'his next business was . . . to get together all such Books and Manuscripts, as concern'd the Subject of Antiquities, whether foreign or domestick'.[16] He also encouraged younger scholars to turn to publishing works of antiquarian scholarship. The most capable of these protégés was William Dugdale (1605–86), whom he recommended to Thomas Howard, earl of Arundel, who was Earl Marshal and

14 N. L. Ramsay, '"The manuscripts flew about like butterflies": the break-up of English libraries in the sixteenth century', in J. Raven (ed.), *Lost libraries: the destruction of great book collections since antiquity* (Basingstoke, 2004), 125–44.

15 See, e.g., A. G. Watson, *The library of Sir Simonds D'Ewes* (London, 1966), 29; Watson, 'The manuscript collection of Sir Walter Cope (d. 1614)', *Bodleian Library Record* 12 (1985–8), 262–97 (reprinted in Watson, *Medieval manuscripts in post-medieval England* (Aldershot, 2004), sect. viii), here 276, note 21, for references to other booksellers who supplied D'Ewes: R. Washington, Thomas Paybody and Mr Stratton.

16 E. Gibson (ed.), *English works of Sir Henry Spelman*, 2nd edn (London, 1727), sig. a2.

thus in control of the College of Arms. At the next appropriate vacancy in the college, in 1640, Arundel duly gave a herald's position to the young Dugdale. Dugdale remained a herald for forty-five years, and on almost any assessment was the central figure in English antiquarianism for most of that time – not so much on account of the collection of printed books and manuscript transcripts which he put together, as for his role in popularising the subject. As a scholar he was not in the same class as, say, John Selden (1584–1654), Archbishop Ussher (1581–1656) or Sir Roger Twysden (1597–1672): these were men of deeper learning, with half a dozen languages at their command and with interests and libraries that extended far beyond the field of antiquities and ecclesiastical history, into theology (especially patristic), law, and the Greek and Latin classics, as well as numismatics, epigraphy and other areas more familiar to Dugdale.[17]

Dugdale was far from unique in his readiness to spend weeks at a stretch reading in the Tower, Rolls Chapel and other London record offices. He collected only a small number of medieval manuscripts, and these he appears mostly to have given to the Cotton Library of which he acted as (in effect) librarian in the 1660s, after its return from Bedfordshire (where it had been placed for safety's sake during the Civil War). Where he excelled was in ordering his notes and transcripts and putting them into print: here, his achievement can be measured by comparing him with Anthony Wood (1632–95), who with equal zeal collected material – a wide variety of printed books and pamphlets, a few medieval manuscripts and much information gained by correspondence – for the purposes of literary biography and local history.[18] Wood, however, only had two books published: a history of the university and colleges of Oxford, in Latin (1674), and a biographical dictionary of Oxford writers and other eminent graduates, *Athenae Oxonienses* (1691–2).

17 Selden bequeathed some 8,000 printed books to the Bodleian Library; for his manuscripts, see D. M. Barratt, 'The library of John Selden and its later history', *Bodleian Library Record* 3 (1950–1), 128–42, 208–13, 256–74. Ussher's entire library came to Trinity College, Dublin, in about 1661: see T. C. Barnard, 'The purchase of Archbishop Ussher's library in 1657', *Long Room* 4 (1971), 9–14; see also W. O'Sullivan, 'Ussher as a collector of manuscripts', *Hermathena* 88 (1956), 34–58; B. Meehan, 'The manuscript collection of James Ussher', in P. Fox (ed.), *Treasures of the library: Trinity College Dublin* (Dublin, 1986), 97–110.

18 Wood's bibliographic punctiliousness is brought out by T. A. Birrell, 'Anthony Wood, John Bagford and Thomas Hearne as bibliographers', in R. Myers and M. Harris (eds.), *Pioneers in bibliography* (Winchester, 1988), 25–39. His printed books and pamphlets are catalogued in N. K. Kiessling, *The library of Anthony Wood*, Oxford Bibliographical Society, 3rd ser., 5 (Oxford, 2002).

More akin to Dugdale in his career, court connections, comparative wealth and publishing output was Elias Ashmole (1617–92).[19] An ardent royalist, he was made Windsor Herald in 1660; he was Dugdale's friend, from about 1655, and his third wife was Dugdale's daughter. Taken as a whole, his various collections were probably the finest assembled in Restoration England: some 9,000 coins and medals; some 430 charters, many with armorial seals;[20] an extensive collection of prints, especially of portraits of the famous; a very fine collection of medieval and later manuscripts, including much on heraldry and astrology, and perhaps the earliest group of medieval manuscripts to be brought together on account of their illuminations; and about 1,310 printed books.[21] Using his own and other people's collections, he wrote a definitive history of *The institution, laws and ceremonies of the most noble Order of the Garter* (London, 1672) – a massive folio, illustrated (like Dugdale's works) with engravings by Wenceslaus Hollar. In 1652 he catalogued the collection of rarities of John Tradescant the Younger[22] and six years later he was asked to catalogue the Bodleian Library's collection of Roman coins. Tragically, he lost most of his coins and medals and all of his charters, prints and rarities in a fire at the Middle Temple in 1679. His bequest of his manuscripts and printed books formed a central part of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, which he had persuaded the university to build (initially, to house the Tradescant rarities).[23]

Dugdale was always at pains to indicate the sources from which he derived his information, both in general terms and on a statement-by-statement basis (as marginal or foot-of-page references). John Selden's *Historie of tithes* (1618) had set a new standard of scholarship in its five-page-long list of manuscripts consulted and in its provision of references for specific statements, and Dugdale followed his example enthusiastically. The very title page of the first two volumes of the *Monasticon Anglicanum* (1655 and 1661) states that its information is derived from the archives of the Towers of London and of York, of the Courts of the Exchequer and Augmentations, and such libraries as those of Bodley,

19 M. Hunter and others, *Elias Ashmole, 1617–1692: the founder of the Ashmolean Museum and his world: a tercentenary exhibition* (Oxford, 1983); C. H. Josten (ed.), *Elias Ashmole (1617–1692): his autobiographical and historical notes, his correspondence, and other contemporary sources relating to his life and work*, 5 vols. (Oxford, 1966).

20 Transcribed in British Library, MS Lansdowne 203.

21 W. D. Macray, *Annals of the Bodleian Library, Oxford*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1890), 365.

22 *Musaeum Tradescantium* (London, 1656).

23 The building is today the Museum of the History of Science. Ashmole's library was transferred to the Bodleian Library in 1860. A further collection of about 1,027 printed books and 34 manuscripts, stated to have been Ashmole's, was sold at auction on 22 February 1694; the sale catalogue was reproduced in *Sale catalogues of libraries of eminent persons*, vol. II: *Scientists*, introduction by H. A. Feisenberger (London, 1975).

King's College [Cambridge], Corpus Christi College [Cambridge], [the earl of] Arundel, Cotton, Selden and [Sir Christopher, Lord] Hatton. The title page of Dugdale's *Antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656) proclaims that that county's antiquities are illustrated from 'Records [the crown's record offices], Leiger-Books [monastic or lay cartularies and other registers], Charters, Evidences [privately owned muniments], Tombes, and Armes [as represented on seals or in stained glass]'. The names of those gentry whom he acknowledges in this book, for giving him access to their muniments, may be seen as representing the antiquarian-minded gentry of Warwickshire; their counterparts in other counties will have been just as numerous, but have hardly yet been isolated and examined by modern scholarship.[24]

Private and institutional libraries, *c.*1700

The Restoration of the monarchy and of the Church of England in 1660 was followed by a shift in the practice of antiquarian scholarship, from a near monopoly by the gentry to a major role for the clergy and for the universities where they were educated.[25] Promotion within the church was enhanced by possession of a reputation for industry and skill in history; moreover, the history that was now fashionable was that of medieval England, and of the Old English language.[26] There was still a strong sense that collections of manuscripts should be made available to scholarly enquirers – and, indeed, freely. What was needed, however, was a guide to these collections, private as well as institutional; and, with remarkable efficiency, just such a book was published by Oxford University before the end of the century.

Catalogi librorum manuscriptorum Angliae et Hiberniae is an unsung triumph in the world of antiquarian scholarship.[27] Its date of publication is taken to be 1697 (that being printed on the title page) and its editor is generally assumed to have

24 For two Warwickshire antiquaries and their libraries, see E. K. Berry, *Henry Ferrers, an early Warwickshire antiquary, 1550–1633*, Dugdale Society Occasional Papers 16 (Stratford-upon-Avon, 1965); P. Styles, 'Sir Simon Archer: "a lover of antiquity and of the lovers thereof"', in his *Studies in seventeenth century west midlands history* (Kineton, 1978), 1–41, 263–71; and cf. J. Broadway, *William Dugdale and the significance of county history in early Stuart England*, Dugdale Society Occasional Papers 39 ([Stratford-upon-Avon], 1999).

25 For Oxford, see S. Piggott, 'Antiquarian studies', in L. S. Sutherland and L. G. Mitchell (eds.), *History of the University of Oxford*, vol. 5: *The eighteenth century* (Oxford, 1986), 757–77.

26 The best overview is still that of D. C. Douglas, *English scholars, 1660–1730*, 2nd edn (London, 1951).

27 See, however, R. W. Hunt's introduction to *Summary catalogue of western manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford* (Oxford, 1953), vol. 1, xv–xxxv; P. Simpson, *Proof-reading in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (London, 1935), 189–94.

been Edward Bernard, Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford; surviving unpublished correspondence makes it apparent, however, that as great or even greater a role was played by Arthur Charlett, Master of University College.[28] The book's preface is unsigned, but is dated at University College, 13 September 1698. As a union catalogue of English collections of manuscripts it had a predecessor in Thomas James's *Ecloga Oxonio-Cantabrigiensis* (London, 1600), which provided lists of manuscripts in the university and college libraries at Oxford and Cambridge; but James's descriptions of manuscripts are perfunctory in the extreme, and his focus was on patristic and medieval authors.

CMA (as the new work is often called) was a truly formidable undertaking, with entries for some 30,000 manuscripts. It opens with descriptions of those in the various collections in the Bodleian Library, 8,716 entries in all (their *CMA* numbers still being used today, since they were repeated in the library's *Summary catalogue of western manuscripts*), and follows with 2,525 entries for all the collections in the Oxford colleges. Its 2,502 entries for nine colleges and the University Library at Cambridge represent its greatest weakness, for these are little more than reprints from James's *Ecloga*. It is in its second volume that its particular value lies, for here were brought together catalogues of some twenty-six institutions and sixty private individuals, spread across England and Ireland. Bernard and Charlett obtained their source-material as best they could, through a large network of correspondents; a few of the catalogues were perhaps several years old or even of a previous generation, but most were new and must have been specially drawn up. The antiquarian bias of the editors' interests is evident in the relative weakness of treatment of the eleven cathedral libraries that are included, and in the strength of the coverage of private collections. *CMA*'s first volume shows such a preponderance in its fullness of description of the manuscripts of John Leland (d. 1552), Roger Dodsworth (Dugdale's collaborator), Dugdale himself and Anthony Wood, which had by now all come to the Bodleian Library or the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. The identification and the obtaining of catalogues for the second volume (comprising a total of over 12,000 manuscripts) was itself a feat of organisation. *CMA* contains catalogues of virtually every significant private library of manuscripts that is today known to have existed in the late 1690s. There are nascent libraries, like those of Sir Hans Sloane (264 MSS; later, when twenty times the size, to be acquired for the British Museum), John Moore, bishop of Norwich (already 827 MSS and, unusually, 201 printed books that had been collated with MSS or annotated, that is to say, works of classical authors;

28 See letters to and from Bernard, Charlett and others, in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

later to be given by George I to the University of Cambridge), and the herald Peter Le Neve (at this date only 67 MSS). There are collections that were now approaching their fullest extent, like those of John Evelyn (74 MSS), Samuel Pepys (129 MSS) and Thomas Gale (355 western and 491 oriental MSS, all now at Trinity College, Cambridge). And there are collections whose owners were already dead, like those of Sir Simonds D'Ewes (212 MSS), the Canterbury antiquary and Old English scholar William Somner (41 MSS; bought, with his printed books, for £100 by the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury in the year of his death, 1669, and still in Canterbury Cathedral library today), or the London physician Francis Bernard (127 MSS; dispersed at auction in October 1698). Country gentry include William Bromley, of Baginton, Warwickshire (23 MSS), Walter Chetwynd, of Ingestre, Staffordshire (22 MSS), and Henry Farmer or Fermor, of Tusmore, Oxfordshire (11 MSS). A little oddly, and rather unsatisfactorily, one record office also makes an appearance: William Petyt (whose private collection, subsequently given by his trustees to the Inner Temple, was not included) supplied a list of sixty 'Books and Rolls' that were in his custody at the Tower of London (mostly categories of material rather than individual books or documents).

The greatest antiquarian library of all in the British Isles was omitted from *CMA*: that formed by Sir Robert Cotton and his heirs. It was widely felt that this collection was a national treasure that could not be allowed to be dispersed. Its then owner, Sir John Cotton, was known to wish to preserve it, and not to let his heirs break it up, and he was accordingly wooed by those who had a care for such matters. Charlett hoped that the library might be secured for Oxford University, and arranged for a catalogue of the manuscripts, by Dr Thomas Smith, to be published at the university's charges.[29] Sir John was gratified, but nevertheless chose to entrust it to the nation as a whole, as a gift that would take effect on his death (1702). Smith's work has weaknesses: most of his descriptions were simply repetitions of the table of contents at the front of each volume, while he did not itemise the contents of the post-medieval volumes of letters and papers, and he omitted all the charters other than those in the Augustus presses. Nevertheless, his catalogue provided the first printed account of this incomparable collection, and, being cast in Latin and with an informative Latin introduction, did ready service abroad as well as in England.

29 T. Smith, *Catalogus librorum manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Cottonianae* (Oxford, 1696); reprinted with additional material (including an English translation of Smith's prefatory account of Cotton and his collection) as C. Tite (ed.), *Catalogue of the manuscripts in the Cottonian Library 1696* (Cambridge, 1984).

CMA could be described as an austere work, although it was made readily usable by being issued with detailed indexes, compiled by Wanley. However, at the same time there was published a discursive account of English historical resources, by an up-and-coming churchman, William Nicolson, DD: *The English historical library: or, A short view and character of most of the writers now extant, either in print or manuscript: which may be serviceable to the undertakers of a general history of this Kingdom*, 3 parts (London, 1696–9). It is a highly readable work and must have been seized upon with enthusiasm by many antiquaries. Nicolson extended his scope with further volumes that applied the same treatment to Scotland (1702) and Ireland (1724), while England was slightly revised for a larger-format edition (1714), to be followed by a combined version (rather misleadingly called a third edition) of all three *Historical libraries* in 1736.[30]

Nicolson dedicated the second edition of his *English historical library* to Charles Montagu, Lord Halifax, chairman from 1703 of the House of Lords committee which had inspected the methods of keeping public records and which had led to the appointment of William Petyt to digest or methodise the records in the Tower of London (1704).[31] It was neither the first nor the last governmental committee to look at the public records, to express shock at the state that they were in, and to call for reforms in their conservation and arrangement and in how they were catalogued; it may, however, be characterised as symptomatic of the higher level of governmental concern about public records that was now manifest, and which – following continental models, and especially the *Codex iuris gentium diplomaticus* of Leibniz – also led to the first governmentally financed publication of English records, Thomas Rymer's and Robert Sanderson's twenty-volume *Foedera* (1704–35). Reorganisation, overhauls or refittings were effected for the records at the Tower of London (including the building of a fireproof room), at the State Paper Office in Whitehall, and at the parliamentary record office in the Jewel Tower at Westminster.[32] At about this date, the Tower record office's hours were 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., Monday to Saturday, from March to November.[33]

Irish public records fared less well. In the 1640s Lord Anglesey had described them as being treated as mere waste paper, and ninety years later no space was

30 Nicolson died, as archbishop-nominate of Cashel, in 1727.

31 Douglas, *English scholars*, 268.

32 E. M. Hallam, 'Problems with record keeping in early eighteenth century London: some pictorial representations of the State Paper Office, 1705–1706', *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 6 (1978–81), 219–26.

33 BL, MS Add. 34711, fol. 37.

allocated for them when a spacious new parliament house was built (*c.*1730).[34] In the early eighteenth century a few individual officeholders methodised their records: the Chief Remembrancer of the Exchequer had his department's documents sorted, and even cleaned, in 1716–19. However, the greatest quantity of crown records, at Dublin Castle, fared miserably: 'embezzled or spoiled, and many . . . made altogether useless by water filling in' during the Civil War years, stated in 1674 to be without 'abstract or directory',[35] and partly destroyed by fire in about 1758.[36] Sir James Ware (1594–1666), a pupil and disciple of James Ussher, built up a significant collection of Irish manuscripts, including some transcripts of public records.[37] This was acquired twenty years after Ware's death by Henry Hyde, 2nd earl of Clarendon, who on his return from Ireland in 1687 deposited the manuscripts for safety in Archbishop Tenison's Library at St Martin-in-the-Fields, where they were catalogued (semi-anonymously) by the young Edmund Gibson, along with Dugdale's manuscripts and a few of Tenison's own.[38] The entire Clarendon collection, of nearly 1,000 manuscripts, was removed from St Martin's a few years later and subsequently sold for £1,200 to James Brydges, 1st duke of Chandos, though Archbishop William King (and later Dean Swift) attempted to secure it for Dublin.[39]

The College of Arms categorised some of its manuscripts as 'office' books – notably the certified copies of coats of arms (as granted or confirmed) and

34 T. C. Barnard, 'Learning, the learned and literacy in Ireland, c. 1660–1760', in T. C. Barnard and others (eds.), *'A miracle of learning': studies in manuscripts and Irish learning: essays in honour of William O'Sullivan* (Aldershot, 1998), 209–35 (here 222).

35 Letter of Michael Tisdall to William Petyt, quoted by J. Conway Davies, *Catalogue of manuscripts in the library of the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple* (London, 1972), vol. 2, 777.

36 W. N. Osborough, 'In search of Irish legal history: a map for explorers', *Long Room* 35 (1990), 28–38 (here 29).

37 *Librorum manuscriptorum in bibliotheca Jacobi Waraei equitis aur. catalogus* (Dublin, 1648). See W. O'Sullivan, 'A finding list of Sir James Ware's manuscripts', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 97 (1997), Section C, no. 2, 69–99.

38 'E. G.' (ed.), *Librorum manuscriptorum in duabus insignibus bibliothecis – altera Tenisoniana Londinii, altera Dugdaliana Oxonii catalogus* (London, 1692). On the title page Gibson gave Tenison's name rather than Clarendon's as owner but this may have been for political reasons (the preface makes the origins clear, and the list was reproduced in *CMA* under Clarendon's name). Gibson's catalogue was heavily criticised (as having been 'slubbered over') by Henry Wharton, in a letter to Tenison (Lambeth Palace Library, MS 942, no. 47), and Clarendon also criticised the cataloguing of the Dugdale manuscripts (Bodleian Library, MS Smith 48, fol. 149).

39 King to Marmaduke Coghill, 1710 (Trinity College Dublin, MS 2531, p. 154); see R. S. Matteson, 'Archbishop William King and the conception of his library', *Library*, 6th ser., 13 (1991), 238–54 (here 253). For Chandos's purchase, see B. J. Enright, 'The Ware–Clarendon manuscripts', *Bodleian Library Record* 6 (1957–61), 586–7. In 1734 Swift wrote to Chandos soliciting the return to Ireland of 'those ancient records, in paper or parchment, that were formerly collected, as we have heard, by the late Earl of Clarendon' (R. Flower in *Analecta Hibernica* 2 (1931), 301).

pedigrees (as verified in visitations of the different counties). All these it would have liked to be seen as having the authority of public records, but it was reluctant to let researchers have access to them in the way in which they had access to the crown's records. The college also had an increasingly large collection of historical and antiquarian manuscripts, and perhaps a hundred or so printed books. The losses of the Civil War period, when it appears to have lost some of its library (and when it certainly lost most of its collection of medieval charters), and of 1666, when its buildings were burnt down, were now put in the shade. In 1678 Dugdale persuaded the duke of Norfolk to present to the college the fifty-three heraldic, genealogical and historical manuscripts that had belonged to his grandfather, Thomas Howard, earl of Arundel.[40] Six years later, Ralph Sheldon (1623–84), a gentleman antiquary of Beoly (Worcestershire) and Weston (Warwickshire), bequeathed to the college 'my Pedigrees and all my MSS. and other papers (except such as are written with my own hand)': these amounted to some 260 volumes and 90 rolls, including most or all of the historically valuable collections of transcripts, notes and older volumes that had belonged to Augustine Vincent (d. 1626), Windsor Herald.[41] A catalogue of the college's library of printed books and manuscripts was started by Gregory King, completed by 1690, and then revised by Robert Dale, Blanch Lyon Pursuivant, in 1694.[42] This lists the contents of twelve presses, together with the books collected and written by Richard Gascoigne, Sheldon's books, books in the Dark Closet, some antiquities (including the ring, sword and dagger of King James IV of Scotland, 'killed at Floddenfeild') and other miscellaneous accessions. The printed books include an assortment of English antiquarian works of reference, such as Thomas Gore's *Nomenclator geographicus latino-anglicus et anglico-latinus* (1667). The heralds' occasional diplomatic role, rather than their personal heraldic interests, was perhaps a good reason for their owning such continental publications as Théodore Godefroy's *Cérémonial de France* (Paris, 1619, and later editions), J. W. Imhof's *Notitia Sacri Romani Germanici Procerum* (Tübingen, 1684, and later editions), or the

40 Wagner, *Records and collections*, 32; cf. E. S. de Beer (ed.), *The diary of John Evelyn* (Oxford, 1955), vol. 4, 144–5. Many of the manuscripts had once belonged to the antiquary, William, Lord Howard, of Naworth.

41 Wagner, *Records and collections*, 33; L. Campbell and F. Steer, *Catalogue of manuscripts in the College of Arms*, vol. 1 (London, 1988), 243–5. For twenty manuscripts of Sheldon's that strayed to Jesus College, Oxford, see I. G. Philip, 'Sheldon manuscripts in Jesus College library', *Bodleian Library Record* 1 (1939–41), 119–23. A further thirty-five manuscripts were among the Sheldon family collection of printed books, drawings, prints and paintings sold by Christie at Weston in 1781.

42 Wagner, *Records and collections*, 36; a copy of Dale's work, not before 1713, is British Library, MS Lansdowne 689.

Stemmatum Lotharingiae of F. de Rosières (Paris, 1580). A condensed selection from Dale's catalogue was printed in *CMA* in 1697.

The College of Arms at this date did not lack books, printed or manuscript; its problem was rather that individual heralds were liable to take them away and not return them. Particularly liable to disappear were books that were intended to belong to heraldic offices such as that of Garter King of Arms. Sir Gilbert Dethick, Garter, was declared in 1601 to have been very poor in books except 'in such as concerned his office of Garter, and were hereditary to the same'.[43] Sir Edward Walker, Garter, in 1677 bequeathed to the college library twenty-two volumes of transcripts by Sir William Le Neve, and to his successor in office 'my two books in manuscript relating to the most noble Order of the Garter, with the book of the Coronation and the book of the arms of the nobility'; but he made no mention of other books belonging to his office. And when the punctilious Dugdale made his will, in 1685, he recited Walker's bequest of four manuscripts and directed his executors to deliver to his successor as Garter just these and a large printed book in folio of the ceremonies observed at the coronation of Charles II.[44]

Elsewhere in London, printed books were also very much the poor relation of manuscripts, in so far as library provision was concerned. In 1684 Thomas Tenison, later archbishop of Canterbury, made the point that Westminster was without 'any noted Library, excepting that of St James (which belongs to his Majestie and to which there is noe easy access), that of Sir Robert Cotton's (which consisteth chiefly of Bookes relating to the Antiquities of England) and the Library of the Deane and Chapter of St Peters Church in Westminster'.[45] Tenison, however, was concerned about the lack of libraries to keep young clergymen from frivolous distractions; and he took practical steps to improve their lot by setting up a library at his church of St Martin-in-the-Fields, which had its own strengths in manuscripts and printed books. For antiquaries and others of a scholarly stamp, the problem remained. In 1694 Dr Thomas Smith wrote: 'I have wished a thousand times, that God would raise up some generous persons to found and erect a publick Library in this great city: I meane, such a one, as would deserve the name.'[46] Five years later, in a letter to John Wallis, he

43 G. F. Beltz, *Memorials of the . . . Order of the Garter* (London, 1841), 410.

44 *Ibid*., National Archives, PROB 11/353, fols. 281v–282v (here fol. 282); cf. J. Anstis, *Register of the most noble Order of the Garter* (London, 1724), vol. 2, 419.

45 E. H. Pearce, *Sion College and library* (Cambridge, 1913), 280. For fuller accounts see P. Hoare, 'Archbishop Tenison's Library at St Martin-in-the-Fields, 1684–1861', unpublished diploma thesis, University of London (1963), and P. Hoare, 'Archbishop Tenison's Library at St Martin-in-the-Fields: the building and its history', *London Topographical Record* 29 (2006), forthcoming.

46 Bodleian Library, MS Smith 66 (*S.C.* 15672), p. 111.

voiced a similar lament: 'Wee here daily find the want of an universall Library, especially for old English books, such as is the Bodleyan at Oxon. The dreadfull fire in 1666 made such a ravage and wast, as is not to bee repaired.'[47]

As Smith tacitly admitted, London was not wholly without libraries; the problem was rather the lack of libraries with an adequate depth of coverage of the field – and especially of the scholarly publications, foreign as much as British, that were available at the Bodleian and perhaps also at Cambridge University Library. John Bagford at just about this date drafted a well-informed *tour d'horizon* of London's libraries, as part of a survey of the city's antiquities.[48] He sketches out the strengths of the record offices (the Tower, and the Exchequer and State Paper Office in Westminster), the Cotton Library, the library at Westminster Abbey (which he states to be open in term from 9 a.m. to noon and 2 p.m. to 4), the royal library in St James's, and the Heralds' Office (where he notes that 'during the late Civil War, they lost many of their best books, which fell into the hands of some that should have had the honour and justice to have returned them'). Of private libraries, he concentrates on those of Bishop Moore, Sir Hans Sloane, the earls of Kent and Pembroke, Lord Somers and Samuel Pepys; he also notes the value of Humfrey Wanley's collection of manuscript fragments.

Of all the collections of printed books in London, the Royal Society undoubtedly offered the richest resource for the antiquary. At John Evelyn's suggestion, Henry Howard (later duke of Norfolk), had in 1667 given to the Society the entire collection of printed books as well as the non-historical and non-heraldic manuscripts of his grandfather, Thomas Howard (d. 1646), earl of Arundel.[49] Like Evelyn, Arundel had been a virtuoso, and his collection, which perhaps contained as many as 3,200 printed books, was strongest on classical and continental rarities, antiquities and curiosities: for these it was sufficiently comprehensive that it could almost be relied on to have any significant publication. Hence, for instance, William Aglionby could write to the Royal Society's treasurer from Verona in 1686:

47 MS Smith 66, p. 53; see also: T. Hearne, *Remarks and collections*, ed. C. E. Doble and others, vol. 1, Oxford Historical Society, old ser., 11 (Oxford, 1885), 60 (1705).

48 BL, MS Harl. 5900, fols. 44–52; printed in *Gentleman's Magazine* 86:2 (1816), 213–16, 317–19, 395–7, 509–11. The history of the text is touched on by M. McC. Gatch, 'John Bagford, bookseller and antiquary', *British Library Journal* 12 (1986), 150–71 (here 165).

49 The Society commissioned a catalogue of the Arundel Library in 1679, published as *Bibliotheca Norfolciana* (London, 1681). The western MSS were sold to the British Museum in 1830–2, followed by the oriental in 1835; the sorry tale of the disposal of many of the printed books in 1873 and 1925 is told in L. L. Peck, 'Uncovering the Arundel Library at the Royal Society: changing meanings of science and the fate of the Norfolk donation', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London* 52 (1998), 3–24. See also, generally, M. B. Hall, *The library and archives of the Royal Society 1660–1990* (London, 1992).

> This place has amused me much with its antiquities, and I had taken some pains about them, when I met with Onuphrius Panvinius's book of them, and it is a most excellent one indeed. The cuts and the dimensions are so very accurate, that I thought it losing time to do any more myself. It is a folio, and is called *Antiquitates Veronenses*. I suppose it is in our library Norfolciana; it not being likely to have escaped the earl of Arundel's curiosities.[50]

It would be a mistake at this date to draw any sharp line of distinction between an interest in curiosities and rarities such as a virtuoso might delight in, and the British or continental (that is, classical) antiquities with which the antiquary concerned himself. In London, the Royal Society seemed a perfectly natural, logical repository for antiquities; in 1678 it commissioned Nehemiah Grew to prepare a classified catalogue of them, which was published in 1681 as *Musaeum Regalis Societatis, or, A catalogue and description of the natural and artificial rarities belonging to the Royal Society and preserved at Gresham College*. In Oxford, the Benefactors' Books of the Ashmolean Museum, begun in 1683, and of the Bodleian Library, begun in 1604, show each to have been receptive of gifts of such materials.[51] For instance, John Aubrey in 1689 gave a mosaic pavement as well as eighty manuscripts to the Ashmolean; he was also a donor of printed books to the Royal Society on various occasions from 1670 onwards. Nathaniel Crynes (d. 1741), who was a major collector of printed books (and a benefactor to the Bodleian Library and St John's College, Oxford), gave to the Ashmolean a picture made of the feathers of Mexican birds. The Bodleian's entries for *cimelia* in its Benefactors' Book are closely comparable, although coins feature more often: as a library, the Bodleian was seen as a repository more for antiquities than for curiosities.[52]

In 1680 it was decided to found a library in Edinburgh for the Scottish advocates, and four years later – even before the formal foundation of the Advocates' Library – it was laid down that manuscripts on Scottish history as well as law might be purchased.[53] The Balfour of Denmilne collection of manuscripts, including thirty-eight that are medieval, was bought for £150 in 1698, and next year the library actually advertised for comparable materials

50 *Familiar letters which passed between Abraham Hill, Esq., Fellow and Treasurer of the Royal Society . . . and several eminent and ingenious persons* (London, 1767), 78–9.

51 Excerpts from the Ashmolean's book have been printed in R. T. Gunther, *Early science in Oxford*, vol. 3 (Oxford, 1925), 448–53; Bodleian *cimelia* were listed in Gunther, *Early science*, vol. 1, Oxford Historical Society, old ser., 77 (Oxford, 1923 for 1922), 382–4 (cf. 384–5), and Bodleian donors are listed by Macray, *Annals*, 419–30.

52 John Selden's astrolabe and Chinese compass were classed as manuscripts: MSS Arch. Selden A.71*(1)–(2) (*S.C.* 3205, 3206).

53 See the essays in P. Cadell and A. Matheson (eds.), *For the encouragement of learning: Scotland's national library, 1689–1989* (Edinburgh, 1989).

('historys, chartularys of monasterys, old charters, or other ancient writes') by way of loan, gift or sale. 'All Polite Nations', it was declared, are 'at this Time, acting in a manner by Concert, in the Design of Rescuing their Antiquities from Oblivion; and in Collecting and Digesting into Catalogues such Manuscripts and Ancient Monuments, as may conduce to clear their Origine, and establish the truth of their Histories'. The Advocates refrained from buying the Balfour collection of natural and artificial rarities, but in 1704–5 purchased the coins and medals of Sir James Sutherland; they already had a number of numismatic books, thanks to the duke of Queensberry's gift in 1695 of the library of his son, Lord George Douglas.[54]

Private and institutional libraries, *c.*1700–50

Sir John Cotton, owner of his grandfather, Sir Robert's, matchless collection of manuscripts, printed books and antiquities, died on 12 September 1702, and by his deed of gift the entire collection of manuscripts immediately became the property of the nation. Control lay with the House of Commons, and within hours the library doors' locks were changed and the library's former keeper, Dr Thomas Smith, found himself excluded and a detachment of soldiers on guard. It would be easy to see Smith's debarring as a purely political act of spite, when it may in fact have reflected a governmental prudence that was combined with uncertainty as to how exactly to run the library – the first that had ever been entrusted to the state. Smith's plight was, however, characteristic of that faced by all the non-jurors – those nine bishops and 400 clergy and others who were not prepared to take the oath of allegiance to William and Mary in 1689, or later oaths – and who had to face losing not only their employment but also their access to such libraries as came within the government's ambit. In London, the Cotton Library and the libraries of Sion College, Lambeth Palace and Westminster Abbey became out of bounds to the non-jurors; so too did the university libraries of Oxford and Cambridge and, probably, most of the cathedral libraries. Antiquarian studies were affected to a particularly serious degree, as the later seventeenth century had seen such a major shift in their leadership and focus, away from the country gentlemen towards the clergy (and especially the higher clergy – the bishops and cathedral deans and canons, many of whom were crown appointees), and from topography more into ecclesiastical history. In the years immediately following the Restoration

54 W. A. Kelly, *The Library of Lord George Douglas (ca. 1667/8?–1693?): an early donation to the Advocates' Library* (Cambridge, 1997).

of Charles II, effectiveness in antiquarian scholarship had become a fast track for promotion, but to the *bien-pensant* Whig such learning was now a subject almost of suspicion.

One of the last of the High Churchmen, Tory by inclination and passionate about medieval ecclesiastical history, to rise to a cathedral canonry was Hugh Todd (*c.*1657–1728). This canon of Carlisle built up a collection of over 800 printed works, and the earlier of two catalogues of them (1720 and *c.*1727) is unusual in recording what each book had cost him. He was not a rich man, and sold about a fifth of his collection in the 1720s. He had a small group of manuscripts, and early on gave the best, a cartulary of Fountains Abbey, to University College, Oxford.[55]

Book provision for antiquarian studies now reverted very much to where it had been in the early seventeenth century – concentrated in the libraries of the country gentry and a few other private individuals. Of course the position had changed in many ways. Numerous substantial works of interest to the antiquary had been published in the intervening decades and greater numbers of books were requisite to the scholar; the collecting of such books was now fashionable, and some of the gentry were ready to spend large sums, and to keep their books in a designated library room rather than in their study. In 1736 the first priced guide to books on English topography was published, by John Worrall: *Bibliotheca topographica anglicana*.

As guides or expert advisers in this market there was also now a small but well-nigh indispensable body of bookmen – men who knew the scholarly and financial worth of a great many books, old and contemporary, and who could advise on what to buy, and how and where, who could 'methodise' or arrange a collection, and who could catalogue it in a rational way. A few of these bookmen were non-jurors, finding a fresh livelihood; others were freelance specialists, like John Bagford or, two generations later, William Oldys (1696–1761). It was not a lucrative occupation, and Oldys was saved from poverty only by the kindness of the duke of Norfolk, who had him appointed Norroy King of Arms. Financially, the most successful of the non-juring bookmen was Thomas Hearne (d. 1735), who stayed on in Oxford even after he had been deprived of the under-keepership of the Bodleian Library (1715). He ingeniously tapped the market for antiquarian books – and made himself financially secure, able to build up a considerable library of manuscripts and printed books – by issuing

55 D. Mawson, 'The library of an eighteenth century cleric – Dr Hugh Todd (*c.* 1657–1728)', *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*, new ser., 97 (1997), 153–72; Todd's manuscripts are listed in *CMA*, 2, part 1, 219–20.

privately printed editions of medieval chronicles and other historical texts.[56] Hearne had a counterpart at Cambridge in Thomas Baker (1666–1740), who was also a non-juror, and was deprived of his fellowship of St John's College (although he remained a resident there). Baker planned but never executed a biographical history of Cambridge University on the model of Wood's *Athenae Oxonienses*, and seems increasingly to have put his energies into acquiring both printed books (of which at one time or another he owned more than 4,290 titles) and transcripts of medieval and later documents. He had an enthusiasm for the early printers, and owned at least five Caxton imprints, but in general he bought books for their texts. Like Hearne, he was an extremely active and punctilious correspondent, putting his information – often derived from his books – at the disposal of others.[57]

Not quite a counterpart to Hearne and Baker was Richard Rawlinson (1690–1755).[58] His scholarly credentials were weaker: he published a rather amateurish life of Anthony Wood (1711), and acted for Edmund Curll as the anonymous editor or reviser for the press of Elias Ashmole's *Antiquities of Berkshire* (1719) and John Aubrey's *Natural history and antiquities of the county of Surrey* (1719).[59] He was, however, more in the non-juring mainstream than was Hearne or Baker, being consecrated bishop in 1728, and he was richer than either of them, being the son and eventual heir of a prosperous London vintner. He bequeathed to the Bodleian Library all of his manuscripts, 4,800 or more, and his many charters, and his 1,800 or 1,900 books that had manuscript notes. His collections varied in quality – 'the choice of book-auctions, [and] the pickings of chandlers' and grocers' waste-paper'[60] – but were strongest in history of all sorts, heraldry and genealogy, biography and topography. Rawlinson

56 S. Gillam, 'Thomas Hearne's library', *Bodleian Library Record* 12 (1985–8), 52–64; F. Korsten, 'Thomas Hearne: the man and his library', in R. C. Alston (ed.), *Order and connexion: studies in bibliography and book history* (Cambridge, 1997), 49–61. Hearne's own catalogue of his books (3,018 entries, despite omitting acquisitions from the last few years of his life) includes prices for them: 'not what I gave for the Books, but according to the rates they have been sold at'.

57 Baker's books of MS transcripts are divided between the British Library and Cambridge University Library. He bequeathed his collection of printed books to St John's College, but duplicates and his tracts and pamphlets were disposed of: see the reconstruction by F. Korsten, *A catalogue of the library of Thomas Baker* (Cambridge, 1990).

58 B. J. Enright, 'Richard Rawlinson, collector, antiquary, and topographer', unpublished DPhil thesis, University of Oxford (1956); see also Macray, *Annals*, 231–51; and G. R. Tashjian, D. R. Tashjian and B. J. Enright, *Richard Rawlinson: a tercentenary memorial* (Kalamazoo, MI, 1990).

59 B. J. Enright, 'Rawlinson's proposed history of Oxfordshire', *Oxoniensia* 16 (1953 for 1951), 57–77; and his 'Richard Rawlinson and the publication of Aubrey's *Natural history and antiquities of Surrey*', *Surrey Archaeological Collections* 54 (1955), 124–33.

60 Macray, *Annals*, 233–4.

consciously collected groups of personal papers, especially of the non-jurors, and acquired the entirety of Hearne's archive.

Hearne and Baker were two of the many scholars who were able to benefit from the easy access granted to them in the greatest private library of all in the British Isles, that of Robert Harley (1661–1724) and his son Edward (1689–1741), successive earls of Oxford.[61] The Harleian Library was vast and wide ranging, ultimately comprising over 7,000 manuscripts, nearly 15,000 charters and rolls, 50,000 printed books, 350,000 pamphlets, 41,000 prints and a great many drawings; it had, however, a clear focus, on the history of England. It is doubtful if either Harley could have read or made sense of most of the medieval manuscripts in their collection, but the same might be said of many other collectors, from Sir Robert Cotton (beyond a certain point) and Thomas Howard, earl of Arundel, onwards. The two Harleys concentrated their personal attentions upon their printed books, which from 1714 were increasingly kept at Wimpole Hall (Cambridgeshire), the country seat which Edward gained upon his marriage that year to Lady Henrietta Cavendish Holles, heiress to the duke of Newcastle.

Robert Harley may be said to have launched the library by his purchase *en bloc*, in 1705, for £500, of the books, manuscripts, prints and drawings that had been collected by Sir Simonds D'Ewes.[62] He bought at a bargain price, perhaps aided by the negotiating skills of Wanley, who soon afterwards became his librarian. Leaving the buying of manuscripts to Wanley, Edward Harley seems to have handled his purchases of printed books by himself, although he used a coterie of friends like James West (d. 1772) to help him, while he also depended heavily on certain booksellers. Of these, the principal was Nathaniel Noel, to whom he seems at one time to have paid an annuity of £450, perhaps in return for certain favours given to him (rather than to his rival in the market for rare printed books, Charles Spencer, earl of Sunderland) in such matters as the first pick of newly acquired stock. An account-book of Noel's shows what opportunities he gave to Harley, but also at what a cost.[63] For instance, when Noel acquired the library of the non-juror Dr George Hickes, Harley was able to buy dozens of books from it three months before it was sold at auction: his

61 C. E. Wright, 'Portrait of a bibliophile: Edward Harley, Earl of Oxford', *Book Collector* 11 (1962), 158–74; C. E. Wright and R. C. Wright (eds.), *The diary of Humfrey Wanley*, 2 vols. (London, 1966); C. E. Wright, *Fontes Harleiani: a study of the sources of the Harleian collection . . . in the British Museum* (London, 1972).

62 Watson, *Library of D'Ewes*, 56–61.

63 G. F. Barwick, 'The formation of the Harleian Library: further notes', *Library*, 3rd ser., 1 (1910), 166–71 (here 167); C. E. Wright, 'A "lost" account-book and the Harleian Library', *British Museum Quarterly* 31 (1966–7), 19–24.

bill for these and other books bought on the same day came to £138 13s 6d for 129 folios and £335 14s for 1,119 quartos and octavos. Less than a month later he bought part of the library of another well-known scholar, Dr Basil Kennet: 60 folios for £64 10s and 425 quartos and octavos for £127 10s, followed by £60 four weeks later for Kennet's prints and drawings. Harley continued buying on this stupendous scale, parting to Noel alone with at least £10,814 in money and about £650 in books, until bankruptcy threatened and he was obliged to sell Wimpole and sharply curb his expenditure.

The Harleian Library filled a critical gap in London's library provision, for its manuscripts and some printed books were always kept there and were made readily available to interested scholars – including the non-jurors. Hearne on several occasions had manuscripts sent on loan to him in Oxford, seemingly even without his having to sign a bond for their safe return. A good many scholars returned the Harleys' kindness by making gifts of manuscripts to their library: it was as though they expected that it would endure beyond the lifetime of the younger Harley. William Oldys, who to some extent succeeded Wanley as library-keeper, once wrote, waspishly, in the margin of his own copy of Nicolson's *English, Scotch and Irish historical libraries* (1736):

> Of the MS Library collected by the three St Georges, too much out of the Heralds Office, see my Catal. Printed 8°. 1738. containing 216 volumes in Folio. Some of which I bought and preserved in the Harleian Library.[64]

In 1739 a Somerset landowner, John Strachey, published (anonymously) *An index to the records, with directions to the several places where they are to be found* – a pocket handbook to different categories of records. Along with the various offices of the Chancery, King's Bench, Common Pleas and Exchequer, he included the Cotton Library and Bishop Moore's library (Cambridge University), while he also made several references to books in the Harleian library as well as in the libraries of the earls of Sussex and Denbigh and of the duke of Kent.

Strachey omitted to mention one major library: that of King George II. The manuscripts, at least, of the Royal Library had recently been made accessible, thanks to its deputy librarian, David Casley, who had produced – seemingly as a private venture – *A catalogue of the manuscripts of the King's Library* (1734). Casley was also librarian of the Cotton Library, and his book includes an appendix in which he summarily set out the state of the Cotton manuscripts as a result

64 BL, 128.g.3, at preface, p. viii; Oldys's reference is to the sale catalogue issued by T. Osborne of the library of William Stuart and of the genealogical MSS of Sir Henry St George, 27 November 1738, evidently drawn up by himself.

of the disastrous fire that had broken out on 23 October 1731 at Ashburnham House, Westminster, where they were then housed: 748 books preserved, but 99 'defective' and 111 'lost, burnt or defaced so as not to be distinguished'.[65]

The elder Harley and more particularly Wanley had encouraged or could even be said to have brought about the revival of the London-based Society of Antiquaries in 1717. This was at first little more than a convivial weekly gathering of record-office keepers, heralds and other book-world professionals with a sprinkling of gentlemen and clergy, meeting together to exhibit items from their own or other private collections. In 1718 they decided to acquire a box for books, but they only gradually came to regard the maintenance of a library of books (for borrowing by themselves alone) as a principal function.[66]

Outside London, where the position was even less satisfactory, the country gentlemen and a few clergy in two places came together and formed antiquarian societies that did aim from the outset to build up libraries. The first of these gentlemen's societies was at Spalding (Lincolnshire), founded in 1712,[67] and it was no doubt a tribute to its success, and to the need that it supplied, that a second followed in 1730 at Peterborough (Northamptonshire).[68]

By 1740 the cathedrals were also emerging as natural reading-places for antiquaries: their readership, if not their stock, was shifting away from patristic and biblical theology towards ecclesiastical history. At York Minster in the years 1716 to 1735 the library's register of loans shows Dugdale's *Monasticon* to have been the most frequently lent-out work, taken out twenty-nine times in the nineteen-year period.[69] The borrowers included such local laymen as the Jacobite antiquary Francis Drake (d. 1771), whose wife was the niece of a canon, and who thus had the entrée to the Minster library. He was at this date doubtless already preparing his topographical history, *Eboracum* (1736), and he also borrowed such relevant books as Twysden's edition of *Historiae anglicanae scriptores decem* (1652) and Selden's edition of the writings of the Canterbury monk Eadmer (1623). When the Kentish clergyman and antiquary John Lewis

65 D. Casley, *A catalogue of the manuscripts of the King's Library* [with] *An appendix to the catalogue of the Cottonian Library* (London: 'Printed for the Author, and sold by him at the said Libraries', 1734), 316–17; he also adds some details and corrections to Thomas Smith's catalogue, at 318–45.

66 J. Evans, *A history of the Society of Antiquaries* (London, 1956), 62, 65, 71 and 86.

67 D. M. Owen (ed.), *Minute-books of the Spalding Gentlemen's Society, 1712–1755*, Lincoln Record Society 73 (Lincoln, 1981).

68 J. T. Irvine, 'Peterborough Gentlemen's Society', *Antiquary* 22 (1890), 207–9, 248–52; see also T. Neve, *Gentleman's Magazine* 56:2 (1786), 560–2.

69 E. Brunskill, *18th century reading: some notes on the people who frequented the library of York Minster in the eighteenth century, and on the books they borrowed*, York Georgian Society Occasional Paper 6 (York, 1950), 9; cf. Woolf, *Reading history*, 199–202.

(1675–1747), of Margate, came upon a medieval cartulary of St Mary's Abbey, York, he evidently felt that the Minster library was the natural repository for it, for he presented it there.

The premature death of Edward Harley in 1741, and the consequent sale of his printed books in the following year, must have brought home to all scholars how precarious were the prospects of any library that was privately owned. There was undoubtedly widespread anxiety about the fate of the Harleian manuscripts. The dispersal by auction in 1731 of the fine collection of over 1,200 heraldic and topographical manuscripts and 2,000 printed books put together by Peter Le Neve (d. 1729) had prompted gloomy observations from William Oldys. Like most antiquaries, he regarded auctions as in general 'of great convenience to the learned', but he feared that much of Le Neve's collection would be 'divided among those who collect such rarities more through curiosity than use and have neither purse nor abilities to make anything compleat with or from them'.[70] The rise in fashionability of the collecting of rare books meant that the concentrations of books on particular subjects, on which scholars have always been dependent, could no longer be relied upon to take place.

A general survey of London's libraries, both institutional and private, was put together by Oldys in the late 1730s: it is based on Bagford's survey, which is extensively quoted verbatim, but brought up to date.[71] For Oldys, the library of the Royal Society at Gresham College was still one of the best in London, although he was critical of its catalogue of printed books, by Marmaduke Foster (1687), and he felt that *CMA*'s treatment of its manuscripts did not do them justice.[72] He also praised Sion College, 'the only public library within the walls of the city', and Archbishop Tenison's Library at St Martin-in-the-Fields, where 'any student may repair, and has liberty of making what researches he pleases, first giving in his name and place of abode'.[73]

None of these libraries, however, can be said to have been up to the standards of intensity of coverage that an original scholar would need. Oldys was a literary antiquary – a lesser Anthony Wood, it might be said, in his bio-bibliographical interests – and not at all to be classed with Dr Thomas Smith. The latter had been dead since 1710, but his complaints about the inadequacy of library provision in London were still just as valid. They were reiterated, in effect, in about 1743, by Thomas Carte, who also stressed the importance of

70 J. Yeowell, *A literary antiquary: memoir of William Oldys, Esq., Norroy King-at-Arms* (London, 1862), 76–7.
71 Printed in Yeowell, *Oldys*, 58–109. 72 Yeowell, *Oldys*, 80. 73 *Ibid.*, 68.

acquiring the Harleian manuscripts, 'a noble treasure of English History and Antiquities'.[74]

Change was finally to come in 1753, when the provisions of Sir Hans Sloane's will at last jolted the government into action, prompted Edward Harley's widow and daughter to offer the Harleian manuscripts to the nation for a modest £10,000, and resulted in the establishment of the British Museum.

74 A. Goldgar, 'The British Museum and the virtual representation of culture in the eighteenth century', *Albion* 32 (2000), 195–231 (here 224); see also Woolf, *Reading history*, 180–1.

11

Professional collections: libraries for scientists and doctors

SCOTT MANDELBROTE

For Meric Casaubon (1599–1671), the study of spirits, including the soul, devils and angels, was properly a part of physics, a discipline treating natural entities. This formed part of the arts curriculum, whose purpose was the inculcation of the general learning that Casaubon, an early critic of the Royal Society of London, applauded.[1] To conduct his own investigations into the activity of spirits, Casaubon drew on what he called 'converse with books'. This exchange took place in part within his own library, but to a greater extent through reading carried out in those of others, notably that of Sir Thomas Cotton in London, where Casaubon gained access to the manuscripts of the Elizabethan magus John Dee.[2]

During the century or so after 1640, the use of collections of books and manuscripts was unquestionably part of the work of scholars such as Casaubon, active in the disciplines of natural philosophy. But those disciplines embraced a great deal that would currently surprise practitioners of 'science and medicine'. Debates about the content and form of natural philosophy often pitted knowledge that could be obtained from experiment and practice against wisdom derived from books.

Francis Bacon (1561–1626), the philosopher on whose ideas many of the proponents of intellectual reform based their programmes, did not make explicit mention of libraries in his scientific utopia, *The new Atlantis* (1626),

1 W. A. Wallace, 'Traditional natural philosophy', in C. B. Schmitt and others (eds.), *The Cambridge history of Renaissance philosophy* (Cambridge, 1988), 201–35. For the curriculum, see W. T. Costello, *The scholastic curriculum at early seventeenth-century Cambridge* (Cambridge, MA, 1958); M. Feingold, 'The humanities' and 'The mathematical sciences and new philosophies', both in N. Tyacke (ed.), *The history of the University of Oxford*, vol. 4: *Seventeenth-century Oxford* (Oxford, 1997), 211–357, 359–448.

2 For information on Casaubon's library, see T. A. Birrell, 'The reconstruction of the library of Isaac Casaubon', in A. Croiset van Uchelen (ed.), *Hellinga Festschrift* (Amsterdam, 1980), 59–68; M. Casaubon (ed.), *A true and faithful relation of what passed for many yeers between Dr. John Dee . . . and some spirits* (London, 1659), sig. D1v–2r; cf. C. Tite, *The manuscript library of Sir Robert Cotton* (London, 1994).

although the descriptions of several of the categories of employees with whom Bacon peopled 'Salomon's House' suggested some of the uses to which he believed libraries could be put. 'The Merchants of Light' thus 'bring us the books, and abstracts, and patterns of experiment of all other parts'; the 'Depredators' also 'collect the experiments which are in all books'; finally, the 'Compilers' were supposed to 'draw the experiments . . . into titles and tables'.[3]

Some of Bacon's followers were interested in improving the structure of existing collections in order to make them more useful. In the early 1650s, John Dury (1596–1680), keeper of the library of St James's Palace, installed new bookcases and urged the drawing up of an inventory for public use. Dury's friend, Samuel Hartlib (*c.*1600–62), established a network of correspondents across Europe and North America. One topic of discussion was the need to perfect catalogues and indices. Dury believed the task of the scientific librarian was to be 'a factor and trader for helpes to learning, a treasurer to keep them and a dispenser to apply them to use'.[4]

The (London) College of Physicians provided an example of the success with which traditional institutions fought off their critics.[5] The college was able to endow a library (1654) as a result of William Harvey's donation of his patrimonial estate.[6] In 1660, the library held 1,278 titles, including not only medical books, but also works on such subjects as geography, astronomy, music and mechanics.[7] In addition, the college's library was supposed to furnish the materials for regular orations that Harvey had also funded.

In Oxford, the Bodleian Library benefited from several donations of remarkable scientific or medical books, including the Greek and Arabic manuscripts that the astronomer John Greaves had collected on behalf of Archbishop Laud.

3 J. Spedding, R. L. Ellis and D. D. Heath (eds.), *The works of Francis Bacon* (London, 1857), vol. 3, 164–5.

4 G. H. Turnbull, *Hartlib, Dury and Comenius* (Liverpool, 1947), 257–70 (here 257); M. Greengrass, 'Samuel Hartlib and the Commonwealth of Learning', in J. Barnard, D. F. McKenzie and M. Bell (eds.), *The Cambridge history of the book in Britain*, vol. 4: *1557–1695* (Cambridge, 2002), 304–22.

5 C. Webster, 'The College of Physicians: "Solomon's House" in Commonwealth England', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 41 (1967), 393–412; cf. P. M. Rattansi, 'The Helmontian–Galenist controversy in Restoration England', *Ambix* 12 (1964), 1–23.

6 G. Davenport, I. McDonald and C. Moss-Gibbons (eds.), *The Royal College of Physicians and its collections* (London, 2001), 70–3; Library of the Royal College of Physicians, London, MS 2074a; British Library, MS Add. 3914, fol. 2r. I have also profited from conversations with Roger Gaskell and from his unpublished 'The fate of William Harvey's library'; Library of the Royal College of Physicians, London, MS 2290, 37–76.

7 C. Merret, *Catalogus librorum, instrumentorum chirurgicorum, rerum curiosarum, exoticarumque Coll. Med. Lond. quae habentur in Musaeo Harveano* (London, 1660); Library of the Royal College of Physicians, London, MSS 2290 (here 76) and 2000/137.

The Bodleian later obtained further oriental mathematical and astronomical manuscripts from the libraries of Edward Pococke, Robert Huntingdon and Narcissus Marsh. Thomas Hyde (1636–1703) was responsible for completing a catalogue of the printed books in the Bodleian (published in 1674), which brought to a conclusion indexing activities first suggested by Seth Ward during the 1640s and 1650s.[8]

In 1683, the first of the rarities and manuscripts of Elias Ashmole (1617–92), intended for a museum that was to function as a teaching institution for chemistry, arrived in Oxford.[9] The Ashmolean contained both a room fitted out as library for natural history and philosophy and, near the laboratory in the basement, a chemical library.[10] From 1692, the museum's holdings included many of the printed books that Ashmole had owned, supplemented by purchase and by the donation of the libraries of other scholars. The Ashmolean also acquired many of the books of Edward Lhwyd (1670–1709), its second keeper, including volumes from his 'moving library', which accompanied him on his tours through the British Isles in search of specimens.[11]

At Cambridge, the University Library received donations in the 1670s that enabled it to obtain works by Harvey, Pierre Gassendi, Descartes and Christiaan Huygens. The University Library, however, lagged behind in collections of scientific and medical books at least until the gift in 1715 by George I of the library of John Moore, bishop of Ely (1646–1714). For the first time, the University Library then owned copies of the major works of English natural philosophy composed in the late seventeenth century, including the writings of Isaac Newton and Robert Boyle.[12]

The formal equipment for the teaching of natural philosophy that the university libraries housed was not limited to books. In 1653, John Wilkins (1614–72) gave £200 to set up mechanical devices and experiments in the Bodleian

8 I. Philip, *The Bodleian Library in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Oxford, 1983), 38–91; G. J. Toomer, *Eastern wisedome and learning* (Oxford, 1996), 229–42; H. W. Robinson, 'An unpublished letter of Dr Seth Ward relating to the early meetings of the Oxford Philosophical Society', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London* 7 (1949–50), 68–70.

9 M. Hunter, *Science and the shape of orthodoxy* (Woodbridge, 1995), 21–44.

10 E. Chamberlayne, *Angliae notitia*, 15th edn (London, 1684), part 2, 327–8.

11 E. Millington, *Bibliotheca Ashmoliana* ([London, 1694]); R. T. Gunther, 'The Ashmole printed books', *Bodleian Quarterly Record* 6 (1929–31), 193–5; B. F. Roberts, 'Edward Lhwyd's collection of printed books', *Bodleian Library Record* 10 (1978–82), 112–27.

12 J. C. T. Oates, *Cambridge University Library: a history*, vol. 1: *From the beginnings to the Copyright Act of Queen Anne* (Cambridge, 1986), 407–9, 434–7; D. McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library: a history*, vol. 2: *The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries* (Cambridge, 1986), 90–5.

Picture Gallery. The Cambridge University Library contained globes and an armillary sphere, as well as, from 1729, the fossil collections of John Woodward, formerly Professor of Physic at Gresham College.[13] Jacob Bobart (1641–1719) compiled a collection of plant specimens for use at the Physic Garden in Oxford. These were mounted on sheets to form a herbarium for use in conjunction with the *Plantarum historiae universalis Oxoniensis* (1680–99) of Robert Morison.[14]

Despite the growth of university collections at Oxford and Cambridge, the most important teaching materials in medicine and natural philosophy remained those that were available in the colleges. Christ's College, Cambridge, had a special fund for the purchase of mathematical and scientific books and instruments, as a result of a 1626 bequest.[15] By the early eighteenth century, borrowing was possible on behalf of undergraduates at some Cambridge colleges, such as Peterhouse, Pembroke and Trinity, where extensive use was being made of the scientific and medical collections of the new Wren Library.[16] It is clear from the registers that many Fellows were borrowing on behalf of others, either pupils or friends.[17]

The strength of Trinity's holdings in scientific and medical books, which grew to more than a tenth of its library's stock by 1695, derived in part from donations by Fellows. John Nidd bequeathed 126 books, mainly about medicine, in 1659.[18] Isaac Barrow, the first Lucasian Professor, donated seventy-one books to the library, many of them Latin works of continental mathematics and astronomy.[19] By the 1720s, regular purchases were being made, including a

13 Philip, *Bodleian Library*, 46; Oates, *Cambridge University Library*, 441–2; McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, 240–1.

14 R. T. Gunther, 'The chemical library of the University', *Bodleian Quarterly Record* 6 (1929–31), 201–3; I. G. Philip and P. Morgan, 'Libraries, books, and printing', in Tyacke, *Seventeenth-century Oxford*, 659–85, especially 676–7; H. N. Clokie, *An account of the herbaria of the Department of Botany in the University of Oxford* (Oxford, 1964), 10–36, 54–89; 'Bibliotheca Bobartiana', MS. SP.P A.11 (Oxford University Archives).

15 P. Gaskell, *Trinity College library: the first 150 years* (Cambridge, 1980), 90.

16 Ward Library, Peterhouse, Cambridge, MS. 411; M. Walsh, 'A Cambridge college library in the eighteenth century: Christopher Smart's borrowings at Pembroke', *Library*, 6th ser., 12 (1990), 34–49; C. Decker, 'The poet as reader: Thomas Gray's borrowings from Cambridge college libraries', *Library*, 7th ser., 3 (2002), 163–93; Trinity College, Cambridge, MSS Add.a.117–22; MS Add.a.124.

17 See especially Trinity College, Cambridge, MS Add.a.122.

18 Gaskell, *Trinity College library*, 120, 126–43; Trinity College, Cambridge, MS Add.a.107; MS Add.a.150.

19 Trinity College, Cambridge, MS Add.a.101, 34–5; MS Add.a.106, fols. 17r–v, 23r; M. Feingold, 'Isaac Barrow's library', in M. Feingold (ed.), *Before Newton: the life and times of Isaac Barrow* (Cambridge, 1990), 333–72 (here 333, 337).

subscription to the *Histoire de l'Académie Royale des Sciences*, and the acquisition of the new Florentine edition of Galileo's *Opere* (1718).[20]

At Oxford, St John's College benefited from the directions of Archbishop Laud, who provided for a separate collection of scientific books and instruments in the library in the Canterbury Quadrangle whose building he sponsored in the early 1630s.[21] The college's existing strong holdings in medicine were augmented in 1715 by the bequest of 258 works from the library of Dr William Brewster, which included books by Harvey, Boyle, Ray and Boerhaave, as well as a copy of Newton's *Principia*.[22]

In the 1730s, there was a scholars' library at Trinity College, Cambridge, which included many standard Latin works of mathematics, astronomy and medicine, as well as some more recent publications.[23] Similar provisions had existed at Queen's College, Oxford, since the 1620s, and by the 1680s Trinity College, Oxford, kept a collection of philosophy and mathematics books for undergraduates. Balliol College, Oxford, established an undergraduate library in 1700, which gained a number of basic mathematical and astronomical works between 1725 and 1728. None of these Oxford undergraduate collections, however, was thriving by the second half of the eighteenth century.[24]

Tutors shaped students' reading habits through the loan of books from their own libraries and by encouraging the purchase of particular texts. Between 1658 and 1693, Samuel Blithe, a tutor at Clare Hall, Cambridge, set courses of reading that mixed traditional Aristotelian philosophy with texts by Bacon, Boyle, and even Gassendi and Galileo. Blithe's students bought many of the books that they were supposed to read. These included contemporary medical works by William Harvey and Thomas Willis.[25]

The importance of individuals in shaping both the curriculum and purchases by libraries is also apparent at the Scottish universities. James Gregory (1638–75) bought books and instruments for the observatory at the University

20 Trinity College, Cambridge, MS Add.a.108.

21 J. Fuggles, 'A history of the library of S. John's College, Oxford . . . to 1660', unpublished BLitt thesis, Oxford University (1975), 81–96, 131–78; H. Colvin, *The Canterbury quadrangle* (Oxford, 1988), 75.

22 St John's College, Oxford, MS Registrum Benefactorum Bibliothecae, coll. cccxvi–xl, and Muniment Room, x 68–9.

23 Trinity College, Cambridge, MS Add.a.110, 1–58.

24 Philip and Morgan, 'Libraries, books, and printing', 676; I. G. Philip, 'Libraries and the University Press', in L. S. Sutherland and L. G. Mitchell (eds.), *The history of the University of Oxford*, vol. 5: *The eighteenth century* (Oxford, 1986), 725–55 (here 750).

25 J. Gascoigne, *Science, politics and universities in Europe, 1600–1800* (Aldershot, 1998), chapter 3; W. J. Harrison, *Life in Clare Hall, Cambridge, 1658–1713* (Cambridge, 1958), 50–1.

of St Andrews, where he was Professor of Mathematics from 1668.[26] In 1676, Edinburgh University acquired fifteen volumes from Gregory's library, including several works by Descartes.[27] The study of Cartesian and later Newtonian natural philosophy was reflected in the purchases of the University Library, and in gifts made by David Gregory (1659–1708), which included works by Barrow and van Schooten and a manuscript commentary on the geometry of François Viète.[28] By the end of the seventeenth century, the Edinburgh University Library was buying reasonably large numbers of current scientific and medical books.[29]

Both lecture notes and library catalogues indicate that new scientific and medical literature was quickly available in most of the Scottish university libraries during the late seventeenth century. English experimental philosophy was popular, as were Latin works published in the Netherlands and France.[30] Yet, despite such purchases, Scottish university libraries depended heavily on donations to augment their collections. The holdings of Edinburgh University Library owed much to the major gift that it received during the 1670s from Revd James Nairn, which included writings by Bacon and Boyle, and a substantial collection of continental authors, above all books by Descartes and Gassendi.[31]

Changing patterns of sociability especially in Edinburgh, as well as the demands of the curriculum, promoted the foundation of libraries providing for the specific needs of particular groups of students.[32] In 1724, Robert Steuart, Professor of Natural Philosophy at Edinburgh, founded such a class library, which was supposed to collect the best editions of books in natural history, natural philosophy and the mathematical arts. The library was particularly

26 C. M. King [Shepherd], 'Philosophy and science in the arts curriculum of the Scottish universities in the 17th century', unpublished PhD thesis, Edinburgh University (1974), 266, 273.

27 Edinburgh University Library, MS Da.1.32, 98.

28 C. M. Eagles, 'The mathematical work of David Gregory, 1659–1708', unpublished PhD thesis, Edinburgh University (1977), 8–16.

29 Edinburgh University Library, MS Da.1.31, 45–6; cf. MSS Da.1.32, 115–38; Da.1.33, 95–118.

30 King, 'Philosophy and science', 8–9, 265–74; C. Shepherd, 'The inter-relationship between the library and teaching in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries', in J. R. Guild and A. Law (eds.), *Edinburgh University Library, 1580–1980* (Edinburgh, 1982), 67–86.

31 M. C. T. Simpson, *A catalogue of the library of the Revd James Nairn (1629–1678), bequeathed by him to Edinburgh University Library* (Edinburgh, 1990); M. C. T. Simpson, 'The library of the Reverend James Nairn (1629–1678): scholarly book collecting in Restoration Scotland', unpublished PhD thesis, Edinburgh University (1988), 191–232.

32 W. P. Dickson, *The Glasgow University Library* (Glasgow, 1888), 26–7; Glasgow University Library, MS Gen.25; D. McElroy, 'The literary clubs and societies of eighteenth century Scotland', unpublished PhD thesis, Edinburgh University (1951–2), 354–410.

strong in the works of Robert Boyle, which filled a complete case.[33] In 1737, a group of students from the faculty of medicine at Edinburgh University, founded 'a Society . . . for Improvement in Medical Knowledge', later the Royal Medical Society. The society held regular meetings to hear dissertations, which were later deposited in a library that the society set up in 1753 at the Royal Infirmary.[34]

Two human skeletons, one male and one female, guarded the entrance of the mathematical library at St John's College, Oxford.[35] The library also contained a collection of instruments, including a telescope, globes and surveying instruments. In 1749, John Pointer gave to St John's his own substantial collection of rarities, including a herbarium of 500 dried plants.[36] From 1703, the library at Trinity College, Cambridge, housed two telescopes, a microscope, prisms and surveyors' tools. There was also a collection of rarities, containing a skeleton, anatomical preparations and one of Sir Samuel Morland's speaking trumpets.[37] The collections in the library at Edinburgh University included bladder stones and other medical curiosities, instruments and maps.[38]

Private individuals were freed from the constraints of the curriculum of general learning that so dominated the concerns of many institutions. The pursuit of education overseas might provide access to otherwise inaccessible networks of purchase and exchange. Conversely, the needs of children who were being educated at British universities, or at home, might encourage the purchase of scientific titles for the libraries of the aristocracy and gentry.[39] Many libraries contained illustrated books on chorography, natural history and foreign travel that provided entertainment as well as parading facts and discoveries.[40] Except

33 *The physiological library begun by Mr. Steuart* ([Edinburgh], 1725), especially 3–4, 9–15, 38, 43, 56–7, 62; M. Barfoot, 'Hume and the culture of science in the early eighteenth century', in M. A. Stewart (ed.), *Studies in the philosophy of the Scottish Enlightenment* (Oxford, 1990), 151–90.

34 Royal Medical Society, Edinburgh, Minute books, vol. 1, entry for 4 August 1778; [W. Stroud], *List of members, laws, and library-catalogue of the Medical Society of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1820), xvi–xxii, xxxii–xxxv.

35 St John's College, Oxford, MS 22; cf. Colvin, *Canterbury Quadrangle*, 74.

36 St John's College, Oxford, Muniment Room, FN.V.A9 F3.7, f. 33v; cf. MS Registrum Benefactorum Bibliothecae, col. ccccxlvii; R. T. Gunther, *Early science in Oxford* (Oxford, 1923–45), vol. 3, 336–41, 454–530.

37 Trinity College, Cambridge, MS Add.a.109, 311; MS Add.a.106, fols. 213–14.

38 Edinburgh University Library, MS Da.1.31, 25, 39, 48; cf. MSS Da.1.33, 84; Da.1.34, 2.

39 A. J. Turner, 'Mathematical instruments and the education of gentlemen', *Annals of Science* 30 (1973), 51–88.

40 B. J. Shapiro, *A culture of fact: England, 1550–1720* (Ithaca, NY, 2000), 63–85; M. Swann, *Curiosities and texts: the culture of collecting in early modern England* (Philadelphia, 2001), 55–148; B. J. Ford, 'Eighteenth-century scientific publishing', in A. Hunter (ed.), *Thornton and Tully's scientific books, libraries and collectors*, 4th edn (Aldershot, 2000), 216–57.

where they were accumulated for professional or practical use, scientific and medical books tended to form only a minor part of substantial private libraries, just as an interest in natural history or experimental philosophy was merely one aspect of a virtuoso culture that also embraced art, literature, antiquities and the design of gardens.[41]

The alchemical manuscripts that Elias Ashmole accumulated through gifts and purchases made over more than thirty years were originally intended primarily for use in a laboratory. For Ashmole, however, a wish to preserve the achievements of the English alchemical tradition may have spurred his collecting activities.[42] The secretive nature of alchemical practice and the importance of textual scholarship to alchemical knowledge made it more likely that the owners of chemical libraries would purchase manuscript as well as printed material. Private libraries of alchemical books and manuscripts, such as those of Boyle or Newton, also became locations for shared study among carefully regulated coteries of individuals.[43]

Concern with the management of estates, with the cultivation of new crops, or with the health of dependants and livestock, provided incentives for the inclusion of herbals, veterinary treatises and recipe books in the libraries of the gentry or aristocracy.[44] The books of John Evelyn (1620–1706) combined the interests of a virtuoso in travel and experiment with the concern of a gentleman

41 W. E. Houghton, Jr., 'The English virtuoso in the seventeenth century', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 3 (1942), 51–73, 190–219; B. J. Shapiro and R. G. Frank, Jr., *English scientific virtuosi in the 16th and 17th centuries* (Los Angeles, 1979); G. Mandelbrote, 'Scientific books and their owners: a survey to ca. 1720', in Hunter, *Thornton and Tully's scientific books*, 333–66 (here 337–8).

42 L. Kassell, 'Reading for the philosophers' stone', in M. Frasca-Spada and N. Jardine (eds.), *Books and the sciences in history* (Cambridge, 2000), 132–50; C. H. Josten, *Elias Ashmole (1617–1692)* (Oxford, 1966), vol. 1, 76–94, 112–28, 157–62.

43 O. Morris, *The 'chymick bookes' of Sir Owen Wynne of Gwydir* (Cambridge, 1997), 4–13; R. S. Wilkinson, 'The alchemical library of John Winthrop, Jr. (1606–1676) and his descendants in colonial America', *Ambix* 11 (1963), 33–51 and 13 (1966), 139–86; L. M. Principe, *The aspiring adept: Robert Boyle and his alchemical quest* (Princeton, NJ, 1998), 138–49; K. Figala, 'Gedanken zu Isaac Newtons Studium von Georg Agricolas Werken', in K. Figala and E. H. Berninger (eds.), *Arithmos–Arrythmos: Skizzen aus der Wissenschaftsgeschichte* (Munich, 1979), 73–103; K. Figala, J. Harrison and U. Petzold, '*De scriptoribus chemicis*: sources for the establishment of Isaac Newton's (al)chemical library', in P. M. Harman and A. E. Shapiro (eds.), *The investigation of difficult things: essays on Newton and the history of the exact sciences* (Cambridge, 1992), 135–79; W. A. Campbell, 'The chemical library of Thomas Britton (1654–1714)', *Ambix* 24 (1977), 143–8.

44 M. Ambrosoli, *The wild and the sown: botany and agriculture in western Europe, 1350–1850*, trans. M. M. Salvatorelli (Cambridge, 1997), 223–61, 423–5; E. S. Rohde (ed.), *The garden book of Sir Thomas Hanmer* (Mold, 1991), xi–xvi; A. S. Bendall, *Maps, land and society* (Cambridge, 1992), 143–50; Sir F. Smith, *The early history of veterinary literature and its British development* (London, 1919), vol. 1, 222–369 (here 312–20); National Library of Scotland, MSS 6505 (catalogue of the library of Sir John Wedderburn), 6305 ('books in the library at Panmure', 1734).

for husbandry and gardening.[45] The library owned by Francis Willughby (1635–72) included volumes of domestic and foreign dried plants, records of chemical experiments, and a collection of seeds.[46] The correspondence of Willughby's mentor, John Ray (1627–1705), moreover, provides glimpses into a world of sociability in which the exchange of books and specimens between the libraries and collections of individuals allowed for interaction across normal social boundaries.[47]

The apogee of the kind of collection of scientific books and specimens to which Ray and Willughby aspired was reached in the library of Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753), which, despite an emphasis on travel and medicine, ranged over a vast array of subjects. Sloane's wealth and contacts ensured that he made the most of burgeoning opportunities to make acquisitions. His library began to resemble a collection of other people's collections, including the rarities and manuscripts of the oriental traveller Engelbert Kaempfer, and the herbaria of several prominent botanists and physicians.[48]

Because of their relatively greater wealth, it was easier for physicians to build up substantial libraries than for most other individuals with a professional interest in medicine or natural philosophy. Many physicians used their resources to acquire books across a variety of fields, frequently including natural philosophy or natural history. Their libraries often contained many works in Latin and Greek, including early editions of medical classics.[49] Dr Thomas

45 G. Mandelbrote, 'John Evelyn and his books', in F. Harris and M. Hunter (eds.), *John Evelyn and his milieu* (London, 2003), 71–94; M. Zytaruk, '"Occasional *specimens*, not compleate *systemes*": John Evelyn's culture of collecting', *Bodleian Library Record* 17 (2000–1), 185–212.

46 M. A. Welch, 'Francis Willughby of Middleton, Warwickshire and Wollaton, Nottinghamshire: a seventeenth century naturalist', *Transactions of the Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire* 81 (1977), 33–40; D. Cram, J. L. Forgeng and D. Johnston (eds.), *Francis Willughby's book of games* (Aldershot, 2003), 12–33; Nottingham University Library, Middleton of Wollaton collection, MSS Mi LM 15–27.

47 T. Ballard, *Bibliotheca Rayana: or, a catalogue of the library of Mr. John Ray* (London, 1708); R. Gunther (ed.), *Further correspondence of John Ray* (London, 1928); H. R. French, '"Ingenious and learned gentlemen": social perceptions and self-fashioning among parish elites in Essex, 1680–1740', *Social History* 25 (2000), 44–66; Wellcome Library, London, MS 1708 (collections of William Cole).

48 A. MacGregor (ed.), *Sir Hans Sloane: collector, scientist, antiquary* (London, 1994); M. Nickson, 'Hans Sloane, book collector and cataloguer, 1682–1698', *British Library Journal* 14 (1988), 52–89; G. R. de Beer, *Sir Hans Sloane and the British Museum* (London, 1953), 108–201; J. E. Dandy (ed.), *The Sloane herbarium* (London, 1958), 9–19.

49 P. M. Jones, 'Medical libraries and medical Latin 1400–1700', in W. Bracke and H. Deumens (eds.), *Medical Latin from the late middle ages to the eighteenth century* (Brussels, 2000), 115–35; A. Besson, 'Private medical libraries', in A. Besson (ed.), *Thornton's medical books, libraries and collectors*, 3rd edn (Aldershot, 1990), 267–300; R. Smith, *Bibliotheca Plucknettiana & Everardiana* ([London, 1707]); D. Browne, *A catalogue of the library of the learned and eminent*

Pellet owned 'most of the scarce Books in Physick, Surgery, Mathematicks, &c', including a fine collection of the works of Isaac Newton.[50] The library of Dr John Ker, on the other hand, was chiefly notable for its collection of first and fine editions of classical authors by Aldus Manutius and other sixteenth-century printers.[51]

A contrast should perhaps be drawn between the private libraries of orthodox medical practitioners and those of apothecaries, astrological physicians, midwives and others outside the bounds established by licensed medicine. In most cases, it is difficult to establish what sort of books such people owned. The possession of some books and almanacs was certainly essential to the work of astrologers. The ready availability of books that offered to teach medical skills suggests that libraries played a role in the practice of unlicensed physicians. Midwives were also likely to learn from, and might even own, such handbooks. Dependence on the *Pharmacopoeia* of the London College of Physicians, and of unauthorised texts on the composition of medicines, highlights the role played by books in the activities of apothecaries and druggists.[52]

Auction catalogues of the libraries of natural philosophers drew attention to the curiosity of the books and the ingenuity of their owners. However, they tended not to break out of the categorisation of natural philosophers either as gentlemanly virtuosi or as dry-as-dust scholars. The presence of significant numbers of technical works in Latin in the libraries of mathematicians and experimental philosophers may have contributed to this dichotomy, though the contemporary growth of vernacular publishing in natural philosophy tended to leaven the diet. The library of Robert Hooke (1635–1703) perhaps came closest to being a professional scientific library, just as Hooke himself, in his career as architect and curator of experiments at the Royal Society, came nearest

physician Dr Chamberlen ([London, 1718]); *Bibliotheca ornatissimi doctissimiq[ue] viri Gualteri Millii M.D.* (London, 1726); C. Bateman and J. Cooper, *A catalogue of the library, antiquities, &c. of the late learned Dr Woodward* ([London], 1728).

50 J. Brigstock and J. Atkinson, *A catalogue of the curious and valuable library of Thomas Pellet, M.D.* (London, 1745), especially 35 (see also the notes on the sale by Richard Rawlinson in his copy of the catalogue: Bodleian Library, Mus. Bibl. III 8°.1(4)).

51 F. Gyles, *Selecta Joannis Ker, M.D. bibliotheca* ([London], 1714).

52 H. King, '"As if none understood the art that cannot understand Greek": the education of midwives in seventeenth-century England', and M. Pelling, 'Knowledge common and acquired: the education of unlicensed practitioners in early modern London', both in V. Nutton and R. Porter (eds.), *The history of medical education in Britain* (Amsterdam, 1995), 184–98, 250–79; D. Evenden, *The midwives of seventeenth-century London* (Cambridge, 2000), 123–5; A. Wear, *Knowledge and practice in English medicine, 1550–1680* (Cambridge, 2000), 78–85; J. Sanderson, 'Medical secrets and the book trade: ownership of the copy to the College of Physicians' *Pharmacopoeia* (1618–1650)', in P. Isaac and B. McKay (eds.), *The human face of the book trade* (Winchester, 1999), 65–80.

to embodying a professional natural philosopher during the third quarter of the seventeenth century. Hooke's library, however, continued to display the diversity of focus that characterised natural philosophy, including as it did books on music and art, as well as maps and plans. It also reflected the growth of serial publishing in natural philosophy, including the *Journal des Sçavans* and an incomplete run of the *Philosophical Transactions*.[53]

Little detailed evidence survives of the library of the pre-eminent scientific virtuoso of the second half of the seventeenth century, Robert Boyle (1627–91). Contemporary accounts of visits to Boyle's house indicate that he had a considerable library of more than 3,500 volumes and that books and papers jostled for space with chemical apparatus, even in his bedroom. However, there was an impression that many of his books were too arcane to be worth much: Hooke recorded seeing 'neer 100 of Mr Boyles high Dutch Chymicall books ly exposed in Moorfeilds on the railes'.[54] The library of Isaac Newton was particularly strong in mathematical and alchemical books, although more than a quarter of its 1896 titles related to theology or church history. Newton used his books extensively, drawing on classical and theological material as he searched for an adequate explanation for the working of gravity in the revisions that he planned to make to the *Principia* during the 1690s. After his death, however, Newton's library was bought to furnish a country rectory.[55]

The growth of the Navy and the development of institutions to support its work were particularly significant in creating a network of interlocking private libraries of mathematical books. This was the environment in which Samuel Pepys (1633–1703), sometime President of the Royal Society, was able to build his remarkable library, which included many works on navigation, as well as works by scientific contemporaries.[56] The interests of the Navy also lay behind the establishment of the Observatory at Greenwich, where John Flamsteed (1646–1719) housed his own small library, which consisted largely of practical astronomical and mathematical books.[57] Flamsteed purchased twenty-seven titles at the sale of Sir Jonas Moore's library in 1684. Moore (1617–79), who was Surveyor General of the Ordnance, was one of those who upheld the importance

53 L. Rostenberg, *The library of Robert Hooke* (Santa Monica, CA, 1989).
54 Gunther, *Early science in Oxford*, vol. 10, 223.
55 J. Harrison, *The library of Isaac Newton* (Cambridge, 1978), 28–30.
56 R. Latham (ed.), *Catalogue of the Pepys Library at Magdalene College, Cambridge*, 7 vols. (Cambridge, 1978–94).
57 E. G. Forbes, 'The library of the Rev John Flamsteed, F.R.S., first Astronomer Royal', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London* 28 (1973), 119–43.

of learning Latin and mathematics in order to be able to read the best books in astronomy and navigation. Numerous mathematicians and astronomers bought for themselves at Moore's sale, including Hooke and Edmond Halley, but also Sir Edward Sherburne, the Chief Clerk of the Ordnance. Sherburne's library held around 2,000 books, many of which focused on mathematics and gunnery.[58]

Baconian ideas were essential to the conception of a scientific institution in the eyes of the Royal Society's leading members in the early 1660s, when Evelyn and other Fellows first planned a library for the new society. The most creative phase in the collecting activities of the society occurred in the years 1666–7, when it purchased the substantial rarities collection of Robert Hubbard and received the gift of the Arundel Library, valued at £1,000, from Henry Howard. Much of this library had little obvious utility for the society, which considered donating the Arundel manuscripts to Oxford University.[59] Hooke, who was at first charged with cataloguing the Arundel books, suggested that the library of the society should be limited to mechanical arts and natural history.[60] Eventually, it was agreed that separate catalogues should be made of the Arundel library and the society's other books. William Perry (*c.*1650–96) was appointed keeper of the library and rules were established for its use. In the 1720s and 1730s, an attempt was made to order and index the society's substantial holdings of scientific manuscripts and letters, including the records of its own meetings. This eventually resulted in the publication of the society's early journals in 1756–7. By the 1740s, acquisitions and donations had so swollen the library's holdings that it was necessary to sell duplicates.[61]

To a considerable extent, the growth and success of the library of the Royal Society was a product of the increasing role played by Fellows whose concerns lay primarily in natural history, travel and antiquarian scholarship, rather

58 F. Willmoth, *Sir Jonas Moore: practical mathematics and Restoration science* (Woodbridge, 1993), 153, 174, 211–12; T. A. Birrell, 'The library of Sir Edward Sherburne (1616–1702)', in A. Hunt, G. Mandelbrote and A. Shell (eds.), *The book trade and its customers 1450–1900* (Winchester, 1997), 189–204.

59 M. Hunter, *Establishing the new science: the experience of the Royal Society* (Woodbridge, 1989), 73–155; M. B. Hall, *The library and archives of the Royal Society 1660–1990* (London, 1992), 2–3; 'John Evelyn's plan for a library', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London* 7 (1950), 193–4; L. L. Peck, 'Uncovering the Arundel Library at the Royal Society: changing meanings of science and the fate of the Norfolk donation', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London* 52 (1998), 3–24; Royal Society, London, Domestic MS vol. 5, 60–81.

60 Hunter, *Establishing the new science*, 185–244.

61 Hall, *Royal Society*, 4–9; Royal Society, London, Domestic MS vol. 5, 31, 43, 90–100; see also the uncatalogued account books of the Society.

than in the experimental learning that Hooke had embodied. The interests of Fellows who saw the society as a meeting place for virtuosi in this sense triumphed over those who wanted it to be an embodiment of Solomon's House. The consolidation of the society's library thus seemed to owe as much to the role of books in gentlemanly conversation as to their contribution to utility and innovation.[62]

The collection and discussion of works of natural philosophy was one means through which provincial elites, such as the members of the Spalding Gentlemen's Society (founded in 1710), might assert their awareness of metropolitan culture. Experimental natural philosophy, and the reading that went with it, was similarly a sign of the social advancement of the Huguenot weavers of Spitalfields in London who formed a society in 1717.[63] Discussion of the *Philosophical Transactions*, and contribution to its pages, was an important aspect of the scientific formation of members of the Dublin Philosophical Society (founded in 1683), who were able to use the extensive scientific libraries of William Molyneux and Charles Willoughby.[64] In Edinburgh, Sir Robert Sibbald (1641–1722) created a remarkable collection of scientific and medical books, and donated the nucleus of the library of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh. Sibbald's activities aimed to make collections and the institutions that housed them into vehicles for national renewal.[65]

The College of Physicians in London was devastated in the Fire of 1666, and when it was rebuilt no provision was initially made for a library. A gift in 1680 by the marquess of Dorchester brought the college a remarkable collection of books and manuscripts, including works that had once belonged to John

62 J. Buchanan-Brown, 'The books presented to the Royal Society by John Aubrey, F.R.S.', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London* 28 (1974), 167–93; M. Feingold, 'Mathematicians and naturalists: Sir Isaac Newton and the Royal Society', in J. Z. Buchwald and I. B. Cohen (eds.), *Isaac Newton's natural philosophy* (Cambridge, MA, 2001), 77–102.

63 Spalding Gentlemen's Society, Minute books, vol. 1; L. Stewart and P. Weindling, 'Philosophical threads: natural philosophy and public experiment among the weavers of Spitalfields', *British Journal for the History of Science* 28 (1995), 37–62.

64 K. T. Hoppen, *The common scientist in the seventeenth century: a study of the Dublin Philosophical Society 1683–1708* (London, 1970), 94–5; [J. Wilcox], *A catalogue of the library of the Honble. Samuel Molyneux* (London, 1730).

65 R. L. Emerson, 'Sir Robert Sibbald, Kt, the Royal Society of Scotland and the origins of the Scottish Enlightenment', *Annals of Science* 45 (1988), 41–72; G. Drummond, *Bibliotheca Sibbaldiana* (Edinburgh, 1722); National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, MS. Acc. 3439/1 (Minute books of the Royal College of Physicians, 1682–1719); Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, MS catalogue of donations to the library, 1681–1725; *Bibliotheca Balfouriana* (Edinburgh, 1695); R. Sibbald, *Auctarium Musaei Balfouriani e Musaeo Sibbaldiano* (Edinburgh, 1697); W. S. Craig, *History of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh* (Oxford, 1976), 117–25.

Dee.[66] In response to this donation, the college commissioned Christopher Wren to convert rooms into a new library.[67] During the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the collection grew largely through donations, several of them from Sloane.[68] However, the principal concern of the college, effectively a guild for learned medical practitioners, was the regulation of medical practice in London, and its library became more a symbol of the Fellows' learning than an opportunity for its advancement.

In the 1630s, the Company of Barber-Surgeons in London built a new library to accompany its recently constructed anatomical theatre. The company failed to maintain the library, however, which was eventually sold in 1749.[69] In 1682, the Society of Apothecaries set aside a gallery for a small library at its Hall. In the 1730s, the society created an additional library in its new greenhouse at Chelsea. This contained 266 volumes by 1769.[70] St Bartholomew's Hospital maintained a museum of anatomical specimens from 1726 and, as early as 1669, it provided a room with a library for its Governors and for 'young university schollers and Gentlemen' that they might admit.[71] In Glasgow, the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons housed a small library which was reordered and expanded in the 1740s; by the 1760s it was being used in the instruction of apprentices.[72]

These diverging histories bring out the unusualness of the attempts that were made to turn some institutional libraries into instruments for intellectual and social reform during the middle years of the seventeenth century in England and at the turn of the eighteenth century in Scotland. These efforts nevertheless helped to change the climate of both personal and institutional purchasing of scientific and medical books. Although both private and institutional libraries continued to be shaped by the assumptions of more traditional learning, their holdings also expanded and diversified. Over time, however,

66 Royal College of Physicians, London, MS 2000/81 (catalogue of the library of the marquess of Dorchester, compiled in 1664); MS 2189, 228–37.

67 British Library, London, MS. Add. 3915, fols. 23–4; L. M. Payne and C. E. Newman, 'The history of the College library: the Dorchester Library', *Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of London* 4 (1970), 234–46.

68 Sloane's donations can be found at Royal College of Physicians, London, MS 2290, vol. 7, 28, 130; vol. 9, 59.

69 A. T. Young, *The annals of the Barber-Surgeons of London* (London, 1890), 402–5; cf. Guildhall Library, London, MS 5255/1 (Warden's accounts of the Barber-Surgeons' Company).

70 P. Hunting, *A history of the Society of Apothecaries* (London, 1998), 130.

71 J. L. Thornton, 'The medical college from its origins to the end of the nineteenth century', in V. C. Medvei and J. L. Thornton (eds.), *The Royal Hospital of Saint Bartholomew 1123–1973* (London, 1974), 43–77 (here 45).

72 Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, MS Minute books 3 (1733–57); J. Geyer-Kordesch and F. Macdonald, *Physicians and surgeons in Glasgow* (London, 1999), 229–30.

the pursuit of utility began to appear a less desirable aim than the growth of discussion. Yet changes in scientific and medical knowledge and practice did not make libraries less important. Instead, the conversations that they encouraged broadened out from private disputes held in individual scholars' studies to debates shared among communities of readers who increasingly exchanged ideas in public and in print.

12

Personal owners of books

GILES MANDELBROTE

For much of the turbulent decade of the 1680s, a stream of petulant letters flowed, sometimes at the rate of one a week, to the door of the prominent London bookseller Richard Chiswell. Their author, Sir William Boothby (1637–1707), of Ashbourne Hall, Derbyshire, may reasonably be assumed to have been one of Chiswell's more demanding customers: his letterbooks bear witness in some detail to the formation of one country gentleman's library, but are perhaps even more remarkable for their strident tone. By turns hectoring and plaintive, Boothby's letters leave little doubt as to the importance he attached to his books: 'I would know what of Eminent there is in the presse . . . I would have the Catalouge of the Library [of Brian Walton, bishop of Chester] which is exposed to sale the 30th instant sent me next week without faile, the news letter mentions a new booke of Dryden . . . pray send it.' Boothby's insistence on being sent the latest pamphlets and newspapers as soon as they became available reflected his profound concern with the political and religious controversies of the day. Constantly anxious that distance from London might lead him to miss out, despite his regular demands for the term catalogues and any other sources of bibliographical news, he turned also to the Lichfield bookseller Michael Johnson: 'I would know whether you can furnish me constantly weekely with all the printed pamphletts sermons and discourses which come out . . . but you must be carefull & constant for my greatest pleasure is in bookes – and indeed my busines and I make and keepe collections of all comes out.'[1]

There was a practical imperative to Boothby's collecting of information about current affairs, especially at a time when the nation was in turmoil and

1 P. Beal, '"My Books are the great joy of my life": Sir William Boothby, seventeenth-century bibliophile', *The Book Collector* 46 (1997), 350–78, and *ODNB*; Boothby's diary and letterbooks, British Library MSS Add. 71689–92. For other collectors of contemporary pamphlets and newspapers, see the chapter by J. Roberts above, 36–46.

for a landowner who had played a minor role in local public life as a sheriff and as a participant in the county assizes. But his 'Convenient graceful Library' of 'near Six Thousand Books', mentioned on his memorial in the local church, also contained a much wider range of books – on theology, law and medicine, classical literature, poetry and plays, history and travel. Boothby's diary and letters provide a rare insight into what a library in this period could mean to its owner. 'I this day finished the reading over the holy *Bible*', he recorded in his diary in 1677, 'oh how great doth my soule delight in it, I find more pleasure in reading it then in any Booke besides'. Writing to Michael Johnson in 1685, he confessed: 'My company is gone, so that now I hope to injoy my selfe & Bookes againe, which are the true pleasures of my life, all else is but vanity & noyse.' Other letters reveal Boothby subscribing to books on behalf of his wife, and purchasing the latest editions to replace old ones already in his library, as well as buying secondhand books from Johnson and commissioning Chiswell to bid for him at auction in London. There are lengthy, often agonised, disputes over the condition of books, damage sustained in transit, and especially their binding: 'the pasteboard is very weak (which is a great fault) and the Leather not well pollished – nor Books well Beaten'; 'the Armes on the Back are very ill done and raither like a Blott than any visible Coate'; 'most of your books which are old, new Bound are so ill Bound that I cannot open them to reade without much difficulty'. Boothby had stamps made of both his coat of arms and his crest, intended for his folios and smaller books respectively, and evidently cared deeply about the appearance of his library: 'I designe to make all my Bookes sutable', he wrote in 1688, 'by Guilding the Backs, and Lettering them . . . and puting on my Armes . . . So that I have some thoughts to have a Booke-binder come ore and do all the worke under my owne Eye and direction.'

Exceptional though Boothby undoubtedly was in articulating his passion for books so forcefully, as a bibliophile on the Derbyshire–Staffordshire border he was by no means isolated. His immediate circle included the minor poet Sir Aston Cokayne (1608–84), from whom he bought Ashbourne Hall. Boothby was in the habit of lending books to another man of letters, Charles Cotton the younger (1630–87), his neighbour at Beresford Hall eight miles away, reminding Cotton in 1685 'to returne those books you have perused, for my Books are the great joy of my life'. Cotton seems also to have owned a library of some sophistication, which Cokayne celebrated in verse: 'D'Avila, Bentivoglio, Guicciardine,/ And Machiavel, the subtle Florentine,/ In their originals, I have read through,/ Thanks to your library, and unto you.' Several of the surviving volumes from Cotton's library were owned and inscribed in

turn by his daughter Catherine (d.1710), who is also mentioned in Boothby's letters.[2]

Further north in the county lay Chatsworth, where Boothby visited the earl of Devonshire in November 1676. William Cavendish (1617–84), 3rd earl of Devonshire, had been a pupil of the philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) and travelled with his tutor on the continent during the 1630s. By the 1670s the aged Hobbes remained under his patronage and protection, moving between Devonshire House in London and the Cavendish family's Derbyshire houses, Chatsworth and Hardwick. For a time Hobbes had acted also as the family's librarian, helping to form a library of some 2,000 books, which were listed in a catalogue he compiled in the 1620s; according to another catalogue, made under Hobbes's direction in 1657, the books were then still at Hardwick, though many of them later came to Chatsworth. For much of his life, Hobbes's position in the Cavendish household gave him the ready access to scholarly works from all over Europe which he needed for his own writing.[3]

A few miles away, near the border with Yorkshire, was Renishaw Hall, the home of George Sitwell (1657–1721), a Cambridge-educated country landowner who made money from the local iron trade. In the pocket almanacks which he kept from the 1680s until his death, Sitwell noted both his purchases of books and also numerous loans from his library at Renishaw: many of these were to his immediate family, his brothers, his cousins, his aunt (the life of the earl of Rochester and plays by Dryden) and his mother (a play, *Romes follies, or the amorous fryars*, and Spenser's *Faerie queene*). Among other borrowers of books were Sitwell's tenants, his apothecary, the local MP, a Chesterfield schoolmaster (Ralph Cudworth's neo-platonist *The true intellectual system of the universe*) and a friend's groom (a copy of *The compleat farrier*). Most of the loans were devotional texts, but they also included works of light literature, history, current affairs and philosophy; some titles (not always the most recent or fashionable) were borrowed several times by different people, perhaps suggesting that Sitwell recommended particular books from his library quite widely.[4]

2 J. Beresford (ed.), *Poems of Charles Cotton* (London, 1923), 18; P. Beal, *Index of English literary manuscripts*, vol. 2, pt 1 (London and New York, 1987), 215–18.

3 N. Barker, *The Devonshire inheritance: five centuries of collecting at Chatsworth* (Alexandria, VA, 2003), 25–6, 95; N. Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford, 2002), 2, 24, 458; J. Hamilton, 'Hobbes's study and the Hardwick library' *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 16 (1978), 445–53.

4 Sir George Sitwell, 'Pocket almanacks at Renishaw, 1671–1721', *Journal of the Derbyshire Archaeological and Natural History Society* 12 (1890), 193–227.

At the centre of a triangle formed by Chatsworth, Hardwick and Renishaw was the market town of Chesterfield, which had at least two booksellers in the late seventeenth century. Joseph Bradley (d. 1699) had a stock of nearly 600 volumes at the time of his death, including schoolbooks for the local grammar school and medical texts, reflecting the presence in the town of several apothecaries and doctors. One of the latter, William Allott MD (d. 1670), was the nephew of the Linacre Professor of Physic at Cambridge and had inherited 'all his Phissicall Books, paper books, and all his phissicall notes, with all the Chirurgical Instruments'. Allott's library, valued at £15, seems to have been one of the largest collections of books in Chesterfield at this time: it also contained the substantial folio *Historie of Great Britain* by John Speed and a Calvinist Latin Bible, together with several works of nonconformist divinity by writers such as Samuel Annesley and Richard Baxter. Law books, by contrast, are recorded in the inventory of Godfrey Clarke (d. 1670), a member of a family of attorneys who owned an estate at Somersall, just outside the town; Clarke's 'Library in the study' was valued at £30. But these are not typical examples: most Chesterfield probate inventories of this period – if they mention books at all – make it clear that these were worth very little, usually less than one pound. Bibles were by far the commonest books to be identified, sometimes in more than one copy or edition, and variously described as 'great', 'large', 'big', 'little', 'old' and 'a Church Bible'; small books, such as the chapbooks sold at the Chesterfield fairs, were not sufficiently valuable to be recorded. When a 'library' was mentioned by the appraisers, the word invariably meant nothing more elaborate than a group of books.[5]

Another, quite different library was to be found in the small town of Ashover, about six miles south of Chesterfield. The autobiography of its owner Leonard Wheatcroft (1627–1707) provides only a tantalising glimpse of his books: 'In 74 I began to write another booke called the Memorys Recreation . . . and I cumended however the coppy of it you may find among the rest of my writings in my libry.' Wheatcroft was an autodidact who earned his living in a variety of ways, as a tailor, gardener, carpenter and schoolmaster, but mainly as parish clerk for thirty-six years. His role in the local rural community seems to have been built around his skills in reading and writing, most notably as the composer and performer of celebratory and commemorative verses for special occasions, sometimes with gentry patronage and within an economy based on the exchange of goods and services. Wheatcroft found inspiration

5 R. Milward, 'Books and booksellers in late 17th century Chesterfield', *Derbyshire Miscellany* 10 (1985), 119–45.

for some of his poems in contemporary printed miscellanies and he wrote up his work in the form of manuscript volumes which followed in layout the conventions of printed books. His 'libry' contained at least seven of his own manuscript books and a remarkable group of copybooks by writing masters, together with printed chapbook histories and romances, poetry and music; many were probably bought cheaply secondhand and some were already old when they were acquired, dating back to the previous century. More recent books, particularly sermons, religious and practical texts and schoolbooks, were later added by his son Titus (b. 1679), who succeeded him as schoolmaster and parish clerk, and who compiled more than a dozen manuscript books of his own, including didactic manuals in question and answer format relating to the church and the school. The library catalogue which Titus began in 1722 lists more than twenty manuscripts and over 350 printed books, valued in total at more than £32, an exceptionally large number of books at this level of society. Both the contents of the library itself and Leonard Wheatcroft's remark about it provide some indication that it may have had a wider circulation, as another strand to the family's varied contribution to the cultural, educational and religious life of Ashover.[6]

This extended example, which mentions only a few libraries owned by individuals or families within a relatively small area in one English county in the last decades of the seventeenth century, may help to illustrate the density and complexity of book ownership in this period and suggest some of the broader themes of this subject. Most of this history remains to be written at local level: it is almost entirely absent from the older surveys of private book ownership and collecting, and even the identification of relevant documentary evidence is still at an early stage.[7] Moreover, the most substantial surviving records,

6 D. Riden (ed.), 'The autobiography of Leonard Wheatcroft of Ashover 1627–1706', *Derbyshire Record Society* 20 (1993), 71–117, at 90; M. Bell, 'Reading in seventeenth-century Derbyshire: the Wheatcrofts and their books', in P. Isaac and B. McKay (eds.), *The moving market* (New Castle, DE, 2001), 161–8; C. C. Brown, 'The Black Poet of Ashover, Leonard Wheatcroft', *English Manuscript Studies 1100–1700* 11 (2002), 181–202. Extracts from the catalogue were printed in C. Kerry, 'Ashover. Memoranda by Titus Wheatcroft, A.D. 1722', *Journal of the Derbyshire Archaeological and Natural History Society* 19 (1897), 24–52.

7 Among the older histories are W. Y. Fletcher, *English book collectors* (London, 1902); S. de Ricci, *English collectors of books & manuscripts (1530–1930) and their marks of ownership* (Cambridge, 1930); B. Quaritch, *Contributions towards a dictionary of English book-collectors* (London, 1892–1921). The work of S. Jayne, *Library catalogues of the English renaissance*, 2nd edn (Godalming, 1983) has not yet been continued beyond 1640, with the notable exception of R. C. Alston, *Handlist of library catalogues and lists of books and manuscripts in the British Library Department of Manuscripts*, Bibliographical Society Occasional Paper 6 (London, 1991). For auction catalogues, see A. N. L. Munby and L. Coral, *British book sale catalogues 1676–1800* (London, 1977).

in the form of auction catalogues and inventories, often provide very limited help in establishing the dynamics of individual book ownership and in resolving questions of definition and context. To describe these as 'private' libraries obscures the extent to which books were being borrowed, lent and exchanged; to describe them as 'personal' does not perhaps adequately reflect the silent choices exercised by wives, sons and daughters, nor the steady incremental effect of inheritance. Libraries were becoming larger in this period, but a count of the number of volumes is the crudest measure of a library's importance; it was possible by the later seventeenth century for quantities of books to be accumulated through little more than inertia, while even a single book might take on profound significance for its owner, depending on that individual's aspirations, interests and particular circumstances. A more sophisticated approach to individual book ownership, concentrating on the presence of intellectually important or unusual texts, or the latest books, or the relatively expensive or most difficult to obtain, may well shed light on an owner's priorities and choices. But these too were liable to change in the course of a lifetime, just as books themselves sometimes came and went.

As larger quantities of printed books came into circulation in the course of the seventeenth century, through both the production of new books and the release onto the market of the libraries of previous generations, there is more and more evidence, albeit anecdotal, of their impact upon the lives of humble people. But if there were more opportunities to acquire books, which might make it possible for collections to be formed by people of relatively modest means who had been gripped by intellectual curiosity or religious enthusiasm or the enjoyment of reading, the evidence of probate inventories suggests that the extent to which these opportunities were taken up broadly continued to reflect disposable income, social status and educational attainment. In the diocese of Worcester, for example, only about 15 per cent of the inventories proved between 1699 and 1713 mention books; most of these belonged to gentlemen, clergy and professional people. Books were almost certainly under-represented in inventories since they were of relatively low value and they were awkward to describe: only the Bible was identified with any regularity by the Worcestershire appraisers. Some other devotional titles, however, notably *The whole duty of man*, were mentioned in Worcestershire wills of the same period and were presumably of especial significance to those bequeathing them. In towns, with a higher concentration of gentlemen, professionals and tradesmen and greater access to education, books were more widely spread. A study of Canterbury, Faversham and Maidstone suggested that by 1640 more than 40 per cent of the inventories already mentioned books, while almost all gentlemen

and professional people were book-owners. In the city of Lincoln, between 1661 and 1714, books were mentioned in 44 per cent of the inventories, which identified thirty-two bibles, four copies of Foxe's Book of Martyrs and two copies of the Book of Common Prayer. A sample of London probate inventories for 1725 suggested that more than half of them contained books, while among the members of City livery companies whose goods were recorded by a separate probate court, the Court of Orphans, the corresponding figure was 94 per cent. In Scotland too, the owners of books in this period were mostly landowners, ministers and merchants.[8]

Exceptions to this pattern may have had to make choices contrary to type, and this makes them all the more interesting. Thomas Tryon (1634–1703), the son of a rural Oxfordshire plasterer, was already in his teens and herding a flock of sheep when he bought a primer and, with the help of the shepherds, 'learn'd to Read imperfectly, my Teachers themselves not being ready Readers'. Later, as an apprentice in London, Tryon was able to spend his wages on tuition and more books and he stayed up through the night to read; he went on to write books himself on a wide range of subjects. The poet Stephen Duck (1705–56), an agricultural labourer in Wiltshire, embarked on his literary career as a result of making friends with someone who, while working as a servant in London, had come into possession of a few books, which included seven of Shakespeare's plays, *Paradise lost*, the *Spectator*, and works by Dryden and classical poets.[9]

Bibles, New Testaments and abridgements of scripture are singled out most often in these autobiographical accounts, not least because the genre was particularly taken up by dissenters.[10] The Presbyterian minister Richard Baxter (1615–91) recalled that in his childhood the historical part of the Bible had 'greatly delighted' him, but his spiritual awakening occurred at the age of fifteen when 'a poor Day-Labourer' lent his father 'an old torn Book' (a Protestant version of a work by the Jesuit Robert Parsons). This experience was soon reinforced by a purchase from 'a poor Pedlar [who] came to the Door that

8 J. A. Johnston, 'Books in wills', *The Local Historian* 15 (1983), 478–82; P. Clark, 'The ownership of books in England, 1560–1640: the example of some Kentish townsfolk', in L. Stone (ed.), *Schooling and society* (Baltimore and London, 1976), 95–111; J. A. Johnston (ed.), *Probate inventories of Lincoln citizens 1661–1714* (Woodbridge, 1991), lxxxiii; L. Weatherill, *Consumer behaviour and material culture in Britain 1660–1760* (London, 1988), 27, 49; R. A. Houston, *Scottish literacy and the Scottish identity* (Cambridge, 1985), 165–73.

9 M. Spufford, 'First steps in literacy: the reading and writing experiences of the humblest seventeenth-century spiritual autobiographers', *Social History* 4 (1979), 407–35.

10 For some Irish examples, see R. Gillespie, 'Reading the Bible in seventeenth-century Ireland', in B. Cunningham and M. Kennedy (eds.), *The experience of reading: Irish historical perspectives* (Dublin, 1999), 10–38.

had Ballads and some good Books' and by reading a fragment of the works of William Perkins which belonged to a household servant. By the time Baxter was a young man, he had 'fallen somewhat excessively in love with good Books; so that I thought I had never enow, but scrap'd up as great a Treasure of them as I could'. His description of a domestic accident reveals a life lived in close proximity to books: 'as I sat in my Study, the Weight of my greatest Folio Books brake down three or four of the highest Shelves, when I sat close under them, and they fell down on every side [of] me . . . it was a Wonder that they had not beaten out my Brains, one of the Shelves right over my Head having the six Volumes of Dr. *Walton's Oriental Bible*, and all *Austin's* Works, and the *Bibliotheca Patrum*'. Although, to his distress, Baxter lost this library during his difficult years as an ejected minister following the Restoration, he went on to accumulate another substantial theological collection of some 1,400 volumes by 1691.[11]

The changing fortunes of Baxter's books illustrate the fact that, contrary to the impression given by catalogues and inventories, many libraries in this period existed in a state of flux. The wealthy virtuoso and connoisseur John Evelyn (1620–1706), for example, had built up a library of some 4,000 printed books and over 800 pamphlets by about 1687, when a catalogue was compiled, but this number was significantly reduced during the collector's own lifetime, first when he moved his library from Sayes Court to smaller accommodation at Wotton in 1694, and again after he inherited his son's library in 1699. These dispersals were partly determined by circumstance, but Evelyn in any case preferred to replace old editions with more recent ones and believed that 'most of the trifling Books' in a library 'should be weeded out to give place to better till it were thro'ly purged'.[12] At a much more modest level, the bookseller Francis Kirkman described how he began his own literary collections in the following way:

> once I happened upon a Six Pence, and having lately read that famous Book, of the *Fryar and the Boy*, and being hugely pleased with that, as also the excellent History of the *Seven wise Masters of Rome*, and having heard great Commendation of *Fortunatus*, I laid out all my mony for that, and thought I

11 N. H. Keeble, *The literary culture of nonconformity in later seventeenth-century England* (Leicester, 1987); I. Green, *Print and Protestantism in early modern England* (Oxford, 2000); G. F. Nuttall, 'A transcript of Richard Baxter's library catalogue', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 2 (1951), 207–21, and 3 (1952), 74–100; R. Baxter, *Reliquiae Baxterianae* (London, 1696), vol. 1, 2–5, 82.

12 G. Keynes, *John Evelyn: a study in bibliophily*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1968); G. Mandelbrote, 'John Evelyn and his books', in F. Harris and M. Hunter (eds.), *John Evelyn and his milieu* (London, 2003), 71–94, at 73.

> had a great bargain . . . and borrowing one Book of one person, when I had read it my self, I lent it to another, who lent me one of their Books; and thus *robbing* Peter *to pay* Paul, borrowing and lending from one to another, I in time had read most of these Histories.[13]

Borrowing from bookshops, sometimes for a fee, was also a common practice. In 1707, for instance, Thomas Bell, vicar of Tardebrigge, Worcestershire, returned as unwanted a copy of Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* to the bookseller John Mountfort of Worcester, merely offering 'some allowance' for having read it.[14] For a regular customer of London bookshops, such as the scientist and book-collector Robert Hooke (1635–1703), the distinction between buying and borrowing seems to have been conveniently blurred: Hooke's main recreation was his daily round of the bookshops and his diary often mentions books taken away on credit terms, some of which were later returned or were exchanged for others.[15] A different technique, adopted by Henry Prescott, a deputy registrar of Chester Cathedral in the early eighteenth century, was to spend time 'diverting' himself in the bookshops of Chester, buying books only after he had read them *in situ*.[16]

Opportunities for borrowing, or for consulting books in the libraries of other individuals or institutions, helped to determine the shape of personal collections and may explain the absence of particular works, especially those available only in expensive editions. The personal library of Isaac Newton (1642–1727), for example, contained some 2,100 books, but among them were surprisingly few editions of the works of John Wallis, the Oxford scholar who exercised a profound early influence on Newton's mathematics; it has also been observed that Newton owned few works by some of the most important continental mathematicians and astronomers, such as Tycho Brahe and Kepler. All of these, however, were well represented in the library of Newton's friend and mentor Isaac Barrow (1630–77), Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. In Cambridge, Newton had access not only to Barrow's shelves, but also to a range of astronomical, mathematical and scientific works in the University Library and in the library of Trinity College itself: Newton had no need to duplicate these collections.[17] The biographer of George Bull (1634–1710), the

13 F. Kirkman, *The unlucky citizen* (London, 1673), 10–11.

14 M. Cooper, 'Books returned, accounts unsettled and gifts of country food: customer expectations around 1700', in P. Isaac and B. McKay (eds.), *The mighty engine: the printing press and its impact* (Winchester and New Castle, DE, 2000), 131–42, at 134.

15 L. Rostenberg, *The library of Robert Hooke* (Santa Monica, CA, 1989).

16 D. R. Woolf, *Reading history in early modern England* (Cambridge, 2000), 117.

17 J. Harrison, *The library of Isaac Newton* (Cambridge, 1978), 61–4; for Barrow's library, see M. Feingold (ed.), *Before Newton* (Cambridge, 1990), 333–72.

future bishop of St David's, deplored the fact that 'it is a great Misfortune to a young Clergyman, when he is confined to a Country Cure, to be destitute of such Books as are necessary to enable him to make any considerable Advance in his Studies of Divinity'. As a young man, Bull's solution to this problem, 'to supply the want of a good private Library', was to travel once a year from Bristol to Oxford, 'where he remained about Two Months to enjoy the Benefit and Advantage of the Publick Libraries'.[18]

Clergymen's libraries formed one of the staples of the growing secondhand trade in books, in the same way that they sustained the growth of book auctions from 1676 onwards, an innovation which was itself inspired by the contact of English Presbyterian ministers with the Dutch book trade. While the libraries sold at auction might number several thousand titles and contain – like Baxter's library – expensive sets of folio volumes, many others were much more modest, such as the 130 titles owned by the young curate of Coleshill, Warwickshire, Thomas Devey (1681–1705), which included undergraduate textbooks from Oxford, which he had recently left, some light literature, sermons, a number of popular religious works and some more serious theological ones, valued at some £10, amounting to about half his total worth. A survey of the libraries of the Leicestershire clergy in the late seventeenth century suggests that many of these were roughly comparable to Devey's in size and value.[19]

The journal of Giles Moore (1617–79), rector of Horsted Keynes in Sussex, records two occasions in the 1660s when he bargained for books with the heirs of a deceased local minister, spending £10 and £5 12s 6d respectively. While he was close enough to London to pay occasional visits to the theology booksellers in St Paul's Churchyard, Moore also bought books from London by proxy, with the help of an apprentice, a tanner and the local schoolmaster, among others.[20] Another Sussex book-collector, who had a very different religious point of view but who also seems to have profited from informal sales of theological libraries, was the former town clerk of Rye and leader of its nonconformist congregation, Samuel Jeake (1623–90). Jeake's meticulously compiled 'Register of all my Bookes, Pamphlets, Manuscripts, & Fragments' records over 2,000 items, including a special section of 'Bibles and Testaments' which contained more than thirty different editions, in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, Dutch, Italian and English, with commentaries by continental scholars

18 R. Nelson, *The life of Dr. George Bull* (London, 1713), 42–3.

19 J. Lawler, *Book auctions in England in the seventeenth century* (London, 1898); J. L. Salter, 'The books of an early eighteenth-century curate', *Library*, 5th ser. 33 (1978), 33–46; J. H. Pruett, *The parish clergy under the later Stuarts: the Leicestershire experience* (Urbana, IL, 1978), 45–6.

20 R. Bird (ed.), *The journal of Giles Moore* (Lewes, 1971), 186–7, 189–90, 116–18, 180–92.

such as Beza, Scaliger and Arias Montanus. Jeake's notes for sermons preached at dissenting conventicles in Rye reveal his use of the library, carefully collating different translations of scripture. Perhaps as much as 70 per cent of this library was acquired secondhand, especially in the 1670s, including a substantial group of books on medicine, science and astrology inherited from a Rye apothecary Philip Frith (d. 1670). One of the main purposes of the catalogue appears to have been to record the value of his books: the total of more than £145, although still relatively modest by comparison with some of the libraries being sold by auction in this period, was much more than some of the examples already quoted and represented a very significant investment for someone of limited means. The problem of valuing the library of another Sussex clergyman, John Greenfield (d. 1662), vicar of Peasmarsh, was the subject of correspondence within Jeake's circle, which reveals – in the absence of an established local book trade – a detailed knowledge of secondhand book prices and a sophisticated awareness of the relationship between scholarly worth, scarcity of copies and market value.[21] Provincial networks of this kind are sparsely documented, but another example, from Westmorland in the first decade of the eighteenth century, reveals yeomen farmers stocking their libraries from regular local auction sales of the personal possessions of their deceased neighbours.[22]

Samuel Jeake's library also demonstrates the way in which a collection of books could come to mean much more to its owner than the monetary or intellectual sum of its parts. Jeake, with the help of his son Samuel (1652–99), continued to acquire pamphlets about the controversies of the 1640s and 1650s long after the events to which they referred. The library and its catalogue became a touchstone of its owner's radical political and religious allegiances, and of hopes frustrated since the Restoration, while more recent intellectual currents were ignored. The younger Jeake grew up with these books around him and seems to have considered the library a shared possession, but following his father's death he ceased to record new acquisitions in the catalogue and appears to have regarded the library as a form of memorial to his father. Individual books within libraries could also be invested with a symbolic role. Most conventionally the prominent display of a copy of the Bible, or of Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, was used as a declaration of piety and of commitment to the Protestant cause. Richard Harrison, the chancellor of Lichfield Cathedral, had in his hall 'A Bible and stand and Booke of Martyrs' at the time of his death

21 M. Hunter, G. Mandelbrote, R. Ovenden and N. Smith, *A radical's books: the library catalogue of Samuel Jeake of Rye, 1623–90* (Woodbridge, 1999).

22 M. Purcell, 'Books and readers in eighteenth-century Westmorland: the Brownes of Townend', *Library History* 17 (2001), 91–106.

in 1676; other books to the value of £50 were kept in his study.[23] The emotional charge carried by Foxe's work at this time is amply demonstrated by the diary notes of one reader of the 1660s, Mary Rich, countess of Warwick, who 'found my heart mightily affected with ye great courage w[hi]ch those blessed martyrs suffer'd'.[24] Although the Book of Martyrs retained its impact well into the eighteenth century, secular alternatives might also occupy semi-public space as a fashionable talking-point. John Aubrey, in a letter of encouragement to his fellow antiquary Anthony Wood, reporting on the sales and reception in London of Wood's recently published and controversial *Athenae Oxonienses* (1691–2), a biographical dictionary which mentioned many of their contemporaries, observed that 'Mr Wilmot (B[isho]p of London lies at his house) and Dr Holder &c. thereabout have your book lying in the Hall, as the Booke of Martyrs did heretofore.'[25]

In the years following the Restoration, owners of books were increasingly affected by fashion, reflecting especially continental influences, most markedly at first in London among those with growing disposable income. As with other areas of material acquisition in this burgeoning consumer society, the exercise of personal choice in forming a library was a means of defining individuality and expressing aspirations, as well as offering opportunities for both competition and emulation.[26] Fashion manifested itself both in terms of which books to buy and in a range of self-consciously elaborate library practices. The experience of exile during the Civil War introduced many book-owners with royalist sympathies to French, Dutch and Italian libraries and bookshops, and to continental bibliographical scholarship, as well as to a much more sophisticated aesthetic of book-collecting. John Evelyn, for example, followed the taste of his father-in-law, Sir Richard Browne, Charles I's ambassador in Paris, in commissioning expensive bindings stamped with his monogram. On his return to England, he seems to have required his London binders to follow French practice in the use of marbled paper for pastedowns, contrasting with free end-leaves made from plain white paper.[27] If the Restoration laid the foundations for the growing influence of continental taste, in books as in many other areas, this was compounded by an influx of French Protestant refugees,

23 Clark, 'Ownership of books', 104–5; K. Charlton, *Women, religion and education in early modern England* (London and New York, 1999), 66, 69; D. G. Vaisey (ed.), *Probate inventories of Lichfield and district 1568–1680* (Stafford, 1969), 252–3.

24 Cited by Woolf, *Reading history*, 104.

25 Aubrey to Wood, 21 October 1693: Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Wood 51, fol. 6.

26 For the background, see, for example, P. Earle, *The making of the English middle class* (London, 1989) and Weatherill, *Consumer behaviour*.

27 M. Foot, 'John Evelyn's bookbindings', in Harris and Hunter (eds.), *John Evelyn and his milieu*, 61–70.

following the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, and by closer commercial, political and cultural ties with the Netherlands as a consequence of the Glorious Revolution. The Grand Tour also reinforced this process, particularly following the peace of Utrecht in 1713.

The owners of libraries became more preoccupied with the appearance of their books in the course of this period. Books were turned spine-out on the shelves and binders advertised their services to regild the spines to create a uniform decorative effect. In January 1665, for instance, the civil servant and book collector Samuel Pepys (1633–1703) recorded in his diary that he had given 'thorough direction for the new binding of a great many of my old books, to make my whole study of the same binding'; subsequent diary entries record Pepys gloating over the 'beautiful sight'. In the following year, Pepys employed a joiner from the naval dockyard, 'with great pains contriving presses to put my books up in', and made arrangements for 'a bookbinder to come and gild the backs of all my books to make them handsome, to stand in my new presses'.[28] At this stage, Pepys's library fitted into two bookcases; the collection of some 3,000 books which he bequeathed to Magdalene College, Cambridge, occupied twelve presses, all constructed to a similar design, with glazed doors, and equipped with carved wooden blocks, gilded on the back to match the spines, which were designed to raise individual small volumes to a more uniform height. Pepys's collection is unusually well documented and preserved, but it reflected trends which were spreading rapidly not only through the court and aristocratic elite, but also among government servants and professional men.[29] Pepys's friend and colleague Thomas Povey, for instance, commissioned similar bookcases, probably from the same joiner, which were later used in William Blathwayt's library at Dyrham Park.[30] The use of engraved bookplates also became well established during this period, as the engraver David Loggan wrote to his customer Sir Thomas Isham in 1676: 'it is very much used amongst persons of Quality to past ther Cotes of Armes befor ther bookes instade of wreithing ther Names'.[31]

28 R. Latham and W. Matthews (eds.), *The diary of Samuel Pepys*, 11 vols. (London, 1972–83): 18 January 1665; 10 February 1665; 23 July 1666; 13 August 1666. See also *Catalogue of the Pepys Library at Magdalene College, Cambridge*, vol. 6: *Bindings*, ed. H. M. Nixon (Woodbridge, 1984) and vol. 7: *Facsimile of Pepys's catalogue*, ed. D. McKitterick (Woodbridge, 1991).

29 For a circle of book collectors around the Ordnance Office, see T. A. Birrell, 'The library of Sir Edward Sherburne (1616–1702)', in A. Hunt, G. Mandelbrote and A. Shell (eds.), *The book trade and its customers 1450–1900* (Winchester and New Castle, DE, 1997), 189–204.

30 A. E. C. Simoni, 'The books at Dyrham Park', *Book Collector* 32 (1983), 171–87, 283–95.

31 E. Castle, *English book-plates* (London, 1894), 7–8; W. Hamilton, *Dated book-plates* (London, 1894).

As collections grew in size, their owners devoted more time and energy to arrangement and cataloguing. John Evelyn gave much thought to questions of subject classification, though he seems to have found his own proposals too complicated to implement. His library catalogue (*c.*1687), which is arranged by subject, does however include a special section describing a category of books in which he was particularly interested: 'Historiae Materiarum & Oeconom: Rei Rustici Mechanologici, &c.', comprising some 160 works on practical subjects.[32] Samuel Pepys's final catalogue of 1700–3, drawn up under his instructions by John Jackson and Paul Lorrain and written in a calligraphic hand, is far more ambitious than most other contemporary catalogues of personal collections. It consists of two volumes, the first containing a shelflist and alphabetical catalogue, while the second volume contains an analytical subject catalogue, arranged under thirty-five headings, with special sections for Pepys's particular interests, such as 'Games & Sports', works on the sea and the Navy, plays and popular literature, including chapbooks ('Vulgaria').[33] It was this catalogue which attracted an encomium from the professional book agent and expert John Bagford, in his survey of London libraries of 1708: 'an admirable Method for the easie finding of any Author on various Subjects, and the least Book may be found assoon as the largest Folio. No Catalogue that I ever saw came nigh it, but that of my Lord *Maitland* . . . Catalogues of this Nature would inform us of such rare Books, as our Ancestors formerly enjoy'd.'[34]

The first decades of the eighteenth century were a formative period in the development of book-collecting in England. One feature of this was the increased buying power of English collectors, when many important European libraries came on the market and intervals of peace made foreign travel easier. This was an heroic era of collectors such as Robert and Edward Harley, 1st and 2nd earls of Oxford (1661–1724 and 1689–1741), Thomas Herbert, 8th earl of Pembroke (1656–1733), John Moore, bishop of Ely (1646–1714), Charles Spencer, 3rd earl of Sunderland (1674–1722), and the wealthy physicians Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753) and Dr Richard Mead (1673–1754).[35] All these collections were on a scale which had not been seen before, and included some books

32 Keynes, *John Evelyn*, 295–303.

33 *Catalogue of the Pepys Library*, vol. 7; for Pepys's collections of chapbooks, see M. Spufford, *Small books and pleasant histories* (London, 1981).

34 [John Bagford], 'An Account of several Libraries in and about London', in *A complete volume of the memoirs for the curious* (London, 1710), 167–82, at 179.

35 C. E. Wright and R. C. Wright (eds.), *The diary of Humfrey Wanley, 1715–1726* (London, 1966); K. Swift, 'Bibliotheca Sunderlandiana', in R. Myers and M. Harris (eds.), *Bibliophily* (Cambridge, 1997); M. A. E. Nickson, 'Books and manuscripts', in A. MacGregor (ed.), *Sir Hans Sloane* (London, 1994), 263–77; I. Jenkins, 'Dr Richard Mead (1673–1754) and his circle', in R. G. W. Anderson *et al.* (eds.), *Enlightening the British* (London, 2003), 127–35.

and manuscripts acquired for their rarity, aesthetic qualities and importance as historical artefacts, as well as for their contents.

It was in the late seventeenth century that interest in the technological evolution of printing – and also in establishing the date of different medieval scripts – led to closer study of the material features of books and a greater appreciation of books as physical objects. Scholars such as Jean Mabillon (1632–1707) and Bernard de Montfaucon (1655–1741) laid the foundations of the study of palaeography; Richard Bentley (1662–1742) and others were making advances in the methodology of textual scholarship. Histories of printing incidentally provided convenient lists of important early printed books which collectors might then pursue. Institutional libraries were being reorganised and systematised on new principles, their contents brought under a more sceptical eye and described for the first time in a comparative way. The development of a more sophisticated approach to buying and selling older books – and the complementary skills needed to record accurately what had already been acquired – laid the foundations for modern bibliographical research and scholarship. For information about older books, scholars and collectors could turn to a small (though growing) number of specialist bibliographies and histories, particularly for subjects such as law, medicine or biblical criticism. The most useful general reference works, however, were either the printed catalogues of institutional libraries (particularly important was the substantial catalogue of over 700 pages published in 1674 by the Bodleian Library in Oxford), the sale catalogues of libraries formed by individuals, or the range of publications intended primarily for use by the book trade itself.

The use of printed book auction catalogues began in the Low Countries: the earliest surviving example dates from 1599. During the seventeenth century Dutch book sale catalogues were widely distributed across Europe, and the practice spread to France, Germany and Denmark. The first English book auction catalogue was published in 1676 – although less formally organised sales would have taken place earlier. This method of dispersing libraries quickly became established, with auctions in Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Dublin and elsewhere, but London was once again by far the most important centre, providing a critical mass of booksellers and competing private collectors.[36] Almost from the start, the auctioneers offered to accept commission bids from those unable to attend the auctions in person, but many buyers preferred to

36 T. A. Birrell, 'Books and buyers in seventeenth-century auction sales', in R. Myers, M. Harris and G. Mandelbrote (eds.), *Under the hammer: book auctions since the seventeenth century* (London and New Castle, DE, 2001), 51–64; G. Mandelbrote and Y. Lewis, *Learning to collect: the library of Sir Richard Ellys (1682–1742) at Blickling Hall* (London, 2004).

employ agents, who might be their usual London bookseller, but might fall into another category. The late seventeenth century saw the appearance of semi-professional bookmen, earning (or supplementing) their living by working as auction agents and valuers, as foreign book-buyers and Grand Tour guides, as librarians and cataloguers, proof correctors, translators and journalists. Many of these were French Huguenots, Scottish Jacobites or English non-jurors, who for political reasons were excluded from many forms of employment and were obliged to live off their wits. The sale catalogues of personal libraries were useful to collectors in a general sense as a record of older books, but they were particularly valued because they presented a selection of books, reflecting the discrimination and knowledge of previous owners.

From the start the auction sale catalogues record the libraries of a range of book-owners: clergy, especially nonconformist ministers, were prominent, but the 1680s saw the sales of the library of John, duke of Lauderdale, Richard, Lord Maitland, and Arthur Annesley, earl of Anglesey, as well as of collectors such as Richard Smith. Interspersed among these were trade sales of booksellers' stock – which sometimes found its way also into the sales of named owners. Many printed sale catalogues now survive in single copies, so there may be significant gaps in the record. From what survives, it appears that sales of significant personal libraries continued at the rate of about seven or eight sales per year until the second decade of the eighteenth century. Thereafter they increased to about a dozen sales a year, reaching a peak of about twenty sales for some years in the 1730s. From the 1720s onwards, libraries from overseas, especially those of French bishops, were being imported for sale in London. There were also numerous sales of very large collections, such as those of Thomas Rawlinson in the 1720s, and of the Harleian library in the 1740s. In the same decades, a noticeably wider range of book-owners were also represented: schoolmasters, writers, lawyers and aristocratic collectors.

Contrasting images of book-owners and their collections may help to illustrate some of the changes which took place between the middle of the seventeenth century and the middle of the eighteenth. The monument to Sir Thomas Lucy (d. 1640) in Charlecote church, Warwickshire, shows a country squire in armour, his hand resting on his sword; immediately behind him are four untidy shelves of books, a few of which are identified by carved titles: Homer's *Iliad*, Xenophon in Greek, works by Cato and Horace, and a book of 'Winter Ayres'. It is a small, but learned selection, consistent with the 1,400 volumes recorded in a catalogue of the family library in 1681 – although the latter also relected the theological interests of his wife, Lady Alice Lucy, of whom it was said: 'A great librarie shee had, wherein were most of our choicest

English Authors. No sooner could shee hear of anie pious Book made publick, but she endevored to make it hers, and her self the better for it.'[37] Between 1756 and 1758, another Warwickshire country gentleman, Sir Roger Newdigate, had his portrait painted at Arbury Hall by Arthur Devis.[38] He sits at a desk in a spacious and newly designed Gothic Revival library, with large alcoves for the books in the same style. The books, uniformly bound, have become a civilised background, part of the architecture: none is identifiable, though some large folios are visible which probably reflect Newdigate's serious architectural interests and may have been acquired during his Grand Tour of 1738–40. At the beginning of this period, books were kept in studies and closets; many were in Latin; their contents were praised for their learning and their appearance for their 'neatness', a term which included a sense of appropriateness to function. By the middle of the following century, larger personal collections of books were housed in library rooms, which also acted as a social space; most of the books were in English; they were admired for their 'politeness' and the prevailing aesthetic was one of elegance. At all levels of society many more books were owned, but it may be that proportionately fewer were being read.

37 Henry Summerson, 'The Lucys of Charlecote and their library', *National Trust Studies 1979* (London, 1978), 149–59.

38 C. Saumarez Smith, *Eighteenth-century decoration: design and the domestic interior in England* (London, 1993), 202.

13

Library buildings and fittings

JOHN NEWMAN

The enormous increase in the number of printed books during the sixteenth century eventually forced complete redesigning of library buildings and furnishings throughout Europe. In Britain this transformation took place over a long period, from the 1590s to the early eighteenth century. It was not until the 1750s that library buildings came into use in England and Ireland which fully reflected what had been achieved a century and a half earlier in the principal Counter-Reformation libraries, Sixtus V's Vatican Library in Rome (opened 1587), Philip II's palace library at the Escorial (*c.*1567–84) and the great library built for Cardinal Federigo Borromeo in 1603–9, the Ambrosiana in Milan.

Traditionally libraries had been fitted to provide individually lit spaces for readers seated at desks to which manuscripts, and later printed books, were chained. Library rooms were therefore normally long and narrow, lit on both sides by small windows set low down to provide focused lighting for the sloping desk tops on which the chained books were read. General lighting could be provided, if at all, only by a larger window in an end wall.

The grandiose new libraries of Italy and Spain were in every way different. Their contents could be counted not in the low hundreds but in the many thousands. Books were shelved against the walls, not fixed by chains but protected by wire guard-doors and accessed from higher shelves by means of galleries. Lighting was general, not focused, from windows set high up the walls or in a clerestory under a vaulted ceiling. Seating was sparse or wholly absent, and books would generally be removed for reading elsewhere. Such library rooms were intended not only, or not even primarily, to foster study but as displays of wealth and patronage.

In England the first step towards adapting library design to take account of the inexorable increase in book numbers was taken in 1589–90 at Merton College, Oxford, where the slope-topped lecterns in the west wing of the fourteenth-century library were replaced by stalls, projecting at right angles

to the walls between the windows. These provided shelves at two levels above the reading shelf, as well as the pre-existing shelf below it.[1] Books remained chained but the space for shelving them was thereby tripled. The medieval reading bench was retained. The same system was used on a larger scale in the complete refitting of the University Library by Sir Thomas Bodley *c.*1598–1604. Here the stalls had three shelves above the reading shelf. Small and rare volumes were kept unchained in locked cupboards in closets at the inner end of the library.[2] The stall system quickly caught on in Oxford and by 1610 had been copied in college libraries at St John's, All Souls, Queen's, New College, Corpus, Magdalen and Christ Church.[3] The problem caused by the bulk of the stalls darkening library rooms was addressed at Merton by inserting dormer windows and at All Souls by a new, decorated plaster ceiling.

At Cambridge developments took a different turn. As late as *c.*1630 new lectern desks with provision for chaining and fixed seats were set up in the library at Trinity Hall.[4] But chaining, which continued to be normal in Oxford until the mid-eighteenth century, in Cambridge had become obsolete almost everywhere by *c.*1650. The pioneer in Cambridge was the new library at St John's College (Figure 1), built and fitted from scratch in 1623–8 at the expense of John Williams, bishop of Lincoln.[5] This was on a new scale for a college library, 110 feet long and 30 feet broad, and although it was fitted with tall, 8 feet high, projecting stalls of Oxford type, the height of the room and the loftiness of the side windows, which rose well above the tops of the stalls, not to mention the great canted oriel window at the inner end, flooded it with light. Chains were not provided, nor were seats for readers; they had to stand to consult books placed on the sloping tops of lower intermediate stalls set in front of the windows. Stools were provided, whether as seats or to stand on. Although some of the innovations in the library at St John's were not imitated, its size, its brightness and the freedom with which books could be moved within it all pointed towards the future. In particular its stalls, without chains or fixed seating for readers, were imitated at Clare Hall (1627), Peterhouse (1641–8), the University Library (after 1649), King's (1659, 1677) (but fitted for chains since the library space in the aisles of the chapel was not secure),

1 N. R. Ker, 'Oxford college libraries in the sixteenth century', *Bodleian Library Record* 6 (1959), 459–515.

2 J. Newman, 'The architectural setting', in N. Tyacke (ed.), *The history of the University of Oxford* (Oxford, 1997), vol. 4, 147–8.

3 *Ibid.*, 147.

4 R. Willis and J. W. Clark, *The architectural history of the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1886), vol. 3, 448–50.

5 J. W. Clark, *The care of books*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 1909), 246–8. See also *Country Life* 6, 1 November 1930.

1. St John's College Library, Cambridge

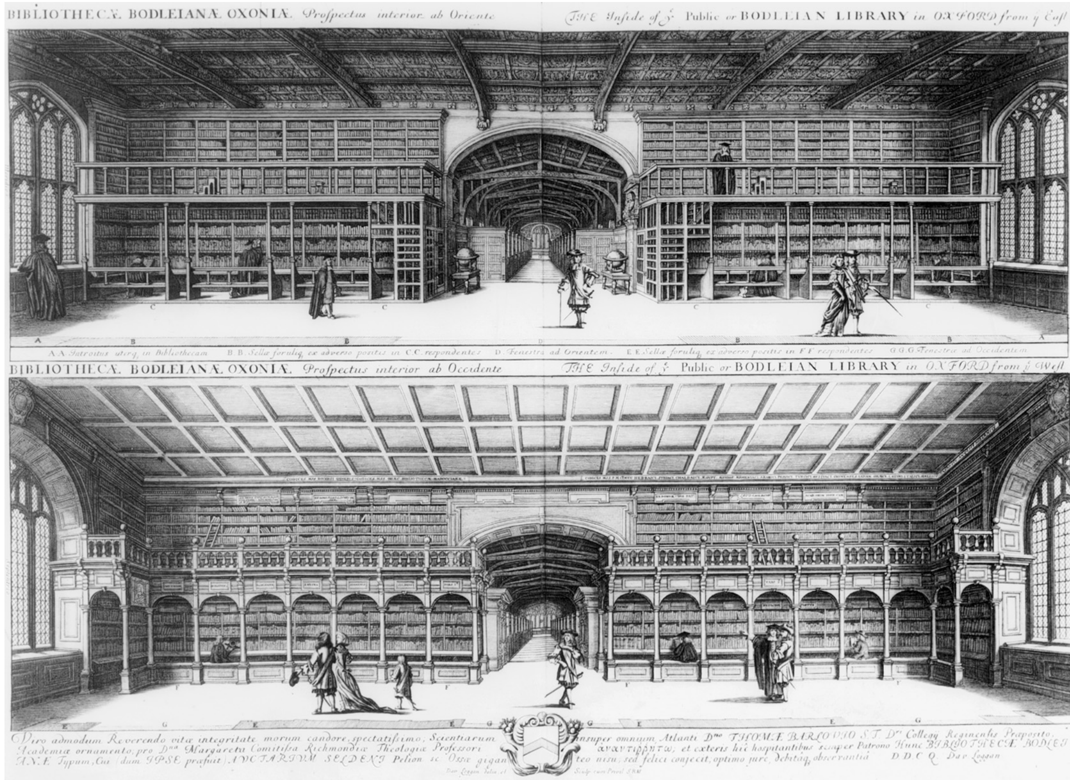
Jesus (between 1663 and 1679), Gonville and Caius (1675), Emmanuel (1679) and Pembroke (1690).[6]

Meanwhile back in Oxford one more crucial development had taken place. This was the first large-scale use of wall shelving. In Arts End, the eastward extension to the University Library of 1610–12, the decision to replicate features of the fifteenth-century building precluded normal library fenestration. A proposal for fitting the new room with stalls was therefore set aside.[7] Instead, chained volumes were shelved against the lower half of the walls on all four sides, and smaller unchained ones against the upper half, right up to the roof. These latter were reached by means of timber stairs and galleries and secured by lockable gates at the foot of the stairs. The main drawback of the whole arrangement was that readers of the chained volumes, seated at a fixed bench and shelf along the base of the shelving, were sitting in their own light, as is easy to appreciate from David Loggan's engraving of 1675 (Figure 2).[8] Yet this drawback cannot have been considered serious, as when the westward extension of the library, Selden End, was fitted up in 1639 all the same features were included.[9]

While the internal arrangements of these two great new library structures may have been innovative, and classicising in their details, their external architecture was in both cases Gothic. At Oxford the additions to the Divinity School and the University Library above it were deliberately designed to harmonise with the fifteenth-century building to which they were attached. At Cambridge Bishop Williams was persuaded by a traditionalist argument: 'some men of judgement like the best the old fashion of church window, holding it most meet for such a building'.[10] Doubtless the argument was in favour not only of the Gothic form of the mullioned and traceried side windows but also of their large size, unprecedented in libraries at that time.

By the 1620s, however, Inigo Jones was beginning to promote a properly understood Italianate classicism at court and beyond. In future, libraries, with the rarest exceptions, would be classical.[11] The first fully classical building containing a library was erected in the City of London in 1652–3 to the design

6 Willis and Clark, *Architectural history of Cambridge*, vol. 3, 453–65.
7 H. Colvin, *Unbuilt Oxford* (New Haven, 1983), 7.
8 D. Loggan, *Oxonia illustrata* (Oxford, 1675), and the detail reproduced in Clark, *Care of books*, 275.
9 Newman, 'Architectural setting', 162.
10 Quoted in N. Pevsner, *The buildings of England: Cambridgeshire*, 2nd edn (Harmondsworth, 1970), 148.
11 At Brasenose College, Oxford, the library is part of the hybrid Classical–Gothic additions of 1656–63; for the later, externally Gothic Codrington Library at All Souls College, Oxford, see below.



2. Bodleian Library, Oxford: engraving by David Loggan (1675), showing Arts End (upper view) and Selden End

of John Webb, Jones's pupil and successor, for the Royal College of Physicians. In little more than a decade the building had fallen victim to the Great Fire; nevertheless, enough is known about its design to assess its significance.[12] John Aubrey described it as 'a noble building of Roman architecture of Rustique work with Corinthian pilasters' having internally 'a great parlour . . . of the Fellows to meet in belowe, and a Library above'. This suggests a ground storey with rusticated walls, and Corinthian pilasters applied to the library storey above. Aubrey says nothing about the internal arrangements. Among John Webb's surviving drawings, however, are six design drawings.[13] They include a preliminary scheme for a seven-bay rectangular building of two storeys to which a system of superimposed pilasters is applied. An arcaded open walk below supports an upper storey divided between the library (three bays) and a 'repository' or museum (four bays). Other designs are for a four-bay library (Figure 3). Internally the library is a combination of old and new. Stalls and benches project from the walls on both sides of the room in the standard Oxford fashion, regardless of the fact that one side wall is windowless. However full-height columns decorate the outer ends of the stalls and one design shows antique-style busts above them, a form of decoration which was to become popular in England.[14] On the evidence of the preliminary designs, the library of the Royal College of Physicians displayed a new classical splendour, but inadequate thought in the way it was fitted out. How far Webb improved his design in execution cannot be known.

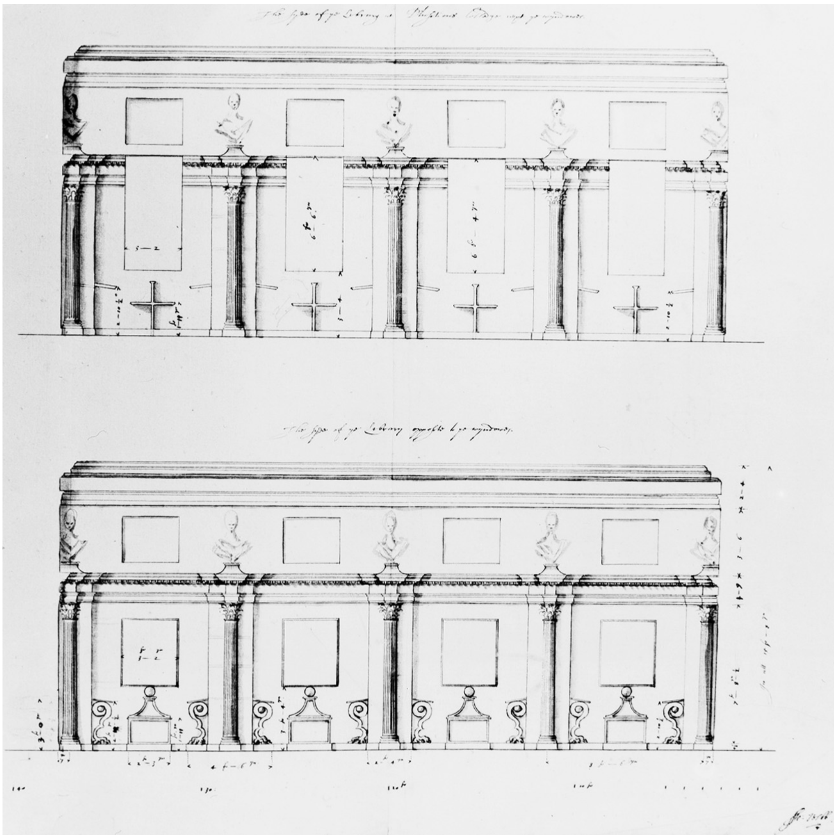
Nevertheless Webb's library must have been familiar to the architect who conceived the greatest range of new ideas in library design, Christopher Wren, Professor of Astronomy at Gresham College, London, 1657–61. Wren probably first thought about library design in the early 1660s when the founding Fellows of the Royal Society, of whom he was one, discussed proposals, never realised, for the erection of a library.[15] But that was before he had had any practical experience of building. His most creative period as a designer of libraries was the mid-1670s, when he had already been Surveyor of the King's Works for half a decade and was embarking on the construction of St Paul's Cathedral. From these years come two executed buildings and two unrealised designs.

12 C. E. Newman, 'The first library of the Royal College of Physicians', *Journal of the Royal College of Physicians* 3 (1969), 299–307; J. Bold, *John Webb* (Oxford, 1989), 165–7.

13 J. Harris and A. Tait, *Catalogue of the drawings by Inigo Jones, John Webb and Isaac de Caus at Worcester College* (Oxford, 1979), figs. 57–62.

14 For the arrangement of book presses under the busts of Roman emperors in Cotton House *c.*1630, see C. Tite, *The manuscript library of Sir Robert Cotton* (London, 1994), 79–99.

15 M. B. Hall, *The library and archives of the Royal Society, 1660–1990* (London, 1992), 2–3.



3. Royal College of Physicians' Library, London: drawing by John Webb (1651) in Worcester College, Oxford

They show that he had become thoroughly persuaded of the advantages of wall shelving and had given careful consideration to the problems of lighting and access.

Wren's new ideas are most clearly and simply revealed in the new library at Lincoln Cathedral constructed and fitted up in 1674–6 under his directions over the north walk of the cloister.[16] Placed above an open arcade, the room is no more than 18 feet wide but of exceptional length, 118 feet 9 inches, and considerable hight, 13 feet 4 inches. Lit on the south side only, by means of eleven large windows (plus one at the west end), the room was unsuitable for

16 *Wren Society* 17 (1940), 76–7; N. Linnell, 'Michael Honywood and Lincoln Cathedral Library', *Library*, 6th ser., 5 (1983), 126–40.

stalls, so the books were accommodated on seven levels of shelving against the entire north wall from a level even with the window sills up to just below an elaborate entablature. No fixed seats or shelves were provided for the convenience of readers.

While the library at Lincoln was under construction Wren made designs for two others of much greater significance, the first to accompany a new Senate House for the University of Cambridge, the other at Trinity College, Cambridge. According to a well-informed contemporary, it was the almost immediate collapse of the former scheme that galvanised the Master of Trinity, Isaac Barrow, to proceed with the latter.[17] However, the physical circumstances of the two schemes were quite different. For the University Library, which was to be built along the flank of the Senate House, he proposed a broader, higher and slightly longer (thirteen-bay) version of what was under construction at Lincoln, but with full-height wall shelving in twelve levels against all four walls and a mid-height gallery all round. Lighting was to come from a single window in the centre of each of the three unattached sides, with an upper oculus in each short end; but the major light source would have been a skylight in the centre of the roof.

For Trinity College Wren worked up two schemes. The rejected scheme, known from a set of highly finished drawings, is for a free-standing library of unprecedented form, in plan a square of 60 feet externally but circular inside, fronted by an attached six-column portico and surmounted by a dome.[18] The library room was set not in an upper storey but merely above a low basement. Within the room itself readers were to sit at long fixed benches backing against a high, plain podium, and consult books on long tables curved to the form of the room. Above, books were to encircle the room on fifteen levels of shelving, rising 21 feet high, separated into ten divisions by giant Corinthian pilasters and doubtless to be restrained from falling by decorative mesh wire guards. No galleries were to interrupt this serried display, for access was ingeniously contrived behind the bookshelves by means of encircling corridors at three levels. D-shaped stairs in the four corners of the square plan were to link the levels vertically. The great circular reading space was to be wholly top-lit, by ten large lunette windows at the springing of the dome, and by a central crowning lantern.

During the mid-1670s Wren had the design of domed structures much in mind: the Great Model for St Paul's Cathedral had been constructed between

17 R. North, *The lives of . . . Francis North . . .* , ed. A. Jessopp (London, 1890), vol. 2, 326.
18 D. McKitterick (ed.), *The making of the Wren Library* (Cambridge, 1995), figs. 28–31.

October 1673 and mid-1674, and a scheme for a vast domed mausoleum commemorating Charles I had been seriously considered by Parliament in 1674.[19] Yet for a library his domed design owes some of its key features to one of the most admired European libraries, the Ambrosiana in Milan. This was the pioneer in being raised above ground by a basement rather than a full storey, in its full-height wall shelving of books and in its clerestory lighting from large lunettes under the vault: the Ambrosiana is mentioned by Naudé throughout his treatise as providing a standard for the ordering of a library, as Wren must have been aware through John Evelyn's English translation of 1661.[20]

Although Wren's domed design would prove influential a generation later (see below), it did not find favour at Trinity. Perhaps Wren did not expect it to, for there is some evidence that he may have been working it up at the same time as the executed scheme.[21] This too was presented by Wren in a series of highly finished drawings, which make clear that here, as in the domed scheme, building and fittings were conceived together and each conditioned the form of the other. What is more, there survives Wren's draft of the letter of explanation which he sent to the Master, Dr Isaac Barrow, explaining the significance, aesthetic and practical, of all the elements depicted in the various drawings.[22]

As executed, Wren's library stands in the tradition of Cambridge library design, but raises it to a new scale and a new magnificence (Figure 4). The library is a long rectangular upper room set not above a ground storey but above an open promenade divided lengthwise by a row of columns 'according to the manner of the auncients', to provide support for the library floor above. Such support was essential, since the library is no less than 40 feet wide. Its great internal length, just under 200 feet, is conditioned by the fact that the whole building closes the inner, west end of Neville's Court, overlapping its side ranges. The internal height of the library room, 37 feet, was unprecedented, and made possible by setting its floor quite low, aligned with the first floor of the side ranges. Externally this is ingeniously masked, towards the court by the use of superimposed orders, Doric below, Ionic above, applied to superimposed arcades, and towards the River Cam by simpler means. The library room is reached from the north end of the promenade below by means of a staircase set beyond the main range in an inconspicuous domed pavilion. The immediate

19 R. Beddard, 'Wren's mausoleum for Charles I and the cult of the royal martyr', *Architectural History* 27 (1984), 136–49; D. Keene, A. Burns and A. Saint (eds.), *St Paul's* (New Haven, 2004), 190.

20 G. Naudé, trans. J. Evelyn, *Instructions concerning erecting of a library* (London, 1661), 4, 63, 72, 80–1, 88.

21 McKitterick, *Wren Library*, 32 and fig. 24.

22 *Ibid.*, figs. 32–40 and Appendix.

4. Trinity College Library, Cambridge

impression given by the library room itself is of spaciousness. This is because all the internal dimensions greatly exceed those of any earlier English library. The central aisle itself is almost 20 feet wide, and paved, as Wren proposed, with black and white marble. Eleven bays are defined by projecting stalls six shelves high (Wren proposed five). The shelving is carried across the walls

between each pair of shelves, creating a series of 'cells' or closets, 12 feet wide, for which Wren designed the still-surviving movable tables and stools. All this can be seen as developing ideas first tried out awkwardly at St John's but with the crucial additional feature of wall shelving, which greatly increases the library's capacity.

Wren's other master-stroke is his management of light. In this too the library at St John's, with its large, high windows, showed the way. But Wren placed his broad and high arched windows so that their sills sat above the shelving and their heads reached almost to the ceiling. Three matching windows lit the large end bays of the library where entrance doorways were sited and the '4 lesser Celles' envisaged by Wren 'to be shut up with some neat Lattice doors for archives'. Thus the library is lit by no fewer than twenty-eight uniform windows, diffusing light throughout the room.

Both its spaciousness and its brightness define Wren's library as a public room, not merely as a setting for private study. Reinforcing this impression is the handsome order of Corinthian pilasters ranged between the windows and carrying a richly modelled entablature all round. Wren's drawings show that he envisaged plaster statues 3 feet 6 inches high on the stall ends: 'a noble ornament'. In the event busts of authors ancient and modern occupied these sites, along the lines recommended by seventeenth-century library theorists.[23]

Wren's other surviving library was a minor element in his St Paul's Cathedral. It had to be slotted in above the Consistory Court off the south-west corner of the nave, and reached up an exhaustingly long spiral stair. In shape it is a broad rectangle with re-entrant corners and windows set very high on three sides (Figure 5). Books are shelved full-height against all four walls, the upper half accessible from a timber gallery to which lead little stairs in the re-entrant. It displays all Wren's characteristic ingenuity, has restrained decorative carving in wood and stone and survives almost unaltered. Wren also designed libraries, now demolished, for Archbishop Tenison's foundation at St Martin-in-the-Fields (1684) and the Royal College of Physicians (1686–7), the latter replacing Webb's.[24]

Trinity College library took twenty years to build and furnish, and was finally brought into use in 1695. By that date the first in a series of grandiose college libraries inspired by the scale and magnificence of Wren's building was

23 M. Baker 'The portrait sculpture', in *Ibid.*, 110–32.

24 L. M. Payne and C. E. Newman, 'The history of the College library: the Dorchester Library', *Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of London* 4 (1970), 234–46; P. Hoare, 'Archbishop Tenison's Library at St Martin in the Fields: the building and its history', *London Topographical Record* 29 (2006), 127–50.

5. St Paul's Cathedral Library, London

under construction in Oxford. This was at Queen's College, 1692–5, the initial phase of a grand classical rebuilding of virtually the entire college.[25] Although its exterior form, eleven bays with an open arcade below and large, arched library windows above, clearly links the Queen's library with Wren's, it is decisively shorter, some 120 feet, and narrower, some 30 feet, and the library room is less lofty. Thus hardly any of Wren's innovations in layout and fittings were possible. Indeed Queen's College library stays firmly attached to Oxford's century-old tradition, with stalls to which the books were chained, and fixed reading shelves and benches. The advantages of wall shelving had already been appreciated by colleges fitting up modest new libraries, University College (1668–70), Jesus (1679)[26] and in particular St Edmund Hall (1680–2).[27] But at Queen's these were entirely ignored. What makes the library memorable is its decoration, a lavish display of wood carving over the entrance doorway and on the stalls, and plasterwork above the windows and on the ceiling.

The heyday of the grandiose academic library was the first half of the eighteenth century. Largest of all was the library built 1705–32 at Trinity College, Dublin. At Oxford, All Souls and Christ Church erected huge new libraries, the former under the spur of a munificent bequest, the latter in a spirit of rivalry and in anticipation of gifts to fill it. At Worcester College the library was the centrepiece of a complex of new buildings. For architectural monumentality the Radcliffe Library in Oxford bore the palm, domed and freestanding in the centre of a newly created square. At Cambridge, by contrast, the revived scheme to build a new Senate House and library led to the construction of the former, but not of the latter until a partial scheme was carried out in the 1750s–1770s.

Wren's designs for Trinity College, Cambridge, exerted an influence, to a greater or lesser extent, on all these libraries, yet as a group they are remarkably diverse. The Dublin library was designed by Thomas Burgh, whose early career had been as a military engineer, not an architect.[28] It is well over 200 feet long and three storeys high, and is rusticated all over externally, an austere effect mitigated by the richly detailed top cornice and the close spacing of the large windows. The three-bay wings at either end housed the principal stair, a room for the college's great collection of manuscripts, and lecture rooms.

25 *Victoria county history of Oxfordshire* (Oxford, 1954), vol. 3, 138.

26 See the contemporary view of the interior reproduced in F. Wormald and C. E. Wright, *The English library before 1700* (London, 1958), figs. 21–2.

27 Wormald and Wright, *English library*, 237.

28 E. McParland, *Ireland's public architecture, 1680–1760* (New Haven, 2001), 145–58, where it is argued that the top storey may have been an afterthought.

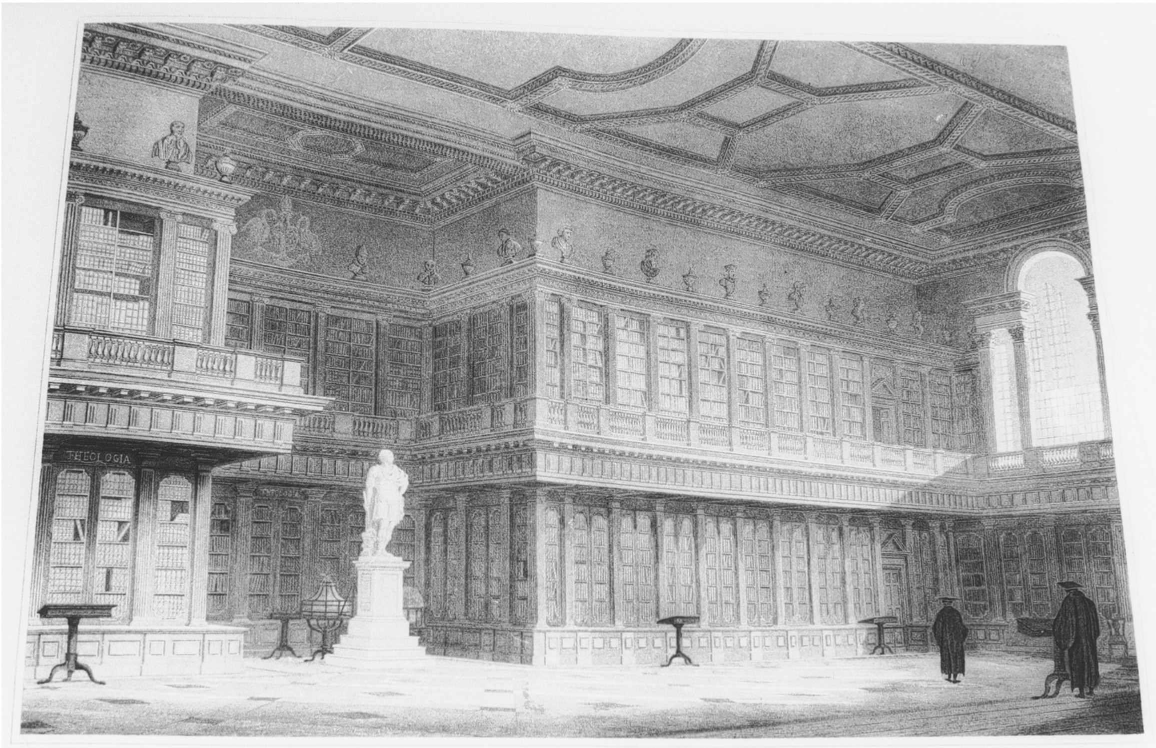
The library room itself is 190 feet long and 41 feet wide. On the first floor in the normal way, it is fitted with high, very close-set stalls without room for readers' seating between them. Unprecedentedly, the stalls themselves support an upper floor, allowing the interior of the top storey to become a spacious, covered promenade under a flat plaster ceiling. Major alterations to the interior in 1859–60 have destroyed much of this extraordinary arrangement.

At All Souls, the Codrington Library, built 1716–21 but not completely fitted up until 1751, departs from traditions of library design even more radically.[29] As at Trinity, Cambridge, the library was built across the far end of the inner quadrangle, and reached an equivalent length, 195 feet internally, but a lesser width, 30 feet. However in 1715 the college had decided that the exterior of the new library should match the hall and chapel on the opposite side of the courtyard, in accordance with the proposal of the architect, Nicholas Hawksmoor. This meant that the library had to be at ground level, and Hawksmoor pointed out the need for vaulted cellars, to protect the books from damp. The entrance was also made central on the long south side, a break with the tradition of the entry in a short end. Opposite the entrance Hawksmoor contrived a deep rectangular recess, which in due course became the setting for a marble statue of Christopher Codrington in Roman dress. The interior architecture is classical too, in direct contrast to the Gothic of the exterior (Figure 6).

The Codrington Library was the first college library to be entirely wall-shelved. Shelving extends on all four sides below the window sills, but on the windowless north wall goes up double that height. Hawksmoor had intended this wall to be covered with books up to the ceiling, and in 1729 shelving for it was constructed. But after his death the college, on the advice of the architect James Gibbs, decided to allow room for a series of busts of former fellows, alternating with urns. Books in the lower block of shelving were secured by lockable wire grilles, and in the upper were reached by means of a gallery. The furniture provided for readers in 1751 consisted of two large baize-covered tables and three mahogany desks on castors. The fittings can thus be seen as a modernised version of those in Arts End and Selden End combined with readers' seating of the sort envisaged by Wren in his domed design for Trinity.

Hawksmoor's other college library, at Worcester College, is an upper-floor version of the Codrington, with central entrance and wall shelving, but half as long and only 18 feet wide. The innovation here was that the shelving was

29 E. Craster, *The history of All Souls College library* (Oxford, 1971), 71–80; K. Downes, *Hawksmoor* (London, 1959), 135–43.



6. Codrington Library, All Souls College, Oxford: engraving from *Oxford Almanack* (1829)

adjustable.[30] At All Souls and Worcester, Hawksmoor was working in close collaboration with Dr George Clarke, Fellow of the former and benefactor of the latter, and an amateur architect. Clarke also had much to do with the realisation of the new library at Christ Church as a free-standing range closing the south side of Peckwater Quadrangle. The rest of the quadrangle had been built from 1707 to an advanced classical design by Clarke's mentor, Dean Henry Aldrich. It was Aldrich's idea to apply a giant order to the exterior of the south range, but only in 1716 was the range allocated to library use.[31] The shell of the library took over twenty years to build, 1717–38, and it was not fitted up until 1752–61. But during the years of construction the college had received three large benefactions of books, which necessitated internal replanning.[32] Instead of the proposed series of stalls projecting from the north wall, both long walls were eventually lined with handsomely monumental wall shelving, with a south gallery. In the process four windows on the north side were blocked by shelving. The room was heated – a novel idea for an academic library – by means of two still-surviving portable braziers. Entrance is up a stair against the centre of the south side, between librarians' rooms.

Last to be begun was the extension to the University Library, built in 1737–48. It had a long prehistory, inaugurated by a munificent bequest in 1712 from Dr John Radcliffe. The first designs were made by Hawksmoor, for a building attached either to the west wall of Selden End, or to the south wall of the Schools Quadrangle. In this situation a building on a circular plan was particularly practical, as its form would ensure that it deprived the existing buildings of the least possible amount of light. Another consideration was Radcliffe's well-known desire for a memorial to himself. So Hawksmoor turned back to Wren's unexecuted domed design, and in due course, after Hawksmoor had died, and James Gibbs had taken over the commission, this became the basis for the monumental, free-standing library which was erected.[33]

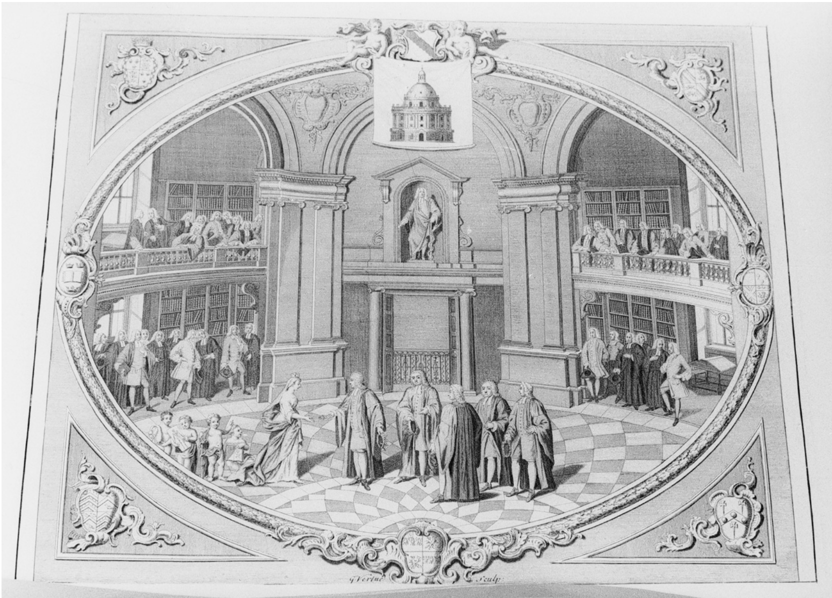
The Radcliffe Library, judged purely as architecture, is one of the pre-eminent buildings of the eighteenth century in Britain. But considered as a receptacle for books it is considerably less successful. Shelving against the outer walls is interrupted in every bay by the imposts of radiating arches which form part of the elaborate support system for the dome. The upper shelving is accessible from solid balustraded galleries the full width of the encircling

30 G. Barber, *Arks for learning* (Oxford, 1995), 110.

31 Colvin, *Unbuilt Oxford*, fig. 22; J. Weeks. 'The architects of Christ Church Library', *Architectural History* 48 (2005), 107–38.

32 W. H. Hiscock, *A Christ Church miscellany* (Oxford, 1946), 49–53, 69.

33 S. Lang, 'By Hawksmoor out of Gibbs', *Architectural Review* 105 (1949), 183–90; T. Friedman, *James Gibbs* (New Haven, 1984), 247–52.



7. Radcliffe Library, Oxford: engraving from *Oxford Almanack* (1751)

aisle, and this inevitably darkens the shelving below.[34] Anyone standing under the dome could be forgiven for wondering whether the library contained any books at all (Figure 7).

To complete this account of academic libraries in Britain one Scottish example should be mentioned. At Glasgow University a new free-standing library was built in 1732–45 to the design of William Adam. It was relatively small, of three bays over a basement, but given a handsome classical treatment as if it were a garden pavilion. Inside, the library room was galleried on three sides, with windows only on the fourth, and had a fireplace. A two-storey annexe provided accommodation for a librarian. As executed the building was simplified from Adam's published design, and it was pulled down in 1887.[35]

Academic institutions provided only limited access to their libraries, and it was this exclusivity which made it possible to experiment with a variety of different arrangements of shelving and seating. But for 'public' libraries,

34 Friedman, *Gibbs*, figs. 273, 275.
35 W. Adam, *Vitruvius Scoticus* (Edinburgh, 1811) and new edn, ed. J. Simpson (Edinburgh, 1980), plates 155–7 for Adam's designs; a photograph of the library shortly before demolition is in D. Murray, *Memories of the Old College of Glasgow* (Glasgow, 1927).

to which a wider range of readers was admitted, consideration of security remained paramount. Thus the two surviving public libraries fitted up in this period both keep faith with the Savile–Bodley stall system with chaining, as first encountered at Merton College, Oxford, 1589–90, and popularised by Bodley's refitting of Duke Humphrey's Library. The free library founded at Manchester under the will of Humphrey Chetham in 1653 was fitted up *c.*1655–8 in the upper storey of one range of the early fifteenth-century buildings of a dissolved chantry college. The range is lit by three-light windows on one side only, allowing deep, wide-spaced transverse stalls, 7 feet high, between the windows, and instead of fixed benches movable tables and stools. The books were secured by chains, and after their removal in the mid-eighteenth century by the present iron gates to the reading bays.[36]

Marsh's Library, Dublin, was new built in 1701–3 and greatly extended *c.*1710 at the personal expense of Narcissus Marsh, archbishop of Dublin. He sited it close to the west end of St Patrick's Cathedral and the extension housed the book collection of Edward Stillingfleet, bishop of Worcester, which March acquired in 1705. Nevertheless it was intended as a public library, not merely for the use of the cathedral clergy.[37] Marsh, an Oxford man, took as his model 'the crosspart of the Bodleyan library', i.e. Bodley's refitted Duke Humphrey. Thus his architect, William Robinson, designed a two-storeyed range with an upper room lit on both sides and furnished with handsome pedimented and crested stalls. Each stall has six-plus-two shelves for books above a fixed reading shelf. There were fixed benches for readers, and the books were chained. Small and precious items were kept in lockable wired alcoves at the inner end of the library, as at Duke Humphrey.

Private individuals, from the monarch downwards, seem not to have had rooms specially designed for their book collections before the early seventeenth century. The earliest identifiable royal example is the library fitted up at St James's Palace in 1609–10 to take Lord Lumley's collection of books and manuscripts.[38] The features mentioned in the building accounts and a plan indicating the room in 1706 suggest that it was rectangular, 30 feet by 14 feet, and divided lengthways into two passages by a central book-stack. The passages seem to have been spanned by arches, and other smaller decorative arches are itemised, all the work of the king's Master Sculptor, Maximilian

36 C. Hartwell, *Manchester*, Pevsner Architectural Guides (London, 2001), 69–70 and figs. 5, 47; C. Hartwell, *The history and architecture of Chetham's School and Library* (New Haven and London, 2004).

37 R. I. Moss, 'Ireland's oldest public library', *Country Life* 157 (1975), 1336–7; McParland, *Public architecture in Ireland*, 162–6.

38 H. Colvin (ed.), *The history of the King's works*, vol. 4, part 2 (London, 1982), 245.

Colt. It is possible that the books and manuscripts were concealed within decorative cupboards, after the manner of the Vatican Library. A contemporary library where this was certainly the case was the exceptionally large, tripartite library at Ashridge, the Hertfordshire seat of Lord Chancellor Ellesmere. It had 'doors resembling a panelled wainscot throughout, to conceal the library treasures within it'.[39] Something of the effect can still be judged at the surviving parochial library at Langley Marish, Buckinghamshire, fitted up in the 1620s.

The earliest surviving room fitted up for library use which can be identified as such is at Hatfield House, the palatial mansion built for Robert Cecil, earl of Salisbury, in 1607–11. In his private apartment on the ground floor of the east wing he had a 'boke chamber', for which Maximilian Colt in 1609 supplied the alabaster chimneypiece and overmantel which still remain *in situ*. They incorporate figures representing the Four Elements, a subject appropriate for a library.[40] No other original fittings survive.[41]

During the second half of the seventeenth century this approach to library design, distracting attention away from the books themselves, seems not to have been developed. It may be that as the book collections of statesmen, senior lawyers and aristocrats expanded, the appearance of serried rows of finely bound books came to be appreciated for its own sake. John Evelyn's comments suggest this when he visited the earl of Essex at his great house at Cassiobury, Hertfordshire, in 1680: 'The Library is large, & very nobly furnish'd, & all the books richly bound & gilded: No Manuscripts, except of the Parliament Rolls, and Journals, which his Lordship assured me cost him 500 pounds transcribing & binding.'[42] By 1702 a censorious preacher is even found complaining about 'that unprofitable Vanity, which obtains so much now a-days, of collecting Great Libraries, which serve for nothing but to dress, or entertain in, while the well-bound Volumes enjoy as perfect rest, as their Authors do in their Graves'.[43]

No visual record of such a library of display survives from before 1700. The only views of a bookroom at this period show Samuel Pepys's large, plain room furnished with the twelve tall glass-fronted cases which he bought between

39 H. J. Todd, *The history of the College of Bonhommes at Ashridge* (London, 1823), 68.

40 C. Gapper, J. Newman and A. Ricketts, 'Hatfield, a house for a Lord Treasurer', in P. Croft (ed.), *Patronage, culture and power: the early Cecils* (New Haven, 2002), 67–95 (here 77–8).

41 For other examples of early private libraries and study rooms, see S. Jervis, 'The English country house library: an architectural history', *Library History* 18 (2002), 175–90.

42 J. Evelyn, *Diary*, ed. E. S. de Beer (Oxford, 1955), vol. 4, 200.

43 J. Adams, *A sermon preached in St. Paul's Cathedral on 8 December 1702 to gentlemen educated at Eton College* (London, 1702), 16.

1666 and 1703, two of which survive, together with his books and prints, at Magdalene College, Cambridge.[44]

The 1st duke of Lauderdale's library room at Ham House, Surrey, which was fitted up in 1674 as a component of the state apartment, is the single extant example from the period. It is reached off one end of the long gallery through a narrow closet and is a room of only moderate size, with direct access to the family stair leading down to the duke's bedchamber. It has an enriched plaster ceiling and a simple fireplace surround of veined marble. Cedar bookshelves line three walls almost to their full height, and in one corner, close to the door to the stairs, is a large built-in writing desk with numerous drawers and a broad flap which can be raised and lowered. The room was clearly intended primarily as a study, not for display.[45]

The architectural library seems to have first become a normal feature of the great house in the 1720s and 1730s. Sir Robert Walpole had one at Houghton Hall, Norfolk (built 1722–35). This was similar in siting and function to Lauderdale's at Ham, but at 22 feet square is somewhat larger. The bookshelves are arranged to form a symmetrical architectural composition on each wall.[46] Walpole could work at the noble kneehole desk, listed in an inventory of 1745 and still in the room today.[47]

Historically as significant is the library room added by James Gibbs to Wimpole Hall, Cambridgeshire, to house the magnificent collection of books and pamphlets collected by Robert Harley, 1st earl of Oxford, and his son Edward.[48] Gibbs's first design dates from 1713; in 1718 a commentator mentioned Harley's 'most noble and magnificent design of building and furnishing a Vatican at Wimpole', but the new library, a room 50 feet by 25 feet, beyond an anteroom, was not completed until the early 1730s.[49] As first fitted up it seems to have had the long west wall completely shelved, with windows only in the east wall

44 Reproduced in P. Thornton, *Seventeenth century interior decoration in England, France and Holland* (New Haven, 1978), 307. A plan of Tenison's Library, *c.*1701, has recently been discovered: Hoare, 'Archbishop Tenison's Library'.

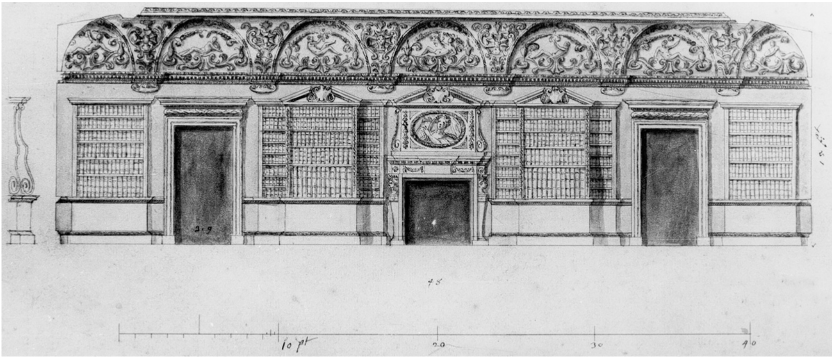
45 J. G. Dunbar, 'The building-activities of the Duke and Duchess of Lauderdale, 1670–82', *Archaeological Journal* 132 (1975), 224; P. K. Thornton and M. F. Tomlin, *The furnishing and decoration of Ham House* ([London], 1980), 152–4.

46 I. Ware, *The plans, elevations and sections of Houghton* (n.p., 1735); *Country Life* 49 (1921), 46, fig. 11.

47 *Country Life* 181:19 (1987), 104.

48 The Harleian manuscripts remained in the Harley town house in London: C. E. Wright and R. C. Wright (eds.), *The diary of Humfrey Wanley* (London, 1966). For a further discussion of the two Harleian libraries, see D. Adshead, '"A noble musaeum of books": a view of the interior of the Harleian library at Wimpole Hall', *Library History* 18 (2002), 191–206.

49 Friedman, *James Gibbs*, 113 and figs. 109–10.



8. Holkham Hall Library: section by William Kent, *c.*1735

and a fireplace at the north end, quite different from the arrangement today. Only the original coved and decorated plaster ceiling survives from Edward Harley's day.[50]

William Kent designed two important libraries. At Holkham Hall, Norfolk, he was responsible for the library which is the major room in the family wing, the earliest surviving example of a library doubling as a living room. It is 40 feet long but only about 18 feet wide, and has windows on three sides and a fireplace in the centre of the fourth (Figure 8). The bookcases which line the walls have broken pediments occupied by busts and the coving of the ceiling is cut back by means of groins.[51]

Busts were an important part of the decoration of Kent's other library. This was built at St James's Palace in 1736–7 for Queen Caroline and formed a virtually free-standing pavilion 60 feet by 30 feet and 30 feet high, i.e. in the popular Palladian proportion of a double cube. It was, sadly, pulled down in 1825. On such a scale stall shelving would have been possible, and was considered, as a surviving design by Kent shows. But a more architecturally impressive arrangement was preferred whereby windows and shelving were both encompassed in wall arcading which continued right round the room. In the spandrels stood the busts, representing kings and their consorts, and executed in terracotta by Rysbrack.[52] The shelving and thus the books were

50 *Ibid.*, 117–18.

51 M. Brettingham, *The plans, elevations and sections of Holkham in Norfolk* (London, 1761); *Country Life* 23 (1908), 1877 for photograph.

52 Colvin, *King's works*, vol. 5, 242–3, plate 30; K. Eustace, 'Stowe and the development of the historical portrait bust', *Apollo* 148 (1998), 37 and fig. 20. For other examples of busts in private libraries of the 1730s, see Baker, 'Portrait sculpture', 114–15.

hidden behind enriched cupboard doors, a throwback to the early seventeenth-century fashion.

All these English house libraries were sited in pavilions or on the periphery of the plan, and other examples could be adduced to show that this layout amounted to a fashion. The preference in Scotland, by contrast, seems to have been to site the library in an upper storey on the central axis of the house.[53] The outstanding surviving example of this is at Arniston, Midlothian, built in 1726–32 for Robert Dundas, a leading lawyer. Here the library is an impressive pilastered room, with books in fitted, glass-fronted bookcases and busts in the groins of the coved ceiling. It remains almost unaltered to this day, an epitome of the library of display.[54]

53 M. Glendinning, R. MacInnes and A. MacKechnie, *A history of Scottish architecture* (Edinburgh, 1996), 90. See Adam, *Vitruvius Scoticus*, plates 34, 40, 55, 69, 73, 126, 130, 133.

54 M. Cosh, 'The Adam family and Arniston', *Architectural History* 27 (1984), 214–30 (here 219); J. Gifford, *William Adam* (Edinburgh, 1989), 105.

14

Baroque librarianship

P. S. MORRISH

Librarianship in the British Isles changed little between 1650 and 1750, and such steadiness encourages a thematic account rather than a chronological one. However terminology did change, the word 'librarian' not appearing until about 1700. Hitherto somebody in charge of a library had been a 'library-keeper', though 'bibliothecary' or 'bibliothecar' featured in Scots usage and also in John Evelyn's translation (1661) of Gabriel Naudé's *Advis pour dresser une bibliothèque* (Paris, 1627). For convenience this chapter will use the more familiar 'librarian', and the word 'baroque' will carry its diffuse chronological meaning.

Traditional local practices guided many librarians, but some treatises were available in English. John Dury's *The reformed library-keeper* (1650) was based on letters he had written to Samuel Hartlib, occasioned by Hartlib's ambition to become Bodley's Librarian, though the published text censored that aspect. Evelyn's version of Naudé was well known; Pepys may have thought it above his reach, but Ralph Thoresby, the Leeds bibliophile, bought a copy for eight pence.[1] Though discounted by the critic Adrien Baillet, Naudé's essay was influential, his ideas about the best site for a library reappearing, for example, in a memorandum by Richard Bentley.[2] Baillet listed other writers on libraries and librarianship in his *Jugemens des savants* (1685) but most were not translated into English.[3] Further guidance could be obtained from older but still cogent sources such as the Bodleian's Jacobean statutes and even the compendious Jesuit library rules of 1580. Moreover librarians might learn of overseas practice through correspondence and travel and from visitors; Robert

1 S. Pepys, *Diary*, ed. R. Latham and others (London, 1970–83), vol. 6, 252; W. T. Lancaster (ed.), *Letters addressed to Ralph Thoresby*, Thoresby Society 21 (Leeds, 1912), 48–9.

2 G. Wakeman, 'Dr Bentley's proposal for building a Royal library', *Private Library* 8 (1967), 59–63.

3 A. Baillet, *Jugemens des savants* (Paris, 1685), vol. 2(i), 270–5. In its chapter on 'Method', the English translation (1739) of P. Le Gallois, *Traité des plus belles bibliothèques* (Paris, 1680), sometimes attributed to William Oldys, merely rehashed ideas propounded by Naudé.

Wodrow, librarian at Glasgow University, notably enquired of George Thomson in Paris how French university libraries were managed.[4] Indeed, similarities between contemporary arrangements in British and foreign libraries suggest some librarianly consensus.

Despite custodial implications in 'keeper', the idea of service inspired some writers and librarians. Dury contrasted librarianship as an office of profit and as a service to readers; deploring mercenary attitudes, he recommended librarians to preserve, increase and exploit the stock of written knowledge, and to be thoroughly familiar with the worlds of books, scholarship and collections. Humphrey Wanley, librarian to Robert Harley, earl of Oxford, agreed.[5] Nevertheless some gentlemanly amateurism intruded: Anthony Wood condemned Thomas Lockey, Bodley's Librarian, for not understanding the management of a library, and Thomas Parne allegedly played little part in daily operations at Cambridge University Library. Dugald Stewart wrote of Thomas Reid, librarian of Marischal College, Aberdeen, 'the situation was acceptable to him, as it afforded an opportunity of indulging his passion for study, and united the charm of a learned society with the quiet of an academical retreat'. David Hume probably had similar hopes upon appointment to the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, in 1752.[6]

Librarianship knew no formal training or certification. Learned libraries sought graduates, preferably members of the body whom they served. Sir Thomas Bodley had required a graduate and linguist, one of sound religion, probity and prudence. Rules devised for Merton College, Oxford, in about 1659 required the librarian to be a fellow of the college and a master in any faculty of not less than four years' standing.[7] Canterbury Cathedral required a member of its clergy, and librarians of the Royal College of Physicians (London) were normally of that body.[8] Scotland differed somewhat. 'Town' as well as 'gown' made the appointment at Edinburgh and Glasgow universities, potentially introducing extraneous issues. There was some official scope for nepotism

4 Cf. R. Wodrow, *Early letters, 1698–1709*, ed. L. W. Sharp, Scottish History Society, 3rd ser., 24 (Edinburgh, 1937), 4.

5 H. Wanley, *Letters*, ed. P. L. Heyworth (Oxford, 1989), 97.

6 D. Stewart, *Account of Thomas Reid* (Edinburgh, 1803), 11–12; D. Hume, *Letters*, ed. J. Greig (Oxford, 1932), vol. 1, 164; cf. J. Priestley, *Memoirs* (London, 1806), 72. Uffenbach cuttingly noted librarians who being English concern themselves little about their occupation: Z. C. von Uffenbach, *London in 1710*, ed. W. H. Quarrell and M. Mare (London, 1934), 34.

7 P. S. Morrish, 'Dr Higgs and Merton College library', *Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society, Literary and Historical Section* 21 (1987–91), Appendix 1.

8 M. Beazeley, 'History of the chapter library of Canterbury Cathedral', *Transactions of the Bibliographical Society* 8 (1907), 159; G. N. Clark, *History of the Royal College of Physicians of London* (Oxford, 1964–72), vol. 2, 528ff.

too. The Advocates were more cautious, not necessarily appointing one of themselves though their librarian had to be suitably learned.[9] English custom prevailed at Trinity College, Dublin, where fellows elected a senior colleague as librarian.[10] Owners of private libraries could appoint whom they wished, but posts deserved literacy and prudence; some non-juring clergy ejected from their livings became private librarians.

Experience, personality and aptitude were important. Evelyn's translation of Naudé opined: 'I suppose it would be expedient to make election and choice in the first place of some honest person, learned, and well experienc'd in books.' Arthur Charlett advised: 'Tis not always the best scholars may be the fittest. He must have strength of body, patience of mind, good nature, good manners, and a natural benignity of temper, to assist others' wants, whether real or only the result of a vain and wanton curiosity.'[11] A successful candidate might have to deposit a caution; James Nasmith had to lodge one and to sign an inventory upon appointment to the Advocates'.[12] Moreover an oath might be required. Wanley advised St Paul's Cathedral, London, that their librarian and his subordinate staff should swear to do their duties, not to embezzle or damage books, nor to allow others to do so, and to observe library rules. Archbishop Marsh required his librarian in Dublin to swear not to lend or alienate stock, and his readers to behave in a gentlemanly manner.[13]

Remuneration varied. It might include accommodation or board, and those who were concurrently fellows of an Oxbridge college would draw a further stipend on that account. Yet others might combine a library post with ecclesiastical preferment. Dury recommended that librarians of institutions comparable to the Bodleian should receive £200 a year, higher than its current official value.[14] In 1661 Abraham Cowley proposed establishment of a scientific college in London for which he listed and costed the entire staff; out of a budget of £4,000 he proposed twenty professors at £120 a year each, and a librarian, who would also act as apothecary, druggist and instrument-keeper, at £30 a year.

9 *Munimenta alme Universitatis Glasguensis* (Glasgow, 1854), vol. 3, 424–6; P. J. Anderson (ed.), *Fasti academiae Mariscallanae Aberdonensis*, New Spalding Club 4 (Aberdeen, 1889), vol. 1, 197; P. Cadell and A. Matheson, *For the encouragement of learning: Scotland's national library, 1689–1989* (Edinburgh, 1989), 292–4.

10 R. B. McDowell and D. A. Webb, *Trinity College, Dublin, 1592–1952* (Cambridge, 1982), 99.

11 G. Naudé, *Instructions concerning erecting of a library*, trans. J. Evelyn (London, 1661), 89; I. Philip, *Bodleian Library in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Oxford, 1983), 86.

12 J. M. Pinkerton (ed.), *Minute book of the Faculty of Advocates*, Stair Society 29 and 32 (Edinburgh, 1976–80), vol. 1, 61, 69.

13 Wanley, *Letters*, 259; M. McCarthy, *All graduates and gentlemen: Marsh's Library* (Dublin, 1980), 35–6.

14 J. Dury, *The reformed library keeper*, ed. R. H. Popkin and T. F. Wright (Los Angeles, 1983), 17.

Such differentials between professorial and librarianly salaries, indicative of social gradations, were common at home and abroad.[15]

In practice some did well. Richard Bentley received £200 a year as Royal Librarian, and retained his prebend at Worcester Cathedral until 1700; subsequently he combined that librarianship with mastership of Trinity College, Cambridge, and the archdeaconry of Ely.[16] When created in 1721 the *protobibliothecarius* at Cambridge carried £50 a year, but its first occupant, Conyers Middleton, was also a fellow of Trinity and incumbent of livings in Cambridgeshire. Oxford tolerated similar plurality. During their tenures at the Bodleian, Thomas Barlow was successively Fellow and Provost of Queen's, and Thomas Hyde a canon of Christ Church, archdeacon of Gloucester, Laudian Professor of Arabic and, latterly, Regius Professor of Hebrew. Understandably, William Stratford later suggested that Bodley's librarianship be subsidised by the Royal Bounty.[17]

At Oxbridge colleges one of three arrangements normally obtained. A junior graduate might supervise the library, his stipend being regarded as a bursary until he proceeded to a mastership, as at Christ Church (originally 10s. a quarter) or at Gonville and Caius. Another approach provided a separately endowed librarianship tenable by either a junior scholar or a fellow, depending upon its terms. The fellow-librarian at Merton received £10 a year in addition to his fellowship, and the Stanhope foundation (1608) at Trinity, Cambridge, paid a junior graduate £6 a year plus livery. In 1728 Bentley boasted to Archbishop Wake that the Stanhope had since been increased to about £63 annually, comparable to a fellowship: Bentley's nephew was then holding the post. A third approach, as at Jesus College, Oxford, was to give an honorarium to a fellow for occasional work in an unendowed library.[18]

Salaries elsewhere were modest. The Harveian foundation (1656) enabled the Royal College of Physicians to give its librarian £20 annually, the same as Sion College paid. English cathedrals tended to make internal appointments

15 A. Cowley, *A proposition for the advancement of experimental philosophy, 1661* (Menston, 1969), 16–17; cf. J. Vallinkoski, *History of the university library at Turku* (Helsinki, 1948), 135–8; F. C. Bouvaert, *L'ancienne université de Louvain* (Louvain, 1956), 87.

16 The salary had been fixed at £200 at the Restoration: *Calendar of Treasury books, 1660–67* (London, 1904), 384, 670.

17 Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on Portland papers at Welbeck* (London, 1891–1931), vol. 6, 78.

18 W. G. Hiscock, *A Christ Church miscellany* (Oxford, 1946), 6; J. Venn (ed.), *Annals of Gonville and Caius College*, Cambridge Antiquarian Society, octavo ser., 40 (Cambridge, 1904), 308; Morrish, 'Dr Higgs', *passim*; P. Gaskell, *Trinity College library: the first 150 years* (Cambridge, 1980), 224ff.; R. Bentley, *Correspondence* (London, 1842), 680–3; C. J. Fordyce and T. M. Knox, 'The library of Jesus College, Oxford', *Proceedings of the Oxford Bibliographical Society* 5 (1936–9), 63.

and paid accordingly; a minor canon at Canterbury received £7 a year in the 1670s, and Wells used its deputy chapter clerk in 1679 at £2 annually. The town librarian at Leicester received £3 a year, but had other income. The Chetham feoffees were allowed discretion in paying their librarian at Manchester.[19] Comparison with Scottish posts can be difficult because for part of this period Scotland had its own currency. The Advocates offered 400 merks in 1685, later £363 Scots. Edinburgh University paid 600 merks (about £33 6s 8d sterling) by 1674.[20] Private librarians relied upon the market and the affluence of their patrons. Wanley, who had started at the Bodleian at £12 a year, later received £3 a week from Harley, rising to about £182 annually. Archbishop Wake's librarian at Lambeth allegedly enjoyed preferments worth £1,000 a year. The Spalding Gentlemen's Society merely excused Henry Howard his subscription in return for supervising its library.[21] Librarians might receive bonuses for extra work or to encourage productivity, whilst supernumerary staff might be engaged for specific tasks at various *ad hoc* rates.[22]

Book selection was not necessarily a librarianly duty. At institutional libraries choice might rest with the head of the establishment, or those whom the library served, or a committee of them. Librarians of private libraries would advise but it might be presumptuous of them to take initiatives. Sir Thomas Bodley had repeatedly warned Thomas James against 'riffe raffe bookes', plays, almanacs and other ephemera. Purchases by the Bodleian required agreement of its Curators, and *desiderata* noted in its suggestions book were referred to professors and the vice-chancellor. Although Dury's metaphor comparing libraries with trading companies obscures his advice, he believed librarians should seek guidance from subject experts, and shared Sir Thomas's aversion

19 Clark, *History of R.C.P.*, vol. 2, 528; E. H. Pearce, *Sion College and library* (Cambridge, 1913), 233; Beazeley, 'Chapter library Canterbury', 160; D. S. Bailey (ed.), *Wells Cathedral Chapter act book, 1666–1683* (London, 1973), 70; H. Stocks and W. H. Stevenson (eds.), *Records of the borough of Leicester. [vol. 4] 1603–1688* (Cambridge, 1923), 541; F. R. Raines and C. W. Sutton, *Life of Humphrey Chetham*, Chetham Society, new ser., 49–50 (Manchester, 1903), vol. 2, 219.

20 *Minute book Advocates*, vol. 1, 72, 126, and vol. 2, 44; A. J. Grant, *The story of the University of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1884), 172–3.

21 'Humphrey Wanley and the Bodleian', *Bodleian Quarterly Record* 1 (1914–16), 106 (for a few years Wanley was assistant secretary of the SPCK at £40 a year); *Portland papers*, vol. 7, 435; J. Nichols, *Literary anecdotes* (London, 1812–15), vol. 6(i), 68.

22 Pearce, *Sion College*, 241; D. McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library: the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries* (Cambridge, 1986), 165–6, 168; Fordyce and Knox, 'Jesus College', 64; Hiscock, *Christ Church*, 11; A. Coates, 'The old library of Trinity College, Oxford', *Bodleian Library Record* 13 (1991), 473; *Minute book Advocates*, vol. 2, 163, 209; *Calendar of Treasury books, 1693–96* (London, 1935), 629.

to ephemera.[23] Addressing affluent private collectors rather than institutions, Naudé advised acquisition of standard works by ancients and moderns, preferably not in translation, but he would not exclude esoteric subjects or unorthodoxy unless the approach were popular. Similarly Leibniz preferred quality to quantity.[24] Librarians who took misjudged initiatives could find themselves in trouble; David Hume clashed with the Advocates over his ordering some French literature which his curators thought unworthy, and consequently resigned.[25]

Various sources showed what books were available. Personal recommendation played an important role. Publishers' and booksellers' catalogues listed new and older books, but could be inaccurate. General bibliographies of current publications were in their infancy though the Term catalogues showed the way. Newspapers advertised occasional book sales, but only a few choice items might be identified. From 1731 the *Gentleman's Magazine* produced monthly listings which, after some uncertainty, were eventually arranged under broad subject headings.[26] However the Stationers' Company could be unhelpful, as Henry Oldenburg discovered when seeking a retrospective list of publications.[27] Finding it difficult to keep in touch, those living in the provinces often relied on friends for the loan of catalogues and to buy for each other: William Sherard bought books in London for Dr Richardson in Yorkshire and, together with Dr Chambers in Hull, arranged purchases from Holland. Despite the Edinburgh book trade, Robert Wodrow prevailed upon acquaintances to obtain books for Glasgow University in London and the Netherlands.[28]

Books were purchased or given. Funds were often inadequate, and, perhaps inspired by practice at Basle, Sir Thomas had made an arrangement with the Stationers' Company for the Bodleian to receive a free copy of each book its members produced. However, such bilateral private arrangements can prove

23 T. Bodley, *Letters to Thomas James*, ed. G. W. Wheeler (Oxford, 1926), 35, 40, 203–4, 220–2; Dury, *Reformed library keeper*, 22–4.

24 G. Naudé, *Advis pour dresser une bibliothèque* (Paris, 1627), chapters 4 and 5; G. W. Leibniz, *Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe* (Darmstadt, 1923–), ser. 1, vol. 2, 16.

25 Hume, *Letters*, 210–12.

26 A. N. L. Munby and L. Coral, *British book sale catalogues 1676–1800* (London, 1977); E. Swaim, 'The auction as a means of book distribution in eighteenth-century Yorkshire', *Publishing History* 1 (1977), 49–91; *The Gentleman's Magazine 1731–51: the lists of books . . . compiled by E. Kimber*, ed. D. F. Foxon (London, 1966).

27 H. Oldenburg, *Correspondence*, ed. A. R. Hall and M. B. Hall (Madison, WI, 1965–77), vol. 4, 79–80.

28 J. Nichols, *Illustrations of the literary history of the eighteenth century* (London, 1817–58), vol. 1, 353, 358, 384, 387, 391; Wodrow, *Early letters*, 9, 19, 28–30, 51–3, 73, 96–7, 140–1; *Portland papers*, vol. 7, 461.

unreliable and hence legal copyright deposit was eventually secured in Great Britain in 1710: nine libraries became privileged to receive free copies of British publications, yet the system still worked imperfectly.[29] Purchases remained vital for most libraries. Wanley could be a shrewd haggler and urged agents not to reveal whom they represented, but Thoresby admitted to unwise purchases at auction.[30] Regular small purchases developed a library only slowly; acquisition of whole collections gave faster growth though it required ample funds or the intervention of a benefactor.[31] To solicit gifts was not thought improper, and libraries encouraged donors by maintaining gift registers. Institutional libraries particularly appealed to past and current members for gifts, either spontaneously or upon such events as their graduation. The librarian of Merton College was admonished:

> It shall be his business to write to distinguished persons in Church and State, particularly to those who were educated in this training-ground of youth, adjuring them earnestly, when they make their wills, to leave to the Library something of bibliographical interest. He shall provide, at the College expense, a sumptuous parchment Register, in which he shall make honourable record of the names of benefactors, and of books given by them or purchased by them for the Library.[32]

Transport of books to a library could be difficult. Books were heavy, and horse-drawn transport slow and laborious. When Wanley sent books mainly by road to Wimpole in 1716, between twenty and forty folios, or up to 132 quartos, or as many as 340 octavos filled a single crate. Upon arrival at Wimpole one crate proved so heavy that six men 'had much ado to carry it into the Servants' Hall'.[33] Water transport could be easier than road, and shipping was unavoidable for consignments from mainland Europe. It also had problems; Wanley was anxious that books to be shipped were securely packed against damp and rats, and when they were shipped from Norwich to Oxford in 1731, Bishop Tanner's books fell overboard and lay submerged for twenty hours.[34]

29 Cf. McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, chapter 2; Philip, *Bodleian Library*, chapter 4.

30 Wanley, *Letters*, 249, 265, 277; R. Thoresby, *Diary*, ed. J. Hunter (London, 1830), vol. 1, 161, 256, 301; *Letters to Thoresby*, 249, 265, 277; cf. T. A. Birrell, 'John Dryden's purchases at two book auctions', *English Studies* 42 (1961), 193–217.

31 Cf. Naudé, *Advis*, 81; Leibniz, *Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe*, ser. 1, vol. 2, 56, 60.

32 Morrish, 'Dr Higgs', appendix 1 (English translation by H. W. Garrod). Thomas Tanner deplored the officiousness with which Merton College allegedly pursued those instructions when Anthony Wood was on his death-bed: Nichols, *Illustrations*, vol. 3, 402. Cf. Naudé, *Advis*, 87–8.

33 Wanley, *Letters*, 331, 354–5.

34 *Ibid.*, 274; *Gentleman's Magazine* 2 (1732), 583; cf. D. Defoe, *The complete English gentleman*, ed. K. D. Bülbring (London, 1890), 141.

Dispersal of libraries grieves bibliophiles and scholars. Exchange of exact duplicates has some rationale, but more contentious, especially if leading to an arbitrary dispersal of a well-known collection, are realisation of his library assets by a needy owner or executors' sales post-mortem. Dury recommended exchange but was unclear whether this should involve any duplicates. The Bodleian did not preclude disposal of duplicates, and Uffenbach explored possibilities but found suggested prices excessive. Cambridge University Library also sold or exchanged duplicates, especially from its Royal Collection, and at the request of his archbishop, Thomas Comber rationalised the collection at York Minster, the Dean and Chapter selling duplicates.[35]

How to arrange books in a library is problematical. Baroque librarians inherited, and largely failed to supersede, a system based on three principles: fixed location, collocation by format (effectually shelving by height), and subject division derived from the medieval curriculum. This system was compatible with a static library book-stock, but not with accelerating acquisition. Knowledge advancing and books proliferating in this period, medieval categories became strained and in these circumstances fixed location together with shelving by format proved incompatible with useful subject arrangement. Such inherent difficulties contributed to the apparent chaos which baffled visitors to an unfamiliar library, and made access by catalogue indispensable since browsing became too tedious to contemplate. The situation perplexed Wanley.[36]

The mechanics of fixed location were simple. Each book bore a unique press-mark, usually letters and numbers, which established its settled place. A typical mark might appear as '12.A.3', that is, the third book from the left on shelf 'A' in the twelfth case. Each shelf and case would bear corresponding notation, and each book a spine-label (or, *pace* Wanley, a note inside) showing its full press-mark. Usually the system used roman letters and arabic numbers, but despite their complexity and potential for confusion, roman numbers were not excluded. Even so, letters are less satisfactory than numbers, for whilst an arithmetical progression continues to infinity, an alphabetical one stops at 'Z', and convention offers no agreed continuation; one might then proceed to use lower case in contrast to upper case hitherto, or double

35 Z. C. von Uffenbach, *Oxford in 1710*, ed. W. H. Quarrell and W. J. C. Quarrell (Oxford, 1928), 26, 51; Philip, *Bodleian Library*, 59, 85; McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, 172–3, 205–9; T. Comber, *Autobiographies and letters*, ed. C. E. Whiting, Surtees Society 156 (Durham, 1946), 16–17. On needy owners selling books to realise capital, see Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on manuscripts . . . at Castle Howard* (London, 1897), 100, and G. Warkentin, 'The world and the book at Penshurst', *Library*, 6th ser., 20 (1998), 346.

36 Wanley, *Letters*, 261.

letters, or exotic alphabets (Greek or Hebrew).[37] Moreover the sequence A–Z might be curtailed by not distinguishing between 'I' and 'J', and 'U' and 'V', and by omitting 'O'. Also, ambiguity may arise in this non-verbal context because two or more letters spell words. Hence it was better to number cases and to letter shelves. Normally books were numbered from left to right, but shelves were sometimes identified from bottom to top, as at Trinity, Dublin, than more usually from top to bottom. In a bookcase with a vertical internal partition, identification of shelves might proceed across that division, in a zigzag manner. How letters and numbers might be displayed was largely a matter of taste, but Wanley recommended painting them in black on a gold ground.[38]

Practicality and aesthetics justified shelving by format. It was economical of vertical space and also ergonomic because removal of folios from lower shelves is less laborious than from higher. Moreover, promiscuous shelving of taller books with shorter deprives the taller of adequate lateral support (they may collapse) and the shorter may slip from view. Then the baroque eye sought harmony. A shelf of duodecimos appeared incongruous under a shelf of folios, whilst gradation from taller books at the bottom to shorter ones at the top gave an illusion of height to a room.[39] Thus Wren's drawings for the library at Trinity, Cambridge, show the two bottom shelves at 22-inch centres, the next at eighteen and the top two at fourteen.[40]

Medieval subject division had been fourfold – arts, law, medicine and theology. This was not procrustean since medicine could include natural history; law, social sciences; and arts not only literary and linguistic studies but also philosophy, mathematics and physical science. Theology was pre-eminent, but actual distribution of these subjects in a room might depend as much upon architectural constraints as upon academic protocol. Identification of subjects was simple. In a stall library their names might appear on the open end of every case, either painted or on a small wooden plaque (*tabula*) fixed there. In a wall library, names might appear on the architraves of cases. Guidance might also come from murals, busts of scholars, *putti* and other symbols, but

37 Cadell and Matheson, *Encouragement*, 191 (use of zodiacal and astronomical symbols); cf. J. C. T. Oates, *Cambridge University Library . . . to Queen Anne* (Cambridge, 1986), 479, 482–3; G. W. Wheeler, 'Bodleian press-marks in relation to classification', *Bodleian Quarterly Record* 1 (1914–16), 280–92. On medieval background, see R. Sharpe, 'Accession, classification, location: shelfmarks in medieval libraries', *Scriptorium* 50 (1996), 279–87.

38 G. Wakeman, 'Humphrey Wanley on erecting a library', *Private Library* 6 (1965), 83. Shelves were also identified upwards at Harvard in the 1720s and at the Advocates'.

39 Cf. C. Middleton, *Miscellaneous works* (London, 1752), vol. 3, 484.

40 C. Wren, *Designs for Oxford, Cambridge*, Wren Society 5 (Oxford, 1928), plate 24.

the relative permanence of frescos and architectural sculpture rendered them decorative rather than useful.[41] Baroque librarians could only achieve closer subject arrangement, within the constraint of format, by tacitly reserving an individual case or shelf for a specific topic, but once any such space was exhausted, rearrangement and renumbering of more than the affected stock might be required. Notably too, fixed location implied retrieval of books not through a notation inherent in any scheme of subject arrangement but by one dependent upon the topography of the library.

Here there is a semantic pitfall for historians. One must not confuse English 'class', and its derivatives, with the baroque Latin 'classis'. In this context 'classis' indicated a set of shelves, or bookcase, and to confuse the issue further, even in eighteenth-century English 'class' could mean just a bookcase.[42] Thus Bodley's and Higgs's Latin instructions did not require classification in the modern sense. Indeed, subject classification characterised by hierarchy and articulated by a notation, as Melvil Dewey was to devise, was alien to this period. Reflection should reveal naivety in Dewey's endeavour since the totality of phenomena exists in a multi-dimensional continuum which cannot be reduced meaningfully to linear order required by library shelves. Furthermore, subject classification is relative to the state of knowledge at any one time and to the standpoint of the observer. Leibniz appreciated such problems and, distinguishing between classification as an academic exercise and as an administrative device for organising books, found problems with both. He stressed that the latter use required support from an alphabetical index.[43]

Medieval categories persisted beyond their expiry date. Manifestly, knowledge was advancing, yet to change the arrangement within a library could be expensive. Puzzlement was clear at Wells in 1670 where its cathedral books were to be shelved merely according to an orderly system, and most librarians were content to tinker with the familiar rather than to develop anything new.[44] Schemes of arrangement devised by Claude Clément and others bear obvious signs of medieval origin, additional major categories emerging pragmatically, user bias and literary warrant justifying them. Naudé added 'histoire' and 'humanitez', and Evelyn's scheme for a general library mixed tradition

41 Cf. A. Masson, *The pictorial catalogue*, trans. D. Gerard (Oxford, 1981).

42 Nichols, *Literary anecdotes*, vol. 6(i), 66–7.

43 G. W. Leibniz, *New essays on human understanding*, trans. P. Remnant and J. Bennett (Cambridge, 1981), chapter 21 (drafted in 1704 but published posthumously in 1765); cf. H. Joseph, *An introduction to logic* (Oxford, 1906), 118–19.

44 *Wells Chapter act book*, 22; cf. W. Milde, 'The library at Wolfenbüttel', *Modern Language Review* 66 (1971), 110–11.

and practicality, his 'liberal arts' conventionally including mathematics, music and physical science, though he began with a division for dictionaries and 'bookes subsidiary'. The *Term catalogues* usually started with 'divinity', followed as required and in no fixed order by such headings as 'physic', 'histories', 'mathematics', 'poets and plays', 'law' and 'miscellaneous'. In the absence of greater specificity, 'miscellaneous' could become unwieldy.[45] In 1723 Conyers Middleton proposed a scheme for Cambridge University Library which merely reworked the faculties.[46] His categories were 'theology', 'profane history', 'civil law', 'philosophy', 'natural history', 'medicine' and 'literae humaniores'. Profane history was so qualified because he subsumed ecclesiastical history under theology. His inclusion of academies, typography, libraries and bibliography under 'profane history' probably reflected the South Room of that library where dictionaries then occupied part of case 'M' which otherwise held some history. His 'philosophy' included political economy, mathematics, physics, music, architecture, artefacts and astronomy, all within the medieval tradition of including number and manipulation of quantity among arts. His 'literae humaniores' were more modern, comprising that part of arts omitted from 'philosophy', and extending beyond the Oxbridge sense to include modern languages and their literature. Middleton glossed his main classes to show their scope, but supplied no notation; his scheme was intended for use in conjunction with fixed location and would have come into its own as the framework for a printed catalogue.

Meanwhile classification bemused philosophers. Thomas Hobbes included a scheme in his *Leviathan* (1651), but typography rather than notation articulated it and it lay in Aristotelian tradition.[47] However speculation on the nature of language was already prefiguring faceted classification. John Wilkins, secretary to the Royal Society and associated with an abortive subject classification for the Bodleian, wrote *An essay towards a philosophical language* (1668) to promote an artificial language for facilitating scientific communication. His project needed a universal classification and sought guidance from taxonomic principles pioneered by John Ray and others. Wilkins devised a notation to articulate his scheme: 'rhinoceros' was XVIII.ii.6' and 'sheep and goats' (not distinguished), 'XVIII.ii.2'. Vickery once commended this notation yet its tripartite

45 Naudé, *Advis*, 100; *Notes and Records of the Royal Society* 7 (1949), 193–4 (Evelyn's scheme); E. Arber (ed.), *The term catalogues* (London, 1903–6), *passim*.
46 Middleton, *Miscellaneous works*, vol. 3, 496–502.
47 T. Hobbes, *Leviathan* (London, 1651), chapter 9.

form differed little from that used by fixed location shelving.[48] The project fell on stony ground, and library classification remained a wilderness well into the nineteenth century.[49]

Cataloguing of printed books depended on no universal rules, but that some viable major catalogues were produced suggests an understanding of principles. Indeed, solecisms in catalogues were as much due to subject ignorance as to faulty method.[50] Catalogues serve two not entirely compatible purposes. One is to check stewardship, but that needs an inventory in actual shelf order which is not necessarily helpful to readers seeking specific authors or titles when shelf order is organised by format and broad medieval categories. Hence the Bodleian had appended an alphabetical author index to its 1605 printed shelflist catalogue. Many librarians were required to produce catalogues which might support stock-taking, and Cambridge University Library maintained a 'classical' catalogue, or shelflist, for that purpose.[51] Yet stock-taking discovers villainy rather than prevents it; Wanley missed the point when he recommended a good catalogue as security against fraudulent librarians whilst Hearne was sceptical of stock-taking in the Bodleian since those conducting it once finished at about 11 a.m. to take lunch with the vice-chancellor.[52]

The other function serves readers. It lists stock systematically by focusing on authorship or subject, or a combination of the two, rather than on shelf order. Alphabetisation was a technique towards this end and early seventeenth-century lexicographers had shown how to account for every letter in a word rather than the first one or two. The printed Bodleian catalogues of 1620, 1674 and 1738 were arranged in strict alphabetical order by author, with a few interspersed keyword headings, mainly for anonymous works, and this model proved to be very influential. Indeed, the prestige of the Bodleian did much to entrench alphabetical author catalogues as preferred

48 H. G. Schulte-Albert, 'Classificatory thinking from Kinner to Wilkins', *Library Quarterly* 49 (1979), 42–64; B. C. Vickery, 'Significance of John Wilkins in the history of bibliographical classification', *Libri* 2 (1952–3), 326–43.

49 J. Holmes, 'Libraries and catalogues', *Quarterly Review* 72 (1843), 15.

50 Historical treatment of the cataloguing of printed books in this period has been inadequate; D. M. Norris, *History of cataloguing* (London, 1939) is now outmoded and was received indifferently when first published. The article on 'catalogs' in A. Kent and H. Lancour, *Encyclopaedia of library and information science*, vol. 4 (New York, 1970) is too brief to be informative. Much has to be inferred from prefaces and entries in contemporary printed catalogues, and from critical remarks by Wanley, Baillet and others.

51 Wanley, *Letters*, 213, 215.

52 T. Hearne, *Remarks*, ed. C. E. Doble and others, Oxford Historical Society (Oxford, 1885–1921), vol. 1, 67–8.

British practice for the main record; copies of its 1674 catalogue were often interleaved and annotated elsewhere to serve as both a general bibliography and a local catalogue.[53]

Less progress was made on the relative merits of alphabetical author catalogues and subject catalogues supported by an author index. Continental thought favoured using both author and subject catalogues, perhaps of equal standing, for example at Tübingen in 1601.[54] Yet progress everywhere was slow and subject catalogues could still be little more than shelflists. Some commentators allege that the Sion College catalogue of 1650 even combined author and subject entries in one alphabetical sequence, but this appears to be a misunderstanding. Naudé advocated subject and author catalogues, and Baillet criticised the 1674 Bodleian catalogue for being only an author one; Baillet understood that readers sought books on something as well as by somebody. A similar insight guided the Advocates to specify both types of catalogue, and Thomas Comber proudly recalled drawing up complementary catalogues for York Minster library.[55] One classified listing of a British institutional library to find its way into print in this period was William Reading's catalogue of the library of Sion College, published in 1724. It included an alphabetical author and subject index, and explicitly claimed to follow – and in some respects improve upon – the classification system used for the catalogue of the library of Charles Le Tellier, archbishop of Reims, published in Paris in 1693.[56]

Many catalogues were difficult or unhelpful to use. That of books at Kilkenny Castle, made in 1685, was apparently so unfocused as to be of little value for either stock-taking or any reader.[57] Whether hand-written in

53 G. W. Wheeler, *The earliest catalogues of the Bodleian Library* (Oxford, 1928); cf. H. Carter, *History of Oxford University Press* (Oxford, 1975), vol. 1, 77. For examples, see Morrish, 'Higgs', 45; R. Birley, 'History of Eton College library', *Library*, 5th ser., 11 (1956) 250; Fordyce and Knox, 'Library of Jesus College, Oxford', 53; McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, 44. Copies went overseas for similar purposes: cf. Oldenburg, *Correspondence*, vol. 9, 154, 174, 212, 278, 458–9; M. Melchionda, 'La cultura inglese nei libri secenteschi della biblioteca oratoriana dei Girolamini in Napoli', *English Miscellany* 21 (1970), 297, 313; A. Predeck, 'Bibliotheksbesuche eines gelehrten Reisender im Aufgang des 18. Jahrhunderts', *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen* 45 (1928), 251.

54 L. Zoepf, 'Aus der Geschichte der Tübinger Universitätsbibliothek 1477–1607', *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen* 52 (1935), 482.

55 Kent and Lancour, *Encyclopaedia of library and information science*, vol. 4, 257. Naudé, *Advis*, 118; Baillet, *Jugemens*, vol. 2(i), 259–60, 263–5; Wanley, *Letters*, 261–2; T. Comber, *Autobiographies*, 17; *Minute book Advocates*, vol. 1, 65.

56 *Bibliothecae cleri Londoniensis in Collegio Sionensi catalogus* (London, 1724), sig. [*a] r; Pearce, *Sion College*, 286.

57 Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Calendar of the manuscripts of the Marquess of Ormonde* (London, 1895–1920), vol. 7, 513–27.

ledgers (or on loose sheets), or printed, few catalogues were easily expansible; most of them only accommodated new entries by interlineation, interleaving or supplements.[58] Even the universality of Latin as an editorial language was being undermined; Baillet challenged it by proposing to use vernacular place-names and preferring to refer to contemporary institutions by their actual titles.[59]

Cataloguers did not always respect the literal integrity of title-pages. Whilst reference to books by the names or epithets of their reputed authors was normal, the actual form of name might not match that on the title page. Greek and Hebrew authors might be Latinized or Anglicized, avoiding typographical problems. Latin title pages were especially difficult because of the characteristic inflexion of that language. Early printers had tried to treat Latin title-pages as grammatical units, reserving the nominative case for such words as 'liber', 'tomus secundus' or 'editio nova', the author appearing in the genitive. Hence Sir Thomas Bodley had required authors' names in Latin to appear in headings in the genitive, but consistency then demanded such bizarre usage as that followed at Harvard as late as 1723 whereby an apostrophe 's' was added to English surnames in headings though absent from the title page. This strange practice, which could be justified from demotic oral usage, recurred in the annual index of authors appended to the cumulated issues of the *Monthly catalogue*. Another approach put an author's Latin name in the nominative for a heading but adjusted the title to make grammatical sense even though that might not represent what appeared on the title page; the preposition 'de' might be supplied. A third method, treating the title page as an assemblage of grammatically discrete data, put Latin names in the nominative for a heading but otherwise transcribed the title as it stood, notwithstanding any grammatical offence. That compromise became standard practice, but in this period library users had to expect all three methods in one context with equanimity. Many apparently did.

Another uncertainty with names as headings was whether to invert them so as to give prominence to the surname (or equivalent) for retrieval. Inversion was not universal. Some catalogues distinguished surnames typographically, for example by italics (Sion College, 1650) or small capitals (Bodley, 1674). The Advocates' 1683 catalogue had used only surnames, but their 1694

58 Hearne, *Remarks*, vol. 4, 431, and vol. 6, 8–9; T. Le Fanu, 'Dean Swift's library', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 26 (1896), 113.

59 Baillet, *Jugemens*, vol. 2(i), sigs. P3r and P4 (unpaginated section). On the alleged universal value of Latin for catalogues, cf. Hearne, *Remarks*, vol. 5, 86; Wanley, *Letters*, 36, and Nichols, *Illustrations*, vol. 1, 807.

rules required surnames and forenames, and a distinction between them. John Whiting's Quaker bibliography inverted names but omitted punctuation to separate them.[60] Headings for anonyma, corporate authors and works identified by generic title were treated according to a perceived consensus rather than rigorously. For anonyma either a keyword or the first word of the title, other than a particle, served. Corporate authors often appeared under a place-name, and that word might be in Latin. The 1674 Bodleian catalogue exemplifies a rather varied approach. It placed Civil Law and Canon Law unhelpfully under one generic heading, but yet more Civil Law appeared under 'Justinian'. Its biblical entries rested variously under 'Biblia', 'Evangelium', 'Pentateuchus', 'Psalmi' or 'Testamentum', though references from 'Biblia' led to these others. The goal was in sight but exactly how to score was not.

Full transcription of titles was uncommon. Baroque cataloguers left much to the imagination. An actual title might be omitted or just given as 'opera'. Cataloguers appreciated the economy of short-titles, but these could drift into convention in the hope that readers worth their salt knew their onions.[61] The line between abbreviation and error could be fine, and critics had much to complain about, yet conventional titles were traditional academic shorthand.[62] The date and place of publication were commonly cited, but less commonly, statements of edition or the names of printers or publishers, omissions which annoyed Wanley.[63]

The physical structure of a printed book did not feature much in catalogue entries. A shelflist of a library arranged by format hardly needed to note format against every item since that was implicit in the arrangement as a whole, but whether to mention it in other forms of catalogue was answered uncertainly. The 1674 Bodleian catalogue omitted 'folio'; Whiting's bibliography left out 'quarto' but mentioned other formats, and the 1650 Sion College catalogue omitted all formats except for books in one location. Catalogues mostly ignored other structural details.

Many catalogues of manuscripts were inadequate. Strangely for an age of antiquarian endeavour, misdating, misreading and disregard for codicological detail were frequent. However Gerard Langbaine, the elder, did exceptional work on Bodleian manuscripts, noting current and former shelf-marks, material, format, contents (with relevant incipits and folios), previous ownerships, date and script. His notes formed the basis of the 1697 catalogue of

60 *Minute book Advocates*, vol. 1, 131; J. Whiting, *A catalogue of Friends' books* (London, 1708).

61 Cf. M. Hobbs, 'Henry King, John Donne and the refounding of Chichester cathedral library', *Book Collector* 33 (1984), 192.

62 Wanley, *Letters*, 104–5, 246.

63 'Wanley and the Bodleian', 108.

those manuscripts, though by then other hands had introduced imperfections. No new comprehensive catalogue of its manuscripts appeared until 1806, but meanwhile some major accessions were listed separately and lesser ones noted in an interleaved copy. Wanley himself contributed in Latin a union catalogue of Saxon manuscripts to George Hickes, *Antiquae literaturae septentrionalis liber* (Oxford, 1705). Under each collection he listed manuscripts by their press-marks. He noted their material and format in a brief descriptive title for each volume and identified every separate work within each with incipits and folio numbers. He omitted provenance. The supporting index of authors, titles and subjects was in one alphabetical sequence but lacked inversion to highlight key words. Thoresby's own list of his collection (1715) was in English and arranged by format; less accomplished, Thoresby omitted much codicological detail and provided no index though he did note donors.[64]

Librarians have to consider security. Fire was then a constant threat; artificial lighting as well as heating depended upon naked flames, and supplies of water and means of pumping it were limited. The Great Fire of London ravaged the premises of both Sion College and the Royal College of Physicians. A town fire in Edinburgh in February 1700 engulfed a building partly occupied by the Advocates. Many lesser fires also occurred. On 5 November 1657 fireworks came through a window of John Worthington's set in Jesus, Cambridge, damaging some papers. A roof fire at Trinity, Cambridge, imperilled its library in 1665. In 1670 workmen ignited the roof above the Audit House of Canterbury Cathedral, and the fire consumed some of the archives below. In 1694 Westminster Abbey lost all its manuscripts except one by fire. A fire at Exeter College, Oxford, on 2 December 1709 destroyed its library apart from one stall of books, and prompted Hearne to think about the safety of the nearby Bodleian. Early on 23 October 1731 Ashburnham House in Little Dean's Yard, Westminster, which accommodated the Cottonian Library, caught fire with serious loss; afterwards Bentley was somewhat phlegmatic about it, but Pope wrote fawningly to Harley.[65]

The risk being so common, librarians hesitated to heat and light their libraries. Leiden University banned lights and candles from its library, and the

64 R. Thoresby, *Ducatus Leodiensis* (London, 1715), 515ff.; cf. Wanley, *Letters*, 133. On both Langbaine and the cataloguing of manuscripts in general, see the historical introduction by R. W. Hunt to *Summary catalogue of western manuscripts in the Bodleian Library*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1953).

65 *Portland papers*, vol. 6, 41; A. Pope, *Correspondence*, ed. G. Sherburn (Oxford, 1956), vol. 3, 240. The fires mentioned all feature in accounts of their several institutions, but see also J. Worthington, *Diary and correspondence*, ed. J. Crossley, Chetham Society 13 (Manchester, 1847), vol. 1, 90; Hearne, *Remarks*, vol. 2, 318, 320, 330; Thoresby, *Diary*, vol. 1, 192, and vol. 2, 308.

Bodleian prohibited any fire, its cold damp allegedly hastening the demise of Langbaine. George Berkeley grumbled about the damp and musty atmosphere in the library of Trinity, Dublin; the Royal College of Physicians, London, prohibited candles and smoking, and Wanley recommended that St Paul's should ban 'fire, lighted candles or lighted tobacco' from its library.[66] Yet readers welcomed comfort, and damp readily harmed books. The Advocates purchased three pairs of brass candle-sticks and a snuffer in 1683, and Norwich Town Library allowed fire, candles and lighted tobacco by 1690.[67] Wanley himself relented and in 1714 suggested to Harley that fireplaces be provided because warmth would be good for the building, its books, the library-keeper and students.[68] Similarly, John Elphinstone, keeper of the Cottonian Library, wrote to the Treasury in June 1716 about dampness from the Thames; the Treasury took his point, allowing £30 annually for firing and candles.[69] Later still, William Adam provided fireplaces in the library he built for Glasgow University between 1732 and 1745.[70] Domestic libraries served sociable purposes as well as scholarly ones and so tended to be better provided. Little evidence survives of fire precautions but Wanley recommended a contingency plan and Hearne considered fire-breaks and pumps.[71]

Insects and their larvae were an insidious pest. Known since antiquity, their identification and eradication required scientific knowledge hitherto unavailable; regular cleaning had been the traditional response. Scientific investigation began with Robert Hooke's *Micrographia* (1667), which included drawings of book-worms from the microscope, the text describing characteristic depredations.[72] Further literature appeared gradually. In 1754 the *Gentleman's Magazine* offered homespun remedies including alum and vitriol

66 E. H. Pol, 'The library', in T. H. Lunsingh-Scheuleer and G. H. M. Posthumus-Meyjes (eds.), *Leiden University in the seventeenth century* (Leiden, 1975), 425; Bodleian Library, statutes 1610, para. 5; G. Berkeley, *Works*, ed. A. A. Luce and T. E. Jessop (London, 1948–57), vol. 8, 24; W. Munk, *The roll of the Royal College of Physicians of London*, 2nd edn (London, 1878), vol. 3, 367; Wanley, *Letters*, 261.

67 Cadell and Matheson, *Encouragement*, 186; G. O. Stephen, *Three centuries of a city library* (Norwich, 1917), 8; cf. Nichols, *Literary anecdotes*, vol. 6(i), 30.

68 Wakeman, 'Humphrey Wanley', 83.

69 *Calendar of Treasury papers, 1714–19* (London, 1883), 213–14.

70 W. Adam, *Vitruvius Scoticus* (Edinburgh, 1980), plates 155–7; cf. C. B. L. Barr, 'The Minster library', in G. E. Aylmer and R. Cant (eds.), *History of York Minster* (Oxford, 1977), 510.

71 Hearne, *Remarks*, vol. 2, 320; 'Wanley and the Bodleian', 111; cf. A. G. Roos, *Geschiedenis van der bibliotheek der rijks universiteit te Groningen* (Groningen, 1914), 6 (buckets of water and a night watch in 1672).

72 R. Hooke, *Micrographia* (London, 1667), 207–10 and plate 33. On cleaning hitherto, cf. R. B. Marks, *The medieval manuscript library of the Charterhouse of St Barbara in Cologne* (Salzburg, 1974), vol. 1, 29–33; W. Milde, 'Die Wolfenbütteler Liberey-Ordnung des Herzogs Julius von 1572', *Wolfenbütteler Beiträge* 1 (1972), 137–9; Bodleian Library, statute 1613, para. 12.

in bookbinder's paste, and regular dusting with pepper and alum.[73] Other contemporary remedies even used arsenic. Johannes Hermann summarised this accumulated wisdom and practice in a prize essay for Göttingen Academy in 1774. Palliative measures included natural predators, physical control, chemical methods, and denying insects a congenial environment.[74] Specific insecticides lacking, repeated battering, dusting and cleaning were probably the best that could be done. Traps and predators took care of larger vermin.

Such infestation apart, cleanliness is a virtue, and Jesuit rules stressed regular cleaning; many libraries followed that regime, and casual labour, often female, was engaged to do it.[75] Success may have been limited, for having visited Magdalen College, Oxford, Edmund Gibson testily remarked, 'old musty papers are but ill company for neat clothes and white hands'.[76] Meanwhile the increased use of sea-coals in towns generated much fall-out of soot to the detriment of books and furnishings; glazed cases and cupboards helped.[77]

Damp was another hazard. It could rise from the ground, penetrate through roofs or appear as a sudden inrush of surface water. Medieval and renaissance builders had met rising damp and inundation by not placing libraries at ground level, a practice which Wren followed. Hence the modernity of the Codrington Library at All Souls, begun in 1715, which Hawksmoor placed at ground level, upon brick-vaulted cellars. In Glasgow, William Adam raised the main floor of his new university library upon a semi-basement, the portico sheltering steps up from actual ground level to the ground floor.[78] Downward penetration of damp may result from deterioration of the roof or from failure to clear gutters; good workmanship and regular maintenance kept trouble at bay.[79] Occasional storm damage is more difficult to anticipate, and a storm in February 1662

73 *Gentleman's Magazine* 24 (1754), 73.

74 E. Wickersheimer, 'Jean Hermann et les insectes ennemis des livres', *Libri* 2 (1952–3), 88–98; cf. C. Houlbert, *Les insectes, ennemis des livres* (Paris, 1903), 227ff.; W. Osler, 'Illustrations of the bookworm', *Bodleian Quarterly Record* 1 (1914–16), 355–7.

75 B. C. Connolly, 'Jesuit library beginnings', *Library Quarterly* 30 (1960), 247–50; Thoresby, *Diary*, vol. 1, 254, 358–9, and vol. 2, 59; Wanley, *Letters*, 260; *Fasti Aberdonensis*, vol. 1, 202; Morison, *Harvard*, 286; Oates, *Cambridge University Library*, 395; G. Hampshire (ed.), *Bodleian Library account book 1613–1646*, Oxford Bibliographical Society, new ser., 21 (Oxford, 1983) 39, 122–6, 135, 139–40, 144, 150; G. Hampshire, 'An unusual Bodleian purchase in 1645', *Bodleian Library Record* 10 (1982), 339. Cf. G. Mercati, *Opere minori* (Vatican, 1937–84), vol. 3, 254.

76 H. Ellis, *Original letters*, Camden Society 23 (London, 1843), 216.

77 Uffenbach, *London in 1710*, 98; J. Evelyn, *Fumifugium*, Old Ashmolean Reprints 8 (Oxford, 1930), 18–20.

78 E. Craster, *History of All Souls College library* (London, 1971), 71–2; Adam, *Vitruvius Scoticus*, plates 155–7.

79 Hampshire, *Bodleian account book*, 189; A. Morgan and R. K. Hannay (eds.), *University of Edinburgh charters 1583–1858* (Edinburgh, 1937), 134; Hearne, *Remarks*, vol. 1, 67–8.

blew three chimneys off St John's, Oxford, which fell into its library, and four pinnacles off the Bodleian.[80]

Theft may be aggravated by burglary or can be construed from failure to return legitimate loans. Librarians have to balance accessibility and security, and to distinguish absentmindedness from malice, yet insofar as theft may be a function of inadequate vigilance, they may have to bear some blame for it. The brothers James and John Young, who managed Glasgow University Library from 1679 to 1691, were none too vigilant, and Patrick Wilson stole many books. Detected and convicted, Wilson was imprisoned and deprived of his degree.[81] Vandalism can be as serious as theft, and Bishop Nicolson condemned illicit extraction of maps from books as Wanley deplored removal of their plates.[82] For two decades after their arrival in Cambridge, Bishop Moore's books remained poorly secured; some were lost to unscrupulous readers, of whom Philip Nichols was accordingly deprived of his degree in 1731 and Henry Justice was sentenced to transportation.[83] Private libraries also suffered from theft.[84] Librarians could do little against *force majeure* during war or civil commotion. Its incidence was less than on mainland Europe, but the English Civil War saw the archiepiscopal library deported from Lambeth to Cambridge, many cathedral libraries ransacked, and St Mary's Tower, York, which held some pre-dissolution monastic archives, blown up; private libraries not secreted might be looted or seized against payment of a fine.[85]

Security required some control of access. Authorised readers might be allowed a key upon giving an oath and depositing a surety. Oaths had moral

80 Wood, *Life and times*, vol. 1, 432.

81 *Munimenta Glasguensis*, vol. 2, 355, and vol. 3, 581; J. Durkan, 'Early history of Glasgow University library', *Bibliotheck* 8 (1977), 123.

82 H. Ware, 'Bishop Nicolson's diaries', *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*, new ser., 1 (1901), 38; 'Wanley and the Bodleian', 107.

83 McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, 195ff.; P. Gaskell, 'Henry Justice, a Cambridge book thief', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 1 (1949–53), 348–57.

84 Le Fanu, 'Dean Swift's library', 117; Warkentin, 'The book at Penshurst', 338.

85 A. Cox-Johnson, 'Lambeth Palace library 1610–1664', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 2 (1954–8), 105–26; N. R. Ker, 'Patrick Young's catalogue of the manuscripts of Lichfield Cathedral', *Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 2 (1950), 151–68; R. W. Dixon, 'The chapter library of Carlisle', *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society* 2 (1874–5), 312–13; L. S. Colchester (ed.), *Wells Cathedral* (Shepton Mallet, 1982), 206; 'Yorkshire monastic archives', *Bodleian Quarterly Record* 8 (1938), 95–100. Cf. H. R. Trevor-Roper, *The plunder of the arts in the seventeenth century* (London, 1970). On some private collections, see Morrish, 'Dr Higgs', 152–5; J. Morris, *Correspondence with Johannes de Laet*, ed. J. Bekkers (Assen, 1970), 85 and 138, and H. Carron, 'William Sancroft . . . a seventeenth-century collector and his library', *Library*, 7th ser., 1 (2000), 297–8.

strength in an age of faith and sureties could be tailored to meet costs and risks. This was thought appropriate to the library of a corporate institution which belonged to members only in trust, a point discussed at the trial of Henry Justice. However, as Leiden University and others discovered, the issue of keys was insecure and could prompt argument, though locks could be changed, even to discipline junior staff as a disgruntled Hearne found.[86] Thus Fellows of Oriel College had to swear not to remove books from the library, nor to deface them, to replace them in their proper places, and to report anybody who transgressed. A bond required of John Aird, librarian of Glasgow University, was not cancelled until six years after he had quit.[87]

Otherwise keys might be held by the librarian, who would attend at set times. There being little means of artificial lighting, those set times might vary seasonally. Aberdeen was open on stated days, in summer between 7 a.m. and 11 a.m. and from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., but in winter between 9 a.m. and 12 noon, and from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. (similarly some Portuguese libraries respected climate and custom by taking a siesta in summer).[88] Having bought those candle-sticks, the Advocates kept their library open into the gloaming when courts were sitting, but Wanley advised St Paul's Cathedral to close its library early in winter.[89] Stated opening hours were not always honoured, especially in vacations, and absence of the key-holder might render a visit fruitless.[90]

Traditionally security for individual books included lockable chests and cupboards, and chaining volumes to lecterns or shelves. Chains were still used around 1650 but were cumbersome, a hazard to fore-edges and ill-suited to smaller formats which were now more common. Recording their visit to the abbey of S. Jean des Vignes, Soissons, the Maurist scholars Martène and Durand commented on how unfashionable chaining had become by the end of the

86 Pol, 'The library [Leiden]', 410–11, 425, 446; Hearne, *Remarks*, vol. 5, 283.

87 G. C. Richardson and H. E. Salter (eds.), *The Dean's register of Oriel 1446–1661*, Oxford Historical Society 84 (Oxford, 1926), 344–5; Munk, *Roll of R.C.P.*, vol. 3, 367; *Minute book Advocates*, vol. 1, 247, 265–7, and vol. 2, 168; P. Hoare, 'The librarians of Glasgow University over 350 years', *Library Review* 40/2–3 (1991), 32.

88 *Fasti Aberdonensis*, vol. 1, 202; cf. *Munimenta Glasguensis*, vol. 3, 458–9. J. B. Salmond and G. H. Bushnell, *Henderson's benefaction* (St Andrews, 1942), 47; Grant, *University of Edinburgh*, 172. On practice outside Scotland: *Records of Leicester*, 509–10; S. Leite (ed.), *Estatuos da Universidade de Coimbra* (Coimbra, 1963), 191; J. Peixoto, *Considerações sobre o regulamento da livraria da Universidade de Évora* (Evora, 1959), 14.

89 *Minute book Advocates*, vol. 1, 131; Wanley, *Letters*, 259.

90 Uffenbach, *Oxford*, 8, 32, 52, 65, 67; cf. E. Martène and U. Durand, *Voyage littéraire* (Paris, 1717, repr. 1969), vol. 1, 273, and vol. 2, 222, and J. Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, ed. G. B. Hill and L. F. Powell (Oxford, 1934–50), vol. 5, 65. Glasgow University tried to avoid this inconvenience by requiring its librarian to leave the key behind whenever he left town: *Munimenta Glasguensis*, vol. 3, 453–4.

century.[91] Chaining was an added expense and not necessarily a deterrent.[92] The Vatican had already unchained its manuscripts in the 1640s, preferring cupboards for them, and Leiden University had released its printed books a decade later. Halifax parish library was unchained in 1710 and Corpus Christi, Oxford, last bought chains in the same year. Eton College removed its chains in 1719, and Sion about ten years later; the Bodleian was unchained between 1757 and 1761. Cambridge had been more advanced. Borrowing from its University Library would have been difficult had it been chained; Emmanuel never used them and Trinity had abandoned them around 1604 but contemplated rechaining in 1660 because of losses.

Not to chain had its critics and implications. Commending the Bodleian, Thomas Hollis wrote from London to Benjamin Colman, president of Harvard, in 1725 about the dire consequences of not chaining valuable books.[93] Both Humphrey Chetham and Archbishop Marsh ordered some chaining, and Wells Cathedral even chained a newly acquired copy of the Koran in 1738.[94] Unchaining brought older libraries into line with private collections and relieved readers of much inconvenience, yet this modernisation proceeded unevenly, and in London Uffenbach noted chains at Middle Temple, Westminster School and Sion College, but cupboards at Inner Temple, Christ's Hospital and the Cottonian.[95] One implication of unchaining is to require closer supervision of casual readers, but this was not always the case. Wanley recorded how John Laughton, the University Librarian, took him to Trinity College, Cambridge: 'some of the books I enquired after could not be found on the sudden; but I made a shift to poke out a few of them myself, being left alone by Mr Laughton who was sent for in haste to the Vice-chancellor'.[96]

On first visiting a library strangers advisedly brought a recommendation. Touring England in 1651, Christoph Arnold obtained support from John Selden before entering the Bodleian, and Johann Schumacher, librarian to Peter the

91 Martène and Durand, *Voyage littéraire*, vol. 2, 24.

92 On purchase of chains, see D. Macleane, *History of Pembroke College, Oxford*, Oxford Historical Society 33 (Oxford, 1897), 279; *Records of Leicester*, 549; Raines and Sutton, *Chetham*, vol. 2, 217. In 1638–9 the Royal College of Surgeons had bought chain at 4d a yard: J. B. Bailey, 'The library of the Royal College of Surgeons', *Library* 1 (1889), 251. On Wanley's views, see his *Letters*, 261; he also recommended lockable cases in the style of the Vatican to deter theft (Wakeman, 'Humphrey Wanley', 82).

93 R. W. Lovett (ed.), *Documents from the Harvard University archives 1628–1750*, Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts 50 (Boston, MA, 1975), 556. On unchaining, see studies of the libraries referred to.

94 Raines and Sutton, *Chetham*, vol. 2, 258–9; McCarthy, *All graduates and gentlemen*, 51; Colchester, *Wells Cathedral*, 207.

95 Uffenbach, *London*, 57–8, 75, 78, 87, 120.

96 Wanley, *Letters*, 131.

Great, not only had a recommendation from Bodley's Librarian but also the company of William Hanbury, Sir John Cotton's brother-in-law, when he visited the Harleian.[97] Wanley advised librarians to receive strangers personally, but attendance upon visitors could tempt venal librarians, or poorly paid assistants, to solicit money beyond what might have been due. Uffenbach paid the customary gratuity to Joseph Crabb to see the Bodleian and also gave him a guinea to gain access to its gallery where he wished to consult a number of volumes together.[98]

Whether chained or not, individual books deserve some identification of ownership. This may not prevent theft for labels or inscriptions may be tampered with, but it may tempt errant volumes to return. Institutional libraries had normally written some formula on a preliminary leaf. Thus advertising for the return of strays, the Advocates' informed the public that its books 'will be known by their mark, viz, Lib: Bibl: Jurid: Edinb., which is writ either on the waste leafe before the title page, or upon the immediate page after the Preface or Dedication'.[99] Although Glasgow University Library had ownership stamps by 1656, Principal William Dunlop continued to write *ex libris* inscriptions in its books around 1700, and in the 1750s Hume was doing the same at the Advocates'.[100] Indeed, academic libraries had tended to use bookplates to identify only gifts, and not until 1706–7 did Cambridge adopt an armorial bookplate for general use; York Minster Library did not have printed bookplates until 1751. On the other hand, affluent and ostentatious private owners indulged not only in bookplates but also in such display as characteristic uniform bindings with heraldic arms or other devices or monograms stamped in gold. Others merely wrote their names.[101]

Wherever books are borrowable, careful records and adequate sanctions are needed. On occasion good will and personal intervention may secure a legitimate loan. Thus Bentley persuaded the Dean and Chapter of Lichfield to lend St Chad's Gospels to Harley, and Bishop Nicolson supported Wanley's

97 F. Blom, *Christoph and Andreas Arnold and England* (Nuremberg, 1982), 49; H. Wanley, *Diary*, ed. C. E. Wright and R. C. Wright (London, 1966), vol. 1, 131–3.

98 Wanley, *Letters*, 259; Uffenbach, *Oxford*, 3, 17–18.

99 Cadell and Matheson, *Encouragement*, 39. An inscription on a leaf in one and gold stamps on the boards of both enabled the Advocates to recover without cost two manuscripts which were being offered for sale by an executor in 1746: *Minute book Advocates*, vol. 2, 208, 212. Common medieval practice is lucidly summarised from German examples in L. Buzás, *Deutsche Bibliotheksgeschichte des Mittelalters* (Wiesbaden, 1975), 151–2.

100 Durkan, 'Glasgow University library', 122; Cadell and Matheson, *Encouragement*, 106.

101 Oates, *Cambridge University Library*, 470–1; Barr, 'Minster library', 510; B. N. Lee, *Early printed book labels* (London, 1976), xiv and appendix 'C'; B. N. Lee, 'Pictorial bookplates in Britain', *Private Library*, 3rd ser., 5 (1982), 59–116; H. M. Nixon and M. M. Foot, *History of decorated bookbinding in England* (Oxford, 1992), 64 and plates 51 and 56.

request to borrow early manuscripts from Durham. Similar support even sent manuscripts to distinguished scholars overseas.[102] Formal arrangements are preferable. Naudé recommended loan registers, an established practice already followed in many libraries.[103] Again, bonds might be required; Wanley gave one for £100 before borrowing three Saxon chronicles from the Cottonian, and himself insisted upon signed receipts from a reluctant Hearne when he wished to borrow from the Harleian collection.[104] Bentley mentioned weighing and counting loose papers before lending them though whether this was a widespread practice is unclear.[105] Risks were sometimes taken; Bentley confessed to slackness upon lending the Phalaris manuscript without proper warrant, and in Cambridge Wanley was allowed to borrow manuscripts for perusal at his temporary lodgings there.[106]

The image of libraries, and how readers were treated, varied. Librarians visiting other libraries could be more critical than laymen, and frustrated readers more voluble than those who were satisfied. Most satire needs to be read with pinches of salt, yet the picture of the Royal Library in Swift's *Battle of the books* was not all imagination; after dining with Bentley, Wanley viewed that library and noted the books were 'in unexpressible disorder and confusion'.[107] Visitors might prove tedious if they were merely sightseers; Thoresby grumbled, 'thus I am exposed, like a common innkeeper, to guests of all complexions', and though he had to be tactful, Wanley occasionally ushered from the premises those who had overstepped the mark.[108] Royal visits could be difficult, and a banquet for James II in the Bodleian concluded with a 'rabble' of courtiers and academics scrambling for food after the king had departed.[109] Show and flattery were in order; Evelyn smugly noted his own name among benefactors to the Bodleian, and Swift remarked that not all the books which

102 Wanley, *Letters*, 180, 182, 186–7; Worthington, *Diary*, vol. 1, 280, 304.

103 Naudé, *Advis*, 120. A record of borrowers' registers of this period still extant in English cathedral libraries appears in E. A. Read, 'Cathedral libraries: a supplementary check-list', *Library History* 4 (1978), 141–63.

104 Wanley, *Letters*, 255, 306–10; Wanley, *Diary*, vol. 2, 213; Nichols, *Illustrations*, vol. 3, 427. Loans might be refused: R. Bentley, *Works*, ed. A. Dyce (London, 1836), vol. 1, xl. Rules might also be ignored, Bentley admitting that books were lent from Trinity College, Cambridge, library without the required Master's written consent, largely because of his own unavailability: Bentley, *Correspondence*, 682, and his *Works*, vol. 1, xiii.

105 Bentley, *Works*, vol. 1, xxxi.

106 Wanley, *Letters*, 137–8.

107 *Ibid*., 95, 300–3; cf. 'Bishop Nicolson's diaries', 40. Disorder in the Royal Library was not new; Dury had found it in a bad state when he assumed custody in 1651: G. H. Turnbull, *Hartlib, Dury and Comenius* (Liverpool, 1947), 268–9. On muddle elsewhere, cf. Hearne, *Remarks*, vol. 6, 8; Uffenbach, *Oxford*, 54; R. Hurd, *Early letters*, ed. S. Brewer (Woodbridge, 1995), 101.

108 Thoresby, *Diary*, vol. 2, 65; Wanley, *Diary*, vol. 2, 334, 396, 398.

109 Wood, *Life and times*, vol. 3, 235–7.

he was shipping to Dublin were worthwhile but 'very bad ones . . . only to make shew as a Dean of St Patrick's should'.[110] Not only was disorder a common criticism but also inadequate or absentee librarians attracted opprobrium. Uffenbach was outspoken on both counts; John Loveday found Henderson at Edinburgh University Library convivial but 'crazed'.[111] Absenteeism could be excessive; Robert Huntingdon served Merton College as librarian from 1667 to 1683 yet spent about ten of those years as chaplain to the Levant Company at Aleppo, though he took that opportunity to send manuscripts back to Oxford.[112]

Librarianship and bibliophily were intellectual and sociable activities. Not all librarians were boorish or poorly educated; Bentley, Berkeley and Hume could stand as peers with Leibniz, though whether any of them grasped all the finer points of library economy may be questioned. Librarians showed kindnesses to those deserving them. Wanley booked places on the coach to Wimpole for Schumacher and himself; Robert Wodrow apologised to correspondents that pressure of work prevented him from replying as promptly as he wished; and Harley found the Advocates' Librarian, Thomas Ruddiman, courteous and understanding.[113] Thoresby constantly visited friends for bookish discourse and wrote to John Strype that he 'would most willingly travel twenty miles on foot to have the happiness of your converse, and a sight of your curious collections'.[114]

Access and admission are distinct. Many people enjoyed relatively easy admittance only to small libraries of philanthropic origin, parish or town libraries. Libraries of universities, colleges, cathedrals and other learned establishments were normally restricted to members, though saving clauses in their constitutions, or courtesy, might admit properly accredited strangers upon suitable application; the Advocates soon capitulated to the *literati* of the Lothians.[115] Similar arrangements might admit strangers to the large collections assembled by bibliophiles. Even so, initial admittance to any library might be an ordeal, for example to the Bodleian.[116] Indifferent roads limited accessibility.

110 J. Evelyn, *Diary*, ed. E. S. de Beer (Oxford, 1955), vol. 3, 385; J. Swift, *Correspondence*, ed. H. Williams (Oxford, 1963–5), vol. 2, 31; cf. Defoe, *Complete English gentleman*, 135.

111 J. Loveday, *Diary of a tour in 1732*, ed. J. E. T. Loveday, Roxburghe Club 121 (Edinburgh, 1890), 154; Uffenbach, *Oxford*, 8, 30, 52. A sour Thomas Hearne referred to Joseph Bowles, Bodley's Librarian, as a 'pert conceited coxcomb': *Remarks*, vol. 7, 71.

112 Morrish, 'Dr Higgs', 44.

113 Wanley, *Diary*, vol. 1, 136; Wodrow, *Early letters*, 27, 30–1, 251; *Report on Portland papers*, vol. 6, 124.

114 H. Ellis (ed.), *Original letters of eminent literary men*, Camden Society 23 (London, 1843), 337.

115 Cadell and Matheson, *Encouragement*, 188–9.

116 L. Boynton, 'Oxford in 1742', *History of Universities* 13 (1994), 306.

John Clegg recalled moving closer to Manchester to make use of Chetham's, and Wanley once hoped to visit Durham whose treasures, he opined, would be 'more useful to the world in my Lord's Library than in that remote corner'.[117] Clearly however his motive was not entirely altruistic. Despite that perceived remoteness, Henrietta, countess of Oxford, visited County Durham in 1745. She found Bishop Cosin's library uncared for and in danger of collapse: perhaps Wanley ought to have carried out his plan.[118]

No adequate historical social survey has yet elucidated what sort of people became librarians in this period. Some hints may be gleaned from the foregoing. Those who became librarians subordinately to other occupations, such as Dury or Bentley, should be distinguished from those whose occupation was predominantly in libraries, for example Hearne and Wanley; the former group were only coincidentally librarians. Whilst not all were necessarily graduates, members of both groups were essentially literate people with inquisitive minds, and might be of quite humble origin. Some were either active or ejected clergy. Fellows or canons who managed institutional libraries not only enjoyed a congenial role but also revealed much about institutional attitudes to librarianship. Such posts saved money, asserted corporateness, hopefully ensured a suitable accessions policy, and suggested that librarianship was not conceived as an occupation of esoteric complexity needing rigorous training. Whatever their learning, private librarians were servants and conducted themselves accordingly. They might act additionally as secretaries or tutors. Their employment might betoken the grandeur of their masters as much as bibliothecal necessity.

A librarian of 1650 returning in 1750 would have found much that was familiar. Of course chaining was being abandoned; wall shelves had become fashionable, and copyright deposit had been asserted if not promptly honoured in practice. There was continuity as well; librarianship remained a cultured occupation and, except at a handful of places, remuneration stayed modest, plurality still being a socially acceptable necessity. Informative rigour still evaded cataloguers who were hamstrung by failure to devise an expansive format. Despite some theoreticians, classification was bumbling along, adding some new classes to a medieval framework. Fixed location and shelving by height still ruled. The familiar daily tribulations of fire, insects and irresponsible

117 J. Clegg, *Diary*, ed. V. S. Doe, Derbyshire Record Society 5 (Matlock, 1981), vol. 3, 913. On the prestige of Chetham's Library, see Loveday, *Diary*, 92, and H. Walpole, *Correspondence*, ed. W. S. Lewis (Oxford, 1937–83), vol. 40, 16. On Durham, see Wanley, *Diary*, vol. 2, 227.

118 *Report on Portland papers*, vol. 6, 185.

readers persisted. This lack of development in practical aspects found a parallel in Cotton des Houssaye's views on duties and qualifications, aired in 1780, which made little advance upon Naudé, Dury and their colleagues.[119] The new librarian was but an old keeper writ afresh.

119 J. B. Cotton des Houssayes, *The duties and qualifications of a librarian*, ed. J. C. Dana and H. W. Kent (Chicago, 1906; repr. 1967).

PART TWO

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LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT AT A LOCAL LEVEL

15

Libraries for sociability: the advance of the subscription library

JAMES RAVEN

The embrace of the new transformed libraries in late Stuart and Hanoverian Britain: the new volume and types of publication, new library founders and entrepreneurs, new library locations and ambitions, new users and readers, new reputations and perceived purposes. More fitful than steady development, the increasing popularity of assembling a collection of books initiated innovative ways of storing, circulating and lending out books. A striking diversity in the forms of library resulted from the different usages, modes of access, private, charitable and commercial objectives, and owners and clientèle. After the Restoration, libraries as places of entertainment and diversion increasingly vied with libraries as repositories of knowledge or 'arks of learning', and their development became less predictable. As the library room came to offer new possibilities of social and political interaction, fears grew that irresponsible reading and discussion might not be contained, however well designed the proclaimed objectives or written rules. Just as books or prints were never neutral or passive, so, it was recognised, library collections were not simply static objects confined to ordained spaces and communities.

What was actually done with the books, prints and other items that might constitute a 'library' hugely varied between the late seventeenth and early nineteenth centuries. Indeed we can court confusion by not qualifying the word 'library' or by using it too liberally to embrace very different types of institution with very different ideas of the communities and purposes they served. What we might deem 'sociability', and the wider interaction between books, people, and the paraphernalia and accoutrements gathered under the roof of a library proved just as varied and volatile. The collection of books, always variable in terms of private and public practice, developed in new configurations, from unprecedentedly large aristocratic and gentlemen's libraries attracting wider social interest and access, to new forms of proprietary libraries in which share owners or subscribers formed literary, scientific and debating societies to raise the local social profile of the library (and of many of its members).

Consequences included the more general employment of salaried librarians, the adoption of new forms of policing a collection and membership recruitment, and the appropriation of some joint-stock subscription libraries to lend out money at interest to members or act as investment companies. From the mid-eighteenth century commercial circulating libraries further extended the social range of those associated with a particular collection of books (and very often encouraging many more women readers). The buildings housing the different libraries offered both marked contrasts (in size, access and usage) and similarities (in allusive decoration and modes of supply).

In one important sense, the history of all libraries in the first half of this period (whether ecclesiastical, secular, private, endowed, subscription or proprietary) is partly of a confluence of old books – not just new books – from myriad tributaries. In other words, from the perspective of book acquisition (including much from abroad) we must appreciate the extent to which English, Welsh, Scottish and Irish libraries were often conglomerates of bequests or of gifts of books. The only exceptions before about 1700 were very modest collections assembled by new purchase; the situation after about 1750 heightened the contrast with the new commercial and subscription libraries demanding new supplies of new publications. Especially in private and institutional libraries, many of the most prized books, and certainly most originating in mainland Europe, arrived at second or third hand (or even more remotely). This is certainly the case for the royal collection, the cathedral libraries, the municipal libraries, the college and university libraries of Oxford and Cambridge, Trinity College, Dublin and the ancient Scottish universities, the Dublin Philosophical Society and the British Museum.

Such library-to-library cannibalism was hugely offset by the advance of the proprietary and then, even more markedly, the circulating library, developments grounded in the economic and social transformation of Britain. The new money and disposable incomes that supported increased book production just as energetically encouraged the formation of new types of library societies and commercial lending operations in all three kingdoms. In different ways, however, this meant that the private purse still governed. From late Stuart Britain we are certainly not looking at orderly or efficient institutional or library purchasing of books from domestic or foreign publishers. Instead, everything, at root, depended on the wealth of individuals, on the depth of their pocket, and on their generosity in their lifetimes or after death in giving or bequeathing a collection to another library.

The developments that began in the late seventeenth century – the changing perceptions of books and collections, individual book-buying passions and the

advance of auctions and foreign dealing – continued through the eighteenth century and remained fundamental to the increase in the number and quality of libraries, but the radical and underlying economic and social change also continued in new ways to support the extension of libraries. The 1740s proved a critical economic watershed, when Britain became a net exporter rather than importer of books. The British Isles in 1695 comprised three kingdoms with a total population of just over 8 million. In 1814 a United Kingdom of Britain and Ireland contained a population of some 19 million. English population growth is clearly the central feature, but the enormous demographic change in Ireland should not be overlooked (as it often is). From 1695 until the catastrophe of 1841 the Irish population was fully a third larger than the population of Scotland. During the eighteenth century the population of Ireland increased at a rate equalling, and, in certain decades eclipsing, that of England. In 1712 approximately 2.8 million people lived in Ireland. Less than fifty years later the Irish population reached 3.5 million. By 1814, 11 million people lived in England and Wales, 5.5 million in Ireland, and nearly 2 million in Scotland. In the decade 1801–11 the rate of Irish population growth still exceeded that of England, even though it was never to do so again. By far the least populated of the three kingdoms, Scotland had a population of under 1.3 million according to the first full estimate made in 1755. Given the demographic crises of the 'seven ill years' from 1696 to 1703, it is possible that the population of Scotland in the mid-eighteenth century was no greater than it was in the mid-seventeenth century. By 1800, however, the Scottish population had increased to over 1.6 million, and by 1811 to over 1.8 million.

An even more striking demographic feature of this period was the soaring growth of London and Dublin. In 1695 London, with over half a million people, was twenty times larger than its nearest English rival and contained 10 per cent of the total population of England and Wales. The largest market in the country, the greatest port, and the administrative and political centre, greater London grew to 1.5 million by 1814. Again, almost a tenth of all those inhabiting the United Kingdom were then living in the English capital. After London, Dublin was easily the second city of the British Isles. The 20,000–30,000 population of Edinburgh in 1650 far exceeded the then population of the Irish capital. In the late seventeenth century, as the Scottish economy faltered, Dublin raced ahead, reaching a population of 60,000 by 1700. Dublin's population totalled 140,000 by 1760, and well over 200,000 by 1814. By 1800 Dublin was more than three times the size of Edinburgh and among the ten largest cities of Europe.

Other urban centres boasted extraordinary growth rates. In 1695 Bristol, with a population of about 20,000, rivalled Norwich as the second largest

English town after London. Sometime in the first decades of the next century, Cork, the second city of Ireland, became the third most populous town in the three kingdoms after London and Dublin. By 1750 the city claimed a population of 70,000. At the same date Bristol was indisputably the fourth largest town of the British Isles, with a population of 50,000 and its port set fair for the Atlantic trade. One of the most significant pointers in demographic change was the rapid advance of Glasgow from a population of 23,500 in 1755 to one larger than Cork, by 1780. By 1800 Glasgow had a population of approximately 83,000, Cork 80,000, Limerick 60,000, Paisley 31,000, Aberdeen 27,000, Dundee 26,000, and the fast-growing city of Belfast 20,000.

It was in England, however, that the most remarkable urban expansion occurred. The transformation of London continued to dominate: the greater city claimed a population of 900,000 by 1800 and by 1814 its population was twice that of 1745. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Paris was the largest city in Europe; at the beginning of the nineteenth century London was at least a third larger than the French capital and dwarfed all other European rivals. London revelled in being the capital of fashion and accomplishment, and also of its discussion. Perhaps the most telling point about the growth of towns in England as a whole, however, is to note that the total population of all provincial towns matched that of London by 1750, and was almost twice as great as the capital's population by 1801. Excluding London, nineteen towns had populations greater than 10,000 in 1750. Five of these, Bristol, Norwich, Liverpool, Newcastle and Birmingham, had populations greater than 20,000. By the first census returns of 1801, forty-eight towns had populations over 10,000, fifteen of which were over 20,000. Many new towns in the midlands and north of England mushroomed from small villages or market settlements in the mid-eighteenth century to be manufacturing and trading centres of over 10,000 people by 1814. By 1801 the third largest city in the United Kingdom was Manchester with a population of some 84,000. The next largest English towns were Liverpool with 77,653 inhabitants, and Birmingham with 73,670. Both had tripled their populations since 1750. By contrast, the fourth largest town in England in 1801, Bristol, had increased its population by only 10,000 since 1750, and it was soon to be eclipsed by other cities of the new industrial areas.

Study of this urban revolution has fuelled debate about the nature of 'commercialisation' and 'commodification' which, in respect of the book trade, especially relate to the break-up of the cartels of London publishers by the end of the eighteenth century and the success of new publishing operations. The repricing and reprinting of old titles affected the stocking of late eighteenth-century libraries as they did the character of the reading public. From 1780

to the end of the century the annual rate of British publication increased by nearly 3.5 per cent, a take-off in publication totals reflecting the expansion of the country distribution network, increased institutional demand, and new productivity based on financial and organisational innovation. Throughout these years, the importation of books also remained, in nominal if not relative terms, greater than ever.

During the second third of the eighteenth century a much more marked income redistribution and an increase in disposable middle-class wealth stimulated demand for a broad range of goods. A large number of industries adopted products and promotional devices to encourage new markets and new forms of demand. Consumption patterns were changed by increased spending on goods associated with social advancement and success. The middle classes were now energetically buying books and magazines as high-fashion consumer objects. Expensively illuminated or printed books, exquisitely bound and tooled, had long been the prized possessions of the rich and powerful. Such luxuries had always been more than just the vehicles of learning and debate.[1] As urban growth-rates soared so did particular accoutrements of civility and politeness – the assembly rooms, the coffee-houses, the subscription concerts, the varying social circuitry from house visits and group outings to resorts and the extension of the 'Season' into something more than legal and parliamentary.

The development of different types of library was clearly part of this eighteenth-century commercial revolution in Britain – the age of a new consumer society – but the social valuation of the book was qualitatively different from most other consumer trades in that it was not simply commercial but intrinsically intellectual and, in the broadest terms, political. Consideration of valuation, indeed, exposes both a paradox and a politics at the heart of commercialisation in the book trade. Commodification enraged those who identified literary devaluation and potential social instability as the consequence of increased print production, but it also ensured the broader political campaigning associated with various emancipatory causes célèbres. By comparison, the rest of Europe was regarded as shackled and unenlightened.

The private subscription or 'social' libraries certainly represented what might be categorised as bourgeois formations but ones greatly varying in size and exclusiveness. Some subscription libraries were financed by annual subscriptions; others, as 'proprietary' libraries, depended in addition upon

1 D. J. McKitterick, *The library of Sir Thomas Knyvett of Ashwellthorpe, c. 1539–1618* (Cambridge, 1978), 1–2; M. Girouard, *Life in the English country house* (New Haven and London, 1978), 166–70; S. Jayne, *Library catalogues of the English Renaissance*, new edn (Godalming, 1983), 93–172, chronological list of private library inventories.

joint-stock enterprise in which members purchased a share in a property (as gentlemen might support an overseas commercial venture or a local project for an improved navigation or new mineral extraction). Libraries with share ownership ranged hugely in size. Modest, often short-lived, literary and scientific groups emulated the major metropolitan institutions, including, at a far remove, continental academies of sciences. Many included a library (and, often, a scientific collection and curiosity cabinet). Although the number of such establishments was modest by the mid-eighteenth century, one survey lists more than 3,000 proprietary libraries established at some time between 1700 and 1799, with 923 society libraries and 1,005 subscription libraries operating in Britain at some point before 1850.[2] Kaufman further lists 110 book clubs of various sorts founded in twenty-nine English counties by the end of the eighteenth century. Many, such as the Botesdale Book Club in Suffolk (1778–89), claimed small numbers of volumes but devoted memberships. Among the larger proprietary institutions (some of which had predecessor libraries with some type of subscription), Liverpool was founded in 1758, Manchester in 1765, Leeds in 1768, Sheffield in 1771, Hull in 1775, Glasgow in 1779, Greenock in 1783, Perth in 1786, Belfast in 1788, Dublin in 1791, Cork in 1792, Newcastle in 1793 and Edinburgh in 1794.[3]

The ambitions of the proprietary libraries were various, with subtle differences in the policing of membership and admission. Only those proposed by two existing members and then sanctioned by the whole society might join the 1792 Cork Library Society (half guinea entrance fee and one guinea annual fee thereafter); the 1788 Belfast Society for Promoting Knowledge charged an admission fee of two guineas followed by a monthly fee of a shilling.[4] The Bristol Library Society specifically banned tavern keepers from membership. Opening hours of the libraries and the officials employed also proved variable. Some times were seasonal; to give one example, the Ludgate Hill London Library was open 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. between 25 March and 29 September, but 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. only during the rest of the year. Most libraries generated a strong sense not only of pioneering a service but also of

2 As of December 1998 Robin Alston's 'Library History Database' website (www.r-alston.dircon.co.uk/contents.htm) listed 3,071 libraries operating at some time between 1700 and 1799.

3 P. Kaufman, 'Community lending libraries in eighteenth-century Ireland and Wales', *Library Quarterly* 33 (1963), 299–312; D. McElroy, 'The literary clubs and societies of eighteenth-century Scotland and their influence on the literary productions of the period 1700–1800', unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Edinburgh (1951/2); P. Kaufman, 'The rise of community libraries in Scotland', *Proceedings of the Bibliographical Society of America* 59 (1965), 233–94.

4 R. C. Cole, *Irish booksellers and English writers 1740–1800* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ, 1986), 35.

a moral imperative for so doing. This was especially true in the remote and isolated towns of Britain – and of its colonies. The other obvious, if variable, characteristic of these libraries was their exclusivity, from the cost of shares and the high price of admission and continuing fees to a bewildering array of regulations and policing measures. The Sheffield library, for example, banned membership to anyone living more than two miles from the centre of town.

Private libraries now grew largely in tandem with the proprietary institutions. Local encouragement was provided by country-house book-collectors, themselves imitating the activities of the nobility. By the mid-eighteenth century the domestic library and its extension into something to be shared by friends and neighbours was emulated by many hundreds of English gentlemen who were regular book purchasers and bought and arranged books with increasing concern to display their trophies to others. A boom in the fashioning and equipping of domestic libraries paralleled the commercial restructuring of bookselling. Modest ventures of provincial gentlefolk and well-to-do tradesmen emulated the palatial attempts of great and often new wealth.

For these collectors and the new subscription libraries, Paternoster Row, Fleet Street, and the other sites of the London book trades comprised the centre of a spreading web – and they all offered services to purchase European books. The communication complex spread thousands of miles, because of the basic transportability of printed texts. London booksellers received requests for texts to support academic enquiry and to enable scientific discovery and botanical evaluation; the same booksellers were asked to supply texts to endorse notions of English liberty and of polite behaviour. From other London streets – notably St Martin's Lane and the yards and alleys off it – furniture makers such as Chippendale and his imitators produced library furniture and the catalogues that promoted their goods. London-made reading chairs, desks, folding library steps and supports for prints and globes (many of which could be crudely copied by local craftsmen in the country towns) contributed to the expected decoration and comforts of the private library opened to family, friends and fellow enthusiasts.[5]

Both private and communal subscription libraries embraced social aspiration as well as offering the obvious benefits of shared literary knowledge and the resources to access expensive, luxury items. Proprietary libraries, extending the ambition of many private collections, were notably established to empower – and not just by the acquisition of textual knowledge, but by the pursuit of

5 Of various examples, see the description of the early Ham library in M. Purcell, 'The private library in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Surrey', *Library History* 19 (2003), 119–27.

particular formal and informal social practices. Reading and dining, private discussion and public parade, were consorting activities. These libraries clearly operated at several levels, as repositories of learning and instruction, but also as social passports and as conduits for polite society. Moreover, the development of these libraries themselves contributed directly to the opposition to other forms of library and book collection by the late eighteenth century – directly fuelling alarms about inappropriate library institutions and inappropriate reading – of which the commercial and the foreign (and especially, by the early nineteenth century, the French) counted often as very inappropriate.

The prefaces of the proprietary library catalogues (of collections great and small) from Leeds to Spalding, from Bristol to Bungay, declared civilising, socialising ambition. The seals, bookplates and other stationery belonging to various library societies reveal further ambitions. The emblems of both seals and certificates echoed the Enlightenment iconography adopted by many gentlemen's societies and civic institutions. Minerva became perhaps the most replicated classical image, and the shining eye featured very widely in the mid-eighteenth century atop representations of pyramids and in various masonic symbols and devices.

Grandiosity is certainly in evidence from many of the surviving catalogues and rules of these libraries, and the more obvious British and European models for such libraries seem not to have deterred because of their magnificence. Late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century foundations from the Royal Society to the Society of Antiquaries established both correspondence communities and homes for meetings, debates and collections. The need for space to display acquisitions to their greatest advantage was even more acute with the development, in the largest of the town society libraries, of collections other than books. In addition to scientific instruments (which were mostly London made and rarely imported), many library societies and companies also acquired extraordinary and miscellaneous collections of 'curiosities' such as coins, stuffed birds and Egyptian mummies, largely by gift and bequest. Most significantly, book requests came from members and their committees. Some libraries ordered foreign literature, and although most holdings were British (often overwhelmingly so) these libraries were not reliant on gift and bequest and they were much more energetic in acquisition than earlier endowed town and municipal libraries such as Wisbech, Ipswich, Bedford and Tiverton (among many others, all of seventeenth-century foundation).[6]

6 T. Kelly, *Early public libraries* (London, 1966), chapter 4.

Even so, smaller subscription libraries – and perhaps the majority before about 1780 – did not boast a permanent home but shared accommodation in a variety of civic or private properties. The Huntingdon Book Club, for example, assembled at the George Inn in the town. Other libraries entrusted the collection to a librarian or keeper whose library room might form an extension of a private residence. Even the London Library Society inhabited a bewildering number of different addresses between 1785 and 1801. Nevertheless, to their members, private subscription libraries and the grander book clubs answered both the needs of social ambition and a quest for connections. The library offered tangible affiliation to a broader intellectual community.

In analysing such library sociability, we must beware of crude and instrumentalist explanations. Perceived communities were not necessarily envisaged as mapped exactly one upon the other, and they were represented in different ways to different people. Libraries supported the aspirations of upwardly mobile men of property, but their members were also independently minded. As Kaufman's pioneering studies revealed, the libraries boasted different (if subtle) social and religious affiliations, and some exhibited marked political differences.[7] We can also point to various tensions where, in the design of library societies, the familiar wrestled with the unfamiliar. The grounding ideals of local library founders were those of English gentry society, but were often expressed from a particular sense of isolation and low confidence. Self-representation as an outstation of civilisation far from London or even from provincial cities gave institutions an acute sense of purpose, however fancifully or crudely expressed. The subscription library at Stamford, for example, founded in 1787, boasted a committee headed by the earl of Exeter, and including three MPs and five clergymen. The cost of joining was a guinea followed by an annual fee of 12 shillings – but paid in advance lest members include local defaulting tradesmen. The surviving catalogue of the Stamford library lists an eclectic and small collection of eighty-one volumes. Its primary purpose as a social institution for the town's élite seems confirmed by the subsequent venturing of one of its subscribers, William Harrod, who established a rival and seemingly very successful circulating library of 700 novels and 300 plays in the town in 1790.[8]

'Bulwark civility', as it might be characterised, demanded unity wherever possible, and the library as a cultural and political focus seems genuinely to have

7 P. Kaufman, *Libraries and their users* (London, 1969); and see Kaufman, 'Community lending libraries in . . . Ireland', 299–312.

8 M. J. Crump and R. J. Goulden, 'Four library catalogues of note', *Factotum* 3 (1978), 9–13 (here 11–12).

attempted to bridge differing or even opposing interests. In the great towns and cities subscription enterprise flourished – the library society of Bristol held 887 volumes in 1774, but 4,996 in 1798; Leeds advanced from 503 in 1768 to 4,500 in 1790, Birmingham's from 277 in 1781 to 4,696 in 1798, and Liverpool, most strikingly of all, from 688 in 1760 to 8,150 volumes in 1801. Liverpool's membership had grown from 109 in 1759 to 950 in 1800, Birmingham's from 19 in 1779 to 480 in 1800.[9] In smaller libraries, such as at Lewes, Whitby, Kendal (and many more besides), a few would-be savants pursued an intellectual sociability in which the mere fact of knowing another scholar provided an indication of status in a community.[10] Daniel Bonhote, solicitor in Bungay, was regarded as a local man of letters (he was also husband to the novelist Elizabeth Bonhote), but the bizarre arrival of the exiled Chateaubriand in the town transformed the local library society. Thomas Dale noted in his letters to Dr Birch that one of the most pleasing aspects of his local library society was that he was looked upon as a learned man.[11] One might perform with distinction because of provincial isolation as much as in spite of it.

The development of so many subscription and proprietary libraries between 1770 and 1830 further encouraged the establishment either overtly or unintentionally of institutions favoured by particular professions or interests. Although membership of the Philosophical and Medical Society Library at Newcastle was not restricted to physicians, it seems that all thirteen members in 1800 were indeed medical men, and given that technical papers were read at its monthly meetings, it proved a society unlikely to attract others. Although far less exclusive, the early 1760 catalogue of the Liverpool Library reveals a membership of fifty-two merchants, two brewers, two brokers, two attorneys, four drapers and one pottery manufacturer, listed alongside four 'gentlemen', two clergymen and eight surgeons and doctors. The Birmingham Library in 1798 offered a similar balance between land and trade, its variegated membership including twenty-three merchants, five brokers, eighteen manufacturers and twenty gentlemen.[12]

Written (and often printed) objectives of subscription libraries (and some personal library manifestos like Willett's) were professedly universal, but sociability, as fostered by early library societies, was manifestly exclusive. As has

9 P. Kaufman, 'The community library: a chapter in English social history', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 57 (7) (1967).

10 See A. Goldgar, *Impolite learning: conduct and community in the republic of letters 1680–1750* (New Haven and London, 1995).

11 J. Raven, *London booksellers and American customers: transatlantic literary community and the Charleston Library Society, 1748–1811* (Columbia, SC, 2002), 220.

12 Tallies (with more besides) given in Kaufman, 'The community library'.

also been observed about French literary societies of the period, such institutions constructed a largely masculine space in which women were publicly marginalised. Women, lest we forget, featured very little in the early history of the proprietary or even the simple annual subscription library. The Liverpool Library's advertised assistance to 'Gentlemen and Ladies who wish to promote the Advantage of Knowledge' was a rarity indeed. Most women readers of the library books were associated with these societies as borrowers of books under their husband's, brother's or father's authority. They acted as adjuncts to male leadership, observing or conforming to male behaviour in an overwhelmingly male social institution. By the end of the eighteenth century conservative reaction to libraries highlighted commercialism, excessive female and lower-class readerships, and foreignness. Hostile commentators linked all such elements to the development of new types of library. The decision of the Belfast Library not to stock novels or plays was unexceptional.

Nothing, indeed, increased the number of communal libraries or the number of volumes loaned more than the development of the subscription library founded for the profit not of its members but of its proprietor. The commercial circulating library, made famous and notorious by turn in the literature of the age, is in many ways the best expression of the business of book culture in which the new spending abilities and emulative desires extended to ever increasing social circles.

By contrast to private and proprietary foundations, commercial circulating libraries developed from the lending services of booksellers, with notable pioneers established in the 1740s. Many of the most successful circulating libraries like those of Thomas Lowndes, the Noble brothers, Thomas Hookham, John Bell and William Lane, benefited from the failed and risky commercial experiments in book lending of the second third of the eighteenth century.[13] Many, like those of William Bathoe, who styled his enterprise 'the Original Circulating library (being the first of its kind in London)', also opened their doors in the Soho and West End streets of the capital. In 1737, James Hoey Sr. established in Dublin what appears to have been the first circulating library in Ireland, with 'a large Collection of Histories, Romances, Novels, Memoirs, etc.'. Four circulating libraries dominated the commercial lending of books in Dublin in the last two decades of the eighteenth century: the Universal (dating from about 1775),

13 H. M. Hamlyn, 'Eighteenth-century circulating libraries in England', *Library*, 5th ser., 1 (1946/7), 197–222; K. A. Manley, 'Booksellers, peruke-makers, and rabbit-merchants: the growth of circulating libraries in the eighteenth century', in R. Myers, M. Harris and G. Mandelbrote (eds.), *Libraries and the book trade* (New Castle, DE, 2000), 29–50; J. Raven, 'The Noble brothers and popular publishing', *Library*, 6th ser., 12 (1990), 293–345.

Samuel Colbert's Established (1778), T. Jackson's (*c*.1786) and Vincent Dowling's Apollo (1792). As in London and Edinburgh, only a handful of Dublin circulating libraries before 1850 were not established by booksellers.[14] In 1800, more than 200 commercial circulating libraries were open in Britain, more than double the number of private proprietary or subscription libraries operational in that year. By 1821, in the celebrated estimate of the *Monthly Magazine*, some 1,500 fiction lending libraries in Britain supplied, it was said, 100,000 regular borrowers and a further 100,000 or more occasional borrowers.[15]

Because circulating libraries usually developed from a specific shop or were founded from the outset at a particular commercial address, the association of place proved particularly important in the reception and reputation of such libraries. Allan Ramsay and then his successor, James Sibbald, established their circulating library in Parliament Square, Edinburgh. Samuel Silver moved his famous library at Margate to opposite the assembly rooms, pandering, as did Samuel Hazard at Bath, to the most fashionable clientèle, even if some of its members teetered on the edge of gentility. Many circulating library proprietors also made much of the sort of shop they offered – the Nobles issued extravagant engravings of their interiors and Thomas Lownds in 1755 noted in the title to his New Catalogue that his library 'is kept in a Spacious Room'. Generous opening hours proved a similar selling point: Francis, John and Samuel Noble's fashionable London libraries stayed open between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. on weekdays.[16]

Given that circulating libraries were involved from their inception in debates about the potency of print, their development focused attention upon the forms of sociability fostered by libraries as social and political institutions. In considering the history of libraries and of the types of reading that libraries might promote, of battles between the classics and the commercial, between the serious digest and the frumpery novel, we should not lose sight of the contemporary concerns about library usage. In order to understand a local culture, many historians have successfully mined the contents of texts and, even more specifically, of certain library holdings; but it has perhaps been too easy to neglect the broader social history of such holdings and the recovery of much broader cultural practices. As is particularly the case with the circulating libraries, fuller understanding of what contemporaries thought they were doing when establishing a library and of the ideas of a library and library

14 W. R. McDonald, 'Circulating libraries in the north-east of Scotland in the eighteenth century', *Bibliotheck* 5 (1968), 118–37; Cole, *Irish booksellers*, 32.

15 Cole, *Irish booksellers*, 31–2; *Monthly Magazine* 51 (1821), 397–8.

16 Raven, 'Noble brothers', 311.

usage that inspired them helps us reclaim the intentions behind the patterns of particular book-collecting and borrowing (and their policing).

Library members and users (the two, of course, were sometimes crucially different) held notions of library usage that might not include reading or coming into much contact with the collections. Self-evidently most library members and users read books and the main purpose of going to their library was to consult or borrow from the collection, but these activities usually formed part of broader library functions and representations. The 1788 poem *The country book club* joshed:

> Thus meeting to dispute, to fight, to plead
> To smoke, to drink – do anything but read.[17]

Joseph Fletcher's 'Solomon's Temple' which opened in Matlock Bath in 1773 seems to have been a hotel and coffee-room with circulating library attached. Other provincial circulating libraries included those joined to breeches-making, silversmithing and watch-making businesses.[18] Where, as increasingly from the early nineteenth century, circulating collections aimed to attract particular political, religious and sectarian interests, the social life of the library often becomes inseparable from specific promotional or missionary activities. Mrs Goddard's circulating library, founded in Lincoln in 1803, for example, soon spawned a separate Philanthropic Circulating Library with books of divinity lent out for a penny a volume. Sibbald's Edinburgh library reflected one facet of the city's fame by advertising that 'a proper selection has been made of the best authors on Anatomy, Physic, Surgery &c'.[19]

An obvious target for criticism was the lower price of borrowing offered by commercial circulating libraries. In fact, although such institutions were notably cheaper than the expensive annual private subscription and proprietary libraries, cost remained prohibitive to all but middle-class customers. Typically, from 1755 Lownds charged 10s 6d a year or 3s a quarter. In Dublin in 1737, Hoey charged a weekly rent of eight pence for what he deemed a large book and sixpence for a small one. For nearly twenty years, the Nobles charged their London subscribers the same fees as Lownds, but in 1766 an advertisement issued in the name of the 'Reputable Circulating Libraries' (a title indicating both defensiveness and rivalry) announced a rise in the cost of borrowing from the Nobles, Bathoe, Lownds, Vernor and Chater, Jones and Cooke of a shilling for quarterly customers and by 1s 6d for annual subscribers.

17 Cited in P. Kaufman, 'English book clubs and their role in social history', *Libri* 14 (1964), 1–31.

18 Manley, 'Circulating libraries', 37, 47.

19 Cited in Manley, 'Circulating libraries', 48.

More significant than the hike in prices was the agreement between the leading libraries, analogous to the cartels operating in the wider wholesale book trade in London, and precluding a price war. Smaller libraries were generally more flexible, with Charles Badham of Hereford lending at a weekly book rate of threepence,[20] but this simply eased payment methods and certainly did not, for the promiscuous reader, work out cheaper. The circulating library may have been attacked by Sheridan as a 'tree of diabolical knowledge' but it was certainly not open to the working classes – before about 1820 very few subscription or circulating libraries offered services for those unable to pay 3 shillings a quarter.[21] It was not until the 1820s and 1830s and the founding of mechanics' institute libraries at Birmingham, Newcastle and Manchester (among others) that the broader philanthropic aims of library founders finally breached the collective *cordon sanitaire* of eighteenth-century polite society.

Instead, it was gender that proved the most distinctive aspect of separateness within the development of these library institutions by the early nineteenth century. What might be called the 'feminisation' of private subscription and proprietary libraries in the early nineteenth century (that is the reluctant accession by library committees of novels and lighter reading) did reflect, it seems, pressure from the women readers of library collections. Their demands, however, were represented only indirectly, usually through the requests made by the usually exclusively and always predominantly male memberships. The Wigton Library in Cumberland was unequivocally styled The Gentlemen's Library at its foundation in 1806, and the surviving Bristol Society borrowing ledgers attest to exclusively masculine lending, if not reading.[22]

The commercial circulating libraries had no such constraints. Although, as Jan Fergus and others have shown, servants often fetched books and delivered orders for others,[23] many nineteenth-century circulating libraries, building on the profiles of their predecessors, were predominantly feminine domains. Moreover, as has long been understood, the circulating libraries claimed a major stake in the publication of the popular, usually ephemeral novel in which as many as 400 of a 1,000 copy edition were sold to circulating libraries.[24] The

20 Manley, 'Circulating libraries', 39.

21 Kelly advances the claims of Kendal Economical Library (1797) as one of the very few: *Early public libraries*, 127.

22 Bristol Society Library registers [Bristol Record Office].

23 J. Fergus, 'Provincial servants' reading in the late eighteenth century', in J. Raven, H. Small and N. Tadmor (eds.), *The practice and representation of reading in England* (Cambridge, 1996), 202–25.

24 E. and R. Griffith, *A series of genuine letters between Henry and Frances* (London, 1767–70), vol. 5, 15.

novel publishing businesses founded by Hookham, Lane and then Henry Colburn (at least until the end of the 1810s) turned on the success of their own circulating libraries and the supply of ready-made fiction and belles-lettres libraries to other booksellers and new proprietors. The original core of John Bell's circulating library was 'Romances, Novels and Other Books of Entertainment'[25] and his library catalogue of 1778 lists some 8,000 titles, of which 11 per cent were fiction. All circulating libraries in Ireland seem primarily to have been stocked with novels, including the 10,000-volume Universal Library of Spotswood in 1784.[26] In 1790 Lane claimed 10,000 volumes in an advertisement for his London 'General and Encreasing Circulating Library'. A year later, Lane advertised to 600,000 volumes after his purchase of the stock of John Walter's Logographic Press. His offer to despatch 'at a week's notice' a complete library for any would-be proprietor in the provinces similarly depended upon his novel publishing business.[27] Lane's *Minerva catalogue* of 1802 lists 17,000 separate titles. Hookham's 1794 catalogue lists 8,866 titles, 14 per cent of which are fiction; Robert Kinnear's Edinburgh catalogue of 1808 lists 5,485 titles, 70 per cent of which are fiction. As Jane Austen wrote in 1814, given the high price of new novels, readers were 'more ready to borrow and praise, than to buy'.[28]

Jane Austen's novels were indeed written and first published during a half-century in which hundreds of new proprietary, subscription and circulating libraries opened their doors. The volume of book production surged, and print, most radiating from London publishers and distributors, penetrated ever more deeply into British society – to both the delight and the horror of contemporaries. As one observer put it, 'a fashionable writer makes a fashionable book, and creates a number of fashionable readers – readers, who pay more attention to the fashion of the writer, than to the fashion of the book'.[29] According to an even more dismissive reviewer, many new book promotions were nothing less than 'insidious attempts at the purses of the Public'.[30] William Lane was the undoubted king of this commerce. During the 1790s Lane's 'Minerva Press' published one third of all new novel titles in London, even if few were reprinted. By the 1810s the firm, directed by A. K. Newman after Lane's retirement and then death in 1814, was responsible for almost a quarter of all new fiction titles

25 John Bell, *A new catalogue of Bell's circulating library* (London, 1766), 69–90.

26 Cole, *Irish booksellers*, 32.

27 Kelly, *Early public libraries*, 146.

28 Cited in P. Garside, 'The English novel in the Romantic era', in P. Garside, J. Raven and R. Schöwerling (eds.), *The English novel 1770–1829: a bibliographical survey* (Oxford, 2000), vol. 2, 15–103 (here 19).

29 S. Paterson, *Joineriana: or the book of scraps* (London, 1772), 41.

30 *Biographical and Imperial Magazine* 3 (1790), 113.

of the decade. The Minerva's nearest competitor, Longmans, published some 9 per cent of the total. Newman, who retired in 1848, continued the 'Minerva' name until 1820.[31]

The circulating libraries served as the main conduit for novel circulation and for the creation of a female readership and a represented female audience (not least in the novels themselves). Altogether, British bookseller-publishers issued 2,503 new novels between 1775 and 1818.[32] The increasing dominance of the three-volume (or 'three-decker') novel responded directly to circulating library demand. Texts were dispersed over many volumes (often with extravagant use of space) and individual volumes of a particular set (each, of course, with its own charge) could be put out to loan to different borrowers at any one time. Novel publication rose sharply until 1800, before a trough in the mid-1810s (with a strong recovery in the 1820s).[33] The early dominance of the epistolary novel (more than three-quarters of all titles published in 1776) had declined by the 1790s, replaced in part by new interest in the Gothic, just as translations from the French dimmed before advancing interest in the German. Particular circulating libraries took care to emphasise the strengths of their shelves, whether continental novels, Gothic fiction, plays or poetry. It is also now clear that a recovery in the number of male novelists, led notably by Walter Scott, complicated the social orientation of the circulating library and its books in the 1820s and 1830s.[34]

Variation between libraries further reflected local particularities. As Keith Manley notes, the high proportion of sermons somewhat unexpectedly available among the fashionable novels at Silver's Margate circulating library can be explained by the frequency with which clergymen used the town as a holiday resort by the late 1780s. George Miller's Dunbar and County Circulating Library folded after the end of the Napoleonic wars because of the departure of the soldiers in the local barracks who boosted Miller's clientèle.[35] One Pollard, who opened a circulating library on the Parade at King's Bench Prison, also published a periodical entitled *The Bencher* from 1799.[36] In addition, the circulation of artefacts other than books – from music scores, paintings and caricatures, to musical, drawing and scientific instruments – offered wide

31 D. Blakey, *The Minerva Press 1790–1820* (London, 1939); A. McLeod, 'The Minerva Press', unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Alberta (1997).

32 Tallies are taken from Garside *et al.*, *English novel*.

33 Garside, 'English novel in the Romantic era', 38.

34 C. Skelton-Foord, 'Walter Scott and the engendering of the popular novel: circulating-library holdings of British fiction 1805–1819', in W. Huber (ed.), *The Corvey Library and Anglo-German cultural exchanges, 1770–1837* (Munich, 2004), 101–16.

35 Manley, 'Circulating libraries', 32, 46.

36 Advertisement, *The Times*, 5 January 1799.

differences between collections and the style in which proprietors presented their establishments to the public. By the 1820s, distinctive regional differences between many of the libraries is also evident, the late development of provincial publication providing libraries with more local materials and local specialities than just the town and county newspapers.

The production of many prints representing both the exteriors and interiors of London and, increasingly, country and spa town circulating libraries charts the very different sociologies of custom recorded – and desired. The extent to which such representations were promotional strategies must always qualify our interpretation of the type of consorting and social interaction experienced on the library floor, across the counter or in window-peering. Nevertheless, the depiction of young women as well as of mixed-sex groups of customers on expeditions to the libraries is very evident. Typically, a prospect of James Barry's Marine Library at Hastings in 1797[37] foregrounds ten different, animated parties advancing upon or happily leaving the fashionably appointed premises. All the women are escorted; by the door linger two smartly uniformed members of the militia. It would appear to be an aspirational venue for a Lydia Bennet.

By the 1780s, the horror of the foreign was associated firmly with the circulating library, and especially with the French, Italian and, later, German novel.[38] Critics portrayed the foreign novel in particular as a ridiculous or even damaging object. As early as 1739 Samuel Fancourt's Salisbury and then London circulating library advertised French books alongside English books in his catalogue. Fancourt held 110 French volumes from a total of 4,000 listed books and pamphlets. Thomas Lownds's 1755 catalogue of his circulating library listed English, Italian and French books; William Bathoe in 1757, likewise, 'both English and French'; John Bell's catalogue of 1778 boasted 50,000 'English, Italian and French titles'; and John and Francis Noble, with their notorious but very popular libraries off St Martin's Lane and Covent Garden, listed many French works (and of course many English translations of French novels). In the provinces French influence was also strong, notably at Samuel Hazard's famous circulating library at Bath. In *The Times* of July 1798 we find advertised 'the German Circulating library' in the Strand; and, most notoriously, Thomas Hookham and Thomas Jordan Hookham offered in 1791 their *Nouveau Catalogue François de la Bibliothèque Circulaire . . . compris plusieurs mille volumes mis par ordre alphabetique*. In Paris Thomas Hookham advertised his 'livres vendu' from his New Bond Street shop in extensive lists of French and

37 Reproduced in Manley, 'Circulating libraries', 38.

38 J. Raven, 'Cheap and cheerless: English novels in German and German novels in English translation, 1770–1799', in Huber, *Corvey Library*, 1–34.

English titles. For all the surviving notices, the business arrangement here is still unclear, but the cross-Channel activities of Hookham and his later partner, James Carpenter, contributed significantly to English–French novel exchange in the period. The Hookhams' *Agatha; or, a narrative of recent events*, published for its author in 1796 in combination with other booksellers, was advertised as having been translated in Paris 'notwithstanding its counter-revolutionary Principles'.[39] The survival of two rare Hookham novels in the Sorbonne is probably a result of the original French custom.[40]

The development of the circulating novel in the early nineteenth century was also part of a commercial escalation of the book trades which involved the creation of larger firms and more regularised practices. This contributed to greater distinctions between traders and a more tiered structure of bookselling, wholesale and retail. In London and Edinburgh (but less so in a depressed Dublin), large bookselling firms now offered a range of services formerly conducted at different sites and by different personnel. The advent of steam-powered presses, revolutionising printing and publishing output in the second decade of the new century, reinforced the new hierarchy.

With this revolution in the availability of print, the attractions of both sociability and participation in an imagined literary community hugely expanded and explain much about new social involvements with libraries. Roger Chartier and Michel de Certeau have in different ways explored the development of this understanding of literary community, while Michael Warner has cast the experience of reading as 'normally impersonal', whereby the reader subsumed within his or her reading experience an appreciation of what was imagined to be the rest of the audience for the book. By reading, the reader assumed links with numberless others also reading the text, extending the notion of a participatory culture.[41] The further possibility here is that readers imagined contrary or more advanced or simpler (or in other ways different) readings experienced by others. For all the inclusive language of library titles – the Amicable Library founded at Lancaster in 1768 or the Friendly Society for the Cultivation of Useful Knowledge at Canterbury in 1769, for example – members' concerns about free-ranging reading underpinned their attempts to impose ideological and political controls. By the early nineteenth century – with several subscription libraries now styled 'Public' (including Westminster, 1789, Warwick, 1792, and Kings Lynn, 1797) – an overarching search for consensus marked the stocking

39 *General Evening Post*, 27–30 January 1798.

40 J. Raven, 'The novel comes of age', in Garside, *et al.*, *English novel*, vol. 1, 15–121 (here 70).

41 M. Warner, *Letters of the republic: publication and the public sphere in eighteenth-century America* (Cambridge, MA, 1990), xiii.

and membership policy of so many relatively exclusive proprietary institutions. All were very much in contrast to the commercial ventures, however expensive the borrowing charges.

One further aspect of this – and again a characteristic that highlights tensions that should caution against certain enthusiasms in the historiography of the British consumer society – is that library members' construction of a wider intellectual consortium also contributed to a progressive *distancing* of refinement from commodification. Men and women of property regarded books as vehicles of enlightenment and instruction, but also, in consequence, as instruments of social and cultural assertiveness that were increasingly by the late eighteenth century seen as inimical to commercialised literature – and the literary trade that was in fact feeding it. Most proprietary libraries were inescapably bound to the intricacies of élite social and political consolidation, where claims to public leadership were founded not only on wealth but on gender, religion, education, fashion and etiquette – precisely the sorts of badges and rituals of gentility nurtured by library societies.

In this respect, the social and political engagement of library societies like those of Bristol, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Dublin and London, while not overt in terms of ideological stances and interventions (and in some libraries specifically deplored in their regulations), was by no means passive. Their history therefore offers certain caution to recent eighteenth-century cultural histories in which various concepts of sociability have been proposed in refinement of or in contrast to the idea of stringently politicised communities. A sociability based on taverns, salons, coffee-houses and the like has been considered in its wider, discursive, effects as unbounded or at least only informally contained. Agreed, these eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British libraries were not simply communities of conscience, but questions of access and of the construction of class identities should not be devalued. The development of the various library societies and library businesses usually resulted in socially instrumental institutions, formally organised, and, in the context of neighbouring and overlapping associations, intellectually grounded organisations that encouraged hierarchical division and the establishment of community boundaries as much as any democratising sociability. Membership did not proscribe hierarchical division.

Libraries, both as private groups and as commercial businesses, encouraged the perception of separate but unified communities acting within broader local societies. They were, moreover, associations that did significant cultural work by cultivating a sense of literary and social belonging – however extended by distance and association in the case of the circulating libraries of country

towns or spa resorts. Subscription libraries such as those at Liverpool, Birmingham, Glasgow, Sheffield and Nottingham supplied the texts to foster political argument, but also ensured a sociability that survived political divisions among members. Such libraries encouraged interest in modern science and ancient scholarship, assisted in the transference of notions of civil society, and constructed and sustained a particular vision of civilised identity. According at least to the surviving manifestos, most proprietary libraries (and some grandly ambitious circulating libraries) were founded to overcome a perceived knowledge deficit, to reproduce learning and to contribute to new discovery and debate.

In such ways the exploration of library sociability contributes directly to current research interests in the social and political history of consumption in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Studies of the use of public information by élite groups to consolidate political power, also contribute substantially to historical debate about the political effects of print-led public discourse.[42] The quality of what might be called 'printedness' was also valued by its recipients for its ability to transmit ideas in an impersonal way.[43] This construct has been especially attractive when transferred to the study of the development and consequences of a 'print culture'. The beguiling impersonality of books and prints is claimed by Michael Warner to have enhanced the 'civic and emancipatory' characteristics that underpinned political transformation.[44] Nowhere is this more important than where the discussion and sociability encouraged by literature and print found immediate political influence.

Eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century libraries, both proprietary and commercial, fostered a sociability that was fed by texts and London connections, but was supported and encouraged by the institution of the library itself. Many leading subscription libraries served as intellectual and civic forums, as promoters of both formal and informal meetings and discussion, and the hosting of social and political events and of scientific, natural history and even astronomical observations and experiments. Intentions can always be questioned here, and it is certainly the case that these discursive institutions were directed to pleasure and play as much as to scripted philosophies. As already noted, Habermas's definition of communities of conscience has been

42 Most influentially, perhaps, aspects of B. Anderson's 'print capitalism': *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London, 1982), 42–8.

43 J. Habermas, *The structural transformation of the public sphere* (Cambridge, MA, 1989); C. Calhoun (ed.), *Habermas and the public sphere* (Cambridge, MA, 1992).

44 Warner, *Letters of the republic*.

rightly qualified and refined.[45] Nevertheless, apparently politically innocent activities are rarely value-free. The appetite for social interaction was often fuelled by practical wants and ambitions, not least by the empowerment and enrichment by advantageous family and neighbourhood alliances. With similar complexity, the envisaging of class and social exclusivity may have been as much culturally and ideologically driven as it was grounded in economically determined relationships. The interplay between social reality and its representation, always historically problematic, is at least partly observable in the empowerment enabled by the literary borrowings (and often, social activities) of a local library.

By the early nineteenth century, many of these relationships were breaking down – and the recognition of this brought greater stridency in some library proclamations. Many library society memberships seem to have been less concerned with fortune, rank and hierarchy. The contrast to the commercial circulating library is remarkable. Despite testimony, like that of Frances Burney, relating to certain meetings in the early circulating libraries, or the insistence of printed interior views like those of the Nobles, the early libraries were, according to the definitions already discussed, sites of limited sociability. Many early circulating libraries acted as book-collecting points for the servants sent by the borrowers or as the recipients of orders by letter. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, many customers regularly visited the circulating libraries in person – an instance, in terms of the many prints and illustrations in catalogues, of life at last imitating art.

Hayden White warns historians against the ironic voice, and it is indeed too easy to use the many late eighteenth-century dismissive reviews to scorn the literary fragility of popular novels. It is, however, to advance beyond White to understand more fully the real moral concern about the novel and the circulating library: both were deemed to transgress and to oppose all the merits of literary and library sociability described above. Instead of confirming, such literature and such literary institutions appeared (save for a few novels whose exception was represented as proving the rule) to reject the values of the civilising mission. It was why the adoption of the emblem 'Minerva' by William Lane for his circulating library (and his business that offered to spawn, wholesale, further circulating libraries) was considered such an affront. A final consideration, therefore, is that eighteenth-century proprietary library foundations energised the opposition to popular literature. The advent of the circulating ventures often horrified an assertive and influential

45 D. S. Shields, *Civil tongues and polite letters in British America* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1997).

cast of commentators. Literary xenophobia were similarly marked. By the 1820s, because of libraries, the most voraciously consumed foreign literature in Britain was no longer the reserve of a few wealthy antiquarians and scholars. It was also the most despised of literature. Great hopes were raised by the establishment of library societies, but ranking and gradation were apparent from the outset. The *Catalogue of the books of the London Library* in 1786 declared in its preface that 'the young of both sexes too frequently suffer from a deprivation of morals as well as taste from the indiscriminate reading of common circulating libraries'.

The weight of commentary was of disapproval and of a panicked defensiveness. According to the poet Cowper, circulating libraries contained 'snivelling and drivelling folly without end', and in 1765 the author of *Village memoirs* declared that 'turnpike roads and circulating libraries are the great inlets of vice and debauchery'. To Elizabeth Griffith, in her *History of Lady Talbot*, the libraries were the 'slop shops of literature'.[46] From the 1770s, the reaction against circulating libraries and against belles-lettres and novel reading advanced markedly, while further hostilities can be explained by the social and political dislocations of the 1790s. The role of the established proprietary libraries in this decade of post-French Revolution Church-and-King riots, treason trials, repressive Acts and new press licensing regulations was significant. Over-enthusiastic travellers did little to help: John Feltham's 1804 *Picture of London* concluded that 'every intelligent village throughout the nation now possesses its circulating library'. A year later, Revd Edward Mangin, secretary to a library society, warned in his *Essay on light reading* that 'there is scarce a street in the metropolis, or a village in the country, in which a circulating library may not be found: nor is there a corner of the empire, where the English language is understood, that has not suffered from the effects of this institution'.

This chapter has connected the sociable cast of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century private, subscription and circulating libraries to broader cultural and commercial perspectives. Attempts to fulfil the philanthropic mission-statements of library societies were self-evidently conducted from the perspective of propertied privilege. Contrasts with later, commercial, profit-for-the-proprietor libraries are tempered (despite the outrage and condemnation of contemporary comment) by the boundaries established by those libraries to participation and access. Both founding documents and business advertisements, most with written rules and behavioural precepts, encoded

46 Cited in Kaufman, 'The community library', 64.

hidden agendas. Well might the *Critical Review* fulminate against 'the volumes which crowd and disgrace a circulating library',[47] but such libraries were no less polite than private subscription institutions. The catalogue introduction that declared of its holdings 'from Books of this kind may be reaped great Advantages, by impressing right Principles with respect to Virtue, good sense and good Manners' was of a circulating library, one established in Kendal by at least 1759.[48] Enlightenment often sponsored protectionism whether the library was private or commercial; despite the apparent openness of many such institutions, the advance of learning was, for many, designed to extend more down the generations of a responsible élite than down the social orders. In the age of the emulative and consumer society and of colonial and industrial expansion, library participation and sociability, in all its forms, remained largely contained and regulated, if increasingly debated and open to local business and philanthropic experiment.

47 *Critical Review* 62 (1786), 199–203.

48 *Catalogue of the circulating library at the Printing Office in Kendal* [Kendal Record Office], cited in Manley, 'Circulating libraries', 37.

16

Local library provision: 1 Norwich

DAVID STOKER

Norwich has been a home to libraries for more than 900 years, and was both a pioneer in the establishment of an independent municipal library in the seventeenth century and the first municipality to adopt the Public Libraries Act in the nineteenth century.[1] Yet until recently the libraries of the eighteenth century have remained largely undocumented, although for much of this period Norwich was the first or second most important English provincial city, and England's largest manufacturing centre prior to the industrial revolution.

The cathedral library

Of the several monastic and parochial libraries in existence during the middle ages, virtually nothing survived the Reformation. The remains of the cathedral library were finally dispersed in 1574,[2] and the library building was demolished.[3] In 1673 the chapter ordered the creation of a new library in the audit chamber, but it was not until 1681, following the appointment of an energetic young canon named Humphrey Prideaux, that any concrete action was taken. The dean agreed to contribute £20 and each canon £10 in money or books towards the formation of a new collection.[4] Prideaux remained at the cathedral for forty-three years, subsequently as archdeacon of Suffolk and dean. He was an able administrator, who established the new library, secured the appointment of a Mr Paul as library-keeper with a salary of 20 shillings in 1710,[5] and

1 B. Dodwell, 'The muniments and the library', in I. Atherton and others (eds.), *Norwich Cathedral* (London, 1996), 325–39; G. Stephen, *Three centuries of a city library* (Norwich, 1917); T. Kelly, 'Norwich, pioneer of public libraries', *Norfolk Archaeology* 34 (1967), 215–22.

2 M. R. James, *The wanderings and homes of manuscripts* (London, 1919), 66.

3 J. F. Williams and B. Cozens-Hardy (eds.), *Extracts from the two earliest minute books of the Dean and Chapter of Norwich Cathedral, 1566–1649*, Norfolk Record Society 24 (Norwich, 1953), 31.

4 A. J. Beck, *Norwich Cathedral library* (Norwich, 1986), 6.

5 Norfolk Record Office (hereafter NRO), DCN 115/2, Prideaux's diary II, fol. 300.

reorganised the chapter archives.[6] Various entries in his diaries refer to gifts of books and money enabling a gradual expansion during the early decades of the eighteenth century,[7] until in 1722 he was able to record: 'The Library being too straitened conveniently to containe the books therein already placed an order was made that it should be enlarged.'[8]

In 1691 John Moore was appointed bishop – one of the foremost book-collectors of his age. He took no apparent interest in his cathedral library, but rather retained '2 or 3 rooms' of books from his own collection at his palace in Norwich.[9] However, Moore had a scholarly young chaplain named Thomas Tanner who had previously worked as a cataloguer at the Bodleian Library. Tanner was employed to buy books, to organise the bishop's library, and as writing master to his daughters. When he married Moore's elder daughter in 1701 he was appointed chancellor of his father-in-law's diocese, and moved to Norwich.[10] After using the libraries of Oxford and London, Tanner soon found that life in Norwich would not assist his studies, particularly once his father-in-law was translated to Ely: 'One great discouragement to me here is that we have nothing in this town that serves the name of a Public Library, and the *Supellex literaria* in private hands diminishes dayly.'[11]

Nevertheless Tanner made the best of a bad job and began taking an interest in the running of the cathedral collection. His preoccupations with topographical and church history are apparent in many of the purchases which he made in 1709/10 on behalf of the cathedral, including Brady's *History of England*, Somner's *Antiquities of Canterbury*, Barnes's *History of Edward the Third*, Plot's histories of Oxfordshire and Staffordshire, and Burton's history of Leicestershire.[12]

During his thirty years in Norwich, Tanner was an avid collector of books and manuscripts, and took an active part in the local antiquarian community. He was also a patron of the City Library. At one point he may have intended to leave at least part of his collections to the cathedral library, but after 1709 he seems to have become more interested in the City Library. In 1731 he was appointed bishop of St Asaph, and ultimately the whole of his collections

6 I. Atherton and V. Morgan, 'Revolution and retrenchment: the cathedral, 1630–1720', in Atherton, *Norwich Cathedral*, 540–75, 563.
7 NRO, DCN 115/1, Prideaux's diary I, fol. 163, II, fols. 246 and 285.
8 NRO, DCN 115/3, Prideaux's diary III, fol. 92.
9 Letter to A. Charlett 25 June 1707, Bodleian Library MS Ballard 4, fol. 84.
10 M. J. Sommerlad, 'The historical and antiquarian interests of Thomas Tanner 1674–1735', unpublished DPhil thesis, University of Oxford (1962).
11 Letter to A. Charlett 25 June 1707, Bodleian Library MS Ballard 4, fol. 84.
12 NRO, DCN 115/2, Prideaux's diary, II, 9 May 1709, fol. 246, and 13 March 1709/10, fol. 285.

went to the Bodleian Library.[13] However, if the cathedral did lose the Tanner manuscripts, it did benefit from a legacy of several hundred books of 'theology, history, the classics, law, politics, and many volumes of pamphlets' from the prebendary Nicholas Penny in 1745.[14] Thus when in 1775 the first manuscript catalogue of the new collection was compiled there were in the region of 1,500 titles, reflecting the full range of clerical interests and tastes of the time.

Little is known of the operation of the cathedral library during the eighteenth century, but there is a set of rules dating from 1818.[15] From these it is clear that it was a lending library for cathedral office-holders, with the dean and prebendaries having superior borrowing rights to those of the minor canons, chapter clerk and organist. Loans were entered in a ledger and keys to the library were held by the dean, prebendaries and librarian. By 1829 the collection had grown to around 3,200 volumes, but this was largely as the result of a substantial donation in 1817.[16]

Parochial libraries

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there are isolated references to the parochial library in the church of St Peter Mancroft, which seems to have been sufficiently large in 1682 to warrant purchase of 'A booke to make a catalogue of ye bookes in ye library'.[17] However by the 1740s the historian Francis Blomefield refers only to 'the remains of the library, which was formerly over the north porch'.[18] Likewise a parochial library was founded in St Andrew's parish in 1586, which was still in existence in 1628 when a list of books was compiled.[19] The antiquary John Kirkpatrick (1680–1725) recalled 'a library of some of ye first reformers, commentaries, etc.'.[20] By the 1740s the collection had dwindled to the 'several old books' in the south vestry again described by Blomefield.[21] Around eighty-two works were given to the parish church of St Martin at Oak by the vicar, Ephraim Megoe, between 1767 and 1781 and the collection was kept in the vestry and

13 D. Stoker, 'The ill-gotten library of "Honest" Tom Martin', in R. Myers and M. Harris (eds.), *Property of a gentleman* (Winchester, 1991), 90–111.

14 Beck, *Norwich Cathedral library*, 6.

15 NRO, DCN 26/12, 'Rules of this Library' (1818).

16 J. Chambers, *A general history of the county of Norfolk* (Norwich, 1829), 1063–4.

17 M. Perkin, *A directory of the parochial libraries of the Church of England and Church in Wales* (London, 2004), 308.

18 F. Blomefield, *An essay towards a topographical history of Norfolk* (Norwich, 1739–75), vol. 2, 635.

19 F. R. Beecheno, *Notes on the church of St Andrew* (Norwich, 1883).

20 Perkin, *Directory*, 306.

21 Blomefield, *History of Norfolk*, vol. 2, 709.

catalogued. By 1829, 400 items were recorded.[22] There is evidence for nine similar small parochial collections in Norwich, often in the form of individual items surviving from a desk library: these are listed in Michael Perkin's *Directory*.[23]

Parochial libraries were sufficiently common in the Norwich diocese to warrant Bishop Charles Trimnell to add three questions concerning their upkeep to his visitation articles of 1716:

> Have you any Parochial Library in your Church or Parish?
> Is there any abuse in the management of the same?
> Is there a Catalogue of the Books belonging to the same deliver'd into the Bishop's Court?[24]

The City Library

The Norwich City Library was founded in 1608, and housed over the porch of St Andrew's Hall. It was the first independent civic library after the Reformation. During the seventeenth century it went through two periods of growth and development (1608–34 and 1657–66), each followed by years of decline and neglect.[25] In the last decade of the seventeenth century there was again a revival of interest following the legacy of 142 volumes by Richard Ireland, rector of Beeston, in 1692. In parallel with the cathedral library, the first decade of the eighteenth century saw considerable development, with an enthusiastic group of users, encouraging further gifts. Thus the library-keeper, Joseph Brett, compiled *A catalogue of the books in the library of the city of Norwich*, in 1706,[26] describing the 923 volumes as follows:

> upon the first Foundation of this Library, many great Benefactions . . . were given by the Magistrates, Gentlemen and Tradesmen of this City, by which means, here is no inconsiderable Collection of Divinity Book, for that time especially . . . And it must not be dissembled, that an Eye to this, was the great motive and main end of Publishing this Catalogue.[27]

22 Perkin, *Directory*, 308. 23 *Ibid.*, 306–8.

24 *Articles to be enquired of and answered unto by the churchwardens and sworn men* . . . (Norwich, 1716), 4, quoted in C. Wilkins-Jones, 'Norwich city library and its intellectual milieu, 1608–1825', unpublished PhD thesis, University of East Anglia (2000), 247–8.

25 J. Tilley, *A catalogue of the donations made to Norwich City Library 1608–1656* (Cambridge, 2000); D. Stoker, 'Doctor Collinges and the revival of Norwich City Library 1657–1664', *Library History* 5 (1980), 73–84; Wilkins-Jones, *Norwich city library*, is primarily a prosopographical study of the library membership.

26 NRO, Norwich Assembly Book 1707–45, fol. 178b.

27 *Catalogus librorum in Bibliotheca Norvicensi* (Norwich, 1883), iii–iv.

The members sold one of their duplicate titles to pay for their catalogue,[28] which attracted many further donations in subsequent years. Bishop John Moore gave three volumes, Thomas Tanner five, and Dean Prideaux the first of several gifts.[29] Then in 1714 Thomas Nelson, rector of Morston, left his library of 570 volumes. The growing library also began to attract non-clerical members, including two of Thomas Tanner's antiquarian friends, Benjamin Mackerell and John Kirkpatrick.

Under rules dating from 1657 the collection was for reference purposes only, but in May 1716 permission was granted 'to render ye Library more usefull' by loaning items, subject to care being taken by the library-keeper 'that there be no loss of the Books'.[30] Mackerell later expressed his disapproval of the management of the collection, in his unpublished history of Norwich:

> For some few years it has been a Lending Library and some persons have had books two or three years long together contrary to an order to the contrary. There is no salary given by the City for any one to take care & the charge of the Books upon him. Only the keys thereof are left at the House of the Clark of St Andrews parish, and any man may be admitted that will but give him twelve pence a quarter. But unless the Corporation would be at the expence of a salary for any sober discreet person to take the charge of the said books upon himself & have the sole custody of them, and pecuniary mulcts inflicted upon such as break the orders already made, there is little hopes of keeping the books thereof in any good order long together.[31]

Mackerell's opportunity to institute reform came in June 1724, when he was appointed library-keeper.[32] He tightened up adherence to the regulations, and solicited yet more donations. His greatest coup was in persuading his antiquarian friends to leave their own collections to the City Library. Thus Thomas Tanner gave over 100 books in 1726 and indicated plans ultimately to leave his entire Norfolk collections. Kirkpatrick and Peter Le Neve likewise undertook to leave substantial parts of their collections.

Kirkpatrick was the first of the group to die, in 1728, leaving over 200 early printed books and manuscripts and his collection of coins and medals. His valuable manuscript collections for the history of Norwich were also left to

28 Stephen, *Three centuries*, 48.

29 *Ibid.*, 54–5. Prideaux donated two further volumes in 1717/18.

30 Stephen, *Three centuries*, 9; NRO, MS 4226, fol. 80. The borrowers register is now lost, but the rules were copied into the back of the minute-book, and are reproduced by Stephen, 9–10.

31 B. Mackerell, 'History of the city of Norwich both antient and modern', 2 vols. (1737): NRO, NNAS Safe II, *c.*1736/7, II, fol. 870.

32 NRO, MS 4226, fol. 92.

his brother Thomas during his lifetime, and thereafter to the city. Had the City Library likewise received the thousands of books and manuscripts in the Le Neve collection as their owner intended, and later those Tanner manuscripts relating to Norfolk, it would have become an enormously valuable resource for the history of the East Anglian region. However this was not to be. Le Neve died in 1729 leaving an imperfect will. His Norfolk and Suffolk collections were retained by the antiquary Thomas Martin, one of the two executors, who had married Le Neve's widow. Thomas Tanner, the second executor, was by then bishop of St Asaph and powerless to do anything about it. This may be why he altered his plans, leaving his entire collections to the Bodleian Library.[33]

The acquisition of the Kirkpatrick collection provided an excellent reason for the compilation of a new library catalogue,[34] and in October 1730 Mackerell advertised in the Norwich press recalling all books, and encouraging further donations.[35] Further gifts were received between 1730 and the summer of 1733, when the catalogue appeared. Edmund Prideaux, the son of Dean Prideaux, donated sixty titles in 1730 and Mackerell himself donated a further thirteen in 1731.[36] At the same time Mackerell sought to introduce new library rules limiting the number of books to be loaned, and the maintenance of proper loan records. He also instituted an annual charge, and additional charges for the loss or damage of books, and an annual recall of all books.

Some members objected to the new rules, and for several months in 1731/2 they managed to remove Mackerell from office, pointing to an existing but long-forgotten rule about annual elections of a library-keeper, and then nominating their own candidate.[37] However on 15 April 1732 Mackerell was again signing himself 'Bibliothecarius' and had presumably been reinstated. His new regulations were passed by the Norwich Assembly, in February 1733,[38] and were printed as a foreword to his catalogue. A committee established to 'examine into the state of the library' also recommended annual inspections, an annual subscription of one shilling plus a further quarterly payment of one shilling, and the maintenance of a register of loans.[39]

33 Stoker, 'The ill-gotten library'.

34 The Norwich Assembly agreed to finance the printing of 600 copies of a new catalogue: NRO, Norwich Assembly Book 1707–45, fol. 178b.

35 *Norwich Mercury*, 3–10 and 17–24 October 1730.

36 NRO, MS 4226.

37 D. Stoker, 'Benjamin Mackerell, antiquary, librarian, and plagiarist', *Norfolk Archaeology* 42 (1993/4), 1–12.

38 NRO, Norwich Assembly folio book 1707–45, 24 February 1732/3.

39 Wilkins-Jones, *Norwich city library*, 319.

Mackerell's catalogue of 1733 was orderly and well executed, dealing with both the books and the manuscripts in the collection.[40] He notes that Brett's 1706 catalogue had attracted donations: 'for which Reason 'tis hoped that publishing and dispersing this Catalogue may have its well-intended design effected'. He also announced on the title page his intention of publishing 'an account of Mr John Kirkpatrick's Roman and other coins' (then still in the hands of Kirkpatrick's executor). Mackerell was working on this project in December 1735, when he wrote to Francis Blomefield seeking advice on the cost of its production,[41] but was then infirm, and he died in 1738 before it was completed. The coin collection was delivered to the City Library, where it was kept in locked cases but was later subject to neglect and pilfering, so that by 1840 everything of any value had been lost.[42]

Following Mackerell's death the City Library entered into a prolonged period of neglect. The minutes of regular meetings of members cease in 1733 and the record of donations ends in 1737. The collection of books remained intact, however, and the Assembly continued to keep the fabric of the library building in good repair, until the building over the porch was entirely replaced by a new structure between 1772 and 1775.[43] This appears to have been a catalyst to reorganise the collection, and in May 1775 the Revd William Pinchen was invited 'to regulate and make a catalogue of the City Library & to report the State thereof', and once again donations to the collection were recorded.[44]

Thereafter little is known about the operation of the library until it was taken into the custody of the members of the Norwich Public Library (which despite its name was a private subscription library) about 1801, and later moved to that library's new premises.[45] This arrangement continued until 1856, when the books were found to be in a 'very disorderly and dirty condition', and they were later taken back to form the nucleus of a new Free Public Library.[46]

40 *A new catalogue of the books in the public library of the city of Norwich* (Norwich, [1733]). Items were arranged in a broad alphabetical classification scheme, and each title was allocated a shelf number. The catalogue was arranged alphabetically by author in columns showing the donor's name, author, title, date (where known), format, class and number.

41 D. Stoker (ed.), *The correspondence of Francis Blomefield*, Norfolk Record Society 55 (Norwich, 1992), 109–10.

42 F. Johnson, 'John Kirkpatrick, antiquary', *Norfolk Archaeology* 23 (1929), 285–304.

43 Wilkins-Jones, *Norwich city library*, 319–20, 322–3.

44 *Ibid.*, 323–4.

45 Stephen, *Three centuries*, 13–14.

46 C. Nowell, 'The libraries of Norwich', *Library Association Record* 22 (1920), 290–306 (here 295).

Circulating libraries

The eighteenth century saw the first libraries aiming to supply a more popular readership. There is evidence that in the 1730s and 1740s some Norfolk booksellers were loaning copies of new books to their customers for a small charge,[47] and the Norwich bookseller William Chase specifically advertised the practice in the *Norwich Mercury* for 20 September 1740.[48] Luke Hansard, who was an apprentice and journeyman printer in Norwich between about 1761 and 1770, also refers to three booksellers having 'extensive libraries': Berry, Wardlaw and Booth.[49] The library of Christopher Berry, his sons and grandsons (who were in business from 1747 until the 1820s) is not otherwise known, but in 1779 there is reference to 'a large circulating library' in a newspaper advertisement by Martin Booth.[50] Booth died in 1783 and his business was continued by his sons George and Thomas until 1792, when it was taken over by Robert Pearson.[51]

The *Norwich directory* of 1783 lists the library of William Wardlaw, in Dove Lane from 1749, who moved to larger premises in the Market Place in 1757. His circulating library was later described as the largest in the city.[52] Wardlaw was, however, experiencing difficulties at this time and his wife Christina took over the business and moved back to Dove Lane. The business struggled on until 1795, when the elderly couple were both described as in hard circumstances.[53] William Wardlaw died in 1797, but his wife's circulating library was still in business in 1801.[54]

Martin Crockett opened a bookshop in Cook's Street in 1782 (subsequently known as Fye Bridge Street). Crockett's 'Lilliputian Library' was also advertised in the *Norfolk Chronicle* on 30 October 1784. He died in 1793, and his library was sold to James Robinson (*Norwich Mercury*, 12 July 1794) but by 1796 had gone out of business. A bookseller named William Lubbock bought binding materials from the trustees of James Robinson (*Norwich Mercury*, 17 September 1796) and may also have bought the stock of the library for in 1799 he advertised

47 Stoker, *Correspondence of Blomefield*, 51. In 1720 the bookseller Thomas Goddard referred in an advertisement to a book 'to be sold not lent': T. Fawcett, 'Eighteenth century Norfolk booksellers; a survey and register', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 6 (1972), 15.

48 Likewise Nicholas Richer advertises 'new books and plays lent to read', *Norfolk Chronicle*, 20 November 1779.

49 R. Myers, *The auto-biography of Luke Hansard* (Wakefield, 1991), 21.

50 Fawcett, 'Norfolk booksellers', 9.

51 D. Stoker, 'The Norwich book trades before 1800', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 8 (1981), 79–125.

52 *Norwich Mercury*, 6 August 1784.

53 *Norwich Mercury*, 11 April 1795.

54 T. Peck, *The Norwich directory* (Norwich, 1801).

a new shop and circulating library (*Norwich Mercury*, 25 March 1799). He too was unsuccessful and the following year sold his stock to J. Hunt (*Norwich Mercury*, 13 September 1800). Hunt's Circulating Library later became known as the Minerva Circulating Library and survived until at least 1804.

A fifth circulating library, that of the bookseller Jacob Edwards, was advertised in the *Norwich Mercury*, 31 May 1783. Edwards died in 1790, and the library was soon afterwards discontinued.[55] Another library was announced by the bookseller William Tooke Robberds, in the *Norwich Mercury*, 6 January 1787, and survived well into the nineteenth century. Likewise about 1798 the bookseller William Parkinson Booth (a third son of Martin Booth) moved to new premises in the Market Place and established a library. This had grown to 5,000 volumes by 1809 and ultimately operated for about twenty-five years.[56]

The extent of Booth's business is illustrated by a surviving catalogue from 1802, listing 4,000 volumes in history, voyages, travels, biography, poetry, romances, novels, plays and miscellaneous books.[57] His charges ranged from 18 shillings per year for three sets of books or magazines, reduced to 17 shillings if limited to novels and plays only. Novels and plays could also be loaned at one penny per night and other books two pence. Booth likewise maintained a reading room for consulting daily papers and monthly reviews at one penny per day or 5 shillings per quarter. By the turn of the nineteenth century there were four or five well-established circulating libraries in Norwich and this number would grow over the next decade.

Book clubs and subscription libraries

There is ample evidence for the existence of book clubs both in Norwich and in the surrounding area during the middle years of the eighteenth century.[58] These were often informal societies with limited memberships among the gentry and middle classes, created to share the costs of keeping up with new publications, with members meeting at an inn or a coffee-house.[59] One interesting Norwich example was the Society of United Friars founded in 1785 'for the promotion of intellectual culture and social fellowship'. The society had

55 *Norwich Mercury*, 30 October 1790.
56 *Norfolk Chronicle*, 23 December 1809; *Norwich Mercury*, 27 September 1823.
57 *W. Booth's catalogue of books belonging to his circulating library* (Norwich, 1802).
58 T. Fawcett 'An eighteenth century book club at Norwich', *Library*, 7th ser., 23 (1968), 47–50. Subscribers' lists for a Monday Book Club (1798) and the Magdalen Street Book Club (1800) also survive. Likewise book societies in Botesdale, Bungay, Diss, Eye and Thetford all subscribed to T. Martin's *History of the town of Thetford* (London, 1779).
59 Examples in Norwich being the White Swan Literary Society (*c.* 1775–9), or Tuck's Coffee House Book Club (1780/1).

mock medieval ceremonial, with members dressed in the habits of monastic orders, and read antiquarian and philosophical papers. They also started a museum and formed a library of several hundred volumes, which was well regulated.[60] The society survived for forty-three years, and from 1793 it also organised large-scale charitable relief by means of soup kitchens.

However in 1784 a more traditional scheme was conceived for the creation of a self-governing Subscription Library. On 24 August a meeting 'for instituting a Public Library in this City' was held in the City Library room in St Andrews Hall. The meeting was called on the initiative of Philip Martineau, a famous local surgeon, and William Enfield, minister of a dissenting chapel. It was attended by the mayor and thirty-two notable citizens, but organisers had secured promises of a hundred one-guinea subscriptions before the meeting. The new society had an unlimited number of subscribers with 'equal right and power', and was run by a library committee of twelve members under a president (Martineau) and vice-president, which appointed John Tubby, a local schoolmaster, as librarian and secretary. After their initial subscription, members purchased a catalogue and a white metal ticket for 1s 6d and paid a further 6 shillings each year.

The Norwich Public Library was a great success, with membership trebling during the first year, and by 1800 there were more than 500 subscribers.[61] For the first fifteen years the institution was housed in St Andrew's Hall alongside the old City Library, and Tubby acted as the City Librarian. Around 1801 the members of the Norwich Public Library took over responsibility for the City Library, so that by 1825 the collections were catalogued in one sequence, although City Library books were distinguished by the letters C.L. As mentioned above, this arrangement continued until the foundation of the Free Public Library.

Other libraries

Institutional collections other than those noted may well have existed in the city, although there is no specific evidence for them. For example the Norwich Grammar School was established about 1542, but there is no evidence of any library before the nineteenth century. Similarly the establishment of specialist libraries serving professional groups other than the clergy – such as doctors or lawyers – is a feature of the first half of the nineteenth century rather than the eighteenth, but may have developed from eighteenth-century book

60 NRO, COL 9/46/28–9 and COL 9/37.

61 Wilkins-Jones, *Norwich city library*, 342–51.

clubs. Upon the foundation of the Norwich and Norfolk United Medical Book-Society in 1826, a collection of books was given by the physicians and surgeons of the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital. These were described as 'part of a collection made many years since at that establishment'.

Thus during the course of the eighteenth century there were perhaps fifteen or more library collections available to the educated citizens of Norwich, in addition to the many private libraries which were advertised for sale at regular intervals by the city's booksellers. There was, however, nothing to cater for the needs of most ordinary citizens. These collections were to come later.[62]

62 For early nineteenth-century libraries, see M. A. Kay, 'Library provision in Norwich before 1850', unpublished MA dissertation, University of London (1974).

17

Local library provision: 2 Belfast

WESLEY McCANN

Although there is evidence from pre-Christian times of human settlement on the site of Belfast, and the existence of a church is recorded in a papal roll of 1308, it was not until the Elizabethan period that the place began to have any real significance.[1] Its name in Irish, *Beál Féirsde*, which translates as 'at the mouth of, or the approach to the sandbank', gives the clue to its strategic importance. The sandbank where the rivers Farset, Lagan and Blackstaff enter the Irish Sea made possible a crossing at low tide between Upper and Lower Clandeboye (the present-day counties of Antrim and Down). Elizabeth granted the settlement and its surrounding lands to Arthur Chichester for his part in the defeat of Hugh O'Neill, earl of Tyrone, who had risen in rebellion against the English crown. The plantation of Antrim and Down by lowland Scots and the flight of the last of the Irish earls in 1607 prompted Chichester to begin the laying out of the town and the rebuilding of the castle. In 1613 James I created Chichester baron of Belfast and in the same year granted Belfast its charter. This allowed it to return two members to the Irish parliament, but more importantly created a system of municipal government which was to serve the town for the next 200 years. It created the offices of sovereign (mayor) and twelve burgesses who had the power (subject to the veto of the Chichester family) to make by-laws and admit freemen. The freemen had no part in municipal government but were permitted to carry on their trade free of the tolls and customs imposed on strangers. Admission as a freeman was on payment of a fine, and those who served an apprenticeship in the town were admitted gratis.

A roll of the freemen survives from 1635 and it is this which provides the first evidence of trade in books in the town.[2] At some date between 19 January

1 For an account of the early history of Belfast, see J. C. Beckett and R. E. Glasscock (eds.), *Belfast: origin and growth of an industrial city* (London, 1967); J. Bardon, *Belfast: an illustrated history* (Belfast, 1982), 1–30.

2 'The roll of the freemen', in R. M. Young (ed.), *The town book of the corporation of Belfast 1613–1816* (Belfast, 1892), 246–300.

and 7 March 1661, a stationer, James Anderson, was sworn free on payment of 5 shillings. Twenty years later another stationer, Francis Kincaid, was admitted, and eight days after him James Callwell, a bookbinder, was sworn free. Nothing is known of the origins of any of the three, but it is most probable that they came to Belfast from Scotland where the name Anderson is well attested in the book trade. The short sea crossing made for easy communication with the west coast of Scotland and from 1682 there survives a record of a cargo imported from Glasgow consisting of a consignment of printed books with a total value of £6 2s 6d.[3]

In the early 1690s, in a period of calm after the Williamite wars, Belfast's first printers set up shop. Patrick Neill together with James Blow (who was first Neill's apprentice, later his partner and brother-in-law, and eventually his successor) came from Scotland by invitation of Belfast's sovereign, William Craford. Craford's intention in inviting Neill might well have been to emulate the practice in Glasgow where Robert Sanders (from whom Neill possibly obtained some of his stock) held the post of printer to the town. Whatever Neill's position, whether as the holder of a municipal office or as a privateer hoping to make his way in a town which offered the promise of a growing market, he was soon printing a variety of books and offering others for sale.[4] We may surmise that some of the residents of the town began to form their own libraries now that a ready source of books was available to them. By 1713 Blow, who had taken over from Neill on his death in 1704 or 1705, was joined by another printer / bookseller, and by the 1730s for a town of still very modest size Belfast had a flourishing trade in books. In 1737 Francis Joy began publication of the first newspaper, the *Belfast News-Letter*.

From the early years of the eighteenth century there is evidence of the formation of libraries by a number of religious groups. The Society of Friends (Quakers) had an established system of acquiring and distributing books to their meetings.[5] Belfast, because of the influx of settlers from Scotland, had a predominantly Presbyterian population, and in 1705 a split occurred within the ranks of the Presbyterian clergy between those willing to assent at their ordination to the Westminster Confession of Faith, and those who held that no formula devised by man should be imposed upon ministers. This division into 'subscribers' and 'non-subscribers' ran deep and

3 G. Benn, *A history of the town of Belfast* (London, 1877), 316.

4 W. McCann, 'Patrick Neill and the origins of Belfast printing', in P. Isaac (ed.), *Six centuries of the provincial book trade in Britain* (Winchester, 1990), 125–38.

5 Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, T1062/41, Society of Friends. Ulster Province Meeting Proceedings October 1694–14 July 1717.

congregations lined up on either side behind their clergy. The ministers in the non-subscribing party formed an association, the Belfast Society, and met regularly to study the Bible and debate this and other theological issues. To aid them in their deliberations it was agreed 'that every member should at every meeting communicate to the whole the substance of everything he found remarkable in the books he had read since the former meeting'. This in turn promoted the cooperative purchase of books and the formation of a shared library:

> By this means a bookish disposition was encouraged and kept up in all . . . and, which was best of all, every individual member reaped the benefit of learning contained in a great variety of curious books, which no man among them had leisure to read, or perhaps money to purchase; and for this end, care was taken that the same book should not be bought by any two of them, except where it was in constant and necessary use in the library of every minister. And for the better managing of this part of our work, we endeavoured to procure the best intelligence we could of the most useful books that were published, in order to our making the best choice of them.[6]

The non-subscribing congregations were brought together into the Presbytery of Antrim in 1725 and the library they later formed has survived to the present, having been donated to the Queen's University of Belfast in 1873.[7] The sharing of books did not inhibit the formation of personal libraries by Presbyterian ministers, small though many of these collections doubtless were. There was a system of mutual inspection of libraries by the clergy, and the records of the General Synod record the purchase of multiple copies of books for distribution among congregations. As is often the case in such bulk buying, the failure of some to take delivery of and pay for their copies left the unfortunate intermediary with a hefty bill to settle.[8]

Evidence of the growth of private libraries in the early years of the eighteenth century comes from advertisements in the *Belfast News-Letter*. In December 1750 'a variety of books in Latin and Greek, with a large folio Hebrew Bible and Lexicon' belonging to the late Andrew Pinkerton was put up for auction,[9] and in 1754 'a choice collection of books in most faculties' from the estate of Arthur

6 Quoted in T. Witherow, *Historical and literary memorials of Presbyterianism in Ireland (1623–1731)* (London, 1879), 163–4.

7 For a full description of the collection see http://www.racsal.ac.uk under 'Antrim Presbytery Library'.

8 *Records of the General Synod of Ulster, from 1691 to 1820* (Belfast, 1890), vol. I, 371, includes a complaint by Revd James Kirkpatrick in June 1715 that he is owed for part of a consignment of sixty copies of David Calderwood's *Altare Damascenum* imported from Holland.

9 *Belfast News-Letter*, 18 December 1750.

Rainey Maxwell was auctioned and was of sufficient number and importance to have merited the production of a catalogue available for inspection in advance of the sale.[10]

In the eighteenth century the printer/booksellers of Belfast adopted the device of publication by subscription and the published lists of subscribers point to the purchase of books by individuals from a variety of social and professional backgrounds.[11]

With the growth of the town of Belfast and the expansion of the booktrade, it was not long before booksellers took the initiative of establishing circulating libraries. The first dates from the 1770s, set up by Hugh Warrin of High Street, and within a few years John Hay 'at the sign of the Two Bibles in High Street' had formed another. Warrin published a catalogue in 1780 and a supplement two years later which claimed a stock of over 1,000 titles. Warrin allowed single items to be borrowed on payment of the rental and Hay advertised a scale of charges ranging from 13 shillings per annum or 1s 7½d per month.[12] Warrin was succeeded in the business by his son Isaac, but by the time of the latter's death the affairs of the library had become somewhat disorganised. An advertisement in the *Belfast News-Letter* appealed for the return of outstanding loans and the settlement of debts, and soon after the new owner, David S. Armstrong, advertised its reopening 'with a very large Addition of the newest Publications'.[13]

While some could afford to purchase their own copies and others could meet the cost of belonging to the circulating library, shared ownership remained the best option for those of modest means with a desire to read and learn. This desire found its satisfaction in book clubs or reading societies. One of the first of these in the north of Ireland was formed in 1770 in Doagh in County Antrim, 10 miles to the north of Belfast. Others were set up in the provincial towns of Antrim and Down in the later decades of the century.[14] A reading society was formed in Belfast in 1788 and it was to have a lasting and continuing part to play in the history of libraries in Belfast.

10 *Belfast News-Letter*, 14 May 1754.

11 W. McCann, 'The distribution of books from Belfast: the evidence of subscription lists', in G. Long (ed.), *Books beyond the pale: aspects of the provincial book trade in Ireland before 1850* (Dublin, 1996), 75–85.

12 J. R. R. Adams, *The printed word and the common man: popular culture in Ulster 1700–1900* (Belfast, 1987), 37–8.

13 *Belfast News-Letter*, 23 September 1806.

14 Adams, *Printed word*, 38–9. See also J. R. R. Adams, 'A history of libraries in County Down from the earliest period to the year 1900', unpublished Fellowship of the Library Association thesis (1977).

Belfast in the 1780s had changed considerably since the period of the Williamite wars a century earlier. The population of Belfast, which had numbered no more than 2,000 in the 1680s, had risen to 8,500 by the middle of the eighteenth century and was to reach 20,000 by 1800.[15] It was now a place of manufacture of both cotton and linen, the latter marked by the building of a fine White Linen Hall in the centre of the expanding town. Shipbuilding would soon be added to the list of industries, reflecting Belfast's importance as a trading centre with the American colonies. A handsome Assembly Room had been built as part of the Belfast Exchange and it soon became the centre of social life. The Belfast Academy (later Royal Academy) was established in 1785 to provide a suitable education for the sons of gentlemen. Belfast had an air of prosperity and a growing middle class with a desire for self-improvement and an interest in world affairs. On 13 May 1788 the Belfast Reading Society was established by a group of 'worthy plebeians' who drew up a set of rules governing admission ('six black beans excluding'), costs ('monthly the sum of one shilling British'), the loan period ('fourteen days if called for by any other member'), and other issues such as replacement costs in the event of loss, and action to be taken where a subscriber was in default of payment.[16]

The members of the society were caught up in the zeal for political reform, and one of the earliest resolutions carried by the members was in support of Catholic emancipation. Within a few years the professional classes of Belfast took an interest in the society and many joined its ranks. The running of the society was soon put on a more secure footing and its name changed to the Belfast Society for Promoting Knowledge. Many of the members of the society were active in the Society of the United Irishmen which sought reform of the Irish Parliament along the republican model adopted in America and France. The English government acted to suppress the United Irishmen in 1796 and among those arrested was Thomas Russell, second librarian of the society. A number of the rural reading societies were suppressed by the government at this time to quieten the radical sympathies of their members, but the Belfast Society survived, perhaps because of the influence and social standing of many of the members. However its long-term survival was still parlous, not least because it lacked a permanent home for its collections, a number of different locations having been used in the first dozen years of its existence. In 1801, at the start of a new century which saw Ireland united with England and for a time at least the end of the period of political unrest,

15 Bardon, *Belfast*, 20, 89.

16 J. Killen, *A history of the Linen Hall Library 1788–1988* (Belfast, 1990), 1–25.

the proprietors of the White Linen Hall offered the society use of part of its accommodation. By this means the Belfast Society for Promoting Knowledge became popularly referred to as the Linen Hall Library, the name by which it is still affectionately known to this day, although it had to move from the White Linen Hall in 1890 when the hall was demolished to make way for the new City Hall.

The nineteenth century saw the continued growth of Belfast as industry prospered and many moved from the country to the town in search of employment. In the first forty years of the new century the population rose almost fourfold to over 70,000 and by the 1860s was in excess of 120,000.[17] In 1825 the Belfast Mechanics' Institute was established, influenced by those founded in London and Glasgow two years earlier.[18] Like the institutes in England and Scotland, that in Belfast sought to promote the study of the arts and sciences and a library supporting that aim was set up. In the first year 401 members subscribed, their subscription of 12 shillings entitling them to attend lectures, stand for office, vote at meetings and make use of the library. Sadly, the high hopes of the founders were soon disappointed and within five years the institute was moribund and a protracted legal wrangle began over its lease and assets. Among the criticisms made of the directors was disposing of the library and apparatus without the authority of its members.

The role which the institute had sought to play was taken over in 1845 by the Belfast Working Classes Association for the Promotion of General Knowledge, which promoted a lecture series and maintained a library. To this provision was later added the People's News Room, which made journals and newspapers available to subscribers paying 1s 6d a quarter, and in 1847 the People's Circulating Library, which claimed a stock of 1,300 volumes, came into being.

Belfast's growing professional classes had access to the Belfast Medical Society's library, and the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society (founded 1821) maintained a scientific library at its museum. One of the town's principal schools, Belfast Academical Institute, had a collegiate department with a library of 5,000 volumes available to both the schoolboys and the third-level students. This latter collection was in time transferred to the Queen's College of Belfast, a constituent college of the Queen's University in Ireland, set up in 1845 and which admitted its first students in 1849. (The other colleges were in Cork and Galway.) Work on creating a library began only after the

17 Bardon, *Belfast*, 66, 31.
18 R. G. Morton, 'Mechanics' institutes and the attempted diffusion of useful knowledge in Ireland 1825–79', *Irish Booklore* 2 (1972), 59–74.

college opened, but rapid progress was made, by purchase and donation, to form the nucleus of a scholarly collection. To speed this process agreement was reached with the Linen Hall Library to avoid the duplication of the most expensive items.[19] Queen's College became the self-governing Queen's University in 1908 and the library grew to be the largest and most comprehensive collection in Belfast.

In 1882 the Town Council began the process which led to the adoption of the Public Libraries and Museums Act which had been extended to Ireland in 1853 and further amended in 1855. The library opened in 1888, the same year in which Belfast's standing was recognised by the conferring of the status of a city, and, by a happy coincidence, one hundred years after the opening of the Linen Hall Library which, despite many predictions to the contrary, continues to flourish alongside the publicly funded provision.[20]

19 T. W. Moody and J. C. Beckett, *Queen's, Belfast 1845–1949* (London, 1959), 129.

20 The events leading to the establishment of a public library in Belfast and its nineteenth-century precursors are described in G. Wheeler, 'A history of Belfast Central Library', *Linen Hall Review* 5/2 (1988), 4–8.

PART THREE

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PROVINCIAL AND METROPOLITAN LIBRARIES 1750–1850

18

Libraries in context: social, cultural and intellectual background

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The expansion and development of libraries between 1750 and 1850 was stimulated by vigorous population and economic growth, and shaped by changes in social structure and living patterns. Growth was fuelled by expansion in publishing (though of course not all books collected for libraries were new publications). Developments in social organisation and attitudes led to the expansion of new kinds of library, catering to new reading habits. The expansion of libraries raised a series of ethical and political issues: what kinds of reading should be permitted, facilitated or encouraged, and how was this best done? A leitmotif was the idea that libraries had a *public* function: it was in the public interest that there should exist well-stocked libraries; various kinds of library proclaimed it their mission to serve variously conceived publics; perhaps, it was increasingly argued from the 1830s, there was need for an extended network of 'public libraries'.

This chapter sketches some broader contexts for library development: demographic, economic, social, cultural and political. However, it needs to be stressed that there exists no certain and determinate 'context' in which the history of libraries can be set; historians have more than one idea about the nature of social change in this period. Our ideas about 'context' are always liable to shape the way in which we write the history of particulars – to some extent they must and should do this, or our account of particulars will tend towards mere chronicle. But our findings about particulars also have the potential to play back and inform our ideas about context, and it is important that we nourish that potential. This introductory survey accordingly also attempts to suggest ways in which the history of libraries might augment and refine our broader picture of this changing society.

Between 1750 and 1850 the population of the British Isles expanded threefold, from perhaps 8.5 million in the mid-eighteenth century to 27 million in the mid-nineteenth (though in Ireland, famine deaths and emigration reduced

the population by some 2 million after 1846–7). The period also saw striking increases in national income and wealth (though as the Irish case reminds us, these benefits were not equally shared). The proportion of men employed in manufacturing industry increased, and women and children found new forms of industrial employment. Population expanded especially in England's industrial midlands and north, and Scotland's central industrial belt. Industry contributed an increasing proportion of national output, and, as British textiles and other manufactured goods claimed a growing share of markets worldwide, Britain was acclaimed the 'workshop of the world'.[1]

Historians have identified this as the period of Britain's industrial 'take-off'. In so doing, they build upon contemporary perceptions. However, there also exists a long tradition of urging, not that these things did not happen, but that they should be set in longer and broader perspective. Thus it is stressed that Britain's manufacturing base had developed over several centuries – already by 1700 (in England at least) employment and prosperity depended more upon manufacturing than elsewhere in Europe. Much industrial growth took place upon a relatively traditional base: until the 1820s, power machinery was little used except in corn milling, the cotton industry, and mine and fen drainage; much manufacturing continued to take place in homes or small workshops. And even as new power machinery came into wider use, in transport and across the textile sector, production in many other sectors remained chiefly dependent on human strength and skill: thus in the boot and shoe industry, mining (once miners had reached the coal or ore face), house- and road-building, and agriculture. The sorts of industry that used new power sources and new technologies were relatively geographically concentrated: much of Britain and Ireland remained rural, and some parts underwent de-industrialisation, such as the linen districts of northern Ireland, and the textile districts of the English south-west, Devon, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. Though industry's contribution to national income grew, moreover, it still accounted only for a minor share; more derived from agriculture, commerce and services.

Similarly (it can be argued) the social hierarchy was not radically reshaped. Great landowners continued to top wealth tables, to fill the benches not merely of the House of Lords but also of the House of Commons, and to rule the counties. Their social world was, by definition, 'society'; as patrons, they presided over the upper reaches of the burgeoning associational world. The

1 M. Daunton, *Progress and poverty: economic and social history of Britain, 1700–1850* (Oxford, 1995) offers one of the most broadly conceived of recent surveys.

1832 Parliamentary Reform Act did not significantly clip their wings; indeed, the immediate effect of the act (designed, as it was, to promote independency among MPs) was to increase the proportion of substantial landowners in the Commons. They also continued to play an important part in the life of smaller towns. Great towns might sustain a middling élite, but this was a heterogeneous élite, with wealthy professionals and moneyed men figuring alongside merchants and manufacturers. National and urban electorates consisted largely of farmers and small tradesmen. Most of the population spent only a few years in school, went out to work aged twelve to fourteen, if not before, and never owned more than a few personal possessions, such as might be trundled along on a cart: clothing, crockery and cutlery, a few pieces of furniture, perhaps a few religious tracts or popular tales.[2]

The most pervasive force driving social change in this period was population growth. This was a wider European trend. In England, the industrial north had higher birth rates than the more rural south – but the highest birth rates in the British Isles were in rural Ireland. The effects of population growth were shaped by the ways in which it interacted with economic growth. Manufacturing regions had some capacity to soak up growing populations – hence the drift towards those regions, and in general from country to town. But these growing sectors of the economy did not siphon off enough people to relieve pressure on some immiserated rural regions; nor was emigration from those regions sufficient to save either highland Scotland or rural Ireland from disaster when potato famine struck.[3]

Population growth did more to change the shape and character of society than any economically induced remoulding of social structure. The landed élite, though they remained ascendant, did not grow proportionately: there was, after all, only so much land to go round; preserving big estates meant keeping numbers of proprietors steady. Oldest sons inherited; other children had to find niches elsewhere: as leisured rentiers; in the colonies; the army, or the learned professions. It is often said that this period saw the rise of the middle classes. This is most evidently true if we think in terms of absolute increase: of a more or less steady proportion of a rapidly growing population finding middle-class jobs. Relatively underdeveloped transport systems did not yet allow for much residential zoning – but urban expansion was associated with some diversification. In the sprawling metropolis, sub-regions developed with their own forms of social life; after 1832, even their own independent

2 For a recent overview of patterns and perceptions: D. Cannadine, *Class in Britain* (New Haven, 1998).

3 N. L. Tranter, *Population and society 1750–1940* (London, 1985).

parliamentary representation. Escaping the sway of high society, these were middle-class provinces.[4] Similarly, larger towns increasingly had extensive working-class neighbourhoods, sustaining their own, relatively impoverished trading and service sectors. Some rural industrial regions densified into quasi-urban agglomerations, without urban amenities or traditional forms of urban government. To some extent in the 1790s (following the French Revolution), more in the depressed and agitated years following the Napoleonic wars, and again from the late 1830s (the era of Chartism), such districts threw up vigorous protest movements, drawing the attention of men at Whitehall and Westminster to these large, in their eyes alien masses, embedded in the fabric of society. Their fear (only intermittently realised) was that these masses would explode in sudden violence.[5]

The history of libraries both reflects and helps to illuminate various elements in this complex scene. Growth in numbers of libraries has to be set against a background of population growth. Of course, there is no reason to expect institutional and population growth to correlate. Insofar as population became more concentrated, levels of service could have been maintained by a lesser increase in numbers of libraries, combined with some increase in holdings; rationalisation of holdings might even have led to a fall in library totals. None the less, other things being equal, we might expect to find a growing population associated with some growth in numbers of libraries.

The continuing ascendancy of the landed classes within both the social and the political system found some reflection in the world of libraries. The humanist ideal of the gentleman man-of-letters had an abiding hold on the imagination of these generations – witness thus the (relatively recently established but now sustained) centrality of the library in the design and life of country houses, and the provision of substantial libraries in London gentlemen's clubs. Even if collections were sometimes inherited and did little more than furnish a room, in so doing they played a residual symbolic role. Peers and landed gentry figured significantly among major collectors, and therefore also, by donation or sale, as contributors to the build-up of major institutional collections. Some gentlemen bequeathed their libraries to communities as public libraries. They also made piecemeal lifetime donations. Thus, MPs might hand on to local libraries their free copies of parliamentary publications. Mechanics' institutes, founded from the 1820s, often relied heavily on gifts from the local

4 For a collection reflecting recent scholarship: A. Kidd and D. Nicholls (eds.), *The making of the British middle class?* (Stroud, 1998).

5 See J. Rule, *The labouring classes in early industrial England, 1750–1850* (London, 1986); J. Belchem, *Popular radicalism in nineteenth-century Britain* (Basingstoke, 1996).

gentry and middle classes to build up their collections, and when the public financing of public libraries was first discussed, it was assumed that most if not all of their books would be donated.

At the same time, the growing weight and significance of the expanding middle classes was reflected in the pattern of library foundations. By far the largest number of new libraries appeared within categories of libraries catering primarily to the demands of a broad middle class – extending from wealthy professionals (who might be scions of the landed class) down to the level of shopkeepers and clerks. These were the kinds of people who, sometimes in tandem with local gentry, sustained the general subscription libraries, the libraries of learned societies including provincial 'Lit and Phils', professional, especially legal and medical, libraries, and the ubiquitous, if sometimes evanescent, commercial 'circulating libraries'. In 1821, the *Monthly Review* guessed that circulating libraries served perhaps 200,000 readers.[6] At the most generous interpretation, this implies that they may have reached one in thirty English adults. A clientèle largely drawn from within the ranks of the upper and middle classes seems to be implied.

Libraries specially designed to cater to the bottom fringes of this group, and to the literate working classes, also existed – whereas (certain religious outreach libraries apart) there had been few such earlier. Though there were occasional instances of such libraries being founded in the eighteenth century (especially from the 1790s), they were chiefly a feature of the 1820s and later. Some early 'mechanics and artisans libraries' followed the American example; from 1825, the notion was popularised in the mechanics institute movement, though this aimed to cater only to highly skilled workers. Some foundations, including those run by Owenites and Chartists (and, in Ireland, by advocates of temperance and Repeal), tried to reach further. Almost all such libraries charged some fees, however – those that aimed for the broadest outreach preferring small, frequent charges, such as a penny a week. In 1850, it was suggested that five 'operative' libraries in Nottingham, founded and managed by their users, had between them a membership of about 700. In fact, there were more than five: *pro rata*, we might hypothesise some 1,500 operative library subscribers. Again at a generous estimate, this might imply that some 12 per cent of adult male workers in Nottingham were served. That would not be an unimpressive figure – but it clearly represents much less than saturation

6 Cited in J. Raven, 'From promotion to proscription: arrangements for reading and eighteenth-century libraries', in J. Raven, H. Small and N. Tadmor (eds.), *The practice and representation of reading in England* (Cambridge, 1996), 175.

coverage – at a time when few below the ranks of the middle classes could have afforded to buy many books for themselves.[7]

Of course, lists of libraries tend to underrepresent the smallest and least formal collections: coffee-house libraries; small collections maintained and lent out by barbers and tobacconists; books purchased by clubs of people, which might or might not be maintained as a single collection; small personal collections that were lent out to friends or neighbours. Those who lived in small communities, or in poor districts in large communities, probably made most use of the kinds of collections which leave least trace. Still, it seems clear that the social reach of the more substantial collections must have been quite limited. Women, moreover, though reputedly keen users of circulating libraries, were not always made welcome in subscription and society libraries, and there is little evidence of effort to target younger children.

To illustrate the geographical and social context of library provision in this era, let us take a quick look at patterns of library provision in Gloucestershire in the early nineteenth century. Gloucestershire at this time contained one large port city, Bristol, one fashionable resort town, Cheltenham, and three market towns and local centres, Gloucester (the county town), Cirencester and Tewkesbury. It also contained, in the area around Stroud, a major woollen-textile manufacturing district.

Setting aside ecclesiastical (including parochial) and school collections, whose incidence and vitality are particularly hard to assess, some sixty-seven libraries have been identified as having existed in Gloucestershire between about 1830 and 1842 (a period arbitrarily chosen by way of illustration, but late enough in our period for libraries targeting a working-class clientèle to figure). As Table 18.1 shows, circulating libraries predominated.

They were chiefly concentrated in the larger towns – as indeed were all other libraries: those maintained by general or specialist societies, or by mechanics' institutes (of which there were five in Gloucestershire by this date), and others whose nature is not obvious, but which were probably either society or further subscription libraries. The towns best stocked with libraries were medium sized: although Bristol possessed the greatest number of libraries, that number did not reflect the city's overwhelming size. Stroud, the town at the heart of

7 Covered in chapter 23 below by Brian Burch. See also T. Kelly, *Early public libraries* (London, 1966), 211–18, 227–35, and for Irish libraries J. R. R. Adams, *The printed word and the common man: popular culture in Ulster 1700–1900* (Belfast, 1987), esp. 37–40, 121–31; M.-L. Legg, 'The Kilkenny Circulating-Library Society and the growth of reading rooms in nineteenth-century Ireland', in B. Cunningham and M. Kennedy (eds.), *The experience of reading: Irish historical perspectives* (Dublin, 1999), 109–23. For the Nottingham libraries see P. Hoare, 'The operatives' libraries of Nottingham', *Library History* 19 (2003), 173–84.

Table 18.1. *Libraries in Gloucestershire, 1830–42*

	Circ.	Soc.	Mech.	?	Total	Pop. 1841 000s	Libs. extant 1830–42 per 000 pop.
Bristol and Clifton	25	3	1		29	122	0.24
Cheltenham	9	2	1	4	16	31	0.52
Gloucester	7		1	2	10	14	0.71
Cirencester	2			1	3	6	0.50
Tewkesbury			1	1	2	6	0.33
Stroud	1	1	1		3	9	0.33
Stonehouse (industrial district)	1				1	6	0.17
Other industrial district					0	28	0.00
Rest of county	2	1			3	209	0.01

These calculations draw on Robin Alston's on-line library database, http://www.r-alston.co.uk/contents.htm', as that stood in August 2004. Gloucestershire population figures are taken from the 1841 census: *Parliamentary papers* 1841 sess 2, II.

the industrial district, had more libraries per capita than Bristol, but the rest of the industrial district was poorly served, as indeed was the rest of the county (or was served only insofar as inhabitants resorted to town libraries). The Gloucestershire example illustrates the spread of mechanics' institutes well outside the industrial north – where they were especially thick on the ground – but also suggests that these new foundations at best extended the social reach of a pattern of provision which heavily favoured a few urban centres.

Population growth, changes in living patterns and the growth of wealth all had effects on patterns of effective demand for libraries. On the supply side, libraries had two chief sources of material: new publications, and recycled older items. The mix between new and older acquisitions varied between libraries. At one extreme, circulating libraries, usually run by booksellers, were most likely to focus on new stock; at the other, mechanics' institute libraries often depended heavily on donations. Somewhere in between, the more scholarly libraries (including the more serious circulating libraries) strove to acquire both old and newer items.

In chapter 19 below, John Feather sketches the expansion of publishing through this period: more titles were produced, and books became somewhat cheaper. As he explains, until the final few decades, these developments had relatively little to do with new technology, more to do with changes in the law and in the organisation of publishing. Only in the 1830s were steam

presses employed in book printing, and only from that decade did railways begin to affect systems of distribution. There was also a market in collectable older books – much inflated, from the 1790s, by the break-up of many European private and institutional collections under the stresses of revolution and war. Many local libraries struggled to maintain financial viability, and they were prone to fail, upon which their stock might be acquired by another local library. A small number of scholarly libraries were entitled to claim free copies of new British publications, on terms regulated by successive copyright acts.

Other things being equal, trends in book production – coupled with belief in the progress of knowledge, and interest in novelty in imaginative literature – might be expected to have skewed library collections towards new output (including perhaps new editions of older works). Probably this was the trend overall (even libraries heavily dependent on donations might acquire some new, and much not-very-old stock by this means). Libraries' purchasing power did not necessarily increase in line with the increase in production, however. Peter Freshwater, in his chapter on university and college libraries, notes that when Oxbridge college incomes were hit by post-Napoleonic wars agricultural depression, purchases of new books declined. Libraries' appetite for the new was sometimes qualified, moreover. Only gradually did the copyright libraries become assiduous in exercising their privileges.

As before, publishing was dominated by a small number of London firms, from which libraries might buy books via agents. Our period saw some experiments in wholesale library supply. In the late eighteenth century, William Lane of the Minerva Press, champion producer of pulp romance, offered to equip provincial circulating libraries with whole collections, and accompanying catalogues. In the 1830s, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge vended (probably rather smaller) libraries of religious books.[8] But most aspects of book retailing and dealing were dispersed among a network of small enterprises. The W. H. Smith chain, at the end of our period, stood in the vanguard of a new pattern of retailing.

Libraries, similarly, were commonly stand-alone enterprises. To some extent, they simply mirrored patterns of book retail – only to be expected in the case of bookseller-run circulating libraries. Non-commercial libraries were also commonly either adjuncts of other stand-alone institutions, or free-standing institutions in their own right, run by local management committees.

8 D. Blakey, *The Minerva Press 1790–1820* (London, 1939); Kelly, *Early public libraries*, 202–3.

The early nineteenth century brought a few experiments in library integration. 'Itinerating libraries', in which collections of books were rotated around a series of locations within a larger region, were tried over much of Scotland and in south-west Wales, after an experiment at Haddington in 1817. In the 1830s, the search for economy and efficiency led some subscription libraries to enter into 'unions': the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge encouraged inter-institutional cooperation between mechanics' institutes. Mudie's Select Library, established in London in 1842, would ultimately lend extensively to other libraries, but developed its provincial business mainly after 1850.[9]

The small-enterprise pattern was common across many sectors of the economy at this time. It was not impossible in that context to maintain common patterns of training and systems of qualification. Traditional small trades continued to sustain systems of apprenticeship through this period; lawyers and doctors had old and developed new training and qualification systems. No such systems were developed in respect of library staff. That, however, was the norm across most white-collar employment. Clerical work, accountancy and most school-teaching ranked alongside library-keeping as employments to which literate and numerate individuals might turn their hand, learning the tricks of the trade from an early employer, or on the job.[10]

Changes in the *forms* libraries assumed are best considered in the context of a changing institutional landscape. This period saw much institutional decomposition and recomposition. This affected libraries, both as adjuncts to other institutions, and in their own right.

During the eighteenth century, some traditional institutions lost vigour. The Church of England found the supply of clerics waning; enrolments at Oxford and Cambridge declined; urban corporations lost some of their old role regulating urban economies, and increasingly shared with other bodies the new work of promoting urban 'improvement'. During that century, the political climate favoured by-passing rather than assaulting inherited institutions, but in the next century, as 'reform' became a watchword, direct assault became more common. In fact, the old institutions were not bereft of life, and were often themselves stirred by the effects of social and cultural change. Accordingly some (thus the church, the universities) were able, under a degree of outside

9 Kelly, *Early public libraries*, 201, 217; W. A. Munford, 'George Birkbeck and mechanics' institutes', in C. B. Oldman, W. A. Munford and S. Nowell Smith (eds.), *English libraries 1800–1850* (London, 1958), 52–3.

10 G. Anderson, *Victorian clerks* (Manchester, 1976).

pressure, to 'reform' themselves, though others (thus municipal corporations) lost control of their fates and were forcibly remodelled (in the case of municipal corporations, by act of parliament in 1835).[11]

These ups and downs might be expected to have had some echoes or effects in the libraries associated with these institutions. Joan Williams finds this an unremarkable period in the history of cathedral libraries – but is careful to emphasise marked differences from one diocese to another, and some relatively common forms of initiative, especially in improving the material setting. In several towns, corporations relinquished care of their collections into the hands of subscribers.

Some of the older professions also experienced a kind of decomposition and recomposition: in the law, the old system of barristers backed up by attorneys linked with central common-law courts gave way to a new division of labour between barristers and London and provincial solicitors; in medicine, the physician-surgeon-apothecary system was recomposed as a result both of the growth of hospital-based medicine, and of the rise of the 'general practitioner'.[12] These 'learned professions' were particularly book-dependent; the chapters which follow provide some account of developing provision to meet their needs, sometimes attached to enduring institutions – such as colleges or universities, hospitals, or the Inns of Court – but also, especially in the provinces, taking the form of society-sponsored libraries, or specialist subscription libraries, which flexibly catered for the changing needs of a fluid body of practitioners.

The inherited matrix of schools was affected by new trends in education. Traditional grammar schools often gave rise to new commercial adjuncts, not limited by founders' statutes. The end of the century saw a marked rise in enthusiasm for promoting the education of the poor, first especially through Sunday Schools, later through an enhanced network of cheap day schools. The 1820s and 1830s saw the foundation of new universities in England – starting with London University; in Ireland, attempts to transcend sectarian divisions stimulated the establishment of a 'national school' system in the 1830s, and a new university, composed of four provincial colleges, in the 1840s.[13] These developments had some effect on library provision, though not always at once or straightforwardly. Not all teaching depends on the existence of libraries,

11 A. Burns and J. Innes (eds.), *Rethinking the age of reform: Britain 1780–1850* (Cambridge, 2003), cf. introduction for an overview of reforming activity.

12 For a recent overview see P. Corfield, *Power and the professions in Britain 1700–1850* (London, 1995) – not however organised around this theme; also I. Loudon, *Medical care and the general practitioner, 1750–1850* (Oxford, 1986).

13 W. B. Stephens, *Education in Britain 1750–1914* (Basingstoke, 1998).

certainly not on libraries open to students, and not all educators encourage student reading beyond the curriculum. For whatever reason, enhancing student access to a range of reading matter seems to have become a higher priority from the 1820s than it had been before: from this decade we find more effort to provide books for school libraries, and more attention to the provision of reading rooms in university libraries (though this may also sometimes have been a result of the reorganisation of space, as problems of book storage mounted). Libraries in schools were by no means always libraries *for* schools: the school building was sometimes merely a convenient place to house a collection serving the wider community.

People seeking to educate themselves in this period often did not pursue formal curricula, but rather attended programmes of lectures and pursued their own course of reading. There was relatively little provision for scientific (non-medical) education in schools and colleges: clubs of enthusiasts, reporting to each other their observations and experiments, played a particularly important part in the transmission of scientific understanding.[14] This hubbub of semi-institutionalised educational and investigative activity stimulated demand for certain books and journals. Sometimes the same organisations hosted lectures and housed libraries – perhaps alongside scientific and ethnographic collections. Mechanics' institutes essentially represented a variation on this theme, distinctive chiefly in their target audience.

From the mid-eighteenth century, recomposition took place alongside decomposition. The 1750s to 1770s saw the foundation in London of several philanthropic and cultural institutions. There had for some time been muttering about the relative shabbiness of British provision for charity, the arts and scholarship, compared with what any traveller to major continental cities encountered there: impressive hospitals, orphanages, academies, etc. – sponsored sometimes by monarchs or noble families, sometimes by city élites, sometimes by religious orders. With the foundation in the 1730s of the Foundling Hospital, then from the 1750s of the Marine Society and Magdalen Hospital, the British Museum and the Royal Academy, London at last acquired its own stock of monuments to national benevolence, public spirit and refinement.[15] This at least is one context in which we might set the creation of a 'public library' within the British Museum in Bloomsbury.

14 R. Porter, 'Science, provincial culture and public opinion in Enlightenment England', *British Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies* 3 (1980), 20–46; J. Golinski, *Science as public culture* (Cambridge, 1992).

15 D. Andrew, *Philanthropy and police: London charity in the eighteenth century* (Princeton, 1989); H. Hoock, *The King's artists: the Royal Academy of Art and the politics of British culture, 1760–1840* (London, 2003).

Even Matthew Bramble, the dyspeptic country squire whom Tobias Smollett created in his own image, saluted the museum and its library, whatever their imperfections, as exceptions to the general degeneracy of the age: 'a noble collection, and even stupendous. Considering the temper of the times, it is a wonder to see any institution whatsoever established for the benefit of the public.'

One agency of institutional recomposition was association. As historians have underlined, the eighteenth century saw the burgeoning of associative activity. Some of it was transient, perhaps merely convivial or single-issue focused; some of it aimed at creating enduring institutions, some of which required a material home: thus charity schools, or voluntary infirmaries. Many such associative ventures were financed, wholly or partly, by members' subscriptions; a series of fund-raising devices were also developed to raise capital for buildings. The English law of trusts provided a set of legal tools that were extremely helpful in this context, allowing real or other property to be held by trustees 'in trust' for some specified purpose (probably because of legal differences, it seems to have been more common for Scottish associations to seek incorporation).[16] The book club and its close relative the subscription library – both with origins a little before our period, but flourishing especially within it – were very consonant with these wider patterns of development.

Historians have for some decades also chronicled a 'commercialisation of leisure' from the eighteenth century. At higher social levels, this was largely set within a matrix of 'polite' values. Leisure activities regarded as refining were especially favoured: thus, parading in appropriately styled walks and gardens, attending balls or concerts.[17] The spread of booksellers in the provinces and of circulating libraries have both been set in this context. At the same time, the development of a more open political culture, both manifested and encouraged by the spread of news-reporting and political journalism, stimulated interest in newspaper and magazine reading rooms, sometimes annexed to libraries.

Some religious developments in this period can be seen at once as reacting to and as paralleling these secular trends. Religious leaders strove to promote religious knowledge and faith in what they often condemned as a worldly, irreligious society – but to this end, they employed new media (such as religious

16 P. Clark, *British clubs and societies, c 1500–1800: the origins of an associational world* (Oxford, 2000); C. W. Chalklin, 'Capital expenditure on building for cultural purposes in provincial England, 1730–1830', *Business History* 22 (1980), 51–70.

17 A central theme in J. Brewer, *The pleasures of the imagination: English culture in the eighteenth century* (London, 1997); for newspapers see H. Barker, *Newspapers, politics and English society* (Harlow, 2000).

magazines, and later newspapers), and, by the very vigour with which they sought to promote their varying messages, helped bring into being a more competitive and in effect more open religious culture. In the early nineteenth century, a revitalised SPCK sought to revitalise older schemes to promote parochial libraries.[18] Fear that true religion might not prevail in an open market of ideas led some devout people to advocate selective collection policies, even to oppose altogether certain library foundations, when they doubted the intentions of their backers. Yet not all serious religious people were sectarian in their reading habits. The Crossgar [Ulster] Religious Reading Society opposed proselytism and even the discussion of religious issues, but in 1829 was said to include among its members 'Roman Catholics, Protestants and Presbyterians, both Old and New Light', who took it in turns to nominate for purchase such religious books as they wished to read.[19]

Adopting a phrase used in the English translation of an influential work by the German philosopher Habermas, historians often group such associative and commercial developments together under the heading of 'the expansion of the public sphere'.[20] The phrase owes much of its attraction to the prominence of the adjective 'public' in the discourse of the time. Subscribers often represented themselves as combining to produce some 'public' benefit, while leisure entrepreneurs protested their eagerness to serve 'the public'.

In this context it is not surprising to find the adjective 'public' increasingly applied to libraries; however, the particularities of its application deserve attention from historians. It was sometimes used relatively restrictively (for example, in some parliamentary discussions) to denote that small set of libraries which had copyright privilege: libraries that had in a sense been chosen as sites of public record. But by the later eighteenth century we also find people talking of 'public libraries' when they mean subscription libraries – libraries potentially open to anyone who subscribed. Some circulating libraries also named themselves 'public libraries'. The adjective seems to have come into increasingly common use in library names from the 1790s, peaking in the 1810s and 1820s. By 1850, more than seventy libraries had at some time used that title.[21] In the 1830s, reformers who wanted to see existing collections made more accessible commonly labelled the institutions they wanted to see established

18 For the development of a more pluralistic religious culture see A. Gilbert, *Religion and society in industrial England* (London, 1976); Kelly, *Early public libraries*, 202–3.

19 Adams, *Printed word*, 129.

20 J. Habermas, *The structural transformation of the public sphere*, trans. T. Burger (Cambridge, 1989).

21 A conclusion derived from Robin Alston's list (see note 8 above).

'public libraries'. Because historical patterns of use made the term ambiguous, when rate-aided libraries, open to free consultation, were established in the later nineteenth century, they were sometimes termed *free* public libraries.

During our period, libraries attracted interest in a variety of ethical and political contexts.

First, circulating libraries featured prominently in diatribes against the reading of novels, especially women's novel-reading. Novels were charged not just with encouraging 'idleness' (turned people into couch potatoes, as we might say) and with immersing readers in an unreal fantasy world, but also with overheating their emotions: producing an unhealthy appetite for sensation and especially romantic excitement. Such criticisms of novels formed part of a larger critique of 'sensibility'. This critique was not peculiar to one social group. Nottingham operatives in 1846 claimed it a merit of the libraries they had set up that their stock offered an alternative to the 'tales' loaned by circulating libraries 'whose mawkish sentimentality or gloomy horror can only result in a morbid state of feeling, and tend to close the avenues of the mind to that knowledge which can have a refining and beneficial effect upon society'.[22] Though there were novelists throughout our period who strove to change novelistic practice and thus shift expectations, the continuing pressure of reader demand for this contested fare seems to have been key to maintaining and sometimes increasing the representation of fiction among library holdings.[23]

A second worry was that libraries would fuel theological and political controversy. In 1850, it was urged against the establishment of municipal public libraries that wrangles over book selection would fuel local political strife. Such arguments sometimes led to schisms within subscribing communities. It was common for library rules to make provision against works thought controversial – sometimes no doubt representing a kind of censorship, but sometimes perhaps a real appreciation of the difficulty of maintaining trust within the user-group upon whose support the library's viability depended.

The movement to establish more popular libraries which gathered force from the 1820s was borne along by a larger tide of enthusiasm for educating 'the people' – in part a product of the ferment of 'enlightenment', and the new attitudes to knowledge that produced, in part, a response to political and

22 Hoare, 'Operatives' libraries', 178.

23 For similar trends in publishing, see S. Eliot, *Some patterns and trends in British publishing 1800–1919* (London, 1994), section C.

economic turmoil in the post-Napoleonic wars years. Those troubled years on the one hand led some working-class readers to hunger for information and ideas; on the other, prompted some of their social superiors to diagnose ignorance as the source of ill-directed protest.[24] Supporters of popular education sometimes managed to find common ground around a package of basic religious instruction, history, political economy and natural science – but might disagree about the weighting best given to these elements. Accordingly, attempts to found mechanics' institutes, usually sponsored primarily by local whigs and radicals, sometimes met opposition (not least from local clergy). There was also scope for disagreement between promoters and users about the extent to which the target user-group should also manage the institution. Though the ideology of self-help, widely espoused by the middle classes, pointed towards self-management as an ideal, in practice users were not always trusted to manage their own affairs – stimulus to some loss of support and occasional secessions.

The 1830s saw the advent of a 'Reform ministry' and a 'Reform parliament'. Though not radically different in their social basis from their predecessors, these had a distinctive sense of mission. Among traditional institutions they subjected to critical scrutiny were not only the church, the law and municipal corporations, but also certain cultural institutions, including the patent theatres, the Royal Academy and the British Museum – not least its library. Scrutiny was inspired by the suspicion that privileged bodies were cliquish and self-serving, prone to mismanage their resources, or limit them to tightly circumscribed groups.[25] In practice, this general agenda was fleshed out in different ways in different contexts – partly as forces already in play differed. In the case of the British Museum library, Anthony Panizzi was to some extent able to hijack the enquiry for his own purposes, obtaining more public funding to build up collections.

For all their suspicion of traditional institutions, reformers of the 1830s and following decades were also enthusiastic promoters of reformed and new-model institutions. The accession of reformers to national power created opportunities to remodel the state and in this new context to rethink both the form and the content of public provision. Some hoped to see new ratepayer-controlled municipal corporations providing a range of services that would be more expansively 'public' than those afforded hitherto – though, informed by a democratic vision in which self-mastery and self-help were also seen as

24 For an introduction, see E. P. Thompson, *The making of the English working class*, revised edn (Harmondsworth, 1968), 781–820, 'The radical culture'.

25 Burns and Innes, *Rethinking the age of reform*.

vital components of freedom, and by an aversion to all but minimal taxation, even proponents of extended government activity commonly advocated some form of 'mixed economy' in public services. As debate raged over whether or not government should play a part in the provision of schools (only central grants to assist building were ultimately agreed), the pros and cons of giving some form of grant or rate aid to facilitate the provision of public libraries also received a parliamentary airing.[26]

The general provision of public libraries, across rural as well as urban areas, was not at this time urged upon parliament. Instead (following a model first developed in relation to the provision of additional churches, in 1818) attention focused on the merits of facilitating provision in towns above a certain size (as ascertained by decennial census). A public discourse which focused upon 'large towns' – conceived alternatively as trouble spots, or as the chief sites within which a new kind of civilisation had the potential to take shape – provided intellectual justification for this focus.[27] Interestingly, parliament agreed to allow large towns to sponsor not only bathhouses but also museums more readily than it allowed them to sponsor libraries. But ultimately in 1850 it gave its blessing to what would, for many decades yet, prove to be a small experiment in the municipal provision of free public libraries.

26 The wider context of debate is usefully sketched in A. Black, *A new history of the English public library* (London, 1988); cf. G. R. Searle, *Entrepreneurial politics in mid-Victorian Britain* (Oxford, 1993).

27 A. Lees, *Cities perceived: urban society in European and American thought, 1820–1940* (Manchester, 1985).

19

The book trade and libraries

JOHN FEATHER

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw significant changes in both libraries and the book trade in Britain. It was a great age of private book-collecting, both as a scholarly necessity and as an aristocratic fashion. It was a time in which the commercial provision of libraries transformed the accessibility of books and the pursuit of leisure reading across Great Britain. It was a period in which philanthropic and eventually public provision of libraries became established. It was also an era in which new institutional libraries were established, including a *de facto* national library for the United Kingdom, and existing institutions re-examined their objectives, their contents and their provision. In the book trade, there was unprecedented growth, interrupted only briefly by economic setbacks. New conventions of publishing were established, especially in fiction, but also in the development of periodical literature, the widespread use of subscription publishing, and the serial publication of books in parts on a large scale. New channels of distribution were opened by the improvements in inland transport which characterised the period. Bookshops proliferated across the whole of the British Isles. New manifestations of bookselling evolved from the antiquarian specialists for the collector to the remainder merchants and the national wholesaling houses who became essential cogs in the internal machinery of the trade. New materials and new production methods increased the number of books and reduced their prices. In 1750, the book trade was a pre-industrial activity, with a clear line of descent from the guild-dominated crafts and trade of the sixteenth century; by 1850 it was a modern commercial enterprise.[1]

In the commercial environment of the period there was an inevitable relationship between libraries and the book trade, and between librarians and collectors on the one hand and booksellers on the other. For much of the time, however, the trade made little if any special provision for libraries or

1 J. Feather, *A history of British publishing*, revised edn (London, 2006), 71–84.

librarians. Librarians, like bibliophilic collectors, were simply buyers of books, and much of what is true of bookselling in general is applicable to their concerns and activities. Nevertheless, the systematic book-buyer, whether it be an individual or an institution, does have different needs and different demands from the casual buyer browsing in a bookshop. In an institution, in particular, there has to be some arrangement for the selection and purchase of books which reflect the objectives of the institution. This may not be the language of the eighteenth or nineteenth century, but the underlying concepts were familiar enough.

The book trade in 1750

The British book trade in the mid-eighteenth century was the product of a long evolution. A trade in books had existed before the invention of printing, but the import and subsequent production of printed books in Britain transformed the scope and scale of its activities. The 250 years before 1750 had established patterns of trade, and customs and practices within the trade, which were to survive for centuries. First and foremost, the trade in England was dominated by traders based in London. This was partly a matter of commercial necessity, for London was the epicentre of the English economy. But it was partly also a consequence of political decisions to restrict the number of printers and presses, and to attempt to control the content of their publications. When provincial printing became legal in 1695, as an indirect and unintended consequence of the decision not to renew the Licensing Act, the structures of the trade were so entrenched that the London booksellers continued to be the nationally dominant players.[2] The English provincial book trade remained essentially distributive; printing was established in most of the major towns by mid- century, but producing a local newspaper and jobbing work were far more important to these new printers than the trickle of books which they produced.[3] There were localised networks of provincial booksellers, usually evolving out of the distribution networks for newspapers, but because publishing was largely a London activity, most serious book-buyers used these networks only as their means of access to the London trade.[4]

2 J. Barnard and M. Bell, 'The English provinces', in J. Barnard and D. F. McKenzie (eds.), *The Cambridge history of the book in Britain*, vol. 4: *1557–1695* (Cambridge, 2002), 665–8; J. Raven, 'The economic context', in Barnard and McKenzie, *Cambridge history of the book*, vol. 4, 568–82.

3 J. Feather, *The provincial book trade in eighteenth-century England* (Cambridge, 1985), 44–68.

4 See, for example, C. Y. Ferdinand, *Benjamin Collins and the provincial newspaper trade in the eighteenth century* (Oxford, 1997), 61–94; Ferdinand, 'Local distribution networks in

In the other countries of the British Isles, developments had been slower and more limited. Scotland, Ireland and Wales all had pre-print book cultures, just as England had, but the transition to print in all three countries was uncertain, and was further complicated by religious, political and linguistic issues. In both Wales and Ireland, the introduction of printing and much of the trade in printed books was essentially a politically motivated imposition by the English.[5] It took root, but progress was slow and intermittent. The Scottish book trade, on the other hand, was a native growth. By the time of the Act of Union (1707), it was a well-established entity with its own traditions and practices, many of which survived throughout the eighteenth century and beyond. Indeed, the Scottish booksellers (and later, some publishers) competed successfully with the Londoners in a number of respects.[6]

This was generally, however, a trade in which real competition was minimal, although it did exist. In both Scotland and Ireland, English books were reprinted without the permission of their owners. In Ireland, this was not illegal, provided that the book was not sold in Great Britain, but in Scotland it was after 1710, for Scotland was subject to the Copyright Act which came into force in that year. Books from both countries reached English provincial bookshops, despite intermittent attempts both by the London trade and by Customs and Excise to intercept them. In the north of England, Scottish books were commonly to be seen in the shops by the middle of the eighteenth century, although at least some of these were legitimate editions. But with these marginal exceptions, the book trade in 1750 was traditional, stable and more than a little complacent.

It was also capable of being efficient. In London, the retail book trade was expanding rapidly as the city grew both in population and in extent. In the provincial towns, the larger booksellers could obtain supplies of books from London with relative ease, and had their own regional and sub-regional networks (largely developed from the distribution system of the local newspapers) which could be used to make books available in smaller towns and to individuals. Collectors, librarians and other book-buyers could obtain books through shops whether locally or in London. Underpinning this were developments which ensured that provincial booksellers and librarians had relatively easy

18th-century England', in R. Myers and M. Harris (eds.), *Spreading the word: the distribution networks of print 1550–1850* (Winchester and Detroit, 1990), 131–49; P. J. Wallis, 'Cross-regional connexions', in P. Isaac (ed.), *Six centuries of the provincial book trade in Britain* (Winchester, 1990), 87–100.

5 R. G. Gruffydd, 'The first printed books, 1546–1604', in P. H. Jones and E. Rees (eds.), *A nation and its books: a history of the book in Wales* (Aberystwyth, 1998), 55–65; M. Pollard, *Dublin's trade in books 1550–1800* (Oxford, 1989), 2.

6 A. J. Mann, *The Scottish book trade 1500–1720* (East Linton, 2000), 1–4.

access to lists of new books. Probably the most widely used source was *The Gentleman's Magazine*, which carried both descriptive reviews of new books and reasonably comprehensive lists of new publications from its beginning in 1732. But there were also formal catalogues issued by some booksellers, advertisements for new books in the London newspapers (many of them replicated in the provincial press) and various attempts to develop a regular listing of all new titles.[7]

Supply was slow by later standards, but reasonably efficient by the standards of the day, and the improvements in transport which had already begun by 1750 were obviously a major benefit to all the distributive trades. Payment and credit also presented problems, but these eased as banking practices were slowly standardised, and credit-worthy banks were established in the provincial towns. Both in London and in the major provincial towns there were bookshops which held stocks of recent books, although the predominant titles in most of them (particularly outside London) were bibles and schoolbooks. Books not in stock could be obtained. In London, this probably still normally involved going to the retail shop of the bookseller who had published the book, but in the provincial towns a well-established bookseller could order on behalf of an individual customer. Some regular buyers, particularly among serious collectors, used London booksellers as their agents, and of course many in the upper classes spent some of the year in London as part of their normal social round.

Changes in the book trade 1770–1820

The well-established patterns of the trade changed radically and permanently in the fifty or so years on either side of the turn of the nineteenth century. The background to this was the widespread changes which were taking place in Britain's economic and political life. An economy which had been agricultural since time immemorial was transformed in little more than a generation into one which was driven by the extracting and manufacturing industries. Coal and iron were the materials of the industrial revolution; the factory was its birthplace. Raw materials were imported from British colonies overseas (and elsewhere) and transformed into goods for both domestic and export sales by the use of new techniques and new patterns of industrial organisation. A new infrastructure was needed to support these changes. The motive power of the industrial revolution was the steam engine, which was ultimately to transform transport as well as manufacturing. But much more was needed,

7 Feather, *Provincial book trade*, 44–53.

and the period under consideration here was the period in which the apparatus of industrial capitalism – banking, insurance, postal services, trades unions – was gradually developed to a high level of sophistication. The book trade could not be immune from these changes.

Their impact was at many levels. New wealth created a new market for reading as it did for all commercial leisure pursuits. But industrialisation also created a new demand for education, and particularly for self-education among some of the workers in the rapidly expanding industrial towns of the midlands, the north of England, central Scotland and south Wales. More broadly, the ethos of competition which characterised the period began to sit uneasily with the tradition of monopoly and oligopoly in the English (and to some extent British) book trade.

The changes were heralded by the end of the 'perpetual' copyrights. After decades of wrangling in the courts, the House of Lords in 1774 finally determined that the 1710 Copyright Act meant what it appeared to say: that copyright subsisted only for fourteen years after publication. This sounded the death-knell of the share books, and opened the way for the first generation of truly entrepreneurial publishers. Some established firms made the transition successfully. The best known was Longmans, which had been established since 1724 on the foundation of a business which could trace its own history back almost to the Restoration. Between 1797, when Thomas Norton Longman brought in the first partner from outside the family, and about 1810, the firm was transformed from a typical, although unusually extensive, eighteenth-century London bookseller into what is recognisably a modern publishing house. The principal source of the business's cash flow was now the publication of new books. The retail business was abandoned. Reprints of steady sellers, and occasional best-sellers, were of course always welcome, but without a continuous flow of new titles, early nineteenth-century Longmans would have ground to an economic halt. This was a different kind of publishing.[8]

In the same generation, new people came into the trade as publishers. John Murray, from the 1770s onwards, was a publisher first and foremost, having begun his career in the Royal Navy. One of his partners was a bank, in itself an indication both of the perception of the trade as one worthy of investment and of a different attitude from that of the traditional booksellers. Murray consciously developed what later publishers would call a list, and would now perhaps be called a brand image. He came to be regarded as the leading publisher of belles-lettres. He carefully cultivated good relationships

8 Feather, *History*, 76, 97–8.

with provincial, Scottish and Irish booksellers. He used his family connections to develop relationships with authors. In the next generation, his son reaped the massive dividends of this enterprise. He disposed of the vestigial retail business, and became solely a publisher. His authors included Scott and Byron.[9]

As publishing developed as an independent and distinctive activity, other branches of the trade also underwent change. The new style of entrepreneurial publishing needed a new kind of bookselling. Some bookshops were now emporia in which books from many publishers were displayed and sold. They needed to be where their customers were, and in London this had a particular manifestation. The historic centre of the London book trade was in the City, and in particular the area around St Paul's Cathedral. But the wealthiest potential customers no longer lived there. They had moved to the newly built squares and terraces west of Tottenham Court Road and Charing Cross. By the end of the century, the most important retail bookshops were not in Fleet Street but in Pall Mall, Piccadilly, St James's Street, York Street and Bond Street, the heart of fashionable London and the carriage trade. The movement was exemplified by John Hatchard, whose shop in Piccadilly, opened in 1797, was intended as a place where the gentry and aristocracy would feel comfortable and would be treated appropriately.[10] Similar shops were to be found in Bath, Edinburgh, York and Newcastle. Gradually, well-stocked retail bookshops were becoming a feature of all English towns and many in Scotland. Books had never been easier to buy.

At the other end of the economic and social scale, this was also the period which saw the beginning of the practice of remaindering, the cheap sale of the remaining copies of a book which is no longer selling at full price. The Noble brothers, who were also deeply engaged in publishing popular fiction, were among the most significant pioneers. They published over 200 novels, most of them intended for the circulating library market, and indeed had a very successful library of their own. They were, at first, also retailers, but they closed the retail business to concentrate on other matters. They continued to publish fiction and to run their circulating library, but they also developed the practice of buying unsold books from other publishers and selling them on to circulating libraries. If this was not quite remaindering as it was later to be understood, it was certainly close to it, and also coincidentally illustrates the symbiosis between popular fiction and libraries which persisted into the

9 W. Zachs, *The first John Murray and the late eighteenth-century London book trade* (Oxford, 1998).

10 J. Laver, *Hatchards of Piccadilly 1797–1947* (London, 1947), 14–38.

late twentieth century.[11] It was a link which was reinforced by their near-contemporary William Lane, whose Minerva Press was the publisher of a large output of Gothic novels also largely aimed at the library market.[12] Lane and the Nobles have been somewhat overshadowed in histories of the book trade by the more flamboyant figure of James Lackington, whose Temple of the Muses was claimed to be the largest bookshop in the country. It may have been; it was certainly well stocked with thousands of remainders.[13] But Lackington was following where the Nobles had led.

A more enterprising retail trade depended more than ever on good distribution networks. George Robinson was another key figure in this late eighteenth-century transformation. He started as a traditional bookseller-publisher in the 1770s. Looking to the future rather than the past, however, within a decade he had forged a new specialisation. He was a wholesaler, buying books in bulk from their publishers and selling at a mark-up to retailers, especially to those in the provinces.[14] The emergence of Robinsons as a large and successful wholesale house established a pattern which was to be maintained throughout the nineteenth century, and indeed until World War II. Robinson's successors included Simpkin Marshal, which dominated this aspect of the trade for much of the nineteenth century, W. H. Smith's in one of their many manifestations, and, briefly and disastrously in the early 1950s, Robert Maxwell.[15]

The structural changes in the book trade in this period were indeed a commercial – if not yet an industrial – revolution. Customs and practices which were almost as old as the trade itself were either forcibly or voluntarily abandoned. The fundamental structures of the trade changed. Much of this was actually driven by customers. Customers wanted new books, and they wanted them quickly and easily. They also wanted them as cheaply as possible. This created a demand for accessible bookshops, an efficient system of distribution and supply, and a steady stream of new titles. The commercial circulating libraries were deeply embedded in this trade. The same period saw their rapid growth, and the smaller libraries, where fiction was the predominant genre, were essential to the success of at least some of those, such as Robinson and the Nobles, who were remaking the British book trade.

For a different class of customer, this was also a period of great change. Hatchard's shop for the carriage trade of Piccadilly may have been unique – as

11 J. Raven, 'The Noble brothers and popular publishing', *Library*, 6th ser., 12 (1990), 293–345.

12 D. Blakey, *The Minerva Press 1770–1820* (London, 1939).

13 R. G. Landon, '"Small profits do great things": James Lackington and eighteenth-century bookselling', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 5 (1976), 378–99.

14 G. Pollard, 'The English market for printed books', *Publishing History* 4 (1978), 40.

15 Feather, *History*, 80–1, 94–5, 197–8.

it was to be for nearly 200 years – but there were similar if lesser shops around the country. In them new books were quickly available and there was a reliable chain of supply for a new book which was not in stock. The traditional British bookshops, whether in London, the English provinces or the other countries of the British Isles, had carried both new and second-hand books to which, by the late eighteenth century, there had often been added a small stock of books for loan. From the early nineteenth century onwards, however, the distinction between new and second-hand became more common, perhaps because it became more apparent. The flood of new titles on to the market, and even the changing physical appearance of books, made for an easy distinction between the new and the old. A generation of bibliophiles were also looking for something different and better from their booksellers. By 1820, the antiquarian branch of the trade was clearly established as a separate activity, perhaps working more closely with the auctioneers than with those engaged in the publication and sale of new books.[16]

The book trade in 1850

The changes in the trade between 1770 and 1820 were essentially internal, although they had a profound and clearly visible effect on customers. By 1800, however, there were technical innovations in book production which were to have a less immediate and less visible, but equally profound, effect on the availability of books by the middle of the nineteenth century. The fundamental technologies of the early modern book trade – typefounding, printing, papermaking, binding – had remained essentially unchanged since the middle of the fifteenth century. By 1800, the search for innovation had begun. The origins of change lay partly in a desire to produce a more aesthetically agreeable product – exemplified by Whatman's work with paper and Baskerville's with type design – but also partly to produce printed matter more cheaply and efficiently. A papermaking machine was developed in London in the early years of the nineteenth century, and took a commercially viable form in 1807. The problem it addressed was the shortage of paper which had been apparent for some years. The Fourdriner machine – perhaps significantly named after its commercial backers rather than its inventor – which was driven by water power (and later by steam, and now by electricity) solved the problem almost at a stroke. Paper became more plentiful and much cheaper.

16 N. Ramsay, 'English book collectors and the salerooms in the eighteenth century', in R. Myers, M. Harris and G. Mandelbrote (eds.), *Under the hammer: book auctions since the seventeenth century* (New Castle, DE, and London, 2001), 101–4.

No such easy solution was available for printing. But the use of iron rather than wood for the manufacture of the hand-printing press, which began very shortly after 1800, was a major step forward. The iron presses were stronger, could print on larger sheets, and in the hands of good workers could be operated more quickly. It was not, however, until 1814 that steam power was applied to printing. It was confined to newspaper printing for many years, but by the late 1830s, steam powered presses were regularly being used to print books. Long print runs could be achieved quickly, and, taken together with cheap paper, their use was a major cause of the fall in the real price of books which characterised the period from 1830 to 1850.[17] By the middle of the century, more books were more widely available to more people than ever before. Moreover, they were – despite execrable standards of both materials and production in the worst cases – typically more attractive than their eighteenth-century predecessors. New techniques of illustration were developed in the same period. At the expensive end of the market the invention of lithography created a new medium of visual art as well as facilitating the printing of maps, music and mathematics. At the other end of the scale, the use of steel rather than copper as an engraving medium made plates which were more durable, and hence made much longer print runs feasible. The illustrated novel of the mid-nineteenth century is a direct product of this change. The ultimate technical revolution in illustration – the use of photography – falls just outside our period, but by 1850 illustrations had become common in books and magazines of all kinds.[18]

The thirty years before 1850 saw the completion of the process of change from book trade to publishing industry. The new commercial structures which had evolved around the turn of the century, and the new technologies which had an impact on book production from about 1820 onwards, ensured that that should be the case. There was also, however, a political and social dimension. From the 1820s onwards there was continual agitation for the reduction or repeal of the taxes which had the effect of increasing the prices of paper, newspapers and pamphlets. The campaign against the 'taxes on knowledge', as their opponents called them, became one of the radical causes of the age, and was associated with other aspects of reform in far wider spheres. In 1836 the duties on newspapers – the main cause of political concern – were abolished, and all the other domestic taxes on paper and publications had either been drastically reduced or abolished altogether by 1850. This in itself was a major

17 S. Eliot, *Some patterns and trends in British publishing 1800–1919* (London, 1994), 61–3.
18 Feather, *History*, 90–1.

factor in the cheapening of books, but we can also take it as symbolic of an overt association between the idea of political reform and popular education on the one hand and literacy and the easy availability of books and newspapers on the other.[19]

Another manifestation of this same movement is, of course, in the foundation of mechanics' institutes and other workers' libraries which characterises the period, and in the development of both formal and informal education for working men and (sometimes) women. Books and the ability to read them lay at the heart of these developments. Whether impelled by middle-class philanthropy, or working-class autodidacticism, the popular education movements of the early nineteenth century (and indeed after 1850) depended for their efficacy very largely on the availability of books, in both bookshops and libraries.[20] Cheap books, and bookshops through which they could be bought, were a *sine qua non*. The early Victorian book trade was responding to market demand, not merely adopting technical innovation for its own sake.

One fundamental factor did not change. Publishing was still essentially a London business, although there were publishers in the provinces, and some of them, particularly later in the nineteenth century, were not unimportant. The Scots also had an impact on the national book trade. This was partly because some of them came to London to make their fortunes, but also because others who remained in Scotland successfully competed with London publishers. In the early years of the nineteenth century, at least four Scottish houses – Constable, Black, Blackie and Collins – mounted a serious challenge to London domination of the British trade. The vicissitudes of Constable, highlighted by the association with Scott,[21] should not be allowed to disguise the fact that these were successful enterprises, and that they were still operating successfully in the twentieth century.

Nevertheless, London remained at the heart of the trade. This dominance, however, depended on the efficiency of the distribution system, as it always had. This was transformed – as were all distributive trades – between 1830 and 1850 by the building of the railways. The network was almost complete by 1850 (although thousands of miles of minor lines were added in the 1850s

19 S. Bennett, 'John Murray's Family Library and the cheapening of books in early nineteenth-century Britain', *Studies in Bibliography* 29 (1976), 138–66; J. H. Weiner, *The war of the unstamped: the movement for the repeal the British newspaper tax 1830–1836* (Ithaca, NY, 1969).

20 R. D. Altick, *The English common reader: a social history of the mass reading public 1800–1900* (Chicago, 1957), 188–317; J. Rose, *The intellectual life of the British working classes* (New Haven and London, 2002).

21 J. Millgate, 'Archibald Constable and the problem of London: "Quite the connections we have been looking for"', *Library*, 6th ser., 18 (1996), 110–23.

and 1860s), and brought with it a new ease of access to virtually the whole of the United Kingdom at comparatively low cost. For goods like books, which have a very low value to weight ratio, this was an immeasurable benefit. The railways also made the Post Office into one of the most efficient arms of the state, and it too was vital to the conduct of a business which depended on the rapid transmission of orders, invoices and cheques.

The railways played another, somewhat less tangible, part in the evolution of the book trades and of reading in the mid-nineteenth century. New series of cheap and popular books, mainly novels, were created specifically to appeal to travellers on those long early railway journeys. George Routledge made his first fortune from them.[22] And to sell the books to the travellers when they needed them most, the London wholesale stationer W. H. Smith negotiated franchises for station bookstalls with many of the railway companies. From his first stall at Euston in 1838, Smith had expanded to over 400 outlets by the end of the 1860s. In the second half of the century, Smiths became newspaper wholesalers and distributors, retail booksellers in their 'town' shops, and circulating librarians. Smith himself became a Liberal MP and cabinet minister and, as First Lord of the Admiralty, the model for Gilbert's 'ruler of the Queen's navee'.[23]

Never had books been so widely, easily and cheaply available in Britain than they were in 1850. For the librarian, the collector or the casual buyer, there were shops which carried a wide stock of newly published books in almost every town of any size in the United Kingdom. For those who wanted to read more than they wished to buy – even among those who could have afforded them – there were circulating libraries in every town and almost every bookshop. For those who could afford few or no books of their own there was an ever-increasing number of mechanics' institutes and similar philanthropic libraries as well as very cheap books. The ownership and use of books was a mark of achievement, but it was also an aspiration. It is an exaggeration to say that there were two parallel book trades, but the class system of Victorian Britain was certainly reflected in the existence of distinctive middle-class and working-class books and markets. The same distinction was reflected in libraries. The circulating libraries were integral to the book trade. They were a dimension of what has been called the 'commercialisation of leisure' in eighteenth-century England,[24] and in the generation of Mudie they were to become part of a mass

22 Feather, *History*, 94.

23 C. Wilson, *First with the news: the history of W. H. Smith 1792–1972* (London, 1985), 37–179.

24 J. H. Plumb, 'The commercialisation of leisure', in N. McKendrick, J. Brewer and J. H. Plumb, *The birth of a consumer society* (London, 1983), 265–84.

market for middle-class recreation and culture. On the other hand, there were the philanthropic libraries which tried to meet the needs of the working class, a tradition which was carried into the public sphere by the 1850 Public Libraries Act. When parliament passed that Act, the publishing industry and the book trade were more than able to meet the modest demands of the newly created libraries.

20

Ecclesiastical libraries

JOAN WILLIAMS

The late eighteenth century has the reputation of being at best a fallow one in the history of ecclesiastical libraries. Many institutions had a major founder or benefactor in the seventeenth or early eighteenth century, but interest in them was beginning to decline by 1750. Often their histories contain strange gaps, or such statements as: 'Interest having lapsed about 1750 it does not appear to have been restored until 1833.'[1] Perhaps the greatest library disaster of the period was the almost complete destruction of Bristol Cathedral's books during the Reform Bill riots of 1831.[2] But the effects of change would have been felt by all libraries by the end of this period. In 1750 it is still sometimes difficult to define an ecclesiastical library; many libraries still had some connection with a religious institution or benefactor, even if their reading matter and their readers were increasingly secular. By 1850 this was no longer the case: libraries, for so long nurtured by the church, had finally grown up and taken wing.

For the great English cathedral libraries this was a time in which they came to be regarded less as repositories of pure 'divinity' and increasingly as centres for historical research. Beriah Botfield has given an invaluable picture of these libraries in the 1830s and 1840s, of which he confidently states that 'no where else can be found any collected account of the Ecclesiastical Libraries, attached to the Cathedrals of England', which is certainly true: even 127 years later their story was still 'strangely neglected'.[3]

In any library with a long history, 'twenty years under a good librarian may lie between fifty years of neglect':[4] periods of interest and activity occur at different times in a library's history, often depending on the accident of

1 L. S. Colchester, *Wells Cathedral library*, 2nd edn (Wells, 1978), 9.
2 J. Rogan (ed.), *Bristol Cathedral* (Stroud, 2000), 57; B. Botfield, *Notes on the cathedral libraries of England* (London, 1849), 1–2.
3 T. Kelly, *Early public libraries* (London, 1966), 59.
4 N. R. Ker, 'Cathedral libraries', in A. G. Watson (ed.), *Books, collectors and libraries* (London, 1985), 296.

a particular individual. Differences between various libraries must be borne in mind: Canterbury, Durham, St Paul's, York and Westminster – closely followed by Exeter – were always larger and better cared for than others, none of which could report more than 5,000 volumes of printed books by the middle of the nineteenth century.[5] But even at Canterbury there seems to have been a period of neglect in the late eighteenth century, while at Salisbury 'it perhaps reflects the lack of interest in the Library at that period that today it contains so relatively few books printed in the 18th century'.[6] But for Chichester at least the whole of the eighteenth century is described as a golden age in terms of care for the library, while elsewhere there seems to have been continued steady growth.[7] Lincoln's misfortunes are legendary: the neglect and mutilation of manuscripts was followed by the notorious sales of the early nineteenth century.[8]

Whatever else may have been neglected, this was conspicuously an age for moving libraries into new or restored buildings; perhaps more moves took place within this period than at any other. At York the Minster library was transferred to the newly restored thirteenth-century chapel of the former archbishops' palace in 1810, where it had room to expand for many years to come.[9] Three libraries were moved out of their post-Reformation homes in lady chapels or their equivalents: Peterborough between 1764 and 1791 to the parvise over the west porch; Exeter in 1820 to the chapter house; Hereford in 1841 to temporary accommodation in the cloisters.[10] Chichester by contrast moved *into* the lady chapel in 1750, while the library at Ely found a larger home on the east side of the south transept.[11] After a brief exile in the south choir aisle, Gloucester's library returned to its original seventeenth-century home in the old chapter house; Lichfield's separate, purpose-built fifteenth-century library building was – apparently for no recorded reason – pulled down in 1758,

5 Cathedral Commissioners, *Appendix to the first report* (London, 1854).

6 N. Ramsay, 'The cathedral archives and library', in P. Collinson, N. Ramsay and M. Sparks (eds.), *A history of Canterbury Cathedral* (Oxford, 1995), 389; S. M. Eward, 'Salisbury Cathedral library', typescript, revised edition (2000), 11.

7 M. Hobbs, 'The cathedral library', in M. Hobbs (ed.), *Chichester Cathedral: an historical survey* (Chichester, 1994), 179–80.

8 R. M. Thomson, *Catalogue of the manuscripts of Lincoln Cathedral library* (Cambridge, 1989), xxi–xxiii; C. Hurst, *Catalogue of the Wren library of Lincoln Cathedral* (Cambridge, 1982), xi–xii.

9 C. B. L. Barr, 'York Minster library', in G. E. Aylmer and R. Cant (eds.), *A history of York Minster* (Oxford, 1977), 512–13.

10 W. D. Sweeting, *The cathedral church of Peterborough* (London, 1898), 90; L. J. Lloyd, *The library of Exeter Cathedral* (Exeter, 1967), 17; J. Williams, 'The library', in G. Aylmer and J. Tiller (eds.), *Hereford Cathedral: a history* (London, 2000), 524.

11 Hobbs (ed.), *Chichester Cathedral*, 146; D. Owen, *The library and muniments of Ely Cathedral* (Ely, 1973), 7.

and the books moved to the room above the chapter house.[12] In the same year Salisbury suffered a reduction in space when half of the building over the east walk of the cloister was dismantled because of structural difficulties.[13] Most spectacularly, Durham in 1849 began to restore the former monastic dormitory to house its new library and museum.[14]

This was a great age for making catalogues, often in several versions: Gloucester had at least three between 1760 and 1833.[15] The preferred formula seems to have been a fully descriptive shelflist accompanied by an alphabetical index. Most of these were still in manuscript, but the first printed catalogues in these libraries also date from this period, the earliest being that of 1802 at Canterbury based on the work of Henry John Todd.[16] This was a model of its kind, providing in one volume a shelflist with an alphabetical index. Other printed catalogues followed at Ely (by G. Millers, 1815), Norwich (1819), Durham (of the manuscripts, by James Raine in 1825 and 1838) and Rochester (of the printed books, 1839).[17] Several others seem to have been proposed but never printed, such as those at York by Edward John Raines in the late 1840s and at Hereford in 1845.[18]

Financial provision, however, still showed little sign of reform. The payment of installation fees, or the donation of books of an equivalent value, was still the most widespread form of income, supporting at least eleven libraries.[19] These were occasionally increased, but were always erratic, and by *c.*1850 those based on the value of prebendal estates had disappeared as a result of the reforms of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.[20] Specific endowments were rare, and the only other means of financial support were regular or *ad hoc* payments out of chapter funds. These could vary wildly: Durham records a staggering £200 in 1854, which it is claimed will still be inadequate to support their new library.[21]

Although their salaries might be small or erratic, there is some evidence for a more formal arrangement of library staff. A 'librarian' was still always a cleric and usually a minor canon: if he were a senior canon he might have a minor canon as deputy or sub-librarian. In the first half of the nineteenth

12 P. Kaufman, 'Readers and their reading in eighteenth-century Lichfield', *Library*, 6th ser., 28 (1973), 110.
13 Eward, 'Salisbury Cathedral library', 10.
14 H. D. Hughes, *A history of Durham Cathedral library* (Durham, 1925), 10.
15 E. A. Read, *A checklist of books, catalogues and periodical articles relating to the cathedral libraries of England*, Oxford Bibliographical Society, Occasional Publications 6 (Oxford, 1970), 22–3.
16 Ramsay, 'Cathedral archives and library', 390.
17 Read, *Checklist*.
18 Barr, 'York Minster library', 517; Williams, 'The library', 524.
19 Cathedral Commissioners, *Appendix to the first report*.
20 *Ibid.*, e.g. York, 26; Salisbury, 419.
21 *Ibid.*, 66.

century he could have earned £2 at Chichester, £11 at Norwich or £25 at York, with additional payments for special activities such as compiling catalogues.[22] A library-keeper would be a lay person who did the dirty work, including 'attendance', and who could have earned a princely £4 at York throughout the eighteenth century.[23] If donors were somewhat thinner on the ground, there was no shortage of librarians whose work can still be admired.

The collections in these libraries were still predominantly theological, but contemporary additions can be seen increasingly 'to veer towards the historical, the literary, and the practical'.[24] Important contemporary works acquired by several cathedral libraries in the late eighteenth century include such titles as Burn's *Ecclesiastical law*, Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical history*, Blackstone's *Commentaries* and Nasmith's edition of Tanner's *Notitia monastica*.[25] From 1802 the publications of the Record Commission began to arrive: a complete set, up to 1837, was given to every cathedral library, emphasising its own importance as a historical repository.[26]

But this trend in acquisitions could tend to give a false impression of the use made of these libraries, which were already well stocked with the 'ponderous folios of obsolete divinity in dark, unlettered calf', which despite Botfield's scorn continued to serve them well.[27] Of the eighteenth-century borrowed books analysed by Kaufman, only a fraction were printed in the latter part of the century. These libraries already had their fine seventeenth-century editions of Barrow, Hammond, Hooker, Lightfoot, Stillingfleet and Jeremy Taylor, which all continued to be popular.[28] Walton's *Polyglot* of 1657 is a classic case: its scholarship had never been improved upon, and it was so ubiquitous in Botfield's survey that its absence at Chester is noted with surprise.[29]

The continued prevalence of classical authors is noteworthy: Botfield commends collections of the classics where he finds them, but sometimes fails to notice other surprising specialisms such as the wealth of philosophy at Carlisle which Coleridge's borrowings there and at Durham reveal.[30] Coleridge was hardly a typical library user, but his activities do show that, in the remoter parts

22 Hobbs, 'Cathedral library', 179; Cathedral Commissioners, *Appendix to the first report*, 295; Barr, 'York Minster library', 515.

23 Barr, 'York Minster library', 515.

24 Ramsay, 'Cathedral archives and library', 387.

25 P. Kaufman, 'Reading vogues at English cathedral libraries of the eighteenth century', *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* 67 (1963), 659, 666, 670; 68 (1964), 191.

26 Ramsay, 'Cathedral archives and library', 392; Barr, 'York Minster library', 511.

27 Botfield, *Notes on the cathedral libraries*, 50.

28 Kaufman, 'Reading vogues', 657, 663, 665, 670.

29 Botfield, *Notes on the cathedral libraries*, 58.

30 P. Kaufman, 'Coleridge's use of cathedral libraries', *Modern Language Notes* 75 (1960), 395–9.

of the country at least, the cathedral libraries were probably the most accessible libraries at which such scholarly works could be found. Where else would Dr Johnson, in the last year of his life, have found a copy of Sir John Floyer's *Treatise on the asthma* in Lichfield but at the cathedral library?[31] This increasing accessibility of the cathedral libraries to a wider public is a feature of this period which seems to predate any direct influence from the movements for church reform and improved education of the clergy. As well as those libraries studied by Kaufman (Canterbury, Carlisle, Durham, Exeter, Gloucester, Lichfield, St Paul's, Winchester and York), borrowers registers or evidence of borrowing also survives for some part of this period at Chester, Chichester, Ely, Lincoln, Southwell, Worcester and even Hereford, where it might have been thought that borrowing defeated the object of the chains.[32] The borrowers were still predominantly clerical, of course, but the willingness of deans and chapters to make their collections available in this way to the laity – including women – confirms that the 'public' tradition of the cathedral libraries was keeping pace with the times.[33] At York in 1837 the dean and chapter even advertised in the *Yorkshire Gazette* that books could be borrowed from the library by 'any gentleman resident in York, or the suburbs'.[34] By the time of the 1854 report, several cathedral libraries reported regular opening hours, including Canterbury, where this development is seen as 'a major shift in the library's role, away from a private community library and towards a public reading room'.[35]

Another sign of the times was the recognition that some items of special interest might be worthy of display. As early as 1789 the dean and chapter of Gloucester ordered a 'Repository for Manuscripts and Choice Books' for the library.[36] In the recognition of the commercial value of some of the rare books in the collections Dibdin for once played a useful role. He was unsuccessful in 1815 in persuading the dean and chapter of York to sell him their Caxtons and incunables, but alerted them to the fact that such items should be kept under lock and key.[37] He apparently served a similar function at Ripon in 1816.[38]

These observations on the English cathedral libraries apply to a lesser degree to those of the established Anglican church in Wales and Ireland, where the libraries were similar in composition but considerably more modest in size, with the exception of that at St Asaph, where the librarian received a respectable

31 Kaufman, 'Readers and their reading', 112.
32 Kaufman, 'Reading vogues'; Kaufman, 'Readers and their reading'; E. A. Read, 'Cathedral libraries: a supplementary checklist', *Library History* 4 (1978), 141–63.
33 Kaufman, 'Readers and their reading', 110; Hobbs, 'Cathedral library', 179.
34 Barr, 'York Minster library', 516.
35 Ramsay, 'Cathedral archives and library', 393.
36 S. M. Eward, *A catalogue of Gloucester Cathedral library* (Gloucester, 1972), xii.
37 Barr, 'York Minster library', 513.
38 Botfield, *Notes on the cathedral libraries*, 389.

£5 by the mid-nineteenth century.[39] The situation in Wales was complicated by the foundation of the SPCK diocesan libraries at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and the refoundation of Llandaff as a parochial library by the Associates of Dr Bray in 1760. The library at St David's had a steady continuous history; in 1795 it was moved to the chapter house, the coeval catalogue listing 452 volumes covering quite a wide range of subjects.[40] In 1847 Bangor's library received a valuable donation of books from Harry Longueville Jones, including many of the early continental editions of the classics for which it is noted.[41] Ireland's cathedral libraries continued to receive donations throughout this period, notably the libraries of Bishop Stopford at Cork in 1805, and that of Bishop Maurice at Kilkenny in 1756.[42]

Botfield's survey includes Lambeth Palace Library, which at this time was still housed uncomfortably in the old cloisters; in 1828 it was transferred to the old great hall, newly restored by Archbishop Howley.[43] The energetic Huguenot émigré Andrew Ducarel (1713–85) was appointed librarian in 1757 at a salary of £30; he was the first lay librarian, and an account of his duties sounds familiar to the multi-tasking professional in a historic library today:

> Not only did Ducarel have to catalogue, shelve, commission binding, acquire and accession books, pamphlets and manuscripts, and deal with visitors and enquiries, he was also required to draw up surveys and reports, search for documentation on dilapidations and palace repairs, and produce a history of the palace and library.[44]

H. J. Todd, chaplain and librarian from 1807, followed his catalogue at Canterbury with a catalogue of the manuscripts at Lambeth in 1812.[45] As in the case of the cathedral libraries, financial arrangements were far from satisfactory: although intended as a library accessible to the public, it was still entirely funded by the archbishop himself. Funds were therefore always uncertain, and a lack of expenditure on binding had left many books in need of repair by about 1850.[46]

39 Cathedral Commissioners, *Appendix to the first report*, 433.

40 M. Tallon, *Church in Wales diocesan libraries* (Athlone, 1962), 77–8.

41 *Ibid.*, 23.

42 H. Carson, 'Cathedral libraries in Ireland', paper delivered at the Cathedral Libraries and Archives Association meeting in Winchester Cathedral on Tuesday 12 November 1996, 4; B. C. Bloomfield (ed.), *A directory of rare book and special collections in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland*, 2nd edn (London, 1997), 599, 615.

43 M. R. James, 'The history of Lambeth Palace library', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 3 (1959–63), 9.

44 R. Myers, 'Dr Andrew Coltée Ducarel, Lambeth librarian, civilian, and keeper of the public records', *Library*, 6th ser., 21 (1999), 209.

45 James, 'Lambeth Palace library', 21.

46 E. G. Bill, 'Lambeth Palace library', *Library*, 5th ser., 21 (1966), 196.

In the 1854 report, St Paul's had cited as the reason for its failure to admit other clergy the availability of Sion College library, the foremost library for Anglican clergy at this time. It was always fortunate in gifts and bequests, which included donations from Richard Rawlinson, the topographer and non-juring bishop, and the acquisition in 1798–9 of 358 volumes of pamphlets from the library of Edmund Gibson, bishop of London; a further 6,000 pamphlets were assembled and bound in 1845. It was also a copyright library until 1836, after which accessions became more limited to theology, philosophy and ecclesiastical history. By the end of this period the collections must have numbered nearly 50,000 volumes.[47]

Archbishop Tenison's Library in St Martin-in-the-Fields in London was similar to the cathedral libraries in size and was, like some of them, in decline in the late eighteenth century. Although famous as a public library, it seems never to have functioned successfully as a lending library. But it was still hosting the meetings of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and there is some evidence for a late flowering of new interest in the library in the second quarter of the nineteenth century.[48] Of great interest is the clash of cultures which occurred when the St Martin's Subscription Library was installed in the Tenison Library room from 1839 to 1852, fiercely resisted by Tenison's combative librarian Philip Hale, who with some justification complained 'What if a Bloomsbury Subscription Library invaded the British Museum Reading Room?'[49] Both libraries were soon to perish, St Martin's in 1852 and Tenison's in 1861, both perhaps the victims of changing library times.

Tenison's was one of a group of episcopal endowed libraries founded for public use. Bishop Cosin's library in Durham received significant bequests in this period; after 1832 it was administered along with the new university library.[50] Archbishop Marsh's great library in Dublin had received its major collections by this time, but a late foundation on the same pattern was Archbishop Richard Robinson's creation of the Armagh Public Library in 1771, which continued to grow, its premises being extended by Archbishop Beresford in the 1830s.[51] Archbishop Bolton's diocesan library at Cashel was still housed in a building

47 E. Edmonston, 'Unfamiliar libraries 9: Sion College', *Book Collector* 14 (1965), 165–77; Bloomfield, *Directory*, 366–9.

48 P. Hoare, 'Archbishop Tenison's Library at St Martin in the Fields, 1684–1861', unpublished Dip. Lib. thesis, University of London (1963).

49 P. Hoare, 'St Martin's subscription library, Westminster, 1839–1852', *Library History* 12 (1996), 74.

50 A. I. Doyle, 'John Cosin (1595–1672) as a library maker', *Book Collector* 40 (1991), 20; Bloomfield, *Directory*, 71.

51 Carson, 'Cathedral libraries', 6–7; Bloomfield, *Directory*, 585–6, 604–5.

adjoining the archbishop's palace, where it suffered some losses during the 1798 rising. In 1835 a new Georgian-style building was erected to house both it and the chapter room in the churchyard of the new cathedral of St John.[52] On a smaller scale, the library founded by William Wake in the palace of the bishops of Lincoln at Buckden for the clergy of the archdeaconry was moved into a room in Huntingdon in 1837–8.[53] In 1779 the collections of John Sharp, archbishop of York, and his clerical sons and grandsons were made over as a public library at Bamburgh Castle, Northumberland.[54] More significantly for the future, in 1837 Thomas Burgess, bishop of St David's and of Salisbury, bequeathed his personal library of some 10,000 volumes to St David's College, Lampeter, which he had founded in 1822.[55]

Bishops with a taste for book-collecting had both the means and the premises to form impressive individual collections, some of which were left for the use of their successors, such as Richard Hurd's exquisite library at the bishop of Worcester's palace at Hartlebury, and that of Beilby Porteus, bishop of London 1787–1809, at Fulham Palace.[56] Archbishop Leighton's library at Dunblane had become a public subscription library in 1734, but continued to reflect the character of its founder's fine theological collection, and enjoyed a short heyday in the early nineteenth century when the trustees exploited the discovery of mineral wells nearby by offering temporary membership of the library to those who came to take the waters. Catalogues were produced in 1793, 1809 and 1843, the last listing some 3,000 volumes.[57] In Edinburgh, the impressive library of the saintly Alexander Jolly, bishop of Moray from 1798 until his death in 1838, was deposited in the seminary in Hill Street: founded in 1810, this was the first theological college in the Anglican communion.[58]

The story of religious libraries outside the Anglican church is more directly influenced by political events. As a consequence of the Revolution, members of the British Roman Catholic colleges and orders in France began to return as exiles. The first staff and students of the English College at Douai arrived in 1793,

52 F. Alderson, 'Unfamiliar libraries 14: Cashel Cathedral', *Book Collector* 17 (1968), 323; Bloomfield, *Directory*, 598.

53 Kelly, *Early public libraries*, 91, 248.

54 Bloomfield, *Directory*, 71.

55 G. Walters, 'The bishop, the Bowdlers, the Botany Bay surgeon: benefactors of the Founder's library', in *The Founder's Library: University of Wales, Lampeter* (Lampeter, 1994), 5–7; Bloomfield, *Directory*, 685.

56 Bloomfield, *Directory*, 93, 407; D. T. Richnell, 'The library of Bishop Porteus', *Library Association Record* 61 (1959), 156–8.

57 G. Willis, 'The Leighton Library, Dunblane', *Bibliotheck* 10 (1981), 142–3.

58 G. Hogg (ed.), *Special and named printed collections in the National Library of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1999), 20.

to found St Edmund's College at Ware in Hertfordshire and Ushaw College at Durham. They brought no books with them, but in both places libraries were speedily built up. At Ushaw this was largely due to the judicious antiquarian book-buying activities of Thomas Wilkinson, whose donations include a good proportion of science, classics, literature and art as well as theology.[59] The Jesuits returning from Liège to St Mary's College at Stonyhurst brought a remarkable number of their books with them, including the early eighth-century Northumbrian Gospel of St John now known as the Stonyhurst Gospel.[60] The English Benedictines finally settled at Downside Abbey in 1814, where they also built up a large library.[61] The newly founded seminary at Maynooth received its founding collection of 3,000 volumes in 1795 from its first librarian, Andrew Dunne, while Oscott College, founded 1794, received among other donations the important recusant library from Harrington Hall in 1810.[62]

The Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 gave further impetus to the foundation of seminaries. Prominent among these is that of St Mary's College, Blairs, Aberdeen, founded 1829, and as the only such establishment in Scotland its library attracted the gifts of other collections from Scotland and the Scottish colleges abroad.[63] In all these newly established Roman Catholic libraries one can perceive an enthusiasm for the acquisition of historical as well as modern books, to make up for the libraries lost and to maintain a sense of continuity with the ancient history of Catholicism in the British Isles.

At the other end of the doctrinal spectrum, English nonconformity was 'rich in scholarship, much less in the libraries on which scholarship depends'.[64] The striking exception was Dr Williams's Library in Red Cross Street in London, which had become to dissenters 'what Sion College was to the clergy of the Established church'.[65] It remained the centre for dissenting activities throughout this period, but at the same time suffered from a lack of interest comparable to that at other historic religious libraries; judging from the

59 J. T. Rhodes, *Ushaw College library* (Durham, 1994); Bloomfield, *Directory*, 75–6, 99.

60 F. Courtney, 'Heythrop College library', *Bulletin of the Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries* 2 (February 1957), 6–8; M. J. Walsh, 'Heythrop College library', *University of London Libraries Bulletin* 10 (April–June 1977), 14–17; Bloomfield, *Directory*, 234.

61 Bloomfield, *Directory*, 544.

62 *Ibid.*, 616; G. F. Pullen, 'The old library at St Mary's College, New Oscott', *Open Access*, new ser., 16 (1968), 2, 4–7.

63 T. A. Cherry, 'The library of St Mary's College, Blairs', *Bulletin of the Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries*, new ser., 3 (June 1975), 11–13; Bloomfield, *Directory*, 633; Hogg, *Special and named collections*, 14.

64 P. L. Heyworth, 'Unfamiliar libraries 16: the Forbes library', *Book Collector* 19 (1970), 317.

65 *Ibid.*

visitors book and borrowers registers it was little used.[66] Robert Southey discovered the library in 1797 and writes enthusiastically about its 'old folios respectably covered with dust', which eloquently confirms that like the cathedral libraries it had come to be regarded as a quaint institution only useful for obscure historical research.[67] With the opening of the London Library in 1841 and the development of the British Museum library, 'Dr Williams's Library must have seemed to many an insignificant and unnecessary survival from the past', which could well have gone the same way as Archbishop Tenison's Library.[68]

Of the other dissenting libraries, the Bristol Baptist Academy is foremost, its library 'equal to that of any private academy in the kingdom', thanks to bequests from the classical scholar Andrew Gifford, an assistant librarian at the British Museum, whose library included a number of surprising treasures such as the only surviving copy of Tyndale's 1525 New Testament.[69] Manchester College had a collection of some 15,000 volumes in 1805–6 while it was at York, as well as an impressive collection of dissenting archives.[70] The migrating and merging of other dissenting academies is bewildering, and on the whole 'their curricula were often limited, their libraries inadequate, and they failed to stretch the minds of their more able students'.[71] Dissenters had an ambivalent attitude to worldly learning in general, but it came to be accepted that ministers needed a basic education, and ironically, perhaps because they had been denied a university education, the subject range of their libraries was wide, if not always deep. In 1838 there were eighteen nonconformist academies in England and Wales, and three which were interdenominational, one of them being that founded at Trefecca by the countess of Huntingdon in 1768, which inherited her private library, moving to Cheshunt in 1793.[72]

Although John Wesley had himself 'compiled a formidable library for the use of ministers', the Methodists were late in establishing their colleges.[73] The Society of Friends in London had built up a substantial collection of books, which was however 'slow to assume the identity of a library, being housed

66 S. K. Jones, *Dr Williams and his library*, Friends of Dr Williams's Library, inaugural lecture (Cambridge, 1948), 20.

67 *Ibid*.

68 E. A. Payne, *A venerable dissenting institution: Dr Williams's Library 1729–1979*, Friends of Dr Williams's Library, lecture 33 (London, 1979), 16.

69 M. R. Watts, *The dissenters*, vol. 2: *The expansion of evangelical nonconformity* (Oxford, 1995), 271.

70 P. Morgan, *Oxford libraries outside the Bodleian*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1980), 72–9.

71 Watts, *Dissenters*, vol. 2, 274.

72 *Ibid*., 269, 273; Bloomfield, *Directory*, 29.

73 P. Kaufman, 'Zion's Temple, Manchester: an introduction to libraries of dissent', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 62 (1968), 348; Watts, *Dissenters*, vol. 2, 273.

in various different parts of the Society's premises in Bishopsgate, and no Librarian appointed until 1901'.[74]

Perhaps the greatest contribution of dissenters to the history of libraries was more indirectly, through their involvement in the foundation of mechanics' institutes and learned societies.[75] Meanwhile the Evangelical revival was a major influence on the developments which were giving new life to the Church of England. One product was the British and Foreign Bible Society, which began to accumulate its unrivalled collection of bibles soon after its foundation in 1804.[76] And the movement to provide better education for the clergy was finally beginning to take shape in the founding of new academic institutions, whose histories take us forward into a new world.

74 'Libraries 35: the library of the Society of Friends', *Bulletin of the Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries* 36 (June 1986), 3.

75 Watts, *Dissenters*, vol. 2, 278–83.

76 A. F. Jesson, 'The libraries of the British and Foreign Bible Society and the American Bible Society, New York: a companion', unpublished M.Lib. Studies dissertation, Loughborough University (1977), 14–15.

21

Libraries in the parish

GRAHAM BEST

> 'One book is my library': the reply of an old woman in a Yorkshire Wolds village, that the Bible was all the library she had or wished to have.
>
> Revd H. Woodcock, *Piety among the peasantry* (London, 1889), 214–15

In a flurry of zealous Christian activity, Thomas Bray, amongst other achievements, brought about the founding of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) on 8 March 1699. Soon after, in 1705, a special committee for creating libraries was established with the title Trustees for Erecting Parochial Libraries and Promoting other Charitable Designs. By the time the Associates of Dr Bray was formed as a new management group, in 1729, the Trustees had established at least fifty-six parochial libraries in England and ten in Wales, each costing more than £20. Between 1753 and 1768 a further seventy parochial libraries and twelve lending libraries were founded by the Associates, though the scheme did not extend to Scotland, for which the SSPCK had been formed, also in 1699.

In its early years, the majority of the Associates' book distribution activity focused on the needs of the Anglican clergy themselves, with piety and education as watchwords. Accordingly, books were chosen, packaged in wooden boxes and distributed to specific locations where it had been agreed that most need existed, with little or no opportunity for use by individual parishioners planned, or intended, by the Associates. Crucially, it seems that many of these nascent parochial libraries did eventually find their way into wider community use later in the century. The evidence offered by the few parish library loan records which survive suggests that overt attempts to open up use to the community and encourage public or, more specifically, parishioner access were often successfully made.

As the eighteenth century progressed, the Bray Associates' centralised parochial library distribution work was augmented by many local book benefactions, endowments and localised reading initiatives, which, unsurprisingly,

produced a very uneven patchwork of provision across the country. This spate of small, predominantly religious, library benefactions is typified by such activity in Kent. At Crundale, the rector Richard Forster had left some 850 volumes, by 1728, to his parish for the indefinite use of his successors.[1] In Westerham, Charles West gave several hundred volumes in 1765 to the parish church of St Mary[2] and in Canterbury, by 1740, a small library of some seventy-eight volumes had been set up in the Eastbridge Hospital and may well have involved the local antiquarian John Lewis in its establishment.[3] Use of this library was specified as for 'Religious Societies and other well disposed persons'. The Canterbury library had been lending books from the cathedral since at least 1672 but had limited itself to serving the dean, prebends and other gentlemen or ministers.

The very survival of these small, overwhelmingly theological libraries was dependent on the vital roles played by the individual benefactor and a library-keeper. Establishing a book collection that was both theologically sound, physically secure, and to some explicit degree accessible to local people, needed both a thoughtful benefaction and careful subsequent attention – actions which were not typically forthcoming. The success of this burgeoning but uneven pattern of parish-based book donation and acquisition was also, in each instance, largely dependent on the specified use-criteria. Perhaps a book collection was an example of a ready-made parochial library, intended exclusively for clerical use and provided through the efforts of an SPCK committee.[4] Or perhaps the books emerged through a local eleemosynary process involving a simple transfer of ownership from individual to community that could, at a stroke, create an opportunity for public access out of private use. Whichever the case, where the parish church accommodated the library (and this was more often the case than not), a handful of the library's original volumes may have had an *in situ* provenance directly arising from the variety of royal and episcopal prescribed reading decrees, directives and instructions, issued to churches at intervals during a long period following the Reformation.[5]

1 Catalogues of this library are included in Canterbury Cathedral Library MSS Y.4.30. and Y.4.31.

2 M. Perkin (ed.), *A directory of the parochial libraries of the Church of England and the Church in Wales*, revised edn (London, 2004), 385.

3 See for example the letter from Mr John Lewis to Mr Chamberlayne of the SPCK, 28 April 1701, quoted in E. McClure, *A chapter in English church history: being the minutes of the SPCK for the years 1698–1704* (London, 1888), 333–4.

4 The 'Bray libraries' were intended for clerical use and were not lending libraries; the Associates did not relax their rules on admitting lay users to their libraries until 1922.

5 The earliest such royal injunction related to 'the Whole Bible both in Latin and also in English' and was issued by Cromwell in 1536 'for every man that will to look and read

At Maidstone parish church, for example, a bequest by Peter Brown, butcher, in 1567, had enabled a bible to be purchased, chained and made available to parishioners. Similarly, with Calvin's *Institutes* in 1596: 'for the better instruction of the poor and simple'. Foxe's *Book of martyrs*; the *Gospel paraphrases* of Erasmus (in English); the *Book of homilies* (as it later became known); works by Bishop John Jewel (especially his *Apologie . . . in defence of the Church of England)*; and to a lesser extent (because it was intended for use by the clergy), Bullinger's *Sermons*; all were similarly provided. More thoughtful and generous bequests included reading desks, lecterns and tables, although more often than not the books were chained.[6]

To these embryonic church libraries could be added a variety of local benefactions, some having the specific intention of benefiting the local incumbent or clergyman, and in not a few cases book donations and bequests were made by the clergy, to the clergy. Other common benefactors were local patrons of livings and pious gentry or tradesmen, philanthropically motivated to improve the learning, and therefore the effectiveness, of their local clergy.

These small parish church libraries were not *public* libraries in the nineteenth-century sense; their location and subject matter would restrict use, if not just to the incumbent clergy, then to a relatively few literate, educated and pious parishioners. The absence of continuing endowments for upkeep, adequate housing or new purchases could often inhibit natural growth into mature libraries, as could the frequently specific restrictions on use imposed by the benefactors themselves. However, certain other, more liberal benefactions had taken place during the seventeenth century such as those at St Margaret's, King's Lynn (1631), Spalding (1637) and Halifax (1645), and at Repton in 1622/3, where one particularly liberal benefaction stipulated that the books were *not* to be chained *nor* retained in the church but made available, under certain other conditions, to the parishioners.[7] Similarly, parishioners at Wootton Wawen, Warwickshire, requested in 1693 that the books bequeathed by the vicar in 1652 be brought out of the vicarage and chained to a desk in the south aisle of

thereon . . . whereby they may the better know their duties to God, to their sovereign lord the King, and their neighbour' [i.e. Coverdale's translation]: W. H. Frere, *Visitation articles and injunctions of the period of the Reformation* (London, 1910), vol. 2, 9.

6 The securing of books in churches by chaining was common well into the eighteenth century. A whole library could be chained, such as that set up in the south chapel of All Saints, Hereford, after 1715. In Bury St Edmunds, the chains on male prisoners in the local gaol were still in place *after* they had been removed from the parish books.

7 T. Kelly, *Early public libraries* (London, 1966), 82–3.

the church.[8] Along with more liberal, public access trends being implemented in parishes elsewhere, the general picture was one of more fertile ground for Anglican parochial library growth in the eighteenth century. This was especially so when libraries served to support an educational role in connection with a local school, or an informal role through a judicious benefaction or serendipitous use by the local community.

In a remarkably prescient benefaction of *c.*1712, for example, one James Hill of Sheffield bequeathed in singular fashion his personal library of books in a way that both anticipated and created the potential for just such a complex multiplicity of use.[9] Hill's thoughtful and liberal benefaction included a donation of twenty books of the most practical (Christian) value – along with associated money – to the chapel at Earl Sterndale, near Castleton, Derbyshire, 'to be deposed to the sight or reading of any person or persons at any time not abuseing them that shall desire to see or read the same'. The 'practical' works of Christianity comprised twelve folio and twelve quarto volumes and included: Matthew Poole's *English annotations*; Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical history*; the *Book of homilies*; Bishop Ussher's *Body of divinity*; two works by Robert Baxter; George Lawson's *Theo-politica*; Edward Leigh's *Annotations*; and according to Hill, 'a plaine booke for the comon people': 'Whailleys Prototyps'.

Additionally, Hill endowed an annual 40 shillings for the schooling of poor children in Sterndale; 3 pounds to buy bibles and catechisms for the poor of the Chapelry of Hartington; 40 shillings to the curate at Sterndale for teaching and explaining the catechism to the children there; and a copy of Adam Littleton's *Latin dictionary* for the scholars at the under-school in Sheffield. Finally, twenty of Hill's nearest relations – those who could read – were each to be permitted to take one 'practical' work in octavo, whilst the Revd Drake of Sheffield was to choose twelve of the best remaining books for the '*lending* library' there.[10] Remarkably, Hill also provided for the Earl Sterndale parish a reading table; 20 shillings for seats; the same amount for a book press; and finally, a further 20 shillings for the making of a window in the chapel wall – presumably to facilitate better reading conditions. This was at a time when elsewhere across the

8 B. H. Streeter, *The chained library* (London, 1931), 292. The desk is illustrated in Central Council for the Care of Churches, *Parochial libraries of the Church of England* (London, 1959), opposite p. 65, but was later altered: Perkin, *Directory*, 400–1.

9 Hill's will was written on 22 December 1709 and proved in York on 11 June 1712; Borthwick Institute, York wills 1712–13 (oversize), vol. 68, fol. 66.

10 The Sheffield books were kept in the vestry of the parish church and are mentioned as early as 1704/5 in the *Notitia parochialis* of that year. The library evidently survived for at least a further eighty years as catalogues are appended to the Sheffield glebe terriers for 1764, 1777, 1781 and 1786.

country, the chaining of books in churches was still common. Unfortunately, we have no record of how useful the community found this most practical of bequests; the scope, specifications and stated intention, 'any person . . . at any time', are generous and untypical of contemporary practice.

Elsewhere, when the incumbent or curate also served as schoolmaster, a parish library may have been expected to fulfil multiple demands made by the cleric, scholar, pupil and parishioner, with the vital aspects of security and control being largely dependent on physical location. At Wisbech, for example, the earliest recorded borrowers from the parish library are Thomas and Edward Cole whose brief entries appear under a page heading: 'Taken out for ye Use of ye School'.[11] In fact a substantial record of parish library loans survives for this particular library and lists a small number of loans from *c.*1713 to 1716, recommencing with the main sequence in 1726. A second revival in recorded library use commences in 1753 and peters out in 1766, with scattered loans recorded during the last three decades of the eighteenth century.[12]

The recorded loans which recommence briefly in 1726 happened during a period of relative but short-lived prosperity for the 12,000-acre parish of Wisbech, where produce from adjacent fertile lands generated a considerable local trade in shipping. Although flooding was a regular hazard, with frequent incursions of water damaging crops, the Dutch-looking town had thrived, with Saturday markets and yearly horse and cattle fairs. Loans continue to be recorded until 1733 with a total of 195 loan transactions, involving the issuing of some 416 volumes through an average of sixteen borrowers per year. The library-keeper at the time was probably Edmund Pyle, who is recorded as borrowing Bennet's *Thirty-nine articles* on 1 June 1728, just a fortnight before his own ordination on 16 June, after having taken out: Samuel Newman's *Concordance*; Whitby's *Commentary*; Mede's *Works*; Richard Fiddes' *Body of divinity* (*Theologia speculativa*); and Locke's *Works*. Such reading confirms the contemporary view that at least *some* reading was considered necessary prior to ordination.[13] Pyle went on to record loans of twenty-eight works from the Wisbech library over a two-year period, a record which contrasts sharply with his apparent attitude somewhat later in life, when as companion to Bishop

11 The schoolmaster of Wisbech Grammar School at the time was Thomas Carter, although his name does not appear in the pages of the loan book. It is feasible that Archbishop Thomas Herring (1693–1757) had access to the library whilst a scholar at Wisbech Grammar School; he matriculated at Jesus College, Cambridge in June 1710.

12 Wisbech and Fenland Museum MS Town Library Catalogue. See also J. C. Jeafferson, 'Manuscripts of the Corporation of Wisbech', Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, *Ninth report* (London, 1883), 293–9.

13 E. Pyle, *Memoirs of a royal chaplain, 1729–1763* (London, 1905), 15–16.

Hoadly, he found little time to read, despite 'the temptation' of a fine library. His description of his later life as a prebend is illuminating and has been often used to illustrate the not very arduous life of an eighteenth-century cathedral dignitary: 'The life of a prebendary is a pretty easy way of dawdling away one's time; praying, walking, visiting; – & as little study as your heart would wish. A stall in this church is called a charming thing.'[14]

A notable family identification from the loans register relates to the Bell family of Outwell. Two different hands enter loans under the name of 'Beaupré Bell' and relate to the father and son of the same name who were notable antiquaries and sometime owners of Beaupré Hall Manor, Outwell, Norfolk, some 5 miles south-east of Wisbech.[15] The younger Beaupré Bell was an active member of the Spalding Society, for which he produced several papers, apparently also assisting other authors such as Blomefield (with his *History of Norfolk*), Thomas Hearne and C. N. Cole (who produced a second edition of Dugdale's *Imbanking and drayning* in 1772).

Obviously, borrowers were not oblivious to the practical help that the library could provide through loans of the *Imbanking and drayning*, *Lectures on hydrostatics* (Desagulier) and the medical textbooks of Cooper, Verheyen and Harvey. If the library was unable to provide the latest offerings from the burgeoning provincial and London presses it could provide a staple, orthodox fare of sound and scholarly texts consisting of classical authors and the church Fathers, along with authoritative works of history with which to provide context to contemporary national events such as the accession of George II in 1727 and Britain's war with Spain.

This second period of recorded loans ends with five volumes being issued in 1766 and only isolated loans recorded subsequently in 1771, 1792 and *c.*1800. An anonymous entry in the loan book during 1774 implores God to send a better librarian. Significantly, when James Burslem, the new vicar, instigated a fresh reading initiative in 1779 it was through 'a well chosen library on a permanent and increasing plan' and was associated with a new 'Wisbech Literary Society' which commenced with no fewer than eighty subscribers. Loans from the old parish library reduced to nine during the whole of the last decade of the century and when the master of the Grammar School arranged and recatalogued the library in 1801 he was to deplore the neglect and misuse suffered by the parish books.

14 *Ibid.*, 191, 266.

15 The two Beaupré Bells amassed a notable collection of books, medals and coins, as well as manuscripts, which passed, on the death of Bell the younger (1704–45), to Trinity College, Cambridge.

Concern for religious education of the provincial Anglican clergy, long a primary issue for the Associates of Dr Bray, was the source of the library that was for a long time to be associated with the parish church of St George, Doncaster. This parish library originated with a society of clergymen formed early in 1715 for 'the improvement of One another in Christian knowledge'.[16] The Society's members met at a variety of venues but the 'standing library' which grew out of these mutual improvement gatherings was static and first housed within the Old Vestry of St George's church, probably by October 1716. By 1726 it was securely established within a refurbished room over the south porch of the same building,[17] despite the intention that the books acquired through members' subscriptions (amounting to 20 shillings, or books to that value) were to be dispersed annually between members, perhaps by drawing lots. Administrative preparations culminated in a detailed library Settlement of April 1726 at which time, 'The Society's Library' was transferred into the hands of twenty-three Trustees.[18] Subsequently, a sequence of recorded loans was made in a borrowers' register, ending some fifty years later in 1776.[19] Probably because of the location,[20] the books became, somewhat incorrectly, referred to as the 'Church Library', with the vicar acting as library-keeper to the Society and its books.[21] Folios could be borrowed for three months, a quarto volume for two months and 'a small book' for one month. The fact that anyone intending to publish was rewarded with up to six books for four months – on the condition that a copy of the completed work be donated to the library when published – suggests serious theological use was anticipated.

The majority of the seventy-five borrowers who recorded loans between 1715 and 1776 were therefore clergymen (at least thirty-four, possibly forty-one, individuals). At least three borrowers were women, although none are recorded until 1733. A possibly notable single-borrower was 'Sam Wesley', who, in March 1730/1, is recorded as borrowing the third volume of Walton's *Polyglot Bible*. Samuel Wesley, father of John and Charles, was then rector of

16 Minute book of St George's parochial library, fol. 1r: Doncaster Archives, P1/5/E1.

17 The refurbishment costs amounted to £6 6s 8d and included money for a table, a book press, locks, a curtain, making fires, dressing the books, and paper on which to catalogue the books for presentation to Archbishop Dawes (DCL, MS H780, p. 113).

18 Trustees comprised thirteen clergymen, nine landed gentry or titled 'esquire', and one other: the mayor of Doncaster.

19 Now in Doncaster Archives. The library itself perished in a disastrous fire in 1853 which also destroyed most of the church structure.

20 Provision was made within the Settlement for the books to be moved into what was described as more suitable accommodation, should the need arise.

21 In this capacity served both Patrick Dujon and Hollis Pigot respectively, until 1762.

Epworth – some 15 miles east of Doncaster – and would have been about sixty-nine years old at the time.

Interest in the books at Doncaster, as measured by the loans register, appears to decline after 1753, with only some twenty recorded loans during the period 1753–9 and a further eight during the subsequent years to 1776, when recorded loans cease altogether. During these years of apparently declining use, a total of six curates of St George's appear as borrowers and serve to emphasise the close relationship that existed between the Society's library and the parish church; one studious curate even moved his bed into the library.[22]

Presented purely in numerical terms, the most popular books in the Society's library, according to recorded issues were: *Universal history* (forty-one loans); Chambers' *Dictionary* (thirty-two); Joseph Bingham's *Antiquities of the Christian Church* (twenty-one); Charles Rollin's *Ancient history* (eighteen); Bishop Burnet's *History of the Reformation* (fifteen); the sermons of George Smalridge (fourteen);[23] and William Watson's *Clergyman's law* (fourteen). However, such a bland presentation of the figures masks some significant borrowing patterns. All the recorded issues of the Bingham volume, for example, occur during the period April 1715 to November 1716,[24] and the *Universal history* issues all occur during a four-year period: December 1749 to November 1753. Significantly, these loans involve only seven different borrowers with examples of persistent sequential borrowings involving single borrowers and up to sixteen volumes. By contrast, the issues of Chambers' *Dictionary* are spread over a twenty-three year period and those for Rollin's *Ancient history* over thirty-four years. Only one issue of the Koran is recorded, when the vicar of St George's borrowed it in December 1729.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, there were just four books available within the parish church at Rotherham: a large bible, two volumes of common prayer and a book of psalms. A reading desk was probably available and at least one of the books was chained.[25] About 1708 the Hon. Thomas Wentworth presented a copy of the works of Henry Moore to the church of Rotherham for use by the incumbent.[26] The local schoolmaster, William Withers, was a regular preacher in Rotherham parish church from 1702 to

22 E. Miller, *History and antiquities of Doncaster and its vicinity* (Doncaster, *c.*1804), 93.

23 Those so admired by Dr Johnson.

24 The volume may not have been available during the later loans period as it remains a possibility there was a book-dispersal procedure early in the library's history.

25 The 'book with the chain' is recorded as a loan in July and November 1796, although no book title is specified.

26 Thomas Wentworth, of Wentworth Woodhouse, presented the same volume to the church at Darton, near Barnsley; he was also a generous benefactor to the Doncaster Clerical Society and was active within the SPCK.

1719 and it is safe to assume that the parish's small library of books was being used for local educational purposes in a similar way to that recorded at Wisbech and at Doncaster. However, the most dramatic library development at Rotherham came from a private benefaction, in this case a gift of £100 by Mrs Frances Mansell in 1728.[27] Importantly, not all the money was spent at once and purchases as well as further benefactions continued to be made for many years.

The library was regarded as a collection of the best authors on divine subjects and was established for the 'Use & Advantage' of the clergy *and* parishioners of Rotherham, forever. Housed in the vestry of the parish church, a loans register commences in 1730 and ends 138 years later in 1868.[28] There is no evidence to suggest that the books were moved from their original home during this period. Originally, not all the books were to be borrowed; those thus specified formed what Thomas Bray would have called a 'standing library' and consisted of volumes classified as 'ye Commentators' and one other: Jeremy Collier's *Great historical dictionary*. These books could however be read and consulted at any time by any person whatsoever. A security was necessary against any book borrowed and as elsewhere – for example at Bedford (1700), Reigate (1701), Maldon (1704) and Tiverton (1715) – a written undertaking or monetary deposit equal to some proportion of the cost of the volume was probably required. Additional rules, introduced at some later date, prohibited use of the library by those who were not of full age but do allow use by those of good moral character as well as respectable householders. A young clergyman ('good Mr Hemmingway') was given the job of selecting the books and organising the library: essentially fulfilling the job of library-keeper.[29] Appropriately, Mr Hemingway and Samuel Ferrand (the incumbent of All Saints parish church) are the first recorded users in March 1730. Approximately twenty-four loans were recorded during the first year that records were kept, and although recorded loan numbers fluctuate yearly, by 1735/6 the average two issues per month mostly involve various volumes of Rapin's *History* – a work which was to dominate loans over the next seventy years. Schoolmasters, clergy and tradesmen account for between three (1750) and twenty (1744)

27 This was after the death of her second husband, Revd Edward Mansell, sometime vicar of Ecclesfield. Mrs Mansell's father was George Westby of Gilthwaite.

28 Rotherham Central Library, Mansel Collection, MS catalogue and issue book. During the eighteenth century there are no loans recorded for the years 1733–5, 1739, 1755 and 1758–81.

29 Likely to be one Isaac Hemingway who had proceeded BA from Emmanuel College, Cambridge in 1722/3 and was made deacon at York in 1723. He became vicar of Attercliffe (near Sheffield) in 1729, though he died soon after in March 1730/1, aged twenty-nine.

book issues per year, comprising mainly Rapin's *History* volumes. In April 1746, the 1,000 families served by the parish church had cause to celebrate as news came through of the defeat of the Jacobite rebels and the fear of fighting in the town was removed.[30] The year 1746 was also when Samuel Walker and his brothers established the celebrated Masborough ironworks, adding much economic growth to the established collieries around Sheffield. Four new borrowers from 'Mrs Mansell's Parish Library' (as it had become known) are recorded for 1746 but only seven transactions are recorded for that year.

Library use was in evident decline after 1753, with only spasmodic loans until 1759; thereafter, only eight recorded loans span the period to 1776. An issue of Thomas Newton's *Dissertations on the prophecies* to Mr Tunnicliffe instigates a new period of loan activity in May 1782 and coincides with the appointment of a new vicar, William Harrison, who, as elsewhere, now had local power to administer the Poor Law. The loans of Thomas Newton's *On the prophecies* are relatively intense; all appear between May 1782 and September 1800 even though the work was first published in 1754. With the exception of 1786, loans never exceeded an average of one per month until loan records increase (to twenty-nine) in 1794, coinciding, as before, with the appointment of a new incumbent. Towards the end of the century some relatively intense borrowing occurred, with one borrower recording loans on forty-seven occasions between 1796 and 1800, and another with thirty-four loans over the same period. Most of these loans occurred on Sundays and lay users outnumbered clerical borrowers.[31]

Between 1730 and 1757, borrowers with the following occupations can be identified: barber (Thomas Carr); shoemaker (Joseph Mellor); glover (Thomas Scholey); and mason (John Watkinson). Further tentative identifications are Edward Bellamy, surgeon; Richard Bingley from a local family of mercers; William Buck, an attorney; Thomas Radley, possibly a glazier or joiner; and Joseph Ludlam, a locksmith. None was an extensive library user, some only recording a single loan, whilst others borrowed a handful of times over a relatively short period. The demand for historical reading was inevitably centred on the one work of general history available from the library: Rapin's *History of England*. These loans, predominantly to local tradesmen, took place over

30 Two of the local townsmen, called to York as jurymen in October 1746 for the trial of the rebels, were parish library borrowers at Rotherham: Benjamin Boomer and Richard Bingley.

31 It is possible that the upsurge in borrowing in the 1790s, evidenced here and elsewhere, is linked to an interest in millennianism (the biblical millennial reign of Christ), a recurring phenomenon of the last years of this and the previous century.

some nine separate years between 1730 and 1756; and all took place during the months of winter and spring (October to May). The Rapin volumes were most popular during 1744 when international events centred on France's declaration of war on Britain and Austria, and Frederick the Great's invasion of Bohemia. Issues of other historical works were modest by comparison to the 188 issues of Rapin between 1730 and 1800; Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* (five loans) and Bishop Burnet's *History of his own times* (ten loans during the period 1790–1800). The next most popular authors from recorded loans, were Thomas Stackhouse (with thirty-five of his fifty-one recorded loans being of his *History of the Bible*); Josephus (thirty-eight loans); William or Thomas Sherlock (thirty-four); Thomas Newton (thirty-four); Augustine Calmet (twenty-five); Jeremy Collier (twenty-four); and Pasquier Quesnal (twenty-three).

Elsewhere across England, a diversity of book bequests, both generous and thoughtful, were benefiting a number of local communities, the overt seriousness of purpose being more often than not associated with the needs of the clergy. In many cases however, there being no continuing endowment to develop the newly available library and no secure accommodation to help preserve it, the vital nucleus of potential which the benefaction provided, could be irretrievably damaged by wilful injury or neglect. This situation had been recognised early in the eighteenth century and some new-found security was offered through the Parochial Libraries Act of 1709 which encompassed and nominally protected these nascent town and country libraries. Otherwise, more often than not, small private libraries would be liable to dispersal on their owner's death, the books finding their way, via the auction rooms, back into yet other private collections. But private library ownership did not necessarily preclude community use. For whilst it is true that, well into the twentieth century, the grand private libraries of the landed classes, for example, were rarely used other than by those who lived in the great houses, at a lower social level more modest private libraries could, at the inclination of the owner, be opened up to a wider local readership – albeit to a relatively small circle of known individuals.

Revd Edward Bagshaw, vicar at Castleton, Derbyshire, from 1723 to 1769, opened up his own modest library for informal loans of books to neighbours and friends whilst briefly recording the transactions in his diary.[32] On 22 June 1747 Bagshaw sent Hal, his son, four pairs of stockings and a copy of *The whole duty of man* and four days later, 'Scot's Christian Life' in five volumes was loaned to the schoolmaster of Hope. The next day, the first volume of

32 Bagshaw diary: Sheffield City Archive Department, BAG.C.315.

Grotius' *Works* was loaned to Mr Bardsley and on 16 October Mrs Bagshaw was loaned 'Pamela in 4 volumes' (she returned it on 12 November). Although there is little remarkable about a pious clergyman circulating theology and works of piety to his parishioners, the appearance of Richardson's recently published *Pamela* is perhaps surprising, given that an evangelical interest in the education of the poor could well have meant an antipathy towards cards, theatre and such lighter forms of literature as *Pamela* represented.[33] Bagshaw, who records that he preached at Norton (Derbyshire) in September 1743, must have known Cavendish Nevile the then rector who also owned a substantial private library, which, when he died in 1749, in what was by then a familiar fashion, made a bequest of over 400 volumes, forming the nucleus of a new parish library at St James, Norton.[34]

The size and nature of a mid-eighteenth-century clergyman's library would vary according to individual means, idiosyncrasies and circumstances. The broad social gulf which existed between clergy at the extremes of the class levels and which permeated contemporary society would have sharpened that difference, as would the evident laxness which affected the Anglican church in the second half of the century. The poor country curate, existing on a meagre income, had little in common with a richly beneficed and perhaps scholarly younger son of a landed family, who, possibly holding a number of lucrative livings, moved with influence in social circles very different from those of his more humble counterpart. And although a library of books held as common stock (such as might be associated with a clerical or literary book club) might ameliorate such differences, individual wealth and inclination would clearly determine the nature of their respective personal libraries and also the extent to which others were given access. This social gulf between the rectory and the cottage widened during the early decades of the nineteenth century when many working men aspired to social mobility and looked for the knowledge which would enable them to 'get on'. Book clubs, circulating

33 One contemporary family's reaction to reading *Pamela* was that all 'wept sorely' over it. Nothing, it was thought, could be more moving, except apparently Richardson's *second* novel, *Clarissa Harlowe*, when in 1749, the same family agreed that 'there's no reading them without shedding a good many tears . . . it is so affecting and moving' (Pyle, *Memoirs*, 55).

34 A total of 447 volumes survive, almost all with the Nevile bookplate, and are housed in the basement of Sheffield City Library. Previous ownership of the books is frequently evident within the books themselves and the names of Thomas and John Dand, Garvis and Dorothy Nevile, John Farrer, Henry Humphys and W. Strode appear. The apparent expensiveness of acquiring books for parish use is illustrated by an inscription within a copy of Poole's *Synopsis* in the Norton library: of the total purchase cost of £6 9s 6d, approximately 8s 4d was spent on carriage costs (London to York) and 24s on binding.

libraries, lectures, literary and scientific societies, and eventually mechanics' institutes all flourished in the right conditions and neglected (or absorbed) the predominantly religious books within the parish, which may have previously served to satisfy a purely spiritual education purpose.

Revd John Bowle (1725–88) moved in higher social circles; he was a scholarly cleric, versed in French, Spanish and Italian having a particular interest and knowledge of Spanish literature (thereby known to his friends as *Don* Bowle). He held the vicarage at Idmiston, a village 6 miles to the north-east of Salisbury, until his death in 1788. In 1781 appeared his *Life of Cervantes*, in Spanish,[35] and he also made contributions to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, *Archaeologia*, Granger's *History*, Stevens's edition of Shakespeare and Wharton's *History of poetry*. Present interest centres on the manuscript catalogue of Bowle's private library wherein are recorded some 200 loans of books over the period 1750 to 1785.[36] The library was not predominantly devotional or theological but rather a literary collection encompassing contemporary British and European scholars with notable additional works of historical, linguistical and antiquarian interest. As such, it was not dissimilar to the library of contemporary clergyman James Bickham, rector of Loughborough (1761–85), who was, like Bowle, a friend of leading literary figures. Crucially in this context, both were financially secure.[37]

The first recorded loans from Bowle's library are dated 11 March 1750/1 and involve plays by Fletcher and John Marston, and were followed by issues of such diverse works as George Whetstone's *Rocke of regarde*; Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*; John Boyle's *Remarks on Swift*; Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones*; as well as works by Boccaccio, Rousseau and Voltaire. The poetical works of Milton, Thomas Parnell and Robert Dodsley were also loaned as were various editions of Shakespeare; Horace Walpole's *Royal and noble authors of England*; Lewis's *Life of Caxton*; and remarkably, the Wynkyn de Worde printing of *The golden legend*. Travel and topography are topics evidently no less popular here than elsewhere and include the voyages of Anson and Jouvin, and the travels of John Durant Breval, Jonas Hanway, Joseph Baretti and Henry Swinburne. Antiquarian subjects can be represented by loans of Walter Charleton's *Chorea gigantum* (Stonehenge); Dugdale's *Monasticon*; Randolph's *History of Feversham*;

35 It was unfavourably received in England (Joseph Baretti leading the attack) though well received in Spain.

36 British Library, Add. MS 30374, fols. 78v–81v.

37 Bickham was moved to bequeath his books to his successors at Loughborough, creating a somewhat literary parish library there: G. Wakeman, 'Loughborough parish library', *Book Collector* 25 (1976), 345–53. Bowle's own library was dispersed by fixed-price auction in January 1790: British Library 129.i.14(2).

Pierce's *History and antiquities of Sarum*; and works by Andrew Ducarel, John Stow and Edward Thwaite. Interestingly, numerous works in Spanish were borrowed, along with Coryate's *Crudities*; two books on witchcraft (by Scot and Hutchinson respectively) and Coke's *Institutes of the laws of England*. Entries which allocate loans to 'Jennings', 'Easton', 'Goddard of Tudworth' and Lord Folkstone probably all relate to individuals within the landed classes. A handful of others merit the suffix 'esquire': John Andrews, James Harris (possibly James Harris (1709–80), MP for Christchurch 1761–80 and author of a universal grammar); T. Hayward (possibly Thomas Haywood, d. 1779?), attorney at law of Hungerford and editor of the *British muse* (1738) and T. Branch Hollis. There is little evidence of loans to parishioners, with only brief references to 'Farmer Massey' and 'Councillor Poore' although many names, as yet unidentified, may indeed refer to parishioners. Finally, mention should be made of Horace Walpole, fourth earl of Orford (1717–97), son of the prime minister and owner of Strawberry Hill, who, in a brief entry for June 1764, is recorded by Bowle as borrowing 'Poetical Miscellanies . . . in which is Licia, or poems of love' along with 'the rising of the Crown of Rd. 3d. written by himself'. These loans took place just six months before Walpole published *The Castle of Otranto* in December 1764.

A sharp contrast exists between Revd Bowle's circulation of his library books within the higher social circles of society and the scope and use made of Revd John Griffiths' books a little later in the century in Wales. Griffiths was curate of Llandyssilio, a parish straddling the counties of Carmarthen and Pembroke.[38] His sizable private library, consisting of some 800 titles, was apparently made available locally over a substantial period of time between 1770 and 1796 – the period for which a loan record survives. Borrowers appear not to have been of any great social standing; it is the breadth of literature circulating that is remarkable given the circumstances and predominance of theological works.[39] Loans of the 'Compleat Farmer', 'a Riddle-book', 'a Cyphering Book', various volumes of the *Spectator*, 'a Play-book', 'a Gazater' and Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* attest the perceived entertainment value of the collection. Borrowers were no doubt local people and some have occupations appended to their loan entries: 'the schoolmaster at Fishguard'; 'the schoolmistress of Rhydwilim'; 'Mr Harris's curate'; a taylor [*sic*], a maid and a journeyman. To such people Griffiths also loaned various works of history: 'The War of

38 Llandyssilio was provided with a parish library proper by the Associates of Dr Bray in August 1766 but use may have been legitimately restricted to the clergy.

39 G. E. Evans, 'John Griffiths clericus: his curious register and diary', *Transactions of the Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society and Field Club* 7 (1906/7), 190, 192–3.

Alexander the Great', 'History of Greece', 'History of the late war', 'Monarchs of England', and 'Sieges and battles', in addition to numerous pamphlets, hymnbooks, sermons and Testaments.

Although nothing is known of the original library establishment at Witham, the use made of the books within this small Essex community defines the concept of a parish library in its most literal sense. Here the books are not overly scholarly – having probably no Latin or Greek texts – and recorded activity is not dominated by scholarly, antiquarian or clerical use. Indeed, the library would have had little to offer such readers, consisting as it apparently did of unexceptional devotional and expositional literature, albeit with a slight dissenting flavour. There is no evidence of *in situ* volumes deriving from earlier royal or episcopal decrees, neither do the books reflect the Associates' standard model library. Rather, the books suggest a private provenance, consisting of bequeathed books dating back to the later years of the seventeenth century. Witham would therefore be typical of the general upsurge in Anglican church libraries which took place during the first half of the eighteenth century. Elsewhere in Essex, large private library endowments had taken place at Chelmsford (1679) and at nearby Maldon (1704) whilst more modest bequests established small libraries at Hatfield Broadoak (*c.*1708), Sible Hedingham (1733) and Stansted Mountfitchet. However, in this area, it is only for Witham that a record of library loans survives.

The beginning of the extant twenty-one-year record of library loans (1757–78) at Witham[40] coincides, to within a year, with the commencement of the Seven Years War with France. It may not be coincidental that this small yet tangible display of bookish seriousness and piety coincided with a period of national emergency and ferment. For even within the remote and relatively isolated English countryside, there may have existed a strong reaction to contemporary national events – events which themselves had the power to create some local hardship and anxiety. During the period for which a record of loans survives, there were fifty-eight recorded borrowers, at least thirty-four of whom were women. A total of 185 individual loan visits are recorded. The most popular days of the week for library borrowing were Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays (in that order) and coincide with a likely pattern of church service attendance.

In the year the loan record begins (1757), there were fourteen, possibly fifteen, active borrowers (twenty volumes issued), rising to seventeen borrowers in 1758 (forty-one volumes) and 1759 (forty-seven volumes). There was then a marked

40 Essex Record Office, MS D/P 30/28/3.

and steady decline in recorded activity until 1768 when no library loans are recorded. Use briefly rose again, with six active borrowers in 1774 and eleven borrowers in 1775 (seventeen volumes issued), though a decline once again followed until 1778 when only one borrower is recorded. Only four borrowers – all women – appear in both periods of relatively high library activity. Two non-resident vicars held the living at Witham during the period covered by the loan record and unsurprisingly neither appears in the register.[41] Elizabeth Darby is recorded as using the books the most frequently, with eighteen visits (twenty-two loans) over forty-six months, whilst Thomas Falsam borrowed his thirteen books over a period of ten years. Twenty-five individuals (43 per cent) are recorded as library borrowers on only one occasion, whilst a further fourteen (24 per cent) are recorded only twice. Samuel Skynner ('in ye Workhouse') borrowed the popular, then anonymous, work *The whole duty of man*[42] on Christmas Eve 1758, along with two further works in February 1759.

At Maidstone by contrast, there existed by 1716 a small collection of twenty-three works (thirty-seven volumes) within the parish church; a situation which was transformed some twenty years later, when Revd Samuel Weller was successful in acquiring for the town a substantial portion of the library of the late Dr Thomas Bray. Weller proudly printed a catalogue in 1736 listing some 681 volumes which were probably securely and appropriately housed in the room over the vestry within the parish church. However, it was Weller's successor, John Denne, who was evidently responsible for the commencement of an important loans register starting in 1755.[43]

From a total of 121 borrowers between 1755 and 1800, at least thirty-one (and possibly forty-two) can be identified as lay persons. Some twenty-six borrowers were women, although seventeen of these are recorded as borrowers on only one or two occasions. The exceptions were Miss Weller (twelve loans, 1759–60); Mrs Lewis (seven loans, 1764–7); Miss Mary Turner (six loans, 1788–91); Mrs May (five loans, 1766–88); Mrs Crew (four loans, 1766–8); Mrs Parker senior (four loans in 1799); Miss Holmes (three loans, 1788–9); Mrs Marshall (three loans, 1755–7); and Mrs Weekes (three loans in 1765). Miss Weller's relatively intense borrowing involves twelve loans over a thirteen-month period (January 1759 to February 1760) during which period no fewer than ten loans were made of Thomas Salmon's *Modern history*. Her first recorded loan is of Sir George

41 Both George Sayer and Lilly Butler held the living *in commendam* and, coincidentally, both died abroad.

42 Written by Richard Allestree.

43 Maidstone Museums and Art Gallery, Maidstone parochial library, MS borrowers' book. The listing begins in August 1755 and the last dated entry is 21 October 1871, by which time the books had been moved out of the parish church into the museum.

Wheeler's *Journey into Greece* (London, 1682) and her last, that of Bernard Picart's *Religious ceremonies*. The majority of Miss Weller's loans took place on either a Wednesday or a Friday, though Tuesdays and Saturdays were also used. The ten recorded loans of the *Modern history* occurred during five winter months: October 1759 to February 1760. Mrs Eastchurch had also borrowed Picart's *Religious ceremonies* in November 1758, not returning it until 23 February 1760, when Miss Weller in turn borrowed it, three days later. Similarly, Miss Weller's loan of Wheeler's *Greece* during January 1759 was followed by a similar issue to Mrs Bellendine two months later.

Further evidence of the popularity of Salmon's *History* with women borrowers at Maidstone is provided by at least ten other female readers. Single issues of the following works were also recorded by women: Camden's *Britannia*; Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*; John Savage's *Compleat history of Germany* (London, 1702) and Richard Grafton's '*Chronicle*'.[44] Other, non-historical works borrowed by these women included the *Book of homilies*, Prideaux's *Connections*, Foxe's *Book of martyrs* and Burkitt *On the New Testament*.

Reference or casual reading *in situ* may well have occurred, albeit unrecorded. Such detail as we do have tells us something about the reading interests of certain women, whose education generally at this time has been described as shallow and haphazard.[45] At Maidstone, the evident demand for works of history and topography is somewhat inevitably centred on Thomas Salmon's *Modern history* and on the few other works of a similar nature which were available within this predominantly theological parish library.

Overall, from August 1755 to December 1800 a total of some 552 volumes were recorded as issues from the Maidstone library, by virtue of 402 individual transaction entries involving as many as 121 borrowers. During the first six years of recorded issues, between one (1760) and twelve (1756) new borrowers were attracted to the library each year, although the number of volumes issued each year never exceeded the forty recorded loans of 1756 (the first full year of loans to be recorded). These forty loans were achieved by a group of seventeen active borrowers; again, a level of activity never again recorded as reached during the eighteenth century. In 1766 the highest number of women borrowers in any one year was recorded (four out of nine, accounting for eighteen issues), although after 1766, recorded loans average fewer than one per month until 1772 in which year, for the first time, no issues at all are recorded.

44 The work thus abbreviated could refer to either the author's edition of Hardyng's *Chronicle* (London, 1543), the author's own *Abridgement of the chronicles of England* (London, 1562) or the author's *Chronicle at large* (London, 1568).

45 G. E. Mingay, *English landed society in the eighteenth century* (London, 1963), 131.

After 1778, Sunday borrowings increased and are typified by barge-builder John Cutbush,[46] who borrowed two volumes of Salmon's *History* and two volumes of Camden's *Britannia* between October 1781 and June 1790. The latter was apparently not returned until seven years later and this may say something about the lax state of control into which the library had descended. In 1810, when John Finch the assistant curate recatalogued the library, he found many volumes missing or irretrievably damaged, including the two copies of an old polyglot Bible (recorded as borrowed in 1759, 1770 and 1773) and an illuminated manuscript Bible which apparently survived, being loaned out in 1840 and again in 1842.

Across England, many parochial and small, endowed religious libraries suffered a decline in use in the new century. In an era of burgeoning secular self-education and growing demand for useful, practical information, such libraries often suffered from multiple neglect. Often without endowment income, adequate accommodation and suffering from the single-benefaction effect of obsolescence, many small parish collections fell into disuse.

However, in Scotland, James Kirkwood's ambitious scheme to establish free, public lending libraries in every parish (through a levy on the parish) had been published in 1699 with a much more liberal remit than Bray had instigated in England and Wales. Books for promoting improvements in the arts and sciences as well as religious books were to be made available at no charge in order that learning might be advanced amongst the populace. Unfortunately there is little hard evidence of the use made of the approximately seventy-seven libraries distributed across the Highlands and Islands in the first decade of the eighteenth century. It seems that somewhat inevitably neglect followed the lack of maintenance and by the nineteenth century most had fallen into disuse.

Certain other small religious and self-improvement libraries which had already been established did continue to thrive in the new century: at Innerpeffray, Perthshire, loans from a largely religious collection show a threefold increase between 1801 and 1850 (4,533 loans) compared to the previous half-century period (1,483 loans). It was founded in the seventeenth century through a single benefaction (the will of David Drummond in 1680), not as a parochial library but as a library for the encouragement of students, and books had been loaned from 1747. The library was added to and housed in purpose-built accommodation by 1776 and continued to be used in this sparsely populated rural area well into the mid-nineteenth century. Of the 287 borrowers recorded

46 Barges then sailed three times a week from Maidstone carrying hops to London.

before 1800, only eleven were women and loans averaged only two volumes per month.[47] After 1801, opening days increased from monthly to weekly and then even to successive days. However, of the forty-one most popular works borrowed between 1801 and 1850, only fourteen were religious titles, with sermons by Tillotson, Clark, Atterbury and Sherlock being most popular. The most popular book overall, according to recorded loans, was William Robertson's *History of Charles V*.

Itinerating libraries, consisting of fifty mostly religious books, were introduced into East Lothian by a Haddington minister, Samuel Brown, in 1817. By 1830 there were approximately fifty such collections circulating every two years between the villages in the area and a number of other similar itinerating schemes operated elsewhere in Scotland. In the towns, the establishment of libraries attached to churches thrived with at least five church libraries in Aberdeen in 1822, including one associated with the Roman Catholic church. Few of the small, largely religious parish libraries that were set up in Scotland during the last two decades of the eighteenth century – such as those in Campbeltown, Linlithgow and Tranent – thrived or even survived into mid-century. Even the library put into the care of Robert Burns at Dunscore (the library of the Monkland Friendly Society) in 1788/9 and its close neighbour at Closeburn failed to succeed as subscription book clubs.

Although there had been only one true Bray library in Scotland – Ballachulish, Argyllshire – the Associates of Dr Bray continued their work in England and Wales during the 1840s by establishing almost forty new libraries. The impetus was soon lost however during the next decade with the passing of the 1850 Public Libraries Act.

The movement to acquire books and form small libraries by philanthropic groups appears to have become increasingly utilitarian and secular during the new century, manifesting itself in the burgeoning number of circulating, self-improvement and book-society libraries. In England, individual bequests such as those at Elham, Kent (1809), Castleton, Derbyshire (1817), and Bewdley, Worcestershire (1819) kept faith with the parochial library tradition by bequeathing, in some cases, large collections of religious books for use of the local clergy and other 'respectable inhabitants'. But parochial libraries could be too theological for popular tastes and the trend was now somewhat inevitably towards philanthropic library foundations, sometimes supported with a small subscription fee and often containing predominantly secular literature. In Scotland, at Lochwinnoch, a 'Working Man's Library' was established to

47 P. Kaufman, *Libraries and their users* (London, 1969), 153–62.

provide all kinds of books on all kinds of subjects – in direct contrast to that offered by the two parish libraries already there. The Establishment intention, by way of comparison, was to help satisfy this spirit of self-improvement whilst still promoting holiness of life and an alternative to the alehouse, through predominantly religious reading material.

Significantly therefore, after 1800, the forces of the SPCK, the Religious Tract Society (RTS) and the Sunday School Union (SSU) combined to resist the rise in secular and irreligious literature, and consequent bad behaviour, through organised religious education, one tool of which was to be the active deployment of lending libraries.

On 16 October 1811, a meeting of the SPCK founded a new society that would address itself to the now parlous state of national religious education: the National Society for the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church throughout England and Wales. After establishing a central school in London, which included teacher training, a newly named Committee (the British and Foreign School Society) distributed large quantities of religious books at subsidised prices, as well as making free grants of books where necessary. Both Scotland and Ireland also received support. Around the same time, in a publication of 1817,[48] Revd E. W. Grinfield of Bath suggested lending libraries as appropriate to both national and parochial schools, and by 1831 the SPCK was indeed producing new publications and creating many lending libraries in association with those schools. In 1835, 38,971 such schools existed; 2,438 of the English schools had libraries and thirty-three of those in Wales. In one comprehensive distribution exercise, Revd Reynold Gideon Bouyer, as archdeacon of Northumberland, established libraries of SPCK publications in each of the ninety-two parishes in his purview; the scheme involved up to 30,000 volumes and was carried out entirely at his own expense.

The main impetus for the SPCK was the need to combat what was perceived to be the spate of secular and blasphemous publications flooding villages and towns. By 1820, the SPCK was lending books to parishioners from over 800 libraries across England although one-third of these had only very recently been established. Thirty years later, in conjunction with the RTS, between 150 and 200 libraries were being created or assisted each year. Between 1832 and 1849, the RTS distributed over 4,000 'libraries' – consisting of approximately 100 SPCK books – to churches, chapels and Sunday or day-schools, especially

48 *Bulwarks of the English Church . . . to which are added some observations on the origin and process of parochial libraries for the use of the common people* (Bath, 1820).

in what were designated 'destitute districts'. Those receiving the libraries had to undertake to superintend them and pay part of their value but other suitable books could be added.

In 1834, the Sunday School Union had only 2,000 libraries in its 10,000 schools and so the following year began a programme of library distribution (consisting of collections of 100–200 books), which established over 2,000 libraries during the next fifteen years in schools attended by over 300,000 students. In one year alone (1849), the SSU Depository issued 9,710,666 tracts and 4,040,793 children's books. Other books were also vetted for inclusion in the SSU libraries and by 1850 some additional 800 books per year were being sanctioned.[49]

Mechanics' institutes, self-help groups and scientific or industrial-related libraries were all pragmatic developments reflecting the wider changes taking place within society as a whole. Access to books and loan procedures, which had developed out of easy-going serendipity, became more formalised around ownership and borrower status, with regulations being imposed for the proper care and circulation of the books themselves. Many small parish libraries continued to suffer neglect and decay where the original benefaction failed to match or keep pace with the aspirations and needs of the immediate community; other parish book collections were subsumed into larger libraries to which the original target community might retain access but could lose fidelity to the original purpose and ultimately lose ownership itself.

49 T. H. Laqueur, *Religion and respectability: Sunday schools and working class culture 1780–1850* (New Haven, 1976), 117–18.

22

Books and universities

PETER FRESHWATER

Universities and university towns

The century before 1850 saw the universities of the United Kingdom and Ireland and their libraries develop from the medieval institutions that they still essentially were to the modern institutions that are still recognisable in the twenty-first century. Including what have been described variously as the Enlightenment (especially in Scotland), the ages of reason, of reform and of revolution, it was a period of enormous change in the world of education, and the serious beginning of the continuous change that has lasted for over 200 years. This study focuses on the libraries of universities and university colleges themselves, but also considers briefly the effect on those libraries and their users of other kinds of library nearby. Particularly interesting is the emergence of increasing demands for improved access to libraries and their collections by students as well as professors, and the early development of services to readers.

The university towns in 1750 were the same as they had been in 1650. England had two, Cambridge and Oxford; Scotland had four, Aberdeen (King's College and Marischal College), Edinburgh, Glasgow and St Andrews; Ireland had one, Dublin (Trinity College, University of Dublin); Wales had none. One hundred years later these had increased and were set to increase further. By 1850 England had new universities in London and Durham. The increasing levels of literacy, education and social reform in the industrial cities of the midlands and the north of England, as well as London, were contributing to the founding of colleges for the professions – doctors, teachers and nonconformist ministers – as well as working men's colleges. Wales had a theological college at Lampeter, with normal colleges (colleges of education) in Bala and Bangor. Ireland had new universities or colleges in Belfast, Cork and Galway, as well as in Dublin. Only Scotland had the same number of university towns, but it had already had a broader base of universities than the rest of the British Isles. Even here,

professional training colleges in education, theology and veterinary medicine, as well as art colleges and technical schools, had been founded in Edinburgh and Glasgow. They were founded independently of the universities with which some of them would amalgamate during the twentieth century, bringing with them substantial and specialist libraries in their own subjects. Others would become universities in their own right.

The first, and greater, part of this period is still described as the Enlightenment or the age of reason. Surprisingly, unlike continental Europe (especially Germany), no new universities were founded in the British Isles until after the Enlightenment had run its course; and then only one, University College London (1826), was truly established on principles of reason. Downing College, Cambridge (1800), the first new college at Cambridge for over a century, was founded by bequest after thirty-five years of family litigation. It limited its clerical fellows to two out of sixteen and stated in its charter that its objects were to produce 'students in law, physic, and other useful arts and learning', thus showing signs of the changing spirit of the times. The next three university colleges, however, were founded firmly in the bosom of the Church of England. St David's College was established as a theological college in Lampeter in 1822. It received its royal charter in 1829 but was not empowered to award its own BD degrees until 1852 or BA degrees until 1865; it was eventually incorporated into the University of Wales in the early 1960s. King's College London was founded in the Strand in 1832 by the Church of England to counter University College London ('the godless institution in Gower Street'). University College, Durham was also founded in 1832, by the last of the prince bishops of Durham, William van Mildert, to ensure the proper education of the established clergy in the north of England. In the same year a School of Medicine and Surgery was established in nearby Newcastle upon Tyne, and was soon awarding University of Durham degrees (it later joined with Armstrong College to found King's College, Newcastle, and from 1963 the college formed the basis of the separate University of Newcastle upon Tyne). The University of London, which incorporated University College and King's College, received its charter in 1836. Durham received its charter in 1837.[1]

In Scotland a bequest from John Anderson (1726–96), Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, established Anderson's Institution in 1796 as 'a place of useful learning' for everyone regardless of class or status; it would eventually become the University of Strathclyde. The Edinburgh School of Arts for the Better Education for the Mechanics of Edinburgh was

1 J. Mountford, *British universities* (London, 1966).

established in 1821, and would become Heriot-Watt University. Three non-sectarian 'Queen's Colleges' in Ireland were established by royal charter in 1845 in Belfast, Cork and Galway, and were linked together as the Queen's University of Ireland in 1850; the Catholic University of Ireland was established in Dublin in 1851.

Collections

Statements as to surviving data on the size and extent of academic libraries during the period are scanty and difficult to find, but such data as have survived do provide a basic framework for reference. Thomas Hearne noted in 1714 that the Bodleian Library housed 30,169 printed volumes and 5,916 volumes of manuscripts.[2] By 1817 this had risen to an estimated 150,000–160,000 printed books and 10,000–12,000 manuscripts.[3] In 1849 Bodley's Librarian reported to the House of Commons that the library then comprised some 220,000 printed volumes and 21,000 manuscripts.[4] By comparison the library of All Souls College, Oxford was estimated to be 12,000 volumes in 1754, and 14,750 in 1778.[5] In 1830 Cambridge University Library was thought to contain 100,000 volumes.[6] The Fellows' Library of Trinity College, Cambridge was reckoned to consist of about 16,000 volumes in 1740, shortly before it was joined by the 1,235 volumes of the Scholars' Library; the college library as a whole was estimated to be about 25,000 volumes in the early years of the nineteenth century, and about 35,000 volumes in 1850.[7]

In contrast, Glasgow University Library is believed to have numbered 5,600 volumes in 1760. This had risen to 'upwards of 30,000' in 1826 and to over 136,000 in 1888, plus the 13,000 in the Hunterian and 7,000 in the Divinity Hall libraries.[8] In 1838 the size of Edinburgh University Library was estimated at 63,000 volumes (printed volumes is implied);[9] it too had several separate class libraries. Marischal College, Aberdeen reported to the Commission on the Universities of Scotland in 1827 that its library had about 11,000 volumes.[10]

2 W. D. Macray, *Annals of the Bodleian Library, Oxford*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1890), 190.
3 *Ibid.*, 310. 4 *Ibid.*, 352.
5 Sir E. Craster, *The history of All Souls College Library* (London, 1971), 85.
6 C. E. Sayle, *Annals of Cambridge University Library, 1278–1900* (Cambridge, 1916), 120.
7 P. Gaskell and R. Robson, *The library of Trinity College, Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1971), 25–6, 33.
8 W. P. Dickson, *The Glasgow University Library* (Glasgow, 1888), 31–2.
9 S. M. Simpson, 'The history of the library 1837–1939', in J. R. Guild and A. Law (eds.), *Edinburgh University Library 1580–1980* (Edinburgh, 1982), 95–114.
10 *Evidence, oral and documentary, taken and received by the Commissioners . . . for visiting the universities of Scotland* (Aberdeen, 1837), vol. 4, 304. The evidence was taken ten years before the report was actually published.

The new universities had to build up their libraries from scratch. Anderson's Institution (later University) began its collections with Anderson's own library of 2,000 volumes,[11] and quickly established separate libraries for the popular mechanics and medical classes.[12] By 1829 University College London had established legal, medical and other basic collections, but its staff were able to rely on the proximity of the British Museum for rare and expensive research books.[13] It managed, however, to acquire a number of significant collections by gift during its first twenty-five years. King's College library was slow to start building up its collections. The University of London, an amorphous body which received its charter in 1836, found itself in 1838 the possessor of a gift of books for which it had no accommodation. It created a library committee in 1839 to oversee the collections, but was not able to offer a true library service until 1870. The story of the founding of libraries in the constituent colleges of the National University of Ireland belongs elsewhere.

Legal deposit

Under the terms of the Copyright Act 1709, all universities, together with Sion College (a college in the ecclesiastical sense rather than a university) and the Royal Library in London, and the Faculty of Advocates in Edinburgh, were entitled to claim one copy of every book printed in the United Kingdom and entered in the Stationers' Register. The facility had already caused a storm in Aberdeen, where the younger university (if a university indeed it was), Marischal College, had tried to claim at least some of the books which the older university, King's College, had assumed were destined for its library. King's College won the long legal battle in 1738, but the matter flared up again from time to time until, in 1814, King's College reaffirmed the decree of the Court of Session that the Stationer's Hall books lodged in its library and clearly identified were accessible by members of Marischal College at all times.[14]

After the Act of Union and the Copyright Act of 1801, Dublin also had two legal deposit copyright libraries, Trinity College and King's Inns. However, the latter's legal deposit privilege was removed by the Copyright Act of 1836,

11 S. Y. Tse, 'Radical Clydeside: the Andersonian, 1796–1964', *Library Review* 26 (1977), 178–83.

12 J. Butt, *John Anderson's legacy: the University of Strathclyde and its antecedents 1796–1996* (East Linton, 1996), 26.

13 B. Naylor, 'University of London libraries', in D. H. Stam, *International dictionary of library histories* (Chicago, 2001), vol. 2, 844–52 (here 851).

14 J. R. Pickard, *A history of King's College library, Aberdeen until 1860* (Aberdeen, 1987), vol. 2, 176–204; vol. 3, 44.

leaving Trinity College as the single legal deposit library for the whole of Ireland until after the First World War.[15]

Most universities adopted the legal deposit facility as the primary means of acquiring modern books, and reduced the perceived need for allocating adequate funds for current purchases. The success of this strategy, the extent to which universities used the legal deposit facility, and the enthusiasm with which they regarded it, varied considerably between the universities themselves, and fluctuated at different periods. In 1818 the Bodleian Library reviewed the books from Stationers' Hall which it was rejecting, and realised that some of the rejections would have been better retained; thereafter its policy was one of all-inclusiveness.[16] The evidence given in 1827 to the Commission on the universities of Scotland by both staff and students indicated that the reliance on the facility was quite unsatisfactory, and that additional funding was required, especially for additional copies of textbooks and of current scientific periodicals.

The number of books claimed depended on commitment by members of the universities to seek out newly published titles, and the appointment of satisfactory agents in London to procure the books at Stationers' Hall and to dispatch them to the libraries. Most universities appointed agents, unofficial if not official, within five years of the Act's coming into force. Robert Henderson, Librarian of Edinburgh University, commissioned George Ridpath, an Edinburgh graduate and a Scots pamphleteer working in London, to expedite the despatch of books from Stationers' Hall to the college, since the professors were complaining that the Advocates' Library had already received theirs. It would be another eleven years before the college appointed an Edinburgh bookseller, George Stewart, as its first official agent, and it was not until 1754 that it preferred to appoint a London agent in the printer William Strahan.[17] Glasgow, however, seems not to have expressed the need for such an agent until 1768, and appointed the bookseller John Murray in 1774.[18] Cambridge did not appoint an agent, but simply accepted the copies of books gathered up for them by the clerk at Stationers' Hall, to whom it paid a fee for the service. Many of these books were thought to be unsuitable for retention by the university which, from 1751, sold rejected volumes in order to purchase non-copyright books. The university soon passed to a local bookseller the task of opening

15 Cf. C. M. Miller, 'The effect of the loss of copyright privilege on Glasgow University Library, 1790–1858', *Library History* 7 (1985), 45–57.

16 Macray, *Annals*, 302–3.

17 S. M. Simpson, 'An early copyright list in Edinburgh University Library', *Bibliotheck* 4 (1965), 202–4.

18 Dickson, *Glasgow University Library*, 13, note.

the Stationers' Hall packages and selecting what to retain and what to sell, in return for credit on his bills to the University Library. This arrangement continued until 1812, when the University won a legal case against a bookseller who had not delivered a book to Stationers' Hall, after which it clearly no longer behoved a library of legal deposit thus to dispose of its Stationers' Hall books.[19]

A new Copyright Act of 1814 was caused by a pamphlet war at Cambridge on gaps in the Stationers' Hall collections in the University Library.[20] The act enabled all deposit libraries to retain the facility, but only the British Museum was entitled to receive a copy of the best edition of each work; the others had to demand the titles that they wished to receive, and then only as copies of the largest impression, regardless of quality. However, publishers were required to deliver the requisite number of copies to the Stationers' Hall warehouse keeper, who was then required to distribute them within a month of receipt; or, if they preferred, they could deliver the copies directly to libraries or their agents.

The privilege continued until 1837 when, under the next Copyright Act, 1836, the universities who could continue to claim were limited to Oxford, Cambridge and Dublin, together with the British Museum library in England and the Advocates' Library in Scotland in their role of national libraries. The Act commuted the legal deposit privilege for the universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and St Andrews, and for Sion College, to an annual grant from HM Treasury to each. The grants varied considerably, and reflected the limited extent to which each university had claimed its legal deposit copies. Aberdeen (both universities together) received £320 per annum, Edinburgh £575, St Andrews £630 and Glasgow £707.[21] The level of the Aberdeen grant, which continued to rankle for another fifty years, was eventually redressed in 1889 when the sum was doubled to £640.[22]

The new universities of London and Durham both received their charters that year, but the legal deposit privilege was not extended to them or to Anderson's University in Glasgow. The increasing numbers of newly established universities undoubtedly contributed to the rationalisation of the privilege under the Copyright Act 1836; such rationalisation had already been sought, unsuccessfully, by the publishers under the 1814 Act. In the wake of the new Act the

19 J. C. T. Oates, *Cambridge University Library: a historical sketch* (Cambridge, 1975), 19.
20 D. McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library* (Cambridge, 1986), vol. 2, 394–412.
21 J. W. Scott, 'The development of British university libraries', in A. T. Milne (ed.), *Librarianship and literature: essays in honour of Jack Pafford* (London, 1970), 58–70.
22 Pickard, *King's College library*, vol. 3, 205.

surviving copyright libraries made even more strenuous efforts than before to secure their legal deposit copies.[23]

Acquisition by gift and bequest

History tends to record and acknowledge the great gifts to university libraries, and many spectacular collections have thus been saved for posterity. Much of the wealth of historic libraries, however, derives from a constant succession of smaller gifts and bequests, from the single treasured item from a personal collection, to the bequest of handfuls of books and papers to an alma mater. Certainly many titles were duplicated, but the contents of each collection, and the annotation or grangerisation of individual volumes, has its own tale to tell.

Some gifts were made simultaneously to several university libraries, if not across the board. The Scottish universities received, as royal gifts, sets of Rymer's *Foedera* (London, 1704–8), the classic and seminal collection of treaties and other documents of international law. At Edinburgh the gift may have been connected with the establishment of the Professorship of Public Law and the Law of Nature and Nations by royal decree in 1707, but the subjects of the Chairs and the books, as well as the timing of the gifts, were really to mark the Union of Parliaments in 1707. In 1806, the Board of Directors of the East India Company presented choice items from the captured library of Tipu, Sultan of Mysore, to the Bodleian and to Aberdeen and Edinburgh universities, which had been uplifted after the fall of Seringapatam and the death of the sultan in 1799. At the same time they presented Aberdeen University Library with a copy of *Authentic memoirs of Tippoo Sultaun*, by An officer in the East India Service (London, 1799). Further gifts were made by the Company in the late 1830s, perhaps in the forlorn hope of persuading universities' members of parliament to vote for renewing the Company's trading monopoly in 1838. In the event the monopoly was withdrawn.

At Oxford, 1821 saw the gift to the Bodleian Library of Edmund Malone's magnificent collection of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama by Malone's brother, Lord Sunderlin. Revd Osborne Wight bequeathed 190 volumes of printed and manuscript music in 1801, and filled a significant gap in the Bodleian's collections thereby. Richard Gough bequeathed his vast library of 5,700 volumes of topography, Nordic and Anglo-Saxon literature, and natural and ecclesiastical history in 1809 to the Bodleian Library, which set aside a separate room in which to house it. On the death in 1834 of the antiquary and

23 F. Lerner, *The story of libraries* (New York, 1998), 130.

Keeper of Manuscripts in the British Museum Francis Douce, the Bodleian received his magnificent collections of printed books, charters, manuscripts, prints and drawings, and coins, while his own unpublished papers went to the British Museum. Anticipation of this collection may have contributed to the lack of enthusiasm for the proposal in 1829 to purchase the Bowyer collection of prints and drawings, as well as the latter's exaggerated price. The Sutherland collection of prints and drawings, begun by Alexander Hendras Sutherland in 1795 and continued by his wife after his death in 1820, was gifted to the Bodleian Library in 1837 and deposited in 1839.[24] The Freman (*sic*) bequest to All Souls College, Oxford, in 1774 included a large collection of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century pamphlets formed by Dr Thomas Leigh, vicar of Bishop's Stortford in the 1680s.

Cambridge had received the gift of John Moore's library, known as the King's or Royal Library of the university of Cambridge, in 1715, which almost trebled the size of the University Library. By the early 1750s, however, the university was still struggling to house and catalogue this magnificent collection, and it appears to have acquired no more major collections until the second half of the nineteenth century. The gift did attract many smaller gifts to the library, including a number of major medieval manuscripts such as the ninth- or tenth-century Book of Deer, and the eighth-century Bede's *Ecclesiastical history* with the *Book of Cædmon*, also eighth century, and the thirteenth-century *Life of King Edward the Confessor* with copious illustrations.

In Scotland, for much of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, most of the individual donations were of small numbers of books, frequently of single titles presented by their authors, or of items acquired by alumni in later life. William Thomson, an Edinburgh alumnus, bequeathed a collection of 745 mineralogical and medical books to his university library in 1808.[25] The great private collections at this time either stayed in the possession of their owners or their families until much later, or went to found institutional libraries outwith the universities, such as those of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland (1780) and the Royal Society of Edinburgh (1783). Smaller collections, usually working libraries, were gifted or bequeathed to their universities by individual academics. Charles Mackie, first Professor of History at Edinburgh, bequeathed his private collection of 151 historical works by European writers of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, thus greatly improving the University

24 Macray, *Annals*, *passim*.
25 C. P. Finlayson and S. M. Simpson, 'The history of the library 1710–1837', in Guild and Law, *Edinburgh University Library*, 55–6.

Library's meagre history collections.[26] After the withdrawal of the legal deposit facility, however, donations of larger collections began to increase. Professor James Bentley bequeathed his oriental library of 140 volumes to King's College, Aberdeen, in 1846.[27] Glasgow in 1847 received the bequest of the Smith Collection of some 350 volumes from the Glasgow bookseller John Smith of Crutherland; this included sets of early record society volumes and 118 composite volumes of Glasgow pamphlets.[28]

Durham University Library began in 1833 with a gift of 160 volumes from the university's founder, Bishop William van Mildert, which were shelved in Bishop John Cosin's library to which the new university had access, but growth was slow, and its next major acquisition by bequest was the library of Dr Martin Routh of Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1854. Because of its early and close association with two neighbouring independent libraries, the university's library heritage is thus deceptively older than its foundation.[29]

Acquisition by purchase

Oxford and Cambridge college libraries, dependent as they were on their own endowments and such current funds as the librarians could wring from their colleagues, were not by and large able to purchase sufficient books to meet their increasing needs, especially during the lean years following the Napoleonic wars. This therefore tended to be a period of consolidation, rather than expansion, for college library collections.

By contrast, the Bodleian Library, probably the wealthiest library in the UK, was able to purchase in 1805 the collection of 570 volumes of classical and oriental manuscripts assembled by the late James Philip D'Orville of Amsterdam for £1,025. The librarianship of Revd Bulkeley Bandinel was marked by increased availability of funds for purchase, which resulted in the acquisition of many significant private collections, often from abroad. These included a huge collection of some 43,000 printed academic dissertations, mostly German, in 1827 (£332), Rabbi David Oppenheimer's Hebrew Library from Hamburg in 5,000 volumes in 1829 (£2,080), valuable parts of Richard Heber's library in 1834, the collections of oriental manuscripts assembled by the explorer James Bruce of Kinnaird in 1843 (£1,000) and by Sir William Ouseley in 1842 (£2,000), and

26 Edinburgh University Library Gallery of Benefactors, 'Charles Mackie', http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk/lib/about/bgallery/Gallery/records /seventeen/mackie.html.
27 Pickard, *King's College library*, vol. 3, 138.
28 Dickson, *Glasgow University Library*, 21.
29 D. Pearson, 'Durham University Library', in D. H. Stam, *International dictionary of library histories* (Chicago, 2001), vol. 1, 299–301.

another Hebrew collection from Hamburg, the library of Heimann Joseph Michael, in 1848 (£1,030).

Much the poorer of the two ancient universities of England, by the 1820s Cambridge had to resort to increasing its purchasing funds, as Oxford and the Scottish universities had done, by a levy on its users. John Lodge's term of office as *bibliothecarius* was marked by a vigorous increase in the availability of funds for the purchase of books and for binding them. No vast large collections were purchased, but the library's holdings were extended by many significant items bought at auction sales, locally as well as in London.[30]

Edinburgh University Library had no funds with which to purchase specifically antiquarian and scholarly collections until 1841, when the Senatus allocated £400 per annum from the bequest to the university by General John Reid. By this time the university's legal deposit status had been withdrawn and replaced by an annual Treasury grant for library purchases of £575; this was, however, a welcome and significant addition to the annual purchasing grant of some £350 from the insolvent City Council in 1838. The grants to the other Scottish universities greatly increased their purchasing powers too.

Cabinets of curiosities

Such museums as had been established in the universities were mostly of natural history specimens. Edinburgh had an early one, established by Sir Andrew Balfour some time before 1689 and supplemented by Sir Robert Sibbald in 1697, which survived with occasional lapses until its remaining collections were transferred to the new Museum of Science and Art (later the Royal Scottish Museum) in 1861. However, the cabinet of curiosities was still accepted as a normal integral part of a well-found private or college library in the late eighteenth century, and was held to be a study resource which supplemented the collections of books and manuscripts. Most university and college libraries thus assumed a museum role until well into the nineteenth century. Collections of curiosities consisted especially of pictures (paintings, drawings and prints), antiquities (mostly coins and sculpted and engraved stones) and scientific instruments, but extended to skeletons and other anatomical specimens, skulls and other relics of the famous and infamous, and ethnological collections brought back by explorers and travellers. Indeed, these collections tended to draw visitors to libraries, and to remain more vividly in their memories as well

30 McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, vol. 2, 457.

as their memoirs than the finest manuscripts or printed books.[31] The opening of the remodelled library at St Andrews in the 1760s provided the opportunity to create a university museum within it. This lasted until the museum collection was transferred to the St Andrews Literary and Philosophical Society in 1838.[32]

The Hunterian Museum at the University of Glasgow was opened in 1807 to house Dr William Hunter's anatomical and antiquarian collections, his collections of manuscripts being deposited in the University Library.[33]

Arrangement of collections

Even in 1850 modern library classification was still some twenty years in the future, but the formal classification of knowledge was well under way; classification is, after all, an innate human activity. The science of taxonomy as a branch of natural philosophy was just beginning in earnest in 1750. Linnaeus had set out his order of natural genera in 1739. Denis Diderot published his *Encyclopédie* in Paris between 1751 and 1780 with subjects arranged in a carefully classified order. The Edinburgh printer William Smellie, however, organised his *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1768–71) in alphabetical order.

Most libraries were shelved in some kind of subject arrangement, but most locations were fixed and related to the cases and rooms in which the books were housed. The rational expansion of any subject sequence required extensive physical rearrangement. Many, if not all, volumes in the expanded sections needed to be given new shelf-marks or press-marks, and catalogues, be they printed or manuscript, laboriously updated. However, early attempts at classified arrangements of collections, with related subdivisions of basic divisions, can be found in libraries like that of Anderson's University, divided into four divisions of theology, philosophy, literature and history which were themselves subdivided and further subdivided again; philosophy included what later generations would call the social sciences, physical and natural sciences, and the arts.[34] These four divisions correspond closely to the five divisions set out by Revd Thomas Hartwell Horne for the British Museum library in 1824 – theology and religion, philosophy, arts and trades, history, and literature – with

31 P. B. Freshwater, 'Collecting beyond the book: Edinburgh University Library and the earliest university museums', *University of Edinburgh Journal* 39 (1999/2000), 237–42.

32 M. Simpson, '"You have not seen such a one in England": St Andrews University Library as an eighteenth-century mission statement', *Library History* 17 (2001), 41–56.

33 Until recently the full title of the director of university libraries at Glasgow was 'University Librarian and Keeper of the Hunterian Manuscripts'.

34 Tse, 'Radical Clydeside', 178–83.

forty-three subdivisions.[35] Horne's scheme owed much to an older French system developed by J. C. Brunet in 1810.

Catalogues

The general library printed catalogue began to get into its stride. Inventories of individual collections there already were in plenty, mostly of a very short-title nature and intended for use either by those who compiled them or by users who would understand their shorthand references that comprised them. Many attempts had been made to insist that library-keepers should create and maintain inventories or catalogues of entire libraries. These enormous tasks were seldom completed, especially as the users' preference was for a *catalogue raisonné* or subject catalogue, much more complex and expensive to compile than the author or name catalogue which usually appeared in the end.

The lack of (or lack of access to) catalogues, finding-lists, or any indicators of what books were in stock and available for loan was one of the recurring complaints by staff as well as students to the Scottish Universities' Commission in 1827. Students had to supply lists of the titles that they wanted to read, and rely on library staff fetching each next available work from the closed-access shelves. The new universities, however, seem to have realised the need for catalogues at the outset. Anderson's University, for instance, issued a printed catalogue in 1832,[36] and many, if not most, class libraries had issued their own printed catalogues from early days. At Edinburgh, catalogues of the Physiological Library first appeared in 1724, medicine in 1798, humanity (i.e. Latin) in 1823, and theology in 1829. The availability of printed catalogues may have contributed to the popularity of class libraries, whose small scale facilitated the production of catalogues. The sheer size of the 'public' university libraries militated against the production of comprehensive catalogues for them.

At Cambridge the first catalogue of printed books was an interleaved copy of the Bodleian Library's printed catalogue of 1738 which was purchased in 1752; and this, with a separate hand-written catalogue of the Royal Library, continued in use until the end of the century.[37] This was replaced in the early nineteenth century by a set of ledgers or guard-books made of blank leaves on which manuscript entries were pasted in the correct order, with spaces left

35 T. H. Horne, *Outlines of classification for a library* (London, 1825), cited in T. Kelly, *Early public libraries* (London, 1966), 176.
36 Tse, 'Radical Clydeside', 178–83.
37 McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, vol. 2, 44.

for further additions. The 1840s and 1850s saw the compilation of a complete catalogue of the library's western manuscripts which was published in five printed volumes with an index between 1856 and 1867.[38] The first college to have a printed catalogue of its entire library was St Catharine's, whose *Catalogus librorum in Bibliotheca Aulae Divae Catharinae* was published in 1771. Queens' College produced one, compiled by Thomas Hartwell Horne, in two volumes in 1827; Horne was the remarkable bibliographer who had published a two-volume *Introduction to the study of bibliography* in 1814, and suggested a classification scheme for the British Museum library in 1824. Other catalogues were selective, such as B. M. Cowie's *Descriptive catalogue of the manuscripts and scarce books in the library of St John's College, Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1842–3).

The Bodleian Library's 1738 catalogue was still in use at the end of the century. As the millennium approached, the curators began planning for a general catalogue of the books in all the Oxford libraries by inviting the college libraries in 1794 to submit lists of titles in their collections not in the Bodleian. A year later Magdalen, Balliol, Exeter and Jesus colleges had sent lists; Oriel is believed to have sent its list many years later, but these were the only ones.[39] The new Bodleian catalogue, covering acquisitions up to 1834, appeared in three volumes in 1843, with a fourth volume covering the years 1835–47 appearing in 1851.[40] This in itself is an indicator of the increasing rate of library acquisitions during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. A separate catalogue of the Douce Collection had already appeared in 1840.[41] Catalogues of oriental manuscripts were begun by John Uri in 1788, continued in 1821 by Alexander Nicoll, Sub-Librarian 1814–22 and Regius Professor of Hebrew 1822–28, and completed in 1835 by his successor in the chair, Dr Edward B. Pusey (better remembered as one of the leaders of the Tractarian movement).

An interleaved copy of the Bodleian Library's 1738 catalogue also provided the basis for an alphabetical catalogue for All Souls College library, compiled by Dr Thomas Bever, Dean of Law, who was paid 20 guineas in 1757 for his work. It accompanied the library's so-called 'classical catalogue', a set of shelflists drawn up by Henry Bennet, fellow of the college, assisted by a chorister called Howell Harris.

Trinity College, Dublin's printed catalogue did not begin to appear until 1854, although it had been compiled on slips between 1835 and 1846; approval

38 Tse, 'Radical Clydeside', 178–83. 39 Macray, *Annals*, 277.

40 *Catalogus librorum impressorum bibliothecae Bodleianae in academia Oxoniensi*, 4 vols. (Oxford, 1843–51).

41 *Catalogue of the printed books and manuscripts bequeathed by Francis Douce, Esq. to the Bodleian Library* (Oxford, 1840).

to publish was given in 1848, and the printed version was modelled on the Bodleian Library catalogue overseen by Dr Bulkeley Bandinel.

Users and services

The main role of university libraries until the beginning of the nineteenth century was custodial. Collections were acquired, catalogued, gloated over and admired. Libraries were largely, in fact, museums of the book. Some, indeed, like that of the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge, were attached to collections of artefacts or of natural history specimens. Others, as has already been noted, had such collections as part of their own stocks.[42] They were resources for research and study, but seldom for teaching.

Those who used university libraries were university teachers and privileged outsiders pursuing research, especially in the humanities. Students had to pay a returnable deposit if not an outright fee (in some cases both), to use their university libraries, although the Bodleian admitted students and their friends free of charge as visitors if they were wearing academic dress. The graduates' fee for admission to the Bodleian was raised to 11 shillings in 1804.[43] 'The early modern [university] library – at least in Protestant countries – expected its readers to use its books in their homes', observes Fred Lerner. 'The book rather than the user was still the focus of the eighteenth-century university library.'[44]

Students were not expected to make much use of university libraries until well into the nineteenth century, although lists of published sources, looking like modern reading-lists, appear in students' lecture notes as early as the 1790s.[45] At Edinburgh, the first set of laws of the library (1636) had not mentioned students specifically; teachers and privileged persons ('nisi Dominicis') were the only identified users. Indeed, students were seldom admitted to the library except as a privilege.[46] Glasgow's first library laws of 1643 do not identify different categories of user, but the following year mentions professors and students and other notable residents in the city as being eligible to borrow

42 See, for instance, Freshwater, 'Collecting beyond the book', 237–42; M. Simpson, '"You have not seen such a one in England"', 41–56, and the papers in the *Bodleian Library Record* 17 (2000–2), 180–267, from a seminar in January 2000 at Christ Church, Oxford.

43 Macray, *Annals*, 281.

44 Lerner, *Story of libraries*, 126.

45 Such as those of Robert Jameson, Professor of Natural History at the University of Edinburgh (EUL Dc.3.30). I am indebted to Andrew Thomson, NAHSTE Project Archivist, and his team for drawing my attention to this.

46 J. Bevan, 'Seventeenth-century students and their books', in G. Donaldson (ed.), *Four centuries: Edinburgh University life 1583–1983* (Edinburgh, 1983), 16–27.

books.[47] The regent system of teaching in Scotland was replaced by the professorial system in the early years of the eighteenth century. Examination of library accession registers indicates that libraries did acquire books required by professors for their subjects,[48] but evidence for the levels of use made of these collections, certainly by students, is scanty.

Edinburgh revised its library laws, by then referred to as regulations, in 1763.[49] Students who did not have access to separate class libraries were required upon matriculation to pay an annual fee of 2s 6d to the 'public library'. They had access to the library for reading, and could borrow books on making a returnable deposit of the value of the book – they could borrow octavos for a week, quartos for a fortnight, and folios for a month. More analysis of borrowers' registers and receipt books from the 1760s to the 1840s will reveal the extent of student borrowing in this period.[50] In 1768, only about 100 Glasgow students (out of how many is not clear) subscribed to the library rules. By 1827 this had increased to 458 students out of a population of 1,027.[51]

Printed information for students on using their university libraries was slow in appearing. Among the earliest is two pages in Alexander Bower's *The Edinburgh student's guide* (1822),[52] but this is no more than a statement of the library regulations. The *Edinburgh University almanack* appeared in 1833 and devoted eight pages to notes on libraries in the university,[53] and a new edition of *The Edinburgh University students' guide* appeared in 1854. Library regulations were printed in the annual university calendars in the wake of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1858.

Collections for the use of students proliferated outwith the university libraries during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The colleges at Oxford, Cambridge, St Andrews and Aberdeen had their own libraries, which were used by their students; but these libraries operated on the basis of custody of historic collections, housed as separate collections without any thought of rationalisation or reorganisation into recognisable subject sequences.

47 Dickson, *Glasgow University Library*, 59.

48 C. Shepherd, 'The inter-relationship between the library and teaching in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries', in Guild and Law, *Edinburgh University Library*, 67–86.

49 University of Edinburgh, *Charters, statutes, and acts*, 241–4.

50 Shepherd, 'The inter-relationship between the library and teaching', 68. Analyses have also been made of specific borrowers' records from Edinburgh University Library, e.g. C. P. Finlayson, 'Thomas Carlyle's borrowings from Edinburgh University Library 1819–1820', *Bibliotheck* 3 (1961), 138–43, and I. Campbell, 'Carlyle's borrowings from the Theological Library of Edinburgh University', *Bibliotheck* 5 (1969), 165–8.

51 Dickson, *Glasgow University Library*, 65.

52 A. Bower, *The Edinburgh student's guide* (Edinburgh, 1822).

53 *The Edinburgh University almanack, MDCCCXXXIII* (Edinburgh, 1833), 112–19.

In the non-collegiate universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, separate collections were developed for class use, usually by the regent (later, the professor) who taught the class, with the support of his students. Edinburgh had had a separate Theological Library as early as 1698, and a short-lived Physiological Library, of which David Hume was a member, in 1724.[54] The next class library at Edinburgh, for humanity (i.e. Latin), was established 100 years later in 1823. Glasgow had a library for the use of the humanity class about 1725, and 'similar small libraries were constituted for the other arts classes, as well as in connection with those in Anatomy and Medicine'. The theological library of Divinity Hall at Glasgow, which outlasted all the others, was established in 1744.[55] In Britain, as in the United States, these class libraries were to develop and multiply during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, and were often modelled on the seminar libraries of German universities like Göttingen.[56]

Between 1780 and 1840 was the great period of clubs and societies, in universities as well as outwith them. Many developed their own libraries, especially in medicine, but access to these was, not surprisingly, jealously reserved for members.[57] The best known, not least for its nationally famous and elegant library, was the Royal Medical Society at Edinburgh (1737), still the oldest surviving student medical society in the world.[58] The Cambridge Union Society (1815) had its own library and reading room from its earliest years, mainly to provide current periodicals and newspapers.[59]

Some wealthy students had their own private libraries. Thomas Beddoes (later the father of the poet Thomas Lovell Beddoes) had a library of considerable size when he entered Pembroke College, Oxford in 1776 and while he studied medicine at Oxford, in London and in Edinburgh during the next ten years. On his return to Oxford as Reader in Chemistry in 1787, he berated Bodley's Librarian for absence from the library, for insufficient opening hours and for closing without warning or authority, and for inadequacy in a range of bibliographical services.[60]

The Bodleian Library, therefore, was not meeting even academic staff needs, let alone those of students; but change was coming, if slowly, and students too began to make their needs known. A proposal by statute to increase the opening hours and number of staff in the library was defeated in Congregation in 1805, and no new statutes were enacted thereafter until 1813. Use of the library

54 M. D. Bell, 'Faculty and class libraries', in Guild and Law, *Edinburgh University Library*, 164.
55 Dickson, *Glasgow University Library*, 26.
56 Lerner, *Story of libraries*, 131.
57 J. Jenkinson, *Scottish medical societies 1731–1939* (Edinburgh, 1993).
58 J. Gray, *History of the Royal Medical Society, 1737–1937* (Edinburgh, 1952).
59 G. Martin, *The Cambridge Union and Ireland 1815–1914* (Edinburgh, 2000), 122–3.
60 I. Philip, *The Bodleian Library in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Oxford, 1983), 106–7.

increased markedly with the end of the Napoleonic wars: matriculation fees, which provided revenue for the library, and which had hitherto not risen above £250 per annum, increased in 1814 to £424, and in 1815 to £633. The Bodleian Library came under pressure in 1833 to follow Cambridge's example and lend books during term time, since college tutors were unable to visit the library during its normal opening hours. This expressed need was eventually met by the Bodleian's attaching to itself the Radcliffe Library as a reading room which remained open late into the evening.[61]

A detailed picture of the state of library services in the Scottish universities at the beginning of the nineteenth century is given in the evidence to the 1827 Royal Commission on the Universities of Scotland, which reported in 1837.[62] Even allowing for a natural eagerness by university staff and students to take any opportunity to air grievances, real or perceived, about their libraries, university library services were in a sorry state, although a surprising number of students seemed happy to accept what services were available to them. Lack of access to catalogues and bookshelves, few copies of books in demand, lack of reading places for students, short opening hours, high fees and deposits required of students in order to borrow books, and then only on the specific recommendation of a professor, the length of loan periods and numbers of books borrowable by professors, these are the common complaints of the day. They have a surprisingly twenty-first-century ring to them, too. Evidence on the state of Edinburgh University Library is especially detailed and graphic. The most vivid pictures are presented of Edinburgh University Library, especially through the lengthy evidence of Macvey Napier, Lecturer in Conveyancing, and a former assistant librarian, James Haig, who had moved to the staff of the Advocates' Library, and who was invited by the commissioners to submit a list of possible solutions to the problems that he had identified.

Although the Commissions on the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge (1850) appear not to have investigated libraries as such, on other evidence the complaints about the Bodleian and Cambridge University Library would appear to mirror those about the Scottish university libraries.

Trinity College, Cambridge had established a Scholars' Library in 1700, but this was a repository for a lending collection, not a reading room;[63] it had, in any

61 Macray, *Annals*, 324.

62 *Evidence, oral and documentary, taken and received by the Commissioners . . . for visiting the universities of Scotland*, and *Evidence, oral and documentary, taken and received by the Commissioners . . . re-appointed . . . 1830; for visiting the universities of Scotland*, 4 vols. (London, 1837).

63 Lerner, *Story of libraries*, 130, quoting Gaskell and Robson, *Library of Trinity College, Cambridge*, 24.

case, amalgamated with the Fellows' Library by the middle of the eighteenth century. The year 1827 saw the conception at Glasgow of a reading room in the University Library, primarily for the use of students and modelled on German practice, and the Senatus resolved in 1833 that additional accommodation for consulting the books in the library should be provided.[64] A reading room was planned for students in William Playfair's new library at Edinburgh, but in evidence before the Scottish Universities Commission in 1827 this facility was said to be quite inadequate; and the Lower Library Hall was eventually reallocated as the students' reading room.[65]

Buildings

The designs of the great purpose-built academic libraries erected at this period were dominated by the Wren Library of Trinity College, Cambridge, completed in 1692. Three in particular were (and are) outstanding. The first was the Long Room (originally the Great Room) of Trinity College library, Dublin (built 1712–32), a majestic glory of dark oak, 210 feet long and 40 feet wide. Originally it had a low gallery and flat roof, which were remodelled to greater glory in the 1860s when the gallery was raised and the roof barrel-vaulted. The Great Room was full by the 1840s, the rate of the library's growth having accelerated by the legal deposit facility since the 1709 Copyright Act, and additional hinged cases had to be introduced into the gallery in 1844. A smaller room, similar in style, was added to the Great Room in 1802 to house the 17,600 volumes of the Fagel Library, with the Manuscript Library directly above it.

The second was the Upper Library Hall of the University of Edinburgh, built exactly 100 years later.[66] The medieval college buildings at Edinburgh, and especially the Library, became increasingly ruinous before the foundation stone of Robert Adam's new college building was laid in 1789. With little more than one corner built, the project was interrupted by the outbreak of the Napoleonic wars in 1793. Twenty years later, new funds became available for the completion of the building. It had, however, become apparent that Adam's design no longer met the needs of the growing university. An unknown architect, William Henry Playfair, nephew of Edinburgh's Professor of Natural Philosophy, John Playfair, won the competition for the new building, including

64 Dickson, *Glasgow University Library*, 27–8.
65 Guild and Law, *Edinburgh University Library*, 92.
66 A. J. Youngson, 'The city of reason and nature', in D. Young [and others], *Edinburgh in the age of reason* (Edinburgh, 1967), 15–22.

the painted wood and gilded plaster magnificence of the Upper Library Hall which now bears his name, and which opened as the general University Library in 1827. It included a reading room for students, at first to offset the delay in opening 'the great room', and temporary reading facilities were also provided for professors.[67]

It is difficult not to see echoes of the Long Room in Dublin in the Playfair Library Hall in Edinburgh. The latter is shorter (190 feet) but wider (50 feet), and the height of its roof the same (40 feet) as the original Long Room roof. Playfair certainly visited Oxford and Cambridge while drawing up his plans for the University of Edinburgh, and can hardly have avoided visiting the Wren Library at Trinity College, but there is no evidence that he visited Dublin or was aware of the Long Room at all. Nor is there any evidence to suggest that Playfair's coffered barrel vault provided a model for the barrel vault that Sir Thomas Deane and Benjamin Woodward later raised over the Long Room. Nevertheless, to enter either of these great libraries is to be irresistibly reminded of the other. Other aspects, including provision for access and borrowing by students, are comparable as well.

The third was the Cockerell building at Cambridge. In 1829 the university held a competition for a new library building, and drew up a short list of architects consisting of Decimus Burton, C. R. Cockerell, Rickman and Hutchinson, and William Wilkins, already known for his library buildings among the colleges.[68] Eventually Cockerell's design was accepted, and Cockerell's building, running parallel to the old building, was opened in 1842. More than the other two, it also has echoes of monumental classical buildings in Italy.[69] Hot-water pipes for central heating were installed in 1845.

The University Archives were moved from the Old Schools to the tower of the Pitt Press building in 1848. The most significant new library in Cambridge was that of the Fitzwilliam Museum, itself newly established by the bequest of Richard, 7th Viscount Fitzwilliam of Merrion, who died in 1816. His bequest included his personal library of 10,000 manuscripts and books printed mainly in the eighteenth century, and was rich in French history and literature, travel and exploration, English local history, and natural history. Increasingly, additional reading accommodation was needed for both professors and their students, who were establishing libraries of their own to meet their daily needs, such as the library of the Cambridge Union.[70]

67 D. B. Horn, *A short history of the University of Edinburgh 1556–1889* (Edinburgh, 1967), 126–7.

68 McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, vol. 2, 475.

69 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 488.

70 Martin, *The Cambridge Union and Ireland*, 122.

A number of Cambridge colleges expanded their libraries during the 1820s.[71] William Wilkins designed libraries for Downing and two other colleges at this time. The Parker Library for Corpus Christi College was built between 1823 and 1827, in memory of Archbishop Matthew Parker (1504–75), Master of the college, who bequeathed his library of 433 volumes of manuscripts and 600 printed volumes. The new library at King's College was completed in 1828 to accommodate collections still housed in the college chapel, but some of the older theological volumes stayed on in side chapels for some years afterwards. Trinity College expanded the seventeenth-century Wren in the 1840s by replacing much of Wren's original furniture with modern bookcases, and installed central heating in 1860. By 1850 Gonville and Caius College was planning its new library, which was built in 1853/4.

Other academic libraries built during the period remained in use for over 150 years; some have survived into the twentieth century. This was an important period for the expansion and rebuilding of academic libraries, to accommodate collections acquired by gift and bequest during the eighteenth century and which continued to come in significant numbers. In the case of the university libraries, these included legal deposit copies of new books from Stationers' Hall which had been at first trickling, and later flowing, in since 1710. At St Andrews the University Library needed more accommodation by the middle of the eighteenth century, and in 1765, when the walls of the upper hall were heightened and a handsome gallery inserted, the opportunity was also taken to amalgamate the old college libraries (St John's and St Mary's) with the University Library. This sufficed, increasingly damp though it became, until 1829, when a new extension was added to the library building after the visitation of the royal commissioners.[72] The 1720s library of King's College, Aberdeen, was demolished in 1773, and the books were housed in the west end of the college chapel where they remained for 140 years. The 1724 library of Marischal College was remodelled at the end of the eighteenth century, and moved to the new neo-Perpendicular college building in 1843.[73] Glasgow had a new library building in 1743, designed by William Adam, father of Robert and his brothers, which became increasingly cramped and inadequate, requiring the double-banking of books on many shelves, until the university moved from the centre of the city to Gilmorehill in 1864.[74]

71 A. N. L. Munby, *Cambridge college libraries* (Cambridge, 1960).

72 R. G. Cant, *The University of St Andrews* (Edinburgh, 1946), 94, 104.

73 C. A. McLaren, *Rare and fair: a visitor's history of Aberdeen University Library* (Aberdeen, 1995).

74 Dickson, *Glasgow University Library*, 44–6.

A heating system was introduced into the Bodleian Library for the first time in 1821; hot air was allowed through gratings at each end of the library, and was all but ineffectual. It was replaced in 1845 by a system of pipes heated by steam, but this was both ineffectual and a fire-hazard, and the head of the London Fire Brigade was called in to advise on the safety aspect in 1855. Water-heated pipes were installed in 1865. Oxford Convocation decreed in 1806 that the Anatomy and Law schools should be annexed to the Bodleian Library, and in 1817 the Law School was fitted out to house manuscripts. Further expansion was soon needed, and in 1821 Convocation allocated to the Bodleian the space in the Schools Quad occupied by the Hebrew and Greek schools.

In the Oxford colleges, Queen's College had already completed its library, built over an open loggia like the Wren library, in 1694. The new library at Christ Church, begun in 1717, was completed in 1779, but was sufficiently advanced to allow the collections to be rehoused on the new shelves in 1763.[75] The Codrington Library designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor for All Souls College, which had been begun in 1716 and beset by financial problems, was eventually completed in 1751, and incorporated the college's earlier Chichele Library. It eventually housed a large collection of drawings by Sir Christopher Wren (Savilian Professor of Astronomy 1661–73), probably acquired as a gift from the jurist Sir William Blackstone in 1761.[76]

Librarians

University and college librarians were mostly senior academics, a practice which continues in Oxford and Cambridge colleges. Traces of this tradition can still be found elsewhere: the convener of the library committee of New College, Edinburgh (founded in 1846, and now the School of Divinity of the University of Edinburgh), for instance, retains the title 'Curator'.

Below the academic librarian, the work of the library was conducted by a salaried officer (often badly underpaid) with one or more assistants. The University of Cambridge appointed the first *Protobibliothecarius*, Conyers Middleton, in 1721. Middleton was succeeded in the post by Francis Sawyer Parris, in 1752. The most notable holder of the post was Thomas Kerrich, of Magdalene. The primary responsibility of the post was for the Royal Library, and the post had seniority; the rest of the library was the responsibility of the *Bibliothecarius*, or Librarian; the notable holder of this post was the antiquary Edward Daniel

75 P. Morgan, *Oxford Libraries outside the Bodleian*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1980), 25–35.
76 Craster, *All Souls College library*, 89–90.

Clarke. The two posts were formally combined in 1828, with the election of Joseph Power, of Clare College, as Librarian. The post of *Protobibliothecarius* was discontinued altogether in 1845. From 1819 to 1852 the combined post was held by John Bowtell, nephew of a Cambridge bookbinder, who practically ran the library and compiled a manuscript author catalogue in forty-two volumes; this superseded the catalogue begun in 1752.[77]

Bodley's Librarian and his Sub-Librarian had one assistant until this was unofficially increased to two assistants in 1821, but they were not formally recognised in the Statutes until 1837. A second post of Sub-Librarian was created in 1813. Revd John Price, Bodley's Librarian, died in post in 1813, having held the position for fifty-two years. He was succeeded by his godson, Revd Bulkeley Bandinel, who had joined the library staff as Sub-Librarian in 1810. The new appointment seemed to galvanise the university and the library itself into action: library staff, opening hours and the annual purchasing grant were all substantially increased, the creation of a new general catalogue was revived, and a grant of £5,000 was obtained from the Privy Purse for its completion. With the help of external loans the library purchased the Canonici Library of western and oriental manuscripts from Venice for £5,444 in 1817, and repaid the loans within five years. In short, the Bodleian Library suddenly moved into the nineteenth century, and became the modern university library that is recognisable still. Bandinel's remarkable librarianship continued until his retirement in 1860 at the age of seventy-nine; he died the following year. He was succeeded by Revd H. O. Coxe, Sub-Librarian since 1838. Among notable college librarians was the antiquary Dr John Gutch, Sub-Librarian of All Souls College, Oxford, from 1771 until his death in 1831.[78]

Curiously, the period represents an exact break in reverse practice at the University of Edinburgh: 1747 saw the death of Robert Henderson, full-time College Librarian, and ended eighty years of dynastic custodianship in the library; he was succeeded as Honorary Librarian by George Stuart, Professor of Humanity. A succession of honorary librarians continued until 1854, when John Small, under-librarian and his father's successor in the post, was appointed full-time University Librarian.[79] Most notable of these honorary librarians were two professors of Hebrew: James Robertson, who was Librarian from 1763 to 1785, and Alexander Brunton, from 1822 to 1854. Much of the impetus

77 Oates, *Cambridge University Library*, 16–19.

78 Craster, *All Souls College library*, 83.

79 By another coincidence, Robert Henderson and John Small both succeeded their fathers in post. William and Robert Henderson between them achieved eighty unbroken years of college librarianship. John Small senior was an assistant to the Under-Librarian Nicholson Bain, succeeding him as Under-Librarian from 1840 until his death in 1854.

for building up the library's collections in the late eighteenth century, however, came from the historian William Robertson, Principal of the university from 1762 until his death in 1793. The day-to-day work was the responsibility of the under-librarian, of whom the three most notable during the period were Duke Gordon, Nicolson Bain and John Small senior. At St Andrews, the University Librarian during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was a working officer appointed by the Senatus, along with the Quaestor (college treasurer), and the Archbeadle (principal mace-bearer), whose post was usually associated with that of bookbinder to the Library.[80] King's College library, Aberdeen, was managed by a series of curators on short contracts, who reported directly to the Principal. A permanent assistant to the curator, Ewen MacLachlan, was appointed in 1801.[81] The post of librarian, with responsibility for both libraries, was created in 1860 when King's College and Marischal College united to become the University of Aberdeen.

At Glasgow the University and the Town Council had agreed in 1733 that the post of university librarian should be *ad vitam aut culpam* ('for life or until at fault') and that each body should present a candidate alternately. The contract was suspended by the Lords of Session three years later. In 1784, after fifteen years of negotiation, the city surrendered its right of appointment. Revd Archibald Arthur, later professor, was appointed librarian, initially for a fixed term, but eventually for life. He was succeeded by Dr Lockhart Muirhead, who later became Professor of Natural History, and he was succeeded in 1823 by Revd William Park (whose brother John, another minister, was appointed sub-librarian). In 1845 Dr Park was followed by Nathaniel Jones.[82]

Apart from occasional references and serendipity, little is known of more junior library staff in Scotland. The evidence to the Commission on the Universities of Scotland includes that of James Haig, assistant librarian in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, who had recently worked in Edinburgh University Library as an assistant librarian. The Calton Old Burying Ground in Edinburgh contains an impressive obelisk to the memory of Thomas McDowall, assistant librarian in the University of Edinburgh, who died in 1867 at the age of fifty-five. The Bodleian Library's junior staff are better documented, perhaps in part because they tended to move on as parish priests after a few years, if they did not achieve promotion to higher office within the library itself.

80 Cant, *University of St Andrews*, 109.
81 Pickard, *King's College library*, vol. 3, 1.
82 P. Hoare, 'The librarians of Glasgow University over 350 years: 1641–1991', *Library Review* 40 (1991), 27–43.

Libraries occasionally brought in specialist expertise from outside. In preparation for the move into Playfair's new library building, the University of Edinburgh engaged the antiquary and bookseller (and *alumnus*) David Laing to establish a bindery in the library and to supervise the repair of the older and more valuable collections.[83] This gave Laing an unrivalled knowledge of the collections, and undoubtedly influenced him in advising James Orchard Halliwell-Phillipps to gift his Shakespeare collection to the university in 1872, and to bequeath his own magnificent collections in 1878.

Use of libraries outside the universities

The existence of nearby libraries other than academic ones is important for understanding the development of library collections, services and, sometimes, buildings in universities. Then as now, university staff and students relied on other collections and facilities to provide access to books and periodicals, especially the latter, that their own university libraries denied them. This could occasionally, however, have benefits. Long association between Anderson's University and the Glasgow Philosophical Society resulted in the Society's library's being transferred to the university library in 1840.[84]

The increasing demand for improved library facilities led students to use what other libraries they could find. Glasgow University students discovered that subscriptions to local libraries were often cheaper than the university library fees: the Glasgow Public Library cost 10s 6d per annum, and Mr Macallan's library only 10s, compared with 7s, plus a deposit of £1 for the privilege of borrowing one volume, payable to the university library. These libraries were especially useful for current and recent issues of magazines and reviews, since university libraries often would not allow student access to periodicals until they had been bound.[85] The libraries of the University of Glasgow and the Foulis Academy, which operated from 1753 to 1776 and occupied space under the university library building, seem to have had a close, even symbiotic, relationship, but no record of the Foulis Academy collection appears to have survived.[86]

The Advocates' Library in Edinburgh had become the national public reference library. Although only advocates had borrowing rights, they commonly

83 Finlayson and Simpson, 'History of the library 1710–1837', 55–66.
84 Butt, *John Anderson's legacy*, 67.
85 *Evidence, oral and documentary* . . . (London, 1837), vol. 2, 197: Glasgow.
86 G. Fairfull-Smith, *The Foulis Press and the Foulis Academy* (Glasgow, 2001), 43.

borrowed books for further circulation outwith the library. By the middle of the nineteenth century the library was apparently being abused by 'persons . . . of all grades and characters'.[87]

Dublin had several libraries to which academic staff of Trinity College, at least, had access. The law library of the King's Inns was a second legal deposit library until 1837, when its facility was withdrawn by the Copyright Act 1836. A seventeenth-century Provost of the college, Archbishop Narcissus Marsh, had established outside the college the library that still bears his name, for the use of 'all graduates and gentlemen', because he was so frustrated at the restrictions placed on the use of the college library by anyone other than the Provost and Fellows.[88]

Cambridge and Oxford had their circulating libraries too, but they seem to have supplied little more than recreational fiction. Indeed, by the 1840s Copyright Act Cambridge University Library was held to have a finer collection of current fiction than any local circulating library; members of the university borrowed books from the Novel Room for their ladies who were barred from borrowing books from the university libraries for themselves.[89]

At its foundation in 1832 the University of Durham already had access to the library of the Dean and Chapter of Durham Cathedral, as well as the library of Bishop John Cosin (1594–1672) of which it became the legal trustee in 1837, on which its academic staff and students could draw.[90] Ushaw College, founded on its Durham site from Douai in 1808, also had a substantial library of early printed Roman Catholic books (the present building dates from 1851). It has already been noted that staff of University College London, had access to the British Museum library as their major research resource.[91]

Conclusion

From the middle of the eighteenth century until the creation of public libraries, university and college libraries became an increasingly significant feature of study, and occasionally recreation, in many areas of society. Although not formally public institutions, they admitted members of local professions and society as external users, usually on a fee-paying basis, and fulfilled a demand

87 John Hill Burton, quoted in J. St Clair and R. Craik, *The Advocates' Library* (Edinburgh, 1989), 60.
88 P. Fox (ed.), *Treasures of the library, Trinity College Dublin* (Dublin, 1986), 6–8.
89 McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, vol. 2, 22.
90 Pearson, 'Durham University Library', 299–301.
91 Naylor, 'University of London libraries', 851.

for books created by the increasing literacy and desire for learning in all levels of society. Within their parent institutions they became, albeit slowly, responsive to the growing needs of students as well as of professors as curricula and research became more formalised. They also retained their collective role, perhaps their primary function at this time, as custodians of an important part of the nation's heritage, its manuscripts and printed books.

23

Libraries and literacy in popular education

BRIAN BURCH

In 1750 Britain was still predominantly rural, with the majority of the population living in the countryside. By 1850, although the rural population still accounted for nearly half of the total, the remainder were concentrated into towns. In parallel with this mass migration, new political ideas spread widely. The French Revolution inspired the growth of Radicalism, and although middle-class reformers were far from revolutionary in their social ideas, there was also a developing working-class movement for more drastic reforms. By 1850 reforms in areas such as public health, housing, sanitation, and the prevention of crime and disorder had begun to have an effect, but the new industrial society still faced massive social and political problems.

It is against this background that the history of popular education, with its attendant libraries, has to be seen. In 1750, the mass of the population had to make do with an assortment of schools of highly variable quality. For those who could afford it, there were a number of grammar schools, and a growing number of private schools or 'academies', but the poorest members of society had institutions offering only elementary education, including charity schools, 'free' schools, parish schools, and above all privately run schools (including the so-called 'dame schools') patronised by some 70 per cent of the 250,000 children at school in England in 1750. Few of the schools available to the masses offered completely free schooling, attendance was in no way compulsory, and in many cases the standard of teaching was low. Many poor children attended school for only a year or two, if at all, and at best could expect to achieve little more than the three Rs.

In Wales, the Scottish Highlands and Ireland, whilst the majority of the population spoke Welsh, Gaelic or Irish respectively, much of the education offered used the medium of English. In Ireland, the problem of language was compounded by religion: much of the educational effort was inextricably tied up with continuing and vain attempts to convert the Catholic Irish to

Protestantism. Scotland had had, since the Reformation, a national system of education which should have ensured that elementary education was provided for all, regardless of class or means. However, many parishes, particularly in the Highlands, never had adequate provision; the system provided only one school per parish, and in heavily populated or widely scattered parishes this was clearly inadequate. As a result, a variety of privately run schools existed. The Scottish system was, nonetheless, somewhat more successful than that on offer in the rest of the kingdom: the Scots themselves regarded it as superior and many English commentators used it as a model against which to criticise educational provision in their own country.

Despite the inadequacy of much elementary education, the ability to read was spread widely through all levels of society, although there is no means whereby literacy can be *directly* measured among the population of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Britain. For the measurement of writing ability only, Lord Hardwicke's Marriage Act of 1754 required both parties to a marriage and their witnesses to sign the marriage register, providing a continuous series of data covering every parish in England and Wales. From 1839, following the establishment of civil registration, the Registrar-General began to collect and summarise the number of signatures in the marriage registers, and the results were published annually. A major study by Roger Schofield based on a random sample of 274 parishes during the years 1754–1838 offers the best evidence so far of literacy rates for both men and women.[1] Among men, Schofield found that just under 40 per cent were unable to sign their names from 1754 to about 1795; the percentage fell for a few years to about 1800, rose again to about 1805, and then fell steadily if slowly to reach about 33 per cent by 1840. Thereafter the illiteracy rate continued to fall, at first slowly (to about 30 per cent in 1850) and then much more quickly to about 1 per cent by 1911. Among women, the pattern was at first rather different: about 60 per cent were unable to sign in 1754; the percentage had fallen to just under 50 per cent by 1840. By 1850 there had been a further fall to 45 per cent and then the rate declined rapidly to about 1 per cent by 1911.

These figures are averages: they conceal wide differences between and within regions. Throughout the period, fewer women than men could sign their names, and the difference between the sexes remained significant even though illiteracy was declining for both. Illiteracy was highest among the lower occupational groups, such as labourers and servants, and lowest among

1 R. S. Schofield, 'Dimensions of illiteracy, 1750–1850', *Explorations in Economic History* 10 (1972–3), 437–54.

the gentry and professional classes; it seems to have declined most consistently in the market towns, as opposed to the agricultural areas on the one hand and the large industrial centres on the other.

Estimating the level of reading skills requires further extrapolation from the signing figures. Reading was almost always taught before writing, at least until the early nineteenth century, and on this assumption Schofield and others have suggested that the proportion of the population able to read fluently was probably similar to the proportion able to sign their names, and that the proportion able to read less than fluently was up to half as many again as could sign. The proportion of the population able to write beyond signing their name was probably less than the number able to sign.

Whilst Scotland was probably more literate than England in the eighteenth century, by the early nineteenth century the literacy rate in Lowland Scotland (where the Scottish national system of education came closest to achieving universal schooling) did not differ widely from that to be found in northern England, although northern England was itself more literate than much of the rest of the country by this time.[2] There is some evidence that overall the Scots were more literate, but literacy in Scotland was by no means universal, and shows the same variations as in England – between regions, between the sexes and between different occupational groups. In Wales, illiteracy was probably similar overall to the southern and eastern counties of England, but below the English average. The state of education in Ireland was worse than the rest of the kingdom during the eighteenth century, and illiteracy was common among the native Irish. Overall illiteracy in Ireland was still at 53 per cent in 1841, and by 1851 had fallen only to 47 per cent; among the Catholic population it was even higher.

Most illiteracy, of course, was concentrated among the poorest classes in society, so that readers among labourers and unskilled workers may have been in a minority, but the overall figures suggest that despite the poor educational provision on offer most people learned to read, and that it was regarded by most classes as a valuable social skill, notwithstanding the fact that for many occupational groups it had limited occupational value. Basic literacy did not, of course, depend solely on schooling. David Vincent has shown how literacy was as often transmitted by less formal methods – for example through family members, friends or workmates, who could read aloud popular stories, Bible passages or news of the day.[3] Schooling was, and remained so well into the

2 R. A. Houston, *Scottish literacy and the Scottish identity* (Cambridge, 1985).
3 D. Vincent, *Literacy and popular culture: England 1750–1914* (Cambridge, 1993).

nineteenth century, a 'commodity' which families purchased as and when they could afford it, and the costs of which extended beyond the school fees to the loss of income if children were not working for wages. Despite this, literacy spread through society by less formal means and was clearly widespread. James Lackington's comment in the 1790s that 'all ranks and degrees now read' may not be far from the truth.[4]

From the late eighteenth century onwards, there was a growing number of libraries to support the reading public, but few of these were used by the working classes. However, there was a substantial popular literature on which the poor could draw.[5] Ballads, folk stories and sensational broadsheets (the tabloid journalism of the day) were widely sold by chapmen and in markets. By the late eighteenth century, these were increasingly supplemented by cheap editions of standard texts and by tracts of all kinds, sold for a penny or two. By this date also, cheap editions of political texts began to be available, so much so that the government, fearful of the effects of the French Revolution, took steps to prevent their publication. Nevertheless, Paine's *Rights of man*, for example, was widely circulated and well known to working-class readers. From the early nineteenth century, there was also a developing popular newspaper press, which, despite attempts to suppress it, continued to succour the working class's growing self-awareness and political consciousness. In the towns, coffee-houses and taverns provided access to newspapers and journals for the working classes. The spread of literacy and the growth of popular literature was unmistakable and, for many of the ruling class, a matter of considerable concern.

As a consequence, the issue of educating the poor became a subject of increasing debate. There was a growing understanding that literacy among the workers was too widespread, and too easily reached by politically dangerous material, for it to be ignored. The poor had not only to be educated, but also guided into reading the right kind of material to help them understand and accept their proper place in society. Among town and parish schools, however, there is little evidence of school library provision in those establishments available to the children of labourers and servants. The great endowed schools, such as Eton and Winchester, had their libraries, and some of the smaller grammar schools, even though they may have lacked dedicated library space, had small collections of books. A catalogue of the library at Sedbergh (Yorkshire), for example, dating from 1707, lists sixty-one classics titles, and although by 1800

4 *Memoirs of the first forty-five years of the life of James Lackington*, 7th edn (London, 1794, reprint, 1974), 243.
5 V. Neuburg, *Popular education in eighteenth century England* (London, 1971).

the school was in a bad way, the library survived and expanded, eventually being housed in a fine eighteenth-century schoolhouse.[6] Ashby-de-la-Zouch (Leicestershire) also had a small library, for which 'a cupboard to lay the books in' was provided in 1666;[7] by 1807, this was housed in a room of the new schoolhouse.[8] A few of the privately run academies, increasingly patronised by the middle classes, also had libraries: Heath Hall near Wakefield, for example, is said to have built up a collection of 1,400 books during its short life from 1740 to 1754. Yet even the grammar schools which retained free places were generally beyond the reach of the poor, and among elementary schools a library was uncommon. There were some exceptions – the parish school of Kings Cliffe, Northamptonshire, incorporated a library which, even if of doubtful utility to the schoolchildren, was nevertheless open to all, according to the inscription over the door: 'Books of Piety are here lent to any Persons of this or ye Neighbouring Towns.' But Malcolm Seaborne's study of school buildings in England up to 1870 found that few of the surviving eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century plans for elementary schools incorporate library space.[9] Most private venture schools were run by an individual and survived only during that individual's lifetime; many of these, including most dame schools, operated in cramped and often unsatisfactory premises, lacking adequate equipment and making do with a handful of well-worn and uninspiring textbooks.

Moreover, all the evidence suggests that most children from poorer families spent only a year or two at school: attendance was erratic, depending on whether the family could afford the school pence or whether the children were needed for work in the fields or factories. One of the first attempts to remedy the situation was the establishment of Sunday schools. Teaching or catechising on Sundays was not new, but the Sunday School Movement expanded rapidly after the publicity given to the efforts of Robert Raikes in Gloucester in the 1780s and the support given to the movement by well-known evangelicals such as Hannah More. To Raikes and his followers, Sunday schools were intended both to educate children in the principles of Christianity and to socialise them, to get them off the streets and away from undesirable influences. The first (and often during the early years of the movement, the only) skill taught was reading; the teaching of writing and arithmetic was

6 A. F. Leach, *Early Yorkshire schools, II*, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series, 33 (1903), 438–9; R. Fulford, 'The Sedbergh School library', *Country Life* 124 (10 July 1958), 80–1.

7 L. Fox, *A country grammar school* (Oxford, 1967), 42.

8 *Ibid*., 67.

9 M. Seaborne, *The English school: its architecture and organization 1370–1870* (London, 1971).

frowned upon both by those who saw no need for the poor to acquire such skills and by sabbatarians who took a narrow view of what could be done on Sundays.

Sunday schools proved immensely popular; early nineteenth century surveys reported large numbers of pupils, and in 1851 there were said to be some 2,225,000 pupils enrolled. For many working families, releasing the children to a Sunday school was preferable to sending them to a day school, for the latter deprived the family of the children's income. Many historians have regarded the Sunday schools as an effective strategy instituted by the middle classes as part of an overall movement towards 'social control' – that is to mould the working classes into their view of society. This view is challenged by Thomas Laqueur, who argues that the very popularity of the Sunday schools could only come about because the working classes recognised their educational value; although Laqueur concedes that the movement originated among middle-class reformers, it was, he suggests, quickly taken over by the working classes themselves, who ran the schools and provided many of the teachers.[10] This has been questioned by later writers, such as Malcolm Dick, who has argued that 'working-class' Sunday schools were in reality dependent on middle-class support and cast in their image.[11]

In any event, Sunday schools thrived, and some came to extend their activities into adult classes and weekday evening schools, where skills other than reading could be taught. Sunday school libraries, however, only became widespread during the second quarter of the nineteenth century; a survey by the Sunday School Union in 1834 found that only 2,000 of the 10,000 schools surveyed had a library, and in the following year the Union began to distribute small libraries of 100–200 volumes to its schools. By 1850, 2,100 libraries had been distributed in this way, and the Union's efforts were matched by the Religious Tract Society (RTS). Laqueur, who suggests that 'no other institution was more instrumental in bringing the printed word to the working-class child',[12] estimates that by 1840 between a half and three-quarters of urban Sunday schools, and about a quarter of those in rural areas, had a library, whilst Thomas Kelly believed that by 1849 Sunday school libraries 'had become almost universal'.[13] A few of these grew into large collections, such as those

10 T. Laqueur, *Religion and respectability: Sunday schools and working class culture 1780–1850*, 2nd edn (New Haven, 1979).

11 M. Dick, 'The myth of the working-class Sunday school', *History of Education* 9 (1980), 27–41.

12 Laqueur, *Religion and respectability*, 113

13 T. Kelly, *Early public libraries* (London, 1966), 201.

in Stockport and Manchester (each of 4,000 volumes), and Hanley (1,700 volumes); many were much smaller, but where the Sunday schools also offered classes to adults, the libraries were often open to both parents and children. Backing the work of the Sunday schools, Hannah More and others recognised that, having taught the poor to read, they should be directed towards wholesome (and politically correct) literature. More's 'Cheap repository tracts' were only one of the better-known examples of material written for the working-class reader, and many Sunday school libraries were well stocked with tracts as well as the material from the Union, the RTS and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) catalogues.

Successful as the Sunday schools were, they could not in themselves solve the problem of educating the poor. By the early nineteenth century, the debate about elementary education was widespread, but it was still seen as essentially a matter for private and charitable enterprise. The first major reforms were effected through the National Society for the Education of the Poor according to the Principles of the Church of England (1811) and the rival British and Foreign School Society (founded as the Royal Lancasterian Association in 1810 and renamed in 1814), ostensibly non-denominational but in practice favoured by nonconformists. Both societies set up schools based on versions of the monitorial system devised by Andrew Bell and Joseph Lancaster. The schools offered cheap education to poor families, and both National and British schools quickly spread, the former in much the larger quantity. At the outset, the societies depended largely on charitable funds, supplemented by modest school fees, and their schools quickly came to dominate the educational scene in England and, to a lesser extent, Wales. (Even as late as 1850, however, 30 per cent of the 2,000,000 children at school in England remained in privately run schools). By 1839, and despite earlier reluctance to fund the schools, the first government grants were offered to the societies, and from then on annual subventions were made. The grants came at a price: the state imposed inspection and increasingly standards and regulation.

In the early monitorial system, school libraries must have been a rarity, for the system hardly required books other than a minimum number of elementary texts. But over time, the monitorial method was discarded in favour of forms of class teaching by more adequately trained teachers. Although the early Committee of Council's model plans for elementary schools do not include library space, the inspectorate had, from 1840, been instructed to enquire into the existence of a school library, a recognition perhaps that, having taught children to read, the school had a duty to encourage the use of

that skill. By this date, literature written for children was becoming plentiful, and although the school library may have been of variable quality, the fact that the state took an interest is significant. As in the Sunday schools, bodies such as the SPCK began to provide ready-made library collections to schools; from 1831 the SPCK offered lending libraries and by 1835 there were said to be 2,438 such libraries in England and thirty-three in Wales. The RTS also made library grants following its publication of a tract on the formation of libraries in schools, and by 1849, 3,108 libraries in all parts of the kingdom received RTS grants. The quality of the libraries in the National and British schools has, however, been criticised – Richard Altick suggests the libraries were small and restricted in scope; material was highly selected, and 'most of the books had "a bearing towards the works of God or the word of God" '.[14] Altick's view is that 'the attractiveness and influence of these libraries was greatly exaggerated by those eager to put the best possible face upon the societies' activities'. Alec Ellis, on the other hand, has pointed out that most school libraries did provide both curricular material and leisure reading for home use.[15] Ellis suggests that only half the British schools had a library, while a survey of 1844 found libraries in only twenty-nine of some 120 schools in the midlands, averaging just over 200 volumes each.

The reform of elementary education, partial and inadequate as it was by 1850, took place in parallel with an upsurge in adult education. The process of industrialisation brought together new communities of working men and women, and reformers took an increasing interest in supplying and controlling their further education. In view of the high levels of literacy in Lowland Scotland, it is perhaps not surprising that some of the earliest efforts in this regard are to be found among the Scots, such as Samuel Brown's circulating libraries in Haddington, East Lothian, and innovative arrangements to provide libraries for particular groups of workers, of which some of the earliest were among the lead mining communities in Dumfriesshire. Brown launched his scheme in 1817 when he purchased 200 volumes to provide a circulating library in the Haddington area, dividing the collection into four sets of fifty, each set being deposited for a fixed time in a different village. Donations enabled further volumes to be purchased and by 1837 there were 2,380 volumes in forty-seven sets, but after Brown's death in 1839 the Haddington experiment faltered. His selection of books also limited their popularity – two-thirds were moral or religious works and the rest were all non-fiction. Nevertheless, Brougham was

14 R. D. Altick, *The English common reader: a social history of the mass reading public 1800–1900* (Chicago, 1963), 152–3.

15 A. Ellis, *A history of children's reading and literature* (Oxford, 1968), 40.

impressed by these 'itinerating libraries' and took them as an example which should be copied.[16]

The lead mining complexes at Leadhills and nearby Wanlockhead and Westerkirk were among the earliest capital intensive enterprises in Scotland; the miners, smelters and support workers formed close-knit communities overseen by paternalistic employers who created some of the first subscription libraries intended for working men. In the interests of self-help and the encouragement of reading and writing, libraries were opened at all three complexes, that at Leadhills being started in 1743, followed by Wanlockhead in 1756. By the late eighteenth century the membership of these libraries was predominantly working class, the entry fees and subscriptions being low enough to enable the miners and smelters, who were relatively well paid, to make use of the facilities. The libraries were not large – Wanlockhead had 309 volumes by 1790 and only 2,000 volumes by 1850. The stock comprised general literature and religious works, and although the libraries were overtly intended to bring about 'mutual improvement' they did not contain mining or technical literature, in contrast to the early mechanics' institutes.

Numerous other examples of subscription libraries for workers can be found, particularly in Scotland, where according to John Crawford there were twelve working-class libraries and fifty-two workers' reading societies by the 1790s, and a further thirty-nine working-class subscription libraries by 1822.[17] Some of these were founded and run by workmen themselves, but most seem to have been set up by middle-class industrialists; they were generally dedicated to 'improvement', with novels and plays excluded. The earliest English example is the Kendal Economical Library, opened in 1797, which was said to be 'designed principally for the use and instruction of the working classes'. Despite problems of funding, this library survived until 1825, when it was incorporated into the town's mechanics' institute. The Birmingham Artizans' Library, which opened in 1799, had begun as a Sunday school library created in 1797 at the works of T. and S. Carpenter.

There are other examples in England of works or factory libraries provided by employers, and libraries of this kind became more common in the industrial communities of south Wales.[18] Under the Factories Acts of 1802 and 1833, textile employers were under an obligation to provide education for the children in

16 Henry Brougham (1778–1868), 1st Baron Brougham and Vaux, Scottish lawyer and politician and a leading reformer, taking a particular interest in education; Lord Chancellor 1830–4.

17 J. C. Crawford, 'The ideology of mutual improvement in Scottish working class libraries', *Library History* 12 (1996), 49–61.

18 L. W. Evans, *Education in industrial Wales 1700–1900* (Cardiff, 1971).

their employ, and in the best cases such provision included a library. The Greg family's mill at Quarry Bank, Cheshire, for example, provided a schoolhouse and library; Henry Ashworth opened a day school at his New Eagley Mills, near Bolton, in 1825, and in his evidence to a Parliamentary Commission in 1833 reported that 'when a boy has nothing to do he can walk into the school and read a newspaper or any history, as we keep a library of books for their use'.[19] Although the 1833 Factory Act placed educational obligations only on the textile industry, other employers sometimes provided facilities for their workers, often in the form of mutual improvement societies and including workers' libraries, such as that at Ransome and May's foundry in Ipswich, Suffolk. In some parts of the country, however, such developments were rare: the first works library in Yorkshire is said to have been that established by Halifax mill-owner Colonel Edward Akroyd in 1850, available to employees at one shilling a quarter.[20] In Wales, many of the iron and steel works were established in remote areas, and employers provided much of the infrastructure, including schools and libraries. Whilst the enthusiasm of employers varied, some major Welsh owners established reading rooms and well-stocked libraries that were well used; however, although the Varteg Hill Iron Company, of Trevethin, near Pontypool, established schools and lending libraries as early as 1823, most of the Welsh works libraries only appeared after *c.*1840. The Rhymney Ironworks school, for example, opened in 1850, and incorporated a reading room and library. The latter was also open to the local gentry and professional men, and only thirty workmen paid the quarterly subscription of 1s 6d. Sir John Guest's schools at Dowlais were among the most progressive in south Wales, and among his other efforts he opened a Workmen's Library in 1845, 'described as one of the best and most attractive in the Principality'.[21] Among the early colliery schools was that of Thomas Phillips at Courtybella, Monmouthshire, opened in 1840; Phillips also established a lending library.

It was among the mechanics' institutes that some of the largest, and longest-lasting, libraries were established, many of which would in time be absorbed into the new public libraries. Mechanics' institutes were among a wider group of institutions whose overall aim was 'mutual improvement'. Some of these were the working-class version of the middle-class 'literary and philosophical society' and reflect a growing self-consciousness among the working class itself. To describe the 'working class' as a single entity is of course somewhat

19 Quoted in M. Sanderson, 'Education and the factory in industrial Lancashire, 1780–1840', *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser., 20 (1967), 270.
20 M. R. Marshall, 'Libraries in Yorkshire industry', *Library History* 1 (1969), 165.
21 Evans, *Education in industrial Wales*, 98

misleading: contemporaries tended to refer to the 'working classes' and in the post-industrial society the plural term more accurately reflects the diversity that existed. At the very least, the working classes can usefully be divided into three: artisans or 'mechanics' (i.e. skilled workers); semi-skilled labourers; and the unskilled. It was the first of these groups, where literacy was likely to be more nearly the norm, that showed the greatest interest in mutual improvement, and to this group also that Brougham and his associates looked when proposing the establishment of mechanics' institutes.

The origins of the movement can be found in Scotland, where George Birkbeck first offered classes to artisans at Anderson's Institution. Birkbeck believed that there was a genuine hunger for technical and scientific instruction among skilled workers, and his example inspired a number of library initiatives. In 1821, for example, James Beaumont, the manager of the Glasgow gas works, founded the Glasgow Gas Workmen's Library; other workmen's libraries, based on modest subscriptions, opened in various parts of the country, among them the Liverpool Mechanics' and Apprentices' Library (1824) and the Sheffield Mechanics' and Apprentices' Library founded a year earlier. The library in Liverpool flourished for some years, and by 1832 had 3,500 volumes, 1,200 readers and issues of 25,000 per annum. It later fell out of fashion and finally disappeared after the opening of the city's Free Library in 1852. The Sheffield library was founded by T. A. Ward, editor of the *Sheffield Independent*, and unlike that in Liverpool, which was run by middle-class supporters, was run largely by the working-class members themselves. By the 1840s there were 600–700 members, and by 1850 the library contained over 6,000 volumes and made issues of about 30,000 a year. Curiously, despite the differences in management, it was the Liverpool library that operated the more open acquisition policy, whereas Sheffield tried to ban 'novels, plays, and works subversive of the Christian religion'. In Scotland, one of the most important workmen's libraries was the Edinburgh Mechanics' Subscription Library, founded in 1825 by members of the mechanics' institute who wanted to continue their studies during the summer when the institute was closed. By 1830 this library claimed over 350 members, and by 1851 it had 18,000 volumes and issues of 200,000 per annum. In Wales, the Society for the Improvement of the Working Men of Glamorgan, founded in 1831, ran an itinerating library from its headquarters in Cowbridge, but the library seems to have disappeared after 1832.

Birkbeck's work in Glasgow attracted considerable interest, and several proposals for new institutions to cater for working men were published. In 1821 Leonard Horner founded the Edinburgh School of Arts, which had its

library a year later, the management remaining in the hands of the patrons. A number of working men, dissatisfied with Anderson's Institution, founded the Glasgow Mechanics' Institution in 1823, and here control remained in the members' hands. In 1824, by which time Birkbeck was in London, the Scottish examples inspired Brougham and others to call for subscriptions to finance a London Mechanics' Institution, which opened in 1824. The London example in turn was quickly followed, and some hundreds of institutes were established throughout England and Wales, with a handful in Ireland. Growth was particularly marked in Lancashire and Yorkshire, where, apart from Liverpool and Sheffield, some other towns already had workmen's libraries. Mechanics' institutes were opened in Manchester and Leeds in 1824, and within a year more than twenty others followed in the north of England. Birmingham had an institute from 1826, Coventry from 1828, and other examples can be found in East Anglia, in outer London and on the south coast.

The aim of the institutes was to offer instruction in science and technology, through lectures and classes; and in almost every case the institutes were provided with a library of texts in these fields. In his influential *Practical observations upon the education of the people, addressed to the working-classes, and their employers*, first published in 1825, Brougham stated his belief that working men were readers – 'even the poorest have a little time and a few pence which they can spend on books', he wrote – and from this premise proposed the establishment of lectures and classes in the larger towns, whilst 'no place is too small for a mechanics' library'. Brougham believed that mechanics had a real desire to learn more of the science and theory on which the industrial changes were based; he believed too that, given the opportunity, mechanics were likely themselves to provide new ideas and insights that would offer further industrial advance. The purpose was essentially didactic, but it was also rooted in middle-class assumptions about the nature of society. 'Self-improvement' was not seen as a means whereby working men could transcend their class, except very occasionally, nor were mechanics' institutes to be a means whereby political radicalism could be spread. To this end, most institutes excluded political and religious controversy, particularly in the content of their libraries. Novels and other forms of entertaining literature were also excluded.

Mabel Tylecote has pointed out that 'The great majority of these institutions owed their foundation to the efforts of men of the employing class and received very considerable financial support from them at the outset.'[22] The

22 M. Tylecote, *The mechanics' institutes of Lancashire and Yorkshire before 1851* (Manchester, 1957), 57.

question of who was to manage the institutes became controversial: most were run by middle- and upper-class supporters and many depended on middle-class funding. Partly for this reason, and with a few notable exceptions, contemporaries recognised that by mid-century, when some hundreds of institutes had been founded, the movement had largely failed in its original aims. Artisans had proved to be less than enthusiastic in their support of classes and lectures devoted to science, and disappointingly lukewarm about suggesting innovations in their work-place. Few artisans, however literate, had received sufficient elementary education to leave them capable of handling lectures and classes in science. Moreover, men who had spent long hours in the factory, often involving considerable manual labour, were in no condition to carry on several hours of evening study. What they wanted from the institutes was something different – the opportunity to socialise, to relax and to be entertained. They were often most interested in the very areas which the institutes sought to exclude – politics, religion and entertaining literature. At the same time, numbers of workers who lacked even basic literacy skills joined the institutes, many of which found that the most popular and enduring classes were those offering elementary education in the three Rs. In some institutes such classes came to be offered also to juveniles and women, and were often well supported.

The need to maintain membership numbers, and the fees they represented, forced many institutes to offer more and more lectures and classes in fields outwith the founders' aims. Increasingly their offerings looked more like entertainment than instruction. Nowhere was this broadening of scope more obvious, or more controversial, than in their libraries, where increasing amounts of 'entertaining' literature were to be found, including history, travel and above all fiction. Richard Altick comments that:

> The libraries gave more trouble than all the other institute activities put together. Since they were to be used principally, if not exclusively, by the working class, they could contain only books that were proper for mechanics to read, and neither works of 'controversy' nor of fiction should be admitted to the shelves.[23]

In an attempt to meet the need for acceptable texts, Brougham and his allies had founded the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (SDUK), which sought to provide the popular audience with material in all branches of knowledge. The SDUK was backed up by a handful of like-minded publishers,

23 Altick, *English common reader*, 195.

notably Charles Knight, and the supply of monographs was supplemented by a series of journals and magazines. But the SDUK was far from successful among working people; the demand for more liberal acquisition policies continued, and in Mabel Tylecote's words:

> Popular demands upon library departments were generally pressed home and resistance from orthodox managements became increasingly difficult as the membership of institutes became ever more associated with the advantages which the library could offer.[24]

The desire for newspapers and magazines also forced many institutes to open newspaper or reading rooms, often despite strong opposition from managing committees. Although these usually continued to exclude radical material, their popularity was further confirmation that the original purpose of the mechanics' institute movement was in danger of being lost. Perhaps the most obvious sign of this was, however, the gradual shift in the nature of the membership of many institutes. Intended originally to serve a specific group – the artisans – by mid-century many institutes had an increasing proportion of members drawn from the lower middle classes, including clerks, shopkeepers, junior managers, and their wives. Although some institutes – particularly those where working-class members had been able to take over the running themselves – continued to draw mainly from the working classes, many others were more or less middle class in membership, governance and programme content.

Yet the failure of the institute movement to meet its original aims should not obscure its success in other ways. Although in the end they may have done little to advance popular scientific education, they did much more to bolster the inadequate system of elementary education and thus improve levels of literacy and numeracy. One study concluded that despite the suspicion with which the institutes' middle-class sponsorship was regarded, mechanics' institutes

> provided an opportunity for large numbers of working men to encounter systematic courses of learning. They provided another means of access to books and periodicals (although censorship often limited the range): many had tiny collections, but by the mid-century some of them had very extensive collections.[25]

Among the largest was that of the Manchester Mechanics' Institution, founded in 1824. Its library was opened in 1825, and a salaried Librarian was the first paid

24 Tylecote, *Mechanics' institutes*, 110.
25 J. Lawson and H. Silver, *A social history of education in England* (London, 1973), 261.

officer (at £20 per annum). The collection grew rapidly, from 823 volumes in 1825 to 13,000 in 1850. Usage of the library also rose steadily, from twenty-four issues per member in 1835 to fifty-four in 1848. From 1838 to 1839 the library was open from 10 a.m. to 9.30 p.m. every day except Sunday. Unlike some institutes, Manchester's stock was varied, described as 'promiscuous and not limited to scientific works', and this no doubt contributed to its popularity.[26] In 1841, the library department was described as 'the most important, and one best calculated to afford the highest degree of pleasure and to communicate instruction the most beneficial and permanent'.[27] In the same year a news-room was opened to extend the facilities enjoyed by Manchester's 2,000 or so members.

In contrast to Manchester, run by middle-class patrons, the Huddersfield Mechanics' Institution, opened in 1841, was founded and run by its working-class members. It never achieved the size of Manchester (regular members numbered some 887 by 1851) but was regarded as among the most successful in achieving its aim of delivering improved education for working men, and from the outset classes received the closest attention, with the library being placed last in the order of priority. Although subsequently the library's importance was recognised, 'There was no question at any time of the library becoming the main consideration with the members, as was the case elsewhere, but its popularity was manifest.'[28] It grew slowly, to 1,700 volumes in 1850, and initially its use was subject to an additional fee of 2d a month, later abolished. It was run by two or three honorary librarians and open on weekday evenings. The library obtained a wide range of material and by 1851 was making some 300 issues on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

W. A. Munford's study of the institute libraries shows that many were very small;[29] by the mid-1830s the hundred or so institutes then in existence had no more than 100,000 volumes between them. In 1839 the SDUK published a manual for mechanics' institutes: part of the model plan for an institute was a library of 500 square feet (which might also double as the boardroom); the contents should be systematically arranged and catalogued, and the stock regularly monitored to weed out redundant or unwanted material. A list of some 500 titles was suggested as a core library collection. Hudson estimated that by 1850 there were over 700 mechanics institutes in Britain, including over 600 in England, twelve in Wales, fifty-five in Scotland and twenty-five in

26 Tylecote, *Mechanics' institutes*, 153. 27 *Ibid.*, 152. 28 *Ibid.*, 216

29 W. A. Munford, 'George Birkbeck and mechanics' institutes', in C. B. Oldham, W. A. Munford and S. Nowell-Smith, *English libraries 1800–1850* (London, 1958), 33–58.

Ireland.[30] Munford suggests that the real total was probably over 800, and of these he was able to compare the libraries of 622 institutions. Although by now Liverpool had 15,300 volumes, Manchester 13,000 and London 7,000, over 400 institutes had stocks of less than 1,000 volumes: 'The typical Mechanics' Institute, in fact, was very small, had very few members, and had only a very small library book-stock.'[31] Contemporaries were apt to criticise the quality of library stocks; George Dawson, giving evidence to the Select Committee on Public Libraries, described the institute libraries of the midland counties thus:

> The chief libraries for operatives are those of the Mechanics' institutions, and they are small. Many of the books are gift books, turned out of people's shelves, and are never used, and old magazines of different kinds, so that, out of 1,000 volumes, perhaps there may be only 400 or 500 useful ones. The rest are, many of them, only annual registers and old religious magazines that are never taken down from the shelves.[32]

Usage of the libraries, despite their shortcomings, was nevertheless considerable: Altick suggests that the 600 or so English institutes were by 1850 achieving annual combined issues of 1,820,000; he also points out that it was sometimes in the smaller institutes, which were more likely to remain under working-class control, that the libraries, even if small, were most heavily used and most appreciated.[33]

The failure of the mechanics' institutes to reach a large working-class audience was in part due to the emergence of rival institutions, founded by working men themselves – a well-known example is the New Manchester Mechanics' Institute.[34] Few of these survived for long, and some eventually rejoined the old institute from which they had broken away. Even before the emergence of the mechanics' institutes, however, there had been other institutions offering forms of 'mutual improvement' within a more overtly political context. The Hampden Clubs in the north of England were principally set up to agitate for political reform, but some ran classes and discussion groups. In 1817 a number of secular Sunday schools were set up in Lancashire which also ran classes for

30 J. W. Hudson, *The history of adult education* (London, 1851). Hudson's account of mechanics' institutes has the virtue of contemporaneity, but later writers have corrected many of his statistics.

31 Munford, 'George Birkbeck', 54.

32 Dawson, a Baptist pastor and lecturer in Birmingham, appeared before the Committee on 3 May 1849: *Report from the Select Committee on Public Libraries*, 79.

33 Altick, *English common reader*, 199.

34 R. G. Kirby, 'An early experiment in workers' self-education: the Manchester New Mechanics' Institution, 1829–1835', in D. Cardwell (ed.), *Artisan to graduate* (Manchester, 1974), 87–98.

adults who came 'to read the news or hear it read'.[35] The Union Societies ran classes and reading clubs.

The radical ideas of Robert Owen inspired much working-class activity, particularly a large number of co-operative societies, such as the Brighton Co-operative Society, founded in 1827, which ran its own school and appointed a librarian among its first officers. Later, and to some extent at least as a counter to the mechanics' institutes, numerous Halls of Science were established during the 1830s and 1840s, and during their heyday many of these had their own libraries. Similarly, the growing Chartist movement set up their own halls and schools, and Brian Simon records a number of substantial libraries, at Bradford, Marylebone (2,000 volumes), Rochdale (a lending library of 5,000 volumes by the 1860s), Greenwich, Deptford, Heywood and Keighley.[36] But the main purpose of most of these working-class organisations was not educational, but political. The Owenite and Chartist efforts to provide education to the working-classes were directed at political ends: for the Chartists in particular, improved and universal education would come only through the widening of the franchise and working-class participation in the business of parliament; without this, no amount of 'self-improvement' would change society.

The hundred years that culminated in the Public Libraries Act reveal a variety of libraries purporting to serve the mass of the people. There is no doubt that during this period rising literacy and an expanding popular press brought reading to a much wider public than before; the education of the poor and the control of their reading were areas of central concern to reformers of all persuasions. For all sides in the political arena, books and reading were tools of immense importance, and libraries provided a means to control and direct their use.

35 B. Simon, *Studies in the history of education 1780–1870* (London, 1960), 188.
36 *Ibid*., 246–8.

24

Scientific and medical libraries: the rise of the institution

JOHN SYMONS

Specialised medical and scientific libraries barely existed in England in 1750, although there were numerous libraries in which the subjects were well represented. By 1850 a flourishing network of specialised libraries had developed, almost entirely through private enterprise, though government involvement had begun.[1]

In the eighteenth century, scientific subjects such as chemistry and botany were closely allied to medicine, and a medical training was the only formal scientific qualification available. Many would-be scientists earned their livings as medical practitioners or, if they were fortunate enough to be employed as scientists, had originally qualified as physicians, surgeons or apothecaries. Medical and scientific libraries were significantly different. Medical libraries developed to serve well-defined communities of medical professionals. By contrast there were very few professional scientists until well on in the nineteenth century, but people from a wide variety of backgrounds had an interest in science, so that, while medicine tended to be the preserve of specialised libraries, general libraries were inclined to include science. When specialised scientific societies and libraries did begin to develop, they served interested amateurs as well as professionals. The libraries discussed in this chapter existed primarily to serve the needs of the professional classes.

Another feature worth mentioning is the peculiar English development of the London, Oxford and Cambridge triangle. London was the capital city and the headquarters of national institutions and professional associations, but had

1 A. Batty Shaw, 'The oldest medical societies in Great Britain', *Medical History* 12 (1968), 232–44; W. J. Bishop, 'Medical book societies in England in the 18th and early 19th centuries', *Bulletin of the Medical Library Association* 45 (1957), 337–50; C. R. English, 'Medical books in early public libraries', *Society for the Social History of Medicine Bulletin* 39 (1986), 16–19; Sir D'A. Power, *British medical societies* (London, 1939); J. L. Thornton, *Medical books, libraries and collectors*, 2nd edn (London, 1966); A. Besson (ed.), *Thornton's medical books, libraries and collectors*, 3rd edn (Aldershot, 1990).

no university until 1826. Oxford and Cambridge were the country's only two university cities, and their collegiate structure led to the development of a range of libraries there. The picture in Scotland and Ireland, of course, was different.

London medical libraries

The British Museum library, opened in 1759, was largely based on the library of the physician and naturalist Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1743) and the museum's remit included natural history. The Royal Society had a wider range of interests than now and a strong medical membership. However, the most important component of its library was a general collection, the Arundel Library presented in 1667 by the sixth duke of Norfolk. Sion College, although primarily a theological library for the London clergy, was a copyright library and had significant medical holdings, in particular the library of Dr John Lawson (*c.*1632–1705). There were also medical books at Dr Williams's Library.

There were three London-based medical professional institutions: the Royal College of Physicians had lost most of its original library in the Great Fire of 1665, but recovered thanks to the bequest in 1680 of the library of Henry Pierrepont, marquess of Dorchester (1606–80). This was a collection of over 3,000 volumes covering medicine, science, mathematics, law, theology, philosophy, classics and history. The library seems to have been efficiently run. Dr Richard Tyson (1680–1750), Harveian Librarian from 1734 to 1750, had been assiduous in his duties and had the assistance of George Edwards (1694–1773), Beadle from 1733 to 1760, an eminent naturalist in his own right, who served the college so well that the office of Harveian Librarian was allowed to lapse and the library was left in the hands of successive Beadles. The library was open to fellows and licentiates, who were required to pay an admission fee of two guineas and were allowed to borrow books and manuscripts. A catalogue was printed in 1757 and the library was generally in a flourishing condition. Its weaknesses were that it was restricted to members of the college, it was less a medical library than a general library with a strong medical bias, and there was an element of *laissez-faire* in its maintenance.[2]

2 G. Davenport, I. McDonald and C. Moss-Gibbons (eds.), *The Royal College of Physicians and its collections* (London, 2001); Sir G. Clark and A. M. Cooke, *A history of the Royal College of Physicians*, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1964–72); C. E. Newman, 'The first library of the Royal College of Physicians', *Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of London* 3 (1969), 299–307; L. M. Payne and C. E. Newman, 'The history of the College Library: the Dorchester Library',

The Society of Apothecaries had lost its original library in the Great Fire but in 1739 received a legacy of botanical books from Dr Samuel Dale (1659?–1739) of Braintree, for the use of the Chelsea Physic Garden, and soon afterwards a small room at Apothecaries' Hall was converted into a library.[3]

The Company of Surgeons was without a library: the joint Company of Barber-Surgeons had had a library, described in 1710 by Zacharias Conrad von Uffenbach as 'a press with glass doors, full of surgical books, or nearly so, some anatomical, but nothing remarkable'; this may or may not have been the company's pre-Great Fire library. When the Surgeons and Barbers separated in 1745 they failed to reach an agreement over the library, and in 1751 the Barbers sold the books to a bookseller for £13. The room intended for the library at the new Surgeons' Hall became the clerk's office.[4]

The various London hospitals had books, but hardly enough to deserve the name of libraries: there were certainly books at St Thomas's Hospital, probably also at St Bartholomew's, and certainly at eighteenth-century foundations such as the London and Middlesex hospitals. There were medical men willing to share their private libraries with their colleagues. Sloane had been a prime example, as was his younger contemporary Dr Richard Mead (1673–1754), whose library was dispersed after his death.[5]

Medical library provision after 1773

The turning point in medical library provision in London was 1773, when the Quaker physician and philanthropist John Coakley Lettsom (1744–1815) founded the Medical Society of London. Its principal aim, still fulfilled, *mutatis mutandis*, was to be a social and learned society for the medical profession, then comprising physicians, surgeons and apothecaries, but the provision of a

Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of London 4 (1970), 234–46; Payne and Newman, 'The history of the College Library 1688–1727', *Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of London* 5 (1971), 385–96; Payne and Newman, 'The history of the College Library: George Edwards, Library Keeper', *Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of London* 7 (1973), 145–53; Payne and Newman, 'The history of the College Library 1760–1792: in the time of George III', *Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of London* 8 (1974), 283–93.

3 S. Minter, *The apothecaries' garden: a new history of the Chelsea Physic Garden* (Stroud, 2000); W. B. Taylor, *Catalogue of the library of the Society of Apothecaries* (London, 1913), introduction by J. E. Harting.

4 Z. C. von Uffenbach, *London in 1710*, ed. W. H. Quarrell and M. Mare (London, 1934); C. and H. Buckland-Wright, 'The library of the Company of Barbers and Surgeons', in I. Burn (ed.), *The Company of Barbers and Surgeons* (London, 2000), 129–51; S. Young, *The annals of the Barber-Surgeons of London* (London, 1890).

5 I. Jenkins, 'Dr Richard Mead (1673–1754) and his circle', in R. G. W. Anderson and others (eds.), *Enlightening the British* (London, 2003), 127–32.

library was always an important function. Earlier medical societies in London had existed for social purposes, or as professional pressure groups without libraries.

The Medical Society's first home was in Crane Court, Fleet Street, and the library was primarily a lending library, open for two hours on Monday evenings, when meetings were held, and one hour on other evenings. In 1788 the society moved to larger premises in Bolt Court. The library then had about 10,000 books and the first catalogue was printed in 1790. In 1800 the society bought the library of its president, James Sims (1741–1820), containing about 6,000 volumes including many early books, so that the library could justify Lettsom's initial expectation of coverage of 'the best ancient and modern authors'. By 1826 the library contained 30,000 volumes. A new catalogue was printed in 1829, and in 1850 the society merged with the Westminster Medical Society and moved to George Street, Hanover Square.[6]

Sims served as president from 1786 to 1808, and his long reign and autocratic behaviour led to the foundation in 1805 of the rival Medical and Chirurgical Society, forerunner of the present Royal Society of Medicine, located first at Verulam Buildings, Gray's Inn, then from 1810 to 1834 in Lincoln's Inn Fields. This society began actively to build up a library, with particular emphasis on foreign publications. As opening hours were limited, the library doubled as the clerk's living accommodation. The first catalogue was published in 1816, and in 1832 a full-time Sub-Librarian was employed. At the end of 1834 the society secured a royal charter and in 1835 followed the westward trend of the profession to Berners Street. By the middle of the century the stock stood at about 17,000 volumes.[7]

There had been parallel developments among the Surgeons. In 1800 the company was transformed into the Royal College of Surgeons (of London until 1843, then of England). The acquisition of the museum of the surgeon and anatomist John Hunter (1728–93) provided the stimulus for a move to build up a library in 1807. Over 800 volumes were acquired by gift in the first year. In 1828 the library was formally opened and Robert Willis (1799–1878) was appointed as Librarian. The accommodation was improved in 1836, when the

6 P. Hunting, *The Medical Society of London 1773–2003* (London, 2003); F. Hickey, 'The library of the Medical Society of London 1773–1969', unpublished thesis, College of Librarianship Wales, Aberystwyth (1969); T. Hunt (ed.), *The Medical Society of London 1773–1973* (London, 1972); Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, *Books from the library of the Medical Society of London: an exhibition* (London, 1985).

7 P. Hunting, *The history of the Royal Society of Medicine* (London, 2002); N. Moore and S. Paget, *The Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London centenary, 1805–1905* (Aberdeen, 1905); P. Wade, 'The history and development of the Library of the Royal Society of Medicine', *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine* 55 (1962), 627–36.

college was rebuilt, and when Willis retired in 1845 the library contained 10,000 volumes of periodicals and 12,500 volumes of monographs. Willis's retirement was, unfortunately, the signal for a forty-year period of decline.[8]

The library of the Royal College of Physicians continued to grow steadily. Perhaps the most important bequest was the library of the anatomist Matthew Baillie (1761–1823), consisting of about 1,000 books, with an endowment of £300. This coincided with the college's move from the City to larger premises in Pall Mall East, where the library was given lavish new accommodation and continued to grow, though more by gift than by purchase. The library was well stocked but always hampered by lack of funds, and recurrent proposals for its more positive development as a modern medical library did not reach fruition until the revival of the office of Harveian Librarian in 1856, in the person of Dr William Munk (1816–98), compiler of *Munk's Roll*.[9]

The various hospitals had embryonic libraries, which developed steadily, particularly with the rise of associated medical schools in the eighteenth century. St Thomas's Hospital had a library by the 1740s but run in haphazard fashion until 1842.[10] At Guy's Hospital, the Physical Society, founded in 1771 for the medical staff and students, started a library in 1775. The succession of catalogues shows that it was very small: thirty-eight books in 1782, 135 in 1786, 723 in 1804, 820 by 1824, but the fact that the society had catalogues printed is testimony to the library's activity. In 1830 a separate society for students was established, the Pupils' Physical Society, and in 1852 the original Physical Society was dissolved; its records and most of the books are now at King's College London. An interesting feature is the involvement of the local bookselling firm of Cox, who provided the society with a deputy librarian, did its printing, supplied stationery, and rented out a room for committee meetings.[11]

At St Bartholomew's Hospital the stimulus for the creation of a library came with the foundation of the Medical and Philosophical Society in 1795. The library was established in 1806 and run by the society until 1830, when

8 J. P. Blandy and J. S. P. Lumley (eds.), *The Royal College of Surgeons of England* (London, 2000); W. R. LeFanu, 'The library of the College', in Sir Z. Cope, *The Royal College of Surgeons of England: a history* (London, 1959), 257–73.

9 L. M. Payne and C. E. Newman, 'The history of the College Library: the last thirty years in Warwick Lane', *Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of London* 9 (1974), 87–98; Payne and Newman, 'The history of the College Library: the new library in Pall Mall', *Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of London* 11 (1977), 163–70; Payne and Newman, 'Dr Munk, Harveian Librarian: the first period', *Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of London* 11 (1977), 281–8.

10 D. T. Bird, *Catalogue of the printed books and manuscripts (1491–1900) in the library of St Thomas's Hospital Medical School* (London, 1984).

11 A. Baster, 'The library of the Guy's Hospital Physical Society 1775–1825', *Guy's Hospital Gazette* 98 (1984), 33–6, 75–8, 115–18.

it was handed over to the hospital governors, who erected a building for it in 1834.[12] Nineteenth-century foundations, such as Charing Cross, University College and King's College hospitals, had libraries from the start, or soon afterwards. The Royal Veterinary College was founded in 1791 with a library.[13]

There is evidence of libraries at various flourishing private medical schools, but little firm information beyond the occasional survival of a book. St Thomas's absorbed the library of the Webb Street School in 1842. Specialist medical societies did not develop until the second half of the nineteenth century and most amalgamated into the Royal Society of Medicine in 1907.

Only two local medical societies appear to have had libraries. The Hunterian Society was founded in 1819, primarily for practitioners in the City and East End who found the location of the Medical Society in Fleet Street and the Medical and Chirurgical Society in Lincoln's Inn Fields inconvenient. It quickly began to collect a library of both classic and up-to-date works. An honorary librarian was appointed in 1834 and a catalogue printed in 1836. By 1848 there were 1,650 volumes.[14] The Brompton Medical Book Society was founded in 1834, primarily as a circulating book club.

General circulating libraries sometimes contained medical books, but mostly those intended for the lay public, such as Buchan's *Domestic medicine* and Wesley's *Primitive physic*. There was a network of medical circulating libraries operated by medical booksellers who clustered near hospitals and medical schools. Callow's (later Churchill's) in Soho was well placed for St George's and the Middlesex and Westminster hospitals.[15] Anderson's in Smithfield served St Bartholomew's, and Cox's in Southwark served Guy's and St Thomas's. These acted as unofficial social centres, but this function declined as the hospitals provided better library facilities and the Royal College of Surgeons and Medical and Chirurgical Society offered a club-like ambience for their members. The most successful medical lending library, attached to Lewis's bookshop in Gower Street, near University College Hospital, was established in 1852 and survived until 1989. It deserves mention, as its efficient service gradually supplanted the smaller society libraries, which commonly abandoned the acquisition of the latest publications in favour of a subscription to Lewis's.[16]

12 V. C. Medvei and J. L. Thornton, *The Royal Hospital of St Bartholomew 1123–1973* (London, 1974).

13 R. M. Nicholas, *The development of medical libraries within the University of London and associated institutes*, unpublished thesis, University College London (1976).

14 R. Palmer and J. Taylor, *The Hunterian Society: a catalogue of its records and collections* (London, 1990).

15 'Obituary, John Churchill', *Medical Times and Gazette* 2 (1875), 197–200.

16 H. L. Jackson, *Lewis's 1844–1944* (London, 1945); D. D. Gibbs, 'In memoriam H. K. L.', *British Medical Journal* 299 (1989), 1,231.

Provincial medical libraries

In the mid-eighteenth century numerous libraries had good medical and scientific holdings, usually the result of individual bequests. Older literature was well represented, but there was usually no provision for keeping collections up to date. Important medical and scientific collections in Oxford and Cambridge libraries mostly derived from the *pietas* of medical alumni. They tended to be static collections, useful for older literature and normally restricted to college fellows.[17] An opportunity was missed in Oxford in 1749, when the Radcliffe Library was opened in James Gibbs's splendid Radcliffe Camera. As John Radcliffe (1650?–1714), whose bequest led to the library's foundation, had been a physician, there was expectation of a medical and scientific library, but it developed rather aimlessly as a general library. It began to specialise in medicine and science in 1810, when George Williams (1762–1834), Professor of Botany, was appointed Librarian. It had about 14,000 books by 1856 and in 1861 was moved to the University Museum, eventually developing into the Radcliffe Science Library under the wing of the Bodleian.[18]

The cathedral libraries functioned to some extent as local community libraries, at least for the local professional classes, and most had good holdings in medicine and natural history, but again predominantly biased to earlier books. There were often important holdings in local endowed town and parish libraries, as in Nottingham. Preston had the library of Dr Richard Shepherd (1694–1761), and there were comprehensive local libraries such as Chetham's at Manchester and the Plume Library at Maldon.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century, medical practitioners in various towns began to found medical societies (sometimes with libraries), medical libraries and book clubs. Some flourished, but others declined after a while, though their books may exist. The most elusive are the book clubs. Often the only surviving evidence of their existence is a single book with a label or circulation list.[19] As in London, a library might grow up under the wing of a hospital, dispensary or medical school. At Liverpool, for example, in the 1770s a group of local surgeons began to club together to buy books jointly. In 1779 this became formalised as the Liverpool Medical Library with books housed at the Infirmary and membership open to

17 P. Morgan, *Oxford libraries outside the Bodleian*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1972).

18 S. G. Gillam (ed.), *The building accounts of the Radcliffe Camera* (Oxford, 1958); Bodleian Library, *Bibliotheca Radcliviana, 1749–1949: catalogue of an exhibition* (Oxford, 1949); I. Guest, *Dr John Radcliffe and his Trust* (London, 1991).

19 A. W. Russell, 'Medical Book Society, of Newark, Southwell, and the neighbourhood', *Medical History Review (University of Nottingham Medical Library)* 2 (1973), 1 and plate 1.

'non-medical gentlemen'. This developed into the still-existing Liverpool Medical Institution.[20]

Exeter acquired a medical library in 1787 when Dr Thomas Glass (1709–86) left his library to the cathedral 'for the use of any physician of the city'. In 1814 local practitioners established the Devon and Exeter Medical Library, and the Dean and Chapter deposited the Glass collection there, reclaiming it in 1948. In 1852 the library was accommodated in a special building at the Devon and Exeter Hospital, raised by subscription among the local practitioners.[21] Bristol and Newcastle both had a succession of short-lived medical book societies in this period.[22]

At Leicester, the Permanent Library, a general library founded in 1790, included medical men among its members. This was soon paralleled by the Leicester Medical Book Society founded by local medical practitioners. There seems to have been some overlap in membership, and both used booksellers as their base. Unlike the Newcastle and Bristol societies, which held discussion meetings, the Leicester society was purely a book circulation society. Its arrangements with booksellers proved unsatisfactory and in 1847 the books were moved to the Permanent Library on a rental basis.[23]

At Nottingham the Standfast Library at the Bluecoat School, presented in 1744 by Dr William Standfast (1683–1754) 'for the use of the clergy, lawyers, physicians, and other persons of a liberal learned education', was transferred in 1816 to the newly founded Nottingham Subscription Library (usually known as Bromley House Library). A Medical Book Society seems to have come into existence at about the same time, forerunner of the present Nottingham Medico-Chirurgical Society, which sold its library to Nottingham University in 1971.[24]

At Norwich, the Norfolk and Norwich United Medical Book Society was founded in 1824, but there had been general subscription libraries in the city

20 Liverpool Medical Institution, *Catalogue of the books to the end of the 19th century* (Liverpool, 1968); J. A. Shepherd, *A history of the Liverpool Medical Institution* (Liverpool, 1979).

21 P. W. Thomas, *Medicine and science at Exeter Cathedral library: a short-title catalogue of printed books, 1483–1900* (Exeter, 2003); M. P. Crighton, *A catalogue of the medical books and manuscripts . . . in Exeter Cathedral library* (Exeter, 1934); Devon and Exeter Medico-Chirurgical Society and Exeter Medical Library, *Medical art and history in Exeter: an exhibition* (Exeter, 1955); *Exeter Medical Library* (Exeter, 1965).

22 Sir W. E. Hulme, 'The medical societies of Newcastle upon Tyne', *Newcastle Medical Journal* 25 (1958), 163–226.

23 Leicester Medical Society, *The library catalogue and a history of the library*, by E. R. Frizelle and K. F. C. Brown (Leicester, 1990).

24 R. T. Coope and J. Y. Corbett, *Bromley House 1752–1991* (Nottingham, 1991); Sir H. D. Rolleston, *Centenary of the Nottingham Medico-Chirurgical Society* (Nottingham, 1928); J. B. Cochrane, *The Nottingham Medico-Chirurgical Society* (Nottingham, 1978).

before that, as well as a library at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, which was presented to the new society. One of the founding members was Dr John Yelloly (1774–1842), active in the foundation of the Medical and Chirurgical Society of London and responsible for its first printed library catalogue. The library tried to serve the surrounding area, as well as Norwich itself, but an attempt to expedite this by purchasing three copies of each new book strained the society's finances. The society took out a subscription to Lewis's in 1858 and by then the accommodation was cramped and the books predominantly of historical interest.[25]

Another club was the Birmingham Medical Library, established in 1825, again in a room rented from a local bookseller, but it did not flourish, perhaps because the subscription was set too high. A quarrel between two of the members over the winding-up of the library led to a challenge to a duel, a rare occurrence in library history. A new Birmingham Circulating Medical Book Society was founded in 1831, limited to twenty members, and this survived until 1875 when the present Birmingham Medical Institute was established.[26]

The Manchester Medical Society was founded in 1834, surprisingly late by comparison with other towns and cities, probably because of the existence of the flourishing Literary and Philosophical Society founded in 1781. By 1834, however, the medical practitioners were feeling the need of their own society and of an exclusively medical library. The library issued its first catalogue in 1835, when it already had 1,075 volumes, but it grew slowly until 1858 when the dynamic Thomas Windsor (1831–1910) became honorary librarian and built the library up to be a major resource. By 1872 the library had nearly 16,000 volumes and was deposited at Owens College, now Manchester University.[27]

This random selection of libraries typifies the development of medical library provision in England between 1750 and 1850. To a large extent it parallels the similar expansion in the establishment of general book clubs and circulating libraries and the foundation of literary and learned societies. Demand changed: in 1750 a medical library would be primarily expected to provide older medical literature, from the classical authors to Harvey, Sydenham and Boerhaave, which could largely be supplied by the general scholarly libraries. By 1850 the demand was mainly for current literature, and a network of specialised libraries had come into being to supply it.

25 A. Batty Shaw, *The Norwich Medico-Chirurgical Society* (Norwich, 1967).
26 Bishop, 'Medical book societies'.
27 E. M. Brockbank, *A centenary history of the Manchester Medical Society* (Manchester, 1934); W. J. Elwood and A. F. Tuxford, *Some Manchester doctors* (Manchester, 1984).

Scientific libraries

Specialised scientific libraries began to be established to serve a more diffuse community.[28] Sometimes the need for scientific books was filled by a general circulating library, as with the Bristol Library Society and Leicester Permanent Library, or the Norwich Public Library founded in 1784, all of which had local medical men involved in their foundation. The growth of scientific libraries was more haphazard than medical libraries. Every city had its corps of local medical practitioners, but there were no comparable local groups of scientific professionals, so that there was no development of scientific reading societies or of specialist circulating libraries. Where a local scientific society grew up it might be due to the presence of a particular dynamic individual or group of individuals, or to the interests of local industrialists. The Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society has been mentioned;[29] a similar Literary and Philosophical Society was founded at Newcastle in 1789.[30] Erasmus Darwin (1731–1802) founded the Derby Philosophical Society in 1783, when he moved there from Lichfield, where he had been a member of the thriving scientific community centred around Birmingham. The society, which quickly developed a library, was dependent on the personality of Darwin (who selected the books) and lost momentum after his death, although it continued until 1857.[31]

In London the Linnean Society (1788) had a library from the start. One of its founders, Sir James Edward Smith (1759–1828), had purchased the library and collections of the society's eponym, Carl Linnaeus (1707–78) in 1784, and on his death his executors sold the collection to the society, nearly bankrupting it in the process.[32] The Royal Institution was founded in 1799 and immediately started its library, fostered by such figures as Sir Benjamin Thompson, Count Rumford (1753–1814), Thomas Young (1773–1829) and the second Earl Spencer (1758–1834). Its most important early purchase was the library of the antiquary Thomas Astle (1753–1803) in 1804.[33]

28 J. L. Thornton and R. Tully, *Scientific books, libraries and collectors*, 3rd edn (London, 1971), and *Supplement 1969–75* (London, 1978); A. Hunter (ed.), *Thornton and Tully's scientific books, libraries and collectors*, 4th edn (Aldershot, 2000); J. B. Tooley, 'London scientific libraries in the 19th century', *Library History* 2 (1971), 139–51; 3 (1974), 129–39.

29 R. A. Smith, *A centenary of science in Manchester* (London, 1883).

30 R. S. Watson, *The history of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle-upon-Tyne (1793–1896)* (London, 1897; reprint, Farnborough, Hants, 1970).

31 E. Robinson, 'The Derby Philosophical Society', *Annals of Science* 9 (1953), 359–67, also in A. E. Musson and E. Robinson, *Science and technology in the Industrial Revolution* (Manchester, 1969), 190–9.

32 A. T. Gage and W. T. Stearn, *A bicentenary history of the Linnean Society of London* (London, 1998).

33 K. Vernon, 'The library of the Royal Institution 1799–1954', *Proceedings of the Royal Institution of Great Britain* 35 (1955), 879–89.

Another library founded at this time, which never quite lived up to its promise, was the London Institution founded in 1807 by a consortium of City businessmen, which eventually settled in Finsbury Circus, with an imposing building and a large library. It offered scientific lectures, but the library stock was more general than scientific, and the institution was never well patronised as the professional classes drifted to the West End.

The Royal Society library had moved to Somerset House in 1781 and was gradually turning from a gentleman's library into a scientific library. It still had the Arundel Library, an outstanding general collection of about 2,700 printed books and 570 manuscripts. Sir Joseph Banks (1743–1820), president from 1778 to 1820, had a large personal library, which he made available to scholars, and which in 1828 went to the British Museum. The Arundel manuscripts were presented to the British Museum in 1829, in exchange for scientific books or cash, although it was suggested that they might have raised more money on the open market. Improvements in administration after the election of the duke of Sussex as President in 1830 were reflected in the library. Antonio Panizzi (1797–1879) was employed from 1832 to catalogue the scientific books and provoked a *cause célèbre* by producing a more elaborate catalogue than the Council considered necessary. The catalogue was eventually published in 1839, but the incident seems to have left the society suspicious of professional librarians.[34]

An unusual example of private enterprise was the botanical garden founded by William Curtis (1746–99) and maintained on a subscription basis, first at Lambeth from 1779, and from 1789 at Brompton. This included a reference library, mainly of recent publications, which survived both Curtis's death and the removal of the garden to Sloane Street in about 1809, but seems to have been dispersed in the 1820s.[35]

The most significant development in the early part of the nineteenth century in London was a gradual growth of specialist societies. The Horticultural Society of London was founded in 1804 and started its library in 1806. The original collection was sold in 1859 as a result of a financial crisis but the society recovered and flourishes as the Royal Horticultural Society.[36] The Geological Society (1807) started its library in 1809.[37] The Institution of Civil Engineers (1818) was the first such professional association in Europe and had a library from the start. The Royal Astronomical Society was founded in 1820

34 M. B. Hall, *The library and archives of the Royal Society 1660–1990* (London, 1992).
35 W. Noblett, 'William Curtis's botanical library', *Library*, 6th ser., 9 (1987), 1–22.
36 H. R. Fletcher, *The story of the Royal Horticultural Society 1804–1968* (London, 1969).
37 H. B. Woodward, *The history of the Geological Society of London* (London, 1907).

and the Zoological Society in 1826.[38] The (Royal) Entomological Society of London was founded in 1833, the Chemical Society in 1841, and the Institution of Mechanical Engineers in 1847. The foundation of the Geological Survey in 1835 under Sir Henry de la Beche (1796–1855), who presented his own library in 1843, marks the beginning of government involvement, although this did not become significant until after the Great Exhibition of 1851.

Turning to the provinces, the Radcliffe Library at Oxford has been mentioned. Surprisingly there was no comparable library at Cambridge and this deficiency was filled in 1819 with the foundation of the Cambridge Philosophical Society.[39] In 1814 the Royal Geological Society of Cornwall was founded in Penzance, intended for the benefit of the local mining industry, though it never quite fulfilled expectation.[40] Two societies were founded in Yorkshire in 1822: the Yorkshire Philosophical Society at York[41] and the Sheffield Literary and Philosophical Society.[42] However, as the century progressed, with improvements in communication, London increasingly dominated the scientific world and provincial scientific societies declined in importance, though their libraries continued to serve a useful function as local centres of information.

Medical and scientific libraries in Scotland

The medical library scene in eighteenth-century Scotland had certain significant differences. There were five universities to England's two, all granting medical degrees, and one, Edinburgh, a major centre of medical education, attracting students not only from the British Isles but from the European continent and America. Scotland had its own medical corporations, in both Edinburgh and Glasgow. In addition to specifically medical libraries, medical books were to be found in Edinburgh at the Advocates' Library and the Signet Library.[43]

38 R. Fish, 'The library and scientific publications of the Zoological Society of London: part 1', in S. Zuckerman (ed.), *The Zoological Society of London 1826–1976 and beyond* (London, 1976), 233–52.

39 A. R. Hall, *The Cambridge Philosophical Society: a history 1819–1969* (Cambridge, 1969).

40 Maggs Bros Ltd, *Catalogue 1270: a catalogue of books from the Library of the Royal Geological Society of Cornwall. With an introduction . . . on the sale of academic libraries*, by H. S. Torrens (London, 1999).

41 A. D. Orange, *Philosophers and provincials: the Yorkshire Philosophical Society from 1822 to 1844* (York, 1973).

42 W. S. Porter, *Sheffield Literary and Philosophical Society: a centenary retrospect 1822–1922* (Sheffield, 1922).

43 A. Bunch, *Hospitals and medical libraries in Scotland* (Glasgow, 1975); J. Jenkinson, *Scottish medical societies 1731–1939* (Edinburgh, 1993).

The Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh had been founded in 1681 and had established its library in the following year, although the library of the founder Sir Robert Sibbald (1641–1722) was acquired by the Advocates'. By the mid-eighteenth century it was experiencing space problems and a sale of duplicates and unwanted books was held in 1755. The possibility of amalgamation with the university was rejected in 1763. A new building for the college was completed in 1781 and thereafter the library grew steadily. Co-operation with the university was explored intermittently but never achieved. Catalogues were printed in 1767, 1769 (with an appendix in 1821) and 1849. The first salaried librarian was appointed in 1823, and in 1846 a new building was completed.[44]

The Royal College of Surgeons (1505) started a library in 1696. From 1761 to 1763 it was housed at the Royal Infirmary and then at the University Library. By the 1830s the university had become unhappy with this arrangement, although it was not finally discontinued until 1887. Meanwhile in 1832 the college erected a new building with provision for a library, which grew steadily, if slowly. Its catalogue, printed in 1863, shows that its holdings were not limited exclusively to medical works.[45]

The Royal Society of Edinburgh had originally been founded as the Medical Society in 1731, but its interests soon began to diversify and it became the Royal Society in 1783, having been known unofficially for some time as the Philosophical Society. The library's holdings continued to be predominantly medical until well into the nineteenth century, when it gradually shifted to the earth sciences.[46]

The Edinburgh medical faculty was established in 1726 and took over from Leiden the role of the medical school of choice for the English-speaking world, particularly during the reign of Alexander Monro *primus* (1697–1767) and *secundus* (1733–1817). Medicine developed into a distinct section within the University Library, which from 1764 incorporated the library of the Royal College of Surgeons. A catalogue of the medical books was published in 1773. By 1831 medicine was the largest section of the library.

In addition, the needs of Edinburgh medical students were catered for by a number of student societies. The Royal Medical Society (1737) collected an important library and improved its facilities after the erection of a purpose-built Hall in 1776. A salaried librarian was employed from 1779 and catalogues

44 W. S. Craig, *History of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh* (Oxford, 1976).

45 C. H. Creswell, *The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh: historical notes from 1505 to 1905* (Edinburgh, 1926).

46 N. Campbell and R. Smellie, *The Royal Society of Edinburgh (1783–1983)* (Edinburgh, 1983).

were printed in 1822 and 1837. By the 1830s the library had over 12,000 books. (The library was dispersed at Sotheby's in 1969.) Other student societies with smaller libraries were the Royal Physical Society (1771), which gradually shifted its interest to zoology, the Plinian Society, which flourished from 1823 to 1841, and the Hunterian Medical Society, founded in 1824, which dispersed its library in the 1850s.[47]

The Edinburgh Royal Infirmary established a library in 1748 and until 1776 also housed the library of the Royal Medical Society. It offered temporary accommodation from 1761 to 1764 to the library of the Royal College of Surgeons and from 1766 to 1781 to that of the Royal College of Physicians. Once these arrangements had ceased, the Infirmary's own library lapsed and was not revived until the twentieth century.

In Glasgow the Faculty (now Royal College) of Physicians and Surgeons, founded in 1599, established a library a century later. The first librarian was appointed in 1734 and a catalogue was printed in 1778. A special library for apprentices was established in 1762 but seems to have been discontinued about 1774. The library grew steadily in the nineteenth century and further catalogues were printed in 1817 and 1842 (with supplements in 1861 and 1871).[48]

The Glasgow University medical school never achieved the celebrity of Edinburgh. The University Library contained medical books and in 1807 received the outstanding collections of books and artefacts of William Hunter (1718–83), who had practised in London as an obstetrician and anatomist, including a remarkable assemblage of medieval manuscripts and early printed books. The collection was maintained as a separate Hunterian Museum. Another medical library within the university developed from a collection for students established in an attic in 1795.

An additional medical school in Glasgow was established in 1799 in the Andersonian University, now the University of Strathclyde. A separate medical library was provided in addition to the medical books contained in the main library. An unusual survival is the catalogue, printed in 1812, of the library provided by Robert Watt (1774–1819) for the students of his private medical school in Glasgow; he is best remembered as a bibliographer, compiler of the *Bibliotheca Britannica* (1824).[49]

47 J. Gray, *History of the Royal Medical Society, 1737–1937* (Edinburgh, 1952).

48 J. Beaton, R. Miller and I. T. Boyle (eds.), *Treasures of the College, in celebration of three hundred years of the library of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow* (Glasgow, 1998); J. Geyer-Kordesch and F. Macdonald, *Physicians and surgeons in Glasgow: the history of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, 1599–1858* (London, 1999).

49 F. Cordasco, *A bibliography of Robert Watt . . . with a facsimile edition of his Catalogue of medical books* (New York, 1950; reprint, Detroit, 1968).

The two Aberdeen universities, King's College and Marischal College, had between them probably the best collection of medical books in Scotland at the end of the seventeenth century. The 1709 Copyright Act, which treated the two universities as one, led to a running dispute which was not resolved until the union of the two into the University of Aberdeen in 1860, after which the medical books were concentrated at Marischal College. Alternative medical library provision was offered by the Aberdeen Medical Society (Medico-Chirurgical from 1811), founded in 1789. Its library began with three volumes in 1791, and catalogues printed from 1792 onwards show that it was slow to grow, but by the time of its dispersal at Sotheby's in 1967 it had developed into an important collection.[50] The library of St Andrews University included medicine in its coverage, but although the university granted medical degrees it offered little medical teaching, and the library's holdings were not of great significance to the medical profession.

Among specialised scientific libraries, the Royal Botanic Garden, founded in 1670, provided a library, although until 1889 the books were the property of successive keepers. The Botanical Society of Edinburgh, founded in 1836, had a library, which was transferred to the Royal Botanic Garden in 1872. The Wernerian Natural History Society, founded in 1808, flourished at first, but declined in the 1840s. It was dissolved in 1858, and the library was divided between the Botanical Society and the Royal Physical Society.

Medical and scientific libraries in Ireland

The Library of Trinity College, Dublin, was more concerned with the humanities than with medicine and science and access was restricted to the Provost and Fellows. Marsh's Library, in the grounds of St Patrick's Cathedral, was founded by Archbishop Narcissus Marsh (1638–1713) to compensate for the limitations of Trinity College library and was available to the general scholarly community, or at least 'all graduats [sic] and gentlemen'. It contained the outstanding collection of Edward Stillingfleet, bishop of Worcester (1635–99), and the first librarian, Dr Elias Bouhéreau (1643–1719), presented his own collection. The library was strong in medicine and science, but suffered from neglect in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when successive generations of the Cradock family served as librarian, with decreasing efficiency; the

50 J. R. Pickard, *A history of King's College library, Aberdeen, until 1860* 3 vols. (Aberdeen, 1987); A. Adam, 'The history of the library', in G. P. Milne (ed.), *Aberdeen Medico-Chirurgical Society: a bicentennial history* (Aberdeen, 1989), 63–70; M. D. Allardyce, *The library of the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Aberdeen* (Aberdeen, 1934).

neglect was somewhat palliated by the devoted service of Dr Robert Travers (1807–88), assistant librarian from 1841 until his death. By the 1830s the building was in need of repair and ill-supervised sales of 'duplicates' began. In the 1850s there were proposals for moving the library to the National Gallery but it was saved in the 1860s by the munificence of Sir Benjamin Lee Guinness (1798–1868).[51]

Sir Patrick Dun (1642–1713) left his library to the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, as part of a plan for the establishment of a medical school. Until 1787 the books were kept at the houses of successive professors. Rudimentary accommodation was then provided in the medical lecture room at Trinity College, regulations were drawn up, and a catalogue was printed in 1794. In 1800 it was decided that Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital should be established as a teaching hospital, including the library, which was transferred in 1814. Conditions were gradually improved but plans for a College Hall did not reach fruition until 1865.[52]

The Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland was founded in 1784 and in 1789 established its School of Surgery in Mercer Street, with a library housed in the anatomy theatre. An imposing purpose-designed building for the college in St Stephen's Green was completed in 1810, and in 1816 the library received the library of the Physico-Chirurgical Society, on its dissolution. The college was substantially enlarged in 1825.[53] Dr Steevens' Hospital, opened in 1733, was bequeathed the library of Dr Edward Worth (1678–1733), with an endowment of £1,000. A specially designed room was completed in 1742 and remains unchanged. The collection of some 4,500 books covers medicine, science, history, classics and theology, including twenty-one incunables, and is notable for its Irish and continental bindings.[54]

The (Royal) Dublin Society was founded in 1731 to foster 'husbandry, manufactures, and other useful arts' and had a library from the start. It grew steadily by purchase, gift and bequest, with an emphasis on foreign books, and a catalogue was printed in 1806. The library had generous opening hours and by 1826 contained some 8,300 volumes. The society was responsible for the foundation in 1795 of the (National) Botanic Gardens at Glasnevin, which built up a library from 1799. These collections were to form the basis of the National Library

51 M. McCarthy, *All graduates and gentlemen: Marsh's Library* (Dublin, 1980; 2nd edn, 2003).

52 J. Widdess, *A history of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, 1654–1963* (Edinburgh, 1963).

53 J. Widdess, *The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, and its medical school, 1784–1984*, 3rd edn (Dublin, 1983).

54 D. Coakley, *Doctor Steevens' Hospital* (Dublin, 1992); T. Kirkpatrick, *The history of Doctor Steevens' Hospital, Dublin, 1720–1920* (Dublin, 1924).

of Ireland in 1877.[55] The Royal Irish Academy (1785) included science within its remit. It received by bequest the library of the chemist Richard Kirwan (1733–1812), which constituted about a third of the 1,360 titles listed in the catalogue printed in 1822. The academy also acquired by exchange the publications of other learned societies.[56]

Apart from Dublin, Belfast was served by medical and scientific libraries. The Belfast Reading Society, founded as a subscription library in 1788 and better known as the Linen Hall Library, provided a general stock, with a particular leaning to natural history in its early years. The Belfast Medical Society, founded in 1806, established a lending library in 1826. In 1862 it merged with the Belfast Clinical and Pathological Society to form the Ulster Medical Society. Many of the older books were eventually transferred to Queen's University. The Belfast Natural History (from 1842 and Philosophical) Society was founded in 1821 and was peripatetic until the erection in 1831 of premises to contain a museum and library.[57]

55 J. Meenan and D. Clarke (eds.), *RDS: the Royal Dublin Society, 1731–1981* (Dublin, 1981); H. F. Berry, *A history of the Royal Dublin Society* (London, 1915).

56 T. Ó Raifeartaigh (ed.), *The Royal Irish Academy: a bicentennial history, 1785–1985* (Dublin, 1985).

57 A. Deane (ed.), *The Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society: centenary volume, 1821–1921* (Belfast, 1924).

25

The first century of the British Museum library

P. R. HARRIS

There was no major library available to the general public in London until the British Museum was founded in 1753 under a body of Trustees. One department was concerned with 'Natural and Artificial Productions' and from this developed all the antiquities departments of the later British Museum, and the Natural History Museum. The other two original departments (those of Manuscripts and of Printed Books) contained the library.[1] In Montagu House, the original home of the British Museum, up to three-quarters of the accommodation was occupied by the books and manuscripts.

Of the three original collections of the library departments, two (Cotton and Harley) consisted of manuscripts. The third was the collection of printed books and manuscripts (approximately 50,000 volumes, including about 5,000 volumes of manuscripts) owned by Sir Hans Sloane whose books, manuscripts, prints, drawings, coins, and natural history and antiquities specimens were acquired by the nation to form the basis of the British Museum. To these collections were added the 3,800 volumes of Major Arthur Edwards's library (left to the nation in 1743), and the books and manuscripts of the Royal Library (about 9,000 volumes) presented by George II in 1757. There was very little money for purchases, and most additions came in the form of gifts. In 1769 and 1788 there were sales of duplicate printed books to raise money, and the 8,000 duplicates disposed of in this way probably exceeded the number of items acquired by gift and purchase. So probably by the end of the century there were fewer printed books in the collections than when the museum opened to the public in 1759. The foundation collections of manuscripts amounted to about 15,700 volumes. About 1,800 Additional Manuscripts were acquired (mainly by gift, but some by purchase) by the end of the century, making a total of 17,500 volumes, plus a large collection of charters and rolls.

1 E. J. Miller, *That noble cabinet* (London, 1973), 60. Archival authorities for the statements in this chapter are to be found in P. R. Harris, *A history of the British Museum library, 1753–1973* (London, 1998).

When the British Museum opened, the total staff was only seventeen, of whom nine were junior staff (porter, messenger, housemaids and watchmen). The eight senior staff (the Officers) consisted of the Principal Librarian, three Under Librarians (later called Keepers) in charge of the three departments, three Assistant Librarians (later called Assistant Keepers), and the Keeper of the Reading Room. The four Officers of the two library departments (who only worked part-time) participated in the work of showing visitors round the collections of the museum. Whatever hours were not devoted to this task were spent in arranging and cataloguing them. After the initial arrangement of the collections of printed books there was little work of this kind to do (because accessions were so few) until the 1790s when a new subject arrangement of the collections was devised by Revd Samuel Ayscough, and implemented over a period of several years. The Officers of the Department of Printed Books spent part of their time selecting duplicates to be sold and items to be bound, but their main occupation was cataloguing the collections. In the early 1760s Revd Samuel Harper, the Assistant Librarian of Printed Books, catalogued the printed material in the Royal Library. Then in 1771 the Trustees gave orders that a complete catalogue of printed books should be produced. This work was carried out with the help of temporary staff and was published in two folio volumes in 1787. It was not of a very high standard, but provided better access to the collections than had previously existed. The first printed catalogue of manuscripts dealt with the Harley manuscripts and was published between 1759 and 1763. No other official printed catalogue of manuscripts appeared until that dealing with the Cotton manuscripts was published in 1802, but unpublished catalogues were produced of the Sloane manuscripts (1765) and the Birch Manuscripts (1772) for use in the Reading Room. An unofficial catalogue of the Cotton manuscripts was published by Thomas Astle in 1777, and one of the Sloane, Birch and some Additional Manuscripts by Samuel Ayscough in 1782.

From the time that the British Museum opened in January 1759 the general public was escorted by members of the staff through the rooms of Montagu House to obtain a cursory view of the collections. Those who wished to study material in detail had to obtain tickets (renewable every six months) to use the Reading Room. The first eight readers were granted admission by the Trustees at their meeting on 12 January 1759, and during the rest of that year about 160 readers' tickets were issued or renewed. In subsequent years to 1799 the number of issues and renewals ranged from 60 to 125. So the number of readers was not large (and included students of antiquities and natural history as well as of manuscripts and printed books). Since the original Reading Room, which was in the basement, only had an area of 860 square feet, it could not

provide room for many readers. As it was damp it was replaced in 1774 by two rooms on the ground floor, but these provided no more accommodation than the original room.[2]

Despite the cramped conditions various well-known people made use of the Reading Room, including Thomas Arne (composer), Sir William Blackstone (lawyer), Edmund Burke (statesman), John Flaxman (sculptor), Edmund Gibbon (historian), Thomas Gray (poet), William Heberden (physician), Catharine Macaulay (historian), Richard Porson (Greek scholar), the duke of Roxburghe (book-collector), William Stukeley (antiquary) and John Wilkes (politician). There were, however, few people at any one time. Isaac D'Israeli referred to 'musing in silence and oblivion' and waiting a day or two for volumes to appear. There were never more than half a dozen people in the Reading Room.[3]

There were some conscientious workers among the staff (such as Samuel Harper who was in charge of the Department of Printed Books from 1765 until 1803), but they lacked resources and decisive leadership. The first Principal Librarian, Gowin Knight (1756–72), was a quarrelsome man who was mainly interested in his own scientific researches; the second, Matthew Maty (1772–6), was ill when he assumed office and died four years later; the third, Charles Morton (1776–99), was lazy and often incapacitated by gout.

A change came when Joseph Planta became Principal Librarian in 1799. Like a number of other members of the staff, he was a foreigner. He was born in Switzerland in 1744 and came to England with his parents in 1752. His father, Revd Andrew Planta, became Assistant Librarian of the Department of Natural and Artificial Productions in 1758 and transferred to the Department of Printed Books in 1765. When he died in 1773 Joseph succeeded him, and then in 1776 was promoted Under Librarian to take charge of the Department of Manuscripts. He was an able administrator who was largely responsible for the many changes which took place during his years as Principal Librarian (1799–1827), and he continued to take a keen interest in the Department of Manuscripts. A special parliamentary grant was obtained in 1807 to acquire the Lansdowne Manuscripts, and further grants were made in 1813 and 1818 to acquire the Hargrave and Burney collections – the Burney collection included a very valuable collection of early British newspapers.

Soon after becoming Principal Librarian, Planta drew up a list of books on British topography which the library lacked, and obtained the Trustees' permission to purchase them. In 1811 he compiled a wide-ranging survey

2 G. F. Barwick, *The reading room* (London, 1929), 41–2.
3 Miller, *That noble cabinet*, 88.

of the collections of printed books, drawing attention to their weaknesses. He believed that they contained only about 70,000 volumes (involving about 140,000 items), and that many subjects were very imperfectly covered. He drew particular attention to British history and topography, where the museum had a special responsibility to have good holdings and where deficiencies could most easily be remedied. As a result the Trustees asked parliament for special grants to improve the collection of books on Britain and its Empire, and the House of Commons voted £1,000 per annum for this purpose for the five financial years from 1812/13 to 1816/17. From 1817/18 the Trustees allocated sums from the general parliamentary grant specifically for the purchase of books. Hitherto the Trustees had mainly relied on the fund of £7,000 bequeathed by Major Arthur Edwards which came to the museum in 1769. The Edwards Fund was liquidated in 1815 when the Trustees bought an important collection of books and minerals formed by Baron Karl Marie Ehrenbert von Moll of Munich. Other major purchases at this time were 2,144 volumes of French Revolution tracts brought to the notice of the Trustees by J. W. Croker (1817) and 10,000 items from the library of Pierre Louis Ginguené (1818).

There were some important gifts. In 1799 Revd Clayton M. Cracherode (a Trustee since 1784) bequeathed his fine collection of books (as well as his prints, drawings, coins, medals and gems).[4] The next year another Trustee, Sir William Musgrave, died and left the museum such of his manuscripts and books as the Trustees selected. Planta and Sir Joseph Banks chose thirty-three manuscripts and about 1,500 books.[5] The next important bequest was from Banks himself (a Trustee since 1778 in his capacity as President of the Royal Society) who died in 1820 leaving his collections to his librarian Robert Brown, and after Brown's death, to the museum.[6] The Trustees arranged with Brown to transfer the Banks collections to the museum in 1827, and employed him to be in charge of them. However, the gift which transformed the museum was that of the library of George III, given by George IV in 1823.[7] Its 65,000 volumes and 20,000 pamphlets (as well as 446 manuscripts) increased the size of the museum collection of printed books by over 50 per cent (in 1821 the museum held 116,000 volumes of printed books). It was quite impossible to fit such a mass of material into the decaying Montagu House so work on a new building was approved by the Treasury. Designed by Robert Smirke, it

4 A. Davis, 'Clayton Mordaunt Cracherode', *Book Collector* 23 (1974), 339–54, 489–505.
5 A. Griffiths, 'Sir William Musgrave and British biography', *British Library Journal* 18 (1992), 171–89.
6 H. B. Carter, *Sir Joseph Banks* (London, 1988), 521.
7 E. M. Paintin, *The King's Library* (London, 1989), 18.

consisted of four wings surrounding a central court, and forms the heart of the present British Museum building.[8] Work began in 1823 on the east wing which was to house the King's Library, and the books were moved there from Kensington Palace in 1828.

Not only did the intake of purchased and presented books put pressure on the accommodation. There was also an increased quantity of material received by legal deposit. Under the Press Licensing Act of 1662 (and subsequently the Copyright Act of 1709) the Royal Library was entitled to a copy of all new publications or new editions containing alterations. This right was held to have passed to the Trustees of the museum when George II presented the Royal Library in 1757.[9] The Stationers' Company was responsible for forwarding the books deposited by printers to the Royal Library, and after 1757 to the British Museum, but although a trickle of such material reached the museum, it was a fraction of what was published. Edward Christian, Downing Professor of Law at Cambridge, campaigned on behalf of his university's library and of the other libraries entitled to legal deposit books, and as a result a new Copyright Act was passed in 1814. Although this had flaws, it did result in an increased amount of material being deposited. It also transferred the obligation to deposit from printers to publishers. The British Museum Trustees took legal action against some publishers who failed to deposit, and from 1824 employed a collector. As a result, whereas the number of items received by legal deposit each year between 1814 and 1824 averaged 1,324, the figure rose to 3,593 between 1825 and 1827.

The compilation of a new general catalogue of printed books was ordered by the Trustees in 1806, and was carried out from 1807 onwards by Henry Ellis (Under Librarian of Printed Books, 1806–12 and Under Librarian of Manuscripts, 1812–28) and Revd Henry Baber (Assistant Librarian of Printed Books, 1807–12 and Under Librarian of Printed Books, 1812–37). The work was published in seven volumes between 1813 and 1819 and contained about 110,000 entries. (The catalogue published in 1787 recorded about 63,000 items plus about 15,000 Thomason tracts which were represented in the 1787 catalogue by one entry, but individually catalogued in the 1813–19 catalogue.) Interleaved copies, in which entries were written for new accessions, formed the main catalogue for the next thirty years. In 1824 the Trustees decided to supplement this alphabetical author catalogue with a classified version. They commissioned Thomas Hartwell Horne (who had worked on other classified

8 J. M. Crook, *The British Museum* (London, 1972), 109–36.
9 R. Partridge, *The history of the legal deposit of books* (London, 1938), 24, 34, 41.

catalogues) to draw up a plan and help to carry it into effect.[10] Subject specialists were employed to deal with particular sections, and work continued until 1834 when it was abandoned to concentrate on a new version of the author catalogue.

The Department of Manuscripts produced a catalogue of the Harley collection (four volumes, 1808–12), of the Lansdowne manuscripts (two volumes, 1812) and the Hargrave manuscripts (1818). Work on these projects prevented much progress being made with the cataloguing of the Additional Manuscripts acquired since 1782, when Ayscough had published his unofficial catalogue. Then in 1824 the Trustees instructed Ellis to draw up a plan to index the entire collection of manuscripts, after he had convinced them that it was not practicable to produce a classified catalogue. John Millard was employed to compile this index, but his slow progress led to the Trustees dispensing with his services in 1833.

The number of persons using the Reading Room rose steadily. In the eighteen years from 1810 to 1827 inclusive the number of new readers amounted to 5,061, rising from 142 in 1810 to 683 in 1827. In 1818 Baber stated that the number of persons using the Reading Room ranged from ten to thirty each day. Among those granted readers' tickets were Charles Babbage (mathematician), Revd R. H. Barham (author of the *Ingoldsby legends*), Jeremy Bentham (writer on jurisprudence), Sir Edwin Chadwick (sanitary reformer), Thomas De Quincy (author of *Confessions of an opium eater*), Benjamin Disraeli (politician), Edward Fitzgerald (poet), Washington Irving (American author), Charles Lamb (essayist), Thomas Babington Macaulay (historian), Humphry Repton (landscape gardener), Sir Walter Scott (novelist) and Charles Wesley (musician). In 1802 additional space for readers was provided.

The increased intake of material by all departments caused Planta to inform the Trustees in 1814 that the shortage of space was becoming serious. The Department of Printed Books had particular problems by 1815 because of the extra quantity of legal deposit material being received and the imminent arrival of the large collection of books bought from Baron von Moll. Galleries were therefore constructed in seven of the rooms used for printed books. This provided a temporary solution, but only the construction of the first parts of the new building held out a longer term hope. The completion of the east wing in 1827 made it possible to move the collections of manuscripts there in the spring of that year, and to accommodate the readers in the two southernmost

10 T. H. Horne, *Outlines for the classification of a library* (London, 1825).

rooms. In 1828 the King's Library was brought from Kensington Palace to the main gallery of the east wing.

The increase in collections and services made it necessary to increase the staff. By 1815 the museum had thirty-six, of whom nine were Officers (the Principal Librarian, four Under Librarians and four Assistant Librarians). A new grade of staff with the title of Attendant was employed from 1802 to deal with the more routine duties – there were sixteen by 1815. The four Officers in the two library departments were Henry Ellis, Under Librarian of Manuscripts; Revd Henry Baber, Under Librarian of Printed Books who managed his department efficiently; Revd James Bean, Assistant Librarian of Printed Books, who spent much of his time dealing with legal deposit; and Revd Thomas Maurice, Assistant Librarian of Manuscripts, an oriental scholar but whose main task was to supervise the Reading Room. In 1828 three men who had worked in the King's Library as servants of the king joined the staff of the Department of Printed Books when the King's Library was transferred to the Trustees. They were Nicholas Carlisle who became second Under Librarian of Printed Books, and William Armstrong and John Glover, Assistant Librarians.

After the death of Planta in December 1827 Henry Ellis (who became a knight of Hanover in 1832 and a knight bachelor in 1833) was appointed Principal Librarian. He held this post for twenty-eight years, but although he was a hard-working scholar, he was not a forceful administrator, and the museum was run by Revd Josiah Forshall, Secretary to the Trustees from 1828 until 1850, as well as being Under Librarian of Manuscripts from 1828 until 1837. He had many clashes with Antonio Panizzi (a political refugee from Italy) who joined the staff as Extra Assistant Librarian of Printed Books in 1831 and who became Under Librarian (Keeper) of Printed Books in 1837.[11]

Forshall as head of the Department of Manuscripts was ably seconded by Frederic Madden who became Assistant Librarian of Manuscripts in 1828, after having worked for a time on the classified catalogue of printed books.[12] The collection of manuscripts grew considerably. In 1836 Forshall stated that (excluding collections bought with special parliamentary grants such as Lansdowne, Burney and Hargrave) the Trustees had bought not more than fifty manuscripts before 1782, 350 between 1782 and 1812, about 150 between 1812 and 1828, but about 3,500 between 1828 and 1835. By 1832 the library had 21,604 manuscripts

11 E. J. Miller, *Prince of librarians* (London, 1967), 75–6, 130.
12 R. W. and S. P. Ackerman, *Sir Frederic Madden* (London, 1979), 9–11.

and 10,093 charters. Between 1828 and 1836 £8,800 was spent; in addition to the funds provided by parliament there was from 1829 a fund bequeathed by Francis Egerton, earl of Bridgewater, for the purchase of manuscripts to augment the collection which he left to the museum.

In 1829 and 1833, on the orders of the Trustees, Baber reported on gaps in the collections of printed books. He produced a disconcertingly long list of categories which needed improvement and as a result, between 1834 and 1837, expenditure on printed books rose from about £2,000 to about £3,000 per annum. By 1833 the Department of Printed Books contained about 219,000 volumes (including the King's Library of 65,000 volumes and the Banks Library of 8,000 volumes). This compared with the figure of 116,000 volumes in 1821, and allowed for the fact that about 14,400 duplicates were disposed of between 1830 and 1832. (The sale of July 1832 was the last occasion on which duplicate books were auctioned – the Officers and the Trustees had come to realise that far too many desirable items had been disposed of in this way.)

The King's Library had been catalogued before it reached the museum, and the five volumes of the catalogue were printed between 1820 and 1829. A two-volume catalogue of the maps, prints and drawings in the King's Library was also printed in 1829. The classified catalogue of printed books, begun in 1824, proceeded too slowly and by 1834 was suspended in favour of a revised version of the alphabetical author catalogue. This involved combining three separate catalogues – those of the Old Library, of the King's Library and of the Banks Library – which contained in total at least 300,000 entries. These needed a great deal of revision, since the three catalogues had been compiled by different methods over long periods. Baber recommended that the energetic Panizzi should be in charge of the work, but the Trustees would not agree to this, and decided that Baber himself and his deputy Revd Henry Cary should supervise the revision. The result of not having one person specifically charged with urging the work forward, coupled with the fact that staff time was occupied in preparing material for submission to the Select Committee of the House of Commons set up in 1835 to investigate the museum, was that progress on the new catalogue was much slower than it should have been.

The House of Commons appointed a Select Committee because John Millard, whose services in compiling a general index to the manuscript collections were dispensed with in 1833, managed to obtain a sympathetic hearing for his complaints from various people of influence, including Benjamin Hawes, a radical member of parliament. The Committee of thirty-three members held nineteen meetings to take evidence between 18 May and 3 August 1835,

and 4,009 questions were put to fifteen witnesses. The two who bore the brunt of the questioning were Ellis and Forshall.[13] A second Select Committee of fifteen members was set up in February 1836 and put 6,010 questions to fifty-eight witnesses at twenty-eight meetings. The witness who made the greatest impression was Antonio Panizzi. He gave details of his investigations into the major continental libraries, and complained that parliament had never given the British Museum enough money to buy books. He maintained that the museum should have rich collections of rare and expensive books so that poor students who did not have access to the libraries of great private collectors should be able to pursue their researches. He explained the need for a good author catalogue, alphabetically arranged, and claimed that no two men had ever agreed on the best way of compiling a classified catalogue.

On 14 July 1836 the Select Committee produced its report.[14] As a result the departments of natural history and of antiquities were increased from two to five. The opening hours of the Reading Room and exhibition galleries were increased. The working week of the staff was standardised at six days and salaries were increased. The duties of the Principal Librarian and Secretary were redefined, with the result that the Principal Librarian had much less power than the Secretary. In consequence Forshall gave up the Keepership of Manuscripts to concentrate on his duties as Secretary. It was decided that in general no person employed by the Trustees should hold any other post which involved emoluments. Baber thereupon resigned the Keepership of Printed Books, in order to retain his rectorship of the parish of Stretham-cum-Thetford in Cambridgeshire.

Sir Frederic Madden (knight of Hanover 1832, knight bachelor 1833) succeeded Forshall as Keeper of Manuscripts on 18 July 1837, and Antonio Panizzi was promoted Keeper of Printed Books on 15 July, over the head of Baber's deputy, Henry Cary, who resigned in anger in October. Madden and Panizzi were two of the greatest figures in the history of the library, and they set the pattern which their departments followed until the latter part of the twentieth century. Regrettably, they did not get on well together. Madden was initially annoyed that his appointment as Keeper was dated three days later than that of Panizzi, and for the rest of his career he considered that Panizzi's department was favoured at the expense of the Department of Manuscripts. The

13 *Report from the Select Committee on the British Museum . . . 6 August 1835* (479) (Parliamentary Papers. Reports from Committees, 1835, vol. 7).

14 *Report from the Select Committee on [the] British Museum . . . 14 July 1836* (440) (Parliamentary Papers. Reports from Committees, 1836, vol. 10).

promotion of Panizzi to the post of Principal Librarian in 1856 was a particular grievance.[15]

Madden's achievements as Keeper of Manuscripts were very considerable. He was a palaeographer of outstanding ability who built up the collections of his department with great success. When he became Keeper in 1837 there were about 23,900 volumes of manuscripts. By 1856 he had increased this figure to about 35,000, and by the time that he retired in 1866 to about 43,000. (These figures exclude the large number of charters and rolls.) Among the major acquisitions were biblical, liturgical, theological and classical manuscripts from the collection of Samuel Butler, bishop of Lichfield, Syriac manuscripts from the monastery of St Mary Deipara in the Nitrian desert of western Egypt, papers of Sir Julius Caesar (1558–1636) from the Strawberry Hill collection, items from the collection of the duke of Sussex (1773–1843), sixth son of George III, the twelfth-century psalter made for Melissende, Queen of Jerusalem, oriental manuscripts (mainly Persian and Hindustani) collected by Major William Yule, the Bedford Book of Hours (or Missal) of about 1423, and the Hours of Joanna of Castile (1496–1506).

Madden also devoted much attention to cataloguing. Before he became Keeper he had compiled a catalogue of about 1,900 Additional Manuscripts acquired after Ayscough's catalogue of 1782. The annual printed lists of additions to the collections of the museum came to an end with the accessions of 1835, so in 1843 Madden obtained the Trustees' authority to publish a *List of additions to the manuscripts . . . 1836–40*. This was the first of a series which has been published at intervals until the present time. The quality of the cataloguing testifies to the strict standards which Madden imposed. The first catalogues of oriental manuscripts were also published during his keepership.

His other great achievement was the restoration of the Cotton manuscripts, which had been damaged by fire in 1731.[16] When the collection was first examined after this disaster it was calculated that of the 958 manuscripts, 114 had been lost or burnt, and another 98 so damaged as to be defective. Repair work (mainly carried out under Madden's control) was so successful that the majority of the manuscripts originally reported as lost can now be consulted. After the rescue work carried out with great speed immediately after the 1731 fire, nothing was done until Planta had some damaged items dealt with in the 1790s. Then in the 1820s and 1830s Ellis and Forshall obtained some scientific advice and a few more manuscripts were treated; but the treatments used were not

15 M. Borrie, 'Panizzi and Madden', *British Library Journal* 5 (1979), 19–36.
16 A. Prescott, '"Their present miserable state of cremation": the restoration of the Cotton Library', in C. J. Wright (ed.), *Sir Robert Cotton as collector* (London, 1997), 391–454.

very satisfactory. After Madden became Keeper in 1837 he initiated a vigorous programme of repair, and identification of fragments. By the time that he retired in 1866 this massive task was virtually complete. In his final report to the Trustees, dated 12 July 1866, he wrote:

> it is not too much for me to say that . . . I may claim without egotism, the title of the Restorer of the Cottonian Library, for out of the number of volumes supposed to be lost or destroyed, above one hundred, under my direction and superintendence have been in great measure recovered, and the whole of the damaged volumes have been repaired, and rendered accessible.

Madden was embittered because he considered that his achievements had been insufficiently recognised, while those of his detested rival Panizzi ('the unscrupulous, lying, scheming Italian villain'[17]) had received excessive praise and reward. Any impartial observer must however agree that Panizzi transformed the Department of Printed Books. He was a man of great force and determination, and was adept at exerting influence in political circles. His first task as Keeper was to move the collection of books (known as the Old Library) from Montagu House into the north wing of the new museum building designed by Sir Robert Smirke. The move was carried out in accordance with a plan drawn up by Baber before he retired, and control on a day to day basis was in the hands of Thomas Watts, who joined the staff as a Supernumerary Assistant in January 1838; but Panizzi was the driving force. Between January 1838 and May 1840 nearly all the 163,000 volumes of the Old Library were moved to the new building and by August all had been given new pressmarks. Panizzi was justly proud of the fact that the move had gone so smoothly, and that an average of only 8,000 volumes were not available at any one time.[18]

By the time that this move was complete the recurring problem of the British Museum – lack of sufficient accommodation – had reasserted itself. For this reason the Arch Room was built to the west of the north wing. It was complete by the autumn of 1842, but was only expected to accommodate new accessions until 1846. So a long, narrow, two-storey building was erected to the east of the gallery holding the King's Library to provide a few more years' breathing space.[19] Madden also needed more accommodation, primarily to provide a place where large masses of newly acquired manuscripts could be examined

17 Borrie, 'Panizzi and Madden', 34.

18 P. R. Harris, 'The move of printed books from Montagu House', in P. R. Harris (ed.), *The library of the British Museum* (London, 1991), 93.

19 M. Caygill and C. Date, *Building the British Museum* (London, 1999), 23, 26.

and sorted. An extension was therefore built to the east of the Department of Manuscripts.

When the room to the east of the King's Library (known as the Long Room) was brought into use in 1848, Watts devised a new placing system (his 'elastic' system) for the material housed there. This was designed in such a way that when blocks of books had to be moved to new presses because of overcrowding, it was not necessary to alter press-marks.[20] This was one of Watts's major contributions. Because of his great expertise in languages he was also the chief selector of books purchased by the Department of Printed Books during much of his career.

He was one of the most able of the new grade of Assistants (intermediate between Attendants and Assistant Keepers) first employed in the 1820s. They were the forerunners of the basic grade of graduate staff who were eventually to deal with the bulk of the higher-grade work. The Department of Manuscripts began to employ Assistants more extensively in the early 1830s, but in the Department of Printed Books it was the drive to compile the new catalogue which led to a considerable number of Assistants being recruited after Panizzi became Keeper. The department had only two in 1837, but fifteen by 1847. They included John Winter Jones, Thomas Watts, William B. Rye and George Bullen, who each rose to become Keeper of Printed Books, Richard H. Major, Keeper of Maps from 1867 until 1889, and Charles Rieu, Keeper of Oriental Manuscripts from 1867 until 1891.

The work of producing a new author catalogue took up much of the time of the Assistants. As soon as he became Keeper, Panizzi began writing reports to the Trustees, but could not persuade them that it should be made available in manuscript rather than in printed form. He argued that the library was increasing so rapidly that by the time that the last volume of the catalogue was printed, the first would be completely out of date. The Trustees would not accept Panizzi's arguments and in November 1837 ordered that a general alphabetical catalogue should be printed as soon as the material for each volume was ready. New cataloguing rules were drawn up under Panizzi's direction, and after the Trustees had sanctioned them, these ninety-one rules were printed and distributed to the staff in August 1839.[21]

Despite his misgivings Panizzi submitted to the Trustees in July 1841 the first volume of the new catalogue which contained the entries for headings

20 F. J. Hill, 'The shelving and classification of printed books', in Harris, *Library of the British Museum*, 14–17.

21 A. H. Chaplin, *GK: 150 years of the General Catalogue of Printed Books* (Aldershot, 1987), 1–33.

under the letter A. He accompanied this volume with a report expressing his dissatisfaction with the quality of the work, because of the way in which the Trustees had ordered that it should be carried out. Although the Trustees continued to exert pressure on him, he then resorted to masterly inactivity and printed no more volumes. Eventually, in January 1846, the Trustees ordered Panizzi to say why he had suspended the printing of the catalogue. His reply was so unanswerable that the Trustees capitulated and agreed that the work should not be printed until the whole of the material was ready in manuscript.

Panizzi campaigned for an increase in the purchase grant of his department. Between 1837 and 1845 he spent a total of £37,775 – an average of £4,197 per annum. But if the special parliamentary grants for purchases at the Strawberry Hill, duke of Sussex, Bright and Southey sales were excluded, the average for normal purchases was only £3,580 per annum, little more than the amount spent in the last years of Baber's keepership. He therefore decided to draw up, with the help of Winter Jones and Watts, a long report on the deficiencies of the printed books, caused by the failure of successive governments to provide sufficient funds.[22] This report, submitted to the Trustees in January 1845, so impressed them that they decided to ask the Treasury for special grants of £10,000 per annum for ten years to fill gaps in the collections of older books, as well as £5,000 per annum to buy newly published items for the Department of Printed Books. In January 1846 the Treasury agreed to recommend to parliament that for some years the grant for the purchase of old and new books should be increased to £10,000 (not £15,000) per annum, on the understanding that the Trustees would postpone additions to the other collections (a condition which much angered Madden).

So by the time that a Royal Commission was appointed in June 1847 to investigate the British Museum (mainly because the scientific community considered that the museum was not doing enough to promote natural history) Panizzi was in a very strong position. He had won the battle with the Trustees about the way in which the new catalogue should be produced, and he had more than doubled the purchase grant of his department. Moreover his friendship with the bibliophile Thomas Grenville had resulted in the bequest to the Trustees of Grenville's library when its owner died in December 1846. The 20,000 volumes involved were of outstanding interest and value.

The Royal Commission, under the chairmanship of Francis Egerton, first earl of Ellesmere, put over 11,000 questions to fifty-one witnesses at sixty-four

22 A. Panizzi, *On the collection of printed books at the British Museum, its increase and arrangement* [1845].

meetings between July 1847 and June 1849.[23] The bulk of the Commission's time was spent on matters concerning the departments of Printed Books and of Manuscripts and not on natural history or antiquities. The good-natured Ellis characteristically expressed the opinion that the Officers were all on very fair terms and that he did not know of any absolute disputes among them, but the Commissioners' questions brought out the fact that there had been much wrangling between the senior members of staff. Panizzi's disputes with Madden and with Forshall (who succumbed to mental illness for several months in 1847) were highlighted. John Gray, Keeper of Zoology, produced two pamphlets attacking Panizzi's administration of his department.[24] However, when the report of the Commissioners was published early in 1850, it was almost entirely in Panizzi's favour. In particular his stand regarding the printing of the catalogue was supported. He also benefited from the Commission's recommendation that the post of Secretary to the Trustees should be abolished, because the retirement of Forshall removed one of Panizzi's chief opponents. Madden was congratulated because cataloguing in his department was so up to date, and extra help to deal with oriental manuscripts was recommended.

With the abolition of the Secretary the enforcement of legal deposit (brought up to date by a new Copyright Act in 1842) passed to the Keeper of Printed Books. Panizzi set about the work with his usual energy and propensity to make enemies.[25] In May 1850 he was given power of attorney to enforce deposit. The Trustees approved his proposal to send circulars to publishers who had failed to comply with the obligation to deposit. He then took legal proceedings against those who did not respond, and between December 1850 and March 1852 six London firms were fined for non-compliance. He next turned his attention to firms in the provinces, and in the summer of 1852 himself visited Scotland, Wales and Ireland to investigate publishers there. As a result the number of books, parts of periodicals and other items deposited in 1852 was 13,934, compared with 9,871 in 1851 (an increase of over 40 per cent). Aggrieved publishers attacked Panizzi's zealous proceedings and by November 1852 even he, strong-minded though he was, felt that he could stand no more abuse. He asked permission to resign the power of attorney, but was persuaded by the Trustees to continue with his campaign. In January 1853

23 *Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the constitution and government of the British Museum* (1170) (Parliamentary Papers. Sessional Papers, 1850, vol. 24).

24 J. E. Gray, *A letter to the Earl of Ellesmere on the management of the library of printed books* (London, 1849); J. E. Gray, *A second letter to the Earl of Ellesmere* (London, 1849).

25 Partridge, *Legal deposit*, 82–7.

he won a case against the publisher H. G. Bohn, but the magistrate refused the museum's application for costs and expressed the hope that in future Bohn would be more liberal and Panizzi less severe. Nevetheless Panizzi won the war: 'The Bohn dispute generated bad publicity for Panizzi, but helped to turn the tide. No publisher could now claim ignorance of the law.'[26] By 1856, when Panizzi was promoted from Keeper of Printed Books to Principal Librarian, the intake of legal deposit material was over 50 per cent more than it had been in 1850 when he was given power of attorney to enforce deposit.

The increased quantity of material received in this way exacerbated the accommodation problems caused by the larger purchase grant from 1846 onwards. Madden's grievances against Panizzi were made worse when the Trustees allowed Panizzi to occupy the intended West Manuscripts Room, in order to house the Grenville Library. Then Panizzi had the temerity to suggest that he should take over the Manuscripts Saloon. This made the Trustees realise that the accommodation problem was reaching crisis point. On their instructions Forshall wrote to the Treasury in March 1848 saying that not only did the library departments need more space; so did the departments of Natural History and of Antiquities. The Treasury were not convinced and refused the Trustees' request that land to the north-east of the museum building should be bought for an extension.

In November 1850 Panizzi reported that he was being forced to double-bank books, and that in the coming financial year he would not be able to spend more than £2,500 of his £10,000 acquisitions grant because of the shortage of storage space. As the Treasury still refused to purchase extra land Panizzi drew up, in April 1852, a scheme to construct a large Reading Room surrounded by four bookstacks in the central courtyard of the Museum. Sydney Smirke (who had succeeded his brother Robert as the museum's architect) produced plans based on Panizzi's ideas, and these were submitted to the Treasury. While the government was considering the matter, Sir Charles Barry, the architect of the Houses of Parliament (than whom, Smirke told Panizzi, he knew 'no more cunning or intriguing a man'), put forward his own scheme. This involved roofing over with glass the whole of the interior courtyard, so that it could become a hall of antiquities. This would free space in the western sculpture galleries for the library departments. The reaction of all the keepers was so unfavourable that in November 1853 the Trustees decided not to accept Barry's scheme.

26 K. A. Manley, 'The book wolf bites a Bohn', in Harris, *Library of the British Museum*, 159.

In January 1854 Panizzi and Smirke presented an amended version of their plan. With surprising speed the Treasury, on 26 January, approved construction with a budget of £86,000. Excavation of the foundations began in April and the contract for the building work was awarded to George Baker and Son of Lambeth in July. The fact that the construction was mainly of cast iron enabled work to proceed speedily and the building was opened in May 1857. It was 258 feet by 184 feet, and the diameter of the Reading Room at the centre was 140 feet. It initially provided space for 302 readers. The bookshelves in the Reading Room and in the surrounding book-stacks could accommodate about 1,500,000 volumes. The final cost was £150,000.[27]

So for some years sufficient space to accommodate new acquisitions was available. Since 1838 readers had been housed in two rooms at the east end of the north wing of the museum. The two rooms at the south end of the east wing (in use from 1827 until 1838) had held 120 readers, but only 100 comfortably. The rooms in the north wing were only designed for 168 readers (130 comfortably), but by 1850 demand was so great that changes were made to accommodate 208 readers (but only 160 comfortably). The ventilation in these rooms was very poor (the 'Museum headache' was notorious) and the daylight available was insufficient (there was no artificial light). So the conditions for the 302 readers in the new Reading Room were a great improvement, even though there was no artificial lighting until the 1880s.

Despite the poor accommodation before 1857, many people found access to the museum's collections essential for their work. Among those granted readers' tickets between 1828 and 1856 were Matthew Arnold (poet and critic), Walter Bagehot (economist), Ford Madox Brown (painter), Robert Browning (poet), Richard Cobden (politician), Charles Darwin (naturalist), Charles Dickens (novelist), Michael Faraday (scientist), Samuel R. Gardiner (historian), Sir Rowland Hill (inventor of the penny post), Thomas H. Huxley (scientist), Sir Edward Burne-Jones (painter), Revd John Keble (initiator of the Oxford Movement), Revd Charles Kingsley (author), Louis Kossuth (Hungarian politician), Harriet Martineau (author), Karl Marx (author of *Das Kapital*), Giuseppe Mazzini (Italian patriot), John Ruskin (author), William Stubbs (bishop and historian), Alfred Tennyson (poet), Konstantin von Tischendorf (orientalist) and Anthony Trollope (novelist).

Although new libraries were founded in London the British Museum library remained the indispensable general library. Such libraries as those of the London Institution, the colleges of London University, the Chemical Society, the

27 *A list of books of reference in the reading room of the British Museum* (London, 1859), xvii–xxi; *British Museum: new reading room and libraries* (London, 1857), 13.

Geological Society, the Insititution of Civil Engineers, the Statistical Society and the Royal Institute of British Architects met the needs of specific groups. But the only real rival to the British Museum was the London Library, founded in 1841 mainly as a result of the efforts of Thomas Carlyle, who thought that working conditions in the museum Reading Room were unacceptable, and who wished to be able to borrow books for reading at home. However, valuable and well patronised as the London Library was, it could not compare in size with the library of the British Museum.

By 1856 this had 550,000 printed books and 35,000 manuscripts. To service these and the readers who consulted them the staff of the Department of Manuscripts had increased to seventeen and that of the Department of Printed Books to seventy-nine. In addition there was a staff of ten in the Reading Room where manuscripts as well as printed books were consulted. With the new Reading Room about to open in 1857, the British Museum library was entering the half century when it became known to the general public as the Mecca of writers.

26

The impact of the British Museum library

MARVIN SPEVACK

1753–1800

It may be a measure of the relative importance of the British Museum that histories of London in the Hanoverian period make little mention of it, and none at all of its library. It is absent from M. Dorothy George's *London life in the eighteenth century*. George Rudé mentions Montagu House – 'merged with the British Museum in 1755' – among aristocratic houses, and Hans Sloane, whose collection of antiquities 'became the nucleus of that in the British Museum'.[1] Francis Sheppard has three brief passing references to the museum, two among plans for the development of London's infrastructure and one among the expansion of cultural institutions.[2] Paul Langford's main concern is the neglect of the museum by George III in favour of the Royal Academy.[3] And Peter Ackroyd's *London: the biography* refers only to the 'building stone'.[4] Works devoted to library history are not particularly forthcoming either. Paul Kaufman's *Libraries and their users*, albeit focused mainly on provincial libraries, contains not even a passing mention of the British Museum library. And P. R. Harris's magisterial *History of the British Museum library* devotes only some twenty-six pages (of a text of 686) to the period 1753 to 1798.

This neglect is due to a certain extent to the infrastructure of London in the mid-eighteenth century. Great Russell Street 'marked for all practical purposes the northern boundary of urban Bloomsbury'.[5] Montagu House, the first of many buildings to house the museum and library, was 'outside' (as it were), one of a number of stately, if not princely, houses (John Evelyn called the

1 G. Rudé, *Hanoverian London 1714–1808* (London, 1971), 43, 51.
2 F. Sheppard, *London 1808–1870: the infernal wen* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1971), 105, 115, 361–2.
3 P. Langford, *A polite and commercial people: England 1727–1783* (Oxford, 1989), 318–20.
4 P. Ackroyd, *London: the biography* (London, 2000), 7.
5 D. J. Olsen, *Town planning in London: the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries* (New Haven and London, 1964), 43–4.

original 'Mr *Montagues* new Palace neere *Bloomesbery*'),[6] which 'some, like the aristocracy, sought [for] occasional or prolonged escape . . . to the neighbouring countryside',[7] as did an increasing number of Londoners seeking to avoid the unwholesome and unhealthy urban environment. If the inner city was recovering from a century of disasters – plagues, fires, storms, earthquakes – and (by Act of Parliament) prescribed brick for wood in building and undertook a major campaign of street-paving, among other things, it had not as yet reached Montagu House, which was backed by a spacious garden of seven acres, not to mention the 'Field of the Forty Footsteps', the fashionable site for fighting duels,[8] and the vast open Lambs Conduit Fields, which afforded a full view of the hills of Highgate and Hampstead. In any event, although by 1750 London was the largest city in Europe, it would take half a century at least for it to reach and assimilate the area. There were old streets to be paved and new ones to be constructed. Not much later, in fact, under George IV in the next century 'there were plans for another Regent Street to link Trafalgar with Bloomsbury, where the British Museum was being rebuilt'.[9] Moreover, Montagu House was difficult to get to since public transportation was wellnigh non-existent: Carlyle, it is said, was motivated to found the London Library in the mid-1840s because the journey to Bloomsbury from his village of Chelsea was so arduous.[10]

And if geography and the absence of a functioning public transportation system were not obstacles enough to the pervasiveness and influence of the British Museum and its library, it cannot be denied that its beginnings were not exactly auspicious. So the assessment of the historian Paul Langford:

> It was established in 1753 in distinctly unpromising circumstances. George II was uninterested in the project and the Prime Minister, Henry Pelham, opposed it. It was initially financed by means of a public lottery, and quickly engendered a depressing controversy about the allegedly corrupt manner in which the lottery was administered. Moreover it did little more than recognize the national obligation to preserve two great collections, the Cotton collection, acquired in 1722 and since stored unsatisfactorily in Westminster School, and Sir Hans Sloane's collection, sold by his trustees on preferential terms in 1753. Grandiose plans for a specially commissioned building had to

6 E. S. de Beer (ed.), *The diary of John Evelyn* (Oxford, 1955), vol. 4, 90.

7 Rudé, *Hanoverian London*, 51.

8 H. B. Wheatley, *London past and present* (London, 1891), vol. 2, 556.

9 Sheppard, *London 1808–1870*, 115.

10 A measure of the exclusiveness of the area is the virtual absence of pubs (even in the late nineteenth century) as enforced by the dukes of Bedford to 'enhance the value of their estates'. See B. Harrison, 'Pubs', in H. J. Dyos and M. Wolff (eds.), *The Victorian city* (London, 1973), vol. 1, 167.

> be abandoned in favour of a modest scheme for the conversion of Montagu House in Bloomsbury. The early years of the new institution did not inspire confidence. Its officials seemed more concerned to quarrel and carp than collaborate in the consolidation of an important scholarly venture . . . Even the reading room proved less than satisfactory. Its first keeper, Peter Templeman, resented his duty of attending on the needs of readers. When Thomas Gray paid a visit he found only the antiquarian William Stukeley, gossiping with acquaintances, two visiting Prussians, and the amanuensis of a peer with an amateur interest in history, Lord Royston.[11]

Furthermore the great majority of the population were workers, who had little time or inclination for reading, and

> during the greater part of the [eighteenth] century the average citizen of the middle class had no books . . . nor did he want any. Reading – except of the newspaper – was not part of his life, nor part of the household life. There were a few libraries: those of St Paul's, Westminster Abbey, Sion College, the College of Physicians, the Royal Society, and the King's Library, for instance; but the citizens knew nothing of them.[12]

For those who wished for more, there were circulating libraries, of which there were some 122 in London by 1800.[13] It may in fact be not too much to say that the British Museum library, in its inception and early years, was not meant for the average citizen at all. It was 'public' mainly in the sense of being supported by public funds. Moreover, it may not be too much to say that in its first decades at least it was not so much a library as a collection of collections, an assemblage of books and manuscripts, a succession of gifts, bequests and purchases, without much regard to cohesion or unity. Its gifts most often represented the interests of the donors more clearly than they fulfilled the needs of a library. Its location, brief opening times and much-complained-of restrictive admission policy lessened its impact immeasurably. Although founded by Act of Parliament, it was in the developing years not as yet a public institution, nor one to vie with the libraries in Paris or Oxford. It may not be surprising that in his *London in the eighteenth century* Besant lists the museum (and with it presumably its library) not among libraries (p. 341) but among the learned societies (p. 393).

11 Langford, *Polite and commercial people*, 319. In a memoir of his father, Isaac, whose works he edited in 1858, Benjamin Disraeli recalls (vol. 1, xxx): 'When my father first frequented the reading-room of the British Museum at the end of the last century, his companions never numbered half-a-dozen.'

12 W. Besant, *London in the eighteenth century* (London, 1925), 341.

13 R. Porter, *London: a social history* (Harmondsworth, 1996), 176.

Although the library could not but be enhanced by being housed in what had been a palatial mansion and within the more famous and more frequented museum, it is nevertheless important to separate the library from the museum. To a certain extent Besant's quaint description is not inappropriate: the library had the character of a learned society in the particularity of its collections and exclusiveness of its clientele, a character which it was never to shed entirely. A parliamentary Act of 1808 regarded 'gratifying the curiosity of the multitudes, who incessantly resort to it in quest of amusement [as] a popular though far less useful application of the Institution'.[14] The ten or twelve rooms allocated to the library could not accommodate more than a handful of readers. If the restrictions on admission, the discomfort of the appointments and the tediousness of the service were not enough to discourage larger numbers of readers, then the collections might. Visitors to the museum could appreciate the scientific and antiquities exhibitions visually, if not intellectually.

But what could the same public make of manuscripts they could not decipher, languages they could not understand, subjects beyond their comprehension or imagination? Logically and inevitably, it was the learned and the devoted amateurs who made use of a library which seemed designed for them. They were few in number: 'in 1759 approximately 160 readers' tickets were issued or renewed; in 1769, 60; in 1779, 75; in 1789, 100; and in 1799, 125'.[15] They were specialists and generally of a certain rank or class. The first eight admissions sanctioned by the Trustees at their meeting on 12 January 1759 are indicative: Revd John Taylor, canon of St Paul's Cathedral; Revd Robert Lowth, bishop of Oxford, 1766–77, bishop of London, 1777–87; Daniel Wray, antiquary, Elected Trustee, 1765–83; Samuel Musgrave, physician and classical scholar; James Stuart, painter and architect; Edward Langton, secretary of Lord Royston.[16] If the remaining two are not as outstanding in rank or position, then they are in speciality: Revd Samuel Chandler, nonconformist minister; Taylor White, noted botanist, 'admitted to make drawings from the volumes of dried plants'. And the readers who followed in the remainder of the century conformed to these contours: they were drawn largely from the nobility and their friends, clergy, antiquaries, artists and authors.[17] And although they were predominantly residents of London, there was a noticeable representation of other localities. From 12 January 1759 (when the library opened) to 11 May 1763 there were readers from many parts of Britain – from Cambridge,

14 I. McCalman and others (eds.), *An Oxford companion to the romantic age: British culture 1776–1832* (Oxford, 1999), 192.

15 P. R. Harris, *A history of the British Museum library 1753–1973* (London, 1998), 10.

16 *Ibid.*, 763. 17 *Ibid.*, 763–5.

Oxford, Exeter, Durham, Huntingdon, Macclesfield, Edinburgh, Glasgow – as well as from Germany, Sweden, Portugal, Denmark and Italy.[18] And as the century progressed, so did the representation from Britain and Europe in the expansion of the classes of readers, which included naval and army officers, lawyers, politicians, doctors, members of foreign embassies.[19] There was even a noteworthy influx of refugees from the French Revolution. Although it is impossible to identify them precisely, for the Register of Admissions gives only London addresses: at the turn of the century a number of clerics and noblemen, among others, are recorded (normally recommended by Joseph Planta, the Principal Librarian, himself); it is surmised that they seem to have regarded the library as a kind of meeting place, if not a haven.[20]

It is obvious that the readers were a select group, united (directly or indirectly) by their intellectual pursuits. They constituted an intellectual class drawn together by the specialist collections of the newly instituted British Museum library. The only evidence available of what books they consulted is from March to May of 1835,[21] but the dominance of science, history, topography and theology suggests an even more stringent selectivity in the manner of learned societies in the previous century. And given the cramped space provided for readers, some at least might well have exchanged pleasantries and views as they would in the learned society or club of which many were already fellow members.

Not surprisingly, there was also a certain unity or inbreeding in the administration, which, perhaps indirectly but nevertheless potently, contributed to the impact of the new library and by extension to the cluster of institutions to which it belonged. Among the first Trustees of the British Museum appointed in 1753 was the President of the Royal Society, the earl of Macclesfield, George Parker, also Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. Other presidents of the Royal Society who were Trustees in this period included James West (also FSA) and

18 British Library, MS Add. 45,567.

19 British Library, MSS Add. 45,568–70. For a description of some of the readers before 1780, see A. Sherbo, 'Some early readers in the British Museum', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 4 (1972), 56–64.

20 The important question of the impact of the British Museum library abroad, involving its contacts with foreign institutions and the nature of its collections, and which was of special interest to Antonio Panizzi, is beyond the scope of this chapter.

21 Harris, *British Museum library*, 87. Interestingly enough, the subjects consulted on a sample day in 1905 did not vary greatly from those of 1835. Although it is difficult to assess the accuracy of the categories, for there is considerable overlapping, theology, topography and history were apparently still among the leading favourites in 1905, as they were in 1835. Science no longer had a prime place because of the move of the natural history departments to South Kensington in 1881–5: G. F. Barwick, 'A day's work in the reading room of the British Museum', *Library*, new ser., 2 (1905), 304–8.

Joseph Banks. Another Trustee appointed in 1753 was William Stukeley, Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries (which he helped found) and Fellow of the Royal Society.[22] Both were aware of the project, so Stukeley's diary, 'to take Montague House for Sr. Hans Sloan's library, the Cottonian and Harleyan MSS and to bring thither the Royal and Antiquarian Societys'.[23] It might well be said that the Royal Society was the progenitive force in the foundation of the museum and library: 'of the fifty-nine executors of Sir Hans's Will no less than forty were Fellows of the Royal Society'.[24] And it was the nutritive force as well: 'of the thirty-one *Elected Trustees* in the first thirty years of the Museum's life, no less than twenty-three were Fellows of the Royal Society'.[25] In the eighteenth century all the Principal Librarians – Gowin Knight, from 1756, Matthew Maty, from 1772, Charles Morton, from 1776, and Joseph Planta, from 1799 – were Fellows of the Royal Society and the latter three had served as Secretary as well. Among other Fellows who became members of the staff in this period were Samuel Harper, Under Librarian of Printed Books; Peter Templeman, Superintendent of the Reading Room; and Richard Penneck, who succeeded Templeman.

This overlapping has important consequences. In the second half of the eighteenth century the relatively few scholarly libraries in Britain were in reality part of a chain of independent organisations, an unofficial confederation, with similar aims and problems. They catered essentially to pretty much the same 'public', that is, a scholarly and/or affluent group whose interests, judging from the nature of the collections, were remote from the direct interests and needs of the general public. This was true of the British Museum library, the great university libraries, the church and municipal libraries, and the private collections which were open to a select public. What bound them, in a way not yet fully realised, was a certain overall meta-coherence in the collections: a preponderance of what amounts to a national archive of historical documents which together could constitute a patriotic and thus cohesive bond. But there was as yet no authority to recognise and administer it, much less to actualise Richard Bentley's *Proposal* of 1697 for a truly national research library. For the time all libraries had much the same fundamental problem: funding. The British Museum depended on meagre resources from a parliament which seems not to have understood the full implications of the library's mission. As

22 J. Evans, *A history of the Society of Antiquaries* (Oxford, 1956), 111.

23 Quoted in *ibid*., 111.

24 A. E. Gunther, 'The Royal Society and the foundation of the British Museum, 1753–1781', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London* 33 (1979), 208.

25 *Ibid*., 209–10.

far as manuscripts were concerned, for example, there was no parliamentary grant at all until 1818 (£300 for Abbot's drawings); there was no special grant from parliament until 1847 (£4,925 for the Lansdowne manuscripts).[26] Bodley's only constant income specifically for books was Nathaniel, Lord Crewe's bequest of £10 per year,[27] and it had often to take out loans from various of the wealthy colleges. Furthermore the deposits of the Stationers' Company under the poorly administered Copyright Act of 1710 were sporadic, at any rate inadequate. The private libraries were strained by the ever-increasing financial burdens of their owners. What libraries in and outside of London had further in common – and which had only a limited influence on whatever impact they may have provided – was the concentration on library design and reader services. Oxford in the mid-eighteenth century was 'setting new standards in library design and promised facilities':[28] in Duke Humfrey, for example, 'benches between the presses were removed and replaced by Windsor chairs "so admirably calculated" as Thomas Warton said "for ornament and repose"'.[29] Both institutions were aware of the necessity of cataloguing, but progress was slow in making known what existed. At the British Museum library opening times were a matter of constant concern, and in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, little more than twenty years after its opening, 'old Montagu House was beginning to feel its age. More and more of the Trustees' scanty funds were being devoted to its upkeep, and its inadequacy was becoming increasingly apparent.'[30]

There was competition, to be sure, for the existence and reputation of each library depended on the uniqueness of its collection. The British Museum library's Cottonian and Harleian collections, for example, could not be found anywhere else. Nor could Bodley's Rawlinson and Clarendon collections. But since they depended on benefactors for the growth of their collections, the libraries engaged in a competition of seized and missed opportunities, which was to increase markedly in the next century. Oxford, according to Humfrey Wanley, 'might have had it [the Cottonian library], had the University thought fit to have used all their endeavours to procure it';[31] the British Museum library was unhappy to have missed the collection of Richard Gough (FRS, FSA),

26 F. Madden, ['A collection of newspaper cuttings, views, etc. relating to the British Museum 1755–1870'], volume entitled 'General history', fol. 35v.

27 I. Philip, *The Bodleian Library in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Oxford, 1983), 103.

28 *Ibid.*, 92. 29 *Ibid.*, 93.

30 E. Miller, *That noble cabinet: a history of the British Museum* (London, 1973), 116.

31 Quoted in I. Willison, 'The development of the British national library to 1837 in its European context: an essay in retrospect', in K. A. Manley (ed.), *Careering along with books* (London, 1996), 39, note 44; also in *Library History* 12 (1996), 39.

apparently disappointed at not having become a Trustee, who bequeathed it to the Bodleian Library, and also that of Francis Douce (FSA), who did likewise.[32] Bodley was able to snatch the Rawlinson collection from the Society of Antiquaries.[33] After both the king and Oxford declined to buy the Thomason Tracts at the Restoration,[34] George III procured it on behalf of the British Museum library in 1762[35] and it was transferred to the nation by George IV in 1823.

Competition, however, was simply not as cogent or potent as common interests and overlapping administration. Although it was unlikely that a formal alliance of research resources could ever be achieved, there was an undeniable network or confederation of institutions, animated by the founding of the British Museum and its library, in which each institution was compelled to define itself and its mission and so to set itself off from the others, in harmony and in rivalry. This, accompanied by a powerful differentiation in funding and an increasingly wider demographic representation among the readership, was a portent of a new thrust, if not order, in the nature and impact of such British intellectual institutions.

1800–1856

By 1800 London had reached Montagu House. The area behind the British Museum was still open field but the area west of Tottenham Court Road was growing rapidly and expanding relentlessly eastward.[36] By 1833[37] the British Museum was no longer in 'splendid isolation', for the area north of Great Russell Street was in the process of becoming a neighbourhood of large town houses, according to the planning of the Bedford Office. By mid-century the immediate area around the British Museum had established itself, having been settled largely by lawyers and bankers (in part at least attracted by the open fields nearby) and certain of those whose scientific interests were met by the museum and the new University of London.[38] In fact the expansion ('sprawl' was another designation) in all directions was so feverish as to make undeniable Asa Briggs's observation that 'London was *sui generis*, vast, seemingly limitless . . . By the end of the century it was beginning to be difficult to tell where London ended.'[39] The population was increasing dramatically: at

32 *Report from the select committee on British Museum, 19 June 1835*, questions 1467–96.
33 Evans, *Society of Antiquaries*, 127–8.
34 Miller, *That noble cabinet*, 73.
35 Langford, *Polite and commercial people*, 320.
36 See the map in Sheppard, *London 1808–1870*, 36–7.
37 See *ibid.*, 84–5.
38 Olsen, *Town planning*, 110.
39 A. Briggs, *Victorian cities* (Harmondsworth, 1968), 86.

the census of 1801, the first taken, London had some 864,000 inhabitants, ten times more than its nearest rival Manchester.[40] By mid-century London had almost tripled in size;[41] according to the census of 1851 the parish of St Giles-in-the-Fields (out of which St George's Bloomsbury was carved) was among the most densely populated.[42] The problems of a metropolitan city were obvious and great: the flood of immigrants, the extremes of wealth and poverty, the inadequacy of the social welfare system, the lack of public transportation, etc. Street improvement, which one historian has characterised as 'appear[ing] to be a panacea for every urban problem',[43] was no answer, of course.

In the first quarter of the nineteenth century the library mirrored London's buoyant expansion: the first printed catalogues of printed books had appeared in 1787; a new reading room was opened in 1803 and plans for more were being drawn up; the Copyright Act of 1814 assured a number (if uncertain) of acquisitions; there was a response, especially under the new Principal Librarian, Joseph Planta, to the criticism of the limited opening hours and admissions policy.[44] Still, the library was modest or limited in its impact. It was a public library. But in 1799 its admissions were under 200 and, although by 1820 over 500, it had (in 1827) places for only 120.[45] Since 75–80 per cent of the population of London were workers,[46] and many who were not were also not readers, it is not inaccurate to estimate that much less than 1 per cent were eligible for admission and only an infinitesimal number could make use of the library. In 1818 it is estimated that there were only ten to thirty persons in the Reading Room per day.[47] In other words, the public of the public library was still much the same select group of scholars, enlarged somewhat by travellers from abroad. This group had special interests and were generally influential, numerous among them persons of rank and privilege, with time enough to travel to the library, wait for service and pursue their special interests. And since most also had the resources for private study, so much the better.

For admission policies, the number of readers and their nature, the improvement of reader services, the image of the library in the political arena – these were topics of discussion and controversy. But the really significant

40 J. S. Watson, *The reign of George III 1760–1815* (Oxford, 1960), 517; M. Reed, *The Georgian triumph 1700–1830* (London, 1983), 213.

41 L. Lees, 'Metropolitan types: London and Paris compared', in Dyos and Wolff, *Victorian city*, vol. 1, 414. By 1891 there were over 4 million inhabitants.

42 Lees, 'Metropolitan types', 418, figure xii.

43 A. Sutcliffe, 'The autumn of central Paris', quoted in Lees, 'Metropolitan types', 427.

44 Miller, *That noble cabinet*, 92.

45 *Ibid.*, 92, and Harris, *British Museum library*, 87, who adds: 'by 1830 there were about 3,000 persons holding readers' tickets'.

46 Lees, 'Metropolitan types', 423–4.

47 Harris, *British Museum library*, 54.

development was on a different, if not higher, plane. Even before the mid-nineteenth century, with its array of library proposals and reforms, its alteration and stricter implementation of the Copyright Act, its apparent concessions to public taste and wishes, and the powerful hand of Antonio Panizzi, the foundations were being laid for a systematic ordering of scholarship. What was once deemed casual and unprofessional was being transformed into a national structure of almost cartel-like power. It was but one manifestation of an age of organisation.

First and foremost, the library grew immensely. Under Joseph Planta, Principal Librarian from 1799 to 1827, a flood of appropriations from the government and gifts from donors, capped by the acquisition of the monumental library of George III in 1823, increased the size of the collection of printed books by over 50 per cent. A new Copyright Act of 1814 added further thousands of items. As a result Montagu House, long in disrepair, was deemed inadequate, and the Treasury approved a new building designed by Robert Smirke, begun in 1823. In the same period the library was strengthened within by a new general catalogue of printed books, catalogues of important manuscript collections, the construction of galleries for printed books, and a substantial increase in staff and services. With the completion of the new east wing in 1827 and the continuation of work on the other three wings surrounding the central court, the British Museum was to become in its time the largest secular building in London and with its colonnade of forty-four Ionic columns the foremost example of the classical style. Its supremacy among libraries – indeed its centrality in the intellectual life of the country – was undeniable and inevitable.

This was in fact conceded and indeed reinforced by other learned institutions which sought to consolidate their position in the scholarly world by arranging themselves in a constellation around the new star. For one thing the network of officers continued and was indeed formalised: to the presidents of the College of Physicians and the Royal Society as original members of the Trustees were added in 1824 the presidents of the Society of Antiquaries and the Royal Academy. For another, multiple and interlocking memberships continued unabatedly: Nicholas Carlisle, assistant librarian of George III's library, who had moved with it to the British Museum in 1823, was to become Resident Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries. Taylor Combe, Keeper of Antiquities in the British Museum, was simultaneously Secretary of the Royal Society and the Society of Antiquaries. Francis Douce, FSA, was Under Librarian for Manuscripts; Henry Ellis, FRS, FSA, was Keeper of Printed Books and then Principal Librarian. Perhaps the most revealing instance of the extent

of the overlapping was the letter from Ellis recorded in the Council Book of the Society of Antiquaries for the meeting of 15 June 1847. Ellis, writing from the British Museum, expressed the 'anxious wish' of the President (the marquis of Northampton) and Council of the Royal Society that the President and Council of the Society of Antiquaries 'join with them in giving the requisite cleansing repairs to the Hall, Staircase and Ante-Room at Somerset House, at present common to both'. Other FSA Fellows among the officers of the British Museum in this period were Frederic Madden, John Winter Jones and William S. W. Vaux. More important than multiple membership, the network of specialists increased. Ellis, while an officer of the British Museum library, prepared the *Catalogue of manuscripts in the library of the Society of Antiquaries* and Carlisle that of its printed books in 1816. Up to 1836 at least, Ellis and Carlisle were paid for their work in both institutions: Ellis received £500 yearly as Principal Librarian and £150 as joint secretary of the Royal Society, Carlisle as second Keeper of Printed Books worked two days a week for £200 per annum.[48] For a new compilation of a classed catalogue, Stephen Lee, Assistant Secretary of the Royal Society from 1823, was engaged to deal with mathematics, Charles Badham, Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and FRS, with medicine, and Frederic Madden of Magdalen Hall, Oxford (shortly to be FRS and FSA), with history. In 1825 W. H. Wollaston (FRS, PRS) was asked to examine fragments of the Cotton manuscripts damaged in the fire of 1731, and in 1826 the Trustees approved the proposals in dealing with them made by Humphry Davy, President of the Royal Society and Official Trustee. And then there was the steady flow of gifts to the British Museum library, such as the collections of Richard Colt Hoare (FSA) in 1825 and of Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society, in 1827.

In 1831 Henry Ellis (FRS, FSA), Principal Librarian of the British Museum, was asked by the Royal Society to supervise the arrangement and classification of its library. And his membership in both organisations, as well as that of Josiah Forshall (Secretary and also Keeper of Manuscripts in the British Museum), was no small factor in the society's extremely complicated transferral of seventy-three volumes of its Arundel manuscripts (in the first of a number of such transactions) to the British Museum in exchange for duplicate printed books, whose sale for £956 enabled the society to buy new scientific works as well as providing it with more space. In the mid-1830s on Ellis's recommendation, Antonio Panizzi, then an assistant librarian at the British Museum, was engaged to assess the library of the Royal Society and to classify

48 *Ibid.*, 106.

the collection. That it was not a happy collaboration is less important here than the fact that it was another illustration of the network.[49] In a similar manner the Society of Antiquaries had in 1814 presented to the British Museum the six cases and three fragments of ancient paintings from St Stephen's Chapel[50] after evaluating its collections and need for space. Such exchanges of personnel and presentations of specimens and publications were not infrequent, as were negotiations concerning purchases (as, for example, the Society of Antiquaries encouraging the British Museum to buy Bryan Faussett's collection of notebooks[51]) or the museum's receiving the society's minutes relative to its collection of Anglo-Saxon antiquities, and other matters of mutual concern. Nor were they restricted to one or two institutions in London. Attempting to implement fully the new Copyright Act of 1814 the libraries of Sion College, the British Museum, Cambridge, Oxford, Ireland and Scotland met in 1816 to put pressure on publishers and the Stationers' Company to observe the regulations.[52] In mid-century the Bodleian Library investigated the possibility of employing the British Museum's classification system for its new catalogue.[53] And although it did reject covering its quadrangle with a glass roof similar to the museum's, it did take over the self-supporting stack construction of the iron library which Panizzi had had installed.[54]

Underlying these interactions was a crucial re-evaluation of the nature of all the institutions, for, among other reasons, they could not compete with the increasingly powerful British Museum, nor were they any longer able to integrate the British Museum library into the existing network and so perpetuate the old establishment. Reform and professionalism were the order of the day. In the mid-1830s the Royal Society felt the need to focus solely on natural science and not on learning in general. By mid-century new statutes governed membership and the nature of its library, giving it a new profile and at the same time distinguishing it from an offshoot like the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Similarly, the Society of Antiquaries was more sharply defined, as restless special interest (the original basis of which was the catalogue of coins of cities and princes in the British Museum) led to the founding of the Numismatic Society in 1838, and general dissatisfaction to that of the British Archaeological Association in 1843. It is not surprising that the Council decided to 'devote an annual sum "for the purchase of useful works", instead

49 M. B. Hall, *The library and archives of the Royal Society 1660–1990* (London, 1992), 24–5.
50 Evans, *Society of Antiquaries*, 219. 51 *Ibid.*, 274.
52 D. McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library, a history: the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries* (Cambridge, 1986), 417.
53 E. Craster, *History of the Bodleian Library 1845–1945* (Oxford, 1952), 54. 54 *Ibid.*, 121.

of occasionally as before'.[55] As these societies were trimmed – Joan Evans titled the relevant chapter in her *History of the Society of Antiquaries* 'Retrenchment and reform' – the British Museum library was all the time growing enormously. But it too, as well as its counterparts in Cambridge and Oxford, was in the process of evaluating and defining itself and by extension its role in, if not domination of, the intellectual resources of the whole country. In his testimony before the parliamentary Select Committee on 7 March 1836, Panizzi, then additional assistant librarian, outlined his concept of a national research library. It was not simply a question of increased funding and a modification of the role of the Trustees, both of which he strongly advocated. He felt that 'there ought to be at least two public libraries for education' (question 4794) and, in further refining the library, he reacted to the 'chief evil of the British Museum, [which] is to have too many things together' (question 4800), by advocating the transference 'somewhere else' of the department of natural history.

Apart from these ultimately accepted opinions and his logistical and architectural accomplishments – moving the books into the new wings of the new building and realising the new round Reading Room – Panizzi's most strenuous efforts and brilliant achievements were connected with the enforcing of the Copyright Act and the cataloguing of the library's vast and vastly increasing collection. Both had direct consequences not merely for the library but also for the national intellectual climate. In the one he was increasing the size of the library and in the other he was democratising scholarship. From 1836 the Copyright Act applied only to certain libraries, but in effect it modified the nature of their collections and set them apart from all other libraries. For the three major recipients in London, Oxford and Cambridge had been most importantly collections of special collections reflecting the taste of donors rather than the policy of librarians attempting coherent and consistent growth. Now they had to accommodate all items published in Britain and Ireland, prompting the iconoclastic William Everett to remark that the copyright privilege 'which, if the library availed itself of it, would soon become like the gift of an elephant, is chiefly exercised in procuring all the new novels, at the instance of the professors' wives and other ladies connected with the University'.[56] For these libraries this meant a reconsideration and re-evaluation of their identity

55 B. Nurse, 'The library of the Society of Antiquaries of London', in R. Myers and M. Harris (eds.), *Antiquaries, book collectors and the circles of learning* (Winchester and Newcastle, DE, 1996), 155. Also, 1861 saw the publication of a catalogue of its printed books 'to help Fellows who lived at a distance', but also in the words of the Preface 'to indicate to Fellows the deficiencies, and induce them to supply them from their own libraries'.

56 *On the Cam: lectures on the University of Cambridge in England* (London, 1866), 36; quoted in McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, 24.

and mission. For growth brought problems of space, admissions, reader services. The university libraries introduced fees, thus restricting readership and claiming that students were paying for the privilege. The British Museum library did not – for obvious political reasons (as a public library supported to a great extent by public funding[57]) and for ideological reasons as well. For the dictum of Panizzi, the foreigner who had overcome the hostility of many English colleagues, was unambiguous: 'I want a poor student to have the same means of indulging his learned curiosity, of following his rational pursuits, of consulting the same authorities, of fathoming the most intricate inquiry, as the richest man in the kingdom.'[58] He was, of course, inflecting the words of the preamble of the Act to incorporate the British Museum (26 Geo. II): 'the Museum be preserved and maintained, not only for the inspection and entertainment of the learned and the curious, but for the general use and benefit of the public'. Furthermore, in favouring and creating an author catalogue, in some ways his outstanding achievement, Panizzi was in effect de-specialising scholarship (and the task of cataloguing as well) by superseding the classed classification and thus responding to a more liberal view of scholarship. The library could no longer be at the service solely of those from 'great houses and learned professions', indeed of the 'aristocratic dilettantism', who created and stocked it.[59]

And it is not without a certain irony that Panizzi should question Göttingen's attempt to be a national library, claiming that it 'is a library for the education of the persons attending the university, and not a national collection, like that of the British Museum. It is not a library for research, as ours sought to be, but a library for education.'[60] But the Cambridge University Library (known popularly until the late nineteenth century as the Cambridge Public Library), if only as a deposit library, 'had to contrive to be both',[61] and Oxford had no choice as well. Nor did the British Museum library. For despite Panizzi's preference for 'rare, ephemeral, voluminous and costly publications', over 'common modern books', he had to admit to the parliamentary Select Committee, 'I want the library of the British Museum to have books of both descriptions' (question 4795). Like it or not, it was to become not merely a national library but

57 For not so obvious socio-cultural reasons, see A. Goldgar, 'The British Museum and the virtual representation of culture in the eighteenth century', *Albion* 32 (2000), 195–231.

58 Panizzi's testimony (question 4795) of 7 June 1836 in the *Report from the select committee on British Museum* of 14 July 1836.

59 Interestingly enough, these designations were applied to the Society of Antiquaries by Evans (*Society of Antiquaries*, 263), who went so far as to admit that the society was 'beginning to draw its members . . . also from trade, both wholesale and retail'.

60 Quoted in McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, 25–6.

61 McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, 26.

a universal one representing all fields of knowledge for both research and education. This development was underlined by the conclusions of the Royal Commission on the British Museum of 1847–9, 'whose commissioners fully coincide in the views of Sir Hans Sloane that these collections should be rendered as useful as possible, as well towards satisfying the desires of the visitors, as for the improvement, knowledge, and information of all persons'.[62]

From a national perspective the library landscape was changing as radically as that of London and Bloomsbury. By mid-century there was a burgeoning of learned societies, specialised libraries, public libraries, lending libraries, book clubs and the like, each with its own clientele, but all dominated, as the century proceeded, at first by three majestic deposit libraries and ultimately by one monolithic organisation which dwarfed all other libraries: by 1849 Bodley had some 220,000 printed volumes and 21,000 manuscripts,[63] whereas the British Museum had 435,000 volumes, 29,626 volumes of manuscripts and more than 2,946 rolls, 23,772 charters, etc.,[64] and only seven years later already 550,000 printed books and 35,000 manuscripts.[65] In 1848 the work of the Royal Commission was completed and implemented: Panizzi's new catalogue was agreed to. In 1851, with the reading rooms open 292 days a year, 78,419 readers (269 per diem) consulted 424,851 volumes (1,455 per diem).[66] In 1856 Panizzi became Principal Librarian. In 1857 the new round Reading Room was opened. The way was clear for the inevitable.

On 16 October 1841, in a plea for evening openings, 'J. H.' characterised the library in a letter to *The Times*:

> At present the chief frequenters of the library of the British Museum are a *coterie* of professed *littérateurs*, men whose devotions, I fear, are more paid to Mammon than to Minerva. In a word, the national library, instead of being a national benefit, is a mere sealed book to the million. What might be of incalculable value to the mass is a mere monopoly in the hands of a few book-makers, hired copyists, and magazine-writers.

Both the opening times and the makeup of the readership expanded but the idea of an institutional supremacy persisted. The British Museum library was the focal point, if not the motor, of British intellectual resources and activities, as central then as its location today on one of the busiest streets in London

62 *The Times*, 29 March 1850.

63 Craster, *Bodleian Library*, 61.

64 Harris, *British Museum library*, 223.

65 See Harris, chapter 25 in this volume. The dramatic increase is apparent in the report of *The Times* of 24 October 1841 according to which the library had 225,000 printed books, and was outnumbered by twelve European libraries, with only half as many as Munich and one-third as many as Paris.

66 Madden, 'General history', in 'A collection', fol. 105v.

and surrounded by Euston, St Pancras and King's Cross stations. There was simply no other choice. No other institution was able to accommodate the diverse interests of independent scholars so satisfyingly.

Moreover, for intellectuals or dilettantes up and down the land, be they those few hundred who had reader's tickets in the eighteenth century when it was likely that everyone knew everyone else or those many thousands today, there has always been a feeling of exclusiveness connected with the library, one beyond the recurring declamations of élitism[67] and litanies of harmony.[68] For its massive collection representing the totality of learning has an almost mystical magnetism. To have it all in one place was and is unique.[69] The library was never noted for multi-volume projects produced by teams of scholars; it was and has always been inward-looking, a Mecca for readers working individually and privately, providing the substance which attracts and binds them in the solidarity of scholarship.

67 *Ibid*., fol. 70, records Robert Peel, Prime Minister and Official Trustee, as saying on 21 September 1841: 'There was every disposition on the part of the trustees to allow access to the library for the purpose of study, but to make the library a public promenade would certainly be to destroy the design of the institution.'

68 One example of the many rhapsodies will suffice. In his scrapbook entitled 'Library founders & officers' (in 'A collection') Frederic Madden mounted R. Hatt's 'Lines suggested whilst in the reading-room of the British Museum' (1837):

> Here silence reigns and meditation dwells,
> In learning's fane, this place by far excels
> What I have read of mighty Greece or Rome;
> And whilst entranc'd around its classic dome,
> I turn my wondering eyes to gaze
> On men and books – lost in the boundless maze
> And labyrinth of thought, with joy exclaim,
> England this Temple crown thy lasting fame!

69 A sentiment implicit even in the caustic criticism of a *Times* leader of 3 October 1850: 'part of the library itself ought to be visible, that our cockneys and their country cousins may realize the bulk and outward form of literature'.

27

Private libraries in the age of bibliomania

ARNOLD HUNT

One word – bibliomania – seems to sum up the great private libraries of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The word was already being used in England as early as 1734, when Thomas Hearne commented on the low prices fetched by the manuscripts at the sale of Thomas Rawlinson's library – 'had I been in place I should have been tempted to have laid out a pretty deal of money, without thinking myself at all touched with Bibliomania' – but it is more commonly associated with the early nineteenth century, the period celebrated in Thomas Frognall Dibdin's *Bibliomania* (1811), when the prices of rare books in England rose to unprecedented heights.[1] It has been succinctly and accurately defined by Marc Vaulbert de Chantilly as 'the rage for rare, curious and splendid books which gripped a number of wealthy, well-educated and well-born Englishmen over a period of approximately fifty years', between about 1775 and 1825.[2] Like the Dutch 'tulipomania' of the late seventeenth century, the English bibliomania of the early nineteenth century has often been seen as a brief and exceptional period of unbridled extravagance, when books were bought and sold at prices far exceeding their intrinsic value. There is certainly a good deal of truth in this view; but as I hope to show in this chapter, the era of bibliomania was not merely a blip in the history of English book-collecting. On the contrary, it represents a profound shift in literary taste, and has had an equally profound and enduring impact on the collecting of books and the formation of libraries.

The period 1750–1850 can be regarded as the beginning of the modern era in book-collecting in at least three respects. First, this was the period when a book's rarity became a principal factor in determining its commercial value, and when the traditional price structure based on size and format – with folios worth more than quartos, which in turn were worth more than octavos

1 T. Hearne, *Remarks and collections*, ed. H. E. Salter, Oxford Historical Society 72 (Oxford, 1921), vol. 11, 389.
2 J. Ferriar, *The bibliomania*, ed. M. Vaulbert de Chantilly (London, 2001), 20.

or duodecimos – was decisively superseded by a new price structure based primarily on rarity and condition.[3] Secondly, this was the period when first editions began to be perceived as intrinsically desirable and preferable to later editions, even if they were not the best editions from a textual point of view. This is reflected in reference works such as the *Bibliographie instructive* (1763–8) by the Parisian bookseller Guillaume-François de Bure, designed to assist 'the curious' (*curieux*) in recognising first editions, in 'distinguishing original editions from counterfeits printed in the same format and bearing the same date', and in assessing the rarity and hence the market value of early printed books.[4] Thirdly, this was the period which saw the establishment of a canon of collectible books, including such high-spots as the Gutenberg Bible and the First Folio of Shakespeare's plays, which have remained highly sought after by collectors ever since. As we shall see, this represented a significant shift away from the classical canon which had reigned supreme at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The great private libraries of the mid-eighteenth century were, above all, classical libraries. They concentrated on the canonical works of Greek and Latin literature, and often formed part of a larger classical collection encompassing pictures, drawings, prints and sculptures, many of them brought back from Italy by English travellers on the Grand Tour. The literature of other languages, too, was judged by classical standards, so that Italian literature tended to rank highest, followed by French, Spanish and other romance languages descended from Latin, while the literature of the northern European nations – including England – ranked lowest, as being furthest from classical models. This order of priorities is well illustrated in the section of de Bure's *Bibliographie instructive* dealing with poetry. Greek and Latin poetry come first, followed by neo-Latin poetry, then French, then Italian, and finally 'Poesie Espagnole & Portugaise, Angloise, Allemande, &c' lumped into a single category. German poetry is represented by the chivalric romance *Tewrdannck* (1517), valued less for its text than for its fine woodcut illustrations, while English poetry is represented by only two works, Milton's *Paradise lost* and Dryden's *Comedies, tragedies and operas*.[5]

The prominence of Italian literature should not surprise us, for Italian was seen as the herald of modernity, the first language to have emerged out of the

3 C. Edwards, 'Antiquarian bookselling in Britain in 1725: the nature of the evidence', in R. Myers and M. Harris (eds.), *A genius for letters: booksellers and bookselling from the 16th to the 20th century* (Winchester, 1995), 89.

4 G.-F. de Bure, *Bibliographie instructive: ou Traité de la connoissance des livres rares et singuliers* (Paris, 1763–8), vol. 1, preface.

5 Bure, *Bibliographie instructive*, vol. 3 (*Belles lettres*), 727–8.

wreckage of the dark ages and to have been restored to something approaching classical purity. Writing in 1757, Joseph Baretti described the Italian language as having arisen in the middle ages 'out of the poor remains of the Latin tongue, like an unhappy woman that escapes from under the ruins of a tremendous earthquake, in a tattered gown, such as chance has thrown on her back: but her beauty, though concealed in rags, is soon perceived, and every one strives to give her something, that she may dress and adorn herself completely'. Baretti singled out several writers for special praise: Brunetto Latini, for setting the language on a firmer grammatical basis; Dante, for making it more 'forcible and vigorous'; Petrarch, for improving its poetry; and Boccaccio, for raising its prose 'to a height which, I imagine, can scarce be surpassed'.[6] The primacy of these writers in the neo-classical canon is reflected in the fact that the first edition of the *Decameron*, printed by Christopher Valdarfer at Venice in 1471, became one of the most highly prized books of the period. By the mid-eighteenth century it was already recognised as an extremely rare book – de Bure, in 1765, described it as 'de la plus grande rareté' – and it reached its apogee at the Roxburghe sale in 1812 when a copy fetched £2,260, at that time a record price for any printed book.[7]

This style of collecting is typified by the libraries of two English bibliophiles, Joseph Smith (1674–1770) and Revd Thomas Crofts (1722–81). Smith, commonly known as Consul Smith, was British consul at Venice from 1744 to 1760 and formed a magnificent collection of books and works of art which he sold to King George III in 1762. His library was very strong in early Italian printing, including some of the very earliest books printed in Rome, Milan and Venice; while the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century books reflect a particular interest in Italian literature, art and architecture.[8] The catalogue of Crofts's library, dispersed at auction in 1783, reveals a similar concentration on classical authors and Italian literature, which between them comprised well over a third of the whole collection. There was a small but fine collection of prints, mostly Italian Old Masters, and a very impressive collection of music, chiefly Italian madrigals of the late sixteenth century. Crofts also owned some important French and Spanish romances – including the famous *Tirant lo Blanc* (1497), which 'for

6 J. Baretti, *The Italian library, containing an account of the lives and works of the most valuable authors of Italy* (London, 1757), ii–iii, xv, xix–xx, 248; see also his 'Remarks on the Italian language', appended to J. Hill, *Observations on the Greek and Roman classics* (London, 1753), 3–4.

7 Bure, *Bibliographie instructive*, vol. 4 (*Belles lettres*), 48–51.

8 L. Hellinga-Querido, 'Notes on the incunabula of Consul Joseph Smith', in D. Reidy (ed.), *The Italian book 1465–1800* (London, 1993), 335–48; S. Morrison, 'Records of a bibliophile: the catalogues of Consul Joseph Smith and some aspects of his collecting', *Book Collector* 43 (1994), 27–58.

rarity and condition, may be pronounced almost matchless', according to the catalogue – but his collection of English literature was relatively small, and German and Dutch literature non-existent.[9] These collections are important not only in intellectual terms, as exemplifying the English predilection for Italian culture, but also in more practical terms, as representing a massive transfer of cultural property from one country to another. Many of Smith's books had come from aristocratic and monastic libraries in and around Venice, but with their sale to George III and subsequent transfer to the British Museum in 1824 they became part of the British national heritage.

The collectors of the mid-eighteenth century paid surprisingly little attention to the *editiones principes* of the Greek and Latin classics. Smith, it is true, made a special effort to seek out books printed before 1480, but most collectors were more interested in the finely printed editions of the classics produced by the scholar-printers of the early sixteenth century such as Aldus Manutius in Venice, Filippo di Giunta in Florence and Henri Estienne in Paris. In the catalogue of Michael Maittaire's library, sold in 1748, the early books were divided into three main categories: 'Editiones Primitivae' (a rather miscellaneous category including incunabula and post-incunabula up to about 1540), 'Editiones Stephanicae' (books printed by Estienne) and 'Editiones Parisienses illustriores' (books printed by other sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Parisian printers).[10] While this reflects Maittaire's own particular interest in Parisian printing, it also seems to reflect a more general lack of interest in collecting *editiones principes* for their own sake. Crofts, for example, preferred to have his classical texts in what his sale catalogue described as 'the most elegant form', which did not necessarily mean the earliest editions. He had no copy of the *editio princeps* of Virgil (although he owned a vast number of Italian translations, which were clearly where his main interest lay); no editions of Horace earlier than the Aldine of 1501 and the Giunta of 1519; and no edition of Homer in Greek earlier than the Aldine of 1524.

The later eighteenth century, however, saw a growing demand for fifteenth-century books, thanks in no small part to de Bure's *Bibliographie instructive*, which made it much easier for collectors to distinguish the early editions of the Greek and Latin classics and to assess their rarity and market value. This trend was clearly apparent at the sale of Anthony Askew's library in February 1775, which Dibdin was later to describe as 'a sort of *era* in bibliography . . .

9 *Bibliotheca Croftsiana: a catalogue of the curious and distinguished library of the late Reverend and learned Thomas Crofts* (London, 1783).

10 *A catalogue of the large and valuable library of the late learned and ingenious Mr Michael Maittaire, deceased* (London, 1748).

[since when] rare and curious books in Greek and Latin literature have been greedily sought after, and obtained . . . at most extravagant prices'.[11] Askew (1722–74) was a London physician who formed an exceptionally fine classical library, including a number of manuscripts from Mount Athos, which he had visited in 1747. The auctioneers Baker and Leigh (precursors of the firm of Sotheby) described it, with scarcely any exaggeration, as 'the best, rarest and most valuable collection of Greek and Latin books that were ever sold in England', and all the leading collectors of the day, including George III (bidding through the bookseller George Nicol), were represented among the buyers. Unlike Crofts, Askew owned many of the *editiones principes* of the classics, highlighted in his sale catalogue with notes drawing attention to their rarity and importance. The first edition of Homer in Greek made £17, the first edition of Horace ('liber rarissimus') made £17 6s 6d, while the first edition of Boccaccio's *Il Teseide* made a remarkable £85, a further illustration of Boccaccio's extraordinary prestige among eighteenth-century collectors.

The fashion for *editiones principes* could not have flourished as it did without the large quantity of early printed books flowing into England in the late eighteenth century. The two principal reasons for this were the suppression of the Jesuits in the 1760s and 1770s and the subsequent upheavals of the French Revolution, which meant that thousands of books from religious and aristocratic libraries were suddenly released onto the market. At the same time, the demand from a number of very rich collectors acted as a magnet to draw books into England from other parts of Europe, and made London the centre of the international book-trade. Continental sales, such as that of Pierre Antoine Crevenna, whose library was sold by auction in Amsterdam in 1790, were increasingly dominated by English buyers; and a pivotal role was played by a few enterprising dealers and entrepreneurs who seized the opportunity to transform themselves into book *arbitrageurs*, buying libraries on the continent to import to England and sell at a profit. One of these was the Abbé Luigi Celotti, who began his career as librarian to the Venetian nobleman Giovanni Barbarigo but later became a dealer in Italian books, manuscripts and works of art, many of which he brought to London and sold off in a series of auction sales between 1819 and 1826. Another was the bookseller James Edwards (1756–1815), whose greatest coup was the purchase of Maffeo Pinelli's

11 *Bibliotheca Askeviana, sive Catalogus librorum rarissimorum Antonii Askew, M.D.* (London, 1775). T. F. Dibdin, *Bibliomania* (London, 1811), 516; see also F. Stubbings, 'Anthony Askew's *Liber amicorum*', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 6 (1976), 306–21; and on Askew's collection of manuscripts, D. McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library, a history: the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries* (Cambridge, 1986), 326–36.

library, which he bought in Venice in 1788, shipped to London and resold at auction in 1789–90, reputedly making a profit of £2,000 on an initial investment of £7,000.[12]

This rich supply of books was an unprecedented opportunity for the wealthiest English collectors, giving them the pick of private libraries from all over Europe and enabling them to be extremely selective in their choice of copies. It was at this period that the symptoms of the bibliomania as described by Dibdin – such as the fashion for large- or fine-paper copies, or copies printed on vellum – began to manifest themselves. Not all collectors could keep up with these increasingly high standards of connoisseurship. In January 1815, Dibdin and his friend and fellow-bibliophile Richard Heber visited the elderly Michael Wodhull at his house in Northamptonshire. Wodhull (1740–1816) was a collector of an earlier generation, who had bought extensively at the Askew, Crofts and other sales when Dibdin and Heber (born in 1774 and 1776 respectively) were still in their infancy. His visitors were expecting great things, but alas, as Dibdin later reported to his patron Lord Spencer, 'we were both equally ready to express our disappointment: both at the *kind* and the *condition* of his books. His Aldines are absolutely not worth the mention; and his vellum Octavos and Duodecimos are quite of a second or even third-rate class.'[13] It is a revealing illustration of changing fashions in English book-collecting. By the standards of the mid-eighteenth century, Wodhull would have been regarded as an extremely discriminating collector, who did not hesitate to break up two copies of the same book and assemble the best and cleanest leaves in order to create a superior copy. By the standards of the early nineteenth century, however, he seemed surprisingly undiscriminating in his attitude to condition.

The duke of Grafton's library – which, coincidentally, came to the hammer only a few months after Dibdin's and Heber's visit to Wodhull, in June 1815 – can be seen as the apotheosis of the classical style of collecting that had been dominant since the early eighteenth century.[14] Classical and Renaissance texts were heavily in evidence throughout: under the heading 'Sciences', for example, one finds the works of Newton and Halley, but also Euclid, Hippocrates, Vitruvius, Palladio, Machiavelli's *Arte della guerra* and no less than five editions of Pliny's *Natural history*. Poetry was catalogued under three headings,

12 On Celotti, see A. N. L. Munby, *Phillipps studies* (London, 1951), part 3, 50. On Edwards's purchase of the Pinelli library, see W. Clarke, *Repertorium bibliographicum* (London, 1819), 499–500.

13 Dibdin to Lord Spencer, 23 January 1815: British Library, Add. MS 76009.

14 *A catalogue of a most elegant collection of books . . . of a nobleman* (London, 1815).

Greek, Latin and Italian, with a mere handful of French, Spanish and English authors bringing up the rear. And the condition of the books demonstrates the extremely high standards that aristocratic collectors had, by now, come to expect. George and William Nicol, the managers of the sale, declared rhapsodically in their preface to the sale catalogue that 'the elegance of the following collection of books' could not possibly be described in words: 'They must be seen to be appreciated . . . The Noble Collector, with an uncommon share of taste, spared neither pains nor expense in purchasing all his books on the largest paper that could be procured, wherever they were so printed; and if no copies were printed on large paper, copies on the finest and fairest paper were selected.' The catalogue also illustrates the specialised vocabulary that had come into use to describe the significant features of edition, condition and binding: not only the familiar 'Ed. Pr'. (*editio princeps*) but also 'C. M.', 'L. R.', 'C. T.' and 'C. R.', standing for 'charta maxima' (large paper), 'lineis rubris' (ruled in red), 'corio Turcico' (turkey leather) and 'corio Russico' (russia leather) respectively.

But the supremacy of the Greek and Latin classics did not go unchallenged. This period also saw a revival of interest in medieval literature, reflected in the fashion for books printed in gothic type – or 'black letter', as it was generally known – which became one of the most distinctive features of early nineteenth-century book-collecting. Dibdin, writing in 1809, described the taste for black-letter printing as 'the most powerful and prevailing . . . of all symptoms of the Bibliomania', and observed that 'books printed in the black letter are now coveted with an eagerness unknown to our collectors in the last century'.[15] He attempted, rather fancifully, to trace this back to a remark by the Dutch antiquarian Johann Georg Schellhorn, who had commented on the beauty of Gothic type in his *Amoenitates literariae* (1725), possibly the first time that black-letter printing had been praised for its visual appeal. However, there is no need to look so far afield for an explanation. The fashion for black letter was essentially a by-product of the Gothic Revival, and arose out of the work of scholars such as Thomas Warton and Thomas Percy, who pioneered the study of medieval romances, ballads and other forms of popular literature. It is no coincidence that many of the literary antiquaries of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, such as George Steevens and Francis Douce, were also distinguished collectors of early printed books.[16]

This new movement was diametrically opposed to the taste of a previous generation of bibliophiles, who admired the books of early Italian printers

15 Dibdin, *Bibliomania*, 71–2.
16 On Douce, see S. G. Gillam (ed.), *The Douce legacy* (Oxford, 1984).

like Nicolas Jenson and Aldus Manutius precisely because these printers had eschewed black-letter typefaces and established roman and italic as the standard for classical texts. In other respects, too, the medieval revival represented a deliberate rejection of classical standards of taste. The metrical romances of the middle ages, for example, were seen as a species of literature for which there was no classical parallel. In his *Reliques of ancient English poetry* (1765), Thomas Percy argued that they had originated among the bards of the Gothic nations, flourished under feudalism, 'and at length arrived to their full maturity in the times of the Crusades, so replete with romantic adventures', before dying out in the sixteenth century when 'the increase of knowledge and classical literature drove them off the stage to make room for a more refined species of fiction'. Emerging out of the chivalric culture of northern Europe, the metrical romances expressed a Gothic sensibility that was profoundly alien to classical literature. 'That fondness of going in quest of adventures, that spirit of challenging to single combat, and that respectful complaisance shewn to the fair sex, (so different from the manners of the Greeks and Romans) all are of gothic origin, and may be traced up to the earliest times among all the northern nations.'[17] The fashion for Gothic literature, therefore, was not merely an enlargement of the existing classical canon but a deliberate departure from it.

The library of Horace Walpole (1717–97) is a good illustration of the transition from classical to Gothic. In some respects Walpole was still wedded to classicism. Unlike some of his antiquarian friends, he was not a serious collector of black-letter texts; and in 1781 he wrote to William Mason declining his offer of a sixteenth-century edition of Chaucer: 'I am, though a Goth, so modern a Goth that I hate the black letter, and I love Chaucer better in Dryden and Baskerville, than in his own language and dress.'[18] Yet the Greek and Latin classics left him largely unmoved. Most of the Latin classics in his library were school texts acquired in his youth, chiefly in the standard editions printed by Elzevir and Brindley; he added little to the collection in later life, and confessed in 1792 that 'it is long since I have been conversant with classic literature'. There were some startling gaps among the Greek texts – no Plato, no Aristotle – and Italian authors were equally thin on the ground. There were no editions of Dante, Petrarch or Ariosto, and Walpole was scathing in his dismissal of some of the most admired Italian writers – Dante was 'extravagant,

17 T. Percy, 'On the ancient metrical romances', in *Reliques of ancient English poetry* (London, 1765), vol. 3, iii–iv.

18 Walpole to Mason, 13 November 1781: Walpole, *Correspondence*, ed. W. Lewis, vol. 29 (New Haven, 1955), 165.

absurd, disgusting'; Tasso had 'a thousand puerilities' – thus turning his back on much of eighteenth-century neo-classical taste. The largest sections of his library were those devoted to English topography, antiquity and poetry; and these, it seems, were the books he valued most highly and to which he turned most often.[19]

In the library of Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832) we find an even sharper contrast between classical and Gothic taste. Scott's library at Abbotsford was established in 1824 with a gift from his publisher, Archibald Constable, who presented the novelist with a 140-volume set of Greek and Latin classical authors. In his account of the library, *Reliquiae Trotcosienses* (1830), Scott acknowledged the generosity of this gift but added that it was 'bestowed on an author not very worthy of it', applying to himself a passage from one of Thomas Warton's poems:

> For long, enamoured of a barbarous age
> A faithless truant to the Classic page;
> Long have I loved to list the barbarous chime
> Of minstrel harps, and spell the gothic rhime.[20]

It was not the collection of Greek and Latin classics but the sixteenth-century chivalric romances, the ballads and popular poetry, the tales of highwaymen and gypsies and the tracts on witchcraft and demonology that Scott chose to single out for special mention. In treating these as the chief treasures of his library, he was not merely cocking a snook at neo-classical taste but subverting the very idea of the library as an orderly collection governed by a logical system of subject-classification. He described his books as 'gabions' – a term of his own invention, which he defined as 'curiosities of small intrinsic value' – and declared modestly that he had 'no books . . . worthy of being mentioned as a collection'.[21] This impression of random accumulation, corresponding to the 'excursive' habits of the antiquarian, artfully disguises the fact that Scott was a serious bibliophile who took immense pride in his library and spent a good deal of money on early printed books.

The most celebrated example of Gothic or black-letter printing is, of course, the Gutenberg Bible; and the collecting history of the Gutenberg Bible provides an excellent case-study of the rediscovery and revaluation of the Gothic in the late eighteenth century. It was in 1763, in de Bure's *Bibliographie instructive*, that

19 W. Lewis, *Horace Walpole's library* (Cambridge, 1958).
20 W. Scott, *Reliquiae Trotcosienses, or the gabions of the late Jonathan Oldbuck Esq. of Monkbarns*, ed. G. Carruthers and A. Lumsden (Edinburgh, 2004), 49.
21 *Ibid.*, 6, 38.

the Gutenberg Bible was first described in detail and identified as the earliest substantial book printed with movable type; 'we do not hesitate for a single moment', wrote de Bure, 'in according it the highest rank, not only above all other editions of the Bible but above all other printed books whatsoever'.[22] Yet despite this glowing recommendation, it took a surprisingly long time for the book to become sought after in England – largely, it would seem, because collectors of fifteenth-century books were more interested in the early Italian than in the early German presses, and had not yet acquired the taste for black-letter printing. Not until 1796, when James Edwards gave it pride of place in his *Catalogue of books in all languages*, was a copy of the Gutenberg Bible offered for public sale in England. By the early nineteenth century, however, it was widely recognised as a highly desirable book; and in 1822, when it appeared at auction for the first time in England, it was accompanied by a long note in the sale catalogue declaring that 'it must always form the most prominent feature in a Collection of Books of the XVth Century'. Thereafter the record of auction prices tells its own story: £199 in 1824, rising to £504 in 1825 at the height of the bibliomania, falling back to £215 in 1829 in line with the general decline in book prices, then rising again to £500 in 1847 as the first wave of American collectors entered the market. In 1873, when a copy was sold for £3,400, the Gutenberg Bible finally overtook the Valdarfer Boccaccio as the most expensive book ever to be sold at auction.[23]

But perhaps the greatest shift in habits and patterns of book-collecting took place in the field of English literature. For much of the eighteenth century, as we have seen, English literature ranked a long way behind Greek, Latin, Italian and French; and while English collectors did not entirely neglect the literature of their own country, they paid it relatively little attention. Askew's sale in 1775 included a number of early English books, mostly translations of the classics, such as Caxton's edition of *Tully of old age and friendship* (1481) and the celebrated edition of Boethius' *Boke of comfort* printed at Tavistock (1525), but the prices paid for these, though respectable, were dwarfed by the much larger sums paid for many of the Greek and Latin *editiones principes*. A few bibliophiles – notably James West (1704–73) and John Ratcliffe (1707–76) – had already begun to specialise in early English books, but it was not until the very end of the century that English literature really began to engage the interest of collectors. Dibdin later pinpointed the great rise in prices as having occurred

22 Bure, *Bibliographie instructive*, vol. 1 (*Théologie*), 32–40.

23 R. Folter, 'The Gutenberg bible in the antiquarian book trade', in M. Davies (ed.), *Incunabula: studies in fifteenth-century printed books presented to Lotte Hellinga* (London, 1999), 271–351.

between the Farmer sale (1798) and the Brand sale (1807–8). 'At no period', he wrote in his *Library companion* (1825), 'has a more enthusiastic attachment been shewn towards [the poetry of our own country] than at present'; and it is significant that in this work he chose to reorder the hierarchy of literary value established in eighteenth-century works of reference. As noted earlier, de Bure's *Bibliographie instructive* put English poetry in a distinctly inferior position, well below French and Italian. Dibdin's *Library companion*, on the other hand, put it second only to the Greek and Latin classics, giving it pride of place among modern European languages.[24]

This emphasis on English literature was, in part, a result of the Gothic Revival and the new wave of interest in the vernacular literature of the northern European nations. But it was also part of the new spirit of eighteenth-century nationalism which sought to cement the union of England and Scotland by cultivating a stronger sense of British national identity, as seen in the creation of new institutions such as the British Museum (founded in 1753), and in the canonisation of Shakespeare as the pre-eminent national dramatist.[25] This can be traced in the steadily increasing demand for the First Folio of Shakespeare's plays – which, like the Gutenberg Bible, rose from obscurity in the mid-eighteenth century to become one of the most highly prized of all printed books.[26] Until the 1780s it was not greatly valued by collectors: Thomas Crofts, for example, owned seven Shakespeare quartos, together with the Johnson-Steevens edition of 1778–80, but none of the early Folios. The average price of a First Folio at this date was between £5 and £10, depending on condition; and even the copy of the Second Folio that had belonged to King Charles I, with his annotations, fetched only £5 10s at Askew's sale in 1775.[27] In the final decade of the eighteenth century, however, the price suddenly began to rise steeply. In 1818 Thomas Grenville paid £121 16s for a copy, a sum which startled even Dibdin, who described it as 'the highest price ever given, or likely to be given for the volume'. In 1824 the bookseller Thomas Thorpe listed the four Folios in his catalogue at £65, £10 10s, £25 and £6 6s respectively, or £100 for the set.[28]

But the new school of collectors were not only interested in Shakespeare. They were also fascinated by the popular literature of the sixteenth and

24 T. F. Dibdin, *Library companion*, 2nd edn (London, 1825), 652.

25 For some discussion of these issues, see P. Connell, 'Bibliomania: book collecting, cultural politics and the rise of literary heritage in Romantic Britain', *Representations* 71 (2000), 24–47.

26 On the collecting history of the First Folio, see A. J. West, *The Shakespeare First Folio: the history of the book* (Oxford, 2001), vol. I.

27 *Bibliotheca Askeviana*, lot 347 (bought by George Steevens).

28 Dibdin, *Library companion*, 818, 823.

seventeenth centuries, including ballads, jestbooks, murder pamphlets and all the other genres of cheap print which, like the *bibliothèque bleue* in France, continued to be printed in black-letter type long after more 'serious' forms of literature had switched to roman. To many contemporaries, this was the most eccentric manifestation of the passion for black letter, as it appeared to set an absurdly high value on items of little or no intrinsic significance. Even Dibdin expressed some reservations, criticising what he saw as the 'undistinguishable voracious appetite' of some collectors 'to swallow everything printed in the black letter' – although he argued that it was not 'wholly unproductive of good' when 'regulated by prudence and discretion'.[29] To modern eyes, of course, the interest in popular literature seems far less inexplicable, though there is still a curious reluctance to accept that it might predate the twentieth century. According to the promotional literature for a recent academic conference on 'Cheap Print and the Scholar', 'the scholarly investigation of cheap print challenges the hegemony of a canon that privileges Milton over Martin Parker . . . and that connects material ephemerality to cultural worthlessness'. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*. One might reasonably object that the hegemony of the canon had already been challenged, with considerable success, by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century collectors.

First and foremost among the collectors of this period was King George III. This may come as a surprise to those brought up on the stereotype of 'Farmer George' – 'in essence a well-read country squire', as he has been described.[30] Yet it has recently been argued that George III should be seen as a quintessential 'Enlightenment monarch', with a lively interest in new technical developments in the fields of agriculture, manufacturing and industry, and a public-spirited desire to spread the fruits of these new discoveries as widely as possible.[31] The King's Library – which later became the foundation collection of the British Museum library, and can be seen today in the British Library at St Pancras – was intended to serve the cause of intellectual and scientific progress. Even during the king's lifetime it was treated as a public resource and made available to scholars; and in the words of the king's librarian, Frederick Augusta Barnard, it had been collected 'upon such a comprehensive and liberal design of embracing every species of knowledge, that the Possessor of it can call to his aid, upon every subject, all the Learning and Wisdom which the mind of man has hitherto communicated to the world'.[32] In pursuit of this

29 *Ibid*., 74. 30 C. Wright, *George III* (London, 2005), 94.
31 D. Watkin, 'George III: enlightened monarch?', in J. Marsden (ed.), *The wisdom of George the Third* (London, 2005), 331–46.
32 F. Barnard, *Bibliothecae Regiae catalogus* (London, 1820–9), vol. 1, viii.

aim, it has been estimated that George III spent about £4,500 a year – roughly one-fifth of his annual disposable income, an astonishing sum – on building up the collection.[33]

The King's Library was designed to be an encyclopaedic collection, and can therefore tell us relatively little about George III's personal tastes. More informative in this respect is the library at Windsor Castle – a much smaller collection, containing about 2,500 titles classified under five main subject-areas, Theology, History, Jurisprudence, Science and Arts – which does appear to reflect the king's own interests.[34] What is striking is the extent to which the king seems to have kept abreast of the latest trends in book-collecting. One of the highlights of the Windsor Library was a group of twenty-seven incunabula presented to George III by the Cambridge scholar and antiquary Jacob Bryant, including a number of *editiones principes* that had clearly been selected for their rarity and bibliographical importance – notably the first edition of Seneca's tragedies (Ferrara, 1478), proudly annotated by Bryant, 'not mentioned by De Bure'. Bryant's gift also included two Caxtons, *Le recueil des histoires de Troyes* (1476) and the *Doctrinal of sapyence* (1489), and a Sarum Missal of 1497, evidently valued for their place in the history of English printing. These were supplemented by other early printed books acquired for the Windsor Library, including a copy of the Mainz Psalter (1457), purchased from the University of Göttingen in 1800, and Charles I's copy of the Second Folio of Shakespeare, purchased at the sale of the Shakespearean scholar George Steevens's library in the same year.

In acquiring books such as these, George III set the royal seal of approval on the fashion for early printed editions, causing it to be seen as a gentlemanly and not merely an antiquarian pursuit, and thereby setting an example which was soon copied by many members of the upper gentry and nobility. The most important aristocratic library of the late eighteenth century was that of John Ker, 3rd duke of Roxburghe (1740–1804), which serves as a good illustration of the transition from the neo-classical style of collecting to the new-fangled taste for black letter. In some respects it was a typical eighteenth-century classical collection, rich in Aldine and Giunta editions and in the works of the most admired Italian authors: Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio and Tasso. But it was also very strong in many of the classes of literature most congenial to Gothic taste: early English poetry, popular vernacular literature – including

33 J. Brooke, 'The library of King George III', *Yale University Library Gazette* 52:1 (1977), 39–40.

34 See J. Marsden's account of the Windsor Library in J. Roberts (ed.), *George III and Queen Charlotte: patronage, collecting and court taste* (London, 2004), 221–4. For George III's Caxtons, see S. de Ricci, *A census of Caxtons* (London, 1909).

the famous Roxburghe ballads, a collection of over a thousand black-letter broadside ballads, now in the British Library – and sixteenth-century French romances such as *Amadis de Gaule* and *Lancelot du Lac*. According to the sale catalogue, the duke 'idolized the talents of *Shakspeare* and *Cervantes*, and collected everything that could illustrate their works', particularly the English literature of Shakespeare's day, and the chivalric romances of King Arthur and the Round Table that Cervantes had satirised in *Don Quixote*. In his later years he also turned his attention to the newly fashionable area of English drama; 'and when his Collection of English Plays is examined, and the reader is informed, that he had only turned his mind to this class of literature for a few years, his indefatigable industry will be readily admitted'.[35]

The sale of the Roxburghe library in 1812 is generally regarded as one of the defining moments – if not *the* defining moment – of the era of bibliomania. It was chiefly notable for the competition between the two leading book-collectors of the day, George John, 2nd earl Spencer (1758–1834) and his cousin George Spencer, marquess of Blandford and later 5th duke of Marlborough (1766–1840), culminating in the contest for the Valdarfer Boccaccio, which, as already mentioned, established a new auction record for a printed book:

> The Marquis proposed starting with five guineas, but Lord Spencer put it in at £100. When the Marquis bid the last £10, Lord Spencer said, 'I bow to you'. The engagement was very fierce, and at its termination there was a general 'Huzza!' Presently after, the Marquis offered his hand to Lord Spencer, saying, 'We are good friends still?' His Lordship replied, 'Perfectly – indeed, I am obliged to you'. – 'So am I to you,' said the Marquis, 'therefore the obligation is mutual'. He declared that it was his intention to have gone as far as £5,000.[36]

This exchange of compliments provides a revealing insight into the gentlemanly culture of early nineteenth-century collecting. Dibdin was not merely indulging in a flight of fancy when, in works like *The bibliographical Decameron* (1817), he disguised his friends and patrons under mock-heroic nicknames like 'Orlando' and 'Palmerin' drawn from the chivalric romances they collected. The encounter between Lord Spencer and the marquess of Blandford in the auction-room was governed by rules of aristocratic conduct and propriety hardly less strict than the rules of engagement between medieval knights jousting on the tournament field.

35 *A catalogue of the library of the late John, duke of Roxburghe* (London, 1812), 15.
36 Article from *Ipswich Journal*, 27 June 1812 (probably reprinted from a similar article in a London newspaper), pasted into Dawson Turner's copy of Dibdin's *Bibliomania* (1811), now in the Lewis Walpole Library, Farmington.

And the world of nineteenth-century book-collecting was almost exclusively masculine, too – despite the existence of some important female bibliophiles, notably Miss Frances Mary Richardson Currer (1785–1861), described by Dibdin as being 'at the head of all female collectors in Europe'. Miss Currer took considerable pride in her library and issued a printed catalogue of it in 1833, which she distributed to all the leading English book-collectors of the day.[37] Yet she was constantly aware of being a woman in a man's world; and when Dibdin proposed to include her portrait in his *Reminiscences* (1833) she demurred. 'I don't doubt the Book will be an amusing one – and to have the Portraits of Gentlemen in it is very proper, but I don't think it would be pleasant for me to be in the Gallery – the *only Lady* – so very *conspicuous*!'[38] She was not invited to join the Roxburghe Club, the dining society founded by Dibdin in 1812 to commemorate the Roxburghe sale; and indeed the records of the club, as compiled by Dibdin's friend Joseph Haslewood (1769–1833) and published posthumously as *Roxburghe revels* (1837), reveal a world of male sociability and drunken conviviality in which Miss Currer would have been wholly out of place.

The market for manuscripts lagged a long way behind the market for early printed books. In 1774 it was still possible to pick up 'An Anglo-Saxon Manuscript, moral and theological, of great Antiquity, upon Vellum' for a mere 12s 6d.[39] Jean Senebier's bold claim, in his *Catalogue raisonné des manuscrits conservés dans la bibliothèque de la ville & république de Geneve* (1779), that manuscripts were 'the rarest, most precious and most useful part of modern libraries' failed to impress Horace Walpole, who commented tartly in the margin of his copy: 'Ce n'est pas toujours vrai. Une grande partie reste manuscrite, parceque elle n'a pas mérité l'impression.'[40] Walpole's low opinion of manuscripts was widely shared. Even as late as 1805, at the sale of William Fillingham's library, a manuscript 'containing fourteen Tracts, part in Latin and part in French, 12 of which relate to the Customs of England, written in the Reign of Richard the Second, about 1378 to 1395, formerly in the possession of the Antiquary William Lambard, with his Autograph and Notes, in fine preservation, and

37 C. J. Stewart, *A catalogue of the library collected by Miss Richardson Currer, at Eshton Hall, Craven, Yorkshire* (London, 1833); the copy presented to Dibdin, with a letter from Lord Spencer praising the book as 'a very interesting and valuable addition to my Class of Bibliography', is in Cambridge University Library, Munby.b.49.

38 Currer to D. Turner, 21 February 1835: Trinity College, Cambridge, o.14.14 (58).

39 *Bibliotheca Monastica-Fletewodiana, a catalogue of rare books and tracts in various languages and faculties, including the antient conventual-library of Missenden-Abbey in Buckinghamshire* (London, 1774), lot 3591.

40 Walpole's copy, with his annotations, is in the Lewis Walpole Library, Farmington, shelf-mark 49.3372.

beautifully illuminated' (now BL Add. MS 32097) attracted no interest whatever. 'For this most beautiful and indeed invaluable Manuscript', wrote Philip Bliss in his copy of the sale catalogue, 'were no bidders, *o tempora o mores*!'[41] The fate of the fourteenth-century Carmelite missal in the hands of the collector Philip Augustus Hanrott is symptomatic. Hanrott gave the manuscript to his young daughters Mary and Ellen, who cut out the illuminated initials, rearranged them to spell out their own names, and pasted them into scrapbooks.[42] While Hanrott appreciated the artistry of medieval illumination, it is clear that he had no interest in the integrity of the manuscript or in its liturgical significance.

By the mid-nineteenth century, however, manuscripts were becoming more widely appreciated – thanks chiefly to the efforts of one man, Sir Thomas Phillipps (1792–1872), who for a period of roughly fifty years, from about 1820 to 1870, bought most of the important manuscripts that appeared on the market. 'My principal search', he wrote in 1828,

> has been for Historical and particularly unpublished MSS, whether good or bad, and more particularly those on Vellum . . . As I advanced, the ardour of the pursuit increased until at last I became a perfect Vello-maniac (if I may coin a word) and I gave any price that was asked. Nor do I regret it, for my object was not only to secure good Manuscripts for myself but also to raise the public estimation of them, so that their value might be more generally known, and consequently more MSS preserved.

Phillipps's motives were perhaps not so public-spirited as he liked to pretend, but his effect on the market is undeniable. At the sale of Heber's library in 1834–7, the only part of the library to show a profit on the purchase price was the collection of manuscripts, largely because of Phillipps's determined bidding against the British Museum. As Phillipps's biographer, A. N. L. Munby, commented in 1956, '[his] wholesale intervention as a purchaser of vellum and paper at all levels raised prices to a degree which ensured that even the humblest manuscript had some value; this was undoubtedly recognized by the book trade throughout the country, and so led to the preservation of material which is prized today, but the existence of which was precarious a hundred years ago'.[43]

41 *A catalogue of a portion of the library of William Fillingham, Esq, consisting of old quarto plays, early English poetry, and a few scarce tracts* (London, 1805), lot 580. Bliss's copy is in Durham University Library, Routh 81.c.19.

42 M. Rickert, *The reconstructed Carmelite missal* (London, 1952), 18–19.

43 Munby, *Phillipps studies* (London, 1960), vol. 4, 170.

Phillipps has often been perceived as completely indiscriminate in his pursuit of manuscripts. His friend and adversary Sir Frederic Madden, Keeper of Manuscripts at the British Museum, complained in his diary that Phillipps's collection contained 'an unusual quantity of *rubbish*' and that Phillipps himself should know better than to indulge in 'the puerile fancy of saving *every scrap of written paper*!'[44] Yet a close study of Phillipps's purchases reveals him to have been surprisingly selective in his buying habits. It appears from his marked copy of the catalogue of manuscripts offered for sale by the firm of Payne and Foss in May 1825 that he had relatively little interest in illuminated manuscripts of the later middle ages: among the items he passed over were a fifteenth-century manuscript of Gratian with '81 Miniatures of the most brilliant freshness' (£52 10s) and a fifteenth-century manuscript of Virgil with a portrait miniature and 'very beautiful' illuminated initials (£45). But he made a clean sweep of all the eleventh- and twelfth-century manuscripts in the catalogue, and also took a particular interest in manuscripts of textual significance: of the thirty-three items he ordered, four were described as 'unedited' and one, a thirteenth-century manuscript of Lucan, was said to contain 'scholia and various readings of great importance'.[45] Phillipps was highly unusual among nineteenth-century private collectors in collecting manuscripts primarily for their textual and historical rather than their artistic significance, though his judgement would be amply vindicated in the twentieth century when the bulk of his collection was dispersed at auction.

The market for prints also underwent a significant expansion in the late eighteenth century. Old Master prints had long been prized by collectors, but what was new was the vogue for portrait engravings which developed in the 1770s, as described here, not altogether sympathetically, by Horace Walpole:

> Mr Granger of Shiplake . . . published a biographic list [of English portrait engravings] down to the Revolution. The Idea took, & by the End of 1770, not two years after his work had appeared, there were known Seventy Collectors of English heads. The two principal were Mr Richard Bull & Mr Gulston, who were indefatigable, & the former especially in little more than a year amassed a most prodigious collection. These two Gentlemen spared no expence, & thence raised the prices so exceedingly, that heads which used to be sold for sixpence or less, were advanced to five Shillings – They both have given five guineas for a scarce single print that two years before would not have

44 Madden's diary entry, 16 May 1863, quoted in Munby, *Phillipps studies*, vol. 4, 142.

45 *Catalogue of a valuable collection of manuscripts, recently imported from the continent by Payne & Foss* (London, 1825); Phillipps's copy is in Cambridge University Library, Munby c.365.

> fetched two shillings. But the greatest mischeif they did was in cutting books to pieces for a single print or two. The same sort of Virtu had occasioned formerly the destruction of most of Dugdale's works, when Hollar's prints were in fashion, many of which being printed on the back, caused the total destruction of the Copy. This rage for English heads has produced another Evil, the multiplication of English portraits, many obscure persons having their faces engraved when sure of being preserved in Collections – they were too numerous before. As Etching too spread, & is a very easy art, several idle people applied themselves that way, & etched portraits of all kinds of persons, so that a compleat Set of English portraits will not only be impossible to attain, but be immeasurably voluminous if near attained. I should have mentioned Mr Ratcliffe of Rotherhithe, who not only bought, but sold, & affixed great prices to his prints.[46]

This grew up alongside the practice of extra-illustration – also known as 'grangerisation' after the print-collector James Granger (1723–1776), who did much to popularise it – in which printed books were enlarged with additional illustrations depicting persons or places mentioned in the text. A variant on this practice – developed to its fullest by the manuscript-collector Dawson Turner (1775–1858) – was to create albums of autograph letters extra-illustrated with portraits of the writers. The 'cult of the autograph letter', as A. N. L. Munby described it, was also an expression of the peculiarly nineteenth-century fascination with the great men and women of history; and the combination of autograph and portrait served as a visible and tangible link with the great figures of the past.[47]

Extra-illustration is of interest for what it reveals about the social status of book- and print-collecting. It was made possible by the great expansion of the London print trade in the mid-eighteenth century, and was essentially a way for less affluent collectors to copy the élite custom of forming print collections, or to customise a mass-produced printed book by inserting their own choice of illustrations.[48] Yet it was scorned by élite collectors. Walpole regarded the trade in portrait-prints as a parable of the relationship between fashion and collecting:

46 'Of collectors of English portrait-prints', note in Walpole's manuscript *Book of materials*, vol. 2 (1771), at the Lewis Walpole Library, Farmington.

47 A. N. L. Munby, *The cult of the autograph letter in England* (London, 1962).

48 On the London print trade, see J. Brewer, *The pleasures of the imagination: English culture in the eighteenth century* (London, 1997), 452–63; on extra-illustration, see L. Peltz, 'The extra-illustration of London: the gendered spaces and practices of antiquarianism in the late eighteenth century', in M. Myrone and L. Peltz (eds.), *Producing the past: aspects of antiquarian culture and practice 1700–1850* (Aldershot, 1999), 115–34.

> As Fashion & Knavery are always at War, tho the Latter is always pretending to assist the former, the Arts lose as much as they gain by being countenanced. Fashion produces absurdities, & Knavery impostures. The Ignorant collect because it is the Mode; & many who understand, cannot purchase, because the prices are raised; and nobody is a gainer but the dishonest Vendor.

And the Roxburghe sale catalogue also had a hit at 'the abominable practice of pillaging the works of different authors of their portraits, and other prints that properly belong to them, in order to illustrate, as it is called, some trifling, stupid book of anecdotes, where the names of those authors are merely incidentally mentioned. It is melancholy to think how prevalent this practice is become.'[49] It would be easy to treat the popularity of extra-illustration as a sign of the democratisation of book-collecting, as élite collecting habits spread down the social scale and were picked up and copied by the middle classes. But in the eyes of many of its practitioners, book-collecting remained an élite pursuit, requiring not only money but also a standard of good taste and discrimination which was sadly lacking in most of the collectors of portrait-prints and extra-illustrated books.

It would thus be more accurate to say that this period saw the gentrification of the private library. In the mid-eighteenth century, book-collecting was practised not only by aristocrats but also by antiquarians like George Steevens, Isaac Reed and Edward Malone, and autodidacts like William Herbert (a bookseller) and John Ratcliffe (a chandler). Lord Chesterfield, writing in 1750, saw it as a less than gentlemanly pursuit and famously warned his son 'not to understand editions and title-pages too well', on the grounds that too much interest in the physical appearance of books smacked suspiciously of antiquarianism rather than true learning. 'Due attention to the inside of books, and due contempt for the outside, is the proper relation between a man of sense and his books.'[50] By the early nineteenth century, however, the field was dominated by a new generation of aristocratic collectors who took pride in the possession of bibliographical knowledge. The introduction to the Roxburghe sale catalogue laid particular emphasis on the fact that the 'late noble Possessor' had personally collated many of his books; while Beriah Botfield turned down the opportunity to buy Sir Thomas Phillipps's collection of incunabula *en bloc* in 1839 on the grounds that it would provide 'no scope for the exercise of that judgement without which in my opinion the most extensive collection would

49 *Catalogue of the library . . . duke of Roxburghe*, 16.

50 J. Bradshaw (ed.), *The letters of Philip Dormer Stanhope, earl of Chesterfield* (London, 1926), vol. I, 187, 330.

possess little value and reflect but little credit on its owner'.[51] The records of the booksellers Payne and Foss reveal a clientèle dominated by the upper ranks of the clergy and aristocracy, including Lord Spencer, the duke of Sussex, the marquis of Bath, the earl of Carysfort and many others.[52] The result, inevitably, was that the humbler sort of collectors found themselves priced out of the market. Book-collecting in 1850 was a far more exclusive pursuit than it had been a century earlier.

Once again it is Dibdin who provides the best and clearest statement of this new culture of collecting. In the *Library companion* (1825), he mounted a spirited defence of book collecting, in response to accusations that the sums paid for old books were simply a wasteful extravagance. Great Britain, he argued, was 'the most wealthy and, politically, perhaps the most powerful kingdom upon earth', and many upper-class families were therefore in the fortunate position of having a good deal of surplus wealth at their disposal. The fact that so many of them chose to direct their wealth into book-collecting, rather than into less edifying pursuits, was greatly to their credit – and the high prices paid for books, far from being an extravagance, were an expression of 'unprecedented gallantry and liberality of feeling' on the part of the rising generation. 'Who therefore shall say that property is misplaced in collecting together such objects?' This was an unashamedly élitist defence of book-collecting, which represented the formation of a private library as an expression of 'pure and fixed principles of taste' and 'intellectual refinement of the most exalted kind'. And Dibdin rejoiced in the fact that the fashion for book-collecting was now so firmly established among the upper classes:

> Noblemen and Gentlemen begin to think (as the old monkish writers thought and have expressed it) that 'a mansion without a library is like a castle without an armoury' – and accordingly, halt where you will, you are sure, on a little gossip with the humblest provincial book-vendor, to glean intelligence of 'some famous library in the neighbourhood'.[53]

Moreover, this conception of the private library proved remarkably long-lived. Go into the exhibition area of any large English or American library, and the books you will see on display will, in many cases, be books that an eighteenth- or nineteenth-century collector would have recognised as valuable

51 *Catalogue of the library . . . duke of Roxburghe*, 10–11. Botfield to Phillipps, 3 July 1839, quoted in Munby, *Phillipps studies*, vol. 3, 108.

52 Payne and Foss's marked copies of their catalogues, with buyers' names, are mostly in the library of the Grolier Club in New York, with one stray in Cambridge University Library (Munby c.366).

53 Dibdin, *Library companion*, i–iv, xix–xxi.

and important, often in the very copies that those collectors once owned. Look at the current auction records for printed books, and you will find that many of them are held by books that first began to be collected in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, sold by firms such as Sotheby's and Christie's that can trace their history back to precisely the same period.[54] In that sense, the age of bibliomania that Dibdin celebrated so eloquently has never really come to an end.

54 Until recently, the world record price for any printed book at auction was held by the copy of Caxton's edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury tales* previously owned by the eighteenth-century collector John Ratcliffe, sold for £6 at his sale in 1776, and for £4.6 million at the Wentworth sale in 1998.

28

Library architecture and interiors

M. H. PORT

Architecturally, the two principal classes of library, in the later eighteenth century, are the great house,[1] and the institution. Subscription libraries were quite small, usually in private houses[2] or bookshops,[3] though in major cities a few were purpose-built.[4] Very few commercial libraries compared with James Lackington's, who claimed his catalogue offered 30,000 volumes in 1784 – when, in his view, the trend began that multiplied the sale of books fourfold in 20 years.[5]

During the ensuing century a shift from representational architecture to utilitarian architecture was slow to emerge, as is indicated by A. L. Humphreys's remark that 'the architect is very frequently a great enemy to the library', providing too little wall space for books or placing them inaccessibly.[6] Masson notes that constructors sought to increase light by enlarging windows,

1 Cf. C. Hussey, *English country houses: mid-Georgian 1760–1800*, 2nd edn (London, 1963); J. Woolfe and J. Gandon, *Vitruvius Britannicus* vol. 5 (London, 1771); G. Richardson, *The new Vitruvius Britannicus*, 2 vols. (London, 1802–8).

2 E.g. Nottingham Subscription Library, founded 1816, took possession of a gentleman's town house, 1822: J. Russell, *History of the Nottingham Subscription Library* (Nottingham, 1916).

3 K. A. Manley, 'Booksellers, peruke-makers, and rabbit-merchants: the growth of circulating libraries in the eighteenth century', in R. Myers, M. Harris and G. Mandelbrote (eds.), *Libraries and the book trade* (New Castle, DE, 2000), 29–47. Hall's library, one of three adjoining in seaside Margate *c.*1790 was 42 feet square and 17 feet high, with Corinthian columns separating it from a toy shop, its bookcases adorned with busts of poets (Manley, 'Booksellers', 31).

4 E.g. Birmingham: founded 1779; plan by Hollins adopted 1793; building completed 1797 (C. Parish, *History of the Birmingham Library* (London, 1966)). Leeds: founded 1768; new building by Thomas Johnson, 1808, cost £5,078; Ionic order, two and a half storeys, shops on ground floor ([F. Beckwith], *The Leeds Library* (Leeds, 1968)). Manchester: Portico Library and Newsroom, by Thomas Harrison, Ionic, with shallow glazed dome over oblong room, 1802–6, similar to J. Playfair's library at Cairness, Aberdeenshire, 1793–7 (A. Brooks and B. Haworth, *Portico Library* (Lancaster, 2000); D. Stillman, *English neo-classical architecture* (London, 1988), vol. 1, 304).

5 P. Langford, *A polite and commercial people: England 1727–1783* (Oxford, 1989), 194, citing *Memoirs of the first forty-five years of the life of James Lackington* (London, 1792), 219ff.

6 A. L. Humphreys, *The private library*, 3rd edn (London, 1897), 120.

to the loss of wall surfaces; an effect enhanced by substituting first ivory and then white surfaces for the traditional natural wood panelling.[7] The standard eighteenth-century library was the traditional wall library in which books were shelved against perimeter walls, described as a matter of course in J. F. Blondel's *Cours d'architecture* (vol. 2, 393) of 1771, and sustained in J.-N.-L. Durand's influential *Recueil et parallèle* of 1801 and his *Précis des leçons* (1802–5).[8] Major library buildings in the British Isles during this period generally retained that form, although the stall system employed by Wren at Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1676, also proved an important model. Pevsner sees the most important development of the period as separating books from readers by creating book-stacks away from reading rooms, found first at Karlsruhe in 1761 (or 1765), but only established by its advocacy in Leopoldo della Santa's *Della construzione e del regolamento di una publica universale biblioteca, con la pianta dimostrativa* (Florence, 1816), described by Denis Keeling as an endeavour 'to plan a library from an entirely utilitarian point of view', important for 'its provision of separate areas designated for readers, staff and book storage, and for the generous accommodation provided for the latter'.[9] An age of multiplying presses and books pouring from them in uncontrollable floods called for such a logical solution; otherwise, buildings of immense size would be required, as Boullée with his penchant for the sublime appreciated in his design for a *bibliothèque du roi* (1784), lighted from ceiling skylights. But the floods did not really burst forth in the United Kingdom until the mid-nineteenth century.

Public and semi-public institutions

There was nevertheless a surge in demand in the semi-public sphere of institutional libraries. Though almost entirely for use by persons defined by membership of a particular institution – college, university, or club generally – they were of an essentially different character from the private library of a single owner: they had to accommodate staff; and provide for the issue and return of books, for insulated book-stacks, and separate rooms for readers. The most notable were the Cambridge University Library, those in Edinburgh for the university and professional bodies, and the British Museum's King's Library acquired from George IV in 1822. George Dance Jn. (1741–1825) designed an unexecuted 'Literary and Scientific Institution', London, *c.*1806, with library

7 A. Masson, *Le décor de bibliothèques du moyen age à la Révolution* (Geneva, 1972), 165.
8 N. Pevsner, *A history of building types* (London, 1976), 100.
9 D. F. Keeling, 'British public library buildings 1850–1870', *Library History* 1 (1968), 100.

and reading room on separate floors. The libraries of the new London clubs of the post-Waterloo era were more akin to that of a great house.

King George III's library at Buckingham House (the Queen's Palace) may be considered as semi-public, on account both of its scale and of the access granted to scholars. Designed by Sir William Chambers (1723–96), it exhibits the neo-classical fascination with rooms of different shapes that is a feature of subsequent library design: the 60 feet by 30 feet Great Library, two storeys in height, next to the king's bedroom, in 1762–4; opening into the South Library, a long, one-storey room with a central apse (a bow window) on one long side, which opened at its further end into the great double-height, galleried Octagon (1766–7); and in 1772–3 the East Library, of a single storey (heightened with a second floor in 1774) immediately backing the West Library.[10] The domed Octagon's walls were lined with shelves from floor to gallery (except for the door and chimney-piece), and from gallery to cornice, with large 'Diocletian' windows above; in the centre, a large octagonal table.[11] This was the first such rotunda inside a library, as distinct from Oxford's free-standing Radcliffe Camera, and offered a model for a number of Robert Adam's designs.

A particular focus of intellectual and professional activity from the 1760s was Edinburgh, where Robert Adam (1728–92) supplied important library designs. For Register House, to hold the public records of Scotland, Adam designed a square building (plans probably 1769), with a central court in which stood a domed rotunda (after that neo-classical archetype, the Pantheon) of 50 feet diameter, and 70 feet high, lit by an oculus.[12] On the principal floor, eight shallow, segmental-headed recesses contain seven levels of shelving in three divisions; each recess is flanked by Corinthian pilasters, with between them a narrow space filled with shelves. On the upper floor, reached by a gallery, this space is occupied by piers supporting semi-circular arches above bays of eight levels of shelving arranged on the same pattern as those below. In Adam's original design, giant Corinthian columns surrounding the central well that

10 H. Colvin (ed.), *History of the King's works*, vol. 5: *1660–1782* (London, 1976), 136; C. Williams (ed.), *Sophie in London* (London, 1933), 145–6.

11 Illustrated in W. H. Pyne, *Royal residences* (London, 1819).

12 James Byres (1734–1817), who studied architecture in Rome, had designed a new building for King's College, Aberdeen, probably in 1767, including a domed Corinthian rotunda and high galleried library hall at first floor: D. M. Walker, 'The rebuilding of King's and Marischal Colleges 1723–1889', *Aberdeen University Review* 55/190 (Autumn 1993), 126–7. I am grateful to Professor Walker for a copy, and for much guidance on Scottish libraries.

lit the ground floor supplied a richer architectural character.[13] But thanks to the paucity of public funding, it was a more utilitarian design that was built. Reading rooms were separated from the book-shelving, designed to contain volumes of public records and therefore not immediately accessible by the public.

Adam's grand library for Edinburgh University, *c.*1785, remained unexecuted, to be redesigned eventually by William Playfair (1790–1857). Planned as three arms of a cross, radiating from a central rotunda, it would have occupied fourteen bays on the first floor of the southern side of the university quadrangle, with stall stacks. A one-bay oval room would have afforded access and facilities for control, the books being issued to readers by the librarian against a monetary deposit.[14] Whether readers would have been sufficiently separated from books by this paper design remains uncertain.

Although a new university library had been completed in Cambridge in 1758 by Stephen Wright (d.1780),[15] an extension was contemplated in 1783–8. Adam provided several comprehensive designs (varying in minor details) in September 1788 for a new library with wings for senate house, university offices and librarians' rooms. None was executed, but his proposals, influenced by his designs for Register House, Edinburgh, are of much interest.[16] A square block, 116 feet (or 108 feet in another version), surrounded a central court 60 feet square, within which a free-standing octagon rising to a spire housed the stair. The library was on the traditional upper floor, above lecture rooms. Four bridges linked the octagon to the perimeter building, in which each arm, 28 feet wide, was furnished on both the outer and inner walls with stacks, with a window above each alcove so formed, as in Trinity College library and Wright's recent building; at either end of each outer wall, a Venetian window. Externally a sexastyle temple front was flanked by towers with Venetian windows, a Wren-like tower and spire rising behind, above the stair-well. An alternative version had two rectangular blocks measuring 102 feet by 24, with stacks, linked by a

13 Sir John Soane's Museum (hereafter SM), Adam Drawings 30, nos. 4, 11; A. T. Bolton, *The architecture of Robert and James Adam (1758–1794)* (London, 1922), vol. 2, 227–9. I deeply appreciate the assistance of the curator of the Soane Museum, Margaret Richardson, and the kindness of her colleagues Susan Palmer and Stephen Astley in producing for me lists of relevant drawings.

14 Bolton, *Architecture . . . of Adam*, 240–1.

15 R. Willis and J. W. Clark, *The architectural history of the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1886), vol. 3, 67; D. McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library: a history: the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries* (Cambridge, 1986), 256–64. The vice-chancellor commented that the bookcases were 'very beautifull and very inconvenient'; and Thomas Gray declared they would 'hold everything, but books' (quoted in *ibid.*, 265–6). New cases were made in 1787–90 (*ibid.*, 315).

16 *Country Life* 76 (1934), 416–21; SM, Adam Drawings 31, nos. 11, 14, 16, 18, 20, 21.

columned circular library of 33 feet diameter, also with stacks, and an octagonal tower containing the staircase. These designs suggest immediate reader access to the books.

Under the 1710 Act the Dean and Faculty of Advocates of the College of Justice in Edinburgh had the right to receive a copy of every book entered at Stationers' Hall, London, so theirs came to be regarded as a national library. The Writers to the Signet also had formed a fine legal library, which from the 1770s had become general in scope. In 1791 the Edinburgh authorities asked Adam for a design for the two libraries. Adam planned to accommodate both on different floors of a new front to the Parliament House (law courts). His Writers' Library, occupying the five northern bays on the ground floor, measuring 63 feet by 34 feet employed a pattern worked out in his great houses, based on groups of threes and fives (discussed below): pairs of columns at either end articulated the space into a central room flanked by small ones. Five bays on the west side, demarcated by stacks, were each to be lighted by a window; opposite, there were windows only in the two end bays, with wall bookshelves flanking a central chimney-piece; at the north end, a Venetian window. The bookcases were to return along the walls between the windows. A gallery provided access to upper shelves. On the floor above, the galleried Advocates' Library would have extended three bays further to the south, over the hall; with, at the rear, an octagon tower to contain three floors of wall book-shelving, the principal one domed, its gallery on Ionic columns.[17]

Adam's project was revived in 1810 when Robert Reid (1776–1856), enlarging Parliament House, executed a western wing. The shell completed, neither body was satisfied with Reid's proposals: he had made little real library provision.[18] They therefore turned to William Stark (1770–1813), an architect 'of exquisite taste'[19] pioneering in Roman, Grecian and neo-baroque styles, and possessing a strong sense of the Picturesque. He had spent some time in St Petersburg from 1798, exposed to its architectural grandiloquences.[20]

17 SM, Adam Drawings 28, no. 170; 33, nos. 1–5, 8; Bolton, *architecture*, vol. 2, 218, 327; I. G. Brown, *Building for books: the architectural evolution of the Advocates' Library 1689–1925* (Aberdeen, 1989), 70–5; A. M. Kerr, 'The library that never was', *Society of Writers to H. M.'s Signet Review* 4 (1998), 1–9 (I am grateful to the former Signet Librarian, Audrey Walker, for a copy).

18 The Curators' Minutes (vol. 1, 101–3) refer to 'the original defects in its construction for the purposes of a library', quoted in G. H. Ballantyne, *The Signet Library Edinburgh and its librarians 1722–1972* (Glasgow, 1979), 75.

19 Sir Walter Scott, quoted in H. Colvin, *Biographical dictionary of British architects 1600–1840*, 3rd edn (New Haven and London, 1995), *sub* Stark.

20 Colvin, *Biographical dictionary*; see also *Dictionary of National Biography missing persons* (Oxford, 1993).

Though designing each library distinctively, Stark employed in both the same rich neo-classical vocabulary, drawing on the Corinthian order of the Roman Pantheon. Each consisted of a spacious hall lined with giant fluted Corinthian colonnades, such as Stark may have seen in Brenna's Greek Hall at Pavlovsk.[21] For the Signet, on the ground floor, he followed Wren (though probably immediately derived from Adam's unexecuted plan for Edinburgh University Library), with stacks to a height roughly two-thirds of the room. When Playfair replicated this pattern in the University of Edinburgh's Lower Library, *The Scotsman* inaccurately hailed it as 'a plan adopted in some English libraries, but not previously introduced here, so far as we know . . . By carrying the shelves around three sides of the projection . . . as well as along the open parts of the wall . . . between them, the space for holding books is more than doubled.' Above the cases, a gallery runs the length of the library, fronted by giant Corinthian columns (plaster, probably concealing an iron core), while the walls in front of the windows, as well as the piers, are lined by bookcases. Gallery windows are partly cut into the ceiling, being expressed externally as first-floor windows.[22] At floor level, larger windows between each pair of stacks create well-lighted alcoves. Defined by Stark's giant order supporting an entablature and flat ceiling, the library's length, excessive on plan, is diminished by Adamic triumphal arches, dividing it into three. A huge cockle in the basement heated pipes running the length of the room, 'terminating in cast-iron tables, from under which heat is conducted into the room by a very neat contrivance for regulating the quantity of it'.[23]

Above, in the much longer former Advocates' Library (136 feet by 39 feet), 'perhaps the most magnificent room in Edinburgh',[24] Stark had to resolve a similar problem, but found a different answer. The space is treated as a unity, flanked by giant Corinthian columns, but again avoids any tunnel effect. Dispensing with stacks, he widened the 'nave' to 23 feet, and created a three-bay central ellipse lighted by a glazed cupola. A gallery runs around the walls at approximately two-thirds of the height of the columns, that support a massive entablature, above which a shallow elliptical, coffered ceiling runs either side of the one cupola. With a painting of Apollo and the Muses by Thomas Stothard

21 This hall also has the interesting feature of a frieze behind the capitals of the giant order and below its entablature, thus implying a lesser order not expressed. Stark actually employs a lesser order, with complete entablature, in the Lower Library. I am most grateful to the Librarian, Audrey Walker, for showing me the whole library.

22 Faculty minutes, vol. 4, 411, cited in Ballantyne, *Signet Library*, 73.

23 *Caledonian Mercury*, 15 or 25 January 1816, quoted in Ballantyne, *Signet Library*, 86 n. 22, and more fully at 100.

24 T. W. West, *History of architecture in Scotland* (London, 1967), 164.

(1755–1834) in the soffit of the cupola, and specially made furniture by William Trotter of Edinburgh, this was far more of a room for display, much as it appears in Thomas Shepherd's engraving (1831) shewing elegant ladies accompanied by fashionably dressed men. A French visitor in 1826 observed, 'Les lecteurs se tiennent dans une galerie décorée de colonnes, et meublée de divans, de sièges mobiles, et de tables autour desquelles se rangent ceux qui veulent écrire.'[25] When George IV used it as a retiring room on his visit to Edinburgh in August 1822, he exclaimed flatteringly, 'The most beautiful Room I have ever seen.'[26] The Advocates, required to prepare their cases in the library instead of in chambers as in London, found it unsatisfactory, with few tables, and limited wall shelving. One complained that 'the most essential requisites for convenience and accommodation are overlooked',[27] for example, it had no heating. They therefore sold their floor to the Signet (at a loss). William Burn in 1833–5 constructed the single imperial stair.

The Advocates then, in 1828, commissioned Stark's brilliant pupil, William Henry Playfair (1790–1857): 'It is not, perhaps, exaggeration', remarks the library's historian, 'to say that Playfair's projected Advocates' Library is not too distant a relation of the paper plans of Durand, and of the actual achievement of . . . Klenze in Munich [Glyptothek, 1816–30], or of . . . Schinkel in Berlin [Altes Museum, 1824–8] . . . something of European significance.'[28] Playfair had already in 1821–2 shewn his 'Romantic Classical stylophily',[29] in his designs for Royal Terrace and Edinburgh's Doric Royal Institution.[30] Durandesque in plan, but also reminiscent of Adam's Register House and Cambridge designs, Playfair's new Advocates' Library design, a columned central rotunda, surrounded by square or rectangular library and reading rooms, was fronted, like Schinkel's Berlin Altes Museum (1825–8), by an unpedimented row of columns, but twenty-four as against Schinkel's eighteen.[31] On the north side, a long hall or 'Corridor' with semi-circular ends, and four massive bay windows looking

25 [M. Ducos], *Itinéraire et souvenirs d'Angleterre et d'Écosse* (Paris, 1834), 32–3, quoted in Ballantyne, *Signet Library*, 87.

26 G. Thompson to Thomas Stothard, 6 September 1822, National Library of Scotland, MS 685, fol. 35, quoted in Ballantyne, *Signet Library*, 39.

27 J. G. Dalyell, advocate, writing in *Edinburgh encyclopaedia* (Edinburgh, 1830), vol. 12, 726; quoted in Ballantyne, *Signet Library*, 82, who suggests (87) that the passage was written several years earlier.

28 Brown, *Building for books*, 131–2.

29 H.-R. Hitchcock, *Architecture: nineteenth and twentieth centuries* (Harmondsworth, 1971), 108.

30 See A. J. Youngson, *The making of classical Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1966), 162–5. Playfair extended the Institution in 1831–5.

31 See plans reproduced in Ballantyne, *Signet Library*, 134, 137. For Schinkel, see Pevsner, *Building types*, 127.

onto the Signet Library, communicating directly with Parliament House, was the only portion realised. The Faculty determined on building in stages, beginning with the Corridor as 'a building complete in itself' to accommodate 30,000 books and deal with the immediate pressures on the library.[32] Playfair accordingly provided a two-storeyed building with a continuous series of eight bays on the north, and twin square reading rooms opening off on the south side,[33] though only in 1856 were the final two bays constructed.[34] Playfair's grand scheme was never fulfilled. Yet Playfair had achieved in the Corridor what an English librarian called 'one of the most quiet, composed, and book-looking rooms in Christendom: of a considerable length, with recesses, admirably managed, near the windows, for the purposes of reading and transcription. The ceiling is gilded in a low tone . . . The room is coloured in an oak or wainscot tint.'[35] Combining wall and stack systems, Playfair covered the interior walls with bookshelves to the entablature, while in the window side short stacks between the almost-continuous bay windows served to create recesses of adequate depth for working tables. The criteria here differ from the Signet Library: for the Advocates, a select and relatively small group, easy access to the books and good lighting were prime considerations.[36]

Playfair had earlier, in 1816, won a competition to complete Adam's University of Edinburgh.[37] 'Whatever his sources of information, Playfair devised an interior not only grander but more suitable to the University's needs than anything to be found in Robert Adam's plans.'[38] At first, he reversed Adam's scheme of central rotunda flanked by rectangular rooms for a central rectangle flanked by twin domed rotundas, that would have provided ample bookshelving. His brief required either rooms or recesses for reading, uniformity of heating, efficient light, bookcases low enough to obviate the use of ladders, wire doors to floor-level bookcases, and secure lodging for rare books.[39] But Playfair modified his scheme in the light of comments from professors and

32 Ballantyne, *Signet Library*, 142.

33 Plan reproduced in *ibid.*, 146–7.

34 *Ibid.*, 150–3, 169–75.

35 T. F. Dibdin, *Bibliographical tour* (London, 1838), 592–3, quoted in Ballantyne, *Signet Library*, 166.

36 I am most grateful to the Dean and Faculty of Advocates for affording me opportunity to visit the library, and to the Keeper, Angus Stewart, Esq., QC, for his helpful, courteous and thorough guidance.

37 Also mentioned at this point must be the library in Thomas Hamilton's Greek Doric Royal High School, Edinburgh, 1825–9: a large square room with wall casing, lighted by an octagonal clerestorey. I am grateful to Professor Walker for pointing this out to me, and to Mr J. Rock for details.

38 D. B. Horn, 'The building of the Old Quad, 1767–1841, part 2', *University of Edinburgh Journal* (Spring, 1969), 50.

39 J. R. Guild and A. Law, *Edinburgh University Library 1580–1980* (Edinburgh, 1982), 89–90.

librarians.[40] The University Library was to occupy both floors of the south wing, and Playfair had to provide for its unique character: in marked contrast to the comparable English libraries,[41] the students were allowed to remove books from the building, even if only those of a common sort. He abandoned the inadequately lighted rotundas and Adam's tripartite windows for a regular succession of rectangular windows on either side: so creating 'a continuous long room subdivided by regular bays of bookcases',[42] somewhat in the character of the Signet (Lower) Library. It was heated by hot air in iron pipes.

Similarly, in contrast to the Advocates' and Signet Libraries, Playfair had to accommodate two classes of users with different privileges, professors and students. 'The professors wanted a magnificent large hall as the central showpiece of their Library.'[43] Playfair provided this on the upper floor, furnishing the lower floor as the working library. The magnificent Upper Library, 190 feet long by 50 feet wide, and 40 feet high, was covered by a great coffered barrel vault of Roman splendour, so ornamented 'as not to obscure or interfere with the effect of the Books, which must surely ever be considered as the fittest decoration for a Library'.[44] Stacks perpendicular to the walls, terminated by giant fluted piers, support a continuous entablature. Above the windows, a gallery runs continuously behind the pilasters, the space between gallery and entablature also filled with bookcases, lighted by skylights. At either end, two giant free-standing Ionic fluted columns frame top-lighted anterooms.[45] More effectively composed than Smirke's comparable King's Library, 'Playfair's Upper Library is one of the finest examples of the Neo-classical quest for a solution that could still be expressed in a single prestigious book-lined hall. By contrast, in his design for the "working library" on the floor below he foreshadowed the Victorian solution that separated the bookstore from the reading room, so that the books might be economically packed into functional store rooms and the readers be seated in a plainer hall.'[46]

40 See A. G. Fraser, *The building of Old College* (Edinburgh, 1989), 106, 170–81, 246–60.

41 Playfair had specially visited London, Oxford and Cambridge, 'where, although I may not have observed anything highly worthy of imitation, I have yet seen much to be avoided, & have acquired useful information on many points' (Report to the College Commissioners, 21 February 1824, quoted in Fraser, *Old College*, 250). As he remarked to the Royal Commissioners, the English libraries were differently constituted, books not being given out on loan (*Parliamentary papers*, 1837 [92] xxxv, Royal Commission for visiting the Universities of Scotland, 480).

42 Fraser, *Old College*, 246.

43 *Ibid.*, 164.

44 Playfair to the Commissioners, February 1824, quoted in Fraser, 247–9.

45 Playfair himself described the room to the Royal Commissioners, *Parliamentary papers*, 1837 [92] xxxv, 480.

46 Fraser, *Old College*, 250.

The new library, indeed, had made possible the introduction of della Santa's system, separating books from readers: 'The Lower Library is to be considered quite sacred', Playfair declared, 'no person going into it but the Librarians.'

> The students, entering at a separate door, pass through the lobby, and arrive at what is called the Students' Hall . . . divided from the lower, or working library, by a small partition . . . [with] four or five wickets. When a student wishes for a book, he knocks at a wicket, which is opened by a Librarian, who . . . receives the paper containing the name of the book the student wishes to have . . . by this arrangement, students will procure a book with more facility than if they were allowed to go among the catalogues themselves, and converse with the Librarians as they formerly did.[47]

Even the professors were to be issued their desiderata through a wicket, though the large ground-floor graduation hall was initially allocated to them as a reading room (it was subsequently transferred to the students).[48] About a hundred poor students, who could not afford the £1 deposit required to borrow a book, also habitually read in the library.[49]

Contemporaneous with Playfair's work was that noble gallery designed by Robert Smirke (1780–1867) in the new British Museum to house the library of King George III presented to the nation by his successor (1823–9). Grand in its dimensions (300 feet by 41 feet – the central section 58 feet wide – and 30 feet high), and noble in its neo-Grecian architecture, the King's Library lacks the magnificence of the Imperial Library at Vienna (the only library of architectural importance Smirke had seen), or the cohesiveness of Playfair's University Library. The centre is demarcated by four columns of polished Aberdeen granite with Corinthian capitals of Derbyshire alabaster (eight more were intended, but the cost of polishing proved prohibitive) and yellow scagliola pilasters; the ceiling – daringly supported on huge cast-iron beams – heavily coffered, with a range of oblong central panels containing oval medallions. Books behind glass fill the full height of the wall, with a gallery which tends to diminish the effect of the height.[50] The British Museum library was open to suitably recommended members of the public; books were taken by librarians to readers in rooms at either end of the King's Library.[51] In 1839–42 Smirke

47 *Parliamentary papers*, 1837 [92] xxxv, 479, Playfair's evidence, 6 February 1827.

48 *Parliamentary papers*, 1837 [92] xxxv, 481.

49 C. P. Finlayson and S. M. Simpson, 'The history of the library 1710–1837', in J. R. Guild and A. Law (eds.), *Edinburgh University Library 1580–1980* (Edinburgh, 1982), 55–66.

50 J. M. Crook and M. H. Port, *History of the King's works*, vol. 6: *1782–1851* (London: 1973), 409, 415.

51 For the British Museum library in general, see P. R. Harris, *A history of the British Museum library* (London, 1998).

added double-height libraries on the north side: the remarkable Arch Room, a series of arches that develop Soane's Wimpole ante-library (see below), with stacks from arch to wall and shelving above the arch, with galleries; and the North Library, with shelf-lined walls and stacks from the walls to a double row of piers supporting a coffered ceiling; and in 1843–6 the Long Room, to the east of the King's Library, 328 feet in length, on two floors, the upper lighted by skylights.[52]

Another library of great architectural distinction was that designed for Cambridge University by C. R. Cockerell (1788–1863), the culmination of long efforts, including Adam's, to provide a building worthy of the university and its entitlement under the 1710 Act.[53] Wren's Trinity College standard stack system[54] was prescribed in the 1829 instructions to architects competing for the new Cambridge library, which also ordained a square building with internal court, as in Adam's proposals. Begun only in 1837,[55] in its general lines, the principal, first-floor room of Cockerell's library resembles Playfair's Edinburgh University Upper Library: at either end an open screen of coupled columns (of the unique Bassae Ionic discovered by Cockerell) frame the long hall, its seven bays articulated by piers at the ends of the stacks, with a gallery passing through the piers, which support short transverse tunnel vaults. The uniquely coffered ceiling, composed of plaster-rendered brick, is panelled with a diagonal pattern.[56] Brick ceilings throughout enabled a local paper to claim that the new library was 'the first example of a fire-proof library hitherto executed in this country'.[57] Externally, the east or main front has an unpedimented decastyle Ionic portico; the other fronts each differ, but are united by an entablature implied where not expressed. 'A richly eclectic range' of sources from Roman

52 *Ibid.*, 110–11, 176. Illustrations in *Illustrated London News*, 7 June 1851; and P. R. Harris, *The library of the British Museum* (London, 1991), 94. The Royal Commission on the museum of 1850 regretted that the desire to produce a visually impressive building (Smirke's insistence on maintaining externally a single range of windows throughout the north face) had led to inefficient working arrangements (Harris, *British Museum library*, 173).

53 McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, *passim*. For Cockerell, see chapter 12.

54 Though William Wilkins, in his spacious Tudor hall type library for Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, preferred wall shelving between the windows: R. W. Liscombe, *William Wilkins 1778–1839* (Cambridge, 1980), plate 61.

55 Cf. D. Watkin, 'Newly discovered drawings by C. R. Cockerell for Cambridge University Library', *Architectural History* 26 (1983), 87–91, plates 44–57; D. Watkin, *The life and work of C. R. Cockerell* (London, 1974), plate 88. The building is fully described in J. Olley, 'University Library', *Architects' Journal* 186 (8 February 1989), 34–63.

56 Derived perhaps, Watkin suggests, from Borromini's Palazzo de Propaganda Fide chapel in Rome, where there are analogies also between the rib vaults and those in the east vestibule of the Cambridge library (Watkin, *Cockerell*, 194–5). I am grateful to Dr P. Mandler for showing me the library, now that of Gonville and Caius College.

57 *Cambridge Advertiser*, 29 July 1840, quoted in Watkin, *Cockerell*, 194.

baths and temples to contemporary French work is 'combined with sculptural power in the handling of mass'.[58]

The desirability of fireproof construction had been manifested by the fate of the parliamentary library engulfed in the Westminster Palace fire of 16 October 1834. A library of parliamentary papers that had been accumulating for years past was in 1825 provided with a first-floor library 55 feet 6 ins by 23 feet, and 13 feet 6 ins high, designed by John Soane (1753–1837) in a late Gothic style with an eastern oriel and a low vault.[59] By 1830, this was inadequate. Soane proposed to incorporate the rooms above by removing the intervening floor and ceiling, and creating a gallery, but it was not until 1832 that the two upper rooms were made available by means of a spiral stair.[60]

In the new Palace of Westminster that rose after the great fire, the specifications called for three rooms each 60 feet long for the Commons library. Charles Barry (1795–1860) added a library for the Speaker contiguous to the noble suite of three rooms for the Commons along the river front, with similar apartments adjoining for the House of Lords. Cases line the walls on all sides, rising above a range of cupboards to about three-quarters of the height of the rooms, with furnishings designed by A. W. Pugin (1812–52).[61]

The post-Waterloo decades also saw the foundation of a number of new gentlemen's clubs. Catering for men from the services, universities, learned professions and political parties, such clubs included a library as an essential function. Architecturally, however, the libraries were based on those of great houses. The most important in literary terms was that of the Athenaeum Club, in Pall Mall, London, in which the shelving originally (1830) ran half-way up the walls; in 1832, two spidery galleries were added to enable the shelving to be carried up to the cornice.[62] Bookshelves line the walls of the elegant library of the Travellers' Club (Charles Barry, 1829), divided into the familiar three compartments by narrow book-lined return walls joined to screens of fluted Corinthian pilasters and columns (somewhat in the fashion of Holland); above the cornice the frieze carries casts of that from the cella of the Temple of Apollo at Bassae.[63] But architecturally, the grandest was that of Barry's Reform

58 F. Salmon, *Building on ruins: the rediscovery of Rome and English architecture* (Aldershot, 2000), 141–4.

59 Crook and Port, *King's works*, vol. 6, 527–8; SM, Drawings Collection 51/5, nos. 8–10, 12, 19–21, 24–30.

60 SM, Drawings Collection 51/5, nos. 4, 6; *King's works*, vol. 6, 530.

61 A. Wright and P. Smith, *Parliament past and present* (London, [1902]), illustrated 261, 263; M. H. Port (ed.), *The Houses of Parliament* (London, 1976), fig. 107.

62 *Country Life* 109 (6 April 1951), 1021; *Survey of London*, vol. 30: *Parish of St James Westminster*, part 1: *South of Piccadilly* (London, 1960), 399, plate 83b.

63 *Survey of London*, vol. 30, 408, plate 92c.

Club (1838–41), also in Pall Mall. Running the whole length of the garden front, the sumptuous first-floor library, articulated by fluted Corinthian columns and pilasters, was converted by Barry from its original function as a drawing-room. Bookcases line the walls. Two doorways on the long internal wall serve to create twin vestibules demarcated by fluted Corinthian pilasters and columns, matched on the window wall opposite, that once again compose the library into three compartments.[64]

Last of the great institutional libraries of this period was that of Lincoln's Inn, constructed in 1843–5. Siting this away from the Inn's other buildings, the architect Philip Hardwick (1792–1870) recommended a Gothic style 'towards the end of the sixteenth century before the admixture of Italian architecture'.[65] This was a much more archaeological Gothic than Walpole's. One wing of a red brick complex, with dark diapering and stone trim, the first-floor library, to contain 40,000 volumes, measured 80 feet by 40 feet internally, and 48 feet to the roof, which is of hammerbeam construction in wood and iron, partially ceiled; it has affinities with that at Eltham Palace (*c.*1479), but structurally resembles Willis's cross-section of the roof of Henry VII's Chapel, Westminster.[66] Bookstacks, lighted on the north by huge windows, form alcoves; a gallery on either side gives access to wall shelving, as well as to three reading rooms. Large oriel windows fill the two ends.[67]

Great house libraries

By the later eighteenth century, most plans for a new great house included a 'library'. But in contrast to such earlier eighteenth-century plans as Holkham, the library came into the body of the house, forming part of the range of reception rooms,[68] and accompanying them down to the ground floor when, towards the century's end, the lower level became fashionable.[69] Isaac Ware in his *Complete body of architecture* (1756) refers to drawing-room and library as 'the two great apartments' for a first-rank town house.[70] Not necessarily a room

64 *Ibid.*, 415, plate 101a.
65 Lincoln's Inn, lithographed manuscript, 16 July 1842, Hardwick to the Hon. Society.
66 *Transactions of RIBA*, 1st ser., 2 (1837/42).
67 The library was extended in the same style and a second gallery added by Sir G. G. Scott in 1871–3. I am most grateful to the Librarian, Mr G. F. Holborn, for showing me the library and the contract drawings, and to Professor A. Quiney for his comments on J. L. Pearson's involvement in the building.
68 Woolfe and Gandon, *Vitruvius Britannicus*, vol. 5, plates 14, 17, 24, 29, 36, 45, 47, 51, 56, 79. See also Hussey, *English country houses: mid Georgian*.
69 M. Girouard, *Life in the English country house* (New Haven and London, 1978), 214.
70 I. Ware, *A complete body of architecture* (London, 1756), 436.

exclusively for housing and reading books the library might well incorporate bays for writing, or private conversation. 'By the mid eighteenth century comfortable library chairs and sofas along with several writing tables begin to be supplied as standard furnishings',[71] encouraging visitors to foregather there. The library tended to be regarded as a male domain in the eighteenth century,[72] but became increasingly available to ladies. By 1790, Adam's Gothic library at Alnwick Castle was described as 'the apartment in which the family generally resides'.[73] While Catherine Morland found the library at Northanger Abbey 'in its way, of equal magnificence' to a drawing-room, 'magnificent both in size and furniture . . . used only with company of consequence',[74] Humphry Repton noted in 1816 that 'the most recent costume [*sic*] is to use the library as the general living-room', the drawing-room only opened to give visitors 'a formal cold reception'. And T. F. Dibdin, the Althorp librarian, refers to the Long Library there in 1822 as 'the morning sitting room and the evening drawing room'.[75]

Robert Adam told Sir James Clerk of Penicuik, planning to rebuild his seat, that, in addition to dining and drawing rooms, 'In the Country there ought to be another room upon the principal floor which I call a loitering room and it ought to be a library and large. There people spend their time with pleasure who like neither to drink or be with the Ladies. There they may take up one book and then another and read a page of each; others may like the children look at a picture book or read the title page and afterwards with importance talk of the book.' Clerk, however, insisted on placing his library upstairs, in the traditional Scottish manner, which he hoped would 'have the good effect of freeing it, from turning out to be the loitering resort of the whole of the family'.[76]

71 C. Wainwright, 'The library as living room', in R. Myers and M. Harris (eds.), *Property of a gentleman: the formation, organization and dispersal of the private library 1620–1920* (Winchester, 1991), 16.

72 Lord Chesterfield had set a pattern in his London house, designed by Ware, completed in 1749: his library, which he considered the best room in England, occupied one wing on the garden front, secluded from the circuit of state rooms. It was lined with bookshelves to door height on three sides; above was a frieze of portraits in rococo plaster frames; a Latin inscription below the cornice referred to 'the bliss of private life'.

73 I. Ousby (ed.), *James Plumptre's Britain: the journal of a tourist in the 1790s* (London, 1992), 103.

74 Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey* (London, 1818, but written 1798–1803), vol. 2, chapter 8.

75 H. Repton, *Fragments on the theory and practice of landscape gardening* (London, 1816), 54–5; T. F. Dibdin, *Aedes Althorpianea* (London, 1822), 20–31.

76 R. Adam to Sir James Clerk bt, National Archives of Scotland, GD 18/1758b; Clerk to Col. Robert Clerk, 4 March 1762, GD 18/5014. Quoted in J. Macaulay, *The classical country house in Scotland 1660–1800* (London, 1987), 170.

Another large first-floor library was Horace Walpole's at Strawberry Hill, his Gothic villa outside London. Probably Walpole himself decided in 1754 that the recessed wall shelves should be fronted with casing based on Hollar's print of the little doorcase in the choir screen of Old St Paul's Cathedral, rejecting his friend Bentley's design of intersecting double Gothic arches in favour of a more accurately modelled alternative by another friend, John Chute. As in a Palladian library, the space above the shelves was occupied by a row of portraits. The ceiling was painted with armorial bearings.[77] Strawberry Hill had immediate progeny in a library at Arbury, Warwickshire, where Sanderson Miller (1716–80) had in 1751 advised Sir Roger Newdigate on a Gothic bow window for a library. This room, however, was not fitted up until 1755, when its bookcases were modelled on Strawberry's.[78]

Despite the importance of Walpole's villa in the history of the Gothic Revival, except for Adam's long-demolished library at Alnwick Castle in the 1770s, there were few imitations of the Gothic library before Soane's unexecuted designs for Kinnaird Castle (1787), in the Early English style;[79] and for the marquess of Buckingham at Stowe (1804), for his 'Saxon' manuscripts,[80] modelled on Henry VII's Chapel, Westminster Abbey, with fan-traceried ceiling made from casts of the chapel, and wall bookcases behind bronze grilles based on the chapel's screen.[81] One important example, however, was that formed by the eleventh duke of Norfolk in his reconstruction of Arundel Castle, Sussex, *c.*1800. Measuring 112 feet by 22 feet, and 17 feet high, it is panelled in mahogany, and 'planned like a complete hall-church with crossing and flattened wooden sexpartite vaulting' on quatrefoil columns; it was inspired by St George's Chapel, Windsor. The bookcases line the walls, with a gallery for access to the upper ranges.[82]

Given that the library in a country house was generally one of a suite of reception rooms, it was inherently unlikely that any form of book arrangement other than shelves or cases against the walls would be adopted. Most libraries were rectangular, but the neo-classical architect's fascination with rooms of diverse shapes did produce a range of alternatives, as at Buckingham House. Sir Robert Taylor at Harleyford, *c.*1755, contributed a polygonal bay in the

77 M. McCarthy, *Origins of the Gothic Revival* (New Haven and London, 1987), 81–4.

78 *Ibid.*, 117–19.

79 SM, Drawings Collection, 78/2, nos. 60–3.

80 Mostly acquired in 1803 on the death of Thomas Astle, celebrated for his publication in 1775 of King Henry VII's will, with instructions about the architecture of the chapel.

81 Illustrated in C. Hussey, *English country houses: late Georgian 1800–1840* (London, 1958), 17.

82 I. Nairn and N. Pevsner, *Sussex* (Harmondsworth, 1965), 93; *Country Life* 174 (1983), 49, and 186 (1992), 73.

centre of one 40 foot side.[83] Robert Adam proposed a 'quasi-quatrefoil' in one plan for Great Saxham, 1779. John Soane's *Designs in architecture* (1778) include a circular 'dressing room or library' for a hunting-lodge. John Plaw at Belle Isle, Westmorland, in 1774 built, and George Dance *c.*1806 proposed for Camden Place, Kent, an oval library.[84] Lord Muncaster, *c.*1780, in his eponymous castle contrived his own octagonal library.

Like his contemporaries', Adam's libraries were usually rectangular; but he liked apsidal features, as at Kenwood and Byram where the end bays were given segmental semi-domed ceilings; Byram also had a great apse on one long side.[85] Imaginatively planned Derby House, London, 1773–4, was perhaps the first to have an oval library.[86] An analysis of designs for libraries contained in the collection of Adam drawings in Sir John Soane's Museum shows that Adam employed a basic design system of alternating bookshelves or cases (whether recessed in the wall, projecting or free-standing) with architectural features: windows, doors, chimney-piece, in a triple or sometimes quintuple form. The principal book-holding wall was a long one with a chimney-piece in the centre, commonly opposite one containing the main windows,[87] normally found in only one wall. Symmetrical on either side of the central chimney-piece; it may be door + bookcase (as at Saltram, Ugbrooke and Audley End),[88] or bookcase + pilasters + bookcase (as at Byram). Fonthill, with doors flanking the chimney-piece in a short side, offered the variation of two three-bay units (each with central window), opposite two large bookcases each composed of a wide pedimented central section with narrower flanks.[89] This three-part aedicular bookcase appears to have been an Adam invention, employed at Kedleston, Newby and Croome,[90] while at Nostell we find it extended to five bays. The flat-topped case is nonetheless more general, sometimes varied by an occasional pediment, as at Osterley. Treatment of the fronts varied: some glazed, others open, or wire netted, as at Luton Hoo.[91] Pilasters were commonly Ionic, but Corinthian was preferred at Harewood and Kenwood, and was the

83 Mrs Lybbe Powys in 1767 thought it 'one of the most pleasing rooms I was ever in': E. J. Climenson (ed.), *Passages from the diaries of Mrs Philip Lybbe Powys* (London, 1899), 118.
84 See Stillman, *English neo-classic architecture*, 148–52, 190, 206, 209.
85 SM, Adam Drawings 50, no. 69.
86 *The works in architecture of Robert and James Adam* (London, 1779), vol. 2, part 1, plate 1.
87 SM, Adam Drawings 50, no. 67.
88 SM, Adam Drawings 50, nos. 67, 46, 50; 31, no. 106.
89 SM, Adam Drawings 50, no. 31.
90 E. Harris, *The genius of Robert Adam: his interiors* (New Haven and London, 2001), 29, 229; SM, Adam Drawings 50, no. 10.
91 Harris, *Genius of Robert Adam*, 255.

main order (with subordinate Ionic) at Syon;[92] at Kedleston, the library a male domain, Doric was preferred.[93] Bookcases may be free-standing, or attached to the wall or recessed into it, the last a feature that relates to Stillman's thesis that Adam's earlier libraries are characterised by dominant orders and classical motifs, but by the later 1760s 'the relief has been slightly reduced and the detailing more refined' (as at Nostell, 1766–7, and Osterley, 1766–73), a format that becomes more refined (as in the 'perfection' of Mellerstain, *c.*1770–1) and attenuated in the hands of others such as Holland and Paine.[94] The relation of the shelving to the height of the room also varied considerably: usually, space was allowed above it for a range of portraits (Kedleston, Syon), painted panels (Osterley, Kenwood, Nostell), or busts or reliefs (Lansdowne House, Harewood, Mellerstain), but at Byram the shelving rose the full height to the shallow coving. An alternative is the arcaded wall, with the bookcases rising only to the impost of the arch, the recess above occupied by busts or classical ornaments (Harewood, 1765; Kedleston, unexecuted book-room, 1768). Ceilings were generally flat, but those at Lansdowne (Shelburne) House and Harewood were coved.

At Kenwood (1767), the 'great room' – by some considered Adam's finest room – was intended also to be principal reception room as well as library, so the apsidal ends with their wall shelving were distinguished from the central reception area by pairs of columns.[95] Adam also devised a complex form of library for two or three noblemen who collected books on the grand scale. Lord Bute employed Adam on a great library in his London house,[96] but suddenly abandoned it for Luton Hoo. Here Adam had to provide a gallery for Bute's vast mechanical organ and then rooms for Bute's growing book collection. By 1767 he had produced a three-room library design embodied in the final plan of 1772, which Dr Eileen Harris suggests may have been derived from George Dance's design for a public gallery awarded a gold medal by the Parma Academy, 1763.[97] With the connecting doors opened, one had a gallery of 144 feet in length, 20 feet high; the end rooms square, with bow windows, and the central room divided into three by columns supporting segmental arches. Lord Shelburne employed Adam to complete Bute's former London house. In the large, first-floor library, the chimney-piece was flanked by vast flat-topped, break-front bookcases, crowned by busts. But Adam's

92 *Ibid.*, 150, 184–5, 79–80. 93 *Ibid.*, 29.
94 Stillman, *English neo-classical architecture*, vol. 1, 303.
95 J. Bryant, *The Iveagh Bequest, Kenwood* (London, 1990), 15.
96 Harris, *Genius of Robert Adam*, 246. 97 *Ibid.*, 255.

original plans for Bute had included a full-height north-west library wing; a shell was completed for Shelburne, but never fitted out.[98] Adam's design provided for a pair of double-height domed and top-lighted octagons connected by a seven-bay rectangular coved room: throughout, bookshelves would line the rooms from floor to ceiling, the upper part serviced by a continuous gallery.[99]

Other important libraries by Adam's contemporaries include James Paine's at Brocket Hall (early 1770s), a long room, painted panels in the ceiling, lighted on one short side, the walls lined with bookcases with cupboards below and pediments above, not dissimilar to Kent's at Holkham.[100] Sir William Chambers designed a powerful library for Lord Charlemont in Charlemont House, Dublin (1763–76): 'the finest private library that Ireland is ever likely to see'.[101] A long corridor from the main block ended in a rectangular room, its small dome pierced by ten windows, with an Ionic exedra on the outer long side containing a copy of the Medici Venus; opposite, a heavily pedimented doorway opened into the main library, the largest room in the house, in which the short walls were composed as triumphal arches with grisailles by Cipriani in place of reliefs. Windows punctuated the long wall on the garden side, and bookshelves articulated by giant Corinthian pilasters filled the opposite wall, with gallery access to the higher shelves, with lunettes above. It was demolished in 1929. Adam's plasterwork artist, Joseph Rose, co-operated with Sir Christopher Sykes in the magnificent complex first-floor library added to Sledmere, Yorkshire, *c.*1778–93, composed of three large, square, groin-vaulted bays (with a deep semi-circular apse to the central one forming the entrance) separated by narrow tunnel-vaults; the glazed bookcases set in the walls are framed in scagliola Ionic pilasters.[102]

The libraries of Adam's great rivals, James and Samuel Wyatt, are of a similar refined character, as at Shardeloes, *c.*1774. But more innovative was Henry Holland (1745–1806), in his work for the great houses of Althorp (Earl Spencer, 1787–90) and Woburn (Duke of Bedford, *c.*1788–91), and at Southill for Samuel Whitbread, 1796–1800. In each of these houses, the bookcases were generally integrated with the walls, framing being reduced to strip pilasters, but Holland created additional book capacity by forming anterooms at either end of the library by using stacks linked by an architectural frame.[103] The

98 *Ibid.*, 131. It was eventually completed by Smirke as a gallery in 1819.
99 SM, Adam Drawings 39, no. 61.
100 Hussey, *English country houses: early Georgian*, 147.
101 M. J. Craig, *The volunteer earl* (London, 1948), 130–3, plates VII A and B.
102 Stillman, *English Neo-classical architecture*, vol. 1, 306–7.
103 *Ibid.*, 303–5.

integration of bookcase with wall reached its *ne plus ultra* in Sir Richard Hoare's library at Stourhead, Wiltshire (?W. Reveley, 1796), where the slight casing is undecorated.[104]

In John Soane's extensive country house practice he designed at least thirty libraries, mostly between 1787 and 1809. In elevation these are characterised by book-shelving up to a height of nearly 9 feet, with semi-circular recesses above, containing busts, and allowing the conventional space for pictures or reliefs. More strictly than Adam, Soane appears to have designed his book-shelving on a system of triplets: a bookcase either side of a window or door, or the central feature itself a wider bookcase; the new library at Albury Park (for the banker Samuel Thornton, 1802), 24 feet by 18 feet, is representative.[105] A more elaborated design is that for Cricket Lodge, Somerset (Viscount Bridport, 1802), in which the entire room, apsed at either end, is designed on the triplet system.[106] For William Pitt at Hollwood, Kent (1796), however, in a room with a canted bay window, Soane employed Adam's pattern of five arcaded bays. At Wimpole, Cambridgeshire, he enlarged and remodelled Gibbs's ante-library in 1791, developing Holland's anteroom innovation into a unique succession of three segmental arches adorned with paterae, springing from stacks projecting from the book-lined walls; small recesses over the stacks contain vases.[107]

The more opulent furnishings of the Regency era are to be seen in the library Lewis Vulliamy added in 1822–4 to Syston Hall, Lincolnshire, a house of *c.*1770. It was lighted by a large central lantern of Soanic character and a large bay window opposite one chimney-piece, and glazed bookcases lined all the remaining wall-space, the full height of the room, the upper ranges being served by a gallery on consoles; both ranges were flat-topped, that under the gallery carrying a symmetrical arrangement of busts, the upper, vases. Amply equipped with sofas, ornaments, games-tables, etc., as shown in an early painting, the room was evidently intended for use also as a drawing-room.[108] The ladies had clearly invaded the library by Regency times: as Sir Walter Scott remarked of his library at Abbotsford, 'unless varied by some angles it would want relief or, in the phrase of womankind, would be inexcusably devoid of a flirting corner', so that an octagon had to be thrown out on one side.[109]

104 Hussey, *English country houses: mid-Georgian*, 236–8.
105 SM, Drawings Collection, 4/5, nos. 11–14.
106 SM, Drawings Collection, 4/5, nos. 1–7; D. Stroud, *Sir John Soane, architect* (London, 1984), plate 151.
107 Stroud, *Sir John Soane*, 148–9.
108 P. Thornton, *Authentic decor: the domestic interior 1620–1920* (London, 1993), plate 302.
109 M. M. Scott, 'Sir Walter Scott on his "gabions"', *Nineteenth Century* 58 (1905), 622.

But though the architectural populariser John Claudius Loudon (1783–1843) noted that the library would be used as 'the common family sitting-room', he recommended that it should 'present a great contrast to the light elegance of the drawing-room', with 'hangings of a warm but dark colour . . . The ceiling and cornice after some rich old pattern'; the chimney-piece handsome, but heavier than that in the drawing-room. 'The vacant walls of the side in which is the fireplace, and that of the two ends, would be covered with oak bookcases, two thirds of their height', the lower part 'enclosed by doors of brass wire' for the more valuable material, 'the shelves above being open'. He recommended the long-standing practice of placing a series of busts on the cornice above the cases, and on the wall above, portraits or scripture subjects. The library should be carpeted, and contain 'an abundance of various sorts of seats and tables'. A bay window 'might be fitted up as a recess for reading in'. In fact, when company stayed, the library 'would be the morning sitting-room for the gentlemen' to read the papers and new publications, and write letters. In the afternoon it would be a room 'in which the sexes might meet'.[110] In the early Victorian house it was often the library that was the most important of the standard reception rooms on the ground floor. Catherine Gore's novels reflect this: a room newly furnished with 'writing tables and writing chairs, reading tables and reading chairs, desks, divans, ottomans and all the luxuries of a literary ease', where the family might spend their mornings, and 'the hum of well-bred chat seemed to do its part in producing a genial atmosphere: half a dozen work tables and writing tables being in play in various nooks of the room, with a praiseworthy activity of small-talk and Berlin wool'.[111] The master of the house, meanwhile, might be driven to contrive another book-lined room for himself as a study, such as Sir Walter Scott enjoyed. 'This formula of a library for show and social use and a study for scholarly work became . . . a frequent Victorian device when planning houses'.[112]

110 J. C. Loudon, *Encyclopaedia of cottage, farm and villa architecture* (London, 1846), 798–9.

111 Mrs Gore, *Stokeshill Place* (London, 1837), vol. 1, 146; *The diamond and the pearl* (London, 1849), vol. 1, 288; cited in J. Franklin, *The gentleman's country house and its plan 1835–1914* (London, 1981), 45–6.

112 *Nineteenth Century* 58 (1905), 622; Wainwright, 'The library as living room', 19.

29

Library management in the pre-professional age

P. S. MORRISH

This chapter and that on librarianship from 1650 to 1750 should be treated in some respects as concurrent rather than consecutive because, many aspects of librarianship having developed as slowly after 1750 as before, some details discussed above will not be re-examined here. Paradoxically this slow technical development coincided after 1750 with proliferation of subscription, circulating and other 'public' libraries, and generally increased activity in the book world. Thus library systems began to creak and arrears grew: despite Enlightenment and Revolution, library reform dawned late and tentatively.

No compendious treatise in English on librarianship was published, and even such French essays as those by Cotton des Houssayes and Parent failed to attract immediate translation.[1] The remarks of the former were commonplace: librarians should be learned and well read in the arts and sciences, attend to readers promptly, courteously and constructively, and maintain order on the shelves.[2] Libraries may not all require exactly the same type of person as librarian, or the same attention, but in many cases a common element was that the librarian, not being the proprietor, served those who owned and used the collection. This master–servant relationship featured in the 1826 rules of Lincoln's Inn library: 'the duty of the Librarian [shall be] to give his attendance at the Library whilst the same is kept open, and generally to superintend the state of the Library under the direction and inspection of the Master of the Library'.[3] Contemplating selection of the first librarian for the London Library, Thomas Carlyle stated that relationship more subtly: 'the Library's function does not imply that he shall be king over us . . . but he will be a wise servant,

1 J. B. Cotton des Houssayes, *Oratio habita . . . Sorbonicae 23 Decembris 1780* (Paris, 1781); French translations, under the title *Des devoirs et des qualités du bibliothécaire*, were published in Paris in 1839 and 1857; Abbé Parent, *Essai sur la bibliographie et sur les talents du bibliothécaire* (Paris, An IX [1801]).

2 The most readily accessible English text appears in J. L. Thornton (ed.), *Select readings in the history of librarianship* (London, 1966), 78–83.

3 W. P. Baildon (ed.), *Records of . . . Lincoln's Inn: the Black Books* (London, 1902), vol. 4, 170.

watchful, diligent, discerning what is what, incessantly endeavouring, rough-hewing all things for us; and, under the guise of a wise servant, ruling actually while he serves'.[4]

Civility is paramount. James Boswell noted of a visit which Dr Johnson made to the Queen's Library at Buckingham House in 1767: 'Mr Barnard, the librarian, took care that he [Johnson] should have every accommodation that could contribute to his ease and convenience'.[5] Dibdin wrote of Revd Herbert Marsh, prebendary at Peterborough Cathedral, he 'is the very individual for a librarian . . . He has zeal, taste, and the happiest attitude'. His service was prompt, kindly and knowledgeable. Similarly Dibdin commended Revd James Dallin, librarian at York Minster.[6] Visiting Cambridge, Frederic Madden noted courtesies, being impressed by the assistant at Trinity College library who stayed with him after closing time (3 p.m.) to allow him to finish his reading; Madden rewarded the kindness.[7] Macvey Napier and David Laing were two much-appreciated librarians at the Signet Library, Edinburgh; one who had known Laing in his later years reported he 'was genial, bright, active and alert, and singularly accessible; always pleased to see you, always willing to help . . . He was never impatient, gave you the attention that was required.'[8] Civility was not just a moral end but, by encouraging potential benefactors, could pay material dividends, allegedly easing the Douce Collection into the Bodleian.[9]

The converse of civility is rudeness and unhelpfulness. In 1787 Thomas Beddoes complained of neglect and incivility on the part of Bodley's Librarian, John Price.[10] That is difficult to reconcile with the encomium of Price printed by John Nichols, who had known him.[11] The British Museum was plagued with squabbles between egotistical senior library staff, and this ill-feeling, together with bureaucratic procedures, readily affected relations with readers.

4 C. R. Sanders and others (eds.), *Collected letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle* (Durham, NC, 1970–), vol. 12, 377.

5 J. Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, ed. G. B. Hill and L. F. Powell (Oxford, 1934–50), vol. 2, 33–4.

6 T. F. Dibdin, *Bibliographical tour* (London, 1838), 20, 190.

7 T. D. Rogers, *Sir Frederic Madden at Cambridge*, Cambridge Bibliographical Society Monograph 9 (Cambridge, 1980), 18. The original rules of the Leeds Library stated that the library would close at 4 p.m., but allowed members to continue reading up to 6 p.m. upon 'gratifying' the librarian: F. Beckwith, *The Leeds Library 1768–1968* (Leeds, 1968), 21.

8 D. Murray, 'David Laing, antiquary and bibliographer', *Scottish Historical Review* 11 (1914), 346.

9 T. F. Dibdin, *Reminiscences of a literary life* (London, 1836), 763.

10 I. Philip, *The Bodleian Library in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Oxford, 1983), 106–7.

11 J. Nichols, *Illustrations of the literary history of the eighteenth century* (London, 1817–58), vol. 5, 471–2.

However, not to be condoned was John King, supernumerary attendant there, whom the Central Criminal Court sentenced to transportation for sending a threatening letter to a reader.[12]

A trustworthy librarian respects the integrity of the library and does not allow, through negligence or collusion, any third party to harm it. Negligence had led to Cambridge University Library losing books from its Royal Collection because for some years those books were poorly secured and uncatalogued.[13] Librarians guilty of malfeasance could expect at least to be dismissed. William Beloe was dismissed from the British Museum for collusion with Robert Deighton, print dealer, in the theft of prints, and John Dearle of Cambridge University Library was sentenced to transportation, later commuted to imprisonment, for selling books from the library as waste paper.[14] Some incidents, however, may now appear ambiguous; in 1834 Joseph Phillips of the British Museum noticed a printed book from its stock in a pawnbroker's shop, but who had pledged it was not discovered and the museum had to recover it by purchase.[15] To avoid conflict of interest, which could strain trust, David Laing disposed of his bookselling business upon appointment to the Signet Library.[16]

Industrious librarians observe library hours and also attend to library business whilst there. Erratic attendance and diversion of attention may arise if a librarian holds other positions simultaneously. From 1747 to 1854 librarians of Edinburgh University were also professors and in the later eighteenth century four *protobibliothecarii* at Cambridge were concurrently heads of colleges. John Price was Bodley's Librarian and rector of Wilcote where he performed pastoral duty regularly.[17] However George Sandy resigned from the Signet Library because other commitments precluded regular attendance, yet his successor, Macvey Napier, became in plurality editor of the *Edinburgh Review* and consequently incurred criticism for spending too little time on library business.[18] Many early staff at the British Museum regarded library work as secondary, Revd Samuel Harper combining museum duties with his chaplaincy of the

12 P. R. Harris, *A history of the British Museum library 1753–1973* (London, 1998), 163. On the quarrel between Panizzi and Madden within the museum, see M. Borrie, 'Panizzi and Madden', *British Library Journal* 5 (1979), 18–36. Other contretemps are mentioned by Harris.

13 D. McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library: a history*, vol. 2, *The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries* (Cambridge, 1986), 195.

14 Harris, *British Museum library*, 59; McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, 516–17.

15 Harris, *British Museum library*, 92–3.

16 G. H. Ballantyne, *The Signet Library Edinburgh and its librarians 1722–1972* (Glasgow, 1979), 117.

17 Nichols, *Illustrations*, vol. 6, 471.

18 Ballantyne, *Signet Library*, 108.

Foundling Hospital. In 1839 the museum grasped this nettle and forbade staff to hold ecclesiastical preferments concurrently.[19] Subscription libraries which employed booksellers as librarians faced similar problems though the severity might vary. Fellow librarians at Oxbridge colleges or the chaplain-librarian at Lincoln's Inn probably had less difficulty discharging their two functions.

A learned librarian was not so much one with research degrees but rather one who could recommend acquisitions with discrimination, knew the contents of his stock and had the mental equipment both to make use of it and to steer perplexed readers in profitable directions. Hence Thomas Carlyle adversely compared Sir Henry Ellis and his staff at the museum with such luminaries as David Hume at the Advocates', Lessing at Wolfenbüttel and Heyne at Göttingen.[20] Absence of such qualities led to Frederic Madden writing of W. K. Ridgeway at the Fitzwilliam in Cambridge, 'he is a trustworthy man, but not a gentleman or man of education, and utterly incompetent to the task of giving any information respecting the treasures under his care'.[21] Of course, esoteric subjects or unusual languages could pose a problem, and having become anxious about a lack of linguistic expertise among their staff, the British Museum Trustees resolved in 1805 that future candidates should be questioned about their competence. Even so, the museum engaged orientalists on a part-time basis to help in that field.[22]

The only training in librarianship was instruction on the job, and many appointees had no prior experience. A sound undergraduate education was believed to provide adequate mental discipline for senior staff, and though knowledge of books gained in trade could be useful, it carried the stigma of a gamekeeper–poacher relationship. Such in-house training reinforces any *status quo* and makes reform difficult, but some modest movement of staff between libraries helped disseminate ideas. Philip Bliss had two spells at the Bodleian, interrupted briefly at the British Museum before appointment as keeper of Oxford University archives; Henry Ellis joined the museum from the Bodleian, and H. O. Coxe the Bodleian from the museum, whilst David Laing had had earlier experience at Edinburgh University Library before joining the Signet. Universities and colleges normally appointed graduates to senior posts, but in Scotland appointment was complicated by town authorities having an interest. Candidates for inferior posts in those libraries had various backgrounds; at Cambridge University Library, John Marshall, appointed assistant keeper in 1770, was formerly butler to the Master of Caius; John Page,

19 Harris, *British Museum library*, 12, 13, 160.
20 Sanders, *Collected letters . . . Carlyle*, vol. 12, 123.
21 Rogers, *Madden*, 32.
22 Harris, *British Museum library*, 63, 83, 96–7.

who joined in 1840, was a bookseller's assistant, and C. N. Wootton, who came two years later, had been a solicitor's clerk.[23] The Bodleian preferred recent graduates for assistantships, but not exclusively, for its last undergraduate assistant was appointed in 1849 and its first non-academic assistant in 1840.[24] Practice in libraries of professional organisations varied. Macvey Napier had been admitted a Writer to the Signet some years before becoming librarian at the Signet, but his successor was not a member.[25] At Lincoln's Inn, the Master of the Library was a senior bencher, but the working underlibrarian was the chaplain or butler before a specific junior post was created in 1826.[26] Around 1800 the medical libraries at Hull and Leeds infirmaries were managed by committees of practitioners, the house apothecaries providing daily routine supervision.[27]

Popular libraries also drew staff from various sources. The Leeds Library employed the Ogle-Robinson dynasty of booksellers on a part-time basis until 1825 when, needing a full-time librarian, it advertised for a gentleman and appointed Thomas Millner.[28] The Bristol Library Society successively employed two clergy and a graduate layman from the mid-1770s.[29] The Halifax Mechanics' Institute had a full-time librarian from 1832 when Joseph Vickerman, bookbinder and printer, was appointed; a schoolmaster, William Corke, succeeded him.[30] The first librarian of the London Library, J. G. Cochrane, was formerly editor of the *Foreign Quarterly Review* (and known to Carlyle); other candidates had been a subscription librarian from Edinburgh, a London police surgeon, a London bookseller and publisher, and a bookseller with Parker's of Oxford.[31] Two snags were ever-present: bookseller–librarians could bring conflict of interest, and might lack sympathetic learning, whilst dynasties of librarians, as the record of the Craddocks at Archbishop Marsh's Library, Dublin, shows, could inhibit dynamic management.[32] In contrast, circulating

23 McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, 287, 516.

24 W. D. Macray, *Annals of the Bodleian Library* (London, 1868), 263 (H. S. Harper, first non-academic assistant, 1840) and 273 (J. C. Hyatt, last undergraduate assistant, 1849). Macray indexes assistants by surname, not generically; some others in this period appear on pp. 201, 210, 219, 235–6, 239, 241, 252, 259, 266.

25 Ballantyne, *Signet Library*, 104, 117.

26 Baildon, *Lincoln's Inn*, vol. 4, 170.

27 Hull General Infirmary, *Catalogue of the books belonging to the Medical Library* (Hull, 1790), 28–32; Leeds General Infirmary, *Alphabetical catalogues . . . Medical Library* (Leeds, 1800), no pagination (Rule 9).

28 Beckwith, *Leeds Library*, 46, 58.

29 K. Hapgood, 'Library practice in the Bristol Library Society 1772–1830', *Library History* 5 (1981), 151–2.

30 L. J. Parr, 'The library of Halifax Mechanics' Institution 1825–1857', *Library History* 7 (1987), 180.

31 W. Baker, *The early history of the London Library* (Lewiston, NY, 1992), 50–5, 126.

32 M. McCarthy, *All graduates and gentlemen: Marsh's Library* (Dublin, 1980), 52–7, 65–9.

libraries were normally owner-managed, perhaps assisted by juniors in the shop, these libraries often being adjuncts to such business as bookselling, printing, bookbinding, fancy goods, patent medicines and haberdashery, as Thomas Wilson had recommended.[33]

Stipends are difficult to evaluate. An official salary might be only part of a librarian's total income; there might be bonuses or benefit in kind, as well as other posts held in plurality. Salaries of senior staff at the British Museum gradually rose. In 1755 the Principal Librarian received £200 a year, the Under Librarians £100 and Assistant Librarians £50. The designation of posts changed, but by 1840 Keepers (immediately below the Principal Librarian) received £600 and Assistant Keepers £400.[34] Other emoluments available to them included accommodation for senior staff which was evaluated at an additional £50 in 1833.[35] One notable museum pluralist, Nicholas Carlisle, received £200 for supervising the King's Library and £500 as secretary to the Charity Commissioners.[36] At the Bodleian the Librarian's salary rose from £400, plus fees, in 1813 to £700 in 1856, and in the same period its sub-librarians rose from £150 to £300.[37] Edinburgh University, beset by financial difficulties and employing professors as honorary librarians, paid other staff poorly; in 1863–4 its now non-professorial librarian and three assistants shared £616.[38] Subscription libraries were more subject to market forces. Having toyed with £100 for its librarian, the London Library eventually decided upon £150 for him in 1840.[39] Provincial subscription libraries paid less and regular increments were unusual; the Bristol Library Society paid John Peace £84 a year over forty years, and the Leeds Library paid Thomas Millner £80 a year from 1825 to 1853.[40] Some libraries also offered bonuses and perquisites: Bristol offered accommodation and the Liverpool Lyceum gave its librarian a half share of library fines, which in 1814 added a twelfth to his stated salary.[41]

David Hume discovered that book selection was not the prerogative of all librarians. In private libraries selection was resolved by patron and librarian

33 D. H. Knott, 'Thomas Wilson and *The use of circulating libraries*', *Library History* 4 (1976), 8.

34 Harris, *British Museum library*, 4, 164. 35 *Ibid.*, 63, 95, 97. 36 *Ibid.*, 100.

37 Macray, *Annals*, 218, 284.

38 J. R. Guild and A. Law (eds.), *Edinburgh University Library 1580–1980* (Edinburgh, 1982), 94–9.

39 Baker, *Early history*, 27, 52.

40 Hapgood, 'Library practice', 151; Beckwith, *Leeds Library*, 58.

41 Accounts for 1814 printed in the published catalogue of that year (Liverpool, 1814), 44. On the other hand, as at Lincoln's Inn, a working librarian might have to pay out of his own stipend the wages of some inferior staff, a cleaner in this case: Baildon, *Lincoln's Inn*, vol. 4, 171. The Inn's working underlibrarian had been awarded 150 guineas (£157 10s) in 1826.

depending on circumstances. Otherwise older-established academic, ecclesiastical and professional libraries were corporate, the membership usually delegating selection to a committee or some senior colleagues. This did not preclude librarians from advising, but members had the final decision. Subscription libraries fell into the same pattern. From its inception in 1768 the Leeds Library entrusted selection to a committee which occasionally deferred or rejected suggestions.[42] Thomas Carlyle and W. D. Christie consulted the secretary of the Norfolk and Norwich Library on current practice when planning the London Library and their steering committee agreed that, after the library had been launched, selection should be done by a committee: Carlyle and a group of friends chose the initial stock.[43] Little is known about selection for circulating libraries and sometimes a complete stock might be bought or sold. Since these were commercial undertakings, owners would have stocked what they considered attractive and viable, but though popular fiction consequently predominated, it was not necessarily the whole stock.[44]

Information about new publications and older material came from various sources. Hearsay was useful but unreliable. Notices of new publications and of auctions appeared in newspapers but were subject to puffery. Catalogues of booksellers and publishers were essential; the Bristol Library Society used them, as many others did.[45] Selective and critical independent guidance supplemented trade sources. The *Gentleman's Magazine*, founded in 1731, included news of recent books, but specific reviewing journals, especially of serious publications, appeared a little later, for example the *Monthly Review* (1749–1845) and the *Critical Review* (1756–1817). Pre-eminent among this genre were the *Edinburgh Review*, founded in 1802, of a whiggish tendency, and the *Quarterly Review*, founded in 1809 as its tory rival. Runs of these quarterlies appear in many subscription libraries. A more frequent and comprehensive listing was becoming needful. The grandiloquently entitled *Universal Catalogue* appeared monthly in the 1770s, listing mainly British publications in no obvious order, by title. Entries included brief and pithy comment, culled mostly from the *Monthly* or the *Critical*. The Leeds Library subscribed to it and copies for 1772 to 1774 inclusive remain there.[46] York Subscription Library bought a similar *Monthly*

42 Beckwith, *Leeds Library*, 13. The rival institution in Leeds, pointedly named 'The New Subscription Library', made identical provision: *A catalogue of . . . the New Subscription Library in Albion Street, Leeds* (Leeds, 1802), 32–3.

43 Sanders, *Collected letters . . . Carlyle*, vol. 12, 197; Baker, *Early history*, chapter 3.

44 J. Knott, 'Circulating libraries in Newcastle in the 18th and 19th centuries', *Library History* 2 (1972), 227–49.

45 Hapgood, 'Library practice', 147.

46 Leeds Library, *Catalogue with the bye-laws and regulations* (Leeds, 1859), 57.

Literary Advertiser.[47] By launching his *Publishers' Circular* in 1837, Sampson Low attempted to improve the situation; it appeared fortnightly and annual cumulations began in 1839, eventually to take the title *The English Catalogue*. The Leeds Library subscribed to the *Circular*.

The dark side of selection is censorship. There is external censorship by coercive authority focusing on the seditious, libellous and obscene, and in some cases the unorthodox. Librarians had to take care, and in a desire to become a national library of record, the British Museum encountered a problem. The Revd H. H. Baber, Keeper of Printed Books from 1812 to 1837, pragmatically evaded it by placing such items in what became the 'private case', with restricted access. This solution caused him and his successors occasional difficulty but they successfully defended the principle.[48] Other learned libraries would use similar discretion.

Self-censorship, which may overlap external censorship, involves publications which those who manage and use a library think objectionable or unsuitable, but as tastes change so relativity creeps in. In subscription and circulating libraries the social mores and aims of promoters and predilections of readers set the tone, and any disagreement was not for the librarian to settle, but the membership. A rule introduced in 1777 empowered the committee of the Leeds Library to suppress 'any book of an indecent and immoral tendency until the next annual meeting', when a decision might be taken. 'Immoral' was taken to include unacceptable religious or political views if one may infer from subsequent controversy, but disputed items tended to be hidden rather than disposed of.[49] The Bristol Library Society sought 'useful and agreeable' books and set itself against novels of an ambiguous character or ephemeral reputation.[50] Like many others, Halifax Mechanics' Institute excluded books of political and religious controversy.[51] Likewise, attempting to keep at bay discord among a small readership in a small town, the subscription library at Beccles, Suffolk, ruled out party politics and controversial divinity.[52] The London Library sought out only good books of lasting value, not wishing to duplicate circulating libraries; it also excluded items of a narrowly technical or professional interest.[53]

47 York Subscription Library, *An alphabetical and classed catalogue* (York, 1823), 169.
48 Harris, *British Museum library*, 92; more fully, see P. J. Cross, 'The Private Case: a history', in P. R. Harris (ed.), *The library of the British Museum* (London, 1991), 201–40.
49 Beckwith, *Leeds Library*, 22, 29, 49, 71, 94.
50 Hapgood, 'Library practice', 146.
51 Parr, 'Halifax Mechanics' Institution', 181.
52 M. Ellwood, 'Library provision in a small market town', *Library History* 5 (1979), 51.
53 Baker, *Early history*, 60–2.

Copyright deposit benefited a small number of libraries in respect of current British publications. The 1709 Copyright Act had established that privilege in favour of the Royal Library, the Bodleian, Cambridge University Library, the four Scottish universities, Sion College and the Advocates' Library. To these were added Trinity College and the King's Inn libraries, both in Dublin, upon the union of 1801, but the list was reduced in 1836, the four Scottish universities, Sion College and King's Inn losing their privilege but receiving as compensation an annual grant from the Consolidated Fund. Further modification in 1842 substituted the British Museum for the Royal Library, confirmed that deposit to the other privileged libraries would be upon their request, ended the monopoly of the Stationers' Company, and extended provision to include publications from British overseas territories. Implementation was unsatisfactory; publishers were resentful and libraries inconsistent. Moreover, as Panizzi admitted, extension to include publications from overseas territories proved a dead letter.[54] Libraries which lost the privilege were confronted with a financial discipline that could sharpen attitudes to book selection. When visiting Glasgow, Dibdin had found copyright accessions dumped in an upper room pending future attention; later, armed with its annual compensation of £707, the university embarked on a more focused accessions policy.[55]

Cataloguing is a core librarianly activity yet choice of conventions rather than one set of rules prevailed. John Holmes averred that few things appeared easier than compiling a catalogue of printed books, the criterion being to show readers with 'ease and certainty' what a library contained, yet he regretted that scarcely any two agreed on how to do so. He commended Panizzi's new ninety-one rules.[56] Hastily formulated in 1839, these rules developed existing British Museum practice and eventually proved to have been a significant development. They regulated both the construction of entries and order within a catalogue. As so often, the devil was in the detail, and how to treat *anonyma*, *pseudonyma*, corporate publications and personal names with prefixes was controversial. These rules would enter 'academies' under continents and countries rather than a specific place, but in 1873 that had to be altered because of recent

54 Harris, *British Museum library*, 148. This subject is also treated extensively, and from their respective standpoints, in accounts of other privileged libraries.

55 Dibdin, *Bibliographical tour*, 714; C. Miller, 'The effect of the loss of copyright privilege on Glasgow University Library, 1790–1858', *Library History* 7 (1985), 45–57.

56 J. Holmes, 'Libraries and catalogues', *Quarterly Review* 72 (1843), 1–25. That Holmes was on the staff of the museum's Department of Manuscripts may have coloured his judgement. It is misleading, though conventional, to refer to these as Panizzi's rules since they were compiled with the collaboration of Winter Jones, Thomas Watts, Edward Edwards and J. H. Parry.

geopolitical changes.[57] The editorial language was to be English rather than Latin, 'Academies' replacing 'Academiae', and names of foreign sovereigns and of religious and military orders being anglicised. Some contentious points were resolved less promptly, if at all, leading to Frederic Harrison's revival of an earlier complaint in his ridiculing the obstinate perversity of entering Voltaire under Arouet.[58]

The immediate impact of Panizzi's rules outside the museum can be exaggerated. They were an in-house compilation to meet particular needs and entered the public realm indirectly, in the preface to the first volume of the abortive 1841 printed catalogue, and then in an appendix to a Royal Commission report in 1850.[59] Moreover no national organisation existed which might have enforced or commended them; their influence was only moral. Although the labour and cost of recataloguing an existing collection was a disincentive to change, Cambridge University Library, which had followed Bodleian practice, reduced Panizzi's rules to fifteen and adopted the result in 1854.[60] The Bodleian was more ambivalent over detail, tending to observe local precedent until E. W. B. Nicholson attempted rationalisation.[61] Libraries not weighed down by past practice did not necessarily embrace Panizzi, the first alphabetical author catalogue of the London Library, published in 1842, going its own way with author headings in the genitive and Voltaire under 'V'; beset with inconsistency it sometimes abandoned the genitive in favour of 'on' or 'de' inserted between author and title.[62] Tradition rather than the Bloomsbury code was then reigning at St James's.

57 A. H. Chaplin, *GK: 150 years of the General Catalogue of printed books in the British Museum* (Aldershot, 1987), chapters 1 and 2; Harris, *British Museum library*, 253, 324, 391. The problem with academies is amply illustrated in vol. 1 of the 1841 catalogue where, under the heading 'Academies. Europe', such sub-headings as Baden, Bavaria, Bohemia, Bremen, Brunswick, Hamburg, Hanover, Hesse, Mecklenburg, Prussia, Saxe Weimar, Saxony and Wirtemberg [*sic*] represented Germany. Italian academies were similarly treated. Catalogues were overtaken by the unification of Italy in 1870 and the Bismarckian Reich of 1871; before then both Germany and Italy had been ethnological as much as political concepts.

58 F. Harrison, *The meaning of history* (London, 1894), 490; Chaplin, *GK: 150 years*, 34–5.

59 Chaplin, *GK: 150 years*, 15, 34; Harris, *British Museum library*, 122. Fifty copies of the rules were printed for internal use in the museum; they reappear on pp. v–ix of the first volume of the 1841 printed catalogue.

60 McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, 325, 532–5.

61 E. Craster, *History of the Bodleian Library 1845–1945* (Oxford, 1952), 167ff.

62 Baker, *Early history*, plates 1–2 and 6–11, reproduces select pages from this catalogue; his commentary (page 88) confuses plural and genitive. Some samples reveal the bizarre result of such an eclectic approach to cataloguing: Ray's (John) Collection of English Proverbs; Repton (H.) on Landscape Gardening; Reuchlin, (Dr H.) Geschichte von Port-Royal; Sharp's (Rich.) Letters and Essays; Virgilii Opera; Vitruvius de Architectura; Voltaire, (F. A.) Œuvres; Voss's (J. H.) Sämmtliche Gedichte.

Less prestigious libraries adopted eclectic inconsistency in cataloguing. Two examples from Sheffield illustrate the point. The catalogue of William Todd's circulating library, issued in 1805, comprised three separate sections: first, novels appeared mainly under title, mostly without author, imprint, date or format; next was a miscellaneous section in another alphabetical sequence, under author or title, quite capriciously, authors mainly identified only by surname in the genitive; lastly, the drama section was an alphabetical title catalogue, largely devoid of authors' names. The first catalogue of the Sheffield Mechanics' Institution, issued in 1824, was arranged by broad subject, and within each class arrangement was alphabetical by author (with some title entries). The only bibliographical detail was the number of volumes; some authors appeared in the genitive but, where not, a spurious 'on' might be inserted; forenames and initials were rarely added; some title entries were inverted to file under a key word. The whole was inconsistent.[63] Though justifying Holmes's criticism, these examples presumably reflected how readers referred to, and sought, different types of literature. Moreover, a demotic genitive persists in conversation about books, even among librarians. These examples also highlight the gulf which separated learned libraries from others; the Bodleian and British Museum tried to identify books with intellectual rigour for an international community of scholars, but circulating and mechanics' libraries served a different readership for whom bibliographical niceties were less important. Subscription libraries stood uneasily between the two extremes, yet some change was stirring; the London Library's catalogue of 1842 had been antiquated, but the preface to the 1859 printed catalogue of the Leeds Library acknowledged it followed the 'plan' of the British Museum and Bodleian catalogues.[64]

Older libraries had normally provided either printed catalogues or handwritten ones in ledger-style volumes. How to add to them entries for new accessions became problematical; the scope for interlineation could be limited, and interleaving with blanks inevitably upset the chosen order, whilst the cost of producing an entirely new catalogue at frequent intervals was daunting. Yet the value of a printed catalogue of a major library in book form had been asserted by how those of the Bodleian had been adopted and annotated by other libraries to provide both a general bibliography and a local catalogue, not least

63 These and other ephemera relating to south Yorkshire are preserved in the Brotherton Library, Leeds; cf. J. Smurthwaite, 'A collection of Yorkshire library catalogues', *Library History* 4 (1977), 112–14. Larger classed catalogues tended to have an alphabetical author index, for example the Royal Institution *Catalogue* (1821) and the Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society *Catalogue* (1848), probably resulting from readers' pressure: cf. Liverpool Lyceum, *Catalogue* (Liverpool, 1814), 47.

64 Leeds Library, *Catalogue* (1859), v.

at Cambridge.[65] The Bodleian supplemented its interleaved and annotated catalogue with a series of printed annual accessions lists between 1825 and 1838, but this became so inconvenient that a new complete printed catalogue appeared in 1843.[66] Edinburgh University produced a hand-written catalogue in seventeen folio volumes between 1809 and 1824, but such was its value and growing complexity that readers were not allowed to use it.[67] The British Museum produced a new printed alphabetical author catalogue between 1813 and 1819, and then spent most of the century agonising over how to replace it, as interleaving, cutting, pasting and transcribing became ever more complicated.

A solution was staring librarians in the face. The museum was already using paper slips for each new entry to organise data for its projected next catalogue: but for the quality of the medium, this did not differ methodologically from the unlimited expansibility of a card catalogue. With some advice, Panizzi developed the existing 'laid down' catalogue into the familiar guard-book format whereby cuttings from the latest printed catalogue and manuscript or printed slips for subsequent accessions were stuck, with liberal spacing, into volumes of blank cartridge paper. These slips could be detached, rearranged and reaffixed at will. This cumbersome compromise between a printed catalogue in traditional volume format and trays of cards was soon adopted at the Bodleian and Cambridge University libraries.[68]

Diderot observed that systematic order either on shelves or in a catalogue facilitates retrieval.[69] Such order was normally in the catalogue rather than on the shelves because rigorous subject order is difficult to reconcile with shelving by format which was still recommended.[70] Few English writers tackled classification for books, but T. H. Horne offered a scheme in 1814 which lay in medieval tradition. He began with generalia and there followed theology, philosophy, history and literature. The position of theology and contents of philosophy (including social and natural sciences, and fine and applied arts), and his justification of the whole scheme along scholastic lines, indicated its pedigree.[71] Otherwise libraries used pragmatic schemes, some still betraying

65 See above, 221; McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library*, 44, 190–5, 325. Even a modest Welsh library foresaw the problem of incorporating future entries by leaving the versos blank in its 1776 printed catalogue: G. Walters, 'The eighteenth-century Pembroke Society', *Welsh History Review* 3 (1966), 293.

66 Macray, *Annals*, 260–1, 268.

67 Guild and Law, *Edinburgh University Library*, 99.

68 Craster, *Bodleian*, 51; J. J. Hall, 'The guard-book catalogue of Cambridge', *Library History* 13 (1997), 39–56.

69 D. Diderot, *Encyclopédie*, 3rd edn (Livorno, 1771), vol. 2, 223, 731–2.

70 T. H. Horne, *An introduction to the study of bibliography* (London, 1814), vol. 1, 359.

71 Horne, *Introduction*, vol. 1, 361–400; cf. schemes noted in Diderot, *Encyclopédie*, vol. 2, 731–6, and Ballantyne, *Signet Library*, 164–6.

traces of the medieval curriculum, but they were clumsy and became more so as science and technology advanced.[72] The solution would be either a notated classification, as Dewey was to develop, or headings in natural language in dictionary mode as G. K. Fortescue used in the British Museum subject catalogue, but being in English the latter lacked the universality inherent in a notation.

Loans, and consultations on the premises of closed-access libraries, require some record. Despite their inflexibility, registers were widely used and many survive.[73] The London Library began with a single, sequential register but soon found it had to add another in which every member had a page or more each.[74] Edinburgh University Library was closed-access and used both a register and slips, making use a bureaucratic affair.[75] Panizzi tightened procedure at the museum for delivery of books to the reading room, introducing pre-printed forms for readers to complete.[76]

Wanley had written about the danger to old books of fire, calamities of war and robbery.[77] Fire was a constant hazard and those who developed the Bloomsbury site for the British Museum had good reason to be cautious; since the fire which had damaged the Cottonian Library in 1731, further fires had ravaged Harvard College library (1764), Princeton University library (1802), the Library of Congress (1815) and Turku University library and the State Library in Brussels, both in 1827. Much of the Hafod Library in Wales perished in 1805, and major fires occurred in Edinburgh close to the Advocates' in 1790 and again in 1823.[78] The museum installed emergency water supply, fire engines and other equipment, and regularly inspected boilers and flues. Even so, Panizzi reported about fire risks in 1841 and subsequent appraisal identified too many hot pipes, too few internal fire-resistant walls, and the need for a resident fireman.[79] Risk

72 Sheffield Mechanics' Institution, *Catalogue* (Sheffield, 1849). The classes were: arts and sciences, biography, divinity, drawing, history, geography and topography, miscellanies, music, poetry, voyages and travels.

73 E. A. Read, 'Cathedral libraries: a supplementary checklist', *Library History* 4 (1978), 141–53. Whilst providing a record of loans, issue registers do not necessarily trace the cultural impact of reading anything: cf. P. Kaufman, 'A unique record of a people's reading', *Libri* 14 (1964–5), 227–42; 'Readers and their reading in eighteenth-century Lichfield', *Library*, 5th ser., 28 (1973), 108–15, and *Borrowings from the Bristol Library 1773–1784* (Charlottesville, VA, 1960).

74 Baker, *Early history*, 3–4 and plates 4 and 5.

75 Guild and Law, *Edinburgh University Library*, 99, 127, 193, and plate 5.

76 Harris, *British Museum library*, 155–8 and plates 31–2.

77 Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on Portland papers at Welbeck* (London, 1891–1920), vol. 5, 515.

78 H. L. Jones, 'The Hafod Library in 1807', *National Library of Wales Journal* 18 (1971–2), 207–8; I. G. Brown, *Building for books . . . the Advocates' Library 1689–1925* (Aberdeen, 1989), 80, 108.

79 Harris, *British Museum library*, 91, 93–4, 120.

from civil commotion and war was probably greater in continental Europe than in the British Isles, and Bishop Nicolson had expressed no great anxiety for his own books when the Scots marched through Cumbria in 1715.[80] However troubles in Ireland persistently threatened country house libraries there; in 1791 a mob in Birmingham sacked Joseph Priestley's home and in 1831 rioters destroyed the bishop of Bristol's residence. Hence, the Metropolitan Police being in a rudimentary state, a detachment of soldiers guarded the British Museum, presumably a greater deterrent than the watchman at Lincoln's Inn.[81] Some precautions were even counter-productive; Dibdin thought the window bars in the Advocates' Library were inappropriately redolent of a prison.[82]

Artificial heating and lighting had depended on naked flame in the vicinity of wherever illumination or warmth were required. Some older institutional libraries maintained traditional spartan regimes; the Bodleian statutes forbidding introduction of fire, it was pointless in the absence of artificial lighting to keep it open after dusk.[83] Even during daylight hours, the light might be poor, and Frederic Madden found the library of Jesus College, Cambridge, too dark and so took some items to the librarian's room where he was better able to examine them.[84] The development of gaslight in place of candles and oil-lamps produced new risks, principally explosion and carbonic acid fumes; Thomas Webster warned of the latter and Edward Edwards specified adequate ducting to carry fumes away.[85] Having expanded into semi-basement accommodation, the Advocates' introduced gaslight early and Dibdin remarked on the smell, burners having to be kept alight all day.[86] Gaslight was introduced into the private apartments of senior museum staff, but not into the British Museum itself, except the bindery. Subscription, circulating and mechanics'

80 J. Hunter (ed.), *Letters to Ralph Thoresby* (London, 1832), vol. 2, 319–20; cf. W. Nicolson, 'Diaries', ed. H. Ware, *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*, new ser., 5 (1905), 5. Notably the Jacobite army had occupied Trinity College, Dublin, briefly in 1689, but no substantial damage was done to the contents of the library: P. Fox (ed.), *The treasures of the library: Trinity College Dublin* (Dublin, 1986), 6.

81 Harris, *British Museum library*, 93, 95, 112, 192. A break-in at Lincoln's Inn Library in 1795 was frustrated by the library-keeper, the watchman not being dutiful: Baildon, *Lincoln's Inn*, vol. 4, 65. The relative tranquillity enjoyed by British libraries and their librarians contrasted with continental experience stemming from suppression of the Jesuits, civil disorder, secularisation and warfare, yet many collections in Europe were only removed from one authority to another.

82 Dibdin, *Bibliographical tour*, 596.

83 When Macray completed his *Annals of the Bodleian* in 1868, its basic hours were still 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in summer and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in winter: Macray, 344. Cf. G. H. Martin and J. R. L. Highfield, *A history of Merton College Oxford* (Oxford, 1997), 311.

84 Rogers, *Madden*, 45–6.

85 T. Webster, *Encyclopaedia of domestic economy* (London, 1844), 173; E. Edwards, *Memoirs of libraries* (London, 1859), vol. 2, 733.

86 Dibdin, *Bibiliographical tour*, 596.

libraries were divided about artificial lighting, but if such libraries wished to attract readers whose only leisure time was in the evening, they would have to use candles, oil-lamps or gaslight in order to function. John Noble's circulating library in London was open between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. around 1746, and by the 1820s many provincial libraries remained open in the evening. The Sheffield Library used candles and gaslight in 1820, but the Leeds Library was less keen, not installing gaslight until the mid-1850s.[87] At St James's Square, the London Library occupied a house with some gaslighting and wall brackets for oil-lamps, and its deliberate policy to remain open in the evening obliged it to accept the risk.[88] Lighting of private and domestic libraries was at the discretion of the owner.

Some heating was beneficial to stock, librarians and readers, but also caused difficulty. In the eighteenth century, Christ Church, Oxford, had two charcoal braziers in its library, and some cathedral libraries had open domestic fires.[89] An inventory of furniture in the library at Temple Newsam House, Leeds, made in 1808, ended with a steel grate, fender, shovel, tongs and poker, but no scuttle.[90] Edwards recommended either domestic open fires or indirect heating from a central boiler or furnace.[91] The British Museum, the Advocates' and the Bodleian tried ducted warm-air heating, but in each case it proved unsatisfactory, and was abandoned in favour of hot water.[92] The Bodleian circumvented its statutes in this respect by placing the boiler outside, in the wall of Exeter College garden. Visitors elsewhere might continue to shiver, but Madden had a fire prepared for him in the Pepysian Library at Magdalene and in a manuscripts room at St John's, Cambridge.[93]

In 1850 library practice varied widely and was even locally inconsistent; only a few libraries were developing techniques. Librarians may have been knowledgeable and helpful, but were not necessarily fully in charge. Librarianship was not yet a profession. The next century would see greater progress than had the two previous ones.

87 K. Manley, 'London circulating library catalogues of the 1740s', *Library History* 8 (1989), 77; S. Joynes, 'The Sheffield Library 1771–1907', *Library History* 2 (1971), 99 (data from earliest surviving account book); Beckwith, *Leeds Library*, 61, 67.

88 Baker, *Early history*, 19, 23, 32, 43–4.

89 M. Chichester, 'Later development of Christ Church library, Oxford', *Library History* 5 (1980), 110; M. Hobbs (ed.), *Chichester Cathedral: an historical survey* (Chichester, 1994), 178; P. Collinson (ed.), *A history of Canterbury Cathedral* (Oxford, 1995), 385.

90 T. Friedman, 'The Georgian library [at Temple Newsam]', *Leeds Arts Calendar* 76 (1975) 16–17.

91 Edwards, *Memoirs*, vol. 2, 733.

92 Harris, *British Museum library*, 28–75; Brown, *Building for books*, 148, 168; Macray, *Annals*, 234–5.

93 Rogers, *Madden*, 22, 35.

30

Libraries for an imperial power

WALLACE KIRSOP

The decades that followed the Napoleonic wars saw a considerable expansion of the British presence in the world even though the full expression of imperial power and pride was to come in the later part of the reign of Queen Victoria. Unlike the hegemony of French language and culture during the long eighteenth century, Britain's ascendancy needs to be seen more in military, naval, commercial and industrial terms. This emphasis gives a slightly different slant to the way in which books and libraries followed the flag into all parts of the globe. British possessions and zones of influence were highly diverse before, and indeed after, 1850, so that one cannot speak of one model of domination, colonisation or settlement. This situation makes it important to take due account of the specific circumstances of each colony and of each place in which English-speakers congregated.

Where once exiles of various kinds – Protestants, Puritans, Jacobites, Catholics – made up the bulk of the British component of the continental European population, the nineteenth century reinforced the 'Grand Tour' tradition. Alongside the wealthy there were the down-at-heel looking for a lower cost of living and the exporters of technological skills. In Paris, in the Channel ports, on the Riviera and in several Italian cities there were sizeable anglophone colonies. These counterbalanced the strategic Mediterranean footholds of Gibraltar, Malta and even the Ionian Islands. Elsewhere there was the usual range of possibilities: commercial concessions or trading-posts, penal colonies, pastoral and agricultural settlements, plantations. Administrators dealt with indigenous populations, with sophisticated ancient civilisations and with displaced colonial regimes established originally by other European powers. Slave labour introduced from Africa and elsewhere added to the ethnic diversity of an empire – in fact, if not already in name – that was not particularly inclined to impose the sort of Jacobinical uniformity and rigidity in language and education that was imputed to the French Third Republic. Separate British territories retained in a period before full self-government distinct personalities

and approaches to cultural and religious questions. Quebec, or Lower Canada, was not treated in the same way as southern Africa or as Van Diemen's Land, not to speak of the Straits Settlements, Bengal and the West Indies.

How, then, does one sketch the diversity of library provision for all these groups? Rather than cataloguing all the disparate parts of the British world, it is more useful to envisage the full spectrum of options offered as one moves from the purely private sphere to a public one controlled and engineered by a distant government occasionally disobeyed and betrayed by its local administrators.

The ultimate affirmation of the private is the collection – small or large – brought from the metropolitan centre to the new port or settlement. The Australian colonies were not alone in having kept records – in probate papers or in newspaper advertisements of auction sales of deceased estates – of such importations. Indeed one can go further and point to the shipboard libraries, at times astonishing in their extent, of early explorers like Nicolas Baudin.[1] This exceptional case points to the fact that British outposts were not quarantined from foreign influences at any stage. The wider European context that underpinned cultural development and scientific interaction was as obvious in Sydney, where a colonial official could present a botanical book to Dumont d'Urville,[2] as in London. The possibilities for variation were enormous, and the fate of most collections, whatever their size, remains hidden from modern observers. We know that Governor Bligh disdained the German scientific books of the pioneer settler Robert Townson,[3] and that the library of Alexander McLeay, long-time Secretary of the Linnean Society and later Colonial Secretary of New South Wales, was dispersed by auction in 1845 and then lost from sight.[4] Other bibliophilic imperial officials like Sir George Grey, benefactor of Cape Town and Auckland,[5] followed their bent in more than one country and left monuments to their skill in acquiring treasures. On the whole the colonial collectors operated on a more modest scale than their European contemporaries and seemed content to sell up on the spot rather than repatriate their books to the northern hemisphere if called 'home'. The result everywhere

1 J. Fornasiero and J. West-Sooby, 'Baudin's books', *Australian Journal of French Studies* 39 (2002), 215–49.

2 M. Bouvier, *Catalogue* no. 33 (2004), item 192.

3 T. G. Vallance, 'Origins of Australian geology', *Proceedings of the Linnean Society of New South Wales* 100 (1975), 21–2.

4 J. A. Ferguson, *Bibliography of Australia*, vol. 4: *1846–1850* (Sydney, 1945), 7, no. 4232. The catalogue is wrongly dated 1846 by Ferguson.

5 W. Colgan, *The Governor's gift: the Auckland Public Library 1880–1980* (Auckland, 1980), and the publications Donald Kerr is developing from his PhD thesis.

was a growing amount of material on the secondhand or antiquarian market and hence available for purchase by private citizens or institutions.

Especially in the earlier nineteenth century, before other types of libraries emerged, individuals resorted to charity and self-help to obtain the reading they required. Books were lent, and their return was sometimes called for in newspaper advertisements. The owners of substantial collections occasionally banded together to produce joint or juxtaposed catalogues as a basis for co-operative use of scarce resources.[6] It is hardly surprising that such initiatives were the prelude to more formal arrangements. Among the first of these was the creation, in colonial capitals and even in provincial towns, of reading societies or book clubs along lines already familiar in the United Kingdom. A number of Australian examples from the 1820s, 1830s and 1840s – Bathurst, Hamilton, Parramatta and Perth – have already attracted the attention of historians.[7] In some instances the overriding purpose seems to have been the sharing of professional literature useful to the clergy or to lawyers. Mostly the clubs did not have a long life and were supplanted by regularly constituted bodies.

Private subscription libraries were set up in most British colonies in the eighteenth or early nineteenth century, but their character and fortunes could be sharply divergent. The Montreal Library or Bibliothèque de Montréal began in 1796 as a bilingual institution before moving in the 1830s and 1840s to a preponderantly English-language emphasis.[8] The St George's Library Society at Buff Bay in Jamaica from 1824 was a quite small affair catering for Europeans,[9] while the Australian Subscription Library, founded in 1826 in Sydney, was meant for the élite of New South Wales society. The Calcutta Public Library, started a decade later, reached out to a wider audience of different classes of subscribers despite overt gubernatorial and episcopal patronage.[10] Although it grew out of a school in 1844, the Singapore Library had a similar basis.[11] The push towards greater openness was not accidental in so far as it helped to

6 P. Orlovich, 'The Philosophical Society Library, 1821–1822', *Biblionews*, 2nd ser., 1:2 (April 1966), 9–12.

7 I. Zoll, *The development of the book trade in Western Australia* (Perth, 1989), 26–33; K. A. Manley, 'Early Australian book clubs: Bathurst, Parramatta, Perth', *Library History* 10 (1994), 76–87; B. Hubber, '"Entertainment for many solitary hours": an 1840s book club on the Australian frontier', *Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand Bulletin* 22 (1998), 81–92.

8 Y. Lamonde, *Les bibliothèques de collectivités à Montréal (17e–19e siècle)* (Montreal, 1979), 37–40.

9 R. Cave, 'Early circulating libraries in Jamaica', in his *Printing and the book trade in the West Indies* (London, 1987), 227–39 (here 237–8).

10 A. Kabir, *The libraries of Bengal 1700–1947* (London, 1987), 108–26.

11 K. K. Seet, *A place for the people* (Singapore, 1983), 16–20.

meet a public demand for readier access to books. Links between settlements in distant parts of the world stimulated a spirit of emulation as in the *Perth Gazette*'s comments in November 1835 on developments in Cape Town.[12] Even small villages in Van Diemen's Land like Bothwell and Evandale embraced the subscription library model in the 1830s and 1840s.[13] In some respects and in some places this movement – despite its obvious appeal to feelings of privilege and exclusiveness – was to give an impetus to, and indeed form the nucleus of, authentic public libraries in the later nineteenth century.

The lack of official interest in creating library systems destined for the citizenry at large seems to have stemmed from a perhaps unspoken assumption that these were matters best left to private enterprise. The business of hiring out books for loan or collecting a fee for entry to a reading room with newspapers and journals already had a long history in the United Kingdom and in Britain's former North American colonies by the end of George III's reign. Consequently it is not surprising to see commercial lending or circulating libraries flourish almost everywhere in the English-speaking world in the nineteenth century.

Part of the incentive came from the entrepreneurial acumen of the London specialists. Just as the Teggs, like the Rivingtons before them in the eighteenth century, tried to set up an international bookselling network in the 1830s and 1840s, the Minerva Press, anticipating Charles Edward Mudie's activities in a later generation, offered from as early as 1784 and on till at least 1832 the possibility of stocking and effectively franchising circulating libraries in the provinces or in the colonies.[14] Apart from the Minerva connection with Caritat in New York,[15] the existence in the Mitchell Library in Sydney of *A catalogue of the most popular novels, romances, &c. comprising a general assortment of amusing and instructive literature*, printed by John Darling of 31 Leadenhall Street, London,[16] in 1832, is a clear indication of another such link.

With or without British inducements the trade in the colonies was not reticent about acquiring collections, largely but not exclusively of fiction, to hire out to settlers and temporary residents. In this respect it was satisfying a need that was also felt in the places where English exiles and tourists congregated

12 Zoll, *Western Australia*, 26.
13 K. E. Adkins, 'For the best of reasons: the Evandale Subscription Library 1847–1861', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Tasmania (2004).
14 D. Blakey, *The Minerva Press 1790–1820* (London, 1939), 18.
15 D. Kaser, *A book for a sixpence: the circulating library in America* (Pittsburgh, 1980), 57.
16 Despite the running title 'Australian Circulating Library' and manuscript annotations relating the 48-page pamphlet to Sydney, it has no entry in Ferguson's *Bibliography*.

on the continent. Galignani in Paris[17] and Vieusseux in Florence[18] catered on a grand scale for moneyed expatriates and holiday-makers, but smaller and more ephemeral businesses were also available in lesser and less well chronicled centres.

To maintain a solid commercial library required a steady flow of capital. Novelty, the one quality most customers prized above all others, presupposed constant investment in stock, and many booksellers fell short in this and cut their losses. If no printed catalogues were issued or – even more problematical – preserved, knowledge of the existence of minuscule and ultimately fleeting enterprises depends on advertisements in the local press and on entries in directories. The chances of names slipping through the net are, therefore, considerable. Official registration is often a hazardous source as well. Without the archives of firms – and these are very rare indeed for colonial libraries before 1850 – historians can easily be misled, not least by the titles in surviving lists. The happy accident that the Walch family kept the loan register of the Derwent Circulating Library in Hobart that they took over from Samuel Augustus Tegg at the beginning of 1846 and ran for a few years is not only a chance to observe the behaviour – down to theft – of colonial book-borrowers, but also a necessary corrective to sometimes fanciful theories about public taste based on the bare facts of availability. It is useful to be reminded that in the commercial sphere fashion, notoriety and impermanence were enduring characteristics.[19]

Despite these caveats the ubiquity of the circulating library phenomenon is not hard to establish. In Jamaica such institutions are attested as early as 1779. By 1820 Smith and Kinnear, then the proprietors of one of the oldest of them in Kingston, were advertising it for sale with a stock of 12,000 volumes, which made it appreciably larger than anything in the Australian colonies before mid-century.[20] Shifts in ownership were not uncommon in these businesses, which were sometimes also dispersed by auction. The closure of the Hurkam Circulating Library in 1832 was a quite momentous event in Calcutta,[21] emphasising the importance of the commercial contribution to making books available to borrowers at this period. Despite the existence in Quebec and Montreal of

17 D. Cooper-Richet and E. Borgeaud, *Galignani* (Paris, 1999).

18 See the references cited in N. Labanca (ed.), *Catalogo della Biblioteca dell'Università Popolare di Firenze* (Florence, 1998), vol. 1, xxx.

19 On the Walch family and their library see W. Kirsop, *Books for colonial readers: the nineteenth-century Australian experience* (Melbourne, 1995), chapter 4: 'Bookselling in Hobart Town in the 1840s', 59–76, 93–6. On questions of method see W. Kirsop, 'Writing a history of nineteenth-century commercial circulating libraries: problems and possibilities', *Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand Bulletin* 27 (2003), 71–82.

20 Cave, 'Early circulating libraries', 234–5.

21 Kabir, *Libraries of Bengal*, 98–102.

several competing institutions, it is clear that lending libraries, often associated with bookshops, were a major resource.[22]

Booksellers were not the only people to see libraries as an enhancement of their establishments. It is not certain whether coffee-house reading rooms on the London model were to be found anywhere in the colonies other than the West Indies in the late eighteenth century,[23] but there is no doubt that collections of books were available in inns of the better kind well into the 1800s and perhaps beyond. John Pascoe Fawkner's hotel in Melbourne had reading matter appreciated or noted by such visitors of the late 1830s as Edward John Eyre and Lady Franklin.[24] The public and private spheres made contact in places of sociability where books and newspapers could be more than a mere adornment or inducement of custom. Other dimensions of cultural commerce are intriguingly prefigured in a somewhat later document, the *Alphabetical catalogue of books in the floating bazaar and public baths*, published in Launceston in 1858.

The only limitation on general public use of commercial libraries was financial and to that extent not inconsiderable for persons of limited means. On the other hand collections created for specific groups – church congregations, schools, colleges, business firms, professional associations, clubs, learned societies, political and other causes – could be quite exclusive or widely open to adherents of all kinds. Since together they represent a substantial part of book provision before 1850, they need to be looked at carefully.

In many ways the churches came first. In territories conquered or taken over by the British, notably Canada and the Cape Colony, there were pre-existing French Catholic and Dutch Reformed institutions that continued into the nineteenth century. Elsewhere missionaries and ministers to the colonists were active early and largely untrammelled by the Church of England. It is not an accident that Australia's first surviving printed library lists are for the Wesleyan Library in Hobart in 1826 and 1827.[25] However, Anglicans had also been busy in the first decades of settlement in New South Wales. The Bishop Broughton Memorial Library of Moore Theological College contains volumes given via Samuel Marsden to 'the Lending Library of Port Jackson' by Dr Bray's Associates in 1809 as well as valuable works donated, after an 1836 appeal by

22 A. Drolet, *Les bibliothèques canadiennes 1604–1960* (Ottawa, 1965), 86–8; Lamonde, *Bibliothèques de collectivités*.
23 Cave, 'Early circulating libraries', 236.
24 H. Anderson, *Out of the shadow: the career of John Pascoe Fawkner* (Melbourne, 1962), 96–7.
25 Ferguson, *Bibliography*, nos. 1098a, 1161.

the bishop himself, by such Oxford luminaries as John Henry Newman and Martin Routh.[26] The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge continued to be active in the support of collections in Bengal, in the Australian centres and in such West Indian colonies as Antigua.[27] At the same time missionary endeavour of various denominations pushed into new and remote territories and created rudimentary libraries for clergy or for lay people. One reasonably well attested example is the Pacific Northwest.[28] The survival of the *Rules and catalogue of the Sydney Jewish Library and Hebraic Association* from 1848[29] and of a label for the New Church Library at Jacob Pitman's residence in Adelaide in 1847[30] demonstrates that religious pluralism had become the norm in a century that saw the gradual removal of old barriers in Britain itself.

Given that in many places the various churches enjoyed a quasi-monopoly of education, it is appropriate to set schools and colleges alongside the parishes that often maintained them. Despite considerable reticence about providing instruction for the children of slaves, convicts and workers generally, more generous impulses gradually triumphed. Thus one sees Wesleyan day and Sunday schools in Antigua equipped with small libraries of useful and piously entertaining works.[31] In Lower Canada secondary colleges attached to various Catholic orders played an important part in library provision, notably in the Collège de Montréal,[32] while in Upper Canada Sunday schools were the only effective resource for nonconformist children till the middle of the century and the reforms instituted by Egerton Ryerson.[33] In general the dearth of information about earlier school libraries reflects both the uncertain progress of many establishments and relative indifference to this side of their operation. However, booksellers' advertisements and catalogues in the Australian colonies indicate that the educational market was sedulously cultivated. It was to be left to the decades after 1850 to ensure government, as opposed to clerical and proprietary, participation in schooling and to promote adequate library provision.

26 Moore Theological College, *The catalogue of the Bishop Broughton Memorial Library* (Sydney, 1973), vol. 1, iii–iv.

27 G. Frohnsdorff, '"Before the public": some early libraries of Antigua', *Libraries and Culture* 38 (2003), 1–23.

28 L. J. McCrank, 'The Trans-Canadian French connection with the Pacific Northwest frontier: missionaries, books, and media in Oregon, 1835–1855', in L. J. McCrank (ed.), *Bibliographical foundations of French historical studies* (New York, 1992), 175–88.

29 Ferguson, *Bibliography*, no. 4924a.

30 Label included at pp. 31–2 of a minute book of the New Church, Adelaide, shown at the Swedenborg exhibition held at the State Library of Victoria in July 1973.

31 Frohnsdorff, 'Before the public', 8–9.

32 Lamonde, *Bibliothèques de collectivités*, 36–7; Drolet, *Bibliothèques canadiennes*, 102–5.

33 Drolet, *Bibliothèques canadiennes*, 137–40.

The tertiary colleges and universities that began to emerge in Britain's overseas territories from the late eighteenth century onwards are better documented. In some cases their origins lay in earlier secondary foundations, and it is fair to say that their business was undergraduate instruction, extending occasionally to professional faculties. Research was as foreign to them as it was to British and United States universities of the same period, and genuine scholarship was more a matter of personal inclination than of prescription or vocational obligation. This orientation was manifest in library collections that could contain signal rarities, but that lacked comprehensive depth in specialised subjects. Substantial changes were not to come till after 1850 or even 1900, and then usually because of greater government pressure and support.

Not surprisingly, several institutions claiming or aspiring to university status grew out of or were sponsored by churches. The Université Laval in Quebec recognises its ancestry in the Jesuit College established – with a collection of books – in the 1630s.[34] On the other hand, the Royal University of Malta, set up in 1769 on the basis of a Jesuit college of 1592, began a paltry library as late as the 1830s.[35] The Anglicans provided more generously for Christ College in Hobart, although it was not to become anything more than a theological hall and student residence attached to the University of Tasmania, chartered nearly two generations later in 1890.[36]

In fact some of the most effective tertiary libraries before 1850 seem to have been those of colleges of a more strictly professional character. The creation of Fort William College in Calcutta in 1800 to train junior civil servants gave Bengal a respectable collection by the middle of the century.[37] It was, it is true, wide ranging in its ambitions outside the documentation of a variety of eastern cultures. McGill College Medical Library, launched in 1829, was the forerunner of the large university system of later times.[38] Elsewhere religion tended to predominate in this specialist group. Alongside seminaries and missionary schools there were a few foundations catering for non-Christians, in particular the Calcutta Madrassah and the Hindu Sanskrit College. In both these cases the libraries contained English books.[39]

34 E. H. Morton, 'Libraries in Canada', in *Encyclopedia of library and information science* (New York, 1970), vol. 4, 71–157 (here 76).

35 P. Xuereb, 'Libraries in Malta', in *Encyclopedia of library and information science* (New York, 1976), vol. 17, 76–87 (here 78).

36 *Christ's College, Tasmania: an exhibition of books from Christ's College library, 1846–1856* (Hobart, 1971).

37 Kabir, *Libraries of Bengal*, 35–54.

38 Lamonde, *Bibliothèques de collectivités*, 47–8.

39 Kabir, *Libraries of Bengal*, 57–60.

Outside minority communities, where solidarity and even survival were buttressed or guaranteed by religious affiliations, there was a growing trend towards neutral and secular organisations. Among them have to be counted business firms and large agricultural and pastoral enterprises. The existence of relevant libraries, those provided for the edification and amusement of employees rather than as elegant appurtenances of owners' vanity, is not well attested before 1850. One Canadian example is mentioned, apart from much earlier arrangements for the Hudson's Bay Company.[40] It is clear too that, as Commissioner of the Australian Agricultural Company at Port Stephens in the early 1830s, Sir Edward Parry distributed pious literature to the workers, many of whom were convicts.[41]

Volunteer efforts and co-operation seem to have been preferred to mere paternalism. By 1841 Sydney had a Commercial Reading Room and Library,[42] a parallel to the Merchants' Exchange and Reading Room of Montreal, launched later in the same decade.[43] The latter had been preceded by an altogether more solid venture, the Mercantile Library Association of Montreal, which persisted in this form till 1885.[44] Even more vigorously than people employed in commercial firms, professionals like doctors and lawyers sought to pool their resources in specialist collections. Not all initiatives led to practical results, witness the attempt to bring together in September 1827 those interested in establishing a medical and physical library in Antigua.[45] Elsewhere, as in Montreal, one finds short-lived clubs such as the Medical Students' Society of McGill College.[46] In the Australian colonies, the Australian Medical Subscription Library (1846–69) in Sydney and the Port Phillip Medical Association (1846–53) performed similar functions.[47] Later, universities and the formally constituted colleges grouping physicians, surgeons and other medical specialists took over a role that had been largely abandoned by the professional associations by the end of the twentieth century. The Sydney Law Library of 1842 was started by solicitors in the absence of a properly organised collection at the Supreme Court of

40 S. Normand, 'Les bibliothèques d'entreprises au Québec', in G. Gallichan (ed.), *Les bibliothèques québécoises d'hier à aujourd'hui* (Quebec, 1998), 101–19; Lamonde, *Bibliothèques de collectivités*, 25, 72–3, 79–80.

41 K. G. Laycock, 'Barnes: an Australian Agricultural Company family', unpublished MLitt essay, University of New England (1984), 51.

42 Ferguson, *Bibliography*, no. 3382: *The rules and regulations of the Commercial Reading Rooms and Library. Established 1841* (Sydney, 1842).

43 Lamonde, *Bibliothèques de collectivités*, 61.

44 *Ibid.*, 49–50.

45 Frohnsdorff, 'Before the public', 8.

46 Lamonde, *Bibliothèques de collectivités*, 60.

47 A. Tovell and B. Gandevia, 'Books purchased by medical libraries in Australia prior to 1856', *Medical history* 9 (1965), 61–71.

New South Wales.[48] The bilingual Advocates' Library and Library of the Bar of Lower Canada, District of Montreal, began its long career in 1828.[49] No one practitioner could hope to be bibliographically self-sufficient despite the fact that lawyers were always prominent amongst the bibliophiles of colonial societies.

Associations of all kinds could and did have libraries, and the trend increased markedly in the second half of the nineteenth century. Even before 1850 there were numerous examples. British institutions included the gentleman's club and this was replicated on the other side of the world, for instance in Sydney's Australian Club of 1838 and the Melbourne Club of 1839. Some sort of library was *de rigueur*, even if it is hard to come by precise documentation about this feature of these establishments. In the far from simple Anglo-French climate of Montreal the beginnings of a more sophisticated stage are visible in two foundations of 1844: the Shakespeare Dramatic and Literary Club and the Institut Canadien, which did own a limited number of English-language books.[50]

Viable learned societies depended on the existence of urban centres of some size and on a certain level of government patronage. In the pre-1850 period the Asiatic Society of Bengal was probably the best known and the most effectively endowed with books and journals, in particular through exchanges.[51] During the 1820s the Quebec Literary and Historical Society and the Natural History Society of Montreal staked out claims to a wide spectrum of human knowledge.[52] In Colombo, in what is now Sri Lanka, a branch of the Royal Asiatic Society started in 1845 and soon formed a library.[53] Local circumstances, which could mean no more than the sympathetic presence in government of figures like Sir John Franklin and Sir William Denison, determined that Hobart would advance more quickly than Sydney to a network of scientific associations with real aspirations in the 1840s. Persons of a scholarly bent were, therefore, able to go beyond the generalist libraries that were otherwise available to them. Diversification was underway.

Some possibilities for access to specialised literature were offered by libraries controlled and financed directly by governments. Typically quite specific groups were being targeted: convicts in penal settlements, military personnel, legislators, scientists working in museums and observatories.

48 Ferguson, *Bibliography*, no. 3734: *Catalogue of the Sydney Law Library. Instituted 17th August, 1842* (Sydney, 1843).

49 Lamonde, *Bibliothèques de collectivités*, 45–7.

50 *Ibid.*, 53–60.

51 Kabir, *Libraries of Bengal*, 71–84.

52 Lamonde, *Bibliothèques de collectivités*, 41–3.

53 R. S. Thambiah, 'Libraries in Ceylon', in *Encyclopedia of library and information science* (New York, 1970), vol. 4, 412–22 (here 415).

In so far as the aim of transportation was reform as well as punishment, schooling and reading improving literature were part of the regime of the prison hulk and of the convict ship. Even if real situations did not always conform to this ideal, there is plenty of evidence about the organisation of classes and the provision of bibles, prayer books and tracts, often with the help of evangelical societies.[54] Where transportees were confined to barracks on arrival or later sentenced to further terms of imprisonment in such places as Norfolk Island and Port Arthur, it is clear that they continued to be supplied with books in what seem to have been quite substantial libraries. Indeed the official order pasted in New Norfolk volumes ('No Man must read during his working Hours or Illuse any Book given to him under pain of punishment'[55]) underscores what we know from other sources about the ambivalence of prisoners' attitudes to printed matter. The reformed were in theory kept from backsliding by membership of serious voluntary groups like the Total Abstinence Society in Hobart. A critical report on that body's library in 1846 by G. W. Walker and E. C. Rowntree gives unusual insights into what was then considered worth reading in such circles.[56]

The convict system was peculiar to some, but not all, of the Australian colonies. On the other hand a military presence of the British government and, where relevant, of the East India Company meant that books had to be provided everywhere in cantonments, barracks and officers' messes. Appropriate arrangements were made in India,[57] and the existence of a regimental collection in Montreal in 1778[58] justifies the hypothesis that such collections continued into the nineteenth century. The problem is one of documentation. Schools attached to regiments bought provisions from the Walches' shop in Hobart in 1846–7, as a sole surviving day book reveals.[59] A reference to a 'Barrack Librarian' in New South Wales in 1852[60] is an invitation to look further into this aspect of the colony's book culture. In contradistinction, the Malta Garrison Library was prominent in that country's cultural history for well over a century.[61]

As Britain's overseas territories moved towards responsible and self-government in the course of the period before 1850, the legislative councils

54 B. Bell, 'Bound for Botany Bay; or, what did the nineteenth-century convict read?', in R. Myers, M. Harris and G. Mandelbrote (eds.), *Against the law: crime, sharp practice and the control of print* (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll; London: British Library, 2004), 151–75.

55 Label in a copy of G. H. Loskiel, *The history of the Moravian mission among the Indians in North America* (London, 1840) held by the Mitchell Library in Sydney.

56 Mitchell Library, MS A 585, 17–20, 207–10.

57 Kabir, *Libraries of Bengal*, 138–40.

58 Lamonde, *Bibliothèques de collectivités*, 37.

59 Kirsop, *Books for colonial readers*, 59–76.

60 Mitchell Library, MS A 334, 530.

61 Xuereb, 'Libraries in Malta', 78.

that were not yet assemblies or elected bodies acquired libraries. By 1900 many of these had become large and wide-ranging collections, among the most significant in their respective colonies. However, the necessarily slow start in Australia and two successive destructions of the Quebec Assembly Library in 1849 and 1854 meant that the work of expansion came in the later period. Fortunately a number of surviving printed catalogues tell us what had been brought together: two, one general and one of Americana, for the Legislative Assembly of United Canada in 1846 and 1845 respectively;[62] two, in 1817 and 1837, for the Legislative Library of Upper Canada;[63] one, printed in 1849, for the New South Wales Legislative Council.[64] All of this preceded by more than a hundred years the notion that legislators needed highly focused and specialised resources.

Government involvement in science, except for voyages of exploration, geological and cartographic surveys, and the collection of specimens for institutions at home in Britain, was quite limited before the middle of the nineteenth century. Despite this, it was expedient to fund observatories in the southern hemisphere, notably in New South Wales and Tasmania. Sir Thomas Brisbane's privately financed establishment at Parramatta in 1822 was taken over, together with its library, by the crown when he left the colony at the end of 1825.[65] Little attention is given to this collection in published accounts, and the same is true of the Rossbank Observatory set up in Hobart in 1840.[66] The influence of Sir Joseph Banks helps to explain the development of botanic gardens, staging posts of imperial collecting, in various colonial centres such as Cape Town, Colombo and Sydney.[67] How effectively they were provided with libraries in their early decades is harder to determine. Likewise those publicly supported museums that were in existence before 1850 do not seem to have had remarkable bibliographical backing. The Australian Museum, which had its rather uncertain start in Sydney in 1827, is perhaps typical in this.[68] However,

62 W. R. Haight, *Canadian catalogue of books 1791–1897* (London, 1958), 21, 36.

63 P. L. Fleming, *Upper Canadian imprints, 1801–1841 : a bibliography* (Toronto, 1988), nos. 118 and 1152. The 1817 list was of books acquired to replace those lost in the United States occupation a few years before.

64 Ferguson, *Bibliography*, no. 5129. Among various contributions to the history of legislative libraries in Australia, see G. Tillotson, 'Australian parliamentary libraries: 1840–1980s', in W. B. Rayward, *Australian library history in context* (Sydney, 1988), 39–57.

65 R. Bhathal and G. White, *Under the Southern Cross: a brief history of astronomy in Australia* (Kenthurst, NSW, 1991), 17–21.

66 A. Savours and A. McConnell, 'The history of the Rossbank Observatory, Tasmania', *Annals of Science* 39 (1982), 527–64.

67 J. Gascoigne, *Science in the service of empire: Joseph Banks, the British state and the uses of science in the Age of Revolution* (Cambridge, 1998).

68 R. Strahan and others, *Rare and curious specimens: an illustrated history of the Australian Museum 1827–1979* (Sydney, 1979).

early discussions about housing it with the Australian Subscription Library raised the public–private question that later generations were to answer by opting for greater recourse to community funds.

Once again the significance of 1850 returns. After that date, overseas British communities could follow the 'home' model and create free public libraries supported from rates and taxes. Before mid-century that solution was manifestly excluded if one accepted that the periphery always obeyed or imitated the centre. In fact things were more complicated. On the one hand, as has already been noted, British precedents like converting private subscription libraries into public ones could be adopted. On the other colonial societies were capable of picking and choosing amongst the available patterns and of shaping them to their own purposes. In particular they took up the great innovation of the first half of the nineteenth century – the mechanics' institute, school of arts, lyceum, athenaeum – with varied degrees of enthusiasm and made it into the authentic precursor of the public library of later times.

One of the problems lies in the interpretation of the word 'public'. New Zealand in the early 1840s had three institutions – in Wellington, Nelson and Auckland – that were recognised as forerunners of what became the dominant form of community book provision,[69] yet they still conformed to an older style. Similarly the Tasmanian Public Library set up in 1849 had a minimal government subsidy, subscriptions and a demonstrably exclusive clientele.[70] The South African Public Library in Cape Town was quite exceptional in being established as 'the world's first tax-supported free library', an arrangement that was terminated in 1829 when it turned into a banal subscription library. What was also unusual was that it received in 1820 the transfer of the Joachim Nikolaus von Dessin bequest of 1761 to the Dutch Reformed Church.[71] Endowed public collections in the European tradition were rare in Britain's colonies, although one can point to the case of Peter Fidler in Rupert's Land and his legacy to the Red River Colony.[72]

69 P. Griffith, R. Harvey and K. Maslen (eds.), *Book and print in New Zealand: a guide to print culture in Aotearoa* (Wellington, 1997), 170.

70 J. Levett, 'The Tasmanian Public Library in 1850: its members, its managers and its books', in E. Morrison and M. Talbot (eds.), *Books, libraries and readers in colonial Australia* (Clayton, Vic., 1985), 11–21.

71 J. Kesting, 'Libraries in the Republic of South Africa', in *Encyclopedia of library and information science* (New York, 1980), vol. 28, 129–259 (here 167–8).

72 L. D. Castling, 'The Red River Library: a search after knowledge and refinement', and D. Lindsay, 'Peter Fidler's library: philosophy and science in Rupert's Land', in P. F. McNally (ed.), *Readings in Canadian library history* (Ottawa, 1986), 153–66, 209–29.

George Birkbeck's work at the Andersonian Institution in Glasgow between 1799 and 1804 and the foundations of the Edinburgh School of Arts in 1821 and the London Mechanics' Institution in late 1823 were to have a profound and quite rapid effect on the colonial library scene in several parts of the world. Indeed the impetus given to the creation – often on a much smaller scale – of similar bodies lasted into the early twentieth century in some places. The history of a movement that languished for a long time and has recently revived is a complex one, especially since local political, social and cultural conditions determined how the formula would be applied and whether it would be maintained. Separate existence without government support of a meaningful kind, official subsidies continued for decades, relatively quick conversion into free public libraries, differences in the names adopted, these were some of the features characterising considerable variation from colony to colony even within Australia, where Birkbeck had his greatest influence.

In British North America the first mechanics' institute appeared at St Johns, Newfoundland, in 1827. Others followed over the next decade in the Maritimes and in Upper and Lower Canada. The sole survivor in the twenty-first century is the Atwater Library founded as the Montreal Mechanics' Institute in 1828.[73] Despite the Quebec location, the phenomenon has to be seen as one controlled by and directed towards speakers of English.[74] More than that, it probably depended on the presence of a relatively large population of immigrant European artisans, hence a weaker representation, for example, in the West Indies. There is evidence of the existence of an Antigua Mechanics' Institution in the 1840s but not of its long-term survival.[75]

All in all, therefore, it is hardly astonishing that, apart from the British Isles and the lyceums of the United States, mechanics' institutes under their various names were most effectively implanted in Australia and New Zealand. Much of this happened after 1850, because the ideal of the free public library sometimes took up to a century to be adopted. None the less some of the most significant creations came quickly. Hobart in 1827 was followed by Sydney in 1833, Melbourne in 1839, Launceston in 1842, Geelong in 1846, Brisbane in 1849 and, after some abortive ventures, Swan River in 1851, a parallel to uncertain developments in Adelaide in the 1840s.[76] In New Zealand the Port Nicholson

73 Lamonde, *Bibliothèques de collectivités*, 43–5.

74 J. Blanchard, 'A bibliography on mechanics' institutes with particular reference to Ontario', in McNally, *Readings*, 3–18.

75 Frohnsdorff, 'Before the public', 15.

76 See, in the rapidly growing secondary literature, P. C. Candy and J. Laurent (eds.), *Pioneering culture: mechanics' institutes and schools of arts in Australia* (Adelaide, 1994);

(later Wellington) institute emerged in 1842.[77] Eventually there would be well over a thousand such bodies scattered across towns, villages and mere hamlets, providing books, a meeting hall and, consequently, a focus for community social and cultural interaction. Small wonder, then, that the whole movement is now the object of both commemoration and serious research.[78]

Even if one allows that, with few exceptions, the institutes were organised by élites for themselves and for the respectable working class, and that there was a measure of social control involved, it is clear that the movement meant an appreciable democratisation of reading opportunities and of access to cultural enrichment. Given the upward striving and the absence of deference that were often characteristic of the Australian colonies, the mechanics' institutes can be seen as necessary preparers of the way for free libraries and mass education in an age that installed a genuine dialogue between the centre and the periphery. The progression from colonies to dominions came not only from greatly increased populations in the later nineteenth century, but also from the establishment of robust institutions, including libraries, on the basis laid during the decades after the Napoleonic wars.

S. Petrow, *Going to the Mechanics: a history of the Launceston Mechanics' Institute 1842–1914* (Launceston, Tas., 1998); J. Partridge, 'The establishment of mechanics' institutes in Western Australia: a case study of the Swan River Mechanics' Institute', in B. J. McMullin (ed.), *Instruction and amusement* (Melbourne, 1996), 3–39.

77 Griffith *et al.*, *Book and print*, 38.

78 See, in particular, the work of Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria, Inc., since its creation in the late 1990s in publishing a *Newsletter* and in organising national and international conferences. See also P. Baragwanath, *If the walls could speak: a social history of the mechanics' institutes of Victoria* (Windsor, Vic., 2000).

31

Engines of literature: libraries in an era of expansion and transition

K. A. MANLEY

Viewing the multiplicity of libraries of all types founded between the end of the Napoleonic wars and the Public Libraries Act of 1850, it is possible to receive a clear impression of a noble concept – education for all classes through access to literary knowledge – gathering momentum, culminating inevitably in parliamentary action. Library historians regard the 1850 Act as a watershed, and yet popular support was singularly lacking. Twenty years on, only twenty-nine libraries had opened in England under the Acts, with two in Scotland and one each in Ireland and Wales.[1] Ratepayers did not besiege their town halls demanding to be taxed for libraries but often protested against. As late as 1871 Leicester council started a public library under the Museums, rather than the Libraries, Act, to avoid defeat at a public meeting.[2] The Act was not a government-sponsored measure. The Liberal prime minister, Lord John Russell, had previously opposed public libraries when included in the failed Public Institutions Bill of 1835. He believed that private enterprise encouraged keen managers of educational institutions, whereas opposition to taxation for rate-supported libraries would produce an apathetic public and indifferent management.[3]

Nevertheless government recognised, albeit unenthusiastically, the need to stimulate the educational and information needs of the population, if through local rather than national taxation; their aim was to fight drunkenness and sedition. At the same time, the government became more willing to make money available, if only paltry sums, towards library provision for its own needs, as in departmental libraries, and for its own servants, willing or not, such as soldiers, sailors and convicts, many of whom were barely literate. The story of general library development in the first half of the nineteenth

1 K. A. Manley, 'Food for the mind, or food for the belly? The Irish famine and the Public Libraries Act of 1850', *Library History* 17 (2001), 203–12.
2 T. Kelly, *History of public libraries in Great Britain, 1845–1975*, 2nd edn (London, 1977), 25.
3 *The Times*, 19 August 1835.

century is essentially one of a shifting balance between individual benefaction, charitable endeavour and hesitant government support.

The Act was preceded by a Select Committee, whose *Report* of 1849 provided an overview of libraries, from parish to university, with a multitude of statistics.[4] Although the purpose was to reveal gaps in library provision, the *Report* accentuated their variety if not always their vitality. Many libraries were provided by benefactors or charities, such as the Religious Tract Society which reported gifts of 5,410 libraries of its own publications to parish libraries, day and Sunday schools, and workhouses. This (Protestant) society encountered more difficulty in Ireland, where seventy-three towns were said to lack a single bookseller.[5] Roman Catholic clergy did encourage libraries, and when James Doyle was appointed bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, his first pastoral instructions of 1821 urged the establishment of chapel libraries.[6]

Many social reformers, such as Samuel Smiles and John Brown, son of Samuel Brown of itinerating libraries fame, addressed the Committee on the benefits of libraries. Breathless endorsements of their value were reported, such as the captain of a man-of-war whose cabin contained libraries for officers and men: 'Talk of discipline', he proclaimed, 'those books do more good than all the corporal punishment I can inflict.'[7] Although such *encomia* are reminiscent of newspaper advertisements for patent elixirs ('cures all known ills'), there existed many people who genuinely believed in an educated population and the importance of libraries.

Why were 'public' libraries so unpopular in 1850? Britain was polarised by class and religion. Schools and universities in England (London excepted), Wales and Ireland were under ecclesiastical domination (less so in Scotland). Municipal socialism seemed acceptable for baths, washhouses, sewerage, street lighting and paving, but libraries – and especially newsrooms – were likely to breed dissent and sedition and revive those infernal Chartists who had seemed so threatening only two years earlier.

Readers were accustomed to pay to borrow books, as for any other service, whether in subscription libraries, mechanics' institutes, or literary, philosophical and scientific societies; the latter regarded libraries as essential adjuncts to their main function of providing lectures. Although many such societies existed outside London, the Royal Institution in London (1799) became the

4 A. Black, *A new history of the English public library* (London, 1996), chapter 5 for further consideration.

5 *Report from the Select Committee on public libraries* (1849), 168–71.

6 T. McGrath, *The pastoral and education letters of Bishop James Doyle* (Dublin, 2004), 66–7.

7 *Select Committee on public libraries*, 171.

most influential of its kind; its (short-lived) free lectures to mechanics preceded those inaugurated by George Birkbeck in Glasgow. Its first library catalogue appeared in 1809, with over 500 pages, and a second, by Charles Burney (the younger), in 1821. The Royal was followed by the London Institution (1806), which purchased the library of the first marquess of Lansdowne, and whose printed catalogues (1813–52) were models of their kind. Unlike the others, the Russell Institution (1808) lent books. Other imitators acquired substantial library collections, such as the Royal Institution of Cornwall (1818) in Truro and the Royal Institution of South Wales (1835) in Swansea. The Society of Antiquaries also spawned local imitators; its own library increased greatly by gifts and by exchange,[8] as did local organisations such as the Cambridge Antiquarian Society (1840) which exchanged publications with a hundred other societies.[9] The Archaeological Society of Newcastle (1813) was immediately collecting books and published a catalogue in 1822.[10]

A portrait of Ipswich in 1850 provides a glimpse of how a provincial town (32,000 inhabitants, a threefold increase since 1800) fared for libraries.[11] The best, according to John Glyde (antiquary and bookseller), was the private subscription library, established in 1791, which charged one guinea per annum (plus share) and was aimed at the higher classes. The Literary Institution (1818) in the Town Hall boasted 3,000 volumes, including parliamentary blue books, but cost two guineas per annum. The splendidly relocated Mechanics' Institution (1824) contained 5,000 volumes, mostly useful works, and a large collection of newspapers and periodicals, but few genuine mechanics used it, and only £26 had been spent on books in 1849 from an income of £365; there were 551 members. The museum (1847) contained a small collection of books, available to members of the Ipswich Philosophical Society (1842) which had been founded by members of the Scientific Book Society and possessed its own library of 300 philosophical works. A Mental Improvement Society had been started in 1836 at the foundry of Ransome and May, which by 1850 was circulating books amongst nearly 2,000 members. Glyde ignored circulating libraries (there were at least three), though he advertised his own 'Biblical and Theological Library', which lent appropriate works at 5 shillings per quarter, as well as his 'Library of Christian Literature' for more general religious writings.

Glyde regretted that only one in thirty-two residents belonged to these societies. The Mechanics' Institution was deficient in religion, autobiographies

8 Gifts were recorded in the society's annual (from 1843) *Proceedings*.
9 M. W. Thompson, *The Cambridge Antiquarian Society 1840–1990* (Cambridge, 1990), 49.
10 *Archaeologia Aeliana* 1 (1822), [supplement].
11 J. Glyde, *The moral, social and religious condition of Ipswich* (Ipswich, 1850), 168–87.

and literature, particularly classic fiction (though it collected Dickens and Scott): 'As people will read fiction, it is surely desirable to provide a healthy and nutritious article.' Glyde fully supported the Public Libraries Bill:

> All social reformers desire that our young men and women should have useful knowledge, become acquainted with their rights and duties, and be brought into the way of usefulness and happiness. But to effect this they must read; they must have easy access to books. In the coming era literature will exercise the greatest influence in governing the people. The press will become all-powerful. It is round the domestic hearth that men will be educated.[12]

Surveying the rest of Suffolk, Glyde found (from the 1851 census) that of fifty-nine towns and villages with a population of over 1,000, only twenty had an institution with a library (mostly recently founded). There was one institute per 22,481 inhabitants, compared to one to every 867 persons in the West Riding of Yorkshire.[13] Although Glyde found these statistics depressing, large circulating libraries in Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds served an extensive rural area. Also, the West Riding contained more mill towns than Suffolk, making comparison rather unequal.

In Essex, most towns had a library, while a diocesan survey of 1839 revealed libraries attached to churches in at least twenty-nine Anglican parishes; many nonconformist chapels had libraries. Braintree and Bocking Mechanics' Institute (1845) had taken over the library of a Mutual Instruction Society and still had almost 7,000 volumes in the 1950s. Courtaulds provided a library for its employees from 1850 at its Bocking Factory Institute and established the Silk Factory Mechanics' Institute in Halstead in 1853; the latter's library still existed in the 1920s.[14]

The importance of mechanics' institutes as library providers deserves emphasis, but religious and political differences mar their story. Wareham Mechanics' Institution dissolved in 1844 after admitting a religious periodical.[15] Leek Mechanics' Institute (1837) met in the Congregational chapel, but strict nonconformists objected to the playing of chess and draughts and to

12 *Ibid.*, 186–7.

13 J. Glyde, *Suffolk in the nineteenth century* (London, [1856]), 288–9.

14 'Voluntary public libraries', in *Victoria county history of Essex: bibliography* (London, 1959), 311–23.

15 Mechanics' institutes are dealt with in chapter 23 by Brian Burch in this volume; see also K. A. Manley, 'From workers' libraries to public libraries', in Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria, *Building books and beyond . . .: proceedings of an international conference . . . 2004* (Melbourne, 2004), 161–73 for Wareham and other instances. For workers' libraries in general, see T. Kelly, *Early public libraries* (London, 1966), chapter 8.

buying novels.[16] Dublin Mechanics' Institute encountered bitter trouble in 1853 over books and periodicals deemed offensive by Catholic members. Repeated disputes between committee members led to arrests.[17] Coventry Mechanics' Institute (1828) possessed 2,000 volumes and a popular reading room within ten years. When Owenite socialists gained control, Anglicans withdrew in 1835 to found their own library, though they returned in 1855. Meanwhile the socialists quarrelled with remaining members and seceded in 1839.[18] Similar situations occurred in Colchester and Coggeshall.[19]

Private subscription libraries increasingly purchased fiction.[20] In Scotland, small, cheap workers' libraries spread rapidly after 1800, such as the Dunfermline Trades Library, established in 1808 by four young weavers, including William Carnegie, father of the famous Andrew. They initially pooled their own books, but by 1826 claimed ninety-five members and eventually took over the Mechanics' Institute and an old-established subscription library, before amalgamating with the Municipal Library in 1883.[21]

The key to the Trades Library's success was put down to the publication of *Waverley* in 1814, an overnight sensation. Sir Walter Scott became the catalyst in changing the popularity of libraries. In mechanics' institutes, there were constant debates about whether to provide technical books to support lectures and classes or general improving literature. In Morpeth in 1830 the Waverley novels were purchased, despite opposition, but lent out for an extra penny per volume to mollify their opponents. In 1838 a second set was acquired because the first was worn out: they were the most popular books in the library.[22] Barnsley Mechanics' Institute was founded in 1831 but foundered almost immediately, because members were divided over admitting the novels of Scott.[23] The Sheffield Mechanics' and Apprentices' Library excluded novels unless considered of real excellence. Harriet Martineau was

16 M. W. Greenslade (ed.), *The Victoria county history of Staffordshire*, vol. 7 (London, 1996), 163.
17 J. Cooke, 'The Dublin Mechanics' Institute, 1824–1919', in N. McMillan (ed.), *Prometheus's fire: a history of scientific and technological education in Ireland* (Carlow, 2000), 337–49 (here 343–4).
18 W. B. Stephens (ed.), *The Victoria county history of Warwickshire*, vol. 8 (London, 1969), 228–9, 233.
19 'Voluntary public libraries', 316.
20 More information on early nineteenth-century subscription libraries, including the influential London Library (1841), will be found in chapter 12 by Geoffrey Forster and Alan Bell in volume 3 of the present work.
21 K. A. Manley, 'Scottish circulating and subscription libraries as community libraries', *Library History* 19 (2003), 185–94 (here 191).
22 R. Hawkins, *Morpeth Mechanics' Institution* (Morpeth, 1997), 2.
23 'Adult Education in Barnsley, 1831–1848', *Notes and Queries* 204 (1959), 27–32.

included on the grounds that her tales often revealed principles of political economy; so too was Thackeray, but Captain Marryat and Sir Walter Scott were banned.[24] Scottish circulating libraries were, unsurprisingly, reckoned to have made thousands of pounds by lending the Waverley novels. Volumes would be split before lending: in 1832 James Bertram recalled seeing *Guy Mannering* split into ten parts of 100 pages each, and lent for 2d per night per part.[25]

Many workers started libraries. The Chartist William Lovett moved to London in 1821 and joined a small literary association in Soho. Members discussed literature and politics and 'paid a small weekly subscription towards the formation of a select library of books for circulation among one another'. The books included Paley, and Lovett was soon 'seized with an enthusiastic desire to read and treasure up all I could meet with on the subject of Christianity'. In 1834 Lovett set up a coffee-house near Hatton Garden with 'what at that time was considered a large supply of newspapers and periodicals, and had moreover a library attached to it of several hundred volumes'. It only lasted for two years, as he attracted unwelcome attention, but 'I gained a considerable amount of information, and was, I believe, the means of causing much useful knowledge to be diffused among the young men who frequented the place.'[26]

Lovett reported approvingly to the 1849 Select Committee that coffee-houses had increased fivefold since 1830, and the working classes frequented them rather than public houses for meals. About 2,000 such establishments existed in London, and Lovett estimated that about 500 included libraries. Some, such as Isaac Potter's in Long Acre, contained 2,000 volumes.[27] In 1840 Lovett published his utopian plans for promoting political and social improvement by setting up schools, halls and circulating libraries of up to 200 volumes of useful works, to be rotated on the itinerating library system.[28] Robert Owen, too, had favoured libraries. The Manchester Owenian Society was the first to establish a library and reading room on co-operative principles, in 1830, while Harmony Hall in Hampshire, the only official Owenite community, had collected 1,400 books when it became insolvent in 1845.[29]

24 J. W. Hudson, *The history of adult education* (London, 1851), 160.
25 J. Bertram, *Some memories of books, authors and events* (London, 1893), 100–4.
26 W. Lovett, *Life and struggles* (London, 1967), 28–9, 71–2; first published 1876.
27 *Select Committee on public libraries*, 177.
28 W. Lovett and J. Collins, *Chartism* (London, 1840), 25, 34–5.
29 P. Jackaman, 'The library in utopia', *Library History* 9 (1993), 169–89 (here 179–80); C. Baggs, 'The libraries of the co-operative movement', *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science* 23 (1991), 87–96.

Lovett's enthusiasm should be contrasted with the guardians of the Greenwich workhouse, who contemplated a lending library in 1844. One guardian referred to a similar library in Woolwich, where

> upon looking over the catalogue . . . he found *Paley's Evidences*. The idea! To give *Paley's Evidences* to a pauper! The thing was absurd. Such a proceeding was . . . travelling at a railway gallop, which would lead to no good consequences . . . He supposed that the next thing would be a proposition to admit *Punch* into the library!

The library was approved, provided it was funded from voluntary, not parish, contributions.[30]

Christopher Thomson of Edwinstowe, near Sherwood Forest, unsuccessfully proposed an Artisans' Library and Mutual Improvement Society in 1836: 'every person I asked to become a member thought, that to pay down *five shillings to buy books* was the very height of extravagance, if not madness!' In 1838 he started the Edwinstowe Artisans' Library by charging one penny per week and one shilling entrance. There were soon fifty members, and the library included both Scott and the *Mechanics' Magazine*. When numbers fell, a ball was held and regularly repeated, much to the disgust of some, but after nine years their library could boast of 500 volumes; free classes were provided. 'May we not hope', wrote Thomson, 'that, at least, one twinkling ray of information has burst upon the minds of these rustic scholars?'[31] In Carlisle workers ran reading rooms with libraries attached. Between 1836 and 1854 no fewer than twenty-four were formed, providing an estimated 4,000 books, eighty newspapers, and eighty periodicals to 1,400 members. They flourished when employment was high.[32]

Other classes demanded libraries, and the rise of London clubs was equally significant and influential. (When Francis Place commended a planned library for young apprentices in 1833, he felt that it should be an embryo of clubs such as the Athenaeum and the Travellers'.[33]) Clustered around Pall Mall, they provided a more comfortable and select venue for conversation than coffeehouses. They became popular during the Regency as military men returning from war wished to maintain the company of their peers. While White's and Boodle's preferred betting books to reading books, Brooks' acquired a library

30 *The Times*, 26 October 1844.

31 C. Thomson, *Autobiography of an artisan* (London, 1847), quoted in *Library History* 8 (1990), 140–4.

32 T. B. Graham, *Nineteenth-century self-help in education* (Nottingham, 1983); *Household Words* 3 (1851), 581–5.

33 Manley, 'From workers' libraries', 167.

but, like other clubs, relied on circulating libraries to satisfy its members' literary needs; it still subscribed to Rolandi's in the 1900s.[34] Though the Travellers' (1814) collected books, no formal library records exist before 1855. The United Service Club (1815), for senior officers, solicited books from its beginnings; the Prince Regent donated the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. It closed in 1975.[35] From 1824, members of the Union Club (1799, re-formed 1821) for merchants, lawyers and MPs paid an extra guinea a year towards its library, then under the charge of one of the waiters. An occasional librarian was appointed in 1834 to catalogue this now-flourishing library.[36]

The Athenaeum (1824) was restricted to 1,000 members, and had no difficulty in attracting that number from the Royal Academy and the Royal Society to pay ten guineas and an annual fee of five guineas. With donations and a healthy income, the library possessed 10,000 volumes by 1832; £500 per annum was voted for its maintenance. In 1830 John Murray, the publisher, offered all the books from his catalogue. The intention, set out by Henry Hallam, was to provide a library of general literature, without specialisation, according to the wishes of its diffuse membership, and to buy reference works which individuals could not afford. Its first printed catalogue was issued in 1845 (with 536 pages), and a supplement in 1850. There were occasional problems. In 1825 Sir Humphrey Davy objected to a book by Volney as improper, and both Volney and Voltaire disappeared from the shelves. The first librarian absconded with £200, and a number of thefts, particularly of French novels, were uncovered. One member was expelled in 1846 after being detected transferring books to a bookseller. New books were mostly borrowed from circulating libraries, particularly prone to theft in the early twentieth century. Despite these setbacks, the Athenaeum had 69,000 volumes at its centenary; no other club could provide space for such a major collection.[37]

The Oriental Club, too, was founded in 1824, gained over 900 members in its first year, and acquired a substantial library, largely gifts from members, especially their own publications, and the India Board. But by 1900 it only possessed 5,000 volumes, and money for its maintenance was scarce.[38] The Garrick Club (1831) recognised the importance of creating a theatrical library and soon had a large collection of play-texts.[39] The Oxford and Cambridge University Club

34 P. Ziegler and D. Seward, *Brooks's* (London, 1991), 76.
35 L. C. Jackson, *History of the United Service Club* (London, 1937), 14, 17.
36 R. C. Rome, *Union Club* (London, 1948), 20, 28, 31, 36.
37 H. Ward, *History of the Athenæum 1824–1925* (London, 1926), chapter 11; [F. R. Cowell], *The Athenaeum* (London, 1975), chapter 4.
38 A. F. Baillie, *The Oriental Club and Hanover Square* (London, 1901), 55, 76, 274–9.
39 R. Hough, *The ace of clubs* (London, 1986), 147–8.

(1830) soon gained 1,000 members and issued a library catalogue in 1840. In 1971 it amalgamated with the United University Club (1821) and now possesses over 22,000 volumes.

Apart from the Athenaeum, the Reform (1836) was the only club to make the formation of a library (opened 1841) a prime objective. As William Fraser Rae, chairman of its library committee in the 1880s, explained:

> a collection of books may have as little title to the name of a library as a pile of stones has to that of a house . . . So a collection of books may supply suitable reading without serving the purpose of a library. In a good library the books are brought together according to a settled plan, just as stones are disposed after the design of an architect.

The club's plan was to collect extensively in political and parliamentary subjects. Parliamentary papers were catalogued according to a scheme devised by the Radical Francis Place, and the library committee included Anthony Panizzi, who implemented cataloguing rules frowned upon at the British Museum. When Henry Campkin was appointed librarian in 1847 (he remained until 1875), he earned £100 per annum, with dinner and tea provided, and worked from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. The drawing-room (the best room in the club) was converted into the library in 1851, a period when other clubs were converting their drawing-rooms into smoking-rooms. In 1973 the library contained about 44,000 volumes, though many others had been disposed of.[40]

Club libraries provided the London Establishment with a reference and literary resource (including newspapers and journals) for their members, many of whom were members of parliament. Government support for its own library services was niggardly, its main concern being to preserve its own records rather than develop an 'information service'. The first parliamentary library was that of the Irish House of Lords. When the Irish parliament was abolished in 1800, Charles Abbot, Chief Secretary, ensured the safe removal of its collections to Dublin Castle. In 1802 Abbot, now Speaker of the House of Commons, began collecting and classifying the printed archive of the British parliament. Not until 1818 was a small room set aside as the first official library of the Commons, and a librarian appointed.[41]

In 1820 Palmerston, the prime minister, was assailed by the Radical Joseph Hume, who had mastered the Army Estimates: 'Mr Hume is assisted in this by an institution of very late establishment, and one which in general will be

40 *Catalogue of the library of the Reform Club* (London, 1883), introduction by W. F. Rae, 7–11; G. Woodbridge, *The Reform Club 1836–1978* (London, 1978), chapter 8.

41 D. Menhennet, *The House of Commons library* (London, 1991), 2–3.

beneficial, though not so in the present instance, a Parliamentary Library . . . with a librarian to assist in finding what is wanted.'[42] Immediate lack of space led to demands for enlargement, and a splendid Gothic building by John Soane was opened in 1828. The government voted over £2,000 for books, and by 1832 the library contained over 5,500 volumes. A law library for the House of Lords was built by Soane in 1826.

The new Commons library was immediately popular, although a proposal to introduce luncheon was firmly rejected. The Law Courts were situated in Westminster, hence the need for an easy-access reference collection, though many 'strangers' managed to enter the library room to overhear members' conversations. Although the library was supposed to be purely parliamentary, general literature was gradually introduced. A Select Committee of 1832 recommended a salary of £400 for the librarian and ensured that the library was answerable directly to the Commons through the Speaker.[43]

On the night of 16 October 1834 a fire in the House of Lords, caused by old Exchequer tally-sticks being burned, destroyed parliament. Two-thirds of the Commons' library's books were lost and most of the unprinted records, though many were rescued from the street by Sir Thomas Phillipps. The Lords' library was largely rescued by a line of soldiers; it occupied Barry's new building in 1848 and gradually amassed a general collection around its legal core.[44] The new Commons' library did not open before 1852, but functioned during the interim. Its librarian, Thomas Vardon, and his assistant, Thomas Erskine May, were increasingly providing a rapid information service. As the new building approached completion, parliament voted more money for a growing general library, so that by 1857 there were 30,000 volumes.[45]

The library of the Board of Customs dated from 1671 but was largely destroyed when Custom House burned down in 1814.[46] The Home Office had acquired a few books by 1782, but by the 1840s the librarian was fully occupied in indexing parliamentary papers and registering mail: 'For the last 5 years I have not been 3 days from the office at one time', he remarked ruefully in 1848.[47] A catalogue was first published in 1852, and one of the Treasury Library appeared in 1853.[48]

42 Quoted in *ibid.*, 4. 43 *Ibid.*, 6–15.
44 C. Dobson, 'The library of the House of Lords', in R. Irwin and R. Staveley (eds.), *The libraries of London*, 2nd edn (London, 1961), 90–4.
45 Menhennet, *House of Commons library*, chapter 2.
46 R. A. Rye, *The students' guide to the libraries of London*, 3rd edn (London, 1927), 334.
47 D. Gibson, 'The Home Office library', *Law Librarian* 3 (1972), 36–9.
48 Cited in *Catalogue of printed books in the library of the Foreign Office* (London, 1926), 733, 1377.

The Foreign Office dated from 1782, and its library became a department in 1801 when the librarian, Richard Ancell, was made responsible for preserving and indexing official correspondence. The library owed most to Lewis and Edward Hertslet, father and son, who served as librarian or sub-librarian from 1801 to 1896. The former published collections of treaties and state papers and supervised the king's messengers. Both were effectively policy advisors owing to their knowledge of precedents. The Foreign Office was in Downing Street, books and manuscripts being distributed in basements and corridors, with no catalogue and no proper access (its first printed catalogue appeared in 1864).

There were lighter moments. Writing of the 1840s, Edward Hertslet recalled how the clerks stuffed the heads of wax lucifer matches into the pipe of the sub-librarian's desk key. When he pryed out the obstruction, a loud bang was heard, followed by the sub-librarian's rapid departure. More seriously, in 1839 a chimney-boy overlooked a smouldering flue. The Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston, ran upstairs to the attic of the elderly German translator: 'Have you any valuable books in this room?' he cried. 'And what if I have?' came the defensive reply. 'Oh! nothing, if you have, but I suppose you know that the house is on fire?' Palmerston left the man pacing his room, shouting 'Mein Gott!' The firemen extinguished the flames as Horse Guards were preparing to remove manuscript registers. During the Chartist tumults of 1848 Hertslet and colleagues were issued with truncheons, old muskets from the Tower (without ammunition) and navy cutlasses, while books were stacked in front of windows – luckily the precautions proved unnecessary.[49]

The War Office library can be traced to 1683, but no formal organisation existed before 1804 when the duke of York suggested a military library. The Military Depot was established at Horse Guards under the Quartermaster General, including a drawing office to distribute maps to the field; there was a similar office in the Peninsula. The library remained small, with only 5,000 volumes by 1860; a catalogue was printed in 1813.[50] The Admiralty library began in 1809. Other libraries were established for the technical needs of the military, such as the Royal Engineers' library at Chatham in 1813.

Book provision for soldiers, sailors and convicts did not concern the government greatly. Private enterprise was normal; for instance, the library established for the Royal Artillery in 1809 was basically a subscription library for officers. The model was the Gibraltar Garrison Library, founded in 1793 by John

49 E. Hertslet, *Recollections of the old Foreign Office* (London, 1901), 31–5, 67–70.
50 H. Gordon, *The War Office* (London, 1935), 279.

Drinkwater along the lines of a proprietary subscription library. Provision for lower ranks depended on chaplains, who distributed religious tracts provided by societies such as the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (whose founder, Thomas Bray, had established port libraries) and the Naval and Military Bible Society. Occasionally individuals set an example. In 1801 surgeon Leonard Gillespie sent on board HMS *Leviathan* bibles and prayer books for the ship's company, 'with some other religious Books to form a Library for the Sick Berth'.[51]

Richard Marks, a lieutenant on the *Conqueror*, which he left in 1810 to take holy orders, distributed tracts to the crew and started a small library for the officers. He claimed over 150 subscribers gave 4 shillings or more to borrow from 200 pious works; they could keep a volume on leaving the ship.[52] On HMS *Leander* in 1816 two officers expressed surprise that 'so useful an establishment as a public library on board his Majesty's ships of war should have been hitherto neglected'. Morals would be improved and even the cause of science advanced, they opined: 'the fiend *Ennui* would be banished for ever; there would be a constant theme for conversation; a general sense of propriety would always be inculcated'. Model rules were drawn up and published, and officers were invited to subscribe and pool their own books.[53]

Merchant seamen benefited from lending libraries of religious tracts in floating chapels; those in Hull and Dublin contained 200 and 439 volumes respectively in 1827, and a similar facility was available in London. The British and Foreign Seamen's Friends encouraged libraries from 1823, based on a plan employed by the duchess of Beaufort on the Isle of Wight.[54] The Thames Rivermen's Society provided five stations by 1824, with books available to river- and bargemen. By 1823 several 'ladies of the church of England' were loaning boxes of books to ships on long voyages. The idea of 'portable libraries' was adopted by the Port of Hull Society, which issued thirty-one to whalers and other ships by 1827, while the Guernsey Seaman's Friend Society lent nine. In 1828 the Mariner's Church Society in London was distributing libraries to ships, as well as running its own libraries and reading rooms for seamen. By 1833 the rival British and Foreign Sailors' Society maintained eighty ship libraries of twenty to forty volumes each.[55]

Prisons too depended on tract societies, well-wishers and chaplains who attempted to raise levels of literacy amongst poverty-stricken inmates. Slowly

51 National Archives, Adm 101/102/11, 2 August 1801.

52 [R. Marks], *The retrospect* (London, 1816), 82.

53 *Naval Chronicle* 35 (1816), 225–8.

54 *The Times*, 18 September 1823.

55 H. R. Skallerup, *Books afloat & ashore* (Hamden, CT, 1974), 31–6.

tract distribution became superseded by designated libraries, and religious books were supplemented by a more general selection. The governing committee at Millbank prison, London, was considering in 1825 allowing prisoners lights during long winter nights and 'the use of Books of amusement in addition to those of a graver character'.[56] In Richmond penitentiary, Dublin (which existed from 1820 to 1831), the earliest-known Irish prison library contained only religious books, lent freely to Anglicans, but Catholics had to pay. It possessed a mere twenty-one titles, including *The whole duty of man* and the works of Richard Marks, mentioned before. A prescient prisoner who requested Captain Cook's *Voyages* was refused.[57] Under the 'separate' system of prison management, books were part of the reformation process of the criminal; but many governors favoured the 'silent' association system for education purposes, where books played a lesser rôle.

The impetus for a more active government rôle in libraries for prisoners, as well as sailors and soldiers, came partly from the Quaker Elizabeth Fry and her Ladies' Committee of prison reformers. In 1818 Fry had addressed a parliamentary select committee on the educational needs of female convicts sailing to the penal colonies. In 1835 she specifically recommended libraries for convict women and sailors. Her Ladies' Committee subsequently provided collections, not restricted to religion, under the charge of ships' surgeons.[58] Visiting Falmouth in 1835, she determined to encourage libraries on its packet boats. She raised £51, and, with co-operation from the tract societies, boxes of thirty books each were placed on board. Travelling home, for good measure she established a library at Amesbury for shepherds on Salisbury Plain: 'Forty-five books are in constant circulation', she was told later. 'More than fifty poor people read them with attention, return them with thanks, and desire the loan of more.'[59] Fry's main goal in 1835 was to persuade the government to provide libraries for coastguards, who had large amounts of idle time. Despite 'rebuffs and humiliations', support from Sir Robert Peel's brother eventually secured £500, in addition to private subscriptions, and later a further £460 from the Exchequer. The scheme was a success, and by June 1836 52,464 volumes had been distributed to libraries in 498 shore stations, seventy-four districts and forty-eight cruisers, including school books for the crews' children, benefiting about 21,000 people.[60]

56 J. Fyfe, *Books behind bars* (Westport, CT, 1992), 116.
57 H. Heaney, 'Ireland's first prison library', *Library History* 3 (1973), 59–62.
58 Fyfe, *Books behind bars*, 26.
59 *Memoir of the life of Elizabeth Fry* (London, 1847), vol. 2, 213–15.
60 *Ibid.*, 204–6, 228–30.

The appointment of a prison inspectorate led to annual reports on prison conditions from 1836. Libraries featured because of the enthusiasm of Frederic Hill, inspector for Scotland. In 1837 Hill attempted to correlate crime statistics with the presence or otherwise of local working-class libraries, e.g. 'Little crime, good deal of reading', he wrote of Orkney, but of Keith: 'Good deal of crime . . . Inhabitants do not appear to be much given to reading . . . there is a library for the poorer classes, but it does not contain many books.' Hill drew up rules for libraries in 1838, which he encouraged Scottish prison governors to adopt, but without government encouragement. He provided lists of recommended books, especially biography, travel and fiction, though condemned *The vicar of Wakefield* because the eponymous hero was too easily taken in by fraudsters; Maria Edgeworth was strongly favoured. Prisoners were to be examined on their reading. Hill's efforts greatly improved Scottish prison libraries, and he continued his work on becoming inspector of northern England in 1847.[61]

Catalogues of libraries appeared in prison inspectors' reports. In 1839 Millbank contained eighty-nine titles, many religious, but also *Anson's voyages*, *Insect architecture*, *Narratives of shipwrecks* and *Robinson Crusoe*; this stock increased rapidly. In 1842 Kendal House of Correction possessed only thirty-nine volumes, headed by the doubtless comforting Foxe's *Book of martyrs*, and ranging through Doddridge and Bunyan to *Paul and Virginia*. Canterbury and Nottingham owned fewer than twenty-five volumes, while in 1835/6 Exeter had between 100 and 200 volumes, Aberdeen and Edinburgh had 300–500, and Glasgow had over 500. Most chaplains saw a library as an instrument for good and that 'a mixture of cheerful books, instead of interfering with reading of a serious and religious character, gives greater zest to such reading'. At Pentonville, opened as a model prison in 1842, attempts were made immediately to have '3 books in each cell', with a total planned stock of 750 religious and 750 secular books. Not until the 1850s were libraries recommended to contain three volumes per convict.[62]

Prison officers too acquired libraries, as at Salford by 1840 and Preston. A warders' library in Portland in the 1850s sparked a staff religious revival. Gradually the government took over from Elizabeth Fry's Ladies' Committee the supply of books to convict ships and the penal settlements in Australia. Some governors, such as Alexander Maconochie on Norfolk Island, were particularly concerned that libraries should include useful works, e.g. on agriculture.[63]

61 Fyfe, *Books behind bars*, 74–80. 62 *Ibid.*, 85, 110, 117–18. 63 *Ibid.*, 95–6, 128–35.

Libraries were provided on prison hulks by the 1820s but had little to recommend them. Revd Thomas Price of the *Retribution* was a voice in the wilderness when he recommended organised libraries in 1815 'for the benefit of these poor outcasts', but virtually all hulks' libraries contained only religious works.[64] In 1848 the Home Secretary, Sir George Grey, authorised libraries for the Woolwich hulks, though the books were reckoned insufficient and unsatisfactory, and for two hulks in Gibraltar, containing no fewer than 950 convicts.[65]

Few general libraries existed for soldiers, notable exceptions being those at Gibraltar and Malta. The latter had been started in 1825 by the 80th Regiment of Foot, and always taken when they moved. Officers joined later, and there were 1,000 volumes by 1833.[66] An example was provided by the East India Company, whose Governor-General, the marquess of Hastings, had authorised seven station libraries for troops in Bengal in 1823 'to improve their minds and to lessen licentious propensities often induced by mere idleness'. Books had previously been provided by the SPCK, but in 1822 the Company had begun drawing up lists of more acceptable fare, including the *Arabian nights*, *Robinson Crusoe*, Bloomfield's *Poems* and the Waverley novels. Similar libraries were sent to Bombay. In 1834 it was recommended that libraries be sent to regiments rather than to stations. The books were said to be popular but insufficient; soldiers paid a subscription to take books to their barracks, where they could read to other soldiers.[67]

With increasing pressure from reformers over low literacy rates amongst the poor, the prison inspectors' report in 1837 and a Royal Commission on Military Punishments both incidentally recommended regimental libraries. The War Office decided to take action, partly 'to put an end to the inebriety which so much disgraces the British Soldier'.[68] Rowland, Lord Hill, Commander-in-Chief, and General Sir John Woodford recommended reading rooms in barracks, supported by Lord Howick, Secretary of State for War, though Hill was concerned by the danger of soldiers forming discussion societies.[69]

During 1838 lists of suitable books were drawn up at a cost of about £50 per library, of which £20 would be for fiction. Libraries for the lower ranks were supplied to infantry and cavalry barracks in England (17), Scotland (5),

64 W. B. Johnson, *The English prison hulks*, 2nd edn (London, 1970), 129–30.

65 Fyfe, *Books behind bars*, 137–43; National Archives, HO45/2133.

66 P. Vickers, *'A gift so graciously bestowed': the history of the Prince Consort's Library* (Winchester, 1993), 10.

67 British Library, India Office Records, L/MIL/5/384, coll 85a, and F/4/1486/58611.

68 National Archives, WO43/590.

69 J. F. Crosthwaite, *Brief memoir of Major-Gen. Sir John Geo. Woodford* (London, 1881), 41; G. Teffeteller, *The life of Rowland, Lord Hill* (Newark, NJ, 1983), 201–2; *The Times*, 4 April 1836.

Ireland (17) and the Channel Islands (3), and to Gibraltar, Malta, Corfu, Canada, Bermuda, the West Indies, Mauritius, China and elsewhere. Users paid one penny per month.[70] There were complaints that accommodation was insufficient. In Richmond, Yorkshire, the room was damp, while at Manchester only 1¼ pounds of candles were provided, and at Kilkenny, with ninety-six subscribers, only one candle per night was permitted.[71] Rules for use were issued.[72] By 1846 Lord John Russell could inform parliament: 'No less than 100 libraries have been established, containing no less than 60,000 volumes. (Hear, hear.) I believe this will lead to a very great improvement in the army (Hear, hear.).'[73] Interestingly the Spanish government established military libraries in the capital of every captaincy-general in October 1843, but abolished them one year later to save money.[74]

Colonel J. Lefroy, Inspector-General of army schools, reported in 1859 that one in five soldiers (or 30,621 men) could not read or write. The government had by then spent £8,000 on libraries and staff for 158 garrison libraries (excluding India), including £400 for regimental libraries for engineers and artillery, approved in 1840. The largest, including Chatham, Parkhurst, Portsmouth and Limerick, possessed over 1,500 volumes, while abroad Hong Kong, Mauritius and Barbados held over 2,000 each. The libraries were well used for books and newspapers, but Lefroy found that soldiers read mostly fiction because of their lack of education. Also in 1859 was established the Prince Consort's Library at Aldershot, the first comprehensive library for the army. 'Free' libraries were founded at Victoria Barracks, Aldershot, and the Royal Barracks, Dublin, from books returned from the Crimea.[75]

Seamen could not be ignored. In August 1838 the Admiralty directed that libraries be established, comprising 270 volumes for large ships and 100 for small, excluding bibles. Libraries were seen as important for sailors' well-being as elementary education and ventilation between decks.[76] The first grant of £1,600 appeared in the Navy estimates for 1842/3. Over ten years £17,600 was allotted to libraries in vessels and dockyard schools.[77]

Policemen were catered for, following the usual pattern. In 1842 Revd Edward Wakeham of Hammersmith donated 100 volumes for the 'amusement

70 *The Times*, 5 January and 31 August 1843. 71 National Archives, WO43/590.

72 *Queen's regulations and orders for the Army* (London, 1844), 253–5.

73 *The Times*, 8 August 1846. 74 *The Times*, 5 October 1844.

75 J. Lefroy, *Report on the regimental and garrison schools of the army, and on military libraries and reading rooms* (London, 1859), 6, 50–61; Vickers, *'Gift so graciously bestowed'*.

76 J. Wilson, *Statistical reports on the health of the Navy* . . . (1840), xix; *Army and Navy Chronicle* 11 (10 September 1840), 163.

77 Parliamentary papers, *Navy estimates for . . . 1842/43* (1842), 48, and following years, under 'Miscellaneous'.

and instruction' of off-duty officers at the suggestion of the Superintendent of T division (Kensington). The City Mission then gave 50–100 religious volumes to each Metropolitan division, helped by individuals such as Revd Thomas Short of St George's, Bloomsbury.[78] A library was established in Hull police station in March 1845 which forty years later amounted to 712 titles, mostly novels, but the extent of such libraries in the provinces awaits exploration.[79]

In 1847 Sir George Grey directed the police commissioners to provide libraries in London. After pointing out the previous charitable grants, they asked for additional funds for books and fires: 'This would be an inducement for the Police to spend more of their time in reading and tend to the general improvement of their habits.' One library was allotted to each division, and officers subscribed one halfpenny per week (there were 4,919 policemen in London). Inspector Robert Walker of A division (Whitehall), who had worked in the book trade, zealously bought 2,313 volumes, much to the consternation of Grey, who had expected to approve the purchases himself. Exception was taken to some of the titles; Mrs Trollope was frowned upon, at least one author was a Chartist, and other books contained passages against the upper classes. Eventually a selection of light non-fiction and novels was agreed, and £420 was expended.[80] Grey, an ardent evangelical, was as Home Secretary the unsung hero of government funding for libraries and subsequently oversaw William Ewart's Public Libraries Bill. The purpose of the police libraries was to provide books for self-improvement and recreation rather than manuals on truncheon use, and this educational theme links all libraries for the lower classes funded by the government. The same applies to the Bank of England where in 1850 a library was started for its clerks with a £500 grant from its directors.[81]

Public funds were sometimes diverted to libraries through devious ways. School libraries were supported by voluntary contributions and tract societies. Leonard Horner, founder of Edinburgh School of Arts and factory inspector for the north, ingeniously used government money from 1845 for school libraries in Lancashire by exploiting (with permission) a clause in the Factory Penalties Fund Act relating to day schools. In 1853 he asked Lord Palmerston for more money for this purpose, which was approved.[82] The government inspectors of mines frequently drew attention to miners' libraries from the 1840s, but

78 *The Times*, 8 September 1842, 24 February 1843.

79 *Catalogue of the library belonging to the Hull Police* (Hull, 1885) [Hull Public Library].

80 National Archives, HO45/1891.

81 *The Times*, 16 May 1850; A. Black, 'The social libraries of large-scale business enterprises in Britain, 1850–1950', in P. Vodosek, A. Black and P. Hoare (eds.), *Mäzenatentum für Bibliotheken = Philanthropy for libraries* (Wiesbaden, 2004), 177–91 (here 179–85).

82 National Archives, HO45/4772.

these were provided by the companies, as at Govan which had 1,253 volumes and charged 6d per quarter in 1844.[83] Seghill colliery, Northumberland, had a reading room from 1850 with over 700 books and newspapers. About 500 workmen paid 1d per week to borrow from 1,000 volumes at the Monkland Iron Works in Lanarkshire.[84]

Although parliamentary grants supported the British Museum, the national official records were kept haphazardly in the Tower, the Rolls House, Soane's short-lived State Paper Office, and elsewhere. (The Irish records were similarly distributed around Dublin, although Scotland had its Register House.) A combined national library and record office would have been a wondrous achievement, but sadly for scholarship never came to pass. Sir Frederic Madden wanted the records to come to the British Museum's Department of Manuscripts, but was resisted by Sir Francis Palgrave and others. Their main objection was that the museum's contents were vested in trustees rather than the crown, thus preventing government control. Madden argued that the museum could better preserve and make accessible the records; he was appalled to discover that 'Exchequer officers . . . have been destroying by cartloads all documents not . . . of a legal character. Pretty mischief!'[85] The Public Record Office was not completed until 1858.

Certain specialised libraries received government grants, such as King's Inns, Dublin, in recompense for losing the copyright privilege in 1836. Legal libraries are a good example of how specialist libraries expanded, especially outside London.[86] The Signet Library, Edinburgh, begun in 1722, never competed with the Advocates', a copyright library, and from 1778 saw itself as a general, rather than purely law, library, owning 40,000 titles by 1837.[87] Local law societies, chiefly for solicitors, included libraries, as at Plymouth and Hull, while subscription libraries were formed elsewhere, such as the Solicitors' Library, Edinburgh (1808). Dumfries Law Library was established in 1818 with twenty-two subscribers and still existed in the 1850s.[88] Liverpool Law Library was founded in 1827 and destroyed in 1941.[89] Newcastle upon Tyne and Gateshead Law Library

83 *Report of the Commissioners . . . into the state of the population in the mining districts* (1844), 40–1.

84 J. Benson, *British coalminers in the nineteenth century* (Dublin, 1980), 152–3.

85 J. D. Cantwell, *The Public Record Office 1838–1958* (London, 1991), 60, 109–10, 551–3.

86 Information on nineteenth-century law libraries, including the Inns of Court, will be found in chapter 34 by Guy Holborn in volume 3 of the present work.

87 G. H. Ballantyne, *The Signet Library Edinburgh and its librarians 1722–1972* (Glasgow, 1979).

88 Minute book in Dumfries Archives Office.

89 D. J. Way, 'The Liverpool University Law Library', *Law Librarian* 1 (1970), 3–4.

Institution also began in 1827 and was open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.[90] Manchester Law Library was established in 1820. Regular catalogues were issued, and by 1849 there were about a hundred members; barristers were permitted to become members for reference only in 1850. By 1853 there were over 1,000 titles in 4,000 volumes. The society still exists as a private subscription library.[91]

Another specialist library receiving subsidy was the Royal Dublin Society, essentially an agricultural library but recognised by the government as a 'public' library in the same sense as the British Museum; any legitimate enquirer could be admitted and over 8,000 readers a year were recorded by 1849, when the grant was £6,000.[92] This collection was the basis of the future National Library of Ireland. A number of private agricultural societies possessed books, such as the Strathearn Society in Perthshire, which donated its library to the Crieff subscription library in 1819, and the Amicable Literary Society of Galway (1791). The Scarborough Agricultural Library was the town's main subscription library. Liverpool Farmers' Library was begun in 1840, as were the Montgomeryshire Agricultural Society, to which the earl of Powis donated his farming library,[93] and the Monmouth Farmers' Club, which included a large library.[94] The York Farmers' Club had a library by 1846.[95] The 1849 Select Committee heard of a number of Scottish farmers' clubs which had formed libraries as a 'means of spreading sound rural statistical and economical knowledge throughout Great Britain'.[96]

Other libraries catering for specialist tastes included the collection of Sir John Soane, bequeathed to trustees in 1837 as a public architectural library, while J. M. Dodd, architect, established a commercial architectural lending library in Brompton by 1849.[97] The Edinburgh Architectural Subscription Library, a proprietary library, was founded in 1832.[98] Circulating libraries for music abounded, as well as a number of libraries for foreign literature, such as Rolandi's in London, or the Glasgow and Greenock foreign libraries (both flourished in the 1820s). Thomas Boosey started a foreign musical library in 1827.[99] The Manchester Foreign Library lasted from 1830 to 1903, acquired over 12,000 volumes of French, German, Italian and Spanish books, and was absorbed into Manchester Central Library; its clientèle stemmed mostly

90 Undated catalogue in Newcastle Central Library.
91 B. Scragg, *Manchester Law Library* ([Newcastle], 2002).
92 *Select Committee on public libraries*, 182.
93 *The Times*, 28 December 1840.
94 K. Kissack, *Monmouth* (London, 1975), 277.
95 Catalogue in British Library.
96 *Select Committee on public libraries*, 253.
97 The British Library's copy of Dodd's library rules was 'destroyed'.
98 *New Edinburgh Almanac* (1850), 517.
99 *The Times*, 11 January 1827.

from émigré families.[100] A library for German workers existed in London in the 1840s.[101]

Specialised libraries blossomed in London, where so many institutions collected books, from the Swedenborgian Society (1828) to the United Grand Lodge, whose library dated from 1831. (Freemasons' Hall, Edinburgh, also contained a substantial library.) Although a library for the Lord Mayor of London had been founded in 1806 (examined by John Bowyer Nichols in 1815[102]), the corporation of London only decided in 1824 to start a collection devoted to London and the home counties, helped by William Upcott. The resulting Guildhall Library opened in 1828, its conscientious first librarian being an antiquary and former actor, William Herbert. The stock reached about 10,000 by 1840, and the library, not yet a genuinely 'public' library, was collecting beyond its original London boundaries.[103] The livery companies did not possess libraries, with a few exceptions, notably the Clockmakers' Company (1813), now containing over 1,000 printed volumes and deposited in the Guildhall Library.[104]

Many of the libraries described here were, or became, general collections, with a range of books that public libraries would later provide. Yet each library catered for its own constituency, whether a London club or an army barracks. What is significant is the value attached to libraries and that there was no stopping their increase. In 1849 *Punch* described as potentially 'one of the greatest engines of literature' a proposal by the North Western Railway to establish circulating libraries at every station. Borrowers would leave a deposit, returnable minus a small fee. Problems were foreseen: would candles be lent in dim carriages; would payment depend on the length of line; and would each station have to contain the first and last volume of each novel (no one read the second)?[105] In general *Punch* supported the proposal. Libraries had entered the age of steam, seeking fresh customers and crossing new boundaries. By 1850 libraries catered for all tastes, and slowly central government was expressing support. The Great Exhibition of 1851, visited by 6 million, showcased British design and engineering might and highlighted the successes of British industry, helping to fuel a desire for knowledge and information for which libraries could act as 'engines of literature'.

100 L. Shepherd, 'German literature in nineteenth-century Manchester', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 71:3 (1989), 79–87.

101 P. Vodosek, *Auf dem Weg zur öffentlichen Literaturversorgung* (Wiesbaden, 1985).

102 E. Edwards, *Memoirs of libraries* (London, 1859), vol. 1, 98; manuscript catalogue in Lambeth Palace Library.

103 D. Dawe and E. Padwick, *William Herbert (1772–1851)* (London, 1997), chapters 11–12.

104 J. Bromley (comp.), *The Clockmakers' library* (London, 1977).

105 *Punch* 16 (1849), 61.

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