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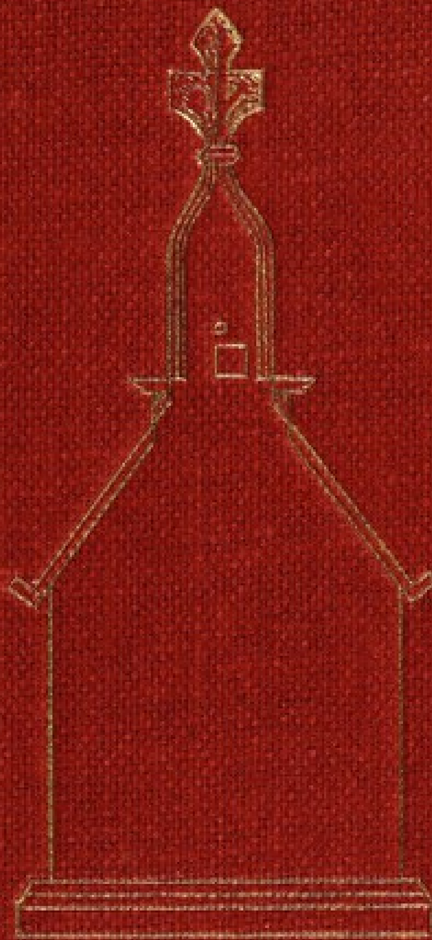

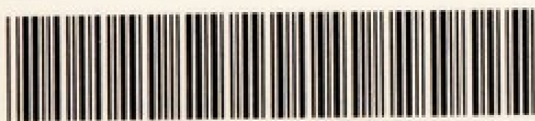

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A SURVEY OF FOUR CENTURIES IN THE
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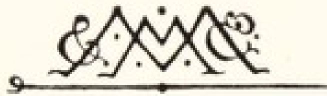

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A SURVEY OF FOUR CENTURIES IN THE EVOLUTION OF THE ENGLISH LIBRARY

BY

BURNETT HILLMAN STREETER

FELLOW OF THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD; CANON OF HEREFORD
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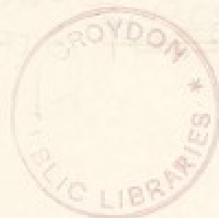

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ERRATA

Page 14, line 28: *for* (p. 281), *read* (p. 283)
Page 66, line 13: *for* (p. 100), *read* (p. 98)
Page 106, line 5: *delete* 195
Page 128, footnote: *for* (illustr., p. 40), *read* (illustr., p. 42)

CROYD... PUBLIC LIBR...

INTRODUCTION

The old-time library was conceived, not as a storeroom for books, but as a noble reading-room. A library was, and was meant to be, a thing of beauty—and of use. When Sir Thomas Bodley, in 1598, was working out his scheme for a University Library at Oxford, he wrote to the Vice-Chancellor asking for the nomination of a committee to consult with him, so that they might "soone resolve vpon the best, as well for shewe and statly forme, as for capacitie and strength and commoditie of Students".

"Shewe and statly forme" were subordinated to design; and in England, for more than four hundred years, design was dominated by the practice of chaining books. A chained book cannot be read unless there is some kind of desk or table on which to rest it *within the length of the chain*; that fact conditioned the structure of the bookcase. Again, since a chained book cannot be moved to the window, the window must be near the book; that determined the plan of the building.

Chaining, then, in ancient libraries is not an interesting irrelevance. The fact that some anthropoid ancestor began to employ his front paws for grasping instead of for walking conditioned the upright posture of man and his use of tools—and so his whole future development. Just so, the fact that books were chained conditioned the structure and development of the historic English libraries to the end of the seventeenth century; and it did this even where, as at Cambridge after 1626, chaining began to be disused. Books continued to be chained much later than is commonly realized. Fresh

chains were being purchased at Chetham College, Manchester, in 1742, and at the Bodleian in 1751. At The Queen's College, Oxford, the chains were not taken from the books till 1780; at Merton not till 1792. Magdalen was the last college in Oxford to retain them; here they lasted till 1799, when woodwork and chains alike succumbed to Wyatt. Seven libraries in the list opposite have never lost them.

The removal of the chains, in a later generation, from a library which originally had them is therefore, from the standpoint of the student of library furniture, a mere accident. Accordingly the title of this book compels the inclusion of many famous libraries which have now lost their chains, or which have merely kept one or two as interesting relics.

Except so far as the exposition has made it necessary to allude to Continental examples, I have deliberately confined my survey to England. The evolution of the English library over four centuries is a field more than sufficiently wide. It is also sufficiently varied. The developments at Oxford and Cambridge are markedly different; cathedrals tend to follow either an Oxford or a Cambridge model. The group of libraries in the Manchester area has also its own peculiar features; yet other types appear in Parish Churches. For reasons which will appear, I have admitted illustrations, as well as a brief account, of the chained library at Zutphen in Holland, and of that designed by Michelangelo in the Laurentian library, Florence. And I have included a discussion, with illustrations, of four notable libraries which, though never actually chained, are structurally related to the chained library in a way peculiarly intimate.

The development here studied is analogous to that evolution of structure which the biologist loves to trace. The individual library can be properly understood only if it is seen in organic relation to a long process of growth envisaged as a whole.

The scope of this book will be made evident by a list of libraries illustrated and, with varying degree of detail, described; the asterisk denotes a library never chained.

English Libraries Illustrated and Described

At Oxford:
- Merton
- Magdalen
- Corpus
- All Souls
- St. John's
- The Bodleian
- Jesus
- Trinity
- St. Edmund Hall
- Queen's
- Lincoln

The Manchester Group:
- Chetham College
- Gorton Church
- Turton Church
- Bolton School

At Cambridge:
- Queens'
- Trinity Hall
- Clare*
- St. John's*
- King's
- Peterhouse*

In Cathedrals:
- Lincoln
- Hereford
- Westminster Abbey
- Wells
- Durham*

In Churches elsewhere:
- Grantham
- Wimborne Minster
- All Saints', Hereford

An account is also given (without an illustration) of three libraries which have the ancient books and chains, but have lost their original woodwork, viz., Chirbury, Guildford Grammar School, Denchworth; of chained books in Winchester Cathedral and of the library at Enkhuizen in Holland; also (with an illustration) of the interesting chained book-desk at Wootton Wawen, near Birmingham.

The above list includes, to the best of my belief, all libraries on the grand scale in this country which were once chained and which (though they may have lost their chains) still preserve substantial remains of the original woodwork. Of libraries on the smaller scale, in Grammar Schools and Parish Churches, it purports to include only those which still retain as many as forty of the original chains. Doubtless, on the day after this book is published, it will be brought to my notice that the list contains grave omissions. To aim at com-

pleteness in any subject is only to qualify oneself to write a homily on the Vanity of Human Wishes.

The evolution of which this book is a study has two aspects. There is the evolution of structure, due to the necessity, recurrent in every generation, of adapting the fittings of the library to cope with the continued multiplication of books. Along with this, there is an evolution of ornamental detail and decorative design, which runs parallel to that seen in contemporary architecture and furniture. Ancient library equipment has received curiously little study. It is a weakness—perhaps a commendable weakness—of people who write about libraries to be less interested in bookcases than in books; while to students of Architecture, or Domestic Furniture, library equipment is a subject which falls between two stools. In the old libraries the bookcases, desks and seats are an essential element in the architectural design; quite properly, therefore, they are ignored in books which deal specifically with Domestic Furniture. Yet in themselves they are objects so essentially of the nature of furniture that it is not strange they should receive small attention in treatises on Architecture.

The only comprehensive and scientific study of the subject in English is J. W. Clark's classic work *The Care of Books*—published 1901, now out of print. This is a continuation—in part a republication—of the pioneer work done by himself and his uncle, R. Willis, in their monumental *Architectural History of the University of Cambridge* (1886). Without the preliminary work done by Clark, my book could never have been written; and I cannot overstate my debt to him. But it is the merit of pioneer work to open up possibilities of further investigation, by which the conclusions first reached may be extended, or (if need be) modified. Some of the libraries I treat of are not even mentioned by Clark, others are dismissed by him in a few words; where we cover the same ground, either personal observation, or the having access to fresh documentary evidence, has enabled me to supplement in important respects,

and not infrequently to correct, his information or conclusions. Indeed, certain discoveries made in the course of my investigations entail a drastic revision of his conception of the chronological development and mutual relations of library forms in the mediaeval and renaissance periods—not least so within his own University of Cambridge.

My studies in this field began in connection with the restoration of the Chained Library at Hereford Cathedral, made possible by the public-spirited generosity of Mr. H. C. Moffatt, of Hamptworth Lodge, Salisbury, who is himself an expert judge of old furniture. In order to guard against mistakes in the work, I "got up" the subject of ancient library fittings; and was thus able to recognize the bookcases at Hereford as identical in type with those at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, or in Duke Humphrey's room in the Bodleian. The actual condition of the Hereford presses was the result partly of mutilation, partly of perverse shuffling in the reassembling of the parts after a removal in the last century. With the recognition of this began the discovery of missing parts.

Thereafter followed a period during which those of us concerned began to feel as if we were living inside a detective story. Nearly every day brought to light some missing part of the original library which was still in existence within the Cathedral itself, though detached from its old position, or some fresh clue to a correct reconstruction. I tell the story later in this book. The most dramatic find—it was one of the earliest—was the complete set of readers' seats which had once stood between the great bookpresses; these back-to-back seats had been taken apart, along the line of a (more or less) central joint, and then, by additions in soft wood to the original oak, had been converted into a row of pews, which had long formed a substantial part of the seating accommodation in the transepts of the Cathedral. A cupboard in the vestry, used for hanging surplices, was found to be made from a dismantled bookcase; a rough carpenter's bench to be similarly composed.

Almost every day for a fortnight, and for weeks afterwards at rarer intervals, there came to light some lost feature, some additional piece of the old material, or some fresh evidence as to the history of the fabric. One by one there turned up specimens of missing features —an original desk-hinge (found in two pieces on two different days); portions, first of the lower, then of the upper, member of the old cornice; first one, then all at once fourteen, then one more, of the original wooden brackets which support the desks. When the restoration was started it was supposed that we possessed only four complete presses, with fragments of not more than two others; at the end there were recovered seven complete presses (which are now fitted with no less than 1,444 of the original chains), beside the ends of two half-presses.

Carried away by the fascination of discovery, I continued my explorations in the libraries of Oxford, Cambridge, Westminster Abbey and Wells. At this point Mr. Norman Ault joined me in the chase. To his trained eye and sense of form and structure I owe the observation of many points of detail, which might otherwise have escaped me, in the libraries at Oxford; and, as will appear later, he is mainly responsible for discoveries at Cambridge, Lincoln Cathedral, and in the Manchester area, some of which are of far-reaching importance to the understanding of library evolution in England. In effect, we found that, even when the library examined had suffered severely from later "improvements"—and few had escaped scot-free—it was practicable (of course, with varying degrees of completeness) to do on paper what at Hereford has been done in concrete fact—to restore the original form. This done, it became possible—or rather necessary—to re-write the outline history of library evolution in this country.

The study of a development in structure, still more in ornamentation, requires an abundance of illustration. Of the 59 photographs reproduced in this volume, all but 16 were specially taken for this book, with a view to bringing out points in the letterpress; the rest

were carefully selected to the same end. To these Mr. Ault has added 20 illustrations and diagrams in pen and ink, besides 14 plans. It will be possible, therefore—at least such is my hope—for the reader, who finds parts of the letterpress too detailed for his taste, by following the illustrations in the order in which they occur, to get a bird's eye view of the development in general.

Fifteen of these photographs are by my friend, Mr. F. C. Morgan, Librarian of the City Library, Hereford, who spared no time and pains to get the best possible results. Seven of those of Oxford libraries, with one of Wootton Wawen, are by Lieut. J. G. C. Low, an old member of my own College; for seven others (from negatives taken for him by the Oxford University Press) I am indebted to Mr. Angus S. Macdonald, of Snead & Co., Jersey City, U.S.A. These thirty may be identified in the list of illustrations by the initials of those to whom, respectively, I owe them. To *Country Life* my thanks are due for permission to reproduce five photographs, and for allowing a sixth to be taken specially for this book by their own expert. The reproduction of Buckler's water-colour drawing of The Queen's College Library was freely put at my disposal by the Oxford University Press. The photograph of the library of Westminster Abbey was taken for me by Mr. G. A. Dunn, through the kind intervention of Canon Storr. I have also to thank Preb. Kynaston of Lincoln and Mr. R. H. Bulmer respectively for photographs which gave useful details for the drawings of the libraries of Lincoln Cathedral and Clare College. Photographs were taken for me by Messrs. Palmer Clarke of Cambridge (pp. 37, 281); Dawkes & Partridge of Wells (p. 277); J. R. Edis of Durham (p. 285); Kay & Foley of Bolton (pp. 300, 301); C. E. Willis of Bolton (pp. 303, 305): others were supplied to me for reproduction by Miss A. O. Yardley of Wimborne (p. 296); Messrs. Alinari of Florence (p. 25); and W. Lee of Grantham (p. 298).

I owe the correction of many errors, as well as constructive

suggestions, to the Rev. J. S. Bezzant, Col. A. S. L. Farquharson, Canon Lilley, Mr. H. C. Moffatt and Mr. F. C. Morgan, who read through the book in proof. For the Index I am indebted to Mrs. C. W. Sowby.

It is not possible to mention the names of all the Heads of Colleges, Deans of Cathedrals, Librarians, and others who have answered questions, put at my disposal documentary evidence heretofore unpublished, and in other ways facilitated the investigations of myself or Mr. Norman Ault. I will only say that, had I been previously disposed to accept St. Augustine's doctrine of the depravity of human nature, I should have been convinced of its falsity by the kindness I have experienced in the writing of this book.

B. H. STREETER

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD
30th July 1931

CHAPTER I

LIBRARY EVOLUTION

CROYDON * PUBLIC LIBRARIES *

SYNOPSIS

In the Middle Ages books were originally kept in cupboards, called almeries (*armaria*), and in chests, or they were chained to desks in a church. Carrels in the cloister were provided for reading. The Chained Library begins in England about 1320; but not all books were chained.

J. W. Clark distinguishes three stages of library equipment—the "Lectern-system", the "Stall-system" (Duke Humphrey's room in the Bodleian, and Hereford), and the "Wall-system". His nomenclature to be retained, but his conception of their chronological development and relation to be modified.

The Lectern-system is best preserved at Zutphen in Holland; but this represents only one of several mediaeval models. At Lincoln Cathedral are lecterns of a different type. Another type was developed in Italy, *e.g.* in Michelangelo's work in the Laurentian Library. All the above have seats; but some libraries had lecterns for standing readers only.

The Lectern-system prevailed at Cambridge till 1600. Evidence for this, and for the type of lectern in vogue, is mainly derived from a fresh study of the remains of the original lecterns at Queens' College, and of their relation to the existing fittings at Trinity Hall, which are earlier than was supposed by Willis and Clark.

In France libraries were being fitted on the Lectern-system as late as 1508. Did the Stall-system ever reach France? Possibility that it was a local Oxford form, until Bodley's development of it made it famous.

The Stall-system a combination of a lectern with an almery. It first appears in the original fittings of Magdalen College, Oxford, 1480. In the early examples—the "Two-Decker" stage—there are only two shelves. The "Three-Decker" model, which afterwards became the standard type, is first seen at Hereford, 1590.

Evidence that Sir Thomas Bodley copied the Hereford model, with minor improvements. Bodley's presses were widely copied in England—probably even at Enkhuisen in Holland.

The Hereford model described—the "presses" (the technical name of bookcases of this kind) and desks, the ironwork and method of chaining, catalogue frames and other woodwork.

The Stall-system was introduced into Cambridge in the old library at Clare,

1626–27; but here chains were dispensed with. Chaining was also abandoned at St. John's, 1628—the seats and desks being replaced by dwarf bookcases with a peaked desk on top. Peterhouse, *c.* 1645, exhibits an alternative modification of the Stall-system, without chains—two *podia* (seats attached to the press) being substituted for the back-to-back seat. Peterhouse became the model of later seventeenth-century Cambridge libraries, the *podium* shrinking into a mere ornament. At King's the structural experiments of St. John's and Peterhouse were combined; but chaining was revived, and continued till 1777.

The Wall-system, on the grand scale, is found in the Escorial at Madrid, begun in 1563. It was introduced to England by Sir Thomas Bodley in the new wing of his library, which he began in 1610, known as *Arts End*. This, and the subsequent addition *Selden End*, were chained. So was the library of St. Edmund Hall, 1682, the first College library on the Wall-system.

The Wall-system, without chains, is seen in eighteenth-century libraries of Oxford, at All Souls, Christ Church, Worcester and the Radcliffe Camera.

CHAPTER I

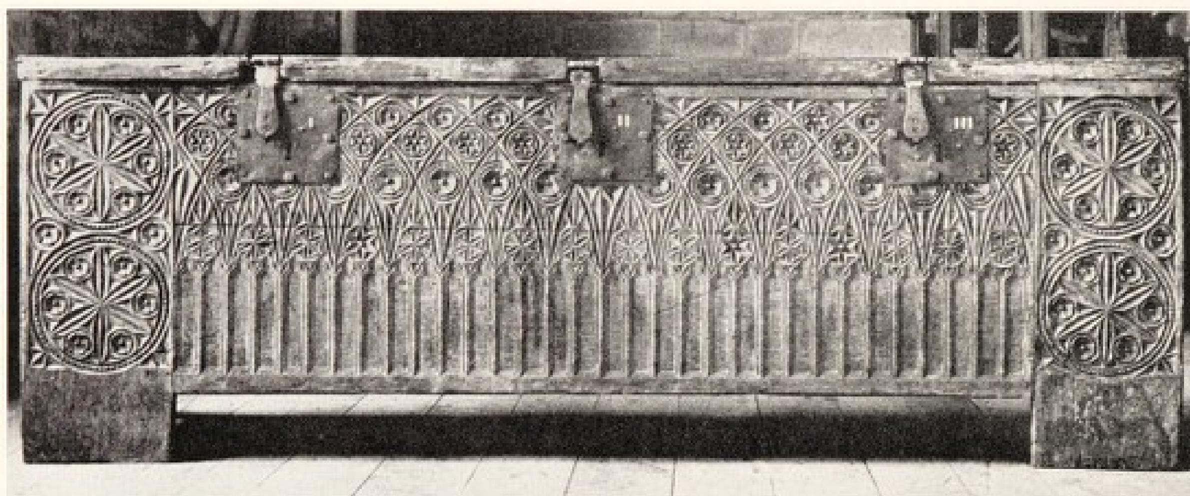
LIBRARY EVOLUTION

Beginnings

The first impression of a visitor, entering an ancient library like that at Hereford Cathedral, is the quaintness of the sight of a row of bookcases with all the books attached to them by chains. Next his reflection will be, How odd that a bookcase should have fixed to it on both sides desks and seats for the reader, all as part of a single design. From the standpoint of the development of library equipment, such a visitor is looking at things upside down. The chains and the desks are the primitive part of the arrangement; the seats are the next most primitive; the bookshelves are of the nature of an afterthought.

I will explain what I mean. In the Middle Ages books were rare, and so was honesty. A book, it was said, was worth as much as a farm; unlike a farm, it was portable property that could easily be purloined. Valuables in all ages require protection. Books, therefore, were kept under lock and key. This was done in two ways: they were either shut up in a cupboard (almery or *armarium*) or a chest, or they were chained, sometimes four or five together, to a desk, often in the choir. The "communar's roll" or account book of Wells Cathedral for the year 1414 includes an item of three shillings and ninepence, paid "for two rods and two chains 3 ft. long each for one porphory and one psalter, the gift of Master R. Drayton, in the choir". Also for a lectern to support a book of Canon Law "on the north part of the choir", two shillings and fivepence.

At Oxford, according to Anthony Wood, the books belonging to the University were originally "locked up in Chests, or chained upon desks in St. Mary's Chancel and Church", and "the said Chests stood in the Old Congregation House, or in one of the Chapels joining to St. Mary's Church"; and this "continued till the Library over the Congregation House was built" [*c.* 1320].[1] I give later (p. 117) a description of the fourteenth-century book-chest here depicted.



BOOK-CHEST, FOURTEENTH CENTURY, HEREFORD

In the wall of the cloister of a cathedral or monastery, recesses may often be seen, usually near the Chapter House, or just inside the entrance to it. These, fitted with wooden shelves and doors, were almeries for books. Sometimes the almery, instead of being a cupboard in the wall, was a piece of standing furniture, rather like a wardrobe, fitted up with shelves and doors. At first these almeries seem to have stood in the cloister; but as books multiplied small chambers were built specially to contain them—apparently still in almeries or in chests. This practice began with the Cistercians early in the twelfth century. But these rooms were quite small and were used merely for storing books and not for reading. Reading and copying were done in the cloister.

[1] *Hist. and Antiq. Univ. Oxf.* (Gutch), ii., pt. 2, p. 910.

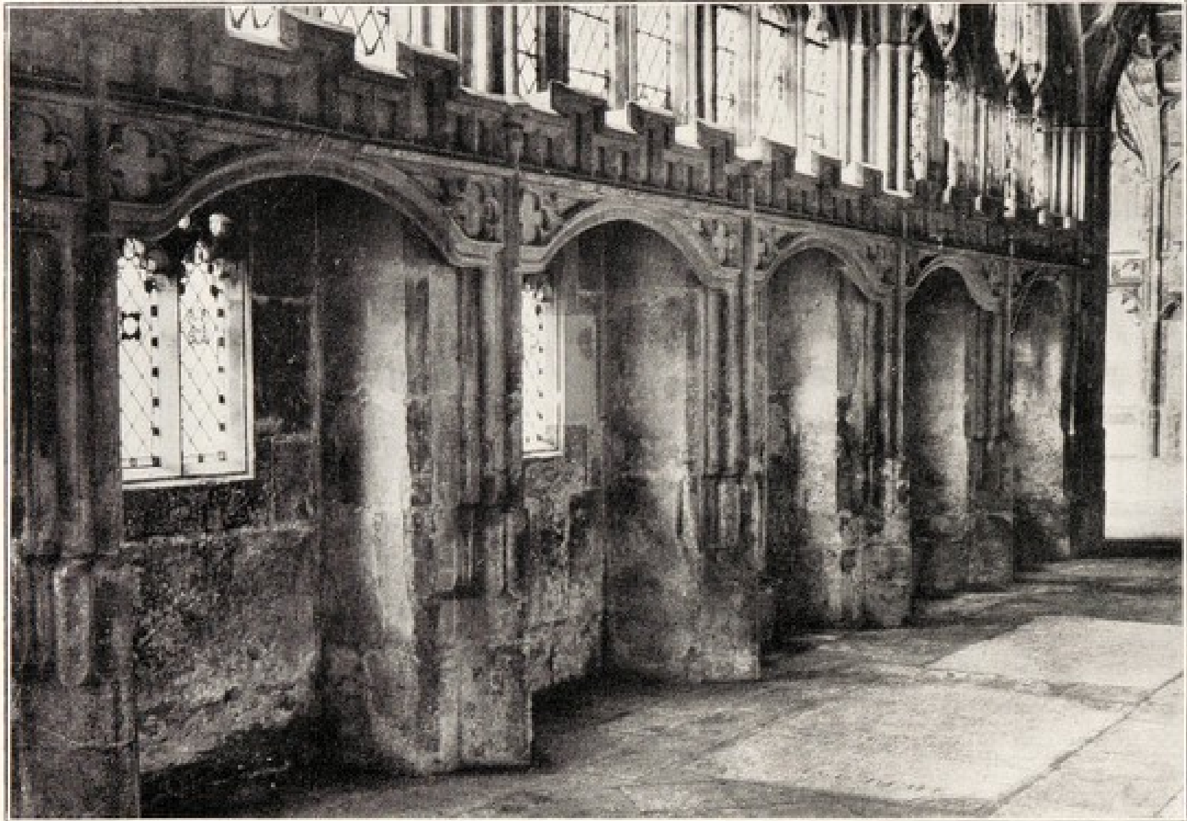
At some date, apparently before 1283, there had been developed in the cloister a system of tiny studies, about the size of a sentry box, known as "carrels"; each of which was provided with a desk and a stool to accommodate a single monk. These were set against the windows of the cloister—at Durham in rows of three to each window—so as to get the best possible light. In an account by an eye-witness of the "Monastical Church" of Durham before the suppression, printed as *The Rites of Durham* (Surtees Soc., 1842, p. 70), there is a description of the carrels, from which I quote:

> In every wyndowe iij Pewes or Carrells . . . all fynely wainscotted and verie close, all but the forepart, which had carved wourke that gave light in at ther carrell doures of wainscott. And in every carrell was a deske to lye there bookes on. And the carrells was no greater then from one stanchell of the wyndowe to another.

A development of the carrel, to be seen at Gloucester, is of special interest for our discussion, since it exhibits the connection, fundamental to the later mediaeval library, of a row of desks and of equidistant windows. The cloisters of Gloucester Cathedral are later than the earliest libraries which are windowed in this way; but even if it were proved that these were the first cloisters to have carrels as part of the structure, the analogy would be interesting. On the south side of the Great Cloister, probably completed before 1400, is the row of twenty carrels built in stone (illustration overleaf). Each of these has a window of its own, and was originally fitted with a desk and stool and possibly also a door with an open grill, so that its occupant could be inspected from the cloister. It was in the well-lighted carrel in the cloister—not in dark "cells" as is popularly supposed—that the monk read, copied and painted the beautiful illuminated MSS. which we so much admire.

To sum up. About the year 1300 the communal life of the monastery had come to deal with books in four different ways. There was the lectern or desk to which one or more books were chained; there

were the almeries and chests in which books could be locked up; there was the row of carrels in which books, taken from adjacent almeries, could be read in a good light in a semi-public place, under the supervision of the person or persons responsible for the safety



THE CARRELS, GLOUCESTER

of the books; there was also, in some monasteries, a room set apart for books, though not adapted or used for reading them. From the confluence of these elements was developed the Chained Library.

Actually the first such library to come to the birth was probably in some monastery that has long ago perished. The first about which we have definite knowledge was in the room mentioned above, built *c.* 1320 by Bishop Cobham over the Old Congregation House in St. Mary's, Oxford. In 1373–74 Bishop Rede gave money towards a library at The Queen's College; he also founded that of Merton.

At New College the provision of such a room is for the first time part of the Founder's plan (1379). All these libraries were originally fitted up on what is known as the "Lectern-system". If I may anticipate a conclusion, of which the proving will require much argument, the fittings at Merton resembled those at Zutphen (see illustration, p. 11); but Cobham's Library and that of New College were more like the Old Library at Lincoln Cathedral (p. 17).

But it is a great mistake to suppose that all the books possessed by a monastery or college were in the library. The old College statutes at Oxford and Cambridge imply a division of the community books into two parts.[1] The more valuable are chained in the library; others, especially text-books and duplicates, are lent to the Fellows under more or less stringent conditions—usually at a solemn scrutiny once a year. At New College the curious position of the windows in the living-rooms, as originally designed by William of Wykeham, was determined by this custom. In a room to be occupied by four Fellows there were four extra windows—two looking into the quadrangle and two, opposite these, in the outside wall of the College—placed as nearly as practicable in the four corners of the room. At each window was a stool and desk in a kind of carrel—one such carrel for each occupant of the room. If the Fellow was studying civil or canon law, the Founder's statutes expressly allowed him two text-books for his own special use. Indeed, it would appear that at New College it was only the books which remained unassigned after the Fellows had made their selection that were chained in the library. Merton was exceptionally rich in MSS., and here—though perhaps not elsewhere—the collection of books available for lending, when not actually lent, was kept in chests in the treasury, not in the library. This distinction of books into two classes, for lending and for chaining, explains the

[1] For evidence, cf. Willis and Clark, *Architectural Hist. Cambridge*, iii., pp. 387 ff.; W. H. Garrod, *Library Regulations of a Mediaeval College* (*Transact. Bibliograph. Soc.*, Dec. 1927); also P. S. Allen in *The Library*, Fourth Series, iv.

frequent injunction of testators that books are to be *chained in the library*. In Coxe's *Catalogue of Oxford MSS.*, inscriptions in MSS. (especially under Merton) are quoted in forms such as:

> incathenandus in communi libraria ejusdem collegii.
> incathenatus in communi libraria ejusdem collegii in libraria studere volencium.

It was not a matter of course that a book should be assigned to the library. Indeed, I am informed by Prof. F. M. Powicke (whose researches on the subject will probably be already published by the time this is in print) that he has evidence that the books kept in the library at Merton were less numerous than those reserved for the personal use of the Fellows. For Peterhouse, Cambridge, the actual figures in the year 1418 are known. Here, out of a total of 302 books, 143 are said to be chained, 125 are assigned for division among the Fellows. The remaining 34 are evidently the books covered by the description, "those of which some are intended to be sold, while certain others are laid up in chests within the aforesaid house".[1]

J. W. Clark distinguishes three main stages in the evolution of the library, which he names, respectively, the "Lectern-system", the "Stall-system" and the "Wall-system".[2] It may avoid confusion in the exposition that follows if I say at once that, while accepting this nomenclature, I have been driven step by step to see that a radical modification is required of his view both of the chronological development of these types, and of their relation to one another and to earlier forms. By "Wall-system" is meant the familiar arrangement of bookcases with their backs to the wall seen in most libraries of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Of the "Stall-system", Duke Humphrey's room in the Bodleian is the most famous example: the best preserved is at Hereford (see frontis-

[1] Willis and Clark (*op. cit.*, iii., p. 403) curiously take these 34 to be also chained.
[2] *The Care of Books*, 1st ed., pp. 153, 172, 267.

piece and p. 205); here the characteristic feature is the bookcase with books on both sides standing at right angles to the wall (which I call by the technical name "press"), having desk and seat attached. The "Lectern-system", which was the earliest, I proceed to describe.

The Lectern-system; Zutphen

The idea of a room set apart for books was there; and the practice of having a row of desks and seats against a row of windows had been developed in the carrel; also (unless Gloucester is the first example of its kind) this had led to an alteration in the structure of the building, so that each window lighted only one desk and seat. The quotation given above from the accounts of Wells Cathedral (p. 3) suggests that the practice of having books attached to a lectern, and that by chains *running on a rod*, was customary in the choir. Combine the cloister carrel and the choir desk, and you get the arrangement to which Clark gives the name of "Lectern-system".

There is one perfect example of a Gothic library of this type, in the church of St. Walpurga at Zutphen in Holland. It represents, however, not the earliest stage (as Clark supposed) in the evolution of the Lectern-system, but the second stage. I had the good fortune to visit this library in November 1930, under the guidance of Mr. J. Gimberg, ex-keeper of the Town Archives, who has published a booklet on the library, and of the Rev. J. Henzel, minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in that city, who had specially taken for me the photograph reproduced overleaf.

On the south side of the room there is a row of ten lecterns with benches between them. The windows are few but large; so there is not that correlation between the row of seats and a row of narrow windows found in most other ancient libraries. The lectern, it will be noticed, has a desk on both sides; the books are chained to a rod just above the peak of the desk. The rod is secured in its place by a lock on the face-end of the lectern. About half an inch from the

end of the rod deep wide grooves are filed, into which the bolt of the lock shoots; when the bolt is shot back, the rod will slide out so that books can be added or removed.

The chain is about a foot long, with long thin links like those at Hereford (p. 340), and it has a ring at both ends. One ring is held by a metal clip riveted to the top edge of the right-hand cover of the book; the ring at the other end of the chain runs loosely on the rod (like a curtain ring), and has a swivel attachment to the end link of the chain. The swivel is meant to save the chains from being twisted and so possibly broken. (At Hereford, Wells, and in the Oxford Colleges—chains required for the Stall-system being very much longer—the swivel is usually found in the middle of the chain.)

The Zutphen Library is of a curiously picturesque shape—being built against the outer wall of the choir of the Church, so that the room has a bend in the middle where the apse begins to turn. It is on the ground floor; but, before this was built (1561–63), there was a library in a smaller chamber above one of the aisles. To this upper chamber there have since been brought a number of books from two suppressed priories, many of which still have attached to them their original chains. The chains are of the same length as those in the present library, which shows that the libraries of the suppressed priories must have been fitted with lecterns; for the Stall-system requires much longer chains. We may infer that the present lecterns were made on the ancient traditional pattern of the locality.

The ironwork is probably as old as the woodwork, but, being made independently, partially covers the carving. Each of the ten lecterns against the outer wall has a carving on the "face-end" (see p. 55); the representations include figures of Christ, the Lamb of God, the Virgin, emblems of the Four Evangelists, etc. In the municipal accounts for the year 1563 mention is made of a payment to Master Wilhelm, the *Bildermacker* or statue-carver of the town, for carving the desks in the library; the same craftsman worked also in stone, and carved the capitals of the columns in the library.

THE ZUTPHEN LECTERNS

Against the north wall of the library are eight lecterns with plain ends—similar to the wall-ends of the carved lecterns which can be seen in the photograph. These plain lecterns were added in 1565.

The average length of the desks is 9 ft.; the distance between the desks is 2 ft. 8 in.; the height of the lower edge of the desk above the floor is 2 ft. $9\frac{1}{2}$ in.; the top of the bench is 1 ft. 10 in. from the floor; the width of the bench is $10\frac{1}{2}$ in.

I would call attention to what I will name the "foundation-beams", since they are a feature which recurs in the great majority of the larger libraries treated of in this book. The "face-ends" and the "wall-ends" (as I will call them) of the lecterns, and also the upright supports at either end of the benches, stand on, and are mortised into, a pair of long heavy beams. Elsewhere these run parallel to one another the whole length of the room. They make the whole row of lecterns and seats (or, in later libraries, of presses and seats) on one side of a library into a single structure; and, since they are firmly fixed to the floor, they also make the row part of the fabric of the room.

Mediaeval Diversity

Anthony Wood states that when the White Friars (the Carmelites) moved from their original abode in Oxford to Beaumont Palace (presented to them by King Edward II., in fulfilment of a vow to the Virgin made during the rout at Bannockburn), their books, previously kept in chests, were placed in a large room provided with "divers pewes (*foruli*) or deskes" (*Oxf. Hist. Soc.*, xvii., p. 429). The gift of the Palace was confirmed to them in 1317. This *may* have been the introduction to Oxford of the Lectern-system. At any rate, the letter from the University to Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, quoted below (p. 199), makes it evident that Cobham's Library was fitted up on the Lectern-system. We must not, however, jump to the conclusion that its fittings were *exactly* like those at Zutphen.

Clark makes a brilliant use of the model of Zutphen to explain the peculiar features in the existing fittings at Merton College, Oxford; and his conjecture that Merton was originally fitted up like Zutphen is confirmed by fresh evidence which I shall later on adduce. I shall also show that Wells was originally furnished in this way. But his argument that the remains of the old lecterns at Queens' College, Cambridge, and at Lincoln Cathedral imply that these libraries also were originally of the Zutphen type, is fallacious. He was misled by the fact that the elevations of these lecterns, when represented in diagram form, show the desk in all three at approximately the same height. But the convenient height of a desk for a sitting reader is determined by the proportions of the human body; it is not a thing which varies with the idiosyncrasy of the architect. What first struck me on examining the library at Queens' was the great distance between the bookcases, the lower parts of which are the remains of lecterns. At Zutphen the distance between the lecterns varies from 2 ft. 7 in. to 2 ft. 9 in.; at Queens' it varies from 5 ft. 5 in. to 5 ft. 9 in. At Zutphen a reader sitting on a bench midway between the lecterns is conveniently seated for reading a book resting on the desk; but no one on a seat similarly placed between the lecterns at Queens' could do this, unless endowed with the neck of a giraffe.

Again, the original entrance to the library at Queens' was between a lectern and a half-lectern at the east end of the north wall; if there had been, as Clark suggests, a single bench fixed half-way between these, it would have stood right in the middle of the doorway. It follows that *if* the benches at Queens' were fixed, as at Zutphen, to a foundation-beam, there must have been *two* benches between each lectern, with a space of about 2 ft. 6 in. between them.

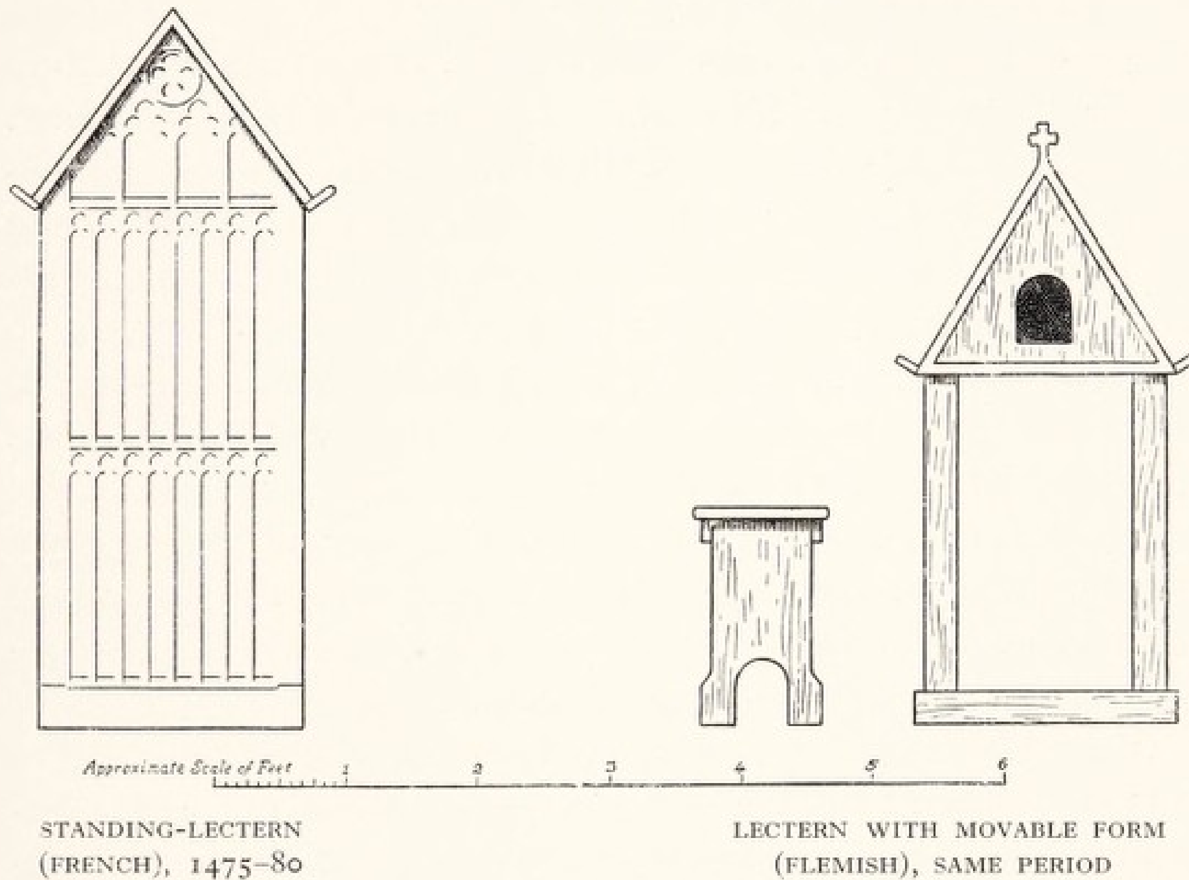
The distance from centre to centre of the lecterns at Zutphen averages 5 ft. 6 in.; this is exactly the distance from centre to centre of the wall-spaces between the windows (against which the bookcases stand) at Merton. The corresponding measurement at Wells before alternate windows were blocked up was 5 ft. 7 in. The case,

therefore, for supposing that Merton and Wells were originally fitted on the model from which Zutphen derives is strong. But the measurements of certain other ancient libraries are as ill-adapted to this model as are those of Queens', Cambridge. The oldest known example of a room built expressly for a library with a row of equidistant windows on each side is, as has been already mentioned, that begun by Bishop Cobham, 1320, for the University of Oxford. Here the average distance from centre to centre of the windows is 7 ft. 6 in., the same as at Queens', Cambridge. In three other early Oxford libraries, New College (finished 1387), Trinity (1417) and Balliol (begun 1431), the distance from centre to centre of the windows exceeds 7 feet. If I am right in my view that the "Stall-system" did not come to Oxford till about 1480, these libraries must originally have been fitted with lecterns; but in none of them would it have been possible for a reader, sitting on a bench midway between these, to read books resting on the desks.

That in some of these libraries there were two benches between the lecterns is probable; since this seems to have been the arrangement at Lincoln Cathedral. But there was also in vogue a system of a totally different kind: the lectern intended for a reader in a standing position. The "standing-lectern", as I will call it, retained its popularity at Cambridge well into the seventeenth century. At Trinity Hall (illustration, p. 37) standing-lecterns are the feature of the library. At St. John's the dwarf bookcases between the great presses are fitted with desks for a standing reader; and there is no evidence that any other kind of desk or table was originally provided. The woodwork in the Old Library at King's, the refurnishing of which began in 1659, must, as I show in a later chapter (p. 281), have included dwarf bookcases of this kind.

We must not, however, suppose that the standing-lectern was an idiosyncrasy developed at Cambridge. The University Library at Leyden in 1610 was fitted with standing-lecterns, as is evident from an old print (which Clark reproduces) of that date; and Leyden at

that date was a University more important than either Oxford or Cambridge. In the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, is a French MS. (No. 164, of date 1475–80) in which is a picture of a library furnished with standing-lecterns. This also is reproduced by Clark; but he fails to call attention to the fact that in a picture of this sort it may be presumed that what the painter depicts is a more or less



STANDING-LECTERN (FRENCH), 1475–80

LECTERN WITH MOVABLE FORM (FLEMISH), SAME PERIOD

typical library of the period. In the above diagram is shown the end-elevation implied by the lecterns there depicted; and also, by way of contrast, the similar elevation of a lectern with a movable form for a *sitting* reader from a Flemish MS. of the same date.[1]

To us a library in which the reader is compelled to stand while reading would be deterrent. But we live in an age that is lenient to the weakness of the flesh. In one of the Chinese classics—a book of stories intended for the edification of youth—it is told of the ideal

[1] Cf. J. W. Clark, *The Care of Books*, p. 164. My references are to the first edition.

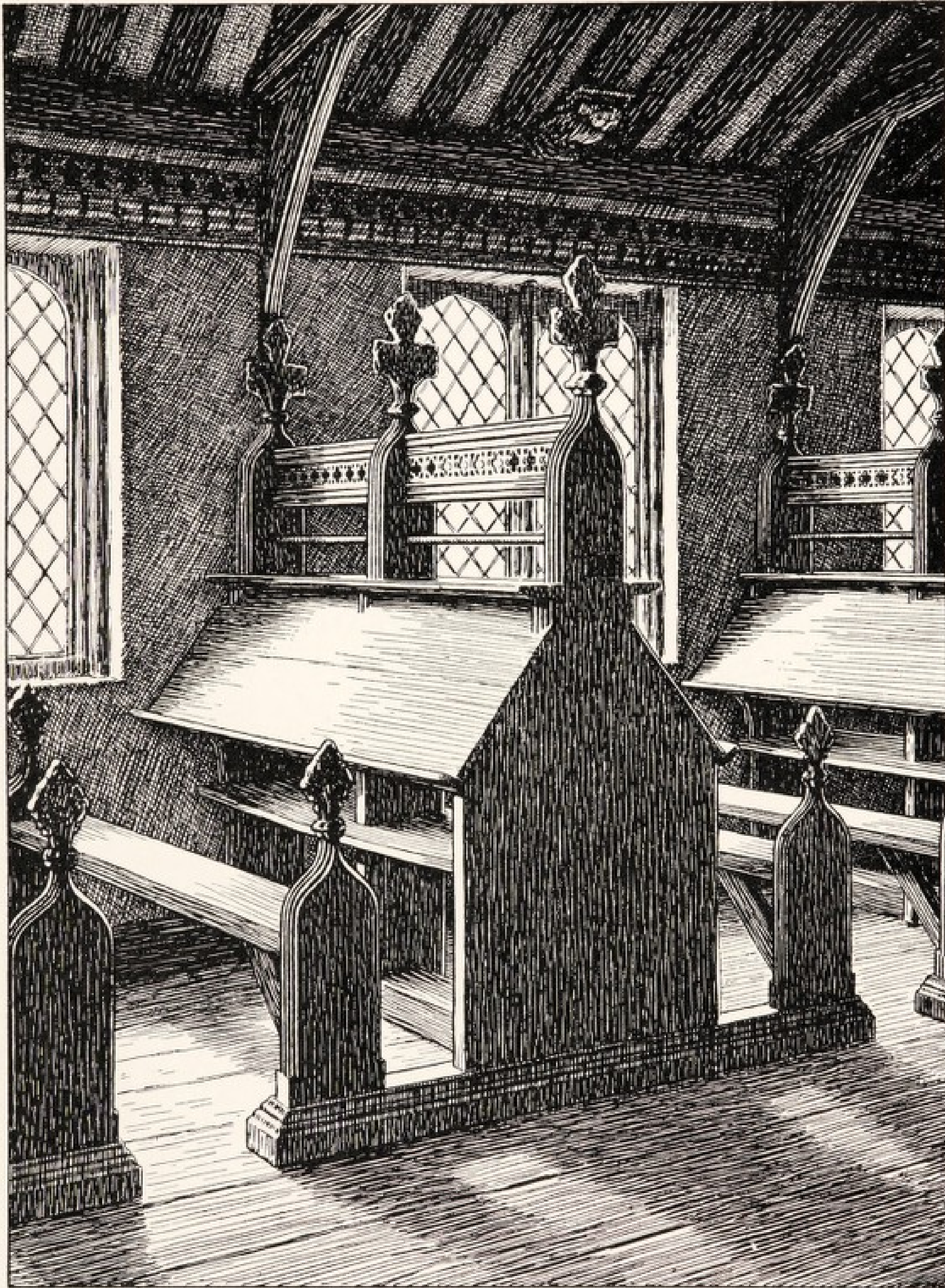
scholar that he was in the habit of fastening his queue to a beam, so that if, when overcome by drowsiness, his head fell forward, he would be awakened by the pull on his hair. Western austerity also, it would seem, had envisaged the possibility that in a library seats may be used for other purposes than reading.

Lincoln Cathedral

The Old Library of Lincoln Cathedral was a timber structure built between 1419 and 1426 above an already existing stone cloister. Three of the original lecterns with which it was fitted are still extant, though not in their original position. They stand, not for use but as interesting relics, at intervals down the middle of the handsome New Library built by Sir Christopher Wren in 1675. As so often with mediaeval woodwork, the dimensions vary from piece to piece; but on an average the height from the floor to the top of the poppy-head is 7 ft. 3½ in., the length is 7 ft., the breadth of the double-desk is 3 ft. 2½ in. Part of the Old Library was pulled down in 1789; but three bays of it remain. There remains also the original oak roof of these bays; but the old windows have been lost—possibly as a result of damage in a fire in 1609.

To Mr. Norman Ault, after a visit to Lincoln, there came the happy thought of replacing—on paper—the old lecterns in the position they had once occupied in the room for which they were designed. In his sketch—made after a second visit to Lincoln for the purpose of more detailed study—the seats and the windows are a conjectural restoration, based on examples to be seen elsewhere of work of the same date. But the drawing of the actual lecterns, and of the roof, has been checked in every detail by means of sketches made on the spot and also by photographs. Hence, along with the diagrams of the elevations of the face-end and wall-end, it can be used as a basis of reference in a scientific study of the structure.

I had communicated to him my tentative inference from measurements I had taken, that in the library at Queens', Cambridge,

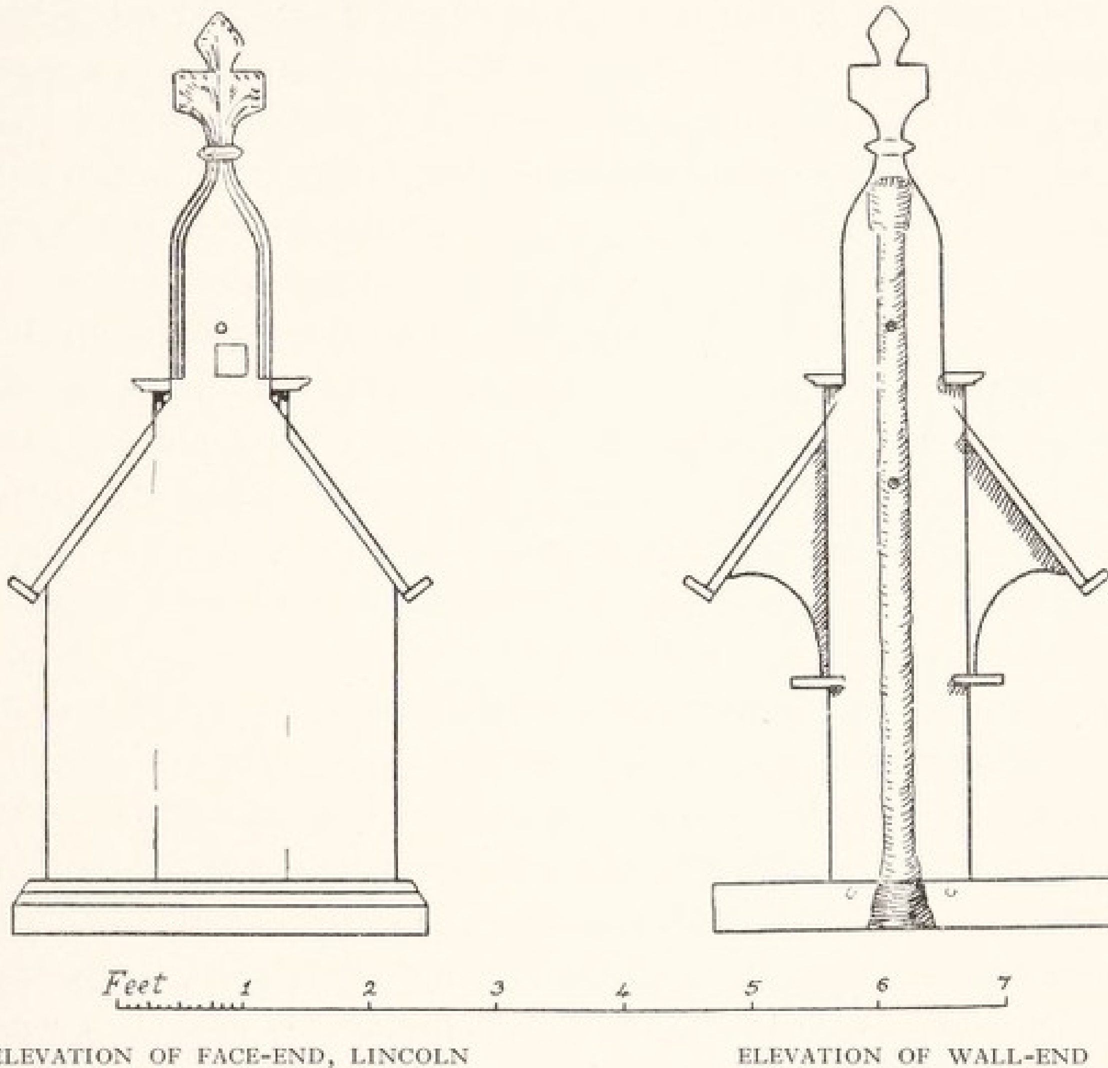


LINCOLN CATHEDRAL. OLD LIBRARY
(seats and windows restored)

there must have been two benches between each lectern. He found that the measurements at Lincoln compelled a similar conclusion; but he went a step further. I had myself taken it for granted (as from his diagram I infer did Clark) that the projecting timbers, on which the three lectern-ends stand, were the remains of a foundation-beam like that at Zutphen into which lectern and benches were mortised. Mr. Ault argued that, on this view, the heavy tie-beam along the floor level, which binds together the face-end and the wall-end of the lectern at Lincoln, would have no meaning or purpose. Foundation-beams—not only at Zutphen but in the many other libraries which have them—are always dowelled firmly to the floor. They do not require, and none of them exhibit, a tie-beam to keep them securely in their place; nor do the tie-beams add to the rigidity of the lecterns if these are mortised into foundation-beams so fixed.

Nevertheless, these projecting timbers are only fragments; they once extended further to right and left of the lectern than they do now. This is proved by two facts. First, the timber under the face-end is finely moulded, but where the moulding should turn at right angles at the ends it becomes merely a straight, sloped saw-cut. Secondly, whereas at the face-ends these timbers are cut at a point which makes them into projecting feet to the lectern-end, at the wall-end they are cut at irregular lengths, which vary from 31¼ to 38 inches. Evidently, then, these timbers performed the same function as the foundation-beams at Zutphen and elsewhere, in that they supported benches as well as lecterns. What the presence of the tie-beam shows is that each lectern, with its pair of benches, formed a separate piece of furniture—movable though ponderous—as restored in the drawing on p. 17. That is to say, the lectern and its seats were at Lincoln the unit in the furnishing of the library; they were not, as at Zutphen and Merton, conceived of as part of the fabric of the building. The final verification of this hypothesis only occurred to Mr. Ault in my rooms in College, whither he had

come to discuss the MS. of this section, which I was to post to the printer next day. He had with him the measurements made for the purpose of his diagrams and sketch; on consulting these to check some point, he saw for the first time the significance of the considerable



ELEVATION OF FACE-END, LINCOLN   ELEVATION OF WALL-END

variations in the height and width of these timbers. The dimensions in inches are as follows:

Lectern	I.	Timber under face-end,	5×5.	Timber under wall-end,	$5\frac{1}{4} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$.
„	II.	„ „	$5 \times 5\frac{3}{4}$.	„ „	$4\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{3}{4}$.
„	III.	„ „	$4\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$.	„ „	$4\frac{1}{2} \times 7$.

Now a foundation-beam, which runs the whole length of the library, is of a uniform height and width throughout. The beam under the row of face-ends may differ from that under the wall-

ends; those on the two sides of the library need not exactly match; but the variety shown by the above figures is only possible if each lectern and its benches was a separate piece of furniture.

The Lincoln lecterns, of course, stood with their wall-ends against the wall-spaces between the windows. Indeed (as Clark had already pointed out), the wall-ends have been hollowed out (diagram, p. 19) and the finial slightly tilted forward, so that the shaft and brace of the roof would fit into them when they were placed in this position. Thus the back finial (or poppy-head) of the lectern would have been immediately under the great brackets that support the roof, as shown in Mr. Ault's sketch. The distance between these brackets averages 8 feet; this, therefore, must have been the distance from centre to centre of the lecterns. Hence, as at Queens', they could not possibly have been used by a reader sitting on a bench fixed half-way between the two. But, as already shown, the timbers on which the lecterns rest are evidence that each lectern originally had its own pair of benches.

The conception of a lectern and its seats as a piece of movable furniture seems logically and structurally prior to the conception of a whole row of lecterns and seats mortised to a foundation-beam fixed to the floor so as to form part of the structure of the building. Now the arrangement of the windows in Bishop Cobham's Library is well adapted to lecterns in the Lincoln style, each complete in itself with its own benches. With such an arrangement, the curious fact that in one instance the wall-space between two windows is a foot wider than the others would not matter: such an irregularity would be a serious embarrassment if the fittings were on the Zutphen system. The library at Merton, our earliest evidence for a single bench serving two lecterns, is some fifty years later than Bishop Cobham's Library. This fact fortifies the inference that in the matter of the seating the Zutphen-Merton arrangement is less primitive than that exhibited at Lincoln.

If it be asked, What advantage was gained by this development?

it may be replied that the substitution of one bench for two between each lectern was a substantial economy in space and a slight economy in timber. The gain, however, was a doubtful one; for with the Lincoln system twice as many readers can work at one time in the same bay. Doubtless for that reason the two methods continued to exist side by side. Eventually they were fused into a device more convenient than either, viz. the back-to-back seat, to be seen at Trinity Hall and in libraries like Hereford or Corpus, Oxford, which represent the Stall-system (illustrations, pp. 41, 115, 160). There is evidence (p. 150) that this type of seat was invented as early as 1480. The back-to-back seat, like the single bench at Zutphen or Merton, is usually mortised into a foundation-beam fixed to the floor (the mortise-holes, where one seat has been removed (p. 157), are visible at Corpus); but the advantage in the Lincoln system of a separate bench for each desk is retained, with the added comfort of a back to lean against.

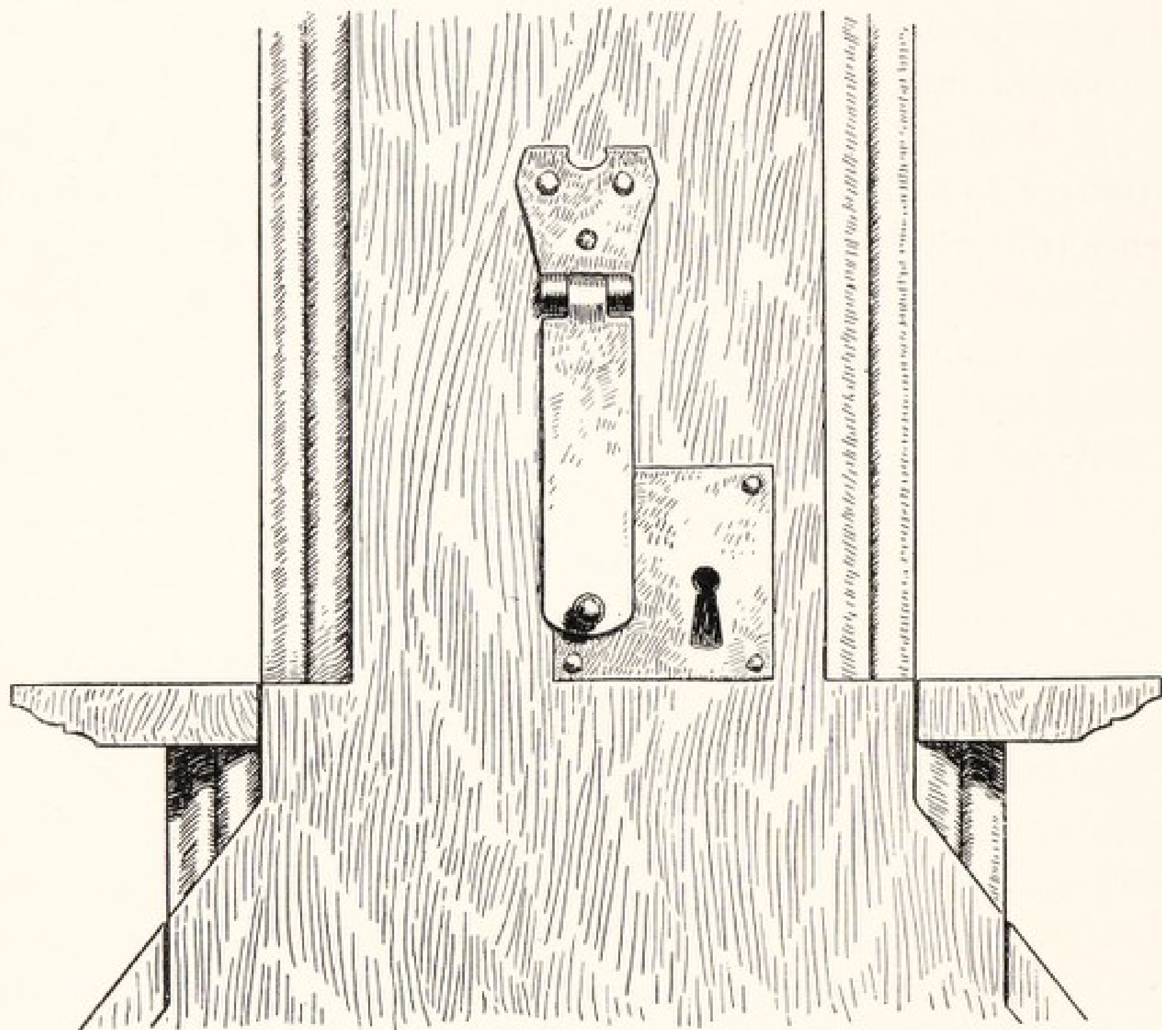
At Lincoln, as at Zutphen, the books were chained to a rod above the desk. Scars show clearly the size and shape of the lock and of the hinge of the hasp by which the rod was secured. The drawing overleaf shows what their original appearance must have been.

Above the desk at Lincoln is a narrow shelf: the purpose of this was made apparent to me by Mr. Ault. Early Renaissance pictures show that it was the usual practice for a writer when copying to place the exemplar immediately above the copy that he was making. Usually the exemplar is represented as resting on a small desk at a higher level. But sometimes it is propped up almost upright, as it would be if placed on the shelf at Lincoln leaning against the ornamented rail above the shelf[1]—obviously the more primitive method.

The shelf *below* the desk is probably an addition to the original structure—though a very early one. It is supported by grooves inside

[1] The latter method is shown in a print in *Revelationes sancte Brigitte* (Nürnberg, Koberger, 1500). For the former see J. W. Clark (*op. cit.*, p. 314); W. Crane, *The Decorative Illustration of Books*, p. 67; A. W. Pollard, *Early Illustrated Books*, p. 107.

the face-end and wall-end; but there are no such grooves in the central support, merely projecting pegs driven in to keep the shelf from sagging—a clumsiness which suggests an afterthought. There are scars under the stop-ledge, that runs along the lower



LINCOLN. LOCK AND HASP, RESTORED FROM SCARS

edge of the desk, which throw light on the purpose for which this shelf was added. The number of scars varies from six to eleven; but on an average they occur at intervals of about 10 inches. They appear to have been left by a row of oblong iron plates, of varying sizes, averaging $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. by $\frac{3}{4}$ in., held in position by a spike driven

into the wood through a hole in the middle. It looks as if a row of staples (or rather eyes) had been driven into the stop-ledge—the iron plate being intended to protect them from being loosened by cutting at the wood round them with a knife. To these eyes there would be chained books resting on the lower shelf; these would be added at irregular intervals, after the desk itself could accommodate no more books. The practice of chaining single books to a staple was in existence before the invention of movable rods for chaining. And for exceptional books, which—like chained Bibles in churches—it was thought ought never to be removed, it outlasted that invention. Thus, when the library at Durham Cathedral was refitted, *c.* 1684, the catalogue was the only book chained; and at Trinity College, Oxford, the catalogue is the only book which has still affixed to it a portion of its ancient chain. It would therefore be natural, when there was no more room for books on the desk, to add a lower shelf, and to chain the books on this to eyes or staples in the position which the scars indicate.

The addition of a shelf for books below the desk introduces us to the next stage in library evolution.

Two-storey Lecterns; Michelangelo

The urge to fresh experiment, which has conditioned library evolution, derives from the fact, deplored by Solomon, that of making many books there is no end. As the Middle Ages passed into the Renaissance, the pace at which books multiplied increased; the pressure on library accommodation grew more severe.

The provision of a shelf below the desk was the first result of this. We have already seen this in the form of a clumsy addition—especially clumsy as regards the method of chaining—at Lincoln Cathedral. But what we have noticed at Lincoln was probably a rough adaptation of an improvement effected elsewhere; for in the Malatesta Library at Cesena in 1452 we find—in a *single-desk* lectern—the addition of a shelf below the desk on which the books

lay flat. It is highly improbable that either Lincoln or Cesena copied the other. An invention, however, which is found in both these places at approximately the same date must have been widely current. Further evidence of its popularity is the fact that more than a hundred years later Michelangelo reproduced, without substantial modification, the Cesena model in the sumptuous library which he designed for a cardinal of the House of Medici—the Laurentian Library at Florence. This was not finished till 1571. A detailed account of this library would be outside the scope of a book which professes to confine itself to English examples. Since, however, the lecterns here are not only evidence of a stage of library development but have the unique interest of being made from drawings by Michelangelo (of which the originals are still extant), I have admitted an illustration. And I would invite the reader to note in Michelangelo's lectern, seen in contrast to those at Lincoln or Zutphen, an index of the difference between a Classical and a Gothic treatment of the same theme.

The shelf in this Italian model is only about 9 inches below the desk, otherwise it would strike the reader's knees; for the same reason it is set back slightly from the front of the desk. The books lie flat on the shelf. Evidence for the existence in England of lecterns with such a shelf below the desk is scanty—though it would have been strange if such an important invention had never reached England. To that afforded by the extra shelf at Lincoln Cathedral I would add the evidence derivable from the desk in the church at Wootton Wawen (illustration, p. 291). This, of course, is of a much later date; but in the matter of this kind of church furniture, the English tradition seems to have been intensely conservative. Thus at Turton we have an adaptation of the ancient book-chest; at Gorton and Bolton of the almery, pp. 301 ff. These examples lend weight to the conjecture that the desk at Wootton Wawen is similarly related to the ancient library lectern. We note also that here, as in the Italian model, the rod for the chain is fixed below the desk in a position

LAURENTIAN LIBRARY, FLORENCE

very similar to that of the bottom rod in the Stall-system. In this respect this type of lectern bridges the gulf between the lectern with the central rod and the later Stall-system.

Only on the eve of returning this chapter to the printer to be paged did I come across more definite evidence in a catalogue (1560–70) of the library at All Souls, Oxford. This implies a system of lecterns like those of Lincoln Cathedral, with a shelf below the desk and also a narrow one above (cf. p. 181 f.).

Cambridge University Library

The south room of the University Library at Cambridge was finished in 1470 or 1471. There is extant a catalogue made for the Proctors in 1473 (*Camb. Antiq. Soc.*, ii., p. 258). The titles and the numbers of the books in each lectern (*staullum*, or *descus*) are given. The total amounts to 334. But from the numbers in detail an interesting deduction can be made.

Designers of libraries make some allowance of space for further accessions of books. In a library barely two years old it may be presumed that the lecterns were not as yet overcrowded. The approximate size of the lecterns can be estimated. At Lincoln, Queens' and Trinity Hall, and in libraries on the Stall-system, the width of the central avenue between the rows of lecterns or presses is equal to, or only a little less than, the width of a lectern or press. To this rule there are one or two exceptions; but it is evident that it represents an arrangement which seemed "right" to the sense of architectural proportion so strongly developed at this period. Since the above room is about 24 feet wide, the lecterns would not have exceeded the length of 8 feet by more than a few inches. The majority of the books were folios; and there should be room on a desk for at least two folios to be opened at the same time for reading or reference, as well as for the books not actually in use, which would, of course, be closed. The printed folios of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries occupy nearly 12 inches when closed and more than 25 inches when

open. But in mediaeval MSS. the folio tends to be rather smaller; and there would be a sprinkling of quartos and octavos. Nevertheless, when the average number of books exceeded eight per desk, or sixteen per lectern, the point would have been reached at which overcrowding would begin.

The numbers of books per lectern in the catalogue of 1473 is as follows:

In the eight lecterns on the north side: 19, 21, 18, 19, 26, 26, 24, 17.

In the nine lecterns on the south side: 15, 17, 14, 14, 27, 21, 15, 23, 18.

Unless, then, the lecterns were already grievously overcrowded within two years after they were first fitted up, we must deduce from the figures given above the conclusion that there was more and other accommodation for books than lecterns on the Zutphen model would provide. The additional accommodation may have taken the form of a flat shelf, like that added at Lincoln, and original in the Italian libraries; or the lecterns may have resembled those in one of the Cambridge colleges which we must now consider.

Queens', Cambridge

The library at Queens' College, Cambridge, was built in 1448. As it now stands, it is not an example of the Lectern-system. On the contrary, it has all the appearance of a library fitted on the Stall-system from which, as so often, the desks and seats have been removed at some later date. Its present appearance, however, has been reached as a result of at least two stages of alteration—made in the interest of accommodating the continued increase of books. It was, I believe, J. W. Clark who first showed that the bottom part of the press-ends, to an average height of 4 ft. 4 in. above the floor, is constituted by the "stumps" of what were once lecterns. This he proved, partly from the existence of the grooves (indicated in the Figs. by dotted lines) inside the ends, which were clearly intended to support sloping desks, and partly from the evidence that the library

was fitted on the Lectern-system afforded by the numbers and arrangement of the books in a catalogue of the year 1472.

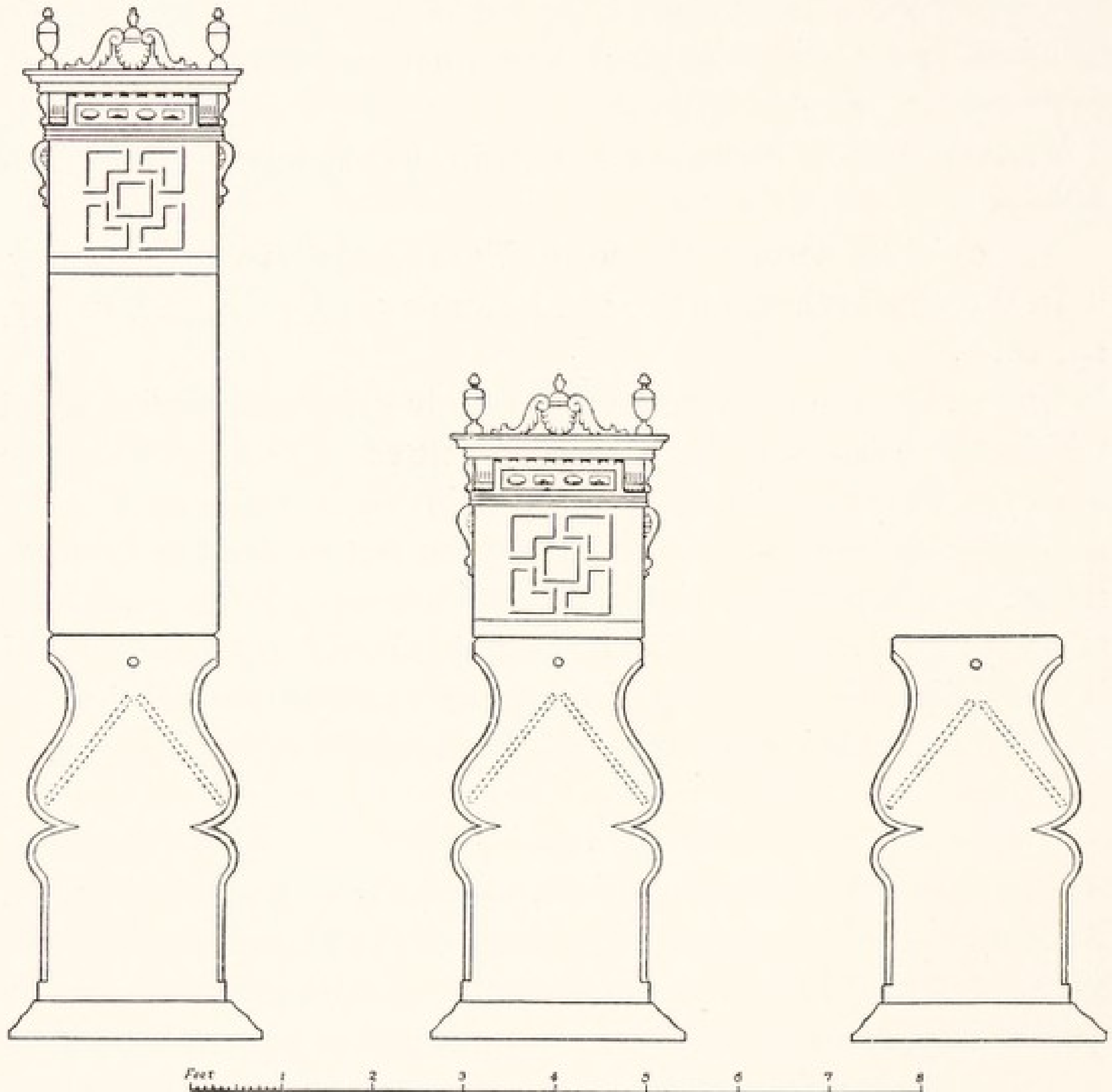


FIG. 1.—QUEENS', PRESENT ELEVATION FIG. 2.—ELEVATION IN 1614 FIG. 3.—"STUMP" OF ORIGINAL LECTERNS

The face-ends of the original presses are hidden by tall modern bookcases backed against them. By the courtesy of the President and Fellows, one of these was temporarily removed to facilitate the examination of the old work for the purpose of this book.

The Jacobean panelling and finials are known to date from 1614; so also does the handsomely carved doorway which leads into the

President's Lodge. Probably at some time in the eighteenth century the cases were further heightened by the interpolation, between the Jacobean work and the remains of the original lecterns, of some 4 feet of plain, unornamented timber. Figs. 1-3 in the accompanying diagram exhibit these three stages in the history of the library. Fig. 1 shows the face-end as it now is; Fig. 2, as it was after the Jacobean addition in 1614; Fig. 3, the "stump" of the original lectern.

Obviously the original tops of the lectern-ends were cut off square in 1614, so as to allow the imposition of the Jacobean panel, cornice

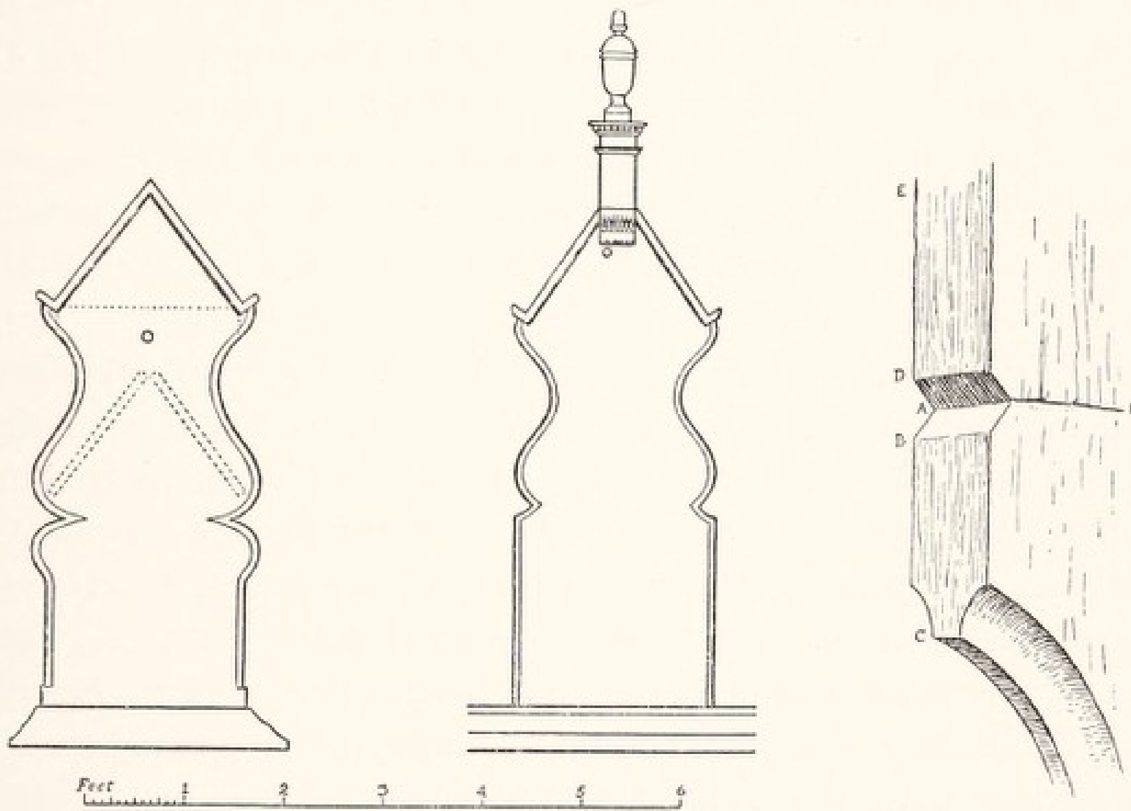


FIG. 4.—QUEENS' LECTERNS RESTORED

FIG. 5.—TRINITY HALL, ELEVATION OF LECTERNS

FIG. 6

and shelf. The question we must ask is, What was the cut-off portion of the old lectern-ends like? In the curves of these ends there are, from lectern to lectern, slight variations. In one of them Mr. Ault noticed that, on either side, the lectern (see Fig. 6, BA) begins to narrow at a steep angle of about 50 degrees for a distance of about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch. The originality of this angle was shown by

the fact that on this lectern the bottom of the eighteenth-century addition (ED) had been undercut to the same extent to prevent overhanging—thus forming a triangular notch (Fig. 6, DAB). He had previously noticed that on *every* lectern-end the surface (marked CB in Fig. 6) does not continue the hollow mould of the curve; this looks as if a piece of the curve had been previously sliced off in order to adapt the former width of the lectern at this point to the proportions of the Jacobean addition.

It occurred to him that both of these phenomena were explicable by the hypothesis that the original top of the lectern was in the form of a sloping desk. He tried the experiment of producing the lines of the notch and of the curve, as shown in Fig. 4. The result was an elevation virtually identical with that of the lecterns at Trinity Hall—as Fig. 5, which is drawn exactly to the same scale, makes evident. The resemblance between the curved lines in these two elevations cannot be the result of accident. Moreover, the meaning of the outward curve at the top of the present remains of the lectern-ends at Queens' only becomes evident if we suppose that, like the similar curves at Trinity Hall, they served the function of supporting some wide structure. If the lower desk (the grooves of which survive) had been the only desk, the lectern-ends—on every analogous example—must have begun to taper soon after they reached the level of the widest part ($27\frac{1}{4}$ in.) of this face-end. Actually they do begin to narrow down (to a width of 17 inches); but afterwards they widen out again, so that, at the point where the original tops have been sawn off, the width of the ends is within 2 inches of their width at the base. Structurally this widening out again can only be justified if support was required, either for a broad shelf or for a second desk, which, like that at Trinity Hall, was adapted for a standing reader.

Assuming the existence of this upper desk, the chains for books on it would, on the analogy of Trinity Hall, have been fastened to a rod *below* the peak of the desk; that is, to a rod fixed at the precise point at which the rod-hole in the surviving fragment may still be

seen. The same rod would have served both desks. Books on the lower desk would have a shorter chain, attached to the top of the cover, as at Zutphen; those on the upper desk would have a longer chain, attached, as in the Laurentian, to the bottom of the cover.

Thus the chains which passed from the rod to the books on the top desk would, as at Trinity Hall, come up from below. The hypothesis that this arrangement was common in Cambridge will explain a passage quoted by Clark (*op. cit.*, p. 160) from an account of the original library at Pembroke by Matthew Wren. The refitting of the library in 1617, it is stated, had been rendered necessary by the serious damage suffered by the books "partly from the sloping form of the desks, partly from the inconvenient weight (*ex inepta mole*) of the chains". Clark himself, in a footnote, makes the deduction that the rod to which the chains were attached must have been below the desk; he does not realize the full implications of his deduction. Chains attached to a rod above the desk, as at Zutphen and Lincoln, were quite short and their weight was carried by the rod, not by the cover of the book. But, with rod below, a long, and therefore comparatively heavy, chain is required to reach from the rod to the book; and more than half the weight of the chain is carried by the cover. At Pembroke, therefore, a substantial number of the books must have been chained to a rod placed as at Trinity Hall. Probably, then, one desk was adapted to a standing reader.

The contract for making new desks in the library at St. John's College in 1516 expressly provides that they are to be copied from those at Pembroke. As St. John's was then the largest and probably the wealthiest college in Cambridge, we may be sure that these new lecterns would be on a model which at that date was considered the best possible for a College library. Is there any evidence that some of the desks at St. John's had the rod above, and others had it below? Several books known to have been in the old library have scars of chaining on the *bottom* of the cover. A Chrysostom (not certainly, but probably, there) has the scars at the *top*. It is probable, then, that

St. John's (and therefore its model, Pembroke, also) was fitted with desks at two levels, of which one would have been adapted for a sitting reader, the other for use standing. This conclusion is fortified by the analogy of Trinity Hall. This represents essentially the same model as Queens' (on Mr. Ault's reconstruction)—except that the lower desk has been turned into a flat shelf in order to hold more books. Again, on this view the popularity of standing-lecterns in Cambridge in the next century is more explicable.

Since writing the above, I have been informed by the librarian, Mr. F. G. Plaistowe, that he has found at least twenty volumes in the library at Queens' which bear scars of chaining on the *bottom* edge of the cover. These books must without doubt have rested on a desk from which the chains went down to a rod below the desk. As the rod-hole in the existing fragments of the Queens' lecterns is *above* the desk of which the grooves remain, these books cannot have been chained on that desk. They constitute conclusive evidence that there was once a second desk above the rod-hole.

A rapid search among the old books at Peterhouse yielded at least six with scars of chaining at the *top*, and as many with scars at the *bottom*. Here, too, is evidence for two-storied lecterns in the sixteenth century.

What I call the "two-storied" lectern, as reconstructed from Queens' by Mr. Ault, was not confined to Cambridge. It was evidently the model adopted at the monastery of Clairvaux, the library of which was begun in 1495 and finished in 1503. Clark quotes a description of this by a secretary of the Queen of Sicily, who visited the monastery in July 1517, and who seems to have been almost as much impressed by its splendours as was the Queen of Sheba by those of Solomon. Clark, however, mistranslates the essential words.

En icelle y a quarante huic banctz, et en chacun banc quatre poulpitres fournys de livres de touttes sciences, et principallement en théologie, dont la pluspart desdicts livres sont en parchemin et escript à la main, richement historiez et enluminez (*op. cit.*, p. 113).

The word *banc*, I take it, means "lectern". The Latin equivalent *banchus* occurs in the catalogue of the Vatican Library of 1481; it is there interpreted by Clark—I have no doubt correctly—as meaning a lectern of the same type as those of Cesena and the Laurentian. The word *poulpitre* he translates (*op. cit.*, p. 196) by the English word "shelf"; and from this translation he deduces the conclusion that the library was fitted on the Stall-system. But in modern French the word *pupitre* means "desk"; it can be applied to a standing reading-desk, or to an ordinary writing-table with a sloped top. Our English word "pulpit" (ultimately derived from the French) is additional evidence that *poulpitre* in Old French would mean not a flat shelf, but a sloping desk. Clearly, then, a *banc* which had four *poulpitres* was a lectern with four desks, two above and two below, on the model the remains of which are preserved at Queens'.

At present at Queens' there is a flat shelf below the lower desk, but this cannot be original for two reasons:

(1) It is so placed that it would strike the knees of a seated reader and prevent his getting near enough to read comfortably at the desk.

(2) The height above the floor averages 15½ inches, but varies from 12½ to 27 inches; this is only explicable if these shelves were added to suit books of varying height, *after* the lecterns were turned into bookcases.

The catalogue of 1472 enumerates the books on each lectern.[1] In most cases the number given is less than 20; 20 books might at a pinch be chained on a 7 ft. lectern without a lower pair of desks. But in two cases the number rises to 22 and 27 respectively. Unless, therefore, the lecterns were two-storied from the first, it would look as if a lower storey in some form had been added to some of the lecterns. This might have been done by a flat shelf, as at Lincoln. But, with standing-lecterns, an attractive possibility was open; for the desk of a standing-lectern is so high above the floor that there is room under it for a steeply sloping lower desk,

[1] This is printed in full in *Camb. Antiq. Soc.*, ii., p. 166 ff.

the bottom of which would be still above the knees of a sitting reader, for whom a stool was probably provided.

The line of the lower curves on the lecterns at Queens' and Trinity Hall is conspicuously un-Gothic. The deep concave line of the upper curve can be paralleled in mediaeval choir-stalls. This curve has a structural purpose; it facilitates light from the opposite windows of the library reaching the desk. The lower curves are not for utility, but are an aesthetic balance in the taste of the sixteenth

Feet 1 2 3 4 5 6

FIG. 7 FIG. 8

QUEENS'

century to the deep upper curve; they may be a later embellishment. It is, however, simpler to suppose that originally the desks at Queens' were standing-lecterns of a Gothic pattern with straight upright ends, like the French model depicted in the diagram, p. 15; and that the lower desk was added and the curved outline given to the edges of the lectern-ends at some date like 1525. Figs. 7 and 8 (which are drawn to the same scale as the previous figures) show that it would have been perfectly possible to convert the ends of such a lectern into the present Renaissance pattern.

The hypothesis that the lower curves at any rate are a later

modification would explain the rough and varied outline and the irregular projection of the "feet" of the lecterns. The feet project beyond the lecterns a distance which varies from 2½ to 5½ inches; and on either side of the same lectern the projection is often of a different length. And this cannot be explained on the hypothesis that the timbers on which the lecterns rest are the remains of what were once foundation-beams; that is shown by the fact that they vary no less conspicuously in width. But suppose the lecterns once had straight sides; Fig. 7 makes it clear that their bases must have been about 3½ inches wider than at present, since the lower part of the lecterns were narrowed to get in the ornamental curves. This narrowing would leave the original feet projecting too far; so they were shortened by a few inches—probably some time afterwards—by a clumsy workman.

An unusual feature of the Queens' lecterns is the method of securing the rod. Ordinarily this is effected by some device on the face-end; there are no traces of this at Queens'. But in every lectern and half-lectern on the inside of the wall-end, at the point where it was entered by the end of the rod, an oblong piece of wood averaging 4 by 2½ inches has been let in. Evidently these wooden fillings are intended to hide the scars left by locks. These locks were so close to the rod-hole that they must, like those at Zutphen, have shot the bolt directly into a slot filed in the rod, not into the staple of a hasp.

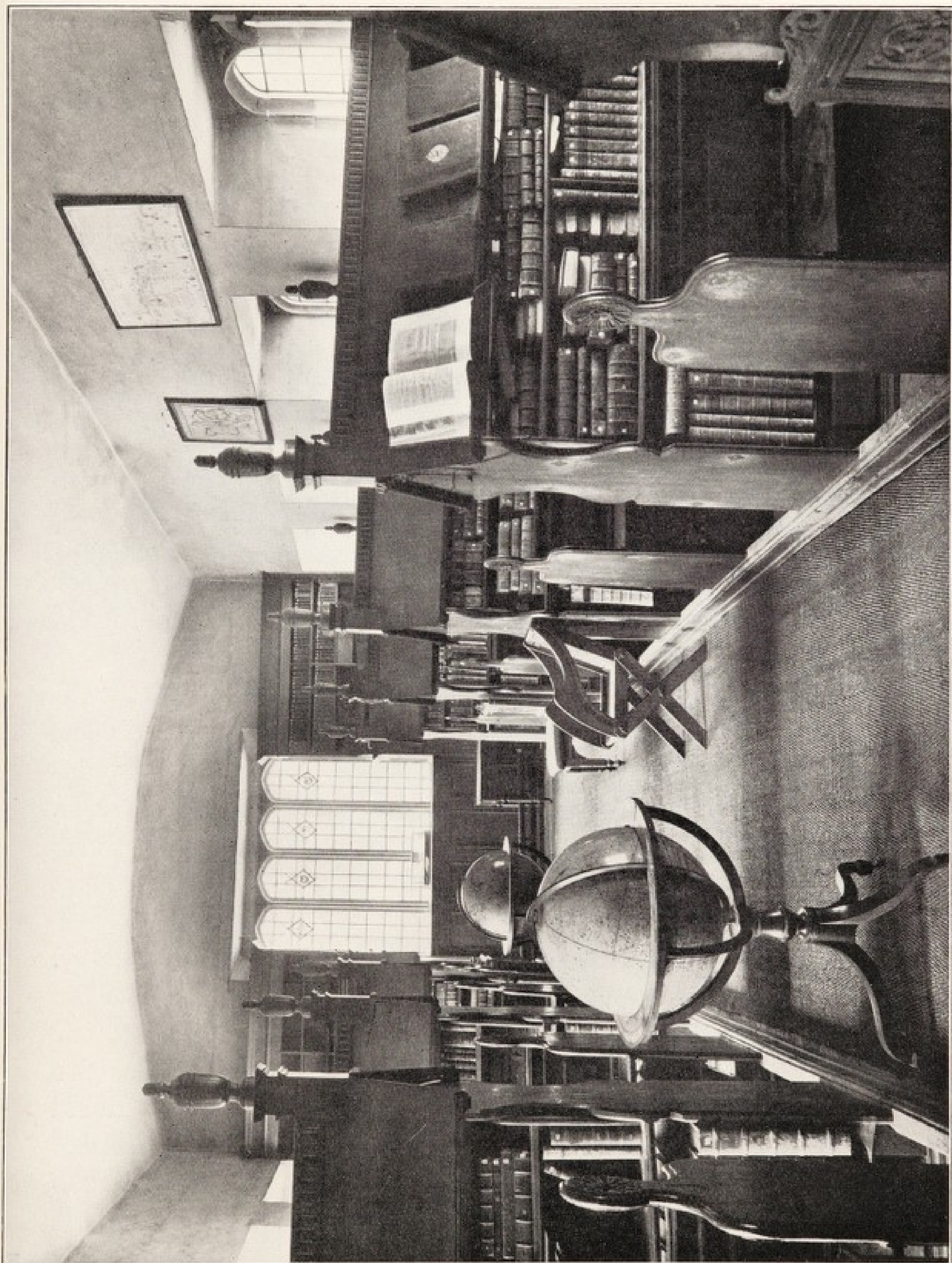
Trinity Hall

The building of the library at Trinity Hall appears to have been finished by about the year 1600. Willis and Clark (iii., p. 449 f.), however, conclude that the fittings were "put up during the Mastership of Thomas Eden, L.M.D. (Master, 1626–45), as his arms appear on the end of the bookcases". This is a mistake. To one only of the lecterns is there affixed a shield bearing his coat of arms, with his name underneath it painted on a wooden scroll. On the rest of the

lecterns there are visible the remains of pieces of paper which once bore press-numbers; possibly in a faint light these were taken to be scars of the attachment of similar shields. But close examination in a good light shows that there is not the faintest trace of a shield having ever been affixed either to these or to any other lectern but the one mentioned above. Moreover, the shield here is not an integral part of the ornamentation of the lectern; it has been put on afterwards in a way that obscures the design; and the scroll displaces a piece of moulding which (as shown by scar round the standard) formed part of the original design. On most of the lecterns this piece of moulding only survives in fragments, but has left its scar on all. It is evident, therefore, that this shield was put up later, possibly some years after Eden's death. It may commemorate a gift made by him to the library; but it must be totally disregarded in an attempt to date the presses.

Failing evidence to the contrary, the fittings of any library—or an instalment of them—will be dated immediately after the completion of the building. The bookcases in a library are not, like the spire which crowns the tower of a church, an ornamental addition which may be left to posterity to complete; they are essential to the purpose for which the library exists. This applies to the lecterns at Trinity Hall; though it is not necessary to suppose that they were all put in at the same time. Indeed, on four of them the ironwork, from the standpoint of finish and decoration, is slightly inferior to that of the rest; and with this difference go some minute variations in details of the woodwork. Probably these lecterns are a little later. When the library was first furnished, it would be natural to procure a group of specially skilled workmen, possibly brought in from outside. Subsequent additions would be made by ordinary artisans, who endeavoured to imitate, as best they could, the skilled work of their model.

The majority of the lecterns, therefore, cannot reasonably be dated much later than 1600. It follows that their importance to the



TRINITY HALL. THE LIBRARY

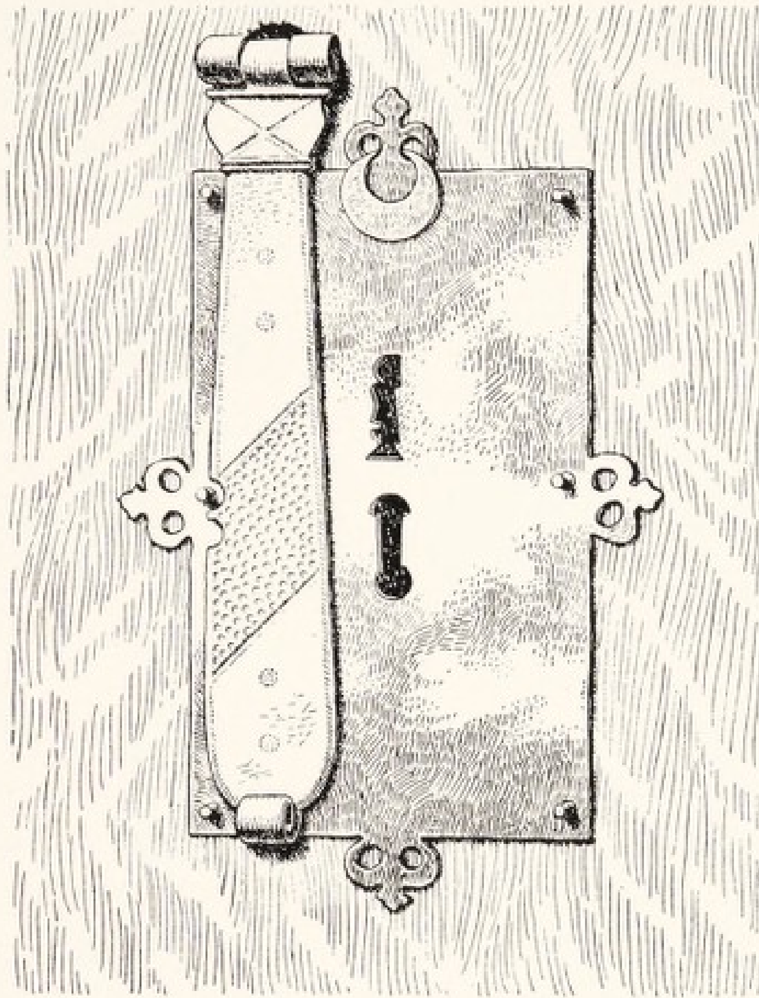
student of library evolution is far greater than that assigned to them by J. W. Clark. They are not, to quote his words, "a deliberate return to ancient forms at a time when a different type had been adopted elsewhere"; this library, so far from being "an eccentric specimen", represents the climax in the evolution of the Lectern-system in Cambridge. And it is hazardous to take for granted that the model they represent was only to be found at Cambridge.

We have seen that the two-storied lectern of the Queens' type was being fitted up at Clairvaux in 1503, and at St. John's, Cambridge, in 1516. Apart from the finial, which represents a late Elizabethan or Jacobean taste, the lecterns at Trinity Hall represent the stage of evolution which follows immediately after Queens'—assuming the flowing, varied curves of Queens' to be not earlier than 1525. The advance consists in substituting for the lower sloping desk a flat shelf—evidently intended for books standing upright in a row. By this arrangement the number of books which the lower storey of the lectern could accommodate was multiplied by four.

To continue with Trinity Hall. Scars on old books show that the chains were here attached to the fore-edge of the cover, as is usual in libraries fitted on the Stall-system. Indeed, this is the only convenient arrangement where books stand in a row upright on a shelf. The two very light chains now to be seen on two of the books are a modern restoration; there is no reason to suppose they reproduce an ancient model peculiar to this library.

The rods on which the chains run are secured in an unusual way. The hasps, which average 8¼ inches long, are hinged to the rod itself, instead of to the woodwork. Also the lock is a double one with two key-holes, one above the other; and the hasp has two staples, one of which enters each portion of the double lock. In old College statutes there is frequently a provision that books and other valuables are to be secured by three keys; by the arrangement described, this requirement could be fulfilled if every Fellow had a

key to the library, while the Master and the Librarian had each one of the two distinct keys of the double lock.



HASP AND LOCK, TRINITY HALL

Between the lecterns at Trinity Hall are back-to-back seats. The moulding on the ends is more elaborate than on the corresponding portions of the lecterns. The quite different curves of their elevation favour an earlier date. These seat-ends may well have been in use in an older library; when the present library was built, they would have been fitted with fresh rails and benches adapted to the dimensions of the new room. The turned support under the middle of the seat will not have belonged to their oldest stage.

Under the shelf below the desk are grooves in which flat boards (one on each side of the centre support of the lectern) slide out, so

as to form a second desk for a reader sitting on the seats. When this board was pulled out, it formed a flat desk, which is related to the position of the reader and to the row of books on the shelf above it, in exactly the same way as is the desk in the Stall-system (p. 85). The remains of one of these sliding desks is seen in the opposite illustration; but as only half of the original board survives, it would originally slide out twice as far, and come over the reader's knees. This desk suggests the view that here the Trinity Hall lecterns have ingeniously adopted a feature which properly belongs to the Stall-system. Mr. Ault, however, after a careful examination of the ledges which supported the grooves, and of the central support of the lectern, slightly inclined to the belief that they might be an early addition. In that case a sitting reader would have been obliged originally to rest the book on his knees. For this a foot-rest would be required ; and it is possible that the bottom shelf in the present lecterns replaces such a foot-rest.

This bottom shelf, and the plinth between it and the floor, can hardly be original; it would have required another rod to chain the books upon it, and of this there is no trace. But chaining began to go out of fashion at Cambridge by 1627; and the grain and colour of the wood, not to mention the close resemblance between the panelling of the plinth and that of the back of the seat, makes it probable that this addition also was an early one.

This leads on to an interesting reflection. Is it not possible that the Trinity Hall lecterns—with one shelf for books below the peaked desk, and, lower still, a foot-rest which clamoured to be turned into another shelf—were the model that suggested the idea of the dwarf bookcases which stand between the great presses at St. John's? If so, the fittings at Trinity Hall are not merely the climax in the development of the Lectern-system; they constitute a bridge between that system and those of St. John's, which was in turn to be the parent of the library type which dominated Cambridge in the seventeenth century.

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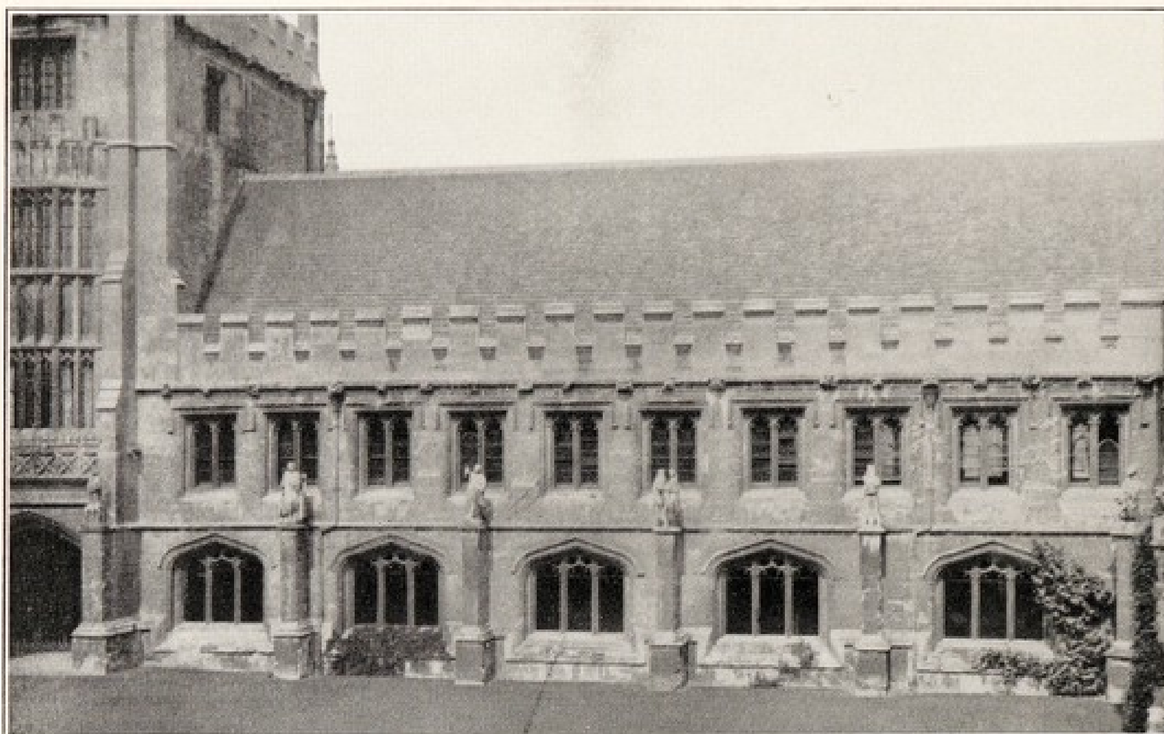
LECTERN AND SEAT, TRINITY HALL



MAGDALEN LIBRARY. (*N.B.*—EQUIDISTANT WINDOWS OVER CLOISTER)

The Stall-system

The lecterns at Trinity Hall are a half-way house between the two-storied lectern of Queens' or Clairvaux and the "two-decker" press of the earliest form of the Stall-system (see p. 50). Of this fact there are two possible explanations. Either the lecterns of Trinity Hall are an attempt to combine the advantages of the two systems, or they represent the "missing link" between the Lectern- and the Stall-system. On the latter hypothesis the lecterns at Trinity Hall have the same relation to a model of 1470 as have those at Zutphen to a model of about 1370. I prefer the former hypothesis. The "two-decker" Stall-system already appears at Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1480. We know this because, although in 1799 Wyatt made a clean sweep of the old presses (which were still chained), Corpus preserves (apart from the knobs on the seats) a copy of the old fittings at Magdalen (p. 150). But at Clairvaux, more than twenty years later, the stage of development represented at Queens' has not yet been

passed. If Trinity Hall represented a model widely influential in 1470, it would have reached France before 1503.

Again, why had not the Stall-system reached the Augustinian House of S. Victor at Paris—the library of which was built between 1501 and 1508, and was, as Clark shows (*op. cit.*, p. 166 f.), fitted on the Lectern-system? I confess that my own mind has for some time been moving towards a solution of the problem that at first sight may seem a startling one. Clark, I shall show later, undoubtedly dates the Stall-system too early; does he also overestimate the range of its influence in the years before its adoption by Sir Thomas Bodley in a library which no one could overlook? Is it possible that the Stall-system was an original invention of the architect who built the library at Magdalen, and that his invention was hidden in the obscurity of Oxford until a date too late to influence Continental development? My knowledge of continental libraries is so exiguous that I tremble to offer the suggestion. But I am struck by the fact that J. W. Clark, who had very extensive knowledge of them, is unable to quote a single instance (except the mistaken one of Clairvaux) of the existence of the Stall-system in France or Italy. Did the Lectern-system continue in vogue in those countries until the invention of the Wall-system—that is, of the library with a range of bookcases backed against the wall? This system first appears on the grand scale in the Library of the Escorial begun by Philip II. of Spain in 1563. To my mind it is significant that the lecterns in the Laurentian Library in Florence had not yet been finished at the time when the Escorial was planned. The example of the Stall-system found in the little library at Enkhuizen in Holland is later than 1600. It combines features found separately in three Oxford libraries: Merton, St. John's (as it then was) and *Duke Humphrey*. The relations between England and Holland at the period—Sir Thomas Bodley, representing Queen Elizabeth, had a vote in the Council which governed the Netherlands—were such as to make reasonable the hypothesis that the designer of the Enkhuizen presses had visited Oxford.

The transition from the Lectern-system to the Stall-system is explained by J. W. Clark as follows (p. 172):

> The Lectern-system was so wasteful in the matter of space, that, as books accumulated, some other piece of furniture had to be devised to contain them. The desk could not be dispensed with so long as books were chained; and it therefore occurred to an ingenious carpenter that the required conditions would be fulfilled if the two halves of the desk were separated, not by a few inches, but by a considerable interval, or broad shelf, with one or more shelves fixed above it. Thus a case was arrived at containing four shelves at least, two to each side of the case, which could be made as long as the width of the library permitted. I propose to call this system "the Stall-system" from the word *staulum* (sometimes written *stalla*, *stallus*, or *stallum*), which is frequently applied to a case for books in a mediaeval library.

The designation is not happily chosen; for in old documents the words "deske", "seate", "stalle" are used indifferently of any system. The word "deske", for example, is used in a letter by Sir Christopher Wren of the bookcases which he designed for Trinity College, Cambridge, which have nothing resembling what we call a desk attached to them; it is used in a map (which I reproduce, p. 329) in Browne Willis' *A Survey of Cathedrals*, published 1727; and it is found, as the equivalent of "bookcase", in a Chapter Minute of Wells, 1728 (p. 275). This continued usage of the word "deske" is a timely reminder of the fact I have already emphasized, that in library evolution chains and desks are the primitive feature, shelves are an adjunct. Similarly the bookcases at St. John's, Cambridge, are regularly called "seates", though there are no seats attached to them. Since, however, the pioneer work of Clark has made "Stall-system" the accepted technical name, I do not propose to alter it. The world has suffered too much already from persons who insist on changing technical terminology—or the spelling of familiar proper names—in the interest of a meticulous precision. All that matters in a technical term is that its meaning should be fixed, and that this meaning should be known.

On another point I differ from Clark. I see the Stall-system as a combination of the lectern with the almery. In the almery the shelves

were commonly divided by uprights into *partitiones*. A great deal is made of these *partitiones* in the Customs of the Augustinian Order. Clark quotes from the observances of the Augustinian Priory at Barnwell, a passage which, since it occurs also in the Customs of an Augustinian House near Brussels, must represent a widespread rule (*op. cit.*, p. 71). The word *armarium* he here translates by "press".

> The press in which the books are kept ought to be lined inside with wood, that the damp of the walls may not moisten or stain the books. This press should be *divided vertically as well as horizontally* [the italics are mine] by sundry shelves on which the books may be ranged so as to be separated from one another; for fear they be packed so close as to injure each other or delay those who want them.

Clark also notices, in regard to two *armaria* fitted into recesses in the east walk of the cloister of Worcester Cathedral (formerly a Benedictine monastery), that in front of each recess there was *a bench table 13 inches broad and 15 inches high* (*op. cit.*, p. 84). When, instead of adding more cupboards recessed into the wall, "almeries of waynscott" were provided (*op. cit.*, p. 90), these also sometimes had a similar "bench table". Clark himself quotes (p. 95) the example of an almery in the Church of Saint Germain l'Auxerrois, Paris, which

> consists of six cupboards arranged in two tiers, the lower of which is raised to the level of *a bench which extends along the whole length* of the piece of furniture. . . . *The seat* of this bench . . .

Standing one day before one of the presses at Hereford, from which the books had been removed, it suddenly "hit me in the face" that this was an *armarium* divided by shelves and uprights into nine of those *partitiones* which were regarded as so essential—the cupboard doors being no longer needed if books were chained, and the "bench which extends along the whole length of the piece of furniture" being slightly sloped to make a desk after the model of the lectern. At that time I had not read the later chapters of J. W. Clark's treatise. When later on I did so, I found (p. 264) an illustra-

tion of the single bookcase in the school at Bolton, Lancashire, which actually *is* an almery, cupboard doors and all, with desk and chains attached. This reproduces in essentials the older model of Gorton—itself evidently a survival of a more ancient form. I have been able to procure fresh illustrations of these interesting bookcases (pp. 300-303).

The Stall-system, so viewed, is not so much a later stage in the evolution of the Lectern-system as the result of the confluence of lectern and *armarium*.[1] What was added to the lectern was not shelves—conceived of as in modern bookcases—but *partitiones*, or cupboard divisions. This view is further borne out by the importance which continued to be attached to the *partitiones*. This is shown by the system of cataloguing. At Hereford as late as 1749 (see below, p. 318 f.) the catalogues are not based on an alphabetical system; they are tables of contents of the *partitiones* in each several bookcase.

I would make the additional point that the Stall-system also afforded, in a way far more comfortable than did the Lectern-system, the advantages of the carrel. The intervals between the great bookcases make perfect little studies. Combining then, as it did, all the advantages of an almery, a lectern and a carrel, there is no wonder that this system captured Oxford, and held its own there for 250 years. Printing made text-books cheaper; so it was no longer necessary for a College to have a large supply for periodic "dividing" to the Fellows. Henceforward most, if not all, of the books owned by the society were chained for use in the extremely pleasant library.

Date of Invention

Clark accepts without question the statement found in all the books on Hereford that the existing "desks" in the library there were

[1] This view does not rule out the possibility that the lecterns at Trinity Hall represent a model of about 1470 which was the "missing link" between the Lectern-system and the Stall-system. In furniture evolution the possibilities of hybridization are wider than in biological; an idea may have several parents.

the gift of Walter de Rammesbury in 1394—a mistake in which he has my sympathy. The belief that the Hereford presses dated from the fourteenth century (instead of from the sixteenth) was the source of endless perplexities to the architect and myself during the Hereford restoration, until I discovered its origin in an error made by Browne Willis in 1727 (see p. 314 f.). Clark also adduces (*op. cit.*, p. 191 ff.) the evidence of a MS. giving an account of repairs done in 1508 to books in the library at Canterbury built between 1414 and 1443 by Archbishop Chichele. The MS. goes through the books repaired in eighteen "seats" (*sedilia*), each of which has a *superior textus* and a *textus inferior*. The word *textus*, Clark explains, "seems to have been used at Canterbury to denote any piece of joinery"; and he supposes that it here refers to the two shelves, at and above the desk level, found in the earlier forms of the Stall-system. On this assumption he ingeniously calculates that sixteen such presses, of a length which would fit into the width of the building, would give just about the right amount of shelf room for the total number of books then in the library. Canterbury was, for those days, incredibly rich in books; a catalogue not later than 1331 enumerates 1850 volumes. Clark reckons that fourteen presses would accommodate this number, thus leaving two presses over for the accessions to the library between 1331 and the date of the MS. in question. The fallacy in this argument is that it overlooks the fact that at Merton and Peterhouse (p. 8) the number of books chained in the library was less than the number of those used for lending to the Fellows and from time to time redistributed. Moreover, the larger the number of books an institution possessed, the more duplicates there would be of those in regular demand, and the smaller would be the proportion regarded as so necessary and so irreplaceable that they had to be chained where everyone could get at them. Probably not a quarter of the volumes belonging to the community at Canterbury were chained in Chichele's Library. The chaining of books was always an inconvenience; it was only resorted to for books which the community

could ill afford to lose, or which were given on condition that they should be chained. The chained library in the mediaeval system was not the equivalent of what we mean by a library, it corresponded rather to a "reference library". At Corpus, Oxford, the Founder only allowed in the library books of a certain value and usefulness, providing for the loaning of others and of duplicates (under indenture) to the Fellows.

Adjicimus ut in Bibliothecam nullus inferatur aut catinetur liber, nisi sit competentis pretii aut utilitatis . . . Alios vero indignos Bibliotheca, aut quarum exemplaria in ea satis affluunt, permittimus ut Socii . . . recipiant, per indenturas inter Praesidentem . . . et illos mutuo recipientes.

I show later that the library at All Souls was once fitted on the Lectern-system. All Souls was a pet foundation of Chichele; we should have expected him to design the library there for the type of fittings which at that time was regarded as the latest and best. Now the examples of Lincoln Cathedral and Queens' College, Cambridge, prove that in Chichele's time the prevalent form of fitting was the Lectern-system; but, I submit, the form of this regarded as "the latest and best" would have the lecterns fitted *with a shelf below the desk*. Why should not the *superior textus* and *textus inferior* referred to in the Canterbury MS. refer to the desk and the undershelf or underdesk of a two-storied lectern? An old catalogue of All Souls has the books arranged under *superius* and *inferius*, and apparently implies the Lectern-system (p. 181).

On any interpretation, however, the MS. quoted by Clark is only evidence for the state of the Canterbury Library in 1508. A monastery so wealthy, so rich in books, and so much in the centre of things as was a Metropolitan's capital in the Middle Ages, would not be likely to wait long before adopting in its library an invention of the first importance for the accommodation of books. Even if the fittings referred to in this MS. were on the Stall-system, it would be hazardous—in a place like Canterbury—to infer they were not of recent introduction. Indeed, Clark can only fit presses of the Stall-system

type into the dimensions of the building at all by assuming that, as at Merton, they had single bench seats. But Merton has the single bench only because the building was made to fit the Lectern-system (p. 135). Merton is not a type-form. So far as it goes, the analogy of Merton tells the other way; it would suggest that book-presses had been by this date substituted for the lecterns which Chichele provided. Wherever we have evidence that a building was originally intended for the Stall-system, the window-spacing allows room for a back-to-back seat.

The only other example at all early of the Stall-system that Clark cites is that of Clairvaux (*op. cit.*, p. 196), which was begun in 1495 and finished 1503; but, as I have shown (p. 32 f.), his view is based on a mistranslation. Since, however, the author of the description is evidently impressed with the exceptionally handsome accommodation he saw, his evidence, even if Clark is right, favours the view that the Stall-system was in 1517 a relatively modern invention.

There is incontrovertible evidence (see p. 150) that the library of Magdalen College, Oxford, built by William of Waynflete, *c.* 1480, was fitted on the Stall-system. My own belief is that, if not actually the first library to be so furnished, it was one of the first. Before that date the total number of chained books to be provided for in the ordinary College would have been completely lost in such a library. In 1473 the University Library at Cambridge had only 334 volumes; but the 227 MSS. at Hereford are now all in one (Stall-system) press. Even in 1480, the occurrence at Magdalen of the Stall-system can only be explained on the hypothesis that William of Waynflete was a man of vision. He saw that the invention of printing—then a thing of yesterday—was going to make a difference.

Even so, the great size of the library at Magdalen raises the doubt whether Waynflete realized the full possibilities of the new system. His presses may have been originally intended for books which lay flat on the shelves. The idea that books on a shelf, instead of lying flat can stand upright in a row, is so familiar to us

that it seems part of the nature of things. It had once the novelty of a brilliant invention. In mediaeval pictures books are always shown—whether in almeries, on lecterns, or on desk-like shelves in private libraries—as lying or leaning on their sides. That is why so often the titles of old books are on the left-hand board of the binding, frequently with a covering made of transparent horn. Incidentally, it is one reason why the practice of handsome bindings developed so early; books were placed so that their covers (not, as nowadays, their backs) were what everyone could see. In an illustration in a *Danse Macabre* printed at Lyons as late as 1499, a bookseller's shop is shown with the books lying flat two deep on the shelves.[1] The 19-inch shelves of the Stall-system may well have been a lucky accident, an inheritance from the almery.

At first the presses in the Stall-system had only two shelves—one on the level of the desk and one above it. This was the type of press, which I call a "two-decker", originally fitted at Corpus, All Souls, Merton, and St. John's, Oxford. Later the height of the presses was raised by about 20 inches, and the number of shelves increased to three; this I style the "three-decker" type. The earliest example of this type is Hereford. The Hereford presses were, I believe, constructed when the library was removed to the Ladye Chapel in 1590 and not, as has been generally supposed, moved across from an older library building.

Hereford and Bodley

The Hereford presses are of peculiar interest, not only from their unique state of preservation, but also because, so it appears, they provided the model from which the presses set up by Sir Thomas Bodley in Duke Humphrey's Library were deliberately copied.

In March 1598 Bodley wrote to the then Vice-Chancellor asking for a committee to be appointed to meet him and discuss with a view to getting the best possible kind of fittings. Five persons were chosen.

[1] Reproduced by A. W. Pollard, *Early Illustrated Books*, p. 159.

"THREE-DECKER" PRESS, WITH DESK HALF-RAISED. HEREFORD

One was Thomas Allan of Merton, a minor Canon of Hereford, who presented MSS. to Hereford as well as to the Bodleian. Another was Thomas Singleton (afterwards President of Brasenose), who became Prebendary of Hereford in 1604, and who most probably (since prebendaries at Hereford were appointed by the Bishop, not the Crown) had had some previous connection with the Cathedral. Still more significant, however, is the fact that the Vice-Chancellor for 1599—the year when the actual fitting up of the library was carried through—was Thomas Thornton. Thornton was Canon of Christ Church, as well as of Hereford; he was the senior Canon present at the Chapter meeting which ordered the removal and reconstruction of the Hereford Library in 1590; he himself became Master of the Library in 1595, and held the office till his death in 1629; and (as recorded in the Donors' Book in the Hereford Library) he provided that library with two presses and two half-presses at his own expense. At that period the Vice-Chancellorship was not confined to Heads of Houses, and was an actual, as well as a nominal, appointment of the Chancellor. Thornton had been Vice-Chancellor previously in 1583. Buckhurst, the Chancellor, had connections with Bodley in the diplomatic world; it is quite likely that Bodley secured Thornton's appointment for the year 1599, precisely on the ground of his interest in library extension. At any rate, the presses in Duke Humphrey's Library are an almost exact reproduction of those at Hereford. The Bodleian presses exhibit some trifling embellishments; the desk-hooks, for instance (illustration, p. 209), are of more elaborate workmanship, and the "ground-supports" (a term explained, p. 63) instead of being straight timber have a curved outline. But the resemblance between the Hereford and Bodleian presses is far greater than exists between any other two surviving libraries. And since the Hereford presses were erected in 1590, they would still be about the "latest thing" in literary fittings in 1598.

The Bodleian at the time of Bodley's death must have been quite the largest and most magnificently furnished library in England.

Probably no library has since been built in England of which the architect was unfamiliar with Bodley's presses. Henceforward the "three-decker" becomes the standard type of the Stall-system. In Oxford itself, not very long afterwards, Corpus and St. John's were altered to this model; it was followed at Jesus, Trinity, Lincoln, and Queen's. It is found also at Westminster Abbey, Clare College, Cambridge, Chetham College, Manchester, and Wells Cathedral—and, without chains, at Durham. These libraries exhibit a continuous evolution in the matter of the ornamentation of cornices, catalogue frames, desk brackets, etc.; but (with the partial exception of Durham) the fundamental structure remains unchanged.

The Hereford Model

A description of the Stall-system will gain in clearness if it takes the form of a kind of running commentary on a series of illustrations. I will, therefore, ask the reader first to take a good look at two views of the library of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. That on p. 151 shows the general arrangement of the long narrow room, between each of the windows of which projects a "press"—*i.e.* a double bookcase set at right angles to the wall—with its seats and desks. On p. 160 is shown a single bay of this library; notice particularly the arrangement of the presses in relation to the window (intended to get the best light on to the desk) and the alignment of the back-to-back seat with the centre of the window. Turning next to the frontispiece, in the view of the library at Hereford, he will get an idea of what Bodley's presses were like before the chains were removed and the hinging of the desks altered.

Hereford, seeing it is both the oldest and the best-preserved example of the fully developed Stall-system, will be taken in this description as the type-form. I am fortunately able to elucidate the detail in the structure of the presses, and in the mechanism of the chaining, by the photographs of my friend Mr. F. C. Morgan. Refer to that on p. 51 to illustrate what follows overleaf.

All the libraries just mentioned exhibit, apart from variety in minor detail, a fundamental uniformity of structure. This is determined in the last resort by two considerations—the majority of books to be housed were folios, and the bottom shelf had to be on a level which was the convenient height of a desk. The books were arranged by subjects, not by size. Thus at Hereford, under the "Class" *Biblia Sacra*, we find a duodecimo Greek Testament chained next to a folio Bible. Hence the height of the shelf was determined by the tallest form of book. The height of the presses was determined by the fact that they had to accommodate three shelves high enough for folios above the level of the desk. A copy of the Benedictine edition of St. Augustine will just *not* go into a shelf 17½ in. high and 11½ in. deep; the average height of the shelves is, therefore, 19 in. This height, however, is never exactly uniform. At Hereford the space between the bottom shelf and that next above it (which I shall speak of as the "second" shelf) is 19 in.; the distance between that and the top or "third" shelf is 18 in.; between the third shelf and the cornice board it is 20 in. For other libraries these figures may vary slightly, but I remember no case where the three shelves are exactly the same height. The reason for this slight variation in the height of the shelves is, I believe, aesthetic; and on aesthetic grounds it is certainly successful. The bottom shelf is 2 ft. 9 in. above the floor; as this height is determined by what is a convenient height for the reader's desk, it varies hardly at all in different libraries. Allowing for the cornice and the thickness of the shelves, these figures give 8 ft. 3 in. as the average height of presses on the three-decker system —a little more or a little less according as the cornice is high or low. No rule is without exceptions; and at Lincoln College, Chetham College and Enkhuizen the top shelf is rather lower—being designed for quartos.

The size of a folio determines the depth of the presses also. There are shelves on each side of the presses. (The arrangement of the presses at right angles to the wall compels me to use the term

"side" for what in the modern bookcase we should call the "front".) A large folio requires a shelf 1 ft. wide. The width of the upright ends of the presses therefore varies from 2 ft. to 2 ft. 2 in. (the interval between the back-edges of the shelves varying from 0 to 2 in.). At Hereford and the Bodleian the width of the ends is 2 ft. 2 in.

The length is the one dimension of the presses which varies very greatly. In the Bodleian it is 11 ft. 3 in., at Hereford 9 ft. 9 in., at Corpus 7 ft. 6 in. This variation has a simple explanation; it is due to corresponding variations in the width of the several rooms for which the presses were designed.

The upright ends of the presses (averaging 8 ft. 3 in. by 2 ft. 1 in.), which generally touch the wall between the windows, I speak of as the "wall-ends". The ends which face a spectator who stands in the central avenue, and which carry the locks and hasps for the chain-rods, I have called "face-ends". Sir Thomas Bodley, in the more rounded phrase of the Elizabethan tongue, speaks of them as "the Heads of the Desks".

In the photographs reproduced in this volume there may frequently be seen one or more shelves for books below the level of the desk. These, it must be emphasized, are later additions; *originally there were no books below the desk level.* This is still the case at Wells; and the old catalogues show that at Hereford the shelves below the desk (which were removed when it was restored) were not there before 1749, and were almost certainly added in 1856.

The desks, on which a book rests when being read, run the whole length of the presses. At Hereford they are 16 in. wide; at Corpus from 1 in. to 1½ in. narrower. In the earlier "two-decker" presses they seem to have been fixed (p. 159); but later on they were provided with hinges so as to flap *upwards*, and there are hooks on the press-ends to enable them to be held up. The illustration on p. 51 shows a desk half-raised; that on p. 95 shows the same desk held up by the hook. These hooks I shall speak of as "desk-hooks". The hinging of the desks will be misapprehended unless it is realized that at Corpus

and the Bodleian the desks have been divided into sections and refitted with modern door-hinges — probably in the nineteenth century—and that both the desks and hinges at St. John's, though ancient, are of a pattern not found elsewhere (see p. 191). Originally the desks at the Bodleian and Corpus were in one piece; and the scars on the woodwork show there were hinges with long straps nailed along the edges of the press-ends, as at Hereford. At Westminster Abbey the original hinges so fixed still survive. Hereford, however, has one peculiarity: the lower strap of the hinge is nailed to the under side of the desk, elsewhere it is (or was) nailed on top.

The desks at Hereford must always have been hinged; otherwise we should find (as at Corpus) scars of the nails or pegs which fixed the desks on the brackets which support them; for sixteen of the original brackets still exist. The inference is that the hinging is of the same date as the original presses. It looks, therefore, as if the hinging of the desks was an improvement introduced about the same time as the invention of the "three-decker" bookcase. As there were no shelves below the desks, one naturally asks what was the purpose of making the desks flap up? It was partly, I think, for convenience in manipulating the chains on the rod fixed below the desk (see illustration, p. 51) when it was desired to add or remove a book which was chained thereto. It would serve also to make more accessible boxes or lockers containing valuables placed under the presses. In a loose sheet in one of the old catalogues at Hereford a note in the librarian's hand (date about 1745) speaks of a certain atlas being kept in *capsula infra hunc pluteum*, the key of which is in charge of the hebdomadary. At Trinity also (p. 231 f.) the old catalogues speak of the MSS. as being kept in *capsulae*, the lettering of which corresponds to the lettering of the presses. This would be natural if the term refers to chests kept under these presses.

Since in the Stall-system the desks alone occupy approximately the same amount of room as the older lecterns, the presses are an extra for which space is required. The Stall-system, therefore,

demands a room in which the distance from centre to centre of the windows is at least two feet more than would be required if it was fitted upon the Lectern-system. We shall see later how, at Merton and at Wells respectively, the problem was solved of adapting woodwork designed on the new Stall-system to a room built for the older Lectern-system. In a building intended for the Stall-system, both the windows themselves and the wall-space between them are wider.

Chaining and its Requisites

I come now to the method of chaining—undoubtedly the most interesting feature of all. Only Hereford, Wells and St. John's have any considerable number of chains left; but all at St. John's, and most at Wells, are detached from the presses and books. At Wells, and also at Merton, one shelf has a chain or two actually in position. The chains have long thin links, varying in length from $2\frac{5}{8}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches; in width there is less variation—merely that between a full and a meagre half-inch. The fact that the MSS. at Hereford, which have never been unchained, tend on the whole to have chains with the shorter links suggests that the elongated link is the later. There are also at Hereford some 91 chains with short oval links—these I believe to date from the eighteenth century; they are mostly on the books now in the Upper Cloister, but there are also a few in the Transept Chamber. The chains have a ring at each end; the rings vary from 1 to $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches in diameter. Most of the chains have a swivel in the middle—a security against their being broken if twisted. Some chains, instead of the swivel, have a third ring; a few have the swivel on the ring attached to the book; a few have it on the ring that runs on the rod.

What surprises the visitor on entering a chained library is to see all the books on the shelves "the wrong way round"—with their backs turned inwards. This is done in order that the chain, which is fastened to the fore-edge of the cover of the book, may hang freely.

Hence the shelf number and often a short title of the books is marked on the fore-edges of the pages.

The ring at one end of the chain is attached to the cover of the book by a thin clip of brass—originally cut with a pair of shears from a metal sheet kept for the purpose. On the variety in the form of such clips and their fortunate preservation at Hereford I shall say something later (p. 96). In the ancient library at Shrewsbury School there are a number of books, evidently once chained, which have clips of a much more solid character—like a kind of staple with the ends flattened out into a triangular pattern where it is riveted to the cover. One of the two chained books at Merton has a somewhat similar clip; and so have the two at Winchester described in Appendix II., p. 345.

The ring at the other end of the chain runs on a rod. The method by which the rods are fixed and locked is a remarkable piece of mechanical contrivance. Books on the bottom shelf are chained to a rod at some distance *below* it—at Hereford $2\frac{3}{8}$ inches below (see illustrations, pp. 51 and 59). Those on the two upper shelves are chained to the rod along the front edge of the shelf on which they rest (see illustration opposite). The rods on these two shelves slide into, and are held up by, iron sockets nailed on to the edge of the press-ends and at the points where the shelves and the uprights, which divide them into *partitiones*, form a cross. But the rods do not form a single piece the whole length of the press; they are divided into three lengths, the ends of which butt against one another *inside* the sockets at the junction of uprights and shelves. The rods are prevented from sliding sideways out of the sockets by the *hasps* (*i.e.* the long hinge-like irons), which stand out conspicuously on the face-ends of the presses and which "stop" the outside ends of the outside rods. (The name "hasp" is used of these in Sir Thomas Bodley's letters.) The hasp itself is secured by a staple on its under side which fits into the lock plate, and is caught by the bolt of the lock.

HASPS OPENED TO REMOVE CHAIN FROM ROD. HEREFORD

The illustration on p. 59 shows the apparatus at work. When it is desired to add or remove a book, the hasp is unlocked. It can then be lifted on its hinge, and the rod can be slid outwards; the ring of the chain, to the other end of which a book is attached, can then be slipped on or off the rod. When the outer rod is in the position indicated in the illustration, the next inner rod—being no longer stopped by it inside the socket—can similarly be slid outwards; and so on with the third and innermost rod.

The upper hasp stops the ends of the rods along the front of the two upper shelves by means of bulges (provided with a kind of cup) which project a couple of inches or so from the edge of the face-end. The lower hasp usually has a bulge on the opposite side, as the bottom rod is not held by a protruding socket, but by a hole in the press-end; this hole can be seen in the same illustration, on a level with the bracket which supports the desk. The bottom rod is also divided into three sections, the ends of which butt on one another in a hole through the heavy timber "ground-supports" (I explain this term, p. 63) under the uprights between the *partitiones*.

In order that the chains from the bottom shelf may reach the rod under the desk, an interval of not less than 1¼ inches—which, following J. W. Clark, I shall speak of as a "slot"—has to be left between the back edge of the desk and the bottom shelf. The normal width of these slots seems to have been 1½ inches; at St. John's and Merton, for special reasons, they are wider. The slot is very clearly shown in the illustration on p. 85, which also shows the position of a book when in use (the reader is Mr. J. Poulter, the verger). A book on the uppermost shelf, chained to the rod in front of that shelf, obviously requires a greater length of chain to reach the desk; while a book on the bottom shelf, chained to a rod just below the desk, needs a shorter chain. Chains, therefore, vary in length between 4 ft. 8 in. and 2 ft. 10 in. Some chains are even shorter than

this, but I believe that these have some time or other been broken, and have lost a few links in the mending.

The rods vary more than one would have expected both in length and thickness; indeed, the same rod is rarely of the same thickness throughout. The reason for this is that each was made separately with no other tool but the hammer. The ends are not filed smooth, but left rough as they were cut off red-hot by the smith's chisel. They are covered with a coat of what is probably some kind of red lead. At Hereford fifty-nine of the original rods have been preserved, most of which are on the presses which are now in the Transept Chamber.

The locks and hasps on the five oldest of the Hereford presses, most (if not all) of the chains, the hinges of the catalogue frames, the original sockets and desk-hooks, and the fragments of the old desk-hinge—all have a surface coating of tin (or of an alloy of silver and tin) intended as a preservative against rust. This method of treatment must have been general; it can be traced on the surviving ironwork at Corpus and the Bodleian, and on the chains at St. John's and Wells. When the chains were new, the row of presses (illustration, p. 85) must have looked like a series of cascades in silver.

All the ironwork is nailed on to the wood (the use of screws for this kind of purpose is a much later practice); the woodwork is held together by oak pegs.

The finest ironwork that survives anywhere is that on the press containing the MSS. at Hereford and the press adjoining it (see illustration, p. 95). The lock-plates on these two presses have something of the outline of a battle-axe; the lock-plates of the three other oldest presses are more nearly, but not quite, square; the lock-plates at Corpus are of a shape intermediate between these. The reader should notice in this illustration the ancient key; also the great decorative nail-heads on the locks, which are distinctive of Hereford.

The lock-plates on the later presses at Hereford are square. For some unknown reason, of the five sets of hasps (upper and lower)

on these presses, no two sets are of the same pattern (see illustration, p. 319). Moreover, the ironwork on these presses shows no signs of having been tinned. Either it was dipped red-hot in oil to make it rust-proof, or treated with some inferior alloy which has turned black.

The Woodwork

The fine grain of the timber comes out well in the illustration, p. 95. Planks in those days were not made by sawing log timber and afterwards subjecting it to the plane. The oak trunk was cleft by wedges along the line of the grain; the thick rough slices thus produced were then smoothed down with an adze. No two press-ends therefore are of exactly the same thickness, and no surface is entirely even. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries misguided renovators often applied the plane to ancient woodwork, in order to produce the neat smooth appearance then so much admired. The Hereford presses have suffered less than those of any other library (less even than Merton) from such benevolence.

A conspicuous feature in most of these libraries is the *catalogue frame* on the face-ends of each press, intended to contain a list of the books in that press.[1] In Bodley's letters both lists and frames are called "*Tables*". Two only of his catalogue frames (illustration, p. 211) have been preserved, on the presses on the right hand and the left as one enters Duke Humphrey's Library; as these may be presumed to date from 1600, they are the earliest extant examples. They are slightly larger than those at Hereford; which is natural, since Bodley's presses being two feet longer held more books, and therefore the lists must have included more titles. The moulding is a trifle simpler than that at Hereford, and they have lost an original central partition; otherwise they are practically identical. The similar frames at Corpus are indistinguishable from those at Hereford, and can now be dated 1605 (p. 164 f.). In later libraries,

[1] At Hereford printed books had no titles on the backs, these being turned inwards. Some twelfth-century MSS. have them in original letters, (?) being kept in chests back upwards.

like Westminster Abbey and Jesus, the catalogue frames provide an opportunity for introducing more elaborate decoration (see photographs, pp. 215, 263).

The shelves at Hereford are divided by two uprights so as to form three rows of *partitiones*. This is the number at the Bodleian, Corpus, St. John's and Westminster; at Merton (except in one half-press), Jesus and Wells there is only one upright, forming two *partitiones* per shelf. The uprights are of the same thickness as the shelves; but underneath the desks (usually immediately under these uprights) there is a support of much heavier timber. At Hereford these *ground-supports*, as I shall call them, are of plain timber (see illustration, p. 51); in *Duke Humphrey* and other later libraries something more ornamental is attempted (compare ground-support on left, p. 205, with Merton, p. 143, and Chetham, p. 270). The brackets which support the desks also act as ledges on which the bottom shelf of the press rests. Owing to the lower strap of the desk-hinge at Hereford being fixed on the under side of the desk, the bracket is cut round the edge of the press-end (in order to give the hinge a certain amount of support) and a shallow hollow is cut in the top of the bracket to receive it; but this detail is not repeated elsewhere. The shelving at Hereford also has a feature which I have not noticed elsewhere. The two upper shelves and the uprights are cut into one another—by a method technically called "halving"—in a way familiar in the cross divisions inside a cardboard box. Also the ends of these shelves are supported by a couple of protruding tongues, about 2 inches wide, which fit into mortise-holes about 1⅛ inches deep cut in the face-end and wall-end of the presses. From the structural point of view both these peculiarities are open to criticism as being insufficiently strong to support the great weight of shelves loaded with folio volumes. Repeated removals having further weakened the joints of the Hereford presses, and in some instances injured the tongues, ledges have been added from time to time to sustain the weight.

The Cambridge Development: Clare, St. John's

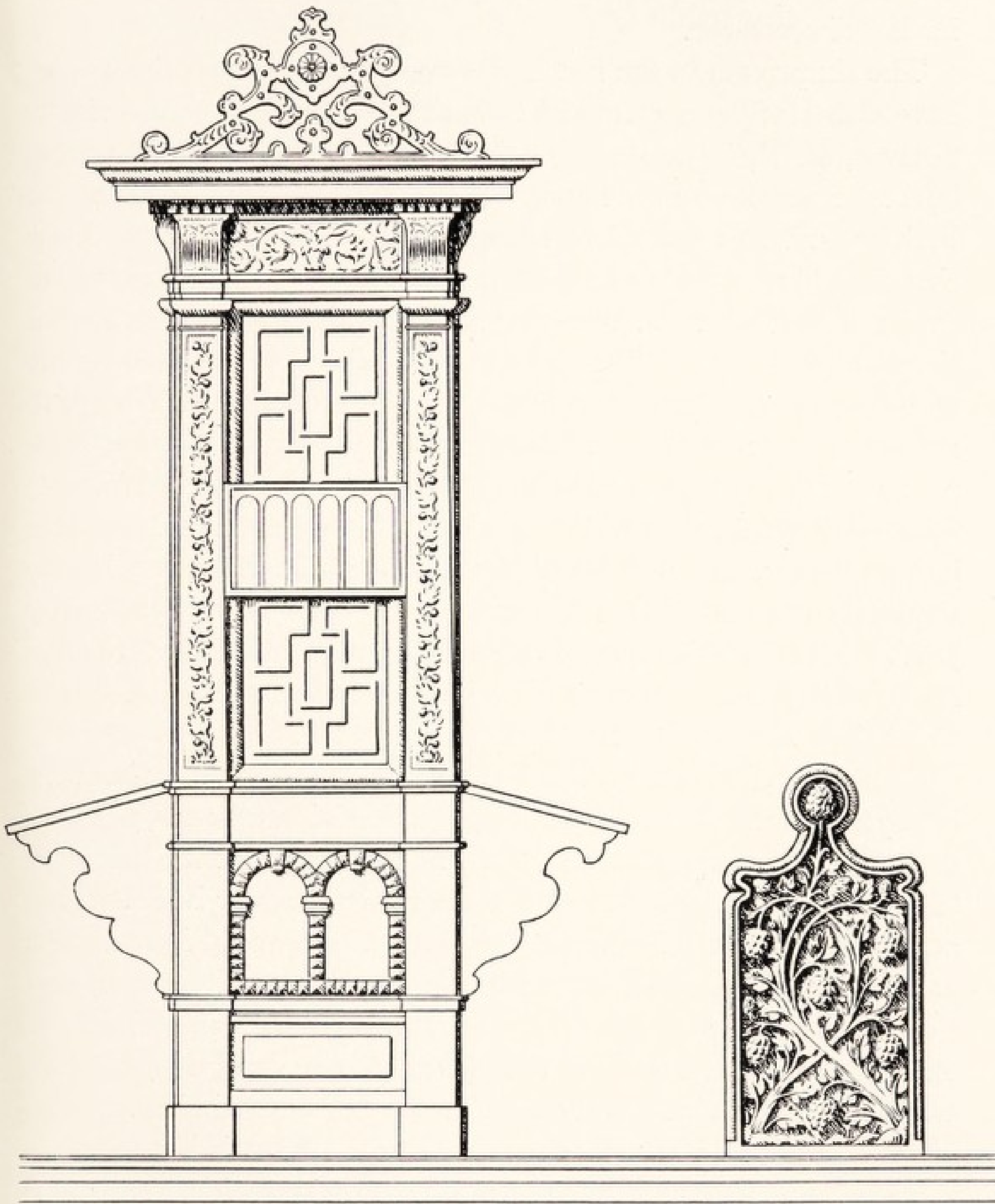
The Stall-system reached Cambridge about 1626. There it promptly expired—first giving birth to mutations which, under the conditions prevalent at Cambridge during the seventeenth century, were better adapted for survival than the parent stock. At Clare we have the Stall-system—without its chains. At St. John's and at Peterhouse, chains having gone, two alternative substitutes for the back-to-back seat are tried. At King's these two are combined, but chaining is retained.

The old library at Clare seems to be the one example of the Stall-system ever seen at Cambridge. In March 1627 the Duke of Buckingham was taken to view it, though it was not yet quite ready for the books. The present library was built in 1687 and was fitted up on the Wall-system. The antiquary, W. Cole, in 1742 saw both libraries, the old and the new. The latter he styles

> Y^{e} most elegant of any in ye University, being a very large well-proportion'd room à la moderne, wth ye Books rang'd all round it & not in Classes as in most of ye rest of ye Libraries in other Colleges. . . . The old Library is over ye Chapel, & had they not one so much better, w^{d} not be reckoned a despicable, being fitted up wth wainscote Classes on both sides, & has a great many good Books also. . . .[1]

The old library was in a room over the old chapel, which was itself built in 1535. In 1763, when this chapel, and the two storeys above it, were pulled down, the ornamented presses made in 1626–1627 were brought over from the old library; they now stand in two rows down the centre of the room. Except for the catalogue frames, which I reserve for later comment, the face-ends are all but identical with those which were being made at the same date, or perhaps a year later, for the library at St. John's; but unlike St. John's, Clare was once, as we shall see shortly, provided with desks and seats. Mr. Ault's drawing shows in elevation the original disposition of these—except that the brackets of the desks are those of a wall-end,

[1] Quoted by Willis and Clark, *op. cit.*, i., p. 113.



CLARE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

the original (doubtless more ornamental) brackets of the face-ends having disappeared.

The six presses in the row to the right as one enters the library have elaborately ornamented face-ends and plain wall-ends—visible because, in their present position, they do not touch the wall. The four presses on the left-hand side have the ornamentation on both ends. Willis and Clark accounted for this on the hypothesis that the old wall-ends of these presses had been replaced by later copies of the face-ends. What has really happened, however, is that the plain wall-ends of these four presses have been replaced by the face-ends of other presses which it was not thought worth while to remove to the new library. That is to say, the same thing has happened at Clare as happened to two of the presses at Hereford (p. 100) when they were reassembled in 1856. This conclusion I reached independently, on the basis of my experience at Hereford; I subsequently discovered that it was also the conclusion come to by J. W. Clark himself some years after the publication of the *Architectural History*, and expounded by him in a communication to the Cambridge Antiquarian Society (viii., p. 18 ff.).

Clark here discusses the fresh evidence afforded by the discovery in 1890, in a forgotten lumber room, of nine plain wall-ends, five cornices, and an ornamented half-end. The half-end evidently belonged to one of those cupboard half-presses for archives or MSS. which are a regular feature in the Stall-system. There would have been a pair of these cupboards, one each side of a great end window; and since the lower part (see the woodcut in Clark's paper) is not ornamented, there must have been (as at Trinity and Jesus, Oxford) a low cupboard connecting them under the end window. If the library contained fourteen presses and two archive half-presses, it would require a room with seven windows on each side. Willis and Clark (i., p. 83) reproduce a sketch of the exterior of the chapel and library, derived by Cole from an old plan, which shows a line of nine windows; and argue that one press has been lost. But libraries so

often had a vestibule that this inference is not necessary. The fire-place, the presence of which is inferred by Clark from a chimney in Loggan's print, was probably on another floor.

A drawing of one of the discarded wall-ends is included in Clark's *The Care of Books* (p. 187). Since these wall-ends still retain brackets, evidently intended to support a desk, he rightly concludes that the Clare presses were once provided with desks of the slope and character normal to the Stall-system. He also notes that scars inside the end show that originally there were three shelves, the usual number. The drawing shows a tenon at the bottom of the standard; this proves that the presses, and presumably also the seats, were also normal in that they were mortised into "foundation beams".

There are, in the library, some half a dozen seats, averaging about 4 ft. 3 in. long. The ends are elaborately carved in a design of interlacing vine-stems which may well be Elizabethan. It would look as if each of the present seats has been made up from the ornamented face-ends of two seats from the old library—the un-ornamented wall-ends and the original benches of the old seats having been discarded. In the general outline of their elevation these seat-ends resemble those at Trinity Hall far more closely than they do the seat-ends in the libraries of Oxford, Hereford or Wells. They are unique in being 18 inches wide. This does not allow room for two seats with a back between them; nor are there any scars of the rail or panelling of such a back. A possible deduction from this is that in the old library building at Clare, originally designed for the Lectern-system, the windows were not sufficiently wide apart to allow of a back-to-back seat. One might conjecture that the same problem had been presented at Clare as at Merton and at Wells (though not in such an acute form), and that it was solved, as at Merton, by fitting a backless bench between the presses; only there was room for a wider bench. But if the seats (as their ornamentation suggests) are older than the presses, the problem which they solved

must go back behind the present presses. Also the present presses are 2 ft. 2 in. wide; 1 ft. 11 in. would at a pinch have sufficed. A preferable solution of the problem is to suppose that before 1626 the library was fitted like that of Trinity Hall, where there is a space of about 2 feet left between the seat and the lectern, for the convenience of a standing reader.

The face-ends at Clare are slightly smaller than those at St. John's (7 ft. 6 in. by 2 ft. 2 in. as against 8 ft. 2 in. by 2 ft. 3 in.). The only other noticeable difference between them is the way in which, respectively, they solve the problem of adapting the traditional catalogue frame to a face-end which is elaborately panelled. At St. John's the lists of books are concealed behind a pair of small panels, which open on a hinge, on the level of the second shelf from the top (illustration, p. 71). At Clare, in identically the same position, the woodwork assumes the form of a kind of arcade of six round-headed arches. It was Mr. Ault who explained to me its purpose. Originally there were three shelves on each side of the presses; each arch was meant to contain the list of books on one shelf.

From the existence of desks and seats, Clark argued that the old library at Clare had once been chained. This deduction, however, has been proved erroneous by the investigation of Mr. W. D. Forbes, the present librarian, who carefully examined the books for signs of chaining. In his sumptuous work, *Clare College* (p. 311 f.), he gives the evidence that books which had been in the mediaeval library were chained; but no book later than 1627 shows scars of chaining. Nevertheless, it appears that the books were still set on the shelves with the fore-edge outermost: they were still clasped, and frequently had titles or numbers written on the fore-edge. He adduces, as evidence of the continuance of this practice elsewhere, a print of the private library of Bishop Boyes. Similar evidence has been communicated to me by Mr. F. C. Morgan of Hereford, who showed me photographs he had taken of certain seventeenth-century monu-

ments.[1] Hence, in every respect, except that of actually having the books chained, the presses set up at Clare in 1627 represent the Stall-system.

John Evelyn, under the date August 31, 1654, wrote:

> This evening to Cambridge; and went first to see St John's Colledge, well built of brick, and Librarie, which I think is the fairest of that University.

The doom at Cambridge of the practice of chaining books was settled by its abandonment, not only at Clare, but in the magnificent library of St. John's, begun 1624, and finished by 1628.

John Williams, Bishop of Lincoln and Lord-Keeper of the Privy Seal (the last ecclesiastic to hold that office), was like Sir Thomas Bodley in that his library fittings represent two stages of development—though not the same two. At Westminster Abbey (illustration, p. 263), Williams followed the model of the Stall-system very much as it is found in Duke Humphrey's Library, except for the elaborate pediments and the slightly more ornate catalogue frames. At St. John's, Cambridge, he struck out a new line. He substituted for the back-to-back seats of the ordinary Stall-system dwarf bookcases with a double sloping desk on top—modelled on the standing-lecterns, which were characteristic of the Cambridge library tradition, and with which, we have seen, St. John's itself had previously been fitted. He also divested the presses of their desks. People who wanted a desk could use the standing desks; but for those who wished it, stools were provided on which the reader could sit, holding the book on his knees or (possibly) resting it on a table.

Thus, while at Trinity Hall we have the Cambridge lecterns modified by details derived from the Oxford Stall-system, at St. John's we have the Stall-system even more profoundly influenced by a relic of the Cambridge Lectern-system. In different degrees and in quite

[1] The monuments are: at Brailes (Warwick), Richard Davies, 1639; at Charlecote (do.), Sir Thomas Lucy, 1640; at Blockley (Worcester), Ann Mary Childe, 1659, with books on two shelves so placed.

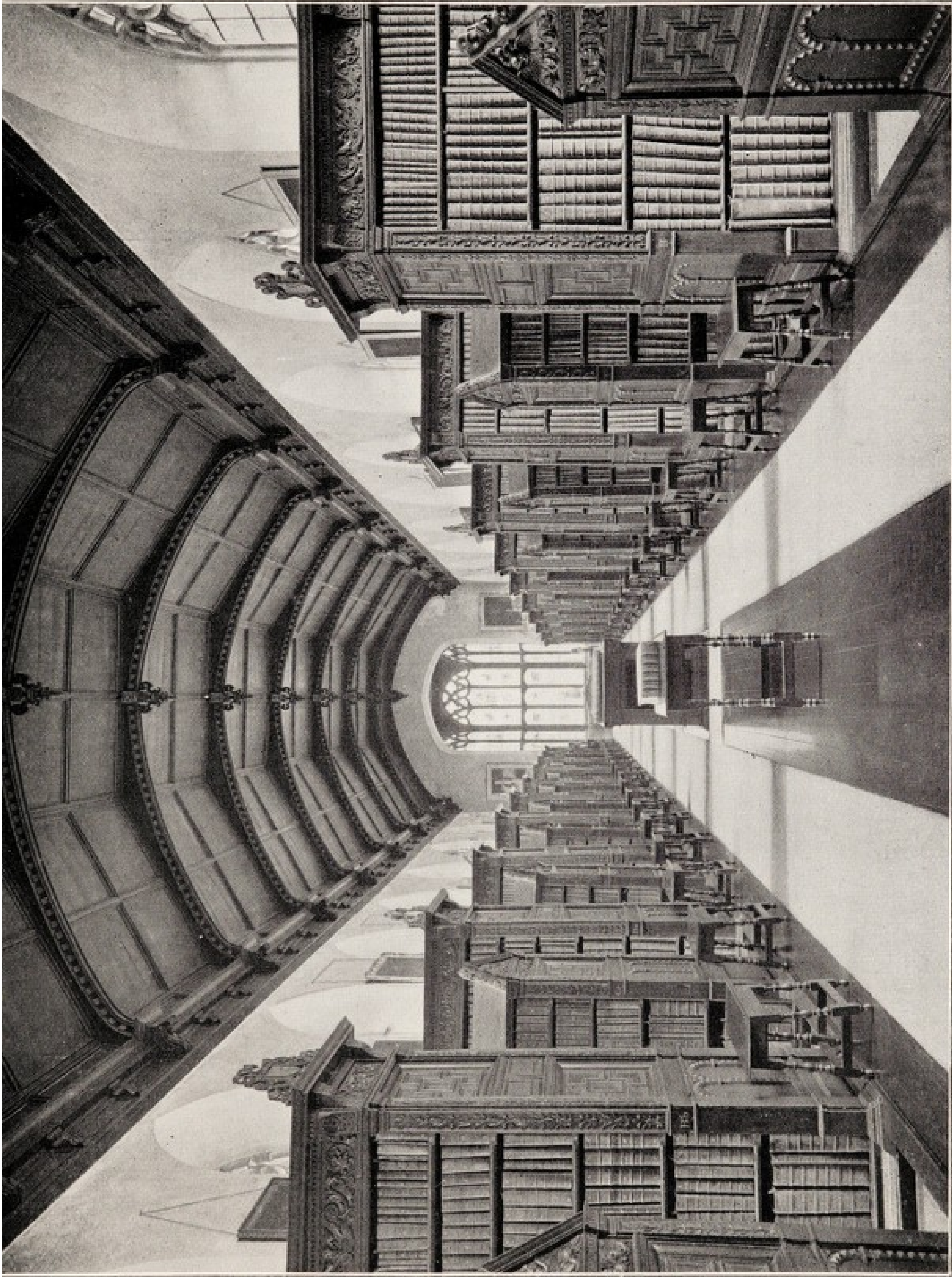
different ways, both these libraries represent a combination of the forms traditional to Oxford and to Cambridge.

The elimination of the desk attached to the presses almost compelled the provision of shelves for books below the desk level. Thus for the first time in English library development, we find the conception of a "bookcase", that is, a piece of furniture consisting only of shelves for books—liberated from the idea with which library evolution started, that the reader's desk is the essential of library structure.

To elucidate the illustration of this library I ought to say that the plinth at the bottom of the face-end was originally carried round the long front of the cases; that there were once pilasters in front of the central divisions of the presses; that the dwarf bookcases (except the end ones seen on either side of the photograph opposite) were raised in 1741–42 by the addition at the bottom of 18 inches, to accommodate more books; and that traces of locks on the half-presses at the ends of the chamber show that the tradition of having end-presses fitted as cupboards for archives was still maintained.

The old library at King's I describe in a later chapter. Here chaining was revived, and it retained its chains till 1777. All other seventeenth-century libraries at Cambridge followed the model for a chainless library which first appears at Peterhouse (*c.* 1645). This is yet another modification of the Stall-system—two *podia* (illustrations, pp. 282-3) being substituted for a back-to-back seat. Willis and Clark trace the Peterhouse model, with vestigial *podium*, in the University Library and at Jesus, Gonville and Caius, Christ's, Emmanuel and Pembroke. Even Wren's great design at Trinity, finished in 1695, retains, along with elements derived from the Wall-system, the row of presses at right angles to the wall—an inheritance from the specifically Cambridge development of the Stall-system without its chains and desks.

Thus it was that chaining went out of fashion here a century and a half earlier than it did at Oxford; but whether because at Cambridge



ST. JOHN'S, CAMBRIDGE. THE LIBRARY

(Copyright of "Country Life")

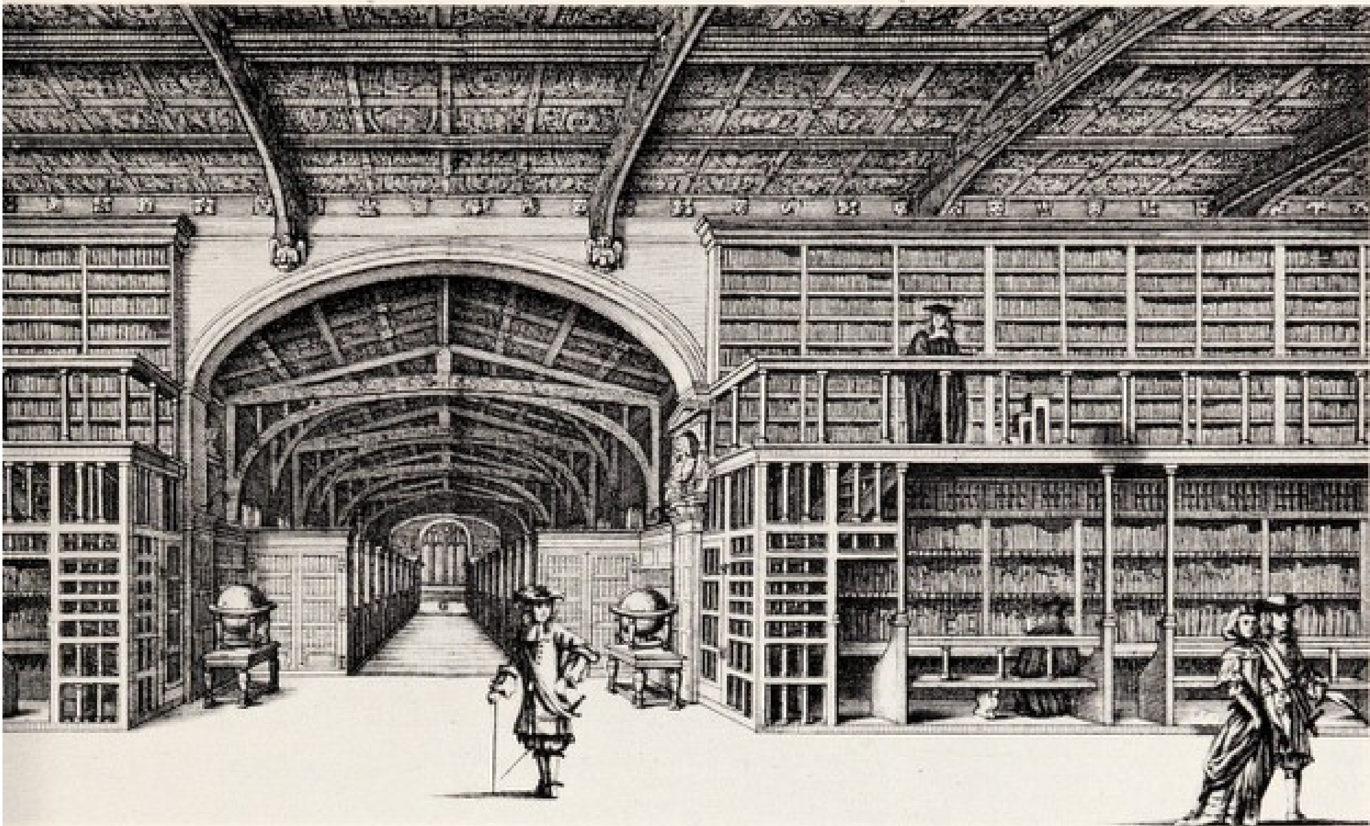
the standard of honesty was higher, or the love of books less, I need not dispute.

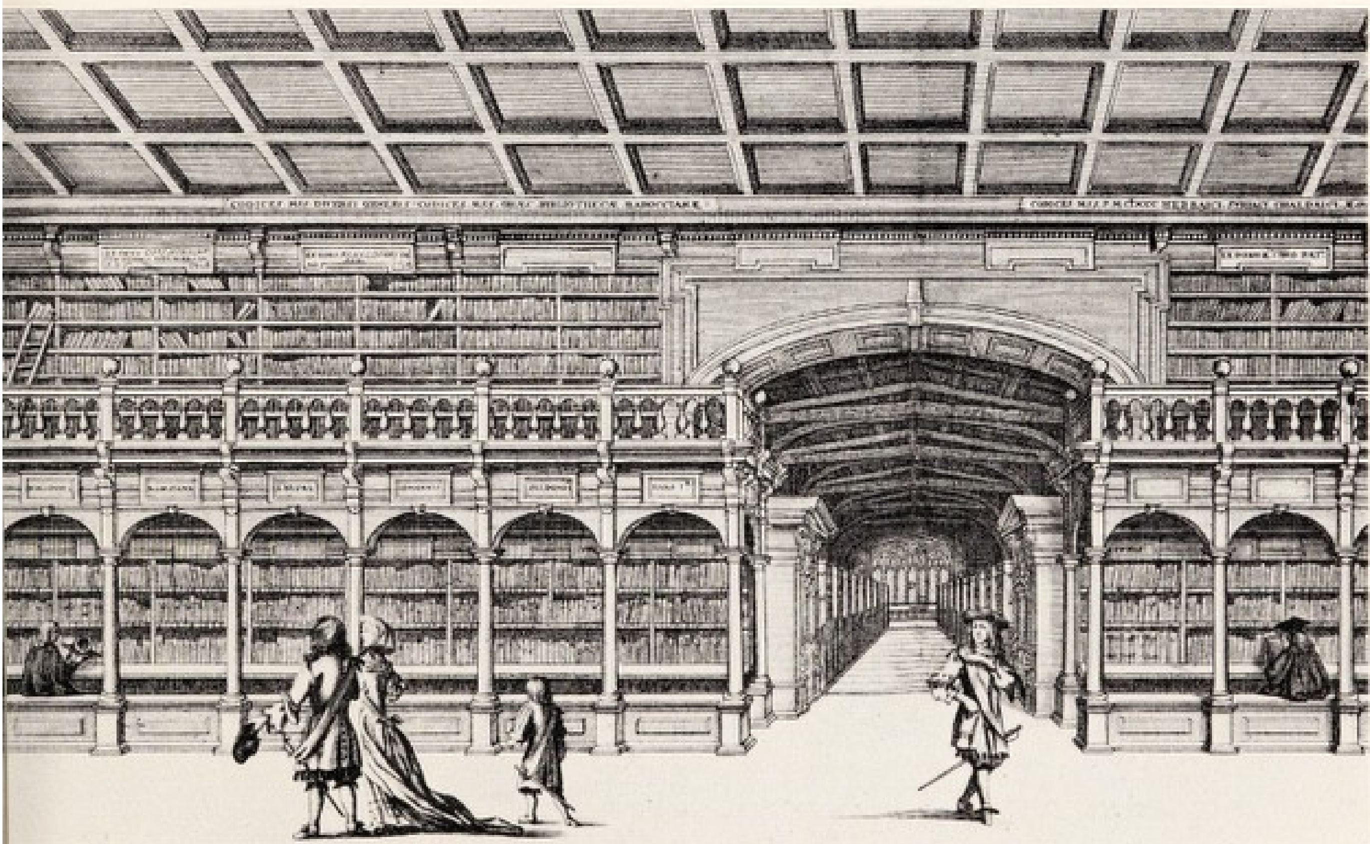
The Wall-system

Flat shelves against a wall were not unknown in the Middle Ages. Clark reproduces from a fifteenth-century MS. a picture of a study so equipped (*op. cit.*, p. 305). I have no doubt that the bookcases at Dover Priory, which a catalogue of 1389 shows were divided into *distinctiones* each having seven *gradus*, were of the same character (*op. cit.*, p. 194 f.). A *distinctio* will be the space between the uprights; the *gradus* are flat shelves. The reason Clark is so puzzled by the description is that he forgets that books were not as yet placed upright on the shelves. Seven shelves for books lying flat could easily be fixed one above another about 9 inches apart without the total height becoming excessive. The Wall-system originated when the idea occurred of applying this form of shelves (only with the books placed upright in rows) to a grand library. Such a library was built with all its bookcases backed against the wall—either a windowless wall, or one with windows high above the floor—instead of being, as heretofore, arranged at right angles to a wall pierced with windows.

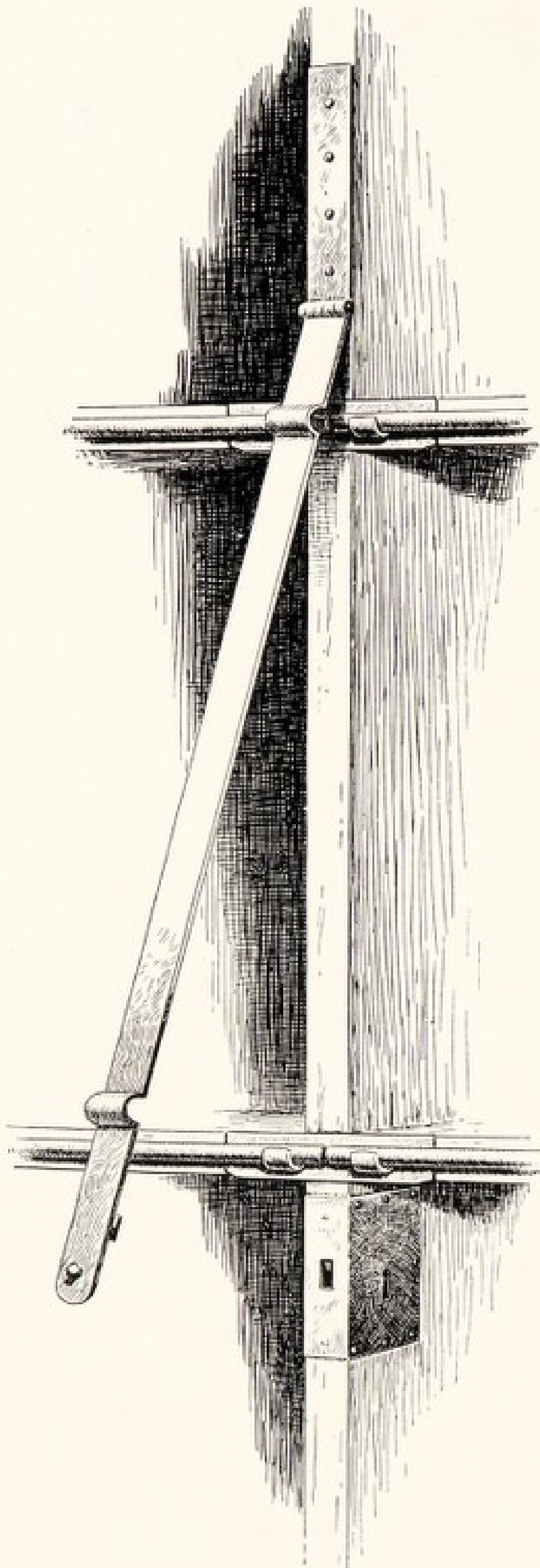
The first important library into which the Wall-system was introduced was that in the Escorial, built by Philip II. of Spain and completed in 1584 (Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 267). The earliest instance in England is the *Arts End* of the Bodleian, which was completed in 1612. In the Bodleian, therefore, we have the exceptional opportunity of studying side by side two stages in the development of library fittings—the transition from one to the other of which is less an evolution than a revolution. The refitting of Duke Humphrey's Library was finished by Sir Thomas Bodley in 1600; it is a fine example of the Stall-system. But in his travels on the Continent he had doubtless seen examples of the recently invented Wall-system, and decided to fit up on this system the great addition to the older building which he began in 1610 and completed by 1612.

In *Arts End*, as this wing of the library is called, bookshelves





THE BODLEIAN (from Loggan, 1675). *Arts End* (above). *Selden End* (below)



LOCK IN *SELDEN END*; HASP AND ROD-SUPPORTS AS INDICATED BY SCARS

fixed against the wall go right up to the ceiling. This fact entails a further development. In order to make accessible the higher shelves, a gallery is provided, approached by a remarkably designed flight of stairs. The upper part of the illustration, p. 73 (a reproduction of part of Loggan's print, 1675), shows *Arts End* in its original condition; Duke Humphrey's Library is visible through the central archway. The door at the bottom of the staircase to the gallery was kept locked, only the librarian or his assistant being allowed to enter. It was mainly intended for books of octavo or smaller size, which Sir Thomas objected to having chained in the open presses. Originally he had ordered these to be kept in the lobbies, which are now librarians' studies, and only to be given out on application to the librarian. But they soon became too numerous for this, and the overflow was provided for by the gallery in *Arts End*. The books on the ground floor of *Arts End* were open to the

general reader; there were therefore provided desks and readers' seats under the gallery, and the books were chained.

Arts End, then, though fitted on the Wall-system, was still a chained library. The same holds true of the still later addition known as *Selden End*, built in 1634 to accommodate the books bequeathed to the University by the great lawyer, John Selden, author of the famous *Table Talk*. In his will the books were specifically ordered to be chained; but as the system of hasps applicable to the press-ends of the Stall-system would not be practicable with the great length of the bookcases on the Wall-system, a different method was employed. As six of the locks in *Selden End* survive, and a large number of scars of rod-sockets, Mr. Ault has been able, in the foregoing diagram, to reconstruct this method. The locks are spring-locks (the spring is still in working order) in which the bolt closes automatically when the staple is inserted; the key is only needed for unlocking. Seats for readers are provided under the gallery, and hinged desks having desk-hooks exactly as in the Stall-system. The scars both of rod-sockets and desk-hooks show that in *Arts End* the ironwork was ornamented as in *Duke Humphrey*; the scars in *Selden End* indicate that the ironwork there was of a plainer and severer character.

The last library on the Wall-system built with the idea of being chained was, I believe, that of St. Edmund Hall, Oxford. This was begun 1680; its chains were removed about 1760. This interesting little library was also, unless I am mistaken, the first College library to be built on the Wall-system. It was (illustration, p. 76) fitted with the gallery, without which that system is a grievous waste of space. The room has been lengthened 10 feet, and the shelving has been remodelled; but the ballustrading preserves substantially its original form. A comparison of old catalogues with scars on the books shows that, as in *Arts End*, only the books on the ground floor were chained. The first catalogue of the library was made by the famous Thomas Hearne, *c.* 1697. For the making of this—in two copies

—he was paid £1. One copy, in his own hand, is now in the Bodleian.

ST. EDMUND HALL

In the eighteenth-century libraries of Oxford—All Souls (Codrington), Worcester, Christ Church and the Radcliffe—the Wall-system with its gallery is magnificently triumphant; but the books were no longer chained. Great pieces of architecture, they are excluded by its title from consideration in this book.

CHAPTER II

HEREFORD

SYNOPSIS

I. The Chapter Library

The hitherto accepted dating of the Hereford presses as the gift of Walter de Rammesbury, 1394, due to an error of Browne Willis.

The mediaeval library was over the west walk of the cloister; and may have been built any time between 1412 and the death of Bishop Bothe in 1535. In 1555 it received many of its MSS. under the will of Sir John Prise, doubtless from monasteries suppressed by him as King's agent. In 1583 Queen Elizabeth approved statutes for its better ordering.

In 1590 the library was removed to the Ladye Chapel—the room vacated being converted to the use of the Cathedral School. Later on two presses and two half-presses were added by Thomas Thornton, who probably also gave the catalogue frames, which are identical with those put up at Corpus, Oxford, 1605. In 1611 a Donor's Book was provided.

Evidence that the five oldest of the existing presses were made in 1590, and that the mediaeval library was fitted on the Lectern-system. The seat-ends, however, were probably those of the (shorter) seats in the mediaeval library.

In 1841 the library was ejected from the Ladye Chapel; after fifteen years the presses were set up again, much mutilated and with many parts wrongly reassembled. In 1897 it was removed to a new room built for it, the "Upper Cloister". In 1930–31 it was restored by Mr. Moffatt, partly in the Transept Chamber, partly in the Upper Cloister.

The saving of the chains, and of the brass clips by which they are attached to the books.

II. Discovery and Restoration

An account, more or less in diary form, of the restoration and of the discoveries which it led to. These included the original seats, which had been converted into pews, the face-ends and wall-ends of three extra presses, and specimens of all the minor items of the structure which had been lost.

III. The Transept Chamber

History and description of the room, *c.* 1270, in which the main part of the library now is.

IV. The Hereford Book-Chests

Two fourteenth-century book-chests of exceptional interest.

CHAPTER II

HEREFORD

I

THE CHAPTER LIBRARY

THE MEDIAEVAL LIBRARY

THE early history of the Chapter Library at Hereford is obscure; and it has had a curiously nomad existence. Books about Hereford commonly date the bookcases from a gift by Walter de Rammesbury in 1394; but this—as I shall show (p. 313 ff.)—can be traced back to a mistake made by Browne Willis, the ecclesiastical antiquary, in the volume of his *Survey of the Cathedrals* that deals with Hereford, published in 1727. I begin, therefore, by reciting facts that rest on evidence which is beyond dispute.

In 1582 a Commission (presided over by Whitgift, the future Archbishop) was appointed by Queen Elizabeth to inquire into abuses alleged by the then Bishop of Hereford (who was at loggerheads with the Chapter on theological as well as practical issues) to be rife in the Cathedral. The Commissioners found the library to be in a filthy and neglected condition, *jam situ et squalore obsita*. The new Statutes for the Cathedral drawn up by these Commissioners, and signed by the Queen in 1583, include a special section prescribing regulations for the upkeep and better management of the library. These Statutes were superseded in 1636 by another set of Statutes approved by Archbishop Laud. The Elizabethan Statutes survive (to the best of my knowledge) in a single MS. copy in the library of the Bishop's Palace at Hereford. As they have never been

printed, and as the section *De Bibliotheca* is of interest to students of ancient library management, I reproduce it, with a translation, in an Appendix. [For discovery of Thornton's copy, see p. 351.]

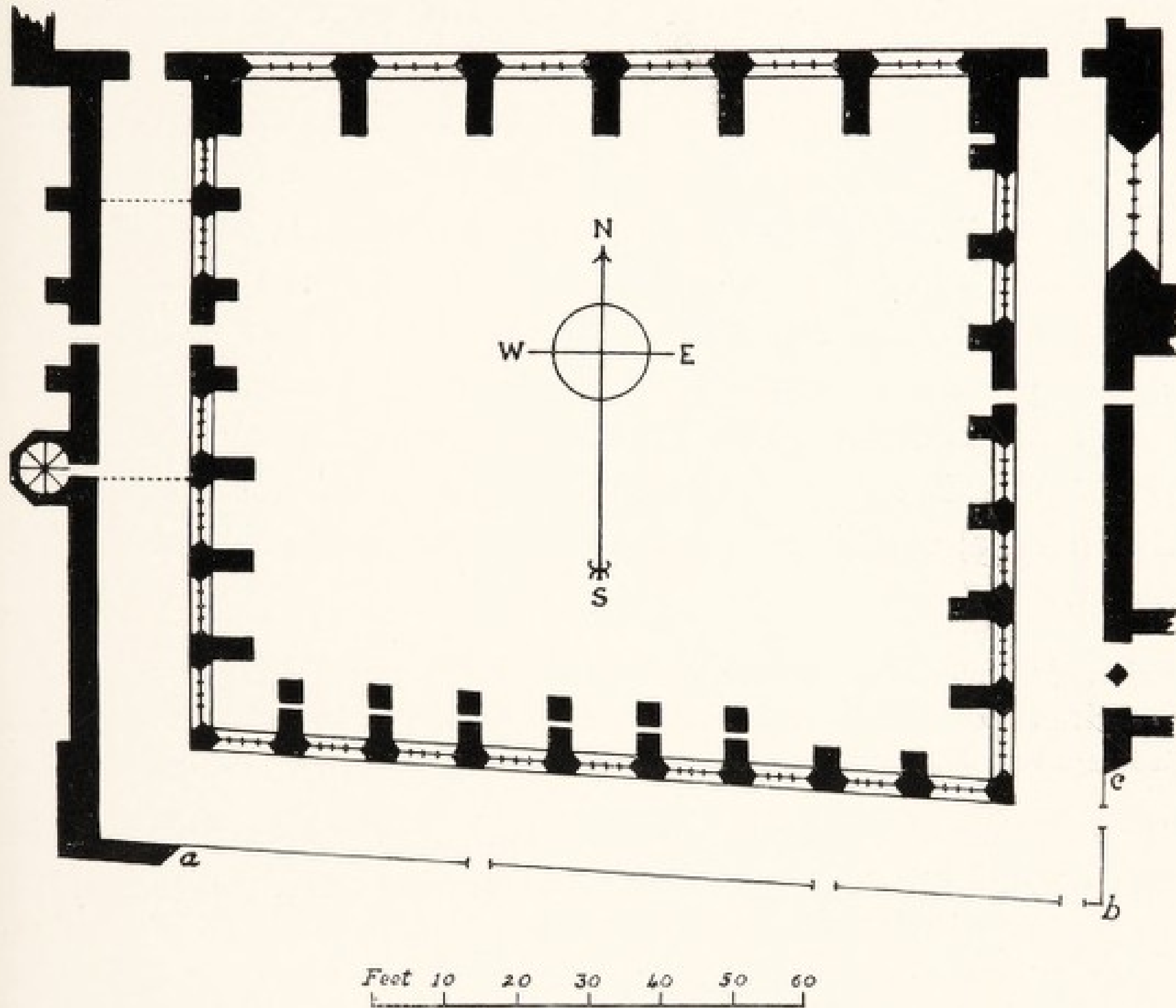
At that time the library was in a room over the west walk of the cloister. The placing of the library above the cloister occurred also at Lincoln, Salisbury, Wells, Old St. Paul's and Magdalen. Evidence that at Hereford also it was above the cloister, and not in the cloister itself (as has been suggested), is afforded by the plan, reproduced opposite, given by Browne Willis.

Notice in this plan a spiral staircase, which could only lead to a chamber above the cloister, and the three buttresses against the outside wall, evidently designed to support the additional weight of an upper storey. The cloister was in course of building in 1412; the library, therefore, must be later than that. (Accordingly, the books which were left by Bishop Charleton in 1369, with the injunction that they were to be chained in the church, must have been placed on a desk in the Cathedral or possibly in the Treasury.) The statement of the Commissioners of 1582 that the library was almost tumbling down from age (*vetustate fere collapsa*) is explicable on the hypothesis that, like the library at Lincoln, it was a half-timbered and plaster building of which the plaster was falling away. As the upper storey of the wing of the Bishop's Palace, which continues the line of the outside wall of the south walk of the cloister—terminating in a fine entrance lodge—is a half-timbered structure, an upper chamber in this style on the west walk would have been aesthetically in keeping.

The earliest of the Chapter Act Books still surviving covers the period 1512–66, though the early part (up to August 1521) is badly mutilated. English handwriting at this period does not make easy reading, and I confess that, knowing Havergal[1] must have searched it carefully before writing his account of the library, I

[1] F. J. Havergal, sometime Vicar-Choral and Librarian, and author of *Fasti Herefordenses*, 1869.

should have flinched from the attack. But the Principal of St. Edmund Hall, who is familiar with sixteenth-century hands, very kindly came to my rescue and volunteered another search. He found one entry only which concerned the library, viz. the letter of Archbishop Parker in 1566, which I print in Appendix III. This



THE CLOISTERS, HEREFORD, FROM BROWNE WILLIS' PLAN

Dotted lines show extent of Old Library, over walk of cloister destroyed 1760.
a, *b*, *c*—Party-wall between cloister and Palace garden.

throws some light on the activities of the Archbishop, but none on the date of the library.

Sir John Prise (the correct date of whose death appears to be 1555), one of the King's agents in the suppression of the monasteries, had made use of his opportunities for acquiring a collection of MSS.

In his will he left "to the Cathedral Church of Hereford, to be set in their library, all my written works of Divinitee". Dr. M. R. James, in his Introduction to the *Descriptive Catalogue* of the Cathedral MSS., by Canon A. T. Bannister (1927), discusses the provenance of the MSS., of which there are in all 227. Of these 114 are "certainly old possessions of the Cathedral; 48 came from libraries that can be named, mostly in suppressed monasteries (especially the Abbey of Cirencester and the Franciscan House in Hereford). These latter probably represent Prise's "written works of Divinitee". In addition some forty-six printed volumes in the library have his name inscribed. The period immediately preceding was not one when libraries were being founded; on the contrary it was conspicuous for the wholesale destruction of books as well as monasteries (see p. 199). The authority of the Pope in England was abolished by Act of Parliament in 1534; the final dissolution of the monasteries took place in 1549; and Hereford was altogether on the side of the old religion.

> Priests and such like enemies of the truth, driven out of other places, find a safe asylum here, with the connivance of the local justices, and are maintained and feasted as if they were God's angels.[1]

The earliest reference to a library that I have been able to find is in the will of Bishop Bothe, dated 28th May 1535, the year of his death.

> Also I will that all my bookes not bequethed, as well those at London as those that bee at Whitbourne, be delivered and brought to the library at Hereford and there to remayne.

Bothe was a man of considerable distinction in his day. He was one of three Bishops in attendance on Katherine of Aragon at the Field of the Cloth of Gold in 1520. In the previous year he finished the beautiful perpendicular addition to the north porch of the Cathedral and the chamber over it. It is just possible that he built

[1] *State Papers*, quoted, A. T. Bannister, *The Cathedral Church of Hereford*, p. 86.

the library; but it is more likely that it was earlier than his time. Of the books bequeathed by him, some twenty-five volumes were in the library in 1611; and of these twenty are there now—so there is something to be said for chaining books.

To the Ladye Chapel, 1590

The Chapter Act Book of the time—there are two copies of this—records an order for the removal of the library

from the cloister where it has been of old to the eastern part of the Cathedral commonly known as the Chapel of the Blessed Mary.

The work was to be charged to what is now called the "Fabric Fund"[1]:

Decreverunt Bibliothecam Ecclesie cath: Heref: transferendam et amovendam a loco consueto, videlicet, a Claustro ubi ab antiquo fuit usitata, usque partem orientalem dicte Ecclesie, scilicet, ad locum vulgariter nuncupatum Capellam beate Marie, ibidemque Bibliothecam construendam et aptandam sumptibus fabrice ecclesie predicte.

The order is dated February 16, 1589, "according to the reckoning of the Church of England" (*Anno Domini secundum computationem ecclesie Anglicane*). These Elizabethan Churchmen have not forgotten the Armada; in the matter of the Calendar, lately reformed by Gregory XIII., they will stand no Popery. As the year (in the "old style", which held till after the Act of 1750) began on March 25, the month of February in this entry would in the modern reckoning be dated in 1590, not in 1589; the statement commonly made in books about Hereford that the removal of the library took place in 1589 is an error due to overlooking this point.

Another minute of the same date orders the refitting of the room vacated by the library as the Cathedral School.

Ludum Litterarium Libere Scole fiendum et construendum eodem loco ubi bibliotheca fuit.

[1] By a Papal Bull of February 1320 an appropriation was made of the tithes of Shinfield to the upkeep of the fabric of Hereford Cathedral, *in usus fabrice fabrica ipsa durante*.

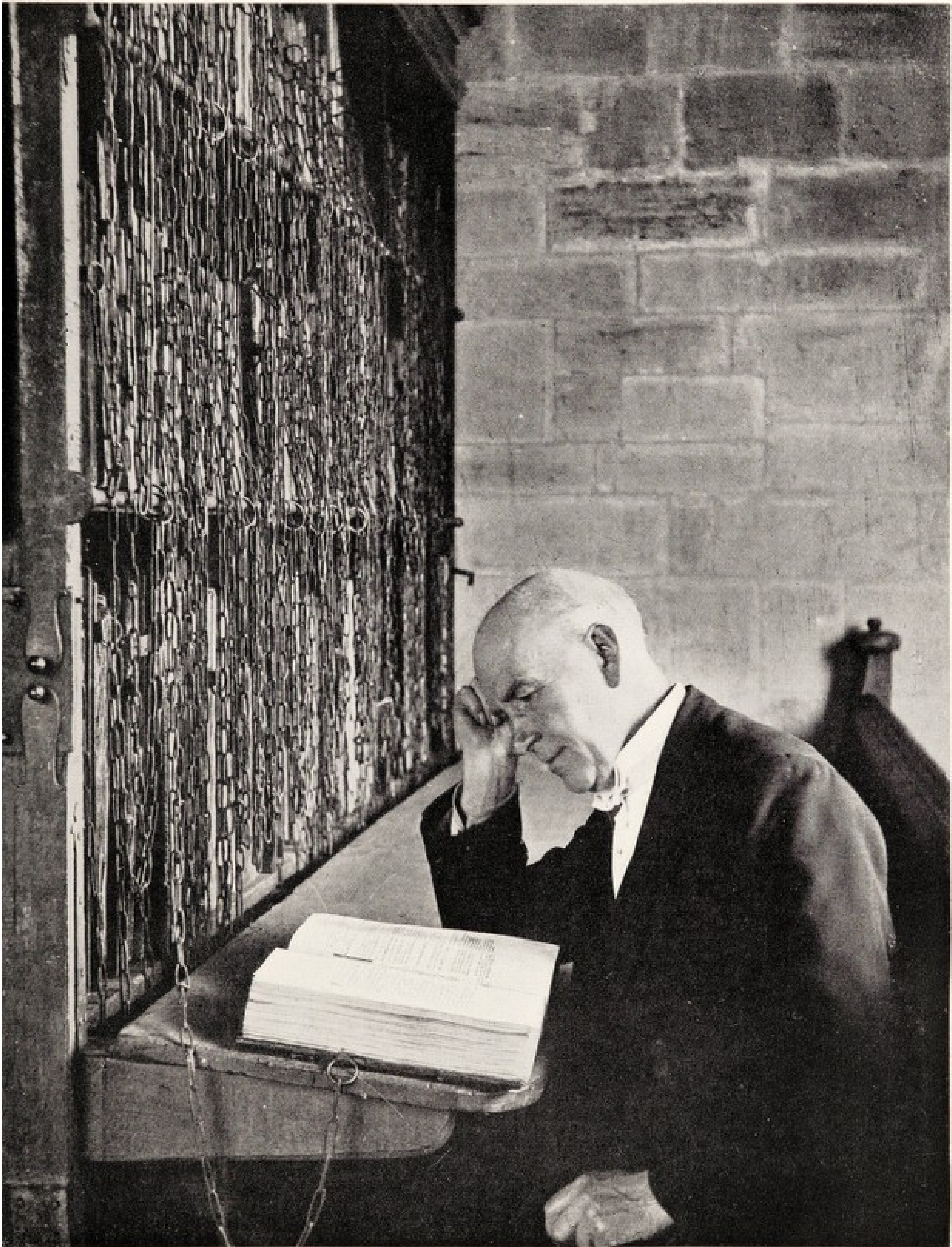
A new doorway is to be opened up giving the scholars access from outside the cloister to the school stairs (*gradus*).

Hostiumque pro ingressu et egressu ad eundem aperiendum et fiendum extra Cimiterium ecclesie cath. ad Gradus dicti Ludi Litterarii.

The word *Gradus* presumably refers to the staircase up to the old library. The new doorway is to be cut through the west wall of the cloister near the foot of these stairs, and the library chamber itself refitted with the desks, etc., appropriate to a school. It does not mean, as has commonly been supposed, that the west walk of the cloister was pulled down at that time, and a new building erected for a school. This is proved by the fact that in 1727 the whole of the west walk is shown as intact in Browne Willis' plan of the Cathedral. A day school at that date usually had only one room; and the Chapter, not being well off at the time, would have been very unlikely to pull down an existing building only in order to erect another in its place. The destruction of the west walk must be dated 1760. At this time (so Duncomb states) the school was replaced by a large red brick building—used for musical festivals, public meetings, etc. This in turn was demolished about 1840, as a preliminary to the general restoration of the Cathedral carried through under Dean Merewether.

After the removal of 1590 the library was enlarged, restored and enriched with books, mainly through the influence and generosity of Thomas Thornton. Thornton had been precentor since 1573; he was elected Master of the Library on September 30, 1595, and thereafter was re-elected to that office yearly until his death in 1629. At his own expense he added two presses and two half-presses, with their readers' seats and fittings, besides providing the library with "many other necessary things". It is probable that among these "necessaries" were the existing catalogue frames. These are identical in pattern with those set up at Corpus, Oxford, in 1605.

Thornton's presses and half-presses were, of course, intended to match the older presses; nevertheless, chiefly by the relative



READING IN THE CHAINED LIBRARY, HEREFORD

inferiority of the ironwork, it is possible to distinguish them. I shall adduce evidence later which enables us to reconstruct the arrangement of the presses when in the Ladye Chapel (plan, p. 325); this is of further assistance in discriminating between the earlier presses and those which were given by Thornton. The latter constitute the greater part of that portion of the library which is now in the room known as the *Upper Cloister*.

In 1611 the Dean and Canons presented the library with the "Donors' Book", a large folio volume in which were to be inscribed the names of all future benefactors of the library. The initial inscription is clearly imitated from that in a similar register provided by Bodley for his library. Thornton, I think in his own hand, wrote in the names of previous donors and their gifts, so far as known.

It may be of interest to note that one of the canons who recorded his vote for the proposal to move the library to the Ladye Chapel was Miles Smith, the most active of the members of the committee which produced the Authorized Version of the English Bible, and himself the author of the Preface.

Date of the Presses

For a long while I took it for granted that the existing presses at Hereford were moved across, along with the books, from the mediaeval library. I have gradually been driven to the conclusion that they were made new for the Ladye Chapel in 1590.

(1) The walk of the cloister is 13 feet wide. If the library built over it was, as at Lincoln, a half-timbered structure with overhanging beams, it might have been a little wider, say 18 feet. All the ancient libraries that I know of in England had a row of lecterns or presses down both sides of the room with an avenue between them. Wells and Chetham College, Manchester, are not really exceptions to this rule; for the rooms at Chetham were not originally designed for a library, but as a chapel and dormitory, while at Wells the windows on both sides are so arranged as to suggest that the room was once

fitted with lecterns on either side. I have already pointed out that the width of the avenue is usually about one-third of the whole width of the room. Now the existing presses at Hereford are, in length, 9 ft. 9 in. They could not have been arranged in two rows in a library 18 feet wide; but, if set up in the Ladye Chapel, which is 30 feet wide, the avenue between would have been approximately one-third of the width of the room.

Again, the great height of the presses would be accounted for if they were designed for the Ladye Chapel. The Hereford presses, it will be recalled, are the earliest example of presses with three shelves above the desk. The extra shelf was certainly not required because of the immense number of books to be stored. It was, I believe, added primarily on aesthetic grounds; "two-decker" presses would have been dwarfed by the great height of the vaulting of the Ladye Chapel.

(2) The moulding of the cornices is of a character that did not come into fashion till the latter part of the sixteenth century. I was at first inclined to explain this by the hypothesis that, when the presses were moved, new cornices were supplied. But the cornices and the presses so entirely harmonize, and their conjunction is so nearly repeated in the Bodleian, and in the Corpus work of 1604, that the burden of proof is thrown on him who would maintain that presses and cornices belong to two different dates.

(3) Five of the presses are shown by the character of the ironwork to be older than the rest. One of these is made up of two half-presses set back-to-back. If we assume that these stood in the mediaeval library, it must have been in a single row; they would form five bays, and would require a room not less than 41 ft. 6 in. in length. But the mediaeval library was over three bays of the cloister, the weight of the end-walls being supported by the buttresses between the windows of the cloisters. The bays are 12 ft. 6 in.; so, allowing for the thickness of the walls, the room can hardly have been more than 36 feet inside. If the room had been extended 5 feet or so longer,

the weight of the end-walls would have rested on the arch of the cloister at the point where it was least capable of supporting weight—especially as it is an arch in the flattened style of the perpendicular period.

(4) If the presses were in the mediaeval library, they would naturally be dated before the Reformation; for after 1534, libraries and church buildings were being destroyed, not built. Also a Chapter resolution of 1569 (Act Book II., fol. 104) limits the number of residentiaries to six, owing to financial stringency and the need of repairs to the Cathedral, described as in ruinous condition. But it seems unlikely that, when at Oxford—at Corpus 1517, All Souls 1572, and at St. John's 1597—the "two-decker" Stall-system with the fixed desk was in vogue, Hereford should have achieved the "three-decker" hinged-desk style before the Reformation. Again, the fact that Sir Thomas Bodley copied the Hereford presses suggests that in 1599 they still represented the most recent improvement.

(5) One cannot press strictly the meaning of the Latin used at this period. But the Chapter minute first speaks of "transferring and removing" the library (*Bibliothecam . . . transferendam et amovendam*), and then speaks of "building and fitting" a library (*Bibliothecam construendam et aptandam*) at the expense of the fabric fund—a fund which has always been ear-marked for work on the structure. It is natural to read the word *Bibliotheca* in the first clause as referring to the books, in the second as referring to the presses.

(6) There is definite evidence, though it is not quite conclusive, that the mediaeval library was fitted on the lectern-system.

On some of the printed books scars of chaining appear on the *bottom* of the cover; this proves they were once chained to lecterns. These are found on six volumes given by Dean Frowcester, who died 1529. All these have horn-covered titles on the cover, which leaves no doubt that they rested on lecterns. There are ten volumes of the edition of S. Augustine, by Frobenius of Basle, given by R. Sparchford, prebendary of Hereford, 1539–60. Three of them (or

more likely six, since the binding shows patching) have scars of *two* earlier chainings at the bottom; the rest have never been chained except by the fore-edge of the cover. Of MSS., scars on the cover (or, where rebound, rust stains, etc., on end-pages) show previous chaining, in five cases at the bottom, in two at the top, in four both at top and bottom. One of these last, being given by J. Bayly, Canon, 1463–70, is some evidence for lecterns at that date.

But if the mediaeval library was fitted with lecterns, why are there not more books so scarred? And why so few MSS.? This question is perhaps answered by the following considerations:

(*a*) The Donors' Book shows that most of the early printed books now in the library—other than those given by Bishop Bothe and Sir John Prise—were acquired during Thornton's librarianship; before the Reformation they must have been very few.

(*b*) The insistence by the Elizabethan Commissioners on chaining the books implies that this had been neglected. Bothe's and Prise's books (which show no older scars) may have been left unchained; ecclesiastics had something else to think about when Henry VIII. was King—or Mary, Queen.

(*c*) At Hereford, as elsewhere in the Middle Ages, it is probable that less than half the MSS. possessed by the society were chained in the library.

(*d*) The majority of MSS. have been rebound—mostly in Thornton's time—so that any scars of chaining other than in the present library would be obliterated.

I conclude that the balance of evidence is in favour of the view that the library over the cloister was fitted on the Lectern-system. If so, it would by 1590 have become overcrowded; and this was the reason for the removal to the Ladye Chapel.

Date of Seats

The seats, or rather the seat-ends, did, I believe, belong to the old library. The back-to-back seat may well have been invented

while the Lectern-system was still in vogue. It is found at Trinity Hall—where the seats (p. 39) are not the least early feature. At Wells, and in Duke Humphrey's Library, the row of library windows is so arranged (illustration, p. 120) that two windows of the upper storey correspond to one of the great arches below. If a similar symmetrical arrangement was followed in the old library at Hereford, the space from centre to centre of the windows would have been 6 ft. 3 in. This would allow exactly the right amount of space for a row of lecterns with a back-to-back seat between each. In that case the seats in the mediaeval library would have been about 6 feet long, so that the benches and backs of these would have been of no use for the 9 ft. 9 in. presses in the Ladye Chapel. But there would be nothing to prevent the face-ends and wall-ends of the seats being taken across and provided with new benches, rails and panelled backs. This hypothesis would explain the fact that, while the moulding on the panelling under the rails is of a kind which Mr. Moffatt will not allow to be earlier than 1560, that of the seat-ends is Gothic in character. Moreover, it lends precision to the language of the Chapter Order: *construendam* (= built) applies to the presses, *aptandam* (? = adapted) applies to the seats.

So far as dimensions are concerned, the seat-ends at Hereford are very much the same as at Corpus—2 ft. wide and 3 ft. 8¼ in. from the top of the knob to the floor—but the style is very different. If the reader will look at the seats in the illustration of Hereford (p. 115) and compare them with those of Corpus and St. John's (pp. 160, 187), he will be struck at once by the distinctively Gothic character of the Hereford moulding. Now, from the joiner's contract (quoted p. 150) for the original woodwork at Corpus, we know that the Corpus seats differed from those set up by Waynflete at Magdalen in 1480 in having round knobs instead of the *fleur de lys* ornament, technically known as a "poppy head", commonly found on Gothic choir stalls. Poppy heads were, therefore, regularly used on library seats. The more one looks at the Hereford seat-ends, the more

one feels that the moulding is Gothic, and that the line of the curve of the "neck" of these ends was originally designed to be continued in a poppy head, not to be topped by a lathe-turned circular knob. Moreover, in some seat-ends—especially in those (illustration, p. 104) which, not being required for the library, remain as pews—the knobs rest on the stalk an inch or two lower down than in the rest; which looks as if the original tops had been sawn off all of them, but not at exactly the same height in every case. I conclude that the original seat-ends were finished with poppy heads, which were sawn off and replaced by round knobs, probably at the time of the removal to the Ladye Chapel. It is quite likely that by this time some of the poppy heads were badly broken; it would be so very much easier and cheaper to replace the broken ones with the then fashionable round knobs (which could be turned quickly in a lathe) than to carve new poppy heads to match the old ones. The seat-ends, then, may well be a century or more older than the presses.

Ejection from the Ladye Chapel, 1841

In 1841 the library was ignominiously ejected from the Ladye Chapel; "the cumbrous bookcases (says Dean Merewether) which filled up the greater part of the area were displaced". Havergal left some interesting notes in an old register of books borrowed from the library. One of these I reproduce:

> The Cathedral Library was kept in the Lady Chapel until the restoration of that portion of the fabric about 1841, when all the books were removed to that portion of the College over Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 23. In consequence of those chambers being required for a resident Vicar, the whole Library was removed to the Archive room in the Cathedral in November 1855. A portion of the shelves only were then erected. The arrangement of the books was then obliged to be completely changed. The MSS. and a few other compartments occupied their original places, all the others were then numbered and entered accordingly in the Catalogue.

By "compartment" Havergal clearly means what the catalogues call "classis". The MSS. are still catalogued under the classes O

and P. These, when in the Ladye Chapel, were divided between two presses; Havergal put them into one press (originally lettered DE). The press P was one of those added by Thornton, and only part of it survives; but as the press in which they now are is one of the earlier presses, it is really more fitting that the MSS., being the oldest books, should be in one of these. In this regard, therefore, nothing would have been gained by altering the arrangement.

The "archive" room mentioned in the above quotation is that now named the "Transept Chamber", a description of which ends this chapter. The setting up of the library here was hindered by Sir Gilbert Scott's restoration of the windows in the Transept Chamber, which, like the triforium and clerestory of the Nave, had fallen into the hands of Wyatt after the collapse of the west tower in 1786. Another note by Havergal, dated December 1859, after explaining the delays, states that, in September of that year,

> the books were placed in the shelves, though not in their original order, as the archive room did not allow sufficient space for the erection of more than two-thirds of the large and massive bookcases. The old map was preserved in the Clerk of the works office during the progress of the restoration. The more valuable MSS. and books were kept in my own apartments.

The note ends with the hope that

> the present bare timber roof may be covered with panels, the mutilated stonework may be repaired, and . . . the archives may be moved elsewhere.

—a hope now realized in a far more magnificent way than Havergal could then have dreamed.

During the fourteen years or so when the books were stowed away in the College of Vicars Choral, the presses, being taken to pieces, were most probably in the crypt, along with the dismantled choir stalls which were kept there until 1857, when Gilbert Scott completed the restoration of the chancel.

The reassembling of the presses was a pitiful affair. In Havergal's *Fasti Herefordenses* there is a photograph (taken in 1867) showing four of these, presenting a thoroughly forlorn appearance. He re-

marks that, since the photograph was taken, a fifth press had been set up and "the original oak desks refixed to the case containing the MSS."; he also mentions one "single bookcase". Blades[1] speaks of "five complete bookcases, and the ruins of two others". Two of the presses were made up from two face-ends, so that they had locks and hasps at both ends; one press was made up from two wall-ends, and so had none at all. The desks were not replaced, and their supporting brackets were all sawn off; also two rows of shelves were fitted below the desk level. Since, without a desk, a chained book is burdensome to read, the chains were gradually removed—except from the MSS. and from seventy-nine of the printed books. The ends of two other presses were sawn down vertically so as to make narrow ends for back-to-wall bookcases. Lastly, the presses were fitted with deal cornices of a stock nineteenth-century moulding, stained brown.

Back to the Cloister, 1897

In 1897 the library was again moved. From a bequest by Canon Powell a portion of the west walk of the cloister had been rebuilt, and over it a room—the "Upper Cloister"—specially intended for the Chained Library, whose value and interest was beginning to be recognized once more. However, it never occurred to anyone concerned to examine the plan of a mediaeval library; with the result that the arrangement of the windows is almost ideally wrong. The transference of the presses from the Transept Chamber to the newly built Upper Cloister was done with the greatest care. The carpenter who was entrusted with the work told me that all parts were numbered, so as to make certain that they were reassembled exactly as before —with the result that the mistakes made in 1856 were perpetuated in the new room as immemorial tradition. Unfortunately the room was far too small; it could contain the library at all only because none of the presses, except that in which the MSS. are kept, had

[1] W. Blades, *Books in Chains* (Blades and Blades, 1890).

its desks. Those on the MSS. press had been replaced in an entirely wrong way, with modern brackets and hinges, flapping downwards. A couple of ancient benches found in the Cathedral—one of these now stands under the east window of the Transept Chamber—were placed by Dean Leigh on each side of this press, in the belief that they were the original library seats. This belief was devoutly accepted by everybody, including myself, until the recent restoration was already begun.

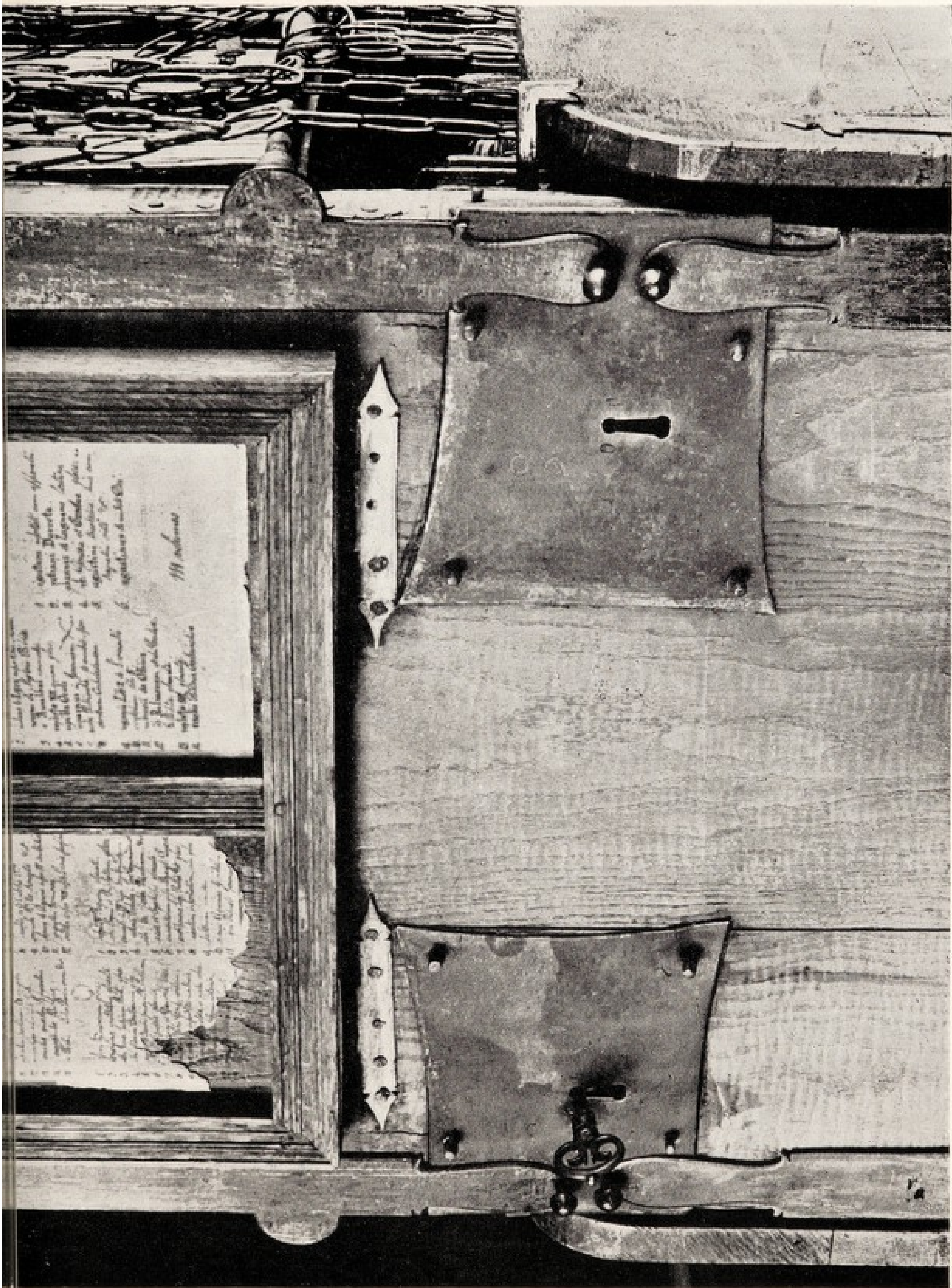
The Rebirth of 1930

The desirability had often been mooted of refixing the detached chains (more than 1,140) to the books from which they had been taken; but, so long as the presses were crowded into a room which did not allow space for any more desks, it was impracticable. The problem was solved by Mr. Moffatt's munificent offer to refloor and receil the Transept Chamber as a library and restore the ancient presses. At the time when he undertook this, no one suspected that sixty years before there had been a grand shuffle of face-ends and wall-ends; and it was taken for granted that nothing was left of the original library but four complete presses, and the ends of one back-to-wall bookcase, which still bore locks and hasps. The possibility that the Cathedral possessed all the essential elements of three other presses, besides the ends of two half-presses, was a thing undreamed of. When, however, the undreamed of happened, it was decided to set up the additional presses in the Upper Cloister.

The chains sufficed to re-equip the seven ancient presses which could be completely restored. Thus in the Upper Cloister also there is now a chained library which, but for that in the Transept Chamber, would be called the finest in the country.

The Chains

It was largely owing to the efforts of Mr. Alban Moore, for more than fifty years sexton or verger of the Cathedral, that most of the



"BATTLE-AXE" LOCK-PLATES, HEREFORD

chains taken off the books have been saved. When the library was being moved from the Transept Chamber he found them lying in heaps on the floor, or on the bottom shelves of two of the presses. He secured an empty cement tub in which to collect and carry them across to the new room. Some years later—suspecting that, through the too open-hearted disposition of a member of the Chapter, they were beginning to pass as mementos into the hands of occasional visitors—he managed to get them hung up in rows from the ceiling on some of the old rods. To him also is due the preservation of several loose desk-hooks, rod-sockets and other odd pieces of the ironwork—including the ornamented end which gave the model for the restoration of the desk-hinges.

By a piece of incredible good fortune the original brass clips, by which the chains had been fastened to the books, had been thrown into an old box, and so preserved. In rechaining the books the rule was rigidly adhered to that no book, however old or valuable, should be chained unless it bore on its cover the scars of its original chaining; or (supposing the book had been rebound) unless it was entered, in the original handwriting, in a catalogue of the library made in 1749. In many libraries the brass clips by which the chains are fastened to the covers of the books were not ready-made; they were cut out fresh for each book, as it came into the library, from a sheet of thin metal kept for the purpose;[1] accordingly hardly any two clips are of the same size and shape. In the Hereford restoration great care was taken to fit to each book a clip which corresponded in size and shape to the scar on its cover; thus in many cases it was possible to use for rechaining a book the brass clip originally attached to that very same book, and for all but 190 there were old clips in sufficiently good condition to be used again. Of the MSS. 222, and of the printed books 79, had never been unchained. The chained books now total 1,444.

[1] Willis and Clark (*Architectural History of Cambridge*, iii., p. 431) quote from the library accounts of Eton College, 1520, the price of a pair of shears for this use: *Et pro pari forcipum ad laminas eneas secandas ad fixuram dictorum librorum xvj*[d].

The Elizabethan Spirit

The library as it now stands must be pronounced Elizabethan rather than mediaeval. And the spirit of the Elizabethan age breathes also in its contents. In the dedication of the Donors' Book, the name of the Dean, Edward Doughtie, stands first. He had been chaplain in one of Sir Walter Raleigh's ships at the taking of Cadiz; and he had chosen books, in part at least, as his share of the loot. Seventeen of these are in the library. The fly-leaf of one, an annotated Bible (A. 2. 11), bears his signature. Below it are the words, *Cadiz: E Collegio Societatis Jesu. 23° Ju. 1596. Jure Belli.* Here speaks the true Elizabethan. Again, the predominance of printed books over MSS. takes away the mediaeval character of the library—they make it the library that Shakespeare saw, if ever he came to Hereford.

II

DISCOVERY AND RESTORATION

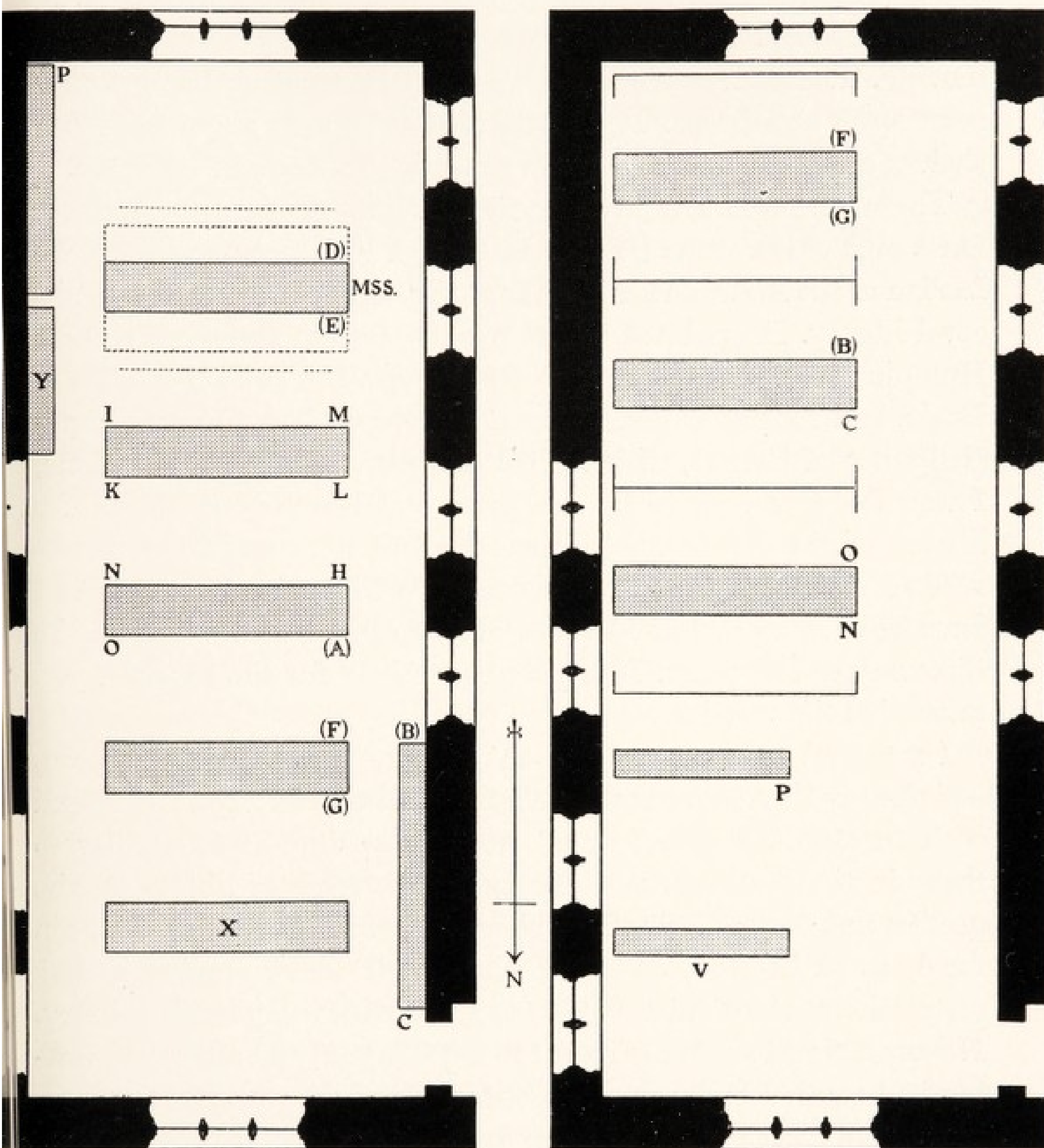
Restorations often obliterate as much of the past as they preserve; and it has been impressed upon me that, where an unique monument of antiquity is concerned, it is a duty to posterity to put on record the exact evidence on which every item of the restoration was based. But the thrill of discovery, the following up of clues (some fruitful, some misleading), the finding day after day of lost pieces of the fabric, or fresh light on its original form, made this particular restoration an experience which glowed with excitement. In the desperate hope of imparting to the reader something of this atmosphere, I have decided to give the account of what was found and what was done almost in diary form. At times, I fear, this may read like a reiteration of *quorum pars magna fui*; but in an author it is perhaps better to seem egotistical than to be dull.

Plan I., overleaf, which shows the library as it had been reconstructed in the Upper Cloister in 1897, will explain the point from

which we started. The letters on the plans are those painted on the face-ends of the presses (illustration, p. 115)—a bracketed letter is one that has been partially or wholly erased. It will be observed that two of the cases had face-ends—that is, ends fitted with locks and hasps, and with letters and titles painted on them—at *both* ends. As everyone took for granted that this arrangement was original, it appeared that the presses must always have stood in a row down the centre of the room, not with one end against the wall. I should also explain that the original letters painted on the presses had either been erased or else covered with letters of a somewhat larger size painted on cardboard—probably by Havergal, when he arranged the books in 1859. These letters were nailed over the old ones; and as they were well designed and did not look new, it was assumed that, though not mediaeval, they were at least ancient. Lastly, it was taken for granted that at least one of the two movable oak benches which stood on either side of the MSS. press was original. (These, and the two surviving desks, are indicated by dotted lines in plan I.)

Mr. Moffatt had at once detected the incongruity of the cornice; it was found to be of stained deal. Mr. W. E. H. Clarke, the Cathedral architect, was asked to design a cornice in the style of the period of Walter de Rammesbury, 1394, whom even an authority like J. W. Clark accepted as the donor of the original presses. I had pointed out that the brackets and hinges of the only surviving pair of desks, on the MSS. press (E)(D), were modern. I undertook to revisit the library of Merton and report exactly on the mediaeval method of fixing the desks as seen there. No one suspected that there was anything else fundamentally wrong with the presses.

The press marked X in the plan had a beaded edge; it had no locks or hasps and no sign of ever having had any. One of us tested the edges of the press-end with a penknife, and it proved to be deal. Evidently, then, it was not part of the original library and ought not to be moved to the Transept Chamber. There was no ironwork on the bookcase marked Y; and the lock and hasp on that marked P



Plan I
The Library, 1897–1930
(before restoration)

UPPER CLOISTER, HEREFORD

Plan II
Thornton's presses
(as restored 1931)

being turned against the wall, with a table jammed up against it, was overlooked. Nothing of these two bookcases seemed worth moving. The shelves of the bookcase C(B) were deal; but the ends bore locks and hasps. It was decided to supply them with oak shelves and make them up again as a back-to-the-wall bookcase.

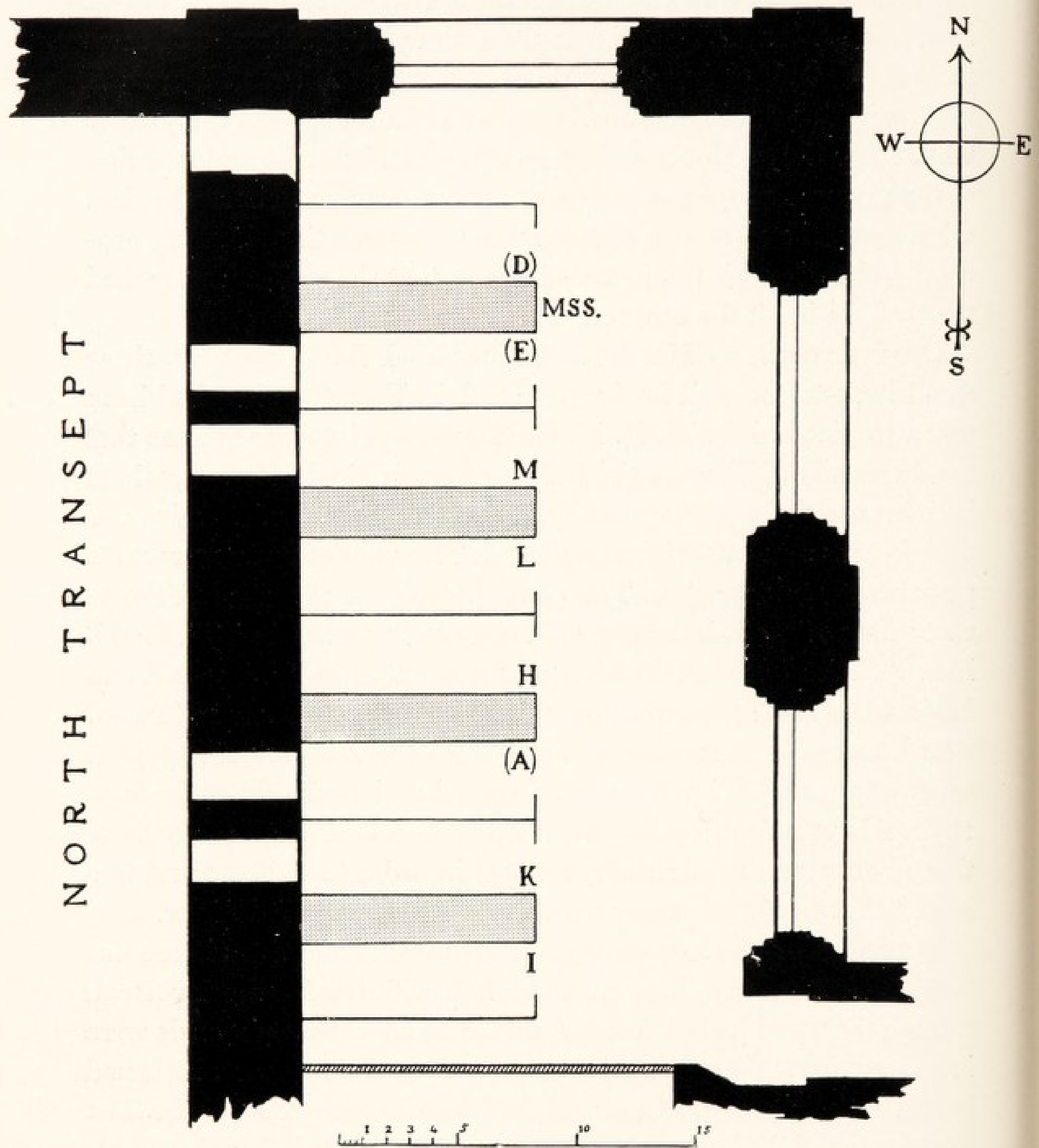
These points having been decided, I left Hereford for Oxford. On a suggestion made by Mr. Moffatt, I had recourse to Mr. F. Madan of the Bodleian for hints as to the original fittings of a mediaeval library. He pointed out to me the ancient features in Duke Humphrey's Library, lent me his own copy of Clark's *The Care of Books*, and recommended a visit to certain College libraries, especially that of Corpus, which I had not previously seen. This done, I was able to recognize the old presses at Hereford as those of a library of the same type as these Oxford libraries. Once it was realized that the original appearance of the library at Hereford must have been more or less like that of Corpus, we had a clue to the discovery of lost parts. It is possible to look for things when you know that they are lost.

I returned to Hereford late on July 21. The four best presses had already been moved to the Transept Chamber. Prowling round with an electric torch, I noted still *in loco* desk-hooks similar to those in the Bodleian, and also noted the scars of hinges on the presses and on the desks. This showed that the desks had not been fixed, as at Merton, and that the models to be studied in any restoration at Hereford were Corpus and Duke Humphrey's Library. Next morning I made my report to the Chapter; and after the meeting had another look round. I noticed one of the carpenters removing a small piece of beading from the front edge of the press (G)(F); I then recollected the beading on the edges of the fifth press X, which had been left behind in the Upper Cloister. I proceeded to re-examine this press, and discovered that the ends were really oak, but that a deal beading had been affixed to the edges—presumably in order to hide the wounds made by the removal of the original iron fittings.

I had to rush off to catch the train to Swanwick for the Student Movement Camp. While I was there the real significance of these facts suddenly flashed on my mind. Clearly, the ends of press X were originally wall-ends, and belonged rightly to one of the presses which now showed locks and hasps at both ends; in the reassembling of the presses in 1856 the face-ends and wall-ends had been shuffled. Obviously, the duty of a restorer was to reverse this shuffling process; and then push the presses back so that the wall-ends touched the wall, as in all the other mediaeval libraries.

On my return to Hereford on July 28 I found that the three small back-to-the-wall bookcases, C(B), P, Y on the plan, had been taken to pieces. Mr. W. E. H. Clarke then pointed out to me that the two ends (C)B were the halves of an original face-end, which had been sawn down vertically, and that similarly the ends of Y together made up an original wall-end. The duty of a restorer was to put these together again. The concealed end of the third bookcase was now visible; it had lock and hasp, and was marked "P. Codd. MSS.". This bookcase had been formed out of half a face-end and half a wall-end. The saw-cut on these ends looked so raw and recent that I suspect this mutilation dates from the removal of 1897; the sawn edges of C(B) were not so recent and probably go back to 1859. About a foot had been cut off the bottom of all the ends of these bookcases, presumably in 1897, in order to reduce them to a height that would go under the corbels in the Upper Cloister.

We had now the face-ends of seven presses and a half—six unmutilated, the remaining one and a half with the ironwork perfect, though the wood had suffered. A day or so later these materials were increased. I recollected having seen among the lumber which had been in the Transept Chamber, a rough carpenter's bench. The timbers which had stood in the place of legs to this bench had already been identified by Mr. W. E. H. Clarke as the missing ground-supports of two of the presses (for which supports of thin wood had been substituted), and had been retained by him for the restoration



TRANSEPT CHAMBER, HEREFORD

Main Library as restored in 1930

Lines between presses indicate seats, single or back-to-back

of these presses. The two heavy planks, which had formed the top, and a third which had been lying on the floor, had been removed with the other lumber. I asked for these to be produced. It was then found that two of these planks, as was shown by the remains of the dowelling, fitted together and formed a complete wall-end—very dirty and with some cuts and holes on the wall-side, but otherwise intact. The third board appeared to be the half of another wall-end. Later on I came to the conclusion that it was more like the wall-end of a half-press; in which case it will have belonged to one of the face-ends (A) or H; it now forms half of the wall-end of (G)(F).

The dimensions of the Transept Chamber are exactly adapted for four presses; it was therefore decided that the three additional presses for which we now had both face-ends and wall-ends should be re-erected in the Upper Cloister. The ground-supports, shelving, etc., for one press existed in the press X; the back-to-the-wall book-case P had yielded shelving for one side of a press in perfect condition and also a cornice board (now fitted on press NO); that marked Y in the plan had also yielded some shelving. The shelves, which were fitted in Havergal's time on the five whole presses below the desks, had been cut from the shelving of the discarded presses; the vestry cupboard (p. 110) yielded up two cornice boards and a good deal of shelving material. Thus, in addition to face-ends and wall-ends, there was now available most of the other woodwork required for a complete restoration of these three presses. And we knew that, after the four presses in the Transept Chamber had been refitted, there would be 500 chains or more to spare.

On July 30 I wrote a long report on all this to Mr. Moffatt, who generously replied that the restoration in the Upper Cloister should also be at his charges. Meantime, there had been crystallizing out in my mind an idea in regard to the seats. The more I read and reflected on the readers' seats in ancient libraries, the less happy I became with the view that either of the two movable forms in the library was originally intended for its present use. The doubt was

increased by the statement made by Mr. Alban Moore, the retired verger, that, though the older of them had always been in the Cathedral, it was first taken to the library by Dean Leigh.

My friend Dr. Pidduck, who had been the first to show me over the library at Corpus, had very kindly taken some photographs to assist us in our restoration. Frequent study of these had printed on my mind the picture of a row of knobs on the top of the ends of the

THE PEWS MADE OUT OF LIBRARY SEATS

readers' seats; one morning, as I was walking through the Cathedral, my eye fell on a row of knobs on the top of some old pews which had long stood in the Transepts. Something whispered to me, "Measure these". I took a foot-rule out of my pocket and found the pews were of the same length—the by no means standard length, 9 ft. 9 in.—as the presses in the library. Examining the ends of these more closely, I saw on most of them the line of a vertical joint between the main portion of the end and a thin beaded strip at the back. I put to Mr. Clarke—who took an unexpectedly encouraging view of it—my idea that, if the beaded strips were removed from

any of these, the residue might be the half of a back-to-back library seat which had been divided vertically so as to form two pews. But the number of pews seemed too many for this hypothesis—besides, it was one of those things which seemed too good to be true.

At this point Mr. Clarke, finding it impossible to alter the date of a holiday, which he had fixed up long before, went away from Hereford for a month, leaving matters in the hands of myself and Mr. Walter Davies, the builder, who has had considerable experience in restoration and takes an enthusiastic interest in this kind of work.

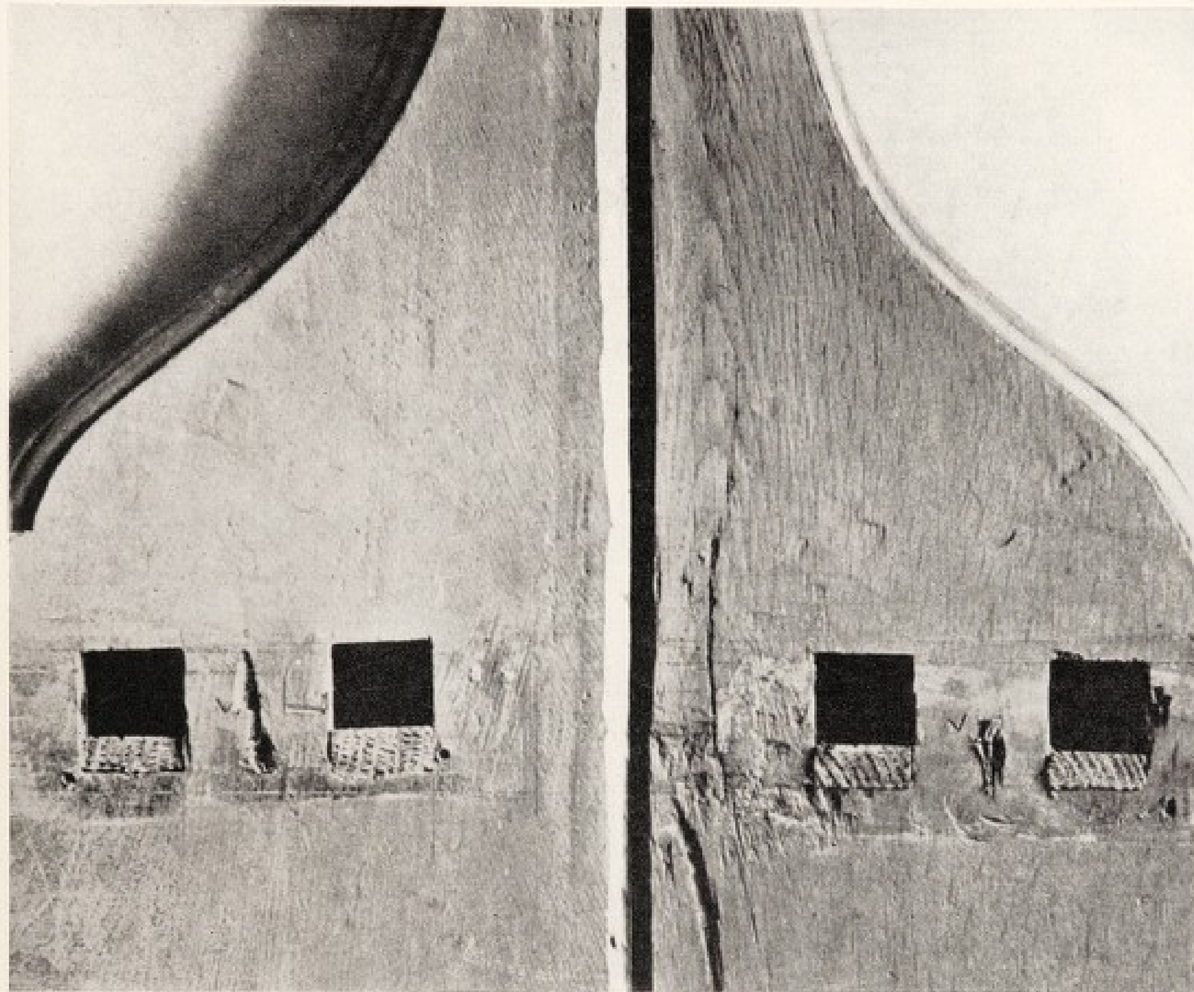
One night, pondering as I lay in bed over the curious fact that the hasps on the half face-end P and the two hasps (which undoubtedly belonged to the press (G)(F), but which had been found lying loose on one of the shelves) were of three distinct patterns, I happened on the idea that three odd sets of hasps would naturally represent the half of the ironwork on three different face-ends. Since, then, we had six face-ends with the original pairs of hasps still attached, this seemed to be evidence for the original existence of at least nine face-ends. Reckoning up the remains of wall-ends, I saw evidence for at least nine of these. I have since found that my then interpretation of the facts was too simple; it did not contemplate a complication like half-presses and cupboard presses; but it was a fortunate error. There was apparent evidence that there had once been nine presses. Nine presses would require (reckoning each back-to-back seat as two) eighteen seats for readers. Next morning (August 1) I counted the pews and found there were eighteen. This made me, for the first time, take really seriously the hypothesis that they were the lost seats. I was so enthused that I wrote off that same day to Mr. Moffatt, enclosing a copy of a photograph showing the pews in the Transept.

A more thorough examination showed that fourteen of the seat-ends consisted of a main portion of oak, with a beaded piece of deal jointed on at the back; and that the size and shape were such that (supposing these deal additions were removed) the oak portions

would cohere in pairs so as to form the ends of back-to-back seats similar to those at Corpus. The ends of the remaining four pews showed no trace of such joining, and were entirely of oak. If for any reason the series of presses is broken, single seats are required; there are 195 single seats in the library of St. John's College, Oxford, to the presses lettered B and U. I noticed also that the benches of all the seats (except two single seats) had been widened, by having a strip of deal 2½ inches wide glued on to the back. There remained the difficulty of accounting for the eighteen top rails; for four single seats and seven back-to-back seats would only require eleven top rails. On August 11, therefore, the Dean with Mr. Walter Davies and myself went through the pews one by one. Mr. Davies and I tested each rail with the point of a penknife, pronouncing some to be of oak and some to be of soft wood; as we agreed on each pew the Dean noted our report on a piece of paper. He then added up and found that we had reported eleven rails as oak and seven as soft wood. It followed that these seven rails must have been copied from the oak rails at the time when the seats were converted into pews.

It was decided to reconvert the pews into their original use as library seats. But as only seven presses could be completely restored, four pews (illustration, p. 104) were left in the South Transept—an interesting relic of the vicissitudes of the library. When the pews were taken to pieces, most of them were found to have marks, made with a chisel in Roman figures, near the mortise-holes (see illustration on next page) made by the original carpenters to enable them to fit together correctly the two halves of the seat-end of each back-to-back seat. Such numbering was customary when building the old wooden frame buildings still so notable a feature in this part of England. The figures, it is important to observe, did not correspond with the pairs of ends as these were assembled as pews; but, when the half-ends were laid side by side according to these numbers, the exact correspondence of width, dowel holes, etc., showed that this

was how they had been *originally* pieced together. The figures, therefore, must have been cut, either by the joiners who made the seats, or else in 1590 on their being taken to pieces for removal to the Ladye Chapel. I asked that a record of these marks should be made, but through some misunderstanding this was not done. I



INSIDE OF SEAT-END, SHOWING CHISELLED FIGURES ON EACH HALF

myself noticed the figures VIII, VIIII; there were two instances of the use of the figure V, of which one set was cut about twice as large as the other. The illustration shows the smaller of these. In the restoration new dowels have been driven into the old dowel holes so that the ends are put together exactly in the original way. The knobs are all of oak and turned; they differ slightly in pattern, and some look more modern than others; but the lathe can imitate

a circular knob so exactly that it is hard to be certain in every case of the distinction between the old knobs and those made to match them when the seats were converted into pews. The discovery of the chiselled numbers and their relation, which was the final verification of the hypothesis that the pews represented the original library seats, was not made till August 21.

I must now hark back to July 28, the day when I returned from Swanwick to Hereford. The question of the original hinges had been a source of perplexity. The scars on the presses showed that the fixing of the hinges at Hereford was quite different from that at St. John's College—the only Oxford library which retains any ancient hinges. But they corresponded exactly to scars on the front edges of the presses at Corpus and, as I have since noticed, in *Duke Humphrey*. But, whereas at Corpus the scars on the desks are on the upper surface, those on the two surviving desks at Hereford were on the under side. With much hesitation we inclined (wrongly as the event proved) to the view that the Hereford desks had been refixed the wrong side up at the last removal—though the dints worn by the desk-hooks, when the desks had been turned up, were slightly unfavourable to this view. Then came the question of the pattern of the original hinges. On two or three of the presses the scar left by the old hinge was sufficiently marked for the outline to be clear. While Mr. Clarke and I were discussing the practicability of restoring the hinges as best we could from the outline visible on these scars, eked out by a tracing I had made of one of the hinges at St. John's, Mr. Walter Davies came near and held up to the scar a short piece of iron with a trefoil pattern at the end, which had been found in the same box as the old clips for fixing the chains to the books. It exactly fitted the pattern defined by the scar. This gave us our model for restoring the upper strap of the hinge. Then Mr. Davies suggested that a thorough search of the Cathedral might possibly lead to the discovery of a complete hinge attached to some cupboard or door. I repeated this suggestion to Mr. J.

Poulter, the verger, who knows the Cathedral in every detail—with what results will appear shortly.

August 1 was a lucky day; it saw the discovery of the old bracket supports of the desks. These had all been sawn off when the desks were removed—presumably in 1856—in order to make it possible to get the presses into a smaller space. A pair of the old desks had been replaced on the MSS. press; but these had been fixed with deal brackets and modern hinges—made to flap downwards instead of upwards—and, instead of leaving the proper "slot" between desk and bottom shelf for the passing of chains to the bottom rod, the desk had been fixed two inches below the shelf. It was the search for a mediaeval model by which to restore these brackets that had first set me on to the study of the Oxford libraries. I had made a sketch of the probable shape of the original bracket ends, mainly based on those at Corpus. On July 31 Mr. Davies showed this drawing to the men at work on the restoration, and asked if by any chance a piece of wood of this shape had anywhere been seen. Next morning a young carpenter, Lawrence Williams, pointed to a ledge fixed as a support of one of the shelves in the press IK. This proved to be the larger portion of an old bracket—a portion, as we afterwards saw, of an *outside* bracket; it now forms the bracket at the wall-end of the (E) side of the MSS. press. Later in the same day Williams recollected noticing that certain oblong pieces of oak (which had been used to fill up the vacant shelf spaces left by the removal of MSS. to the glass showcases) were formed out of two wedge-shaped pieces of old oak nailed together. The wedges were separated and proved to be the original ends of more brackets—to the number in all of fourteen. He was exhorted to further search; and next day he found, nailed as a support to the cornice board in the MSS. press, the outside bracket now fixed to the (D) side of the face-end of that press. The fourteen brackets found on the previous day had all been *inside* brackets (though as yet we had no means of recognizing the distinction); this one was shown to be an *outside*

bracket by the hollow cut to receive the strap of the hinge nailed to the desk. Its discovery proved beyond doubt that the hinges had been originally fixed on the *under side* of the desks. A comparison of this bracket with the one used as a ledge which was first discovered, showed the exact way in which the outside brackets were fixed to the ends of the press—a way differing somewhat from that found in the other libraries I have examined.

Next day (Aug. 3) Mr. Poulter told me that he had found, not the hinges he was looking for, but part of the woodwork of an ancient bookcase. While examining the hinges of a large cupboard in the vestry, used for hanging the surplices of the Dean and Canons, he had noticed that the upright ends of the cupboard had oblong holes similar to those into which the tongues of the shelves in the bookcases are fitted. The identification of these ends as those of one of Thornton's half-presses is discussed, p. 328 ff. Further examination showed that (apart from the doors, which look as if they embody panels of the four mediaeval stalls which were not replaced by Sir Gilbert Scott in 1857 when he restored the choir) they were entirely composed of material from a dismantled half-press, including two cornice boards now fitted on to the presses C(B) and NO. One of these cornice boards had still attached to it the lower member of what was evidently the old cornice. This now forms the lower cornice on the right-hand side of the MSS. press; and a small piece of that on the press IK. The real meaning of this discovery of a part of the lower member of the cornice, still *in loco*, only gradually became clear. Heretofore (with Walter de Rammesbury in our minds) we had been thinking of a cornice of the kind in fashion in 1394, and a trial restoration of a cornice of that date had already been affixed to some presses. To find that there was a moulding along the bottom as well as along the top of the cornice board was a surprise; although, once some ten feet of this was recovered, the scars left by a moulding exactly the width of the recovered portion were evident on every press. The significance of this fact only became

quite clear with the discovery, which I shall come to shortly, of a piece of the upper moulding. It was a cornice of a late sixteenth-century style!

On August 5 Lawrence Williams started to search a kind of loft over the choir aisle, to which had been removed the remains of the four old choir stalls and some other odd material which had previously been lying about on the floor of the Transept Chamber. Here he found a piece of the bottom strap of one of the old desk-hinges, with the knuckle of the hinge and part of the upper strap. As this proved to be the remainder of the upper strap previously discovered, it became possible to reproduce exactly the original hinges, since the scars on the press-ends and desks, and the hollow cut to receive the hinge on the outside bracket already mentioned, gave further information. The hinge is of the kind technically known as "cranked". The lower strap being nailed to the *under* side of the desk, the upper strap is bent at right angles about $1\frac{1}{8}$ in. from the knuckle—thus allowing a space, the thickness of the desk, between the two straps when the hinge closes.

Mr. Davies then told Williams to go over all the miscellaneous woodwork in the same loft and sort out any pieces of moulding, on the chance that among them would be some fragment of an original cornice. Half a dozen pieces of moulding of various patterns were found. One piece of these fitted in with the scars at the top of the presses, and harmonized so completely with the lower member of the cornice previously discovered, that we decided it was a fragment of the top moulding of the old cornice. If the reader will turn to the illustration, p. 205, and notice the cornice on the presses in *Duke Humphrey*, and will then look at the frontispiece, at the illustration of Hereford, I think he will share our confidence—the more so since the loft had been floored only a few months before, and, therefore, contained nothing but the debris removed from the Transept Chamber, in which the reassembling of the dismantled presses had taken place in 1856. If, again, the cornices of the three libraries

—Hereford (1590), *Duke Humphrey* (1600), Corpus (1604)—be compared, it is evident that they form a series. The cornices are all of the same fundamental design, but they become lighter and more elaborate as their date gets later. The recovered fragment has been worked into the moulding on the face-end of the press IK. Its discovery gave an authentic model for the upper cornices—the one part of the restoration which till then we had feared would have to be done from pure conjecture.

We had now all the materials for a perfect restoration; but a comparative study of Hereford and of the Oxford libraries of the same type—some of which I had again visited—caused me to feel a growing suspicion of the dating of the presses as early as 1394, in spite of its acceptance by so great an authority as J. W. Clark. This led me to the investigation into the early history of the library, and thus to some further discoveries, the account of which I reserve to a later chapter.

Bodley's librarian, Sir A. E. Cowley—and, again later, Dr. Craster—at some inconvenience, put at the disposal of the Chapter the skilled services of Mr. E. E. Wilmot. He carefully straightened out and cleaned the old clips, and was at great pains always to select a book the scar on the cover of which corresponded to the shape of the clip used. The chains were sorted by Miss Maud Bull, the sub-librarian, and under her supervision carefully cleaned. The great majority were in very good condition; twenty of them had been broken and were put together again. At the same time twenty-five of the old clasps which had come off, or were on the point of coming off, the books, were repaired by Mr. Wilmot. An original chain, three brass clips, three rod-sockets and a couple of book-clasps, which had come into the possession of the John Evelyn Archæological Society, and had been handed on by them some years ago to the Hereford City Museum, were, by the courtesy of the Committee, given back to the Cathedral and made use of in the restoration.

One chain is much heavier than the rest. At one end, in the grip

of a heavy iron clip, is a fragment of an old book cover; at the other end is a bottle-shaped ring evidently intended, not to run on a rod, but to be attached by a staple. This was doubtless the chain seen by Botfield (p. 323) by which the catalogue was fastened to a separate desk. It now hangs from a staple provided for it in the woodwork at the south end of the Transept Chamber.

III

THE TRANSEPT CHAMBER

THE architecture of the North Transept is in the geometrical decorated style—but of an unusual variety. The curves of the pointed arches are flattened so that they are almost triangular in shape. Its building, between 1260 and 1268, was one of the few good deeds of Peter de Aquablanca, a Savoyard high in favour with both Henry III. and the Pope on account of successful extortions from ecclesiastical persons and houses in the Royal and Papal interest. His memory, in the vigorous language of Matthew Paris, "now exhaled a sulphurous stench".[1] One of the rewards of his iniquity had been the bishopric of Hereford. In the aisle on the east side of this Transept is the tomb of Thomas Cantilupe, 44th Bishop of Hereford, who died 1282, excommunicated by the then Archbishop of Canterbury—afterwards, in 1320, by reason of the miracles performed at his tomb, canonized as saint.

Above this aisle, behind the triforium of the Transept, is a handsome chamber 39 ft. 7 in. long and 18 ft. 6 in. wide, probably intended to be the Treasury. It is lighted by three circular windows (one at the north end, two on the east side) 9 ft. 6 in. in diameter. There are also two pairs of window-like openings, which look out into the Transept through the triforium; one pair is seen in the illustration (p. 115). During the eighteenth and most of the nineteenth century the Cathedral archives had been kept in this chamber.

[1] W. W. Capes, *Charters and Records of Hereford Cathedral*, p. xix.

After these had been removed to a tower in the Cloister, known as the Lady Arbour, it had become a mere lumber room. The floor was in many places rotten, the original ceiling had disappeared, and the roof timbers had been replaced in deal by Wyatt (*c.* 1800) and were of no architectural interest. The circular windows had been converted into pointed Gothic; but this enormity had been partially remedied by Sir Gilbert Scott in 1859. I quote again from Havergal's MS. notes:

> Several causes arose which made the rebuilding of these windows such a long affair. 1st the fragments of the tracery being so small it was no easy task to ascertain the exact number of circles in each window, 2nd the difficulty of determining how the cusps were originally formed. As Mr. Scott would allow no restoration besides that which he was sure was in existence before, he very wisely did nothing hastily. The stonework which filled up the two eastern windows was removed, but no trace of the cusps found. The masonry in the northern window was after some delay taken out when very fortunately *one cusp* was discovered so perfect as to remove *all* doubt. This is to be preserved in the Library with the other fragments of the antient tracery.

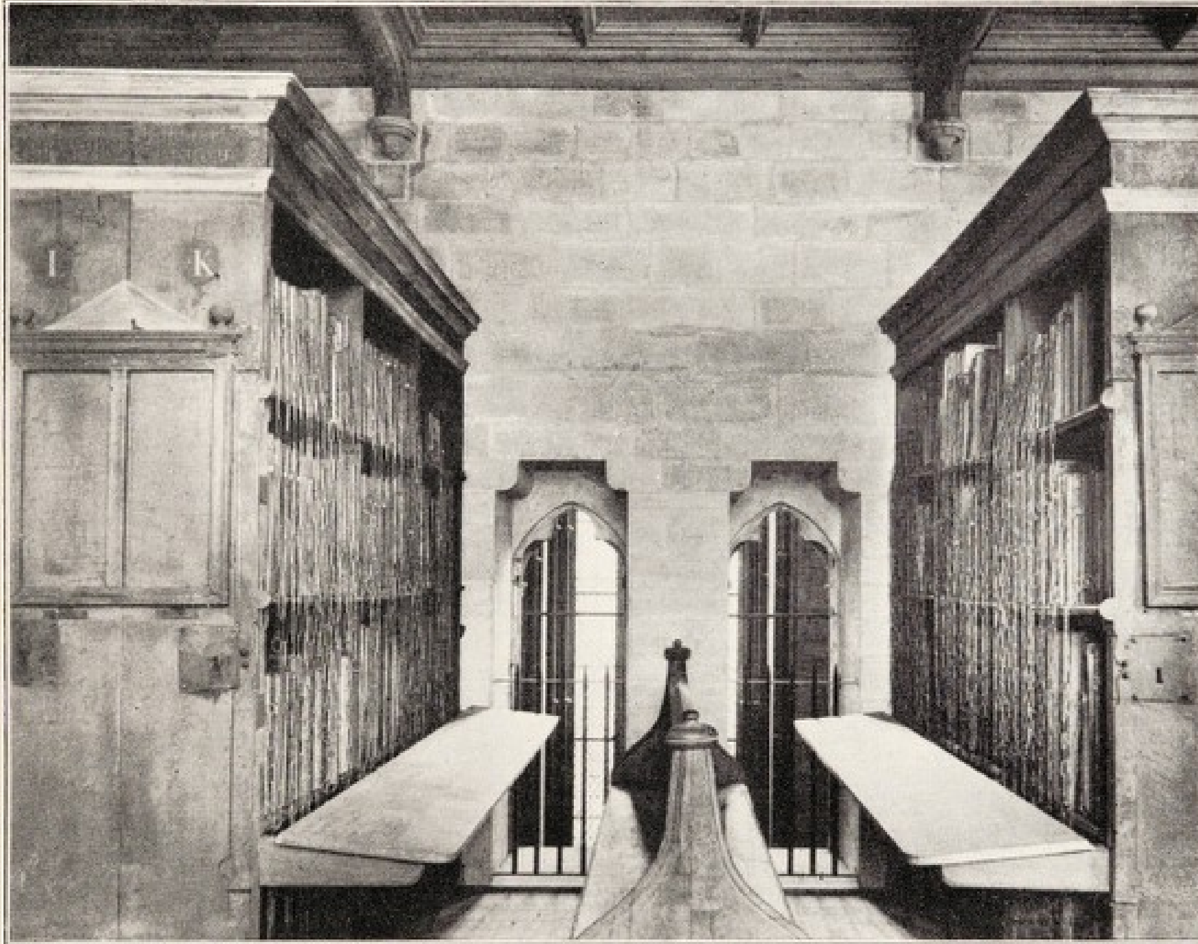
A second note is dated November 7, 1860:

> All the fragments of the ancient tracery of the Library windows were this day deposited by me in the Library. It is to be hoped that they may be preserved, for so long as they exist it will be impossible for any critical or sceptical person to deny that the late restoration of these windows has been effected otherwise than in *exact accordance* with those previously existing when the transept was erected.

On the Day when the Recording Angel reads out that this same architect fitted the Norman Choir of the Cathedral with a brass screen spotted with coloured stones—made in Birmingham and deemed a worthy art exhibit in the Great Exhibition of 1851—may there be pleaded in extenuation the good deed of which this note is evidence!

Mr. Moffatt's restoration began by making this beautiful and ancient chamber fit for the library it was to receive. The ceiling was designed by Mr. W. E. H. Clarke, the Cathedral architect, on a fourteenth-century model. The work was carried out by Mr. Walter

Davies, who used for the purpose some very old oak which fortunately he had at command. The panelling at the south end of the room, though not original, was ancient.[1] It was in bad condition and patched with deal. The oak used for its restoration was obtained from some of the old planks of the floor which were still quite sound. The joists being rotten, and the weight of the books to be carried



HEREFORD. TRANSEPT CHAMBER

very great, it was necessary to support the new oak floor with steel girders; and since the bottom of the windows was below the floor level, 11 inches was taken off the lower end of the small columns on each side of the windows. The corbels were carved at the same time, two of them by Mr. Davies himself.

[1] Originally the chamber extended much further in this direction, over the aisle of the choir; it was shortened in the fourteenth century to allow the aisle to be raised in height and provided with pointed vaulting.

By a peculiar piece of good fortune the dimensions happen to be peculiarly well adapted to its present use. The four presses, being set against the inner wall at right angles to it, equidistantly from one another, as in a mediaeval library, there are between the first and second presses, and again between the third and fourth, window-like openings (p. 115) looking into the triforium of the Transept. The distance between the presses is 6 ft. 5 in., which must be within a couple of inches of their original spacing; for at Corpus this distance is 6 feet, in the Bodleian it averages 6 ft. 6 in.; and a comparison of measurements of the width of seats at Hereford and Corpus, and of desks at Hereford and the Bodleian, proves the original spacing of the cases at Hereford to have been wider than at Corpus, but narrower than at the Bodleian. Moreover, the width of stone showing between the press-end and outside edge of these window-like openings is within an inch of the corresponding spaces between woodwork and windows at Corpus and the Bodleian. If, then, the visitor to the Hereford library summons his imagination to envisage these openings into the Transept as outside windows, he will see an ancient library complete in every detail.

One object in the room has a good claim to be regarded as an "old inhabitant". On the assumption that it was, in mediaeval times, the Treasury, it would have housed some of the most valued relics in the Cathedral. The removal, therefore, to this chamber of the fine thirteenth-century Limoges reliquary—enamelled with a representation of the murder of Thomas à Becket—is probably an example of "genuine restoration".

A handsome Jacobean table has been brought up from the Lower Library to the Transept Chamber. I think it possible that it is this which is indicated by the oblong figure near the west end in Browne Willis' plan of the Ladye Chapel (p. 329). At any rate, since it undoubtedly dates from Thornton's time, it is an appropriate piece of furniture in the library whose general aspect owes so much to him.

IV

THE HEREFORD BOOK-CHESTS

BOTH the almery and the book-chest—sometimes called a "cofre" or an "ark"—continued in use side by side with lecterns and presses. Clark quotes evidence for this in the Old Vatican library (finished 1481), and at Pembroke and Peterhouse, Cambridge. The word used for a chest in the catalogue of the Vatican library is *capsa*. I have come across two instances of the use in England of the diminutive *capsula* at a much later date. At Trinity College, Oxford, there is a catalogue, dated 1697, of the books, mainly MSS., which were kept *in capsula*; and in 1745 there was a locked *capsula* under one of the presses at Hereford.

Havergal mentions the existence of three chests in the library at Hereford in the middle of the last century. One of these is the magnificent specimen, dated by the design of the carving *c.* 1360, which is shown in the illustration, p. 4. The carving is so well preserved that Havergal thought it must have been recut; but when the varnish, with which it had been covered, was "pickled" off, his hypothesis was found to be an error. Its dimensions are: length 6 ft., height 2 ft. 1½ in., width 1 ft. 9 in. The slot for coins in the lid, though ancient, is not original. It was probably made for small monies specifically connected with the library, such as the fee of 3s. at one time paid for the privilege of having a key to the library. Emphatically it is not a treasure-chest; it could be broken into in five minutes with a good axe. Mediaeval treasure-chests—there are two in the tower of All Souls, Oxford—are made of oak planks 3 to 4 inches thick, smothered with iron bands; these would tease a professional burglar for a while. It was the fashion to keep books in beautifully carved chests. Books require protection, not so much from burglars as from "borrowers"; against such, a decorated chest, locked by three keys held by three different persons, is a sufficient bulwark.

Havergal having mentioned three chests, it occurred to me one day to ask the verger if he knew of any other old chests about the Cathedral. He led me at once to a dark corner of the Nave where was a large old box, used for stowing odds and ends. This turned out to be a chest, dated by its ironwork as early fourteenth century, which Mr. Moffatt pronounces to be in certain respects unique, viz. it is made of poplar wood, and it is provided with rings at the end adapted to be swung on a pole to be carried on men's shoulders.

TRAVELLING BOOK-CHEST, FOURTEENTH CENTURY, HEREFORD

Poplar being a very light wood, its use would be a gain in portability. It is 3 ft. 11 in. long, 20 in. wide, and 18 in. high. It had been fitted with an unsuitable oak lid, evidently made from a shelf of one of the presses dismantled in 1841; and it had been painted black. The lid has been restored in poplar wood, the paint has been removed, and an ash carrying-pole has been supplied.

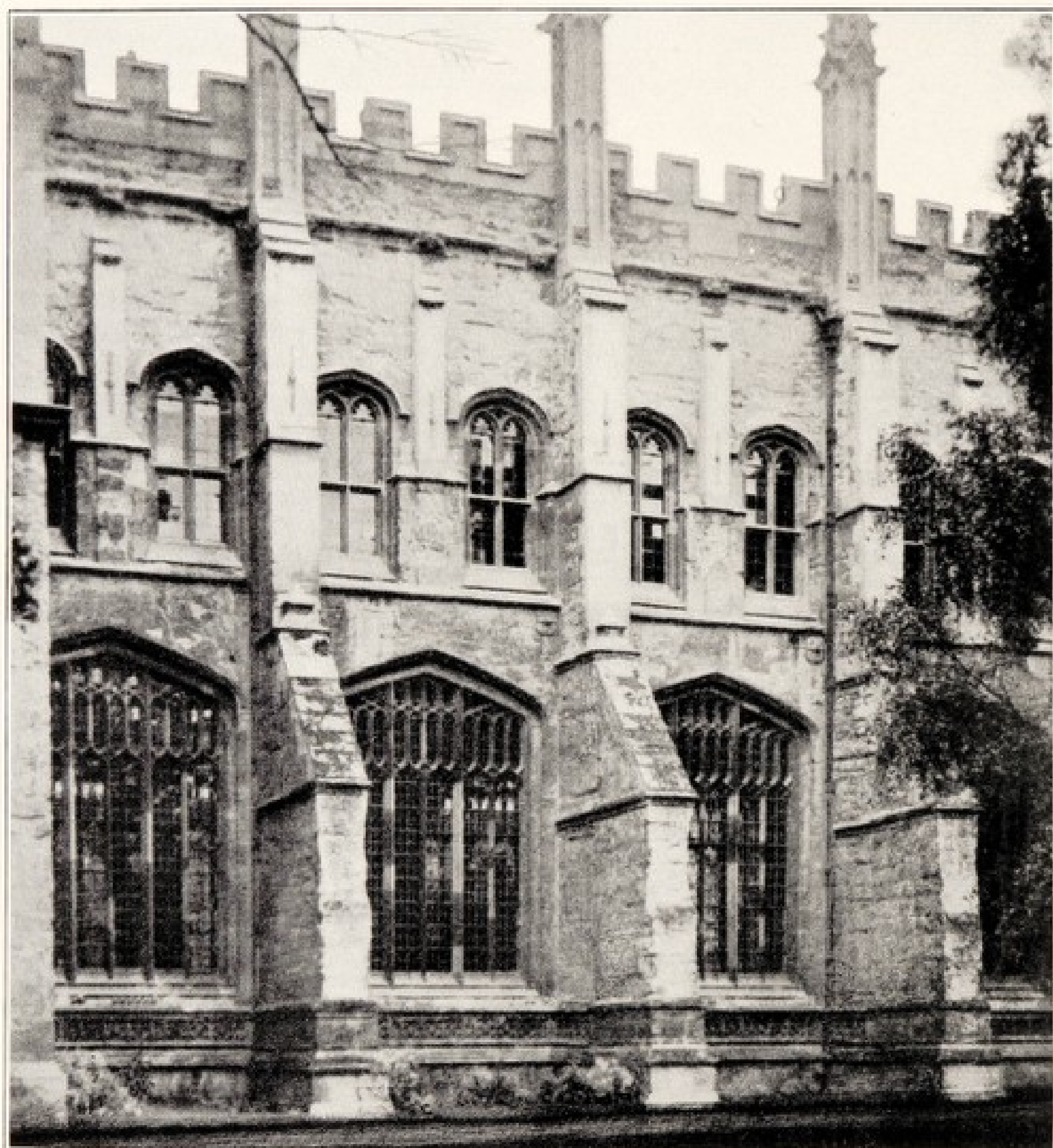
I have no doubt that the chest was intended for the travelling library of some mediaeval Bishop. The Bishop had several residences; and he constantly needed not only service-books, but also books of law, for the everlasting legal controversies in which the

ecclesiastics of that happy period were engaged. J. W. Clark mentions (*op. cit.*, p. 293) the use by Kings of France of chests specially made for a small travelling library. What looks like the reference to a similar chest occurs in an inventory of the year 1464 of the effects of the Church of St. Mary, Warwick, quoted by Cox and Harvey in their *English Church Furniture*, p. 300:

It. in the house afore the Chapter hous j old irebounde cofre having hie feet and rings of iron in the endes thereof to heve [*i.e.* carry] it bye. And therein liuth certein bokes belonging to the Chapter.

The illustration opposite makes further description unnecessary. It probably came to the library containing the books bequeathed by some Bishop of Hereford.

P.S.—Since the above was printed I have found in the lumber loft three rings, with the remains of the long links, of size and pattern identical with those affixed to this chest. Evidently the Cathedral once possessed two more chests of this same character.



THE BODLEIAN, FROM EXETER COLLEGE GARDEN

(Showing Duke Humphrey's Library over Divinity School)

CHAPTER III

NINE OXFORD LIBRARIES

SYNOPSIS

THE difference in library tradition between Oxford and Cambridge may be envisaged in the fact that Bodley's fittings in *Duke Humphrey*, and those of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, are contemporary.

The libraries of Merton, Corpus, the *Old Library* of All Souls, and St. John's show the Stall-system before Bodley; those of Jesus, Trinity, Queen's and Lincoln (and the later alterations at Corpus and St. John's) represent a later development of the Bodleian model. Merton to a certain extent stands outside the series.

The libraries are usually in long handsomely decorated rooms on the first floor, with a row of windows on each side, between which stand the rows of presses; there is a central avenue between the face-ends of the presses. The most conspicuously mediaeval of the buildings is that of Merton; an extreme contrast is Queen's, probably designed by Wren, with woodwork in the style of Grinling Gibbons. At Lincoln the old presses are in a modern room.

MERTON

Built 1373–78; both wings originally fitted on the Lectern-system in the style of Zutphen. In 1623 the east wing was completely refitted; but the new work was ordered to be a copy of that in the west wing. The woodwork in the west wing is, therefore, the older; but there is no precise evidence as to its date.

Probability that the benches and foundation-beams in the west wing are those of the original lecterns; but that the lecterns themselves were replaced by the existing presses about 1585.

One half-press retains lock, hasp, rods, with a couple of chains attached to books. It has also certain notable peculiarities.

CORPUS

The retention of locks, hasps, etc., makes this the best preserved of the Oxford chained libraries. The contract with the joiner (1517) provides that the woodwork is to be an exact copy of that at Magdalen, save for the poppy-heads on the seats.

The library in 1517 was 60 ft. long, with 12 presses and 4 half-presses; it is now 80 ft. long, with 16 presses and 4 half-presses. Originally the presses were "two-deckers", and the desks were pegged to the brackets. The presses have been raised twice; and the desks have been twice altered.

Discovery of confirmatory evidence in the accounts that the presses were raised and the library largely refitted, 1604–5. The present cornices, ironwork, and catalogue frames belong to this date, and are therefore imitated from Sir Thomas Bodley's presses.

This dating of the ironwork—in its relation to that of Merton and St. John's—throws light on the evolution of the Stall-system in general.

All Souls

About 1744, after the books had been moved to the new *Codrington Library*, the Old Library was turned into a set of Fellows' rooms. It is now a lecture-room. Fortunately the face-ends of the old presses were preserved—being utilized as part of the panelling. Other portions of the old woodwork were adapted in the chimney-pieces and cornice. A drawing shows these restored.

The window-spacing shows that the library was built for the Lectern-system. The surviving face-ends belong to a refitting of the library by Warden Hovenden which must have been carried out shortly after the fine ceiling. The ceiling cannot be later than 1571.

From the dimensions of the face-ends, and from a catalogue signed by Hovenden in 1575, we can deduce that the presses were originally "two-deckers"; though they were raised and became "three-deckers" in 1665. In their elaborate ornamentation they are a forecast of St. John's, Cambridge, except that the books were chained.

From three still earlier catalogues inferences can be drawn as to the number and shelving of the lecterns in use before Hovenden refurnished the library.

St. John's

The old wing of the library dates from 1596. For the building, stone and timber (1000 cart-loads) were brought from the Hall of Beaumont Palace—a suppressed convent of the White Friars. The north wing was added by Laud, 1636; but his woodwork was destroyed in the last century.

The seats are the most striking ancient feature. Some forty chains survive, but are not attached to books.

The presses were originally "two-deckers"; but they have been raised (possibly by Laud) and provided with classical pediments and cornice.

The desks are divided and hinged in a way not found elsewhere. These may

also be due to Laud; as there is evidence that the desks were originally fixed and sloped at a steep incline, like those at Bolton or Enkhuizen.

A close scrutiny of the presses at the ends of the library afford evidence that it was originally shorter. The extension took place at an early date, and was probably effected by the inclusion of a vestibule and a small end-room.

The Bodleian

Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, in 1444 undertook to build over the Divinity School a new room for a University library, to replace Cobham's Library at St. Mary's. His books were scattered, and the woodwork sold, 1550–1556. It was probably fitted on the Lectern-system.

Sir Thomas Bodley refitted the room, and restocked it with books, 1598–1602. His refurnishing of Duke Humphrey's room was on the Stall-system; but 1610–12 he added the extension *Arts End*—the first English example of the Wall-system with gallery. *Selden End* (1634) was modelled on *Arts End*.

Bodley's letters to the first keeper, James, reveal his idiosyncrasies, and his interest in detail.

Comparison made between the presses in Duke Humphrey's Library and those at Hereford.

Facts about the chaining.

The ironwork.

The "closets", "grates" and "tables" (=catalogue frames).

A *mot* of James I.

Jesus College

An exceptionally beautiful library—largely because its woodwork has suffered less from later alteration than that of any other library in Oxford.

Discovery that the presses are those of an older library, *c.* 1623, which were saved and set up again in the present building in 1679.

Resemblance of the presses to those of Westminster Abbey, 1624. Exceptional lightness of the woodwork.

Trinity

Trinity inherited the library building of Durham College—a "cell" of the great Abbey of Durham—which was begun 1417. Some of the original glass remains.

The mediaeval library has been enlarged by about 9 ft. at the north end, and the entrance has been changed.

The presses date from about 1625. Though originally "three-deckers", they have been raised twice, and now touch the ceiling. In other respects they have

lost more of their original features than the other libraries discussed in this chapter; but a minute examination makes it possible to trace much of the original form.

Facts concerning the chaining, which seems to have gone on till after 1765. Extra locks and hasps were fitted after the raising of the presses.

The Queen's College

The building, finished 1694, was probably the joint work of Wren and Hawkesmoor. The presses are in the style of Grinling Gibbons.

Discovery that the library was originally chained, and remained so till 1780.

Characteristic treatment in the Wren-Gibbons manner of various details of the traditional three-decker model—brackets, catalogue frames, grates, etc.

The relation of the Lower Library (1841) to the original cloister.

Queen Philippa, Henry V., Sir Roger Newdigate.

Nineteenth-century alterations.

Lincoln

The library was moved to the old Chapel in 1659. Probably at the same time lecterns were replaced by the Stall-system.

In 1739 the presses were remodelled and redecorated in eighteenth-century taste; but chaining was still retained.

The method of locking the rods differed from that found elsewhere in Oxford.

Additional Note

The Mediaeval Library, Queen's.

CHAPTER III

NINE OXFORD LIBRARIES

THE difference in library tradition between Oxford and Cambridge is vividly expressed in the fact that Sir Thomas Bodley's fittings in Duke Humphrey's Library, and those of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, are contemporary. To realize the full extent of this contrast, the reader should turn from the illustration of Trinity Hall (p. 37) to the frontispiece of this volume, remembering that, when the Bodleian was first opened, its presses, with their seats and chains, were all but identical with those at Hereford.

In Chapter I. we saw how Trinity Hall represents the climax in development of the Lectern-system at Cambridge: also how the Bodleian model reached Cambridge in Clare, and then, with important modifications—first at St. John's and then at Peterhouse—assumed the form characteristic of Cambridge in the seventeenth century.

In the first four libraries studied in this chapter we trace in Oxford the early history of the Stall-system until it achieved the climax of its structural development in Duke Humphrey's Library. The last four libraries show the further development, in detail and in ornamentation, of what is fundamentally the same structural form. To the student of library evolution Corpus and St. John's—All Souls also, so far as can be judged from the surviving evidence—stand both before and after *Duke Humphrey*. In their present form they represent a development of the Bodleian model—at Corpus the development is so little later as to be almost a replica. But beneath

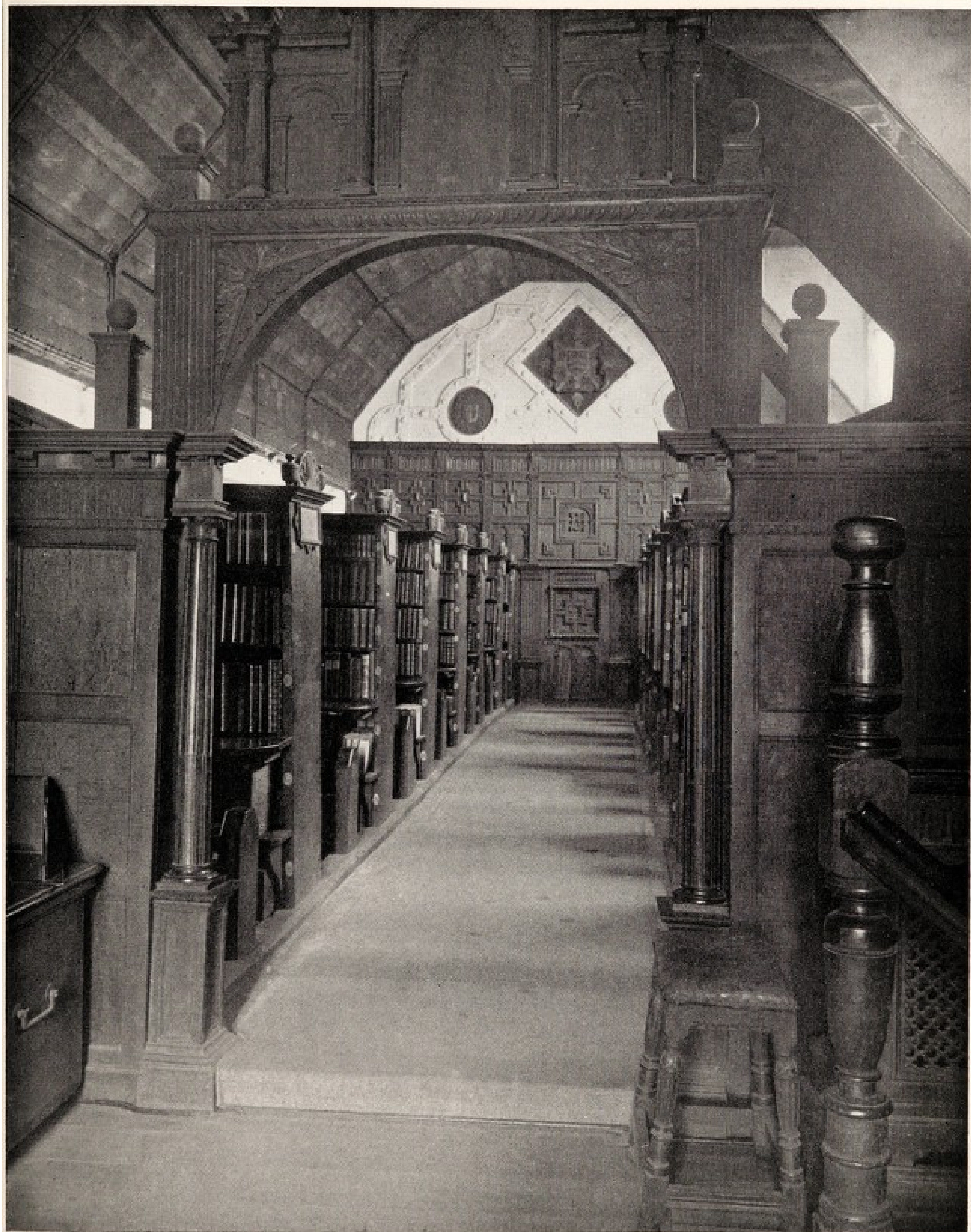
their present structure can be detected an earlier stage—the "two-decker" press, with fixed seats and more elementary ironwork.

The library of Merton stands somewhat apart. Its fittings are the result of an attempt (probably Elizabethan) to adapt, to a building originally intended for the Lectern-system, the "two-decker" form of the Stall-system. It must not, therefore, be taken as a representative type of that system. Nevertheless, as the building did not allow of the presses being further adapted to the later (Bodleian) type, Merton remains the one library in Oxford which, in its present form, is uninfluenced by Bodley's adoption of the Hereford model.

The nine Oxford libraries here described are on the first floor, and (with two exceptions) occupy a long and handsomely decorated room;[1] on both sides there is a row of windows, between which the great bookcases stand out at right angles to the wall. Thus in all of them there is a long central avenue between the face-ends of the bookcases; the face-ends frequently exhibit some striking feature. Two of these libraries stand apart from the rest, in regard to the architectural character of the building and therefore of the fittings adapted to it—Merton (1373–78) has lancet windows of a mediaeval type, Queen's (1692–96) is in the style of Wren. All Souls, Corpus, St. John's, the Bodleian, Jesus and Trinity form a bridge between these; Lincoln preserves its old presses, but in a modern building.

Within this long period we expect, and we find, a very interesting development traceable in the detail of the woodwork, especially in the matter of ornamentation. But this development cannot be properly studied until a detailed examination of the structure has resulted in making clear the distinction between original forms and later alterations. Some of these alterations are of a date early enough to make them in themselves an integral part of the evidence for the whole of the evolution to be studied. Alterations due to the vandalism or misapplied efficiency of the nineteenth century are

[1] At Balliol, Magdalen (illustration, p. 40) and Wadham similar rooms survive; and, with much alteration, at New College and Brasenose; but the original fittings have vanished. For old Oxford libraries on the Wall-system see pp. 75-6.



MERTON LIBRARY. ENTRANCE TO WEST WING

merely a matter of regret; those which mean that in libraries like Corpus and St. John's there are represented both an earlier and a later stage within one living tradition, have an independent interest of their own.

In broad outline the results of such an investigation are of a character to secure the interest of the general reader; but some of its detail may strike him as being of the "dry as dust" order. I have endeavoured, therefore, in the letterpress to bring out at the beginning of each section large results which seem to me likely to be of more general interest; then I proceed to the discussion of points which will rather concern those who have made, or wish to make, a special study of the subject. I venture, therefore, to ask the reader, whenever he feels his attention slacken, to turn over a page or two, and look out for the beginning of a fresh subject. Great pains have been taken in the selection of the photographs with a view to making clear the matters discussed in the letterpress. With a constant reference to the illustrations and a little judicious skipping of the text the reader will be able to follow the development of the old-time Oxford Library from its birth in the mediaeval quaintness of Merton to its apotheosis in the Palladian majesty of Queen's.

I

MERTON

Merton is the most picturesque, it is also the most perplexing, of English libraries. It is certainly mediaeval, and it is certainly Jacobean; the problem is to determine the degree of mixture between these two strains. Perhaps we may solve it by discerning an Elizabethan stratum also.

Undisputed Facts

The library, on the first floor of "Mob Quad"—probably the oldest quadrangle in Oxford—is divided into two wings at right

angles to one another running down two sides of the quad, separated in the angle by a square vestibule at the head of the staircase.

Each wing is entered from the vestibule through a beautiful Jacobean screen. The west wing, shown in the illustration, p. 129, is 38 ft. 6 in. long, the east (or south) wing—sometimes called the *New Library*—is 56 ft. 6 in. long. Both rooms are of the same width, 20 ft. 6 in., and (except at the far end of the east wing, which was originally a separate room) are lighted by equidistant lancet windows of uniform size; each has also two large dormer windows in the roof, the eastern pair dating from 1623. The tops of the windows which look outside the College (to the south or to the west) are of a slightly different pattern from those which look on to the inside of the quadrangle. The narrow windows and the small interval (of two feet) between them are a notable feature of this library. The space from centre to centre of the windows is only 5 ft. 6 in.—a fact which, as we shall see later, has exercised a determining influence on the style and size of the bookcases and seats.

The building of the library began in 1373 (*sic*), and ended in 1378. In 1379 the bursar paid £2 for fifty-five planks for desks in the library. In the same year timber is bought for *grondsells*:

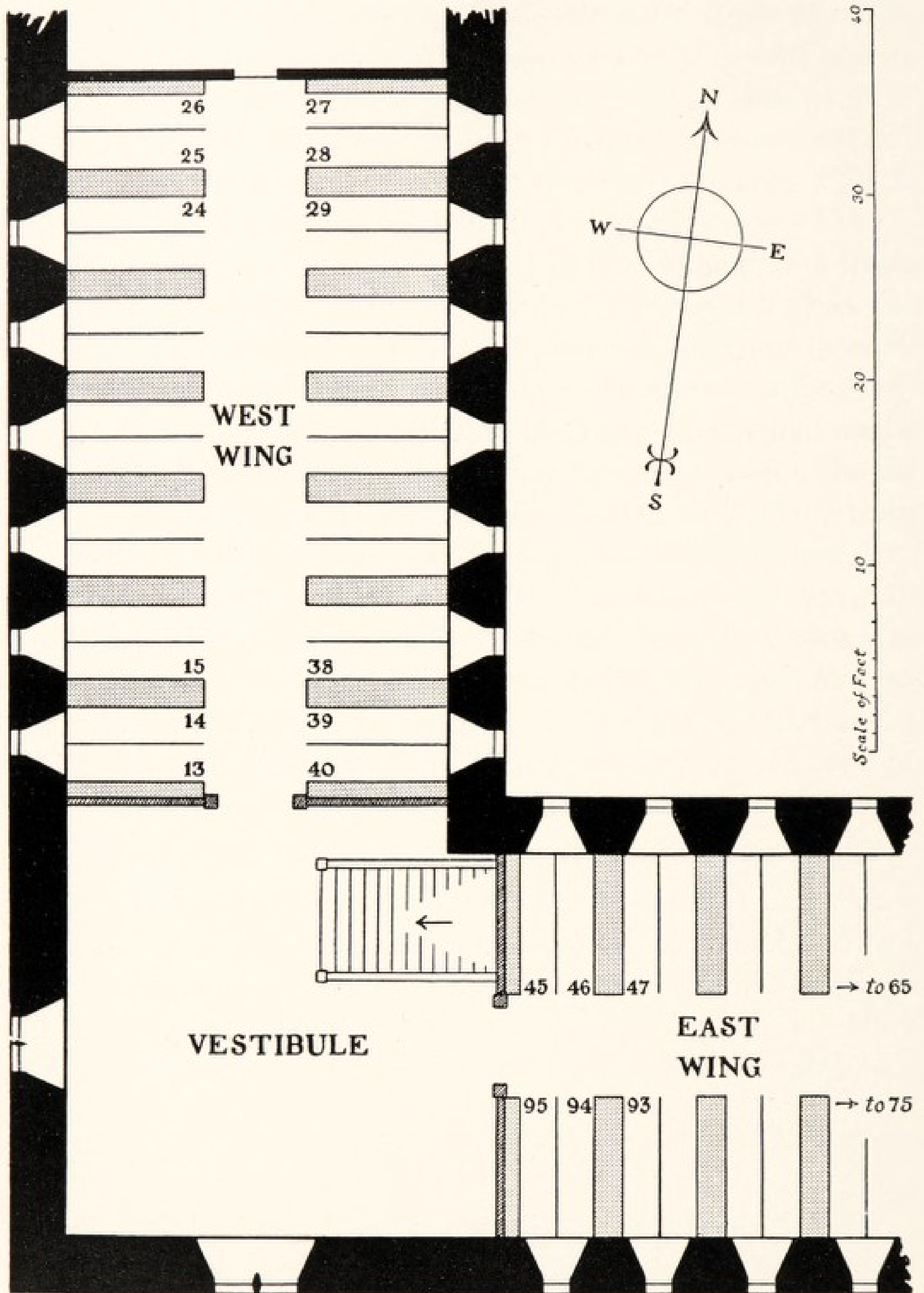
Item pro meremio empto pro grondsell' in noua libraria xxiiijs vijd.

Presumably the *grondsells* (the apostrophe is a mark of the plural) are the "foundation-beams" into which lecterns and benches are mortised; "ground-sill" is technically used of foundation-beams of timber houses. *Tabulae* are also purchased. The number of these is so large that they cannot have been an early form of catalogue frame; they are also mentioned in the old accounts at Queen's and Trinity, and were perhaps boards covered with wax for writing notes on.

Item pro liiij tabulis in noua libraria pro desc' xls.

The next item is of less ambiguous interpretation; the money was not spent on "soft drinks"!

Item in potationibus cum eorundem venditoribus iijd per vic'.



MERTON LIBRARY. WEST, AND PART OF EAST, WING

Lines between presses indicate single-bench seats

The work was still going on in 1383, when a payment is made of eight shillings and sixpence for one *tronc . . . ad desc' in libraria.* In 1387, 48 chains for the books were bought for thirty shillings.

The fitting up of the east wing is mentioned in a note which records an interesting connection between Merton College and Hereford Cathedral; a connection, however, which, as I have already mentioned, has been the origin of a grand error in regard to the date and the early history of the library at Hereford. Walter de Rammesbury (or Rommysbury), besides being Fellow of Merton, was Canon of Hereford. In the "Old Catalogue" of Fellows of Merton there is against his name the statement that he gave £10 for new desks in the east wing of the library, and ten marks for stalls in the choir, *dedit X libras ad novas descas in ala orientali librarie et X marcas ad stallandum chorum.* In Anthony Wood's *Historia et Antiquitates Universitatis Oxoniensis* (1674, Bk. ii., p. 398) the date of this donation is given as 1394. We may estimate the price of oak timber from the above notices; that of labour in this century may be inferred from the fact that at Hereford in 1359 a master mason was engaged permanently by the Chapter for 3s. a week and a loaf of bread a day.[1] It seems probable, then, that the gift of £10 would provide more than half the eighteen or twenty "desks" in the east wing.

The ceiling can be proved by decorative and heraldic evidence to be that which the College account-books show was put up in 1502–3. Work was done on the staircase in 1606, which probably included the newel post seen in the illustration, p. 129. The fine plaster decoration at the end of the west wing (p. 147) dates from 1641, when also *an addition*—doubtless the portion above the press-tops —was made to the (probably Elizabethan) panelling.

The accounts show an expenditure for making and glazing windows in 1597–98. This probably refers to the two large dormer windows in the west wing. The two similar dormers in the east wing are known to have been made in 1623. As the bookcases set up there

[1] W. W. Capes, *Charters, etc., of Hereford*, p. xxiii.

in the same year were ordered to be copied from those of the west wing, it is reasonable to suppose that the dormers were also copied from already existing dormers in the west wing.

In 1623 the east (now known as the "south") wing of the library was completely refitted. Rammesbury's desks were swept away—Benet, the joiner who contracted for the new work, allowing the College £3 : 7 : 6 for the old timber (p. 144). This transaction is recorded in the College accounts, and also in the College Register. In the latter the College order for the refitting is preserved; this expressly lays it down that the new cases for the east wing are to be *copied from those in the west.* This important reference, with others from the College records, I owe to the courtesy of Prof. Garrod.

In 1792 the chains, except as shown p. 143, were removed.

Original Lectern-system

It follows that the presses in the west wing are the older; also that Rammesbury's desks, which were removed to make room for *copies* of them, must have been of a design which, by comparison, was regarded as obsolete. We are entitled to infer that Rammesbury's desks were on the Lectern-system. The existence in the library of a number of books (once chained) with the titles painted on the *side* of the cover (occasionally the title is covered with a horn shield) affords further evidence for an original Lectern-system. In a book which is chained on a shelf there would be no object in having the title on the side; in a book which lay flat on a lectern, that is the most convenient position. One such book, I noticed, bore a date as late as 1575.

It says much for the acuteness of J. W. Clark that, without the assistance of the documentary evidence just quoted, he had drawn the conclusion that the west wing was the model of the east, and that the original building had been *designed for the Lectern-system.* His ground for this inference is the narrow space between the windows—only 2 ft. at Merton as against 3 ft. 6 in. at Corpus—and also the narrowness of the windows, at the widest splay only

3 ft. 6 in., as against 5 ft. 6 in. at Corpus. The analogy of Wells, which I develop elsewhere (p. 273 f.), considerably fortifies this conclusion. At Merton, as in Cobham's Library, the windows have a single light; elsewhere, even at Wells and All Souls (both of which must have had lectern fittings), the windows have double lights.[1]

It is lack of space, due to the window arrangement having been intended for lecterns, that accounts for the exceptional narrowness of the presses. In the west wing these vary from 15½ inches to 17 inches, whereas in no other library on the Stall-system were they originally less than 2 feet. This raises a difficult question as regards the old arrangement of the books at Merton. Two feet is the convenient shelf-width to allow two folio volumes to stand back to back without actually touching; and at the time when these presses were made the folio size must have predominated. The scars of locks and hasps show that there must have been two sets of books and two desks on each press. I can only suppose that there was some system of alternation. Perhaps two *partitiones* were reserved for books facing one way, and two for books facing the other. The same lack of space accounts for the fact that, when the east wing was refitted in 1623, the backless benches of the Old Library were reproduced (in a lighter style), although back-to-back seats at that time were the universal fashion. The space between the cases at Merton averages 4 ft. 1 in., as against 6 ft. at Corpus or 6 ft. 7 in. at Bodley. In such a small space there simply was not room for two desks and also for the minimum of 2 feet required by a back-to-back seat. The backless benches in the west room average 8½ inches; and on these a reader can face in either direction, so that a single plank provides sitting accommodation for two desks. Unfortunately, except in bay 45-46, one desk between every pair of presses has been removed.

[1] The character of the stonework suggests that there has been some reconstruction on the sides that look on to the quadrangle; this *may* mean that on this side the lighting has been altered. In 1378 the accounts mention a "great window on the south wall"; and in 1390 "two great windows" somewhere in the library. Ancient libraries nearly always had a large end window on which the avenue between the lecterns or presses centred; as there are two rooms at Merton, one would expect two such windows.

To the student of library-forms these facts should be a danger signal. The structure of the Merton fittings has been determined by the necessity of solving the problem of adapting the Stall-system to a building peculiarly ill-suited for that system. Merton, therefore, must never be taken as a type-form. It is so easy and natural to think of Merton as a normal library, representing the earliest stage in the development of the Stall-system. I early fell into this pitfall myself, and only scrambled out again after much toil and time wasted.

In the primitive pattern preserved at Zutphen the lecterns have a single bench as at Merton. I am confident that the similar benches in the west wing at Merton are older than the presses, and belong to the original fittings of the library, for four reasons:

(1) As there is only room for single benches, no object would be gained by making these anew, unless those substituted were of a pattern more in accord with the taste of the age. But the shape of the uprights is primitive and the workmanship is rough; whereas that of the presses is much neater and smoother. In the east wing, by contrast, an attempt has been made to provide benches in a neater and lighter style.

(2) The timber is much heavier than that of the presses: the average thickness of the uprights which support the benches is $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches; that of the press-ends is only $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches. If benches and presses had been made at the same time, the uprights of the presses would have been either of the same thickness as those of the benches, or they would have been a little thicker.

(3) The timber of the desks also is rougher, and looks older, than that of the uprights of the presses. The steeply sloping desks of the old lecterns could easily be cut and adapted to the later presses. If so, there is evidence of a willingness to utilise old materials at the time of the change. I show later that the phenomenon of the central rod below the desk-level points in the same direction.

(4) At the foot of the wall-ends of several of the presses a portion

BENCH AND DESK, MERTON. (*N.B.*—DESK ON LEFT IS MISSING)

of a mortise-hole in the foundation-beam can be seen, not quite filled up. This fact, and also the great thickness of these beams, suggest that the foundation-beams were those of the previous lecterns. If the foundation-beams are original, the case for the benches being so is strengthened.

These foundation-beams gain in interest if studied as a structural feature common to Zutphen and Merton. The press-ends and bench-supports are mortised into beams some 6 inches square, which run the whole length of the library, the tenons in the mortises being fastened to the beams by oak pegs nearly an inch in diameter. Now the reader's bench, like a schoolboys' form, is a light, easily movable object, and a lectern, even with its books on it, would not be so heavy that it could never be slightly displaced. There was, therefore, a real point in an arrangement which ensured that the lecterns, and still more the benches, were permanently fixed in the position most suitable in relation to the windows. If this was to be done, mortising them into a beam which stood up some inches above the floor, so that pegs could be driven in from the side, was the obvious method. In the developed Stall-system, however, neither presses nor seats really needed to be fixed in position. Presses as heavy as those at Hereford require three strong men to move them, even when the shelves are empty; when filled with folio and quarto volumes they are absolutely immovable. To a less extent this applies to the back-to-back seats. When the Hereford library was in course of restoration I raised the question of fixing these to the floor, as in other similar libraries. Mr. Davies, the builder, replied that, as it took two men to put them in position, they were not likely to be displaced by a casual reader. But the practice of fixing the presses and seats to beams running the whole length of the library is still found at Corpus, St. John's and Jesus. A drawing by Buckler, dated 1815, shows it in *Duke Humphrey*. It is found at St. John's College, Cambridge, where low bookcases, which when filled with books would have been quite immovable,

are substituted for seats. This, however, is not an example of structural conservatism. The foundation-beam in the Stall-system serves *another* function; it distributes the great weight of the book-presses over the maximum number of the joists which support the floor. I could see no signs of tenons at the bottom of those Hereford presses I examined—most of them had been set up before it occurred to me to look; but since the presses rested on the stone floor of the Ladye Chapel, there were no joists to be considered here.

Another feature which it is worth while to notice at Merton is the transverse plank, about 3 inches wide, let into the beams at the level of their top side, forming a foot-rest; most of these survive, but several have been widened to make shelves for books below the desks. At Corpus the floor under the presses and seats is raised to the level of the top of the beams; I suspect that this is a seventeenth or eighteenth-century improvement and replaces original foot-rests. The tiling of the central gangway at Merton is known to have been done in 1623 at a cost (for 2000 tiles) of £7.

Dating the Presses

To date the presses in the west wing at Merton we must first decide the question whether or no the cornice or pediment is original. The conclusion reached after a careful examination by Mr. Ault and myself was that the cornice and the half-moon are original (see illustration, p. 137); but the wooden urns on each side of the half-moon are a later addition. They look like two stages (*c.* 1615) of an experiment, of which a later stage appears in the east wing.

The College minute of 1623, ordering that the east wing should be copied from the west, was carried out with a certain amount of freedom. At the top of the presses in the east wing are wooden brackets projecting 2½ inches on each side, so that the width of the face-end is increased by 5 inches immediately below the cornice. As the face-ends are themselves from 1 to 2 inches wider than those in the west wing, this means that the cornice above them is more than

6 inches wider. There is thus plenty of room for a Jacobean urn on each side of the pediment. Also the urns have a base which raises the curve at the foot so that it can be seen above the cornice. But the narrow tops of the cornice in the west wing do not allow sufficient space for urns; they look badly crowded. Moreover, their shape is concealed at the bottom by the edge of the cornice. This stumpy and overcrowded effect is less obvious on the presses at the far end of the room. It would look as if the urns on the presses nearest the screen had been put on first; afterwards, the effect not being as good as was expected, slimmer and taller ones were provided for the rest.

But if the Jacobean urns be removed from the presses in the west end, the cornice and semicircular pediment suggest an Elizabethan date (cf. All Souls, p. 176). With this I connect the fact that in 1597 payments are made for stone and glass for making windows in the library—apparently the dormer windows in the west wing. People had been reading in this library for over 200 years; why should they suddenly want more light in this wing? The obvious answer is, Because it has just been fitted with presses in place of the old lecterns.

With lecterns, like those at Zutphen, butted against the wall-spaces between the windows, the library would have been adequately lighted. The light entering through each of the splayed windows would be diffused over a large area; every part of the room would be lighted from many windows. But when presses nearly 7 feet high were set up between each window, the light from that window was entirely confined to the bay between the two presses on either side of it. The result would be to make the library exceedingly gloomy. But this is the kind of result which would not have been discovered until after the presses had been set up. This consideration, combined with the character of the cornice, would favour a date 1585–95. When, in 1623, similar presses were put up in the east room, wisdom had been learnt by previous experience, and dormers were added at the same time.

If one keeps fixed in one's mind the idea that the massive benches and foundation-beams are the remains of the original mediaeval Lectern-system, the impression of primitiveness made by the west wing is seen to depend on these. It is not made by the presses, which are not at all heavy, and are of neat workmanship. No doubt the presses represent the earlier "two-decker" stage of the Stall-system, with which went a fixed desk; originally they had only two shelves above the desk (and, of course, none *below*). The fixed desk, being closer akin to the lectern than the hinged desk, is presumably more primitive; and two shelves will be earlier than three. But both these characteristics were originally to be found at Corpus, All Souls, and St. John's—the last being as late as 1597. The first "three-decker" presses with the hinged desk in Oxford seem to have been those set up in 1599 by Sir Thomas Bodley. Thus, if about 1585 it was desired to introduce the Stall-system into the Merton Library, the natural model would have been Corpus or All Souls—both at that date "two-decker" libraries with fixed desks. But, as space here (as previously at All Souls) would not admit of back-to-back seats as at Corpus, the old lectern benches were allowed to remain.

There is, however, one feature in the presses in the west end which at first sight looks more primitive than Corpus. The books on the lower shelf were chained to a single rod fixed centrally below the desk instead of to two rods, one on each side. The two rods are more convenient; and, as in the Corpus system the hasps for the lower rods are secured by the same lock as those of the upper rod, there is the saving of a lock. The Corpus system thus looks like an improvement on the Merton. But the Corpus ironwork dates from 1604 (p. 164), and was no doubt copied from *Duke Humphrey*.

The scars on the Merton presses show that this rod was secured by a lock and short hasp as at Lincoln Cathedral (illustration, p. 22), only the hinge of the hasp seems to have had a slightly ornamental curve at each end. A lock and hasp of this kind would have been needed for the central rod of the old lecterns which the presses displaced. Why

may not the idea have occurred to someone of using these locks and hasps again for the new presses? Even if you were making a fresh start, the Corpus system (if invented by that date) would be more expensive; for it requires two rods and two hasps instead of one, and the hasps must be considerably longer; it also involves larger and more complicated locks. But, given that you start with the lock and hasp and central rod in hand, it would mean a considerable saving in ironwork to do as was done at Merton; and iron in the days of Queen Elizabeth was not cheap, and every little piece had to be separately hand-forged. On this view, the central rod at Merton may be an obvious economy; but it may be an ingenious utilisation of existing hasps which itself suggested the improved form which reached Corpus *viâ* Hereford and *Duke Humphrey*.

The position of the lower rod explains another peculiarity of Merton—the exceptional width of the "slot" between the desk and the edge of the lower shelf. In the west wing at Merton this "slot" varies from 3 to 3¼ inches wide; normally it is about 1¼ inches. The reason for this is that it was difficult to get at the rod at Merton unless the slot was wide enough to put your arm through; with the existing slots—I have tried the experiment—it is perfectly easy to get at the rod, or rather the place where the rod used to be.

Sir Thomas Bodley was twice in England in 1595—on leave from his diplomatic appointment in the Netherlands; can it have been the spectacle of the library renewal in his own College that suggested to his mind a larger project? At any rate, the selection by the Vice-Chancellor of Thomas Allan of Merton as one of a committee of five to meet Bodley to advise on the best kind of library fittings would fit in with the view that work of this character had recently been carried out at Merton.

Chained Half-press

B. W. Henderson, the College historian, quotes an entry—in the delightful Latin of the period—in the accounts for 1623, of the

THE CHAINED HALF-PRESS, MERTON

payment to "Benet, the joiner, for twenty presses and a half at the rate of 45 shillings a press", less the allowance of £3 : 7 : 6 "for our old presses".

> Benet junctori pro viginti pluteis et dimidio juxta xlv^{s} pro singulis (supra iii^{li} vii^{s} vi^{d} pro veteribus pluteis nostris deducendis) xlii^{li} xv^{s}.

Presumably this is the Benet (or a relation), the lack of whose services as joiner is deplored by Sir Thomas Bodley in one of his letters to James (No. 227), the first Keeper of his Library.

The account names twenty presses and one half-press; but there are in the east wing twenty presses and *two* half-presses. An explanation of this appears when we notice that the half-press illustrated on p. 143 (numbered 45 on the plan) differs in several points from the other presses. It is divided into three sets of *partitiones* instead of two; it has a shaped "ground-support" under the centre of the bottom shelf, of a pattern like those in the Bodleian and at Corpus; the ends are of much lighter timber; the bench attached to it is much lighter, has an ornamented edge, and supports of a quite different shape from the others. It also has a sloping desk, the others being flat, a point I shall return to shortly.

Henderson speaks of this half-press as surviving "to serve as a model of the original cases". This is an impossible suggestion. Where this half-press differs from the others is in its being slightly *more modern*; besides that, no one in his senses would ever have refitted a whole library for the sake of making changes so insignificant as the differences of this from the other presses. It may represent an experiment, made, perhaps a few months earlier, before the plans for refitting the east wing were finally passed. This half-press being already *in loco*, Benet was instructed to leave it, but not to imitate its minor innovations. Alternatively, the place it occupies may have been filled with a large almery; in which case the half-press was added later, after the almery had been removed.

This half-press has the further interest that it alone retains a lock and hasp; one shelf is fitted with sockets and rod; and two books

are still attached by chains. The rod, as at Hereford, is divided into three sections which butt against one another inside a socket $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches wide. The shelf, however, along the front edge of which the rods are now fixed, is not in its original position; the position of the original shelf and the scars of the fixing of the socket can be seen some 8 inches lower down. The hasp also has been altered in order to accommodate it to the alteration in the position of the shelf. A close scrutiny shows that the hasp has been lengthened by welding together parts of two hasps; also the bulge in the ironwork which butts against the rod and socket has evidently been cut from its original position, and neatly soldered into the new portion of the hasp.

One of the two chains is of the same pattern as those at Hereford and St. John's; the other is of a quite different type, three or four times as heavy, without a swivel, and attached to the book by the end link, not as usual with a ring. Even the (highly precarious) evidence as to its date, which might have been drawn from that of the book it is chained to, is lacking, as title-page and colophon have disappeared. It may be that this chain was once attached to the catalogue of the library, or to the College statutes—a kind of book often chained in a special place (p. 185).

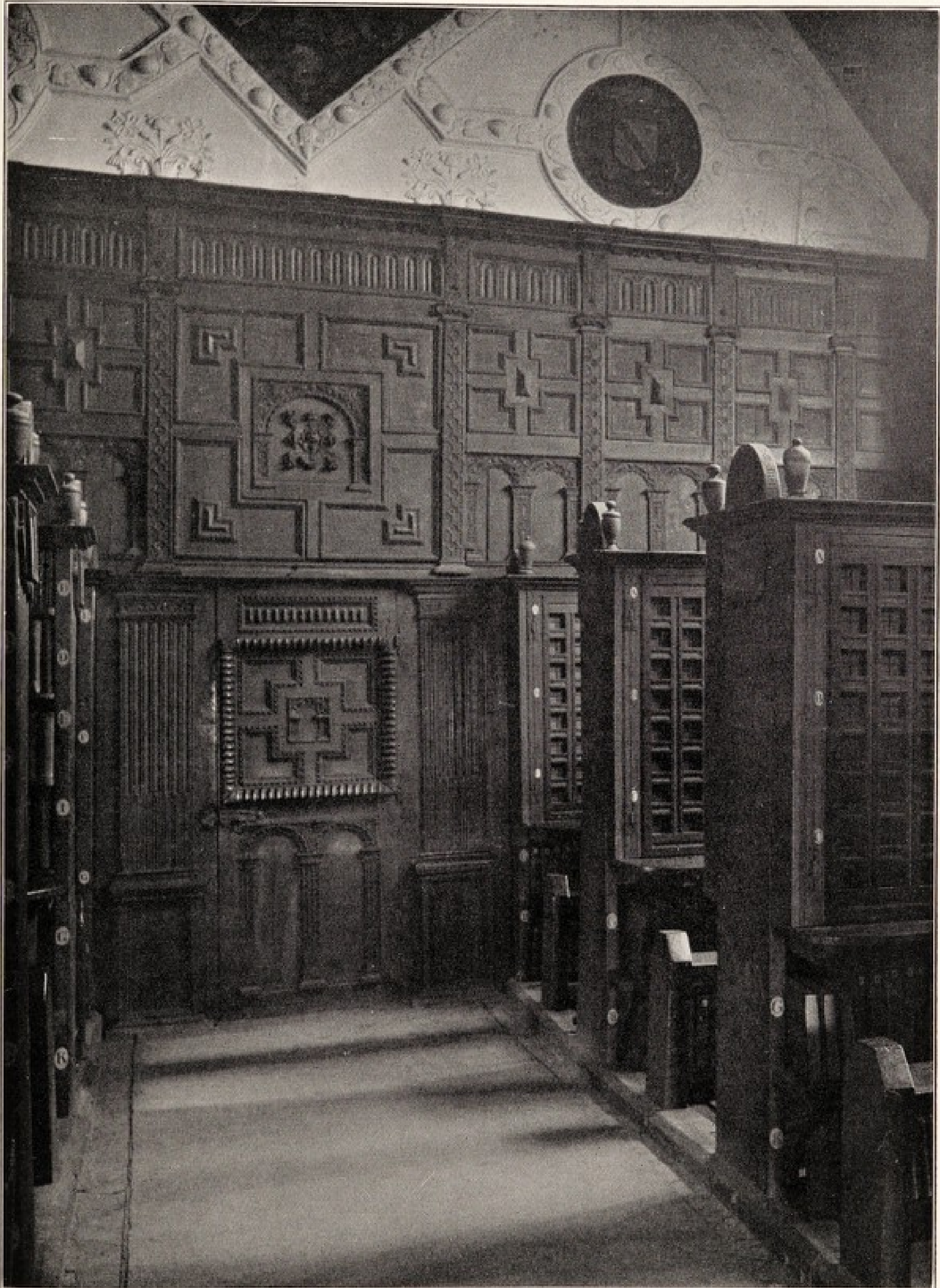
One other respect in which this half-press is unique I have already mentioned: its desk is on the slope, whereas all the other desks in this library are flat. This raises an interesting question. The bracket which supports this particular desk may possibly be a restoration; nevertheless, in a chained library the desk is historically descended from the older lectern, and in nearly all such libraries the desk is (or was originally) sloping. This raises the suspicion that at Merton also all the desks, like that of this half-press, were originally on the slope. At Hereford, where a number of the original brackets are preserved, it is notable that the top of the bracket begins to slope at the point where it emerges from the under side of the bottom shelf. Thus the back edge of the desk is on a level with

the top of the lowest shelf of the bookcase. At Merton, everywhere except in this one half-press, the brackets have been sawn down about 2 inches where they emerge from under the shelf, so that the top of the desk is actually lower than the bottom of the shelf; and many of the brackets do not look original. The result is that the desk becomes flat, instead of sloping. The desks at the Bodleian have been similarly flattened; and there the flattening is clearly not original. Its motive, I imagine, was the fact that books, and still more ink-pots, are apt to fall off a sloping desk. Some of the brackets at Merton retain an inch or so of the slope—which confirms the inference that the desks were not originally flat.

The East Wing

The presses in the east wing, though copied from those in the west, are not absolutely identical. The height of the ends, from the beam to which they are mortised to the under side of the cornice, is 6 ft. 2½ in. as against 5 ft. 9 in. The width of the presses is 1 ft. 6 in., as against an average width of 1 ft. 4 in. in the west wing. The space required for this widening of the cases is gained by reducing the width of the benches from 8½ to 7½ inches and by a similar reduction in the combined width of the desk and slot.

At the far end of the east wing, the long fronts of the two end presses—numbered 65 and 75—instead of being open for books, are closed in as cupboards like the presses on either hand of the entrance to Duke Humphrey's Library. The cupboard doors, however, are panelled, not with open ironwork like those at the Bodleian, but with a wooden lattice similar to the doors to the later sub-librarian's studies in *Duke Humphrey*. The cupboards belong to the original structure; for these end presses are a couple of inches wider than the others—and the hinges are obviously Jacobean. Four presses in the west wing have a similar lattice to make them into cupboards; but these lattices, though not original, seem to have been added before chaining was given up, as there are holes



CUPBOARD PRESSES AND PANELLING, WEST WING, MERTON

for the rods to come through; they are probably an eighteenth-century imitation of those at the far end of the east wing (see illustration, p. 147).

The press-ends in the east wing are made of sawn and planed timber, unlike those in the west, which are all of cleft timber smoothed with the adze. The benches rest on top of their end supports, like an ordinary school form, instead of being mortised into the ends as in the west wing (see illustration, p. 137). These end supports are cut into a pattern and the bottom edges of the bench chamfered. The differences in the cornice and pediment of the presses I have noted above (p. 139 f.).

The planks of the benches (but not their end supports) and the desks in this wing are made of older material smoothed with the adze; they are no doubt relics of the older fittings adapted by Benet to their present position.

A curious point arises as to the chaining of the books on the bottom shelf in the east wing. On the half-press (numbered 95 plan, p. 132) immediately to the right of the entrance, and on the side facing it of the whole press 94, rods for the chains of the bottom shelf were fitted in an unusual place. Besides the stopped-up central holes, there are holes for them in the bracket, an inch and a half in front of the shelf, just below the slot. It follows that the lower hasp (of which there are scars) must have had a bulge outwards, as is usual with upper hasps, to cover the end of this rod. The same method seems to have been used on No. 35. Perhaps also on No. 45, but as the corresponding brackets are the result of restoration, this must remain doubtful; there are certainly scars of a lower hasp. But on none of the other presses in the east wing can I find scars of any lock or hasp for fixing the lower rod. In a few presses there is a central rod-hole (now filled up), as in the west end; but there is no sign that there was ever a lock for this. It would seem that in the east wing the books on the bottom shelf were either not chained at all, or, more probably (see pp. 170, 268), the chains were attached

to the same rod as those on the upper shelf. In favour of this last suggestion is the fact that in a copy of Bacon's works, printed 1740 (*i.e.* too late for the Lectern-system) the scars of chaining are on top edge of the cover.

The screens in the east and in the west wing are almost identical. There are slight differences in the balls and spandrels, of a kind that suggest that the work in the east screen is a copy of that in the west, which looks contemporary with the press-ends.

II

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE

Of all the Oxford libraries that once were chained, Corpus is the one which most eloquently proclaims the fact. It alone retains, on all its presses, the locks, the hasps and the iron sockets for the rods on which the chains ran. A description of it is rendered almost superfluous by the excellence of the illustrations which, by the courtesy of Mr. A. S. Macdonald, I am able to reproduce. Moreover, both the presses and the ironwork of Corpus so closely resemble those of Hereford that a description would be largely a recapitulation of that of Hereford given in Chapter II. Indeed, when Hereford was under restoration, it was the model of Corpus more often than of any other library that gave evidence for the right placing of parts of the structure at Hereford which had strayed from their original position.

Some Fresh Evidence

In regard, however, to the history of the library and of the series of alterations which it has undergone at different dates, I have been fortunate in accumulating a considerable amount of new material. And since, next to Hereford, Corpus is the best preserved library of the type with which this book is mainly concerned, the question of its original form is one of considerable interest.

Corpus is happy in possessing, in the original MS., the accounts of the building of the College. Dr. P. S. Allen, the President, has very kindly excerpted from these a number of items concerning the library.

First and foremost, in the accounts of March 15–30, 1517, occurs this entry:

> Memorandum, conmenawntyd and agreid wyth Cornell Clerke ffor the makyng off the dextis in the liberary to the summe off xvi, after the maner and fforme as they be in Magdaleyn College, except the popie heedis off the seitis. Thes to be workmanly wrowght and clenly, and he to haue all maner off stooff ffoond hym, and to haue ffor the makyng off on dexte x^s : the summe off the hole viij^li.

The last sentence I transliterate into modern English:

> he to have all manner of stuff (*i.e.* timber) found him, and to have for the making of one desk (*i.e.* a complete press with its desk and seat) 10 shillings: the sum of the whole £8.

The importance of this contract—known to J. W. Clark only in Hearne's quotation—is that it affords information as to the original presses at Magdalen College, as well as those at Corpus. Only in regard to "the poppy heads of the seats" did the presses of Corpus differ from those set up in Magdalen by Waynflete about 1480. The change in taste which substituted the round knobs at Corpus for the *fleur de lys* ornament, technically known as a "poppy head", is the beginning of a departure from the Gothic tradition—a tradition which, to judge from their moulding (p. 90 f.) was once preserved in the seats at Hereford. Since, apart from the seats, Corpus was an exact reproduction of Magdalen, if behind later alterations we can find the original forms at Corpus, we may be pretty sure that we have the climax of English library development by 1480. The designer of the magnificent buildings of Magdalen would have supplied his college with the "latest thing" in library furniture.

The money was paid to the contractor by instalments, and in November 1517 the accounts show a payment "for a finall end of

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD. THE LIBRARY, LOOKING EAST

hys bargayn for the makyng of the dextis in the liberary". An entry for March 1518 shows that the sixteen presses or "dextis" consisted of twelve whole presses and four half-presses; at least ironwork is provided for this number:

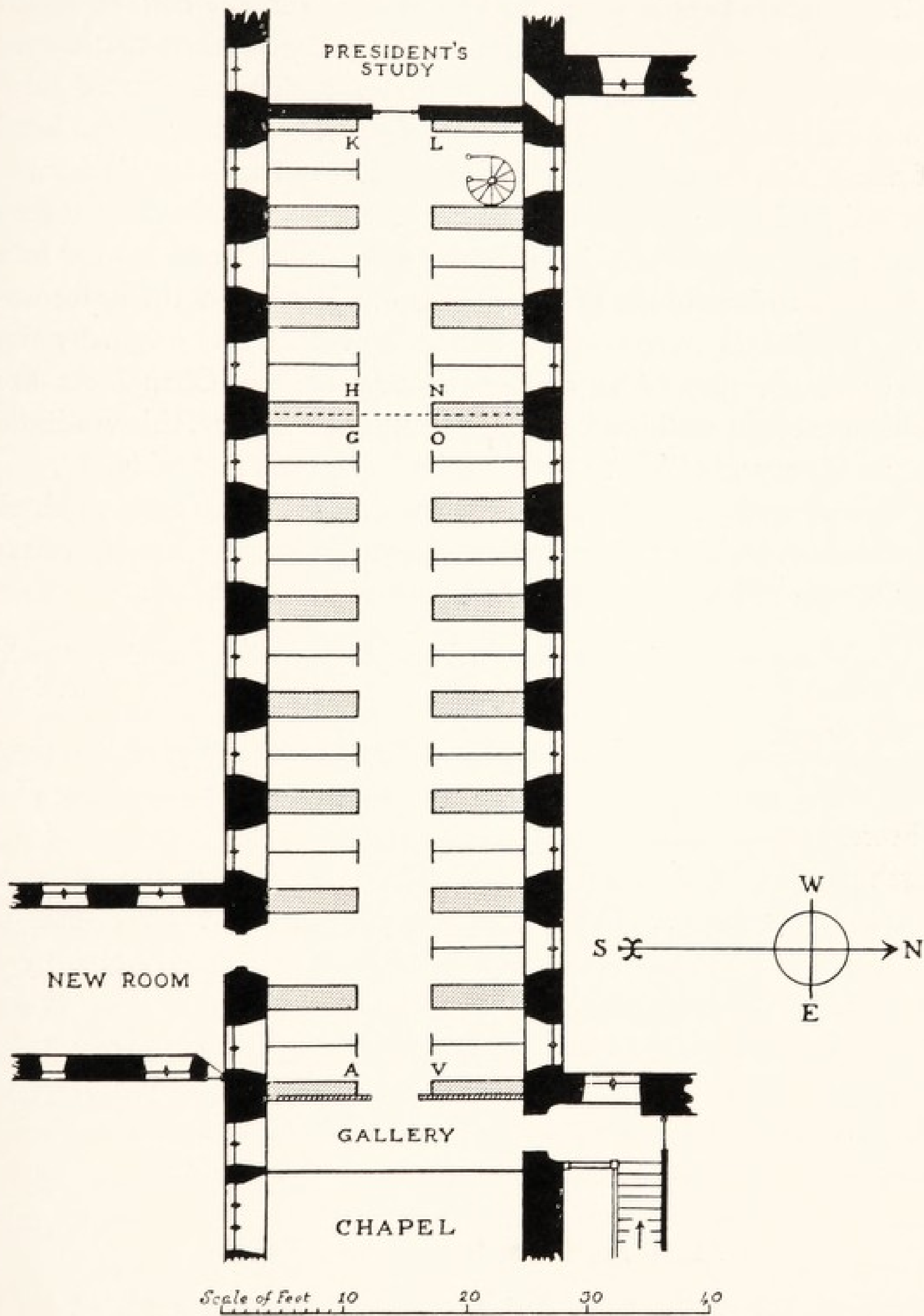
> Item ffor xij lockis and hengys for the hole dexis in the lyberarye att xx^{d} the peese xx^{s}.
> Item for iiij lockis for the halffe dexys iiij^{s}.

Early in the next year eighteen dozen chains were purchased for the library at the rate of eighteen pence the dozen. From this entry we may infer that the number of books in possession of the College at that time was not much more than 200. Books, however, began to come in, for in September 1518 there is an item "for the caryage off ij pypys off bookis off Greke from London". Pipes (= barrels) appear in Bodley's letters and the Chetham accounts as used for packing books.

The same MS. contains an estimate of the size of the library—made apparently for computing the cost of the internal wooden ceiling:

> The lyberary is in lengyth xx yerdis ii footis and the rooff in compas ix yardis on foote: the summe off yardis ix^{xxti} xij yardis ii foote att xvj^{d} the yard xii^{ll} xvii^{s} iiii^{d}.

From this it appears that originally the library was 62 feet in length; it is now just short of 80 feet. This raises an interesting question as to precisely how the extension of the library has been effected. The dimension 62 feet puzzled me a good deal at first. We know that the original contract provided for twelve whole and four half-presses, *i.e.* on each side six whole presses with a half-press at each end. The distance from centre to centre of the presses is almost exactly 8 feet; and as this is determined by the position of the windows, it cannot have been altered. The space, therefore, required for the seven bays implied by the arrangement of six whole presses and two half-presses is 56 feet; and as half-presses presumably backed against a wall or partition, the question arises, Where was the extra 6 feet?



PLAN OF LIBRARY, CORPUS, OXFORD

The answer to this question is to be found in the fact, to which the President called my attention, that the east end of the library was originally a screen, the doors of the archway being of later construction than the rest of the woodwork. The door at the head of the stairs, which has an ancient and very handsome lock, was the original entrance to the library. At present this door enters upon a sort of gallery which is open to the Chapel, and is used as a pew for members of the President's family. But before the Reformation, Presidents were celibate, and it is evident that originally the wall was not pierced with openings towards the Chapel. As the thickness of the wall has been thrown into the gallery, this vestibule to the library would have been originally about 6 feet wide.

The entry in the MS. quoted above, which gives the length of the library, is followed immediately by a similar item which refers to the cost of ceiling a "closet" at the end of the library:

> The closett att the lyberary end conteynyth in measure xxx^tl yardis iij footis att xiiij^d the yard xxxv^s.

This ceiling, we notice, cost twopence per square yard less than that of the main library, so it may possibly have been a ceiling of a different character. Assuming, however, that it was a ceiling of the same pitch as that of the main library, the length of the closet is obtained by dividing the $30\frac{1}{3}$ square yards by 9; the resultant is 9 ft. 9 in. If the closet was separated from the main library by a wooden partition (dotted line on plan), the further wall of the closet would just fall short of the window of the second bay to the west. The two westernmost bays, then, were not part of the library; they were either a separate chamber or a jutting-out portion of the large room now used as the President's study.

First Heightening of the Presses

Still more of the early history of the library is revealed by a scrutiny of the woodwork. This shows that, both as regards the height

of the presses and the method of affixing the desks, what we now see represents not the original but the third stage in that history.

The original height of the presses was 6 ft. 7 in.; and there were only two shelves—one on the level of the desk, and one some 20 inches higher, as formerly at Merton. At the height named a join in the timber runs right across the wall-ends of every press.[1] On the face-ends there is a similar join, but it is 5 inches lower; it is concealed by the narrow strip of beading, visible in the illustrations, immediately above the apex of the catalogue frame. Evidently on the face-ends, at the time when the addition was made, 5 inches were cut off the top of the old timber before adding the new. There were probably two reasons for this. First, in order that the join between the old and the new might come in a position where it could be concealed by a beading so fixed that it would look as if it were an integral part in the design of the catalogue frames. Secondly, the top of the face-end would be scarred with the nails by which the original cornice had been fastened to it; so it made a neater job to cut off the scarred portion.

By this addition the ends of the presses were brought to a height of rather more than 8 feet, that is, to the standard height of a "three-decker" press. The third shelf then added is on a level with the beading which conceals the join. At the same time new hasps—or perhaps only new upper hasps—must have been provided to stop the extra rod of the additional shelf. On every press,[1] just *below* the level of the third shelf, may be seen the nail-holes (in some cases also a scar showing the outline) of an older hasp, which could only have been designed to secure the rod of the first shelf above the desk level. It follows that the present upper hasps were supplied when the presses were raised; for they secure, not only the rod of this shelf, but also that of the shelf above, which did not exist before the presses were raised. These hasps differ from those at Hereford in having a circular protrusion in the middle of the bulge

[1] There are two presses on each side of which this does not hold, see p. 165.

which butts against the ends of the rods—making a kind of stopper to the rod-socket. As this is of the nature of an improvement, it creates a presumption that they are later than those at Hereford. In regard to the lower hasps, the question is more complicated. There are slight differences in the workmanship, from which I am inclined to infer that some of the lower hasps are original, while others, of a pattern modelled after them, were renewed at the same time as the upper hasps. [This inference is mistaken, see pp. 164, 169.]

The raising of the presses and the fixing of the present upper hasps must have been prior to 1604. Under the pelican in the College arms over the west door is the date 1604; the plaster work on the east door (illustration opposite) is so entirely in the same style that it must have been part of the same scheme. But on either side of the east door there is a break in the carved moulding which shows that when it was put up the cornice was already in the position which it occupied when the presses were at the three-decker height. All the ironwork, therefore, is earlier than 1604.

The catalogue frames are so like those at Hereford that they must have been copied one from the other or supplied by the same firm or guild of artificers. The moulding of the cornice exactly matches that of the catalogue frames, and the timber is of the same texture. I conclude, therefore, that the presses were heightened and the present cornice and catalogue frames were supplied at the same time.

The rod-sockets are of two different lengths, some being 1 inch long, others 1¾ inches. The longer are mostly on the upper shelf, the narrow on the shorter; though there are instances where this position is reversed. The variation is to be accounted for by the fact that the presses have at least once been taken to pieces and planed inside and out; the carpenter who reassembled them was careless in replacing the rod-sockets. It happens, however, that the short sockets are mounted on a long plate, and the long sockets on a short plate; where, therefore, long sockets have been fixed on the lower shelf, the nail marks of the plate of a short socket

EAST DOOR AND PLASTER-WORK, THE LIBRARY, CORPUS

can be detected. Hence there is no doubt that the short sockets properly belong only to the lower shelf—and, therefore, *represent the older form*. This fact is more important than at first sight appears, for it suggests an inference in regard to the rods. At Hereford (and also in the one surviving instance at Merton) the rod is divided into three sections, each corresponding to a *partitio*; the sections of the rods butt on one another *inside* the iron sockets which are fixed at the junction of the shelves and upright divisions. A certain amount of play ($\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch) between the abutting ends is required; in a $1\frac{3}{4}$-inch socket there is room for this, but hardly in a 1-inch socket. It would seem to follow that originally at Corpus the books on each shelf were chained to a single continuous rod running the whole length of the press. This was undoubtedly the usual method in the Lectern-system; for at Zutphen and at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, rods the whole length of the press still survive. With the single rod it would be necessary, whenever a book was added or removed, to release all the books on a shelf; where the rod is divided into three, this need only be done for the books in one *partitio*. Obviously the single rod is the more primitive; the rod divided into three is a later improvement.

Second Raising of the Presses

Just below the cornice there is a slight discoloration of the woodwork, forming a band about 6 inches deep; there are also the scars of nails forming two rows, one near the lower and one near the upper edge of this band. The present cornice, instead of being nailed directly on to the face-end of the bookcase as at Hereford and *Duke Humphrey*, forms an independent frame of wood which rests upon the top of the ends. These ends are of exactly the same height as those at Hereford; and the discoloured band corresponds to the place which there, and in *Duke Humphrey*, is occupied by the cornice. Evidently the discoloration represents the position of the cornice after the first raising of the presses; the rows of scars were made by the nails by which the upper and lower mouldings of the

cornice were attached. That is to say, when the presses were first heightened there were only three shelves; and the cornice was fixed at the same height and in the same way as at Hereford or *Duke Humphrey*.

It follows that at some later date the cornice mouldings have been detached from their original fixing, and nailed on to a new framework designed so that it could rest, like a kind of lid, on the *top* of the press-ends. By this device the height of the space above the third shelf was increased by the width of the long cornice board—which at Hereford is 8 inches, here only about 6 inches—making it about 2 feet. This made room for the insertion of an extra shelf dividing this space into two; thus was reached the "four-decker" shelf arrangement which still survives in many of the presses. In still more recent times some of the lower shelves have been subdivided.

The Desks and their Hinges

As regards the method of fixing the desks we can detect three stages, though it does not follow that the several alterations of the desks were contemporaneous with the three stages in the height of the presses traced above.

If the desks be lifted, the remains of pegs or dowels in the brackets and on the under side of the desks can be seen; occasionally the dowels come through to the surface of the desks. This shows that originally at Corpus, as at Merton, the desks were fixed to the brackets by pegs instead of being attached to the press by hinges. In a small minority of the presses, nails were used instead of wooden pegs. Where nails were used, on the under side of the desks there is a groove hollowed out, of the width of the bracket, averaging three-eighths of an inch deep, so that the brackets are let into the under side of the desks. This method of fixing is only found at the extreme west end of the library. It occurs in the half-press L (plan, p. 153) and the two adjacent presses on the north side, and in the two corresponding presses on the south side. But curiously enough

SEAT AND DESKS, CORPUS

the half-press K on the south side has pegs, while the west half H of the third press from the west has nails. For a long time I was greatly perplexed to account for this phenomenon, till it flashed upon me that only sixteen presses were provided for in the original contract. Pegging is in general a more primitive way of fixing wood than nailing; and the desks fixed by nails and grooves are evidently of later date. Moreover, since the library was originally only 62 feet long, these all stand in the added portion. In one of the added presses pegs were used, so perhaps the additions were not made all at one time. [See also p. 165.]

The second stage in the development of the desks was the addition of hinges. There are scars corresponding to the straps of hinges on the face-ends and wall-ends in the same position as at Hereford and elsewhere, with corresponding scars on the top of the desks. The nail-holes are concealed by a thin piece of veneer let into the woodwork; but in one case at the wall-end they are exposed, and it is clear that the hinges were nailed on to the surface, as originally at the Bodleian, not sunk into the wood as at Westminster Abbey.

At this stage the desks had not yet been divided in the middle; for only a desk which ran the whole length of the press could have been attached by hinges fixed to the two ends of the press. Moreover, the line which at present divides each desk into two frequently cuts through old peg-holes. Originally, therefore (as still at Hereford, Jesus and Westminster), the desk was undivided.

The position of the pegs shows that, when the desks were fixed, the space between the back of the desk and the front of the bottom shelf—the "slot" through which the chains passed—was of an average width of $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The width of the slot does not seem to have been altered when the desks were first hinged; this can be inferred from the position of the desk-hooks which hold the desks up when lifted. These hooks are unlike those at Hereford, the Bodleian and Jesus; and are only found at the wall-end. They are hung side-

ways from a staple driven into the edge of the wall-end, and they fit into an iron eye-hole on the edge of the desk. There are no traces that there were ever any such hooks at the face-end. This is additional evidence that the desks were originally undivided, as only such a desk could be kept in position by a hook at one end.

The third stage in the alteration of the desks was not reached, I imagine, until some time in the nineteenth century. Then the slot between the desk and bottom shelf was filled up by a strip of timber fastened to the main fabric; the desks were sawn in half and then affixed to this strip of timber by ordinary door-hinges. By this time shelves for books had been fitted below the desks; it was, therefore, a convenience to have short light desks which could be easily lifted to get at the books underneath.

The presses at Corpus are only 7 ft. 6 in. in length as against 9 ft. 9 in. at Hereford; the shelves, therefore, being shorter did not require so much in the way of intermediate support between the ends of the presses. At Hereford the bottom shelf is held up by two plain and heavy-looking intermediate ground-supports resting on the floor; these support the shelf immediately under the two uprights which divide the shelves into three equal *partitiones* (see illustration, p. 51). At Corpus, though the presses are divided into the same number of *partitiones*, there is only one ground-support. This is central, and therefore does not come directly under either of the uprights between the *partitiones*, but props up the bottom shelf half-way between the two. These ground-supports have been boarded in, so that one cannot see their original shape[1]; but the half-press V has the support exposed, and is of the same ornamentally curved pattern as those in *Duke Humphrey* and Merton (pp. 205, 143). It may be presumed that the concealed supports are similarly shaped. I infer that they were copied from the Bodleian, and date from the first raising of the presses. The top shelf then added

[1] The purpose of this, as at Chetham College, was no doubt to obtain support for a new shelf below the desk (p. 270).

would (when loaded with folios) add considerably to the weight on the uprights between the *partitiones*. The bottom shelf has not only to support the books which rest upon it, but also so much of the weight on the upper shelves as is carried by these uprights. Even with the original two shelves a central support to prevent the bottom one from sagging would have been structurally desirable; with three it would be essential.

I may conclude with mentioning a little discovery which was reached by the President and myself conjointly.

On the bottom shelf of the half-press A at the south-east corner of the room there was once a curious little cupboard about 4½ inches wide. One side was formed by the wall-end, the other by an upright partition which has left its scar on the shelf. The door—20¼ inches by 4½ inches—with a lock and two beautiful hinges—is at present lying on the shelf. The purpose of this tiny cupboard is a matter for conjecture. It would just hold one large folio, and was perhaps made for books of special value. At any rate it has the interest that always goes with rarity and quaintness.

A Later Discovery

The MS. of my discussion of the Corpus Library up to this point went to the printer at the beginning of the Easter vacation. But I have decided to leave unaltered what I had written—save for the addition of footnotes and references, and the correction of verbal errors or obscurities.

During the vacation I found out the relation between the Bodleian and Hereford. Reflection on the connection between these libraries and Corpus convinced me that the cornices at Corpus were copied, with further elaboration, from those in *Duke Humphrey*. Since I had argued that the heightening of the presses at Corpus was not later than 1604, it looked as if the cornices must belong to that date. I therefore wrote to the President, enclosing the proofs, and asking him to examine the College accounts for 1604, to see if there were

any entries which would bear out this conjecture. He replied (April 28):

> Your divination is as correct as Adams' about Neptune: I looked at 1604 and there is abundant detail, which will require a detailed search.

The accounts show that during 1604, and the year following, a reconstruction of the library was carried out. The raising of the presses and the new cornices are dated by the item, under the heading *Impensae Novae Structurae*, 1604:

> To Key for makeing the crestes and arcketraues of the whole librarie at 3^d the foote iii^l $iiii^s$.

The same account shows that sixteen new locks for the presses were paid for this year. A further sixteen appear in the following year in an account headed *Impensae dispensatorii et bibliothecae*. The items which follow are selected from one or other of these two accounts:

> To the smith for 16 locks for the sells in the librarie at 6^s a locke [1604] iv^l xvi^s.
>
> To the same smith of Warwickshire for 20 dosen of chaines at 4^s 6^d the dosen $iiii^l$ x^s.
>
> Sixtene lockes and hapses for the sels in the librarie at 6^s 8^d the locke having paied before on the old book 52^s [1605] $liiii^s$ $viii^d$.
>
> For xi dosen off chaines at 4^s and 6^d $xlix^s$ vi^d.

The word "sel" I have not found used elsewhere for presses; it is, I take it, derived from the Latin *sedilia* (Murray suggests *sella*), which is frequently so used.

Another entry reveals the purpose of the tiny cupboard, the discovery of which was mentioned at the end of the last section:

> Locke and hinges for the statute book ii^s.

At St. John's the statute book was ordered to be chained in the library. At Corpus a minute cupboard was provided.

By another set of entries, under the year 1605, is fixed the date of

the catalogue frames which, as in Bodley's letters, are styled "tables":

ffouretene boltes and loopes for the tables in the librarie	vii^s x^d.
ffouretene tables at the ends of the librarie sels	lii^s iiii^d.
foure lesser at thends of the halfe sels	iiii^s.
A quier of paper and 8 sheetes for the tables in the librarie	2^s.

The Hereford catalogue frames are an exact replica of those at Corpus. As Thornton was Canon of Christ Church, which is next door to Corpus, he probably arranged with the same joiner to supply him with a set for Hereford. But at Hereford the half-frames are of the same relative weight as the whole frames; at Corpus they are much lighter—and, therefore, cost less than one third of the sum paid for a whole "table".

It will be noted that catalogue frames are supplied for fourteen whole presses and four half-presses. That number of presses and half-presses would require thirty-two locks—which is the number of new locks supplied at this time. It appears, then, that since 1517 the two presses GH, NO, had been added; so the room must have lengthened —probably the "closet" at the end of the library had been thrown into the main room. At present there are eighteen whole presses. The additional space, which now constitutes the two westernmost bays of the library, was probably gained in 1604, for on the plaster ornamentation over the doorway into the President's study there is, worked into the pattern, the date 1604. But as there were then only fourteen presses, it must have formed a kind of lobby. This necessary inference led me to re-examine this end of the library. I found that the four westernmost whole presses differed from the rest in the fact that they had never required patching, for they were originally made of the full height. On the wall-ends of all the other presses (on the face-end the corresponding join is concealed by a strip of moulding and a rod-socket) the horizontal join showing the original height is plain; on these four presses there is no such join, the planks from floor to cornice are unjointed pieces. These presses, therefore, were

added at some date later than 1605; when they were added, the half-presses (which show jointing) were moved back against the west wall. I noticed, also, for the first time, that the sills of the windows in the last two bays differ from those in the rest of the library; this fits in with the other evidence that they were not in any sense part of the library before 1604.

The existence of a kind of lobby at the end of the library explains an entry under *Impensae Internae* for 1605:

> ffor silke riband and makeing the curtaines for the pictures in the librarie x^s iiii^d.

In the library as it now is, there is no place where a picture could be hung without concealing highly ornamented plaster-work. It is known that a portrait of the founder was at one time in the library. This, with others, was evidently in the lobby which now forms the two westernmost bays.

Presumably in this lobby there also stood some of what J. W. Clark describes as "wheel desks" (*op. cit.*, p. 304 ff.). These were revolving desks fitted on a stem consisting of a large screw to raise or lower them—rather like a modern music stool.

> To goodman Key for setting the screwes in the librarie xviii^d.

The desks which Clark speaks of were all circular; but at Westminster Abbey there is a square peaked-topped example; others dating from the founding of the library exist at Chetham College.

A great deal of the work done is of an unspecified character. There are several entries of payments to Pereson: "more for worke in the librarie". He is also paid a sum "for the mouldes of the worke in the librarie"; this looks like a reference to the fine ornamental plaster-work (illustration, p. 157). There is an entry for making the window from the library into the chapel; another for "paynting the barres in the windowe betweene the librarie and chappel". It would seem, however, that the gallery looking into the Chapel, which forms the President's pew, is a further development carried out at some later

date; for the window into the Chapel seems to have been glazed and to have been of an area of 61 square feet—much less than the present opening from the pew into the chapel:

> 61 foote of Normandie glasse for the windowe in thend of the librarie xlv^{s} x^{d}.

The doorway by which the library is now entered from the north-east corner may be older; but the door was made in 1605:

> 140 great nayls for the librarie dore vi^{s} iiii^{d}.
> Hinges for the librarie dore viii^{s} vi^{d}.
> A locke and 37 keyes for the librarie dore lv^{s}.

Later entries are for three, and one, keys. It is an interesting fact that as many as forty persons were allowed a key to the library at this date. The heads of the "great nails" mentioned are nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ inch square.

The windows seem to have been fitted with casements at this time:

> Eightene double casementes for the librarie windowes iv^{l} x^{s}.
> ffive casementes for the windowes in thend of librarie xl^{s}.

This raises in my mind the suspicion that, even at this late date, the windows were not glazed but fitted with lattice and shutters. That this was once the case in the library at Magdalen may perhaps be inferred from the elaborate instructions in the Founder's statutes[1] about shutting windows in the library and the penalty prescribed for delinquents. The statutes imply that a number of windows in the library would regularly be opened. But the library was unwarmed, and "the fresh-air craze" had not yet developed. This wholesale opening of windows is explicable only if the shutter had to be opened in order to let in light enough to read. There were, no doubt, glazed windows in the Old Library at Trinity (=Durham College), and earlier still in Cobham's Library; but the accounts of these may refer only to the large windows at the ends of the central avenues of these libraries.

[1] *Statutes, printed by order of the Oxford University Commission of 1854* (p. 61).

The accounts are rich in small details, which throw light on the practice of other libraries as well as that of Corpus.

While fresh books are being chained and new chains bought, books (presumably deemed obsolete) are being unchained:

> To Syllys men for 21 dayes worke in chayning and vnchaining of bookes xxi^s^.

Two other payments of 1s. each are made, to a smith and a cutler respectively, for taking off chains from books.

Another entry shows that the red colour on the rods, still preserved in the Hereford library, represents a general usage:

> To Sampson for the colouring of 8 dosen yron barres for the librarie sels viii^s^.

The clips for fastening the chains to the books are at Corpus spoken of as "loopes"—as also in the accounts of St. Edmund Hall. They are frequently purchased, in large or small quantities, *e.g.*:

> Seaventene dosen of loopes for the bookes in the librarie li^s^.

The tinning of the locks and hasps was probably included in the contract for their making; the following shows that the nails were also tinned:

> Two hundreth nayles fild and tinned, and set on the haspes and lockes on the sels x^s^ vi^d^.

As in other libraries, some books were fitted with clasps; others were kept from opening by strings fastened in the corresponding places on the fore-edge of the cover. Three shillings is paid for twelve pairs of clasps; also:

> Seaventene yards of tape for book strings xx^d^.

The practice of "ploughing" the fore-edge of the pages of a book and staining it (usually) a claret colour, and other such details, are illustrated by the following:

> To Midleton's executors in full discharge of his paines in colouring and dressing 299 and binding 12 bookes vii^s^ vi^d^.

To him that succeeded Midleton for colouring and dressing 344 bookes; 80 paire ofe clapses[1] and binding 13 books in folio 4 in quarto; 10 (?) in octavo, and dressing stringing and clapsing 24 newe bookes vi^{l} viii^{d}.

For cutting and colouring a [? vol.] of Chrisostom iv^{d}.

For clasping 5 bookes, for 5 receivers and one claspe xiii^{d}.

We may conjecture that the books were occasionally dusted, for there is an entry:

For rubbing the librarie xiiii^{d}.

The extent to which the imagination of the time had been impressed merely by the first instalment of Bodley's great work is illustrated by the entry (1605):

To Mr. James [the first Keeper of the Bodleian Library] for the Catalogue of the bookes in the great librarie iii^{s} iiii^{d}.

A problem of greater interest to the student of library evolution is posed by the entries concerning the locks and hasps. These suggest two perplexing questions:

(1) Why was it necessary, when the presses were raised, to have new locks? Would it not have been sufficient to supply the existing locks with a longer upper hasp—in the way I had conjectured (p. 156)?

(2) How do we account for the extraordinary rise in price between 1517 and 1604? The decline in the purchasing power of money is a quite inadequate explanation. The twelve "lockes and hingys" supplied in 1517 cost 20d. apiece. Those supplied in 1604 cost six shillings each; those supplied in 1605 cost 6s. 8d. each. That is to say, the average price was four times as high.

The locks on the Corpus presses must always have been in their present place; otherwise there would be scars of the old locks. But they *may* replace locks which were a good deal smaller. There are

[1] A philologist might note with interest the interchange of "clapse" and "claspe" in a single entry.

scars of an earlier hasp, in a position to stop the rod running along the first shelf above the desk. If, in the design of 1517, this was the only hasp, and if the lock was both smaller and simpler—owing to its only having to secure one hasp instead of two—the difference in price might be accounted for, especially if the ironwork was not tinned.

On that hypothesis, there was in the earliest form of the "two-decker" Stall-system only one rod on each side of the press; to this books on the shelf above and the shelf below were chained. There was only one rod for two desks in the two-storey Lectern-system, and at Trinity Hall; thus there seems no reason why the inventors of the Stall-system should have immediately conceived the idea that each shelf ought to have its own rod—especially as it is possible that, when it was first invented, the books lay flat on the shelves (p. 49 f.) and were therefore fewer in number. I am more and more inclined to think that the Stall-system was invented at Magdalen, and copied at Corpus, All Souls, and Merton; but that it was not imitated elsewhere until Thornton, himself an Oxford man, developed it on a grander scale at Hereford. On this view, the evolution of the iron-work becomes clear. At Magdalen and Corpus there were no rods below the desk; the designer of the west wing at Merton thought of affixing one centrally below the desk; at Hereford and at St. John's we see *alternative* developments of this Merton idea. Each substitutes two rods for the one. At St. John's this is done by the device of lengthening the hasp and fixing the lock below the desk; at Hereford it is effected by adding a lower hasp, and providing the lock with two bolts and two staple holes, so that it will lock two hasps. If so, Thornton (or his architect at Hereford) was the inventor, not merely of the three-decker press and the hinged desk and desk-hook, but also of the double hasp. All these were reproduced in Duke Humphrey's Library; thence they spread to practically every chained library on a large scale subsequently built in England.

III

THE OLD LIBRARY, ALL SOULS

THE Old Library at All Souls belongs to the original plan of the founder, who started to build in 1438. The building of the great Codrington Library began in 1716, and it was actually finished (through the efforts of the famous lawyer, Blackstone) in 1756; but it was ready for books before 1744. About that date[1] the old library was turned into a set of Fellows' rooms, described by a contemporary as

> fitted up in a very elegant manner in the Gothic taste, and deservedly esteemed one of the curiosities of the town.

Perhaps at a later date the library, plus the room which adjoins it to the south, formed two sets of rooms. But in the latter part of the last century the intrusive partitioning was removed, and it was restored to its original size. It is now used as a lecture-room.

THE OLD PRESS-ENDS

By a piece of unexpected good fortune the Fellow who fitted it up "in a very elegant manner in the Gothic taste" conceived the idea of making use of the face-ends of the old presses as part of the panelling of the room. These stand out conspicuously against the portions of the panelling which belong to the eighteenth-century Gothic, so that there is no difficulty in identifying them at a glance. The face-ends of these presses differ in their ornamentation from anything else of the kind in Oxford; so an examination of them is germane to the subject of this book, although the room is no longer used as a library.

In all, there survive the face-ends of fourteen whole presses and of two half-presses. Of the whole-face-ends eight are placed so as to form the panelling of the wall-space between the windows, and

[1] C. Grant Robertson, *All Souls College*, p. 186.

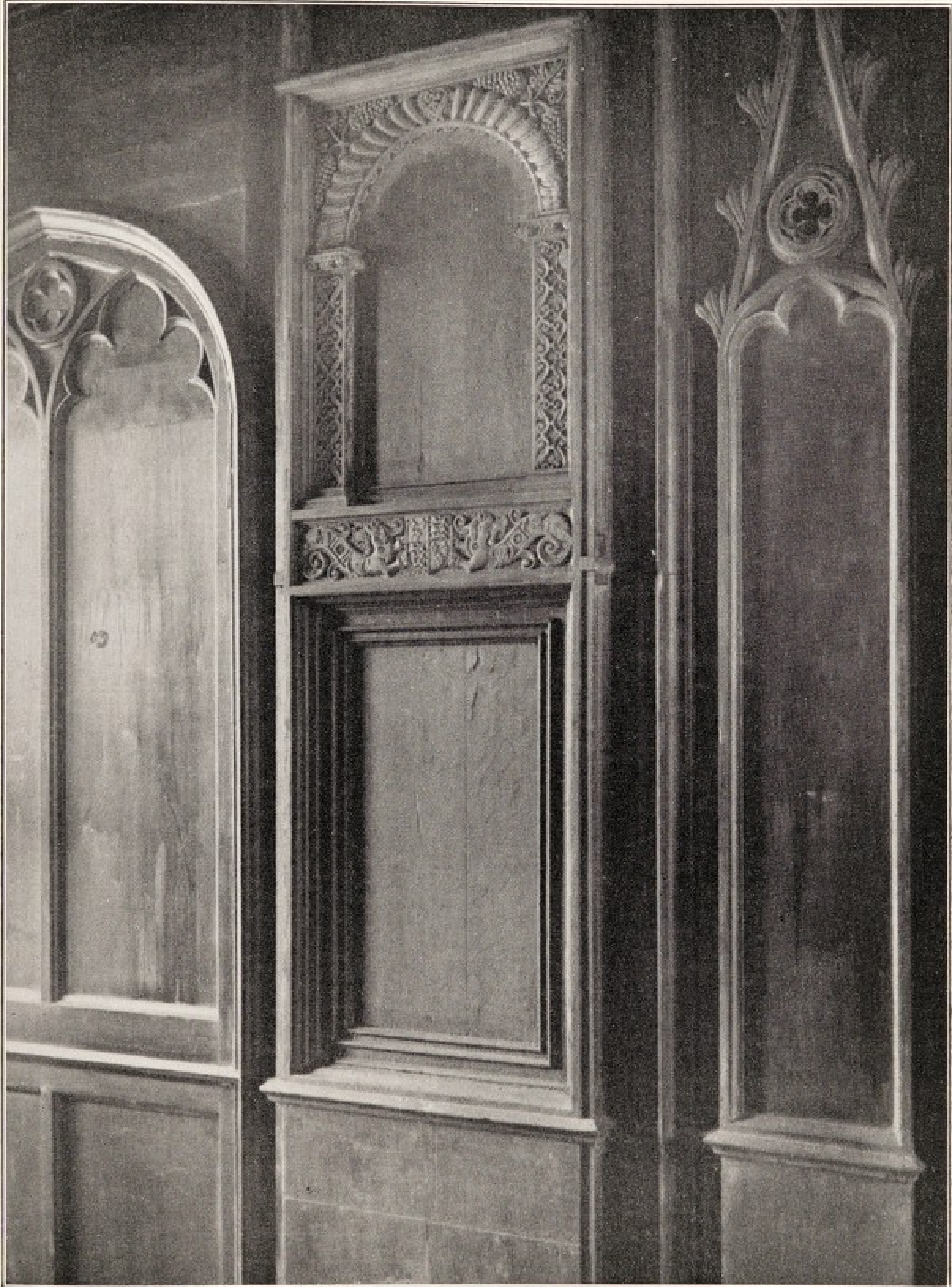
the two half-face-ends are in a similar position at the north end of the room; that is to say, the ornamented face-ends are fixed to the wall in the position originally occupied by the unornamented wall-ends which corresponded to them. But six of the face-ends, instead of being thus placed, have been worked into the panelling at the ends of the room, in the way shown in the illustration.

When we examine the face-ends themselves it at once becomes evident that at All Souls, as in most of the libraries studied in this book, we can distinguish between original and later work. In every one, about $7\frac{3}{4}$ in. below the lowest panel (see illustration opposite), and about 18 in. above the plinth on which they stand, is a transverse joint. This shows that in order to accommodate more books the presses were heightened by that amount. Instead, however, of putting the addition at the top of the old work, as was done at Corpus, St. John's and Trinity, the addition was made at the floor end—as has been done to the dwarf bookcases at St. John's, Cambridge. The reason, both at All Souls and St. John's, Cambridge, for putting the addition at the bottom is the ornamental panels on the face-ends; it was aesthetically impossible to put 18 inches of plain wood above these, as was done to the face-ends above mentioned; it *was* possible to raise the ornamented part by fixing a plain piece below.

The oblong panel, 12 inches high, above that with the carved arch, is also an addition—possible because it could be coloured and carry titles in gilt. So are the two projecting horizontal mouldings. Thus the original presses, excluding the cornice, were only 6 ft. $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. above the plinth—which probably takes the place of an older foundation-beam. It follows that here, as at Corpus and St. John's, the presses were originally "two-deckers".

A College Order of 1665 directs that "the shelves are to be enlarged to the receiving the books of Mr. Digs". The heightening of the presses, therefore, may reasonably be dated in that year.

The ornamented plaster-work at the south end of the room descends at two points which evidently mark the lines of the central



ELIZABETHAN FACE-END IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY GOTHIC PANELLING, ALL SOULS

avenue between the presses. We may infer that the original length of the presses was approximately 7 feet.

Along the edges of the face-ends there is at present a strip of moulding. Most of this is soft wood; on some, however, it is of oak. But the oak portion never extends below the panel which contains the arched moulding; and it is attached by nails, of which the heads have been punched in and puttied. This looks as if some old oak moulding—supplemented with deal moulding made to match it—was nailed over the face-ends to conceal the scars left by the removal of the desks and of the ironwork required for chaining.

The cornice which now tops the panelling all round the room is mainly oak; but this has been eked out with soft wood, which suggests an adaptation of an older cornice by the "Gothic" artist. It is pieced together from lengths, usually with mitred ends, which in no case exceed 7 ft. 1 in. in length. Dentils of identical pattern go back to Elizabethan times. They are found, for example, at Elmore Court, Glos., on a chimney-piece not later than 1574. The inference that in the oak portions of the cornice at All Souls we see the remains of that of the presses will not seem precarious in the light of what follows.

The Chimney-pieces

The room is 47 ft. 6 in. long by 19 ft. 7 in. wide. On the west side are eight windows; but on the east side there are only six—the places of two windows being occupied by fireplaces. If the outside of the library be looked at from the Warden's quadrangle, the line of an original window, which has been blocked up at the back of the southern of the two fireplaces, is distinctly visible. At the back of the other fireplace a chimney has been built out, and the drip-courses are neatly carried round this. But the moulding over the adjoining window shows a join, and the "plinth", so to speak, of the chimney does not fit that of the main building; this fireplace, therefore, is also an addition, though not necessarily of the same

date. Moreover, no other ancient library has a fireplace; indeed, most living-rooms were without them in the Middle Ages.

A further reason for supposing that the fireplaces are not original is the existence of the six face-ends of the old presses worked into the panelling at the two ends of the library. The rest of the face-ends are on the wall-space between the windows in the position originally occupied by their corresponding wall-ends. Two of these wall-spaces are bare, presumably because a partition ran across the room here; four of the wall-spaces are occupied by the wooden pilasters of the present ornamental chimney-pieces. That is to say, the number of face-ends surviving exactly equals the number of wall-spaces between the windows, if we assume that originally there were no fireplaces.

Hearne's account of the library,[1] which he visited twice in 1724, fits in with this conclusion. He gives a list of the subjects in the stained glass in each of the windows. There were kings on the west side—including John of Gaunt, who is quaintly described as *rex Hispaniarum*. On the east side were saints—including Archbishop Chichele, the founder of the College. This ancient and interesting glass can now be seen in the ante-Chapel; but for our present purpose what matters is the evidence afforded as to the number of windows in the library. Hearne gives expressly and in detail the figures in the glass of eight windows on the east side and seven on the west. Since he found eight windows on the east side, the fireplaces were not yet there. As he only describes seven windows on the west side, it may be presumed that the painted glass in one of the windows on this side had been destroyed. Probably the destroyed window portrayed a saint who was specially obnoxious to the Tudor monarchy—Thomas à Becket, for example. During the Reformation period pressure was again and again put upon All Souls to destroy or deface articles associated with anti-Reformation sympathies.

[1] *Oxf. Hist. Soc.*, L., pp. 222 and 225. I owe the reference to Dr. H. H. E. Craster.

On either side of the top of the northern chimney-piece are half-moons carrying a large lion's head—one of them holding a spray of acorns. Smaller lion's heads with acorns below appear on two of the press-ends (see drawing opposite); so far as ornamentation is concerned, the presses go in pairs, which doubtless stood on opposite sides of the central avenue. The width of the presses averages $22\frac{3}{8}$ inches; the diameter of the half-moons is $22\frac{3}{4}$ inches. I owe to my colleague, Mr. E. C. Ratcliff, the suggestion that they were originally pediments above the face-ends. Half-moon pediments, though with less elaborate carving, occur at Merton (illustration, p. 137).

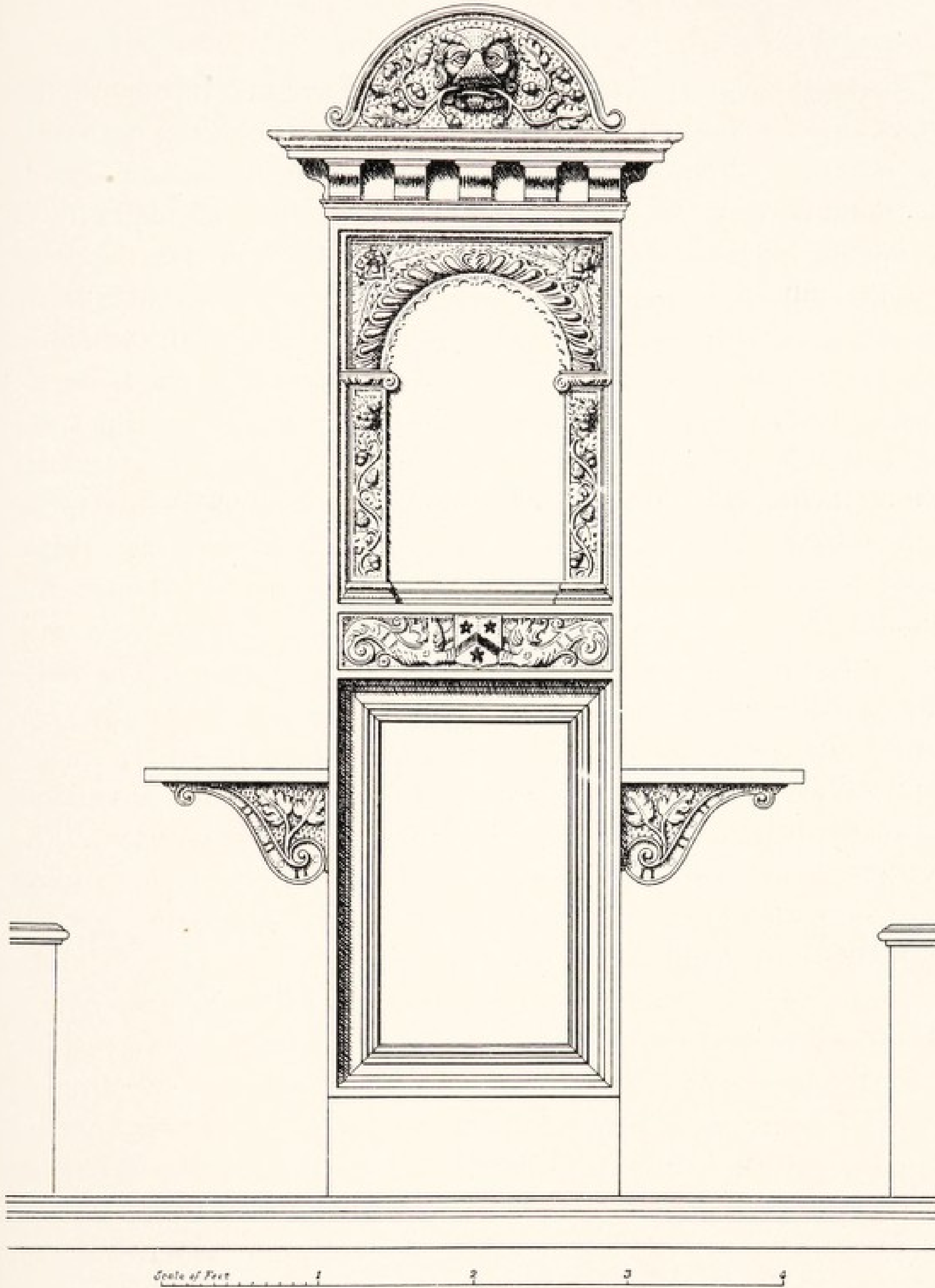
The top centre of the chimney-piece is made up, as Mr. Ault detected, of four carved brackets arranged round a plain panel of later date. These brackets, which are $12\frac{7}{8}$ inches on the longer side, evidently once supported the desks affixed to the presses—which at All Souls seem to have been flat.

The pilasters on either side of the fireplace look like remains of the original doorway (the present doorway is eighteenth century); the arched panels may have formed part of the door.

In the southern chimney-piece most of the work forms a unity—a handsome piece of Italian renaissance work. But immediately above the fireplace is a horizontal strip about $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, of a different character. On close examination this reveals itself as an intricate amalgam, pieced together from a half-moon with lion's head, like those over the other fireplace, with six more of identically the same carved brackets—all slightly mutilated so as to make them fit in.

It appears, therefore, that besides the original face-ends of the presses, there are worked into the panelling and chimney-pieces of the present room examples of the cornice, pediments and ornamental brackets which supported the desks. Thus in elevation the presses can be completely restored, as in the pen drawing opposite.

And this beautiful woodwork was in a room magnificently ceiled. No wonder Hearne found the library "a very pretty place".



ALL SOULS. PRESS REASSEMBLED

The Date

Obviously presses so ornamented do not form part of the original furnishing of the library, *c.* 1443. Moreover, though the face-ends are those of a library fitted on the Stall-system, the dimensions of the building make it reasonably certain that it was originally fitted up on the Lectern-system. The wall-space between the windows averages only 19 inches; the original stone can be seen if the shutters are opened. Again, the width from centre to centre of the windows is only 6 feet. This, as we have seen before, is ample for the Lectern-system, but not nearly enough for the Stall-system. Deducting from the face-ends the width of the moulding added later, they are just over 22 inches wide; this is the minimum to accommodate two folios back-to-back. And there would have been just room for single benches and narrow desks like those at Merton; for, though the distance from centre to centre of the windows at Merton is only 5 ft. 6 in., the face-ends there are only 16 to 17 inches. The wall-ends at All Souls—instead of being narrower (as universally elsewhere) than the wall-space between the windows—are 3 inches wider. This is inelegant; but it was the best they could do in adapting to the Stall-system a room built for the Lectern-system. The eighteenth-century adapter got rid of the inelegance by adding shutters which are so splayed out that the wall-space now *appears* to be the same width as the press-ends.

When was the Stall-system introduced at All Souls? We have a date for a general restoration of the library. The handsome ceiling —the finest in any college library in Oxford—displays the arms of the University and of fifteen colleges. St. John's, which was founded in 1555, is included; Jesus College is not. Jesus was given its charter by Queen Elizabeth (who insisted it should be styled as her foundation) on June 27, 1571. The ceiling of the library, therefore, can be dated between those years. We also know that in 1568 a very large number of books came to the college by the bequest of David

Pole. It is a natural inference that the substitution of the Stall-system for the Lectern-system was prompted by the necessity of doing something to cope with this accession of books; and that the new ceiling was a preliminary to a general "modernization" of the library. In that case the presses can hardly be later than 1572. The vine pattern and arch ornament on some of the presses resembles that in the old warden's house; this was fitted up by Hovenden, who became Warden in 1571.

Chains

Fellows of the College who had worked on the Archives told me that they did not recollect any allusion to chaining books.

But, feeling that the question of the chains ought to be probed further, I obtained permission to examine documents in the archives and old books in the Codrington Library under the guidance of Mr. R. Pares, Fellow of the College.

Our search revealed a number of books with scars on the fore-edge, but which could not be proved by certain evidence to have been in the Old Library after its refitting about 1570. At last the library assistant produced a copy of the first edition of Beaumont and Fletcher, with the date 1647 on the title-page. This bears scars of chaining in the same place as the other books; in it is a MS. note saying it was presented to the College on February 27, 1646 [= 1647 new style]. This book therefore was issued a month or so before the date on its title-page—a not unusual practice. But the date when it was given to the College makes it impossible that it was chained in any other library before it reached All Souls; it is, therefore, conclusive evidence that in 1647 the books in the Old Library at All Souls were chained.

The archives yielded no less important information, mainly in the shape of a vellum MS., damaged at the bottom edge by fire.[1] Mixed

[1] Cf. C. Trice Martin, *Catalogue of the Archives of All Souls College*, p. 416.

up with various inventories of College possessions, this contains several catalogues of the library.

One of these catalogues is in two parts—the first roughly written, the second in a fine professional hand. The first part (fol. 48 ff.) which contains the books on Law, bears the date, in Hovenden's own writing, "Mgr. Hovenden custode 1575". As other lists in the same volume are similarly signed and dated, the implication is not that the catalogue was made, but that its contents were checked by the Warden, at the date appended. The woodwork, then, may be a little earlier, but cannot be later, than 1575. The second part of the catalogue contains Theology and Arts, and is dated by the scribe himself 1576. As the presses in the first part of the catalogue clearly run from right to left, it is evident that it was the west side of the library which was given to the Law. It implies a half-press and seven whole presses; each press has two shelves. The catalogue, therefore, confirms the evidence of the dimensions that the library was fitted on the Stall-system at the "two-decker" stage. The east side (Theology and Arts) is the same, except that books are only given for one side of the second press; the other side may have been empty, or it may have been a cupboard press. Thus there were presses against what are now the jambs of the fireplaces; hence the pilasters now here must have performed some such function as that suggested above.

A small paper volume in the Archives opens with an inventory of the contents of the library in January 1627. This enumerates the Founder's picture "and a greene silke courtayne with a courtayne rodd before it"; a long white staff; two globes; "a great old mappe"; *stemma Caesarum* in a frame. Underneath is a memorandum (presumably of a regulation which the writer desired to have enforced) "to shut the books in the library whereof many especially law books lye open longe". Books in large numbers cannot lie open except on a table or desk; as the inventory does not include a table for readers, this is evidence that (as inferred above) the presses had the usual desks for readers attached.

The Mediaeval Lecterns

Most of the catalogues in the vellum MS. above-mentioned belong to the period when the library was fitted on the Lectern-system. From a comparison of three of these, certain inferences suggest themselves as to the character of the lecterns. Dr. H. H. E. Craster, Keeper of the Western MSS. at the Bodleian, was so kind as to inspect the MS. and give me his expert opinion as to the dating of the Latin hands in the different documents.

One catalogue (fol. 28 ff.), written in a small hand of the period 1450–80, shows a half-lectern at each end of the room (*primus*, and *ultimus*, *dextus*) and seven lecterns with a desk on each side—as is implied by the occurrence in each entry of approximately the same number of books under the same divisions with the heading *In altera parte*. The books on the half-lecterns at the two ends are divided into two divisions, *superius* and *inferius*; the whole-lecterns have these divisions on *both* sides. The number of books under *superius* is usually five or six, occasionally as many as eight; the number of books under *inferius* is always two or three more than the number under *superius* in the same lectern. This suggests that *superius* was the desk, *inferius* a flat shelf below it. For room must be left on a desk for at least one of its own books to lie open, and also for a book brought up from a shelf below; the shelf below could hold two or three more books of the same size.

On the second folio of the vellum MS. is another undated catalogue, the handwriting of which Dr. Craster assigns to the period 1550–60. This seems to imply that the lecterns, like those of Lincoln Cathedral, had a narrow shelf above the desk, which though not originally meant for books was now being used for that purpose. On each *dextus* (a variant of the ordinary *descus*, used in all the All Souls Catalogues) the books are usually divided into three sections, labelled respectively *superius*, *in media parte*, *inferius*; some have also *subter*. The *dextus* (after the first, which would have been a half-

lectern) have books "*in altera parte*", *i.e.* they had books on both sides. But the "other side" lacks the division *superius*; the divisions here begin with *in media parte*. This looks as if in this catalogue (*superius*) referred to a shelf above the desk, like that at Lincoln, only wide enough for one row of books; *in media parte* will then be the desk of the lectern; the shelf below is *inferius*. The division *subter* may be an additional shelf, or possibly a chest (p. 56), introduced later to cope with the increase of books; it is evidence that, even before David Pole's benefaction, the library was overcrowded.

In yet another catalogue in the same volume (fol. 24 ff.)—written in a minute hand which might be anything from 1560–80—the division *superius* is found on both sides of the lectern. This looks as if the top shelf had been widened, so as to cope with a row of books on each side.

The evidence, such as it is, that the All Souls lecterns, like those at Lincoln Cathedral, had originally a narrow shelf above the desk, does not carry with it the corollary that the seats at All Souls were also on the Lincoln model. This is ruled out by the window spacing; the distance from centre to centre of the windows is 2 ft. narrower at All Souls than it is at Lincoln. The narrow wall-space between the windows at All Souls makes it possible that the lecterns also were narrow, and separated by back-to-back seats.

Tudor Decoration

To conclude, to the student of the evolution of library structure, the Old Library of All Souls has another interest. In no other Oxford library do the presses show the influence of the style of decoration developed in Tudor England under Italian influences, to which the name "Jacobean" is too frequently given. So far as the decoration is concerned, the next stage of the development seen at All Souls is to be found, not in the Oxford libraries which follow it, but in the elaborately-panelled presses of Clare and St. John's, Cambridge.

IV

ST. JOHN'S

Origin

The library at St. John's, Oxford, as at Merton, is on two sides of a quadrangle—the two wings being separated by a vestibule in which are no (old) book-presses. The north wing, an addition to the original library, was built and furnished by Archbishop Laud in 1636. Laud describes its inspection by Charles I. (*Remains*, ii., p. 103):

> The Musick began, and they had a fine short Song fitted for them, as they ascended the Stairs. . . . They passed through the old into the new Library, built by my self, where the King, the Queen, and the Prince Elector dined at one table, which stood cross at the upper end. And Prince *Rupert* with all the Lords and Ladies present. . . .

Unfortunately it was completely gutted in the nineteenth century, and Laud's cases were replaced by modern Gothic substitutes. No wonder his ghost now walks there more seldom than of old. Happily the *Old Library* escaped the vandal invasion.

The foundation stone of the *Old Library* was laid in 1596, two years before Sir Thomas Bodley undertook the refitting of Duke Humphrey's Library; and in 1602, the year his library was opened to the public, St. John's bought sixteen dozen chains for the books it then possessed. Very surprising, then, is the difference which at once strikes the eye between the woodwork of the two libraries. The presses at St. John's—of which there are eight and one half-press on each side of the room—are very much higher and wider; and they are topped with a classical cornice, and a pediment of a type that it would be difficult to date earlier than 1630. Nevertheless, it does not seem to have occurred to anyone (even to J. W. Clark) who has written on the College buildings to raise the question how far the woodwork is in its original state.

Anthony Wood states that the great Hall, which by that time was all that remained of Beaumont Palace, "was, in the year 1596,

chiefly demolished and conveyed to St. John's College . . . to make an enlargement for their library". As mentioned above, Beaumont Palace, notable as the birthplace of Richard I., was given to the White Friars (Carmelites) by Edward II.—in fulfilment of a vow to the Virgin made by him in 1314, when hard pressed by Robert Bruce in the retreat from Bannockburn—and at the dissolution

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THE LIBRARY, ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD, LOOKING EAST

of the monasteries suffered the usual fate. The name survives in the modern Beaumont Street, opposite to the College. A MS. still preserved in the College states that there was brought "1000 cart-loads of stone, tymber etc. from the Howse of the White Friars"—including no doubt the massive timber of the seats—the most indubitably ancient and original feature in the room.

A closer examination will reveal the presses as also ancient; I shall show later that in their original state they belong to an earlier type

than those in *Duke Humphrey*. Their primitive character is disguised by their height having been raised about 3 ft. 6 in.; by the pediment and urns of a later date; by the thick coating of dull brown paint by which they were covered in 1745; by modern shelves (see illustration) fitted on to the face-ends (as in *Duke Humphrey*)—locks and hasps being previously removed.

The Chains

The librarian, Mr. Poole, produced for my inspection a small "dump" of the old chains. There are twenty-seven in perfect condition, and enough half or three-quarter chains broken in the middle to make up nine more complete chains; there are besides a few which are on loan at the Ashmolean Museum. The fortunate preservation of what amounts to as many as forty chains was due to the fact that some ingenious person had conceived the idea of using them to suspend lamps from the ceiling. The links vary in length and weight, but are mostly of the same character as those of the chains with the longer links at Hereford; and, like these, were once covered with a thin coat of tin; and all have a swivel in the middle. One book—a copy of the Statutes—is still attached to a chain; but this chain has no swivel, and a shorter link of somewhat heavier metal; it is attached to the bookcase, not by a rod, but by a staple.

The Seats

The weight and width of the timber, and the character of the workmanship, attest a high antiquity. The uneven lines of rails and seats show that they were not sawn and planed, but cleft from the oak trunk, and then smoothed with an adze. The benches vary in width; some are as much as 15⅜ inches inside, few are as narrow as 14 inches. The width of the seat-ends varies from 2 feet to 2 ft. 2 in.; and the place of the shoulder of the curve and its contour differs, not only from seat-end to seat-end, but sometimes even on the same end (see first seat in illustration, p. 187). The knobs also

differ in size. Some of the benches look as if they were originally fitted in positions other than those in which they now are. This would be readily explicable if some of them had been benches or tables when at Beaumont Palace. The seats, however, between the presses (marked C D and V W in the plan) at the far end, are of lighter weight and smoother workmanship than the rest; the seat-ends are only 1 ft. 10¾ in. wide and the benches 10¾ inches. Of this I shall offer an explanation shortly. Some of the seats at the west end have cupboards underneath; but these do not look original.

The press-ends and seat-ends, as at Merton and Corpus, are mortised into a foundation beam. For a reason which I cannot even guess at, the spacing of the windows, and also the interval between them, is at St. John's much greater than is either usual or, one would suppose, convenient. The average distance between the centres of the windows is 9 ft. 7 in., as compared with 8 feet at Corpus. As a result it would not have been possible for a person, sitting on a reader's seat aligned to the centre of the window, to be in contact with the desk in front of him, had the presses, desks and seats been of the normal width. This explains the unusual width of the presses, which average 2 ft. 9½ in. This extra width is in itself of no use. The usual 2 ft. 2 in. gives ample space for two rows of folios back-to-back. Moreover, before the presses were raised in height, it would have lent them a squat appearance. Also, it has necessitated a feature not found elsewhere. In order to prevent the books slipping back too far, horizontal boards about 7 inches wide are fixed, edge upwards, about 1 foot back from the front of the shelves. But even with these extra wide presses, the average distance between the presses is still 7 ft. 3 in. as compared with 6 feet at Corpus and Jesus, or 6 ft. 7 in. at the Bodleian. To fill up this space, the desks are made wider, and the slot between desk and press is 2½ inches; this no doubt is also the explanation of the great width of the seats, the benches of some of these being as much as 15⅜ inches wide. Curiously enough, the wall-space between the last

PRESSES AND SEATS, ST. JOHN'S, OXFORD

two windows is considerably narrower; this, obviously, is the reason why the seats between the last two presses are narrower, not only than the other seats at St. John's, but than the average of other libraries.

In the centre of the face-ends, about 2½ inches above the third shelf, there are (filled up) holes 1½ inch in diameter. These probably indicate the position of the attachment of catalogue frames, removed to make room for the modern shelves which, as shewn in the illustration, almost cover the face-ends.

The Heightening of the Presses

I come now to the evidence that the height of the presses has been raised. The ends of every bookcase, 6 ft. 8 in. above the foundation beam, exhibit the line of a transverse join (level with the bottom of the cornice of the modern bookcases fixed on to the face-end). On the front edge of the face-end of one press this is visible in the illustration (p. 187). Above this join the timber is in most cases thinner by from a quarter to half an inch; and the divisions between the planks above the join rarely correspond with those below. It follows that at St. John's, as at Corpus, the original presses were only of a height to hold two shelves for folio volumes.

There is another transverse join 1 ft. 6 in. higher up the press-ends; this is concealed on the outside by the thin bead which can be seen in the illustration just below the cornice-board, but it is clearly visible from inside the shelves. Below the joint the grain of the timber runs vertically; above the joint it runs horizontally. This horizontal section consists of a board 10 inches wide which serves to carry the painted title indicating the main contents of the press. Whether this horizontal board was intended to act as a tie to the upright planks, or whether it represents another, still later, raising of the presses, is uncertain. It is probable that the cornice itself is original, and was afterwards elevated by the insertion of the 2 ft. 4 in. which now separates it from the top of the oldest part.

However this may be, the conclusion that the original presses were only intended for two shelves is borne out by scars which indicate the original position of the hasps and lock. The detection of such scars is less easy at St. John's than elsewhere; partly on account of the modern shelves on the face-ends, partly because, before these were set up, the old presses had been puttied and thickly painted. Nevertheless on many of the presses a close examination in a good light still reveals, through the paint, scars left by the nails which fixed the hasps—these scars being too low for a hasp which could stop the rod of the third shelf. Again, the face-end of every press exhibits a square piece of wood exactly like those employed in other libraries to fill in the gash left by the removal of the lock. This lock is in an unusual place, *i.e.* just below the rod-hole beneath the desk (these holes are stopped up on the outside, but are still open on the inside). It would appear, therefore, that originally a single hasp, fixed just above the upper shelf, sufficed both for the rod along this shelf and also for that below the desk; and it was secured by a lock just below the desk. We see here an instructive variant on the methods employed at Merton and at Corpus (cf. p. 170). The exact measurement is, therefore, worth noting. From the top of the scar left by the hasp to the lower rod-hole is 29½ inches, while to the centre of the lock-plate it is 36 inches.

At Corpus, when the height of the presses was raised, new upper hasps were supplied so that the books on the added shelf could be chained. This shelf seems to have been chained at St. John's only in one bay, *i.e.* on the half-presses S and Ω on the right and on the left as one enters the library, and on one side only of the presses that face them, *i.e.* R and Ψ. The absence elsewhere of any scar of the rod-sockets on the third shelf suggests that, with the exception just mentioned, the additional shelves, gained by raising the presses, were never fitted up for chains.

Is it possible to date the raising of the presses? The librarian tells me that the library accounts show no item during the seventeenth

or even eighteenth centuries sufficiently large to cover the cost of the urns and the elaborate pediments. Presumably, then, this was done at the expense of an individual benefactor. I venture the hypothesis that this benefactor was Archbishop Laud. We know he took an immense interest in the library, and himself built and furnished the new wing; and it was in the library that, in 1636, as recounted above, he entertained at dinner Charles I. and his Queen, with their attendant lords and ladies. That he should, perhaps a year or two earlier, have beautified the Old Library and increased its accommodation for books is possible, indeed actually probable.

Older Shelving and Desks

If the press-ends be examined from the inside, it will be found that, with the exceptions I shall discuss later, they bear clear traces of having once been differently shelved. About 7 inches above the present bottom shelf is a horizontal mortise-hole, long and narrow (8 in. × 1 in.), evidently intended to support a shelf. Some 20 inches higher is a similar mortise. Allowing for the width of the shelf, this would leave 19 inches clear space above the shelf supported by the lower mortise—a convenient height for a row of folios and actually that of the bottom shelf at Hereford and elsewhere. Another 22½ inches brings one to the top of the press at its original height, that is to say, room is left for another row of folios and a cornice board. I find it hard to resist the inference that these mortise-holes indicate the original position of the two shelves which were all that the presses had in their earliest form. Had the bottom shelf been originally, as it is now, practically on a level with the desks, it is inconceivable that anyone should have wished to fit an additional shelf only 7 inches higher. On the other hand, if the bottom shelf was originally 7 inches higher than it now is, it would be a perfectly rational proceeding to *lower* it (and the shelf above it) 7 inches, before or after the height of the presses was increased; for this would give room for an extra shelf at the top, as well as making it possible

to reach books on the upper shelves without the use of a step-ladder or stool.

Are we then to assume that the library of St. John's was unique in the fact that the bottom shelf was 7 inches higher than the back of the desk? To answer this question we must make a study of the desks and hinges.

The desks at St. John's, in their present state, are unlike those in any other surviving example of the chained library. In all other cases the hinge was fixed to the press by a strap 8 to 10 inches long, nailed *vertically on the front edge* of the press-end. At St. John's this is a short flap 2 inches square, and fixed *horizontally on a part of the bracket* extending about 2½ inches from the press. The "slot" between the desk and the bottom shelf is thus about 2½ inches wide; and the desks are so balanced that when raised they will remain in position, the front edge leaning against the bookcase, and do not need to be held up by desk-hooks. The other strap of the hinge, a beautiful piece of ironwork about 6¾ inches long, is on the top of the desk, as in most similar libraries.

The desks are divided into two; but the division has not been effected, as at Corpus, by a simple cut of the saw. They are separated by nearly half the width of a bracket, 5 or 6 inches wide (supported by a turned upright post, I think, of seventeenth-century character) fixed in the centre of the press. The bracket has a groove on each side, of a depth equal to the thickness of the desk; thus the top of the bracket divides the desks by a strip 2 inches wide, while the under side of its grooved edges supports their weight. Thus, if the desks were originally one, and have later on been cut in two, they must have been shortened by about 6 inches; this would have provided an opportunity for cutting off portions which bore ugly scars resulting from an earlier method of fixing. The beautiful iron hinges are of a character which might well be dated as early as 1600; though it would be more natural to date them 1620–30.

There are signs that the desks were once fixed in a different way. On the under side of many of the desks the scars of nailing may be seen, and often there can also be detected the dim outline of the woodwork to which they would seem to have been nailed. In one instance—the desk of the press lettered Q in the plan—the outline is clearly defined as that of a bracket-support; but it is the outline of a bracket shaped quite differently from that on which it now rests. This looks as if there was an earlier stage, when the desks, as once at Corpus, were nailed to the brackets. Rarely, however, are there corresponding nail-holes in the existing brackets; this suggests that the original brackets were of a different shape and character.

This evidence that the desks were once differently fixed I would relate to the evidence, given above, that the bottom shelf was originally higher by 7 inches, by the hypothesis that the desks were once fixed with a steep slope. In the Cathedral Library at Durham (see illustration, p. 286) the desks are fixed and have such a slope, which, of course, entails a ledge at the bottom edge to prevent the books slipping off. The same feature, but with an even steeper slope, is found in the small chained library at Bolton Grammar School (p. 300 f.) and at Enkhuizen. These examples, no doubt, are later than St. John's; but it must be remembered that the steeply-sloping desk, as seen in the Lectern-system (from which the Stall-system is derived), is the more primitive form. I venture, therefore, the tentative hypothesis that the desks at St. John's were originally fixed, the back edge being on a level with the then bottom shelf (*i.e.* some 7 inches higher than at present) and with a slope at about the same angle as those of the desks at Durham.

There remains to be accounted for the fact that certain presses and half-presses lack the mortise, which points to an originally higher bottom shelf. In these presses the bottom shelf must from the first have been at its present height. All, however, have the transverse join that shows they were once only 6 ft. 8 in. high. It would look as if these presses were later than the rest, but that they were

added *before* the height was raised. We infer that the lowering of the bottom shelf of the oldest presses—with which goes the present way of fixing the desks—is also earlier than the raising of the presses.

Inference is made more precarious because some, more probably all, of the press-ends have been taken to pieces and reassembled at least once. In the press lettered HI, the board which has the mortise-hole for the disused shelf, and which therefore was formerly an outside board, has changed places and is now in the centre. In the middle shelf of the same press there are notches which show that the uprights between the *partitiones* in the press in which this once stood were differently placed from those in the press where it now is. Again, although all the presses show traces of original hasps and locks, very few show scars of the iron supports of the sockets which held the rods; a probable explanation of this is that the original outer edge of the shelves has been turned inside so as to hide the wounds. A similar motive *may* have caused some interchange of the upright boards which comprise the press-ends. Occasionally a thin strip of deal has been nailed along the edge of these, presumably with the same object of concealing wounds. Add the fact that the presses have been puttied up and heavily painted, and it will be evident that the attempt to trace minor stages in successive alterations is extremely difficult.

Early Extension of the Library

Certain facts suggest that there were alterations in the library at a very early date—prior to any raising of the general height of the presses. The detailed evidence for this is illustrated by the plan overleaf; but the general reader would be well advised to omit this sub-section, and turn at once to the "Recapitulation" on p. 197.

I. At the east end:

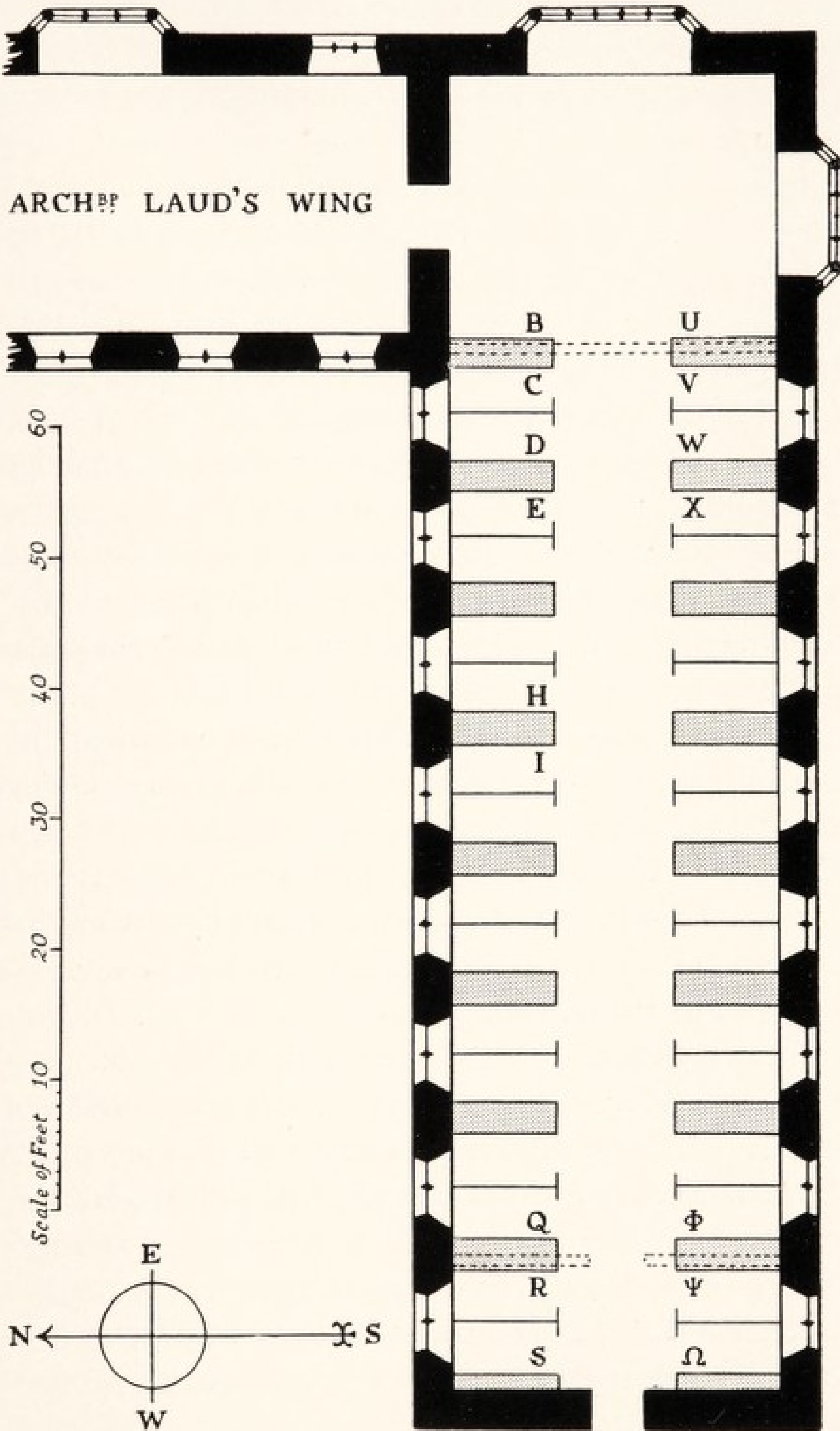
(i.) The ends of the two presses BC and UV at the far end are divided vertically down the middle by a gap ½ inch wide, up to the height of the original presses; that is to say, the gap already existed

when the presses were raised. Scars in the paint show that it was once concealed by a strip of wood 4 inches wide, nailed vertically down the middle of the press. This looks as if C and V were originally half-presses. Later on they have been turned into whole presses by having a new half-press set up back-to-back against each of them; but owing to some clumsiness the backs did not quite meet.

(ii.) This hypothesis is borne out by other facts. The foundation beam along the floor, into which (as in other libraries) the press-ends and seats are mortised, only extends to the middle of the press UV on the south side, the ends of the U half of this press resting directly on the floor. On the north side the beam, although it extends under the whole press, yet shows patching just before it reaches the press BC. The two halves of both the presses BC and UV are separated inside by a neatly-boarded partition (the boards of this *are vertical*), which evidently once formed the back to the half-presses C and V.

(iii.) The heavy beam which runs the whole length of the library on the top of the wall, forming a kind of cornice, and on which rest the rafters that support the inside of the roof, is very roughly patched over the centre of the presses BC and UV on either side of the room. The floor-boards also at this point run transversely to their old direction; the boards are not original, but their direction depends on that of beams below which is not likely to have been altered.

We seem bound to conclude that either the end wall of the library, or some partition against which the half-presses C and V stood, ran across the library at the place indicated on the plan by a dotted line. Anthony Wood states that Archbishop Laud extended the old library, as well as building the new at right angles to it. I understand, however, that there is some evidence that the extension was earlier than Laud. This view is borne out by the fact that the added half-presses B and U once had the bottom shelves 7 inches higher, and therefore must date from a very early period. At the time when the presses were lettered there must have been a pair of half-



PLAN OF LIBRARY, ST. JOHN'S, OXFORD

presses lettered A and T; though where they stood is a matter of conjecture.

II. There is also evidence of early alteration at the entrance end of the library:

(i.) The ends of the two presses QR and Φ Ψ are divided vertically by a gap of ½ inch (once covered by a board)—in that respect resembling those at the far end of the library. We naturally suspect that here too a pair of original half-presses have been made into two whole presses. This suspicion is confirmed by the observation that the halves of these presses lettered R and Ψ lack the curious mortise-holes (which imply an originally different shelving); but these are found on the halves Q and Φ which face the other way.

(ii.) These mortise-holes are also lacking in the half-presses S and Ω on either side of the entrance. Also these half-presses have behind them panelling of a kind which one would not have expected on a wall which was originally intended to be concealed by bookshelves.

The natural inference from these facts is that originally there was a small vestibule inside the entrance door. This was separated from the library proper (as at Merton and Corpus) by a wooden screen in the place shown on the plan by the dotted line. Against this screen on the inside there would be (as at Merton and Corpus) a half-press on either side. These half-presses now form the Q and Φ halves of the first pair of whole presses.

Two other presses lack the tell-tale mortise-holes, viz. the presses lettered DE and WX. Moreover, as I have already pointed out, the seats between the last-mentioned presses and those at the far end (which I have just shown were originally half-presses) are of a much lighter timber, and are much more neatly made, than the other seats; the seat-ends are narrower and the benches much narrower —projecting less than ½ inch in front of the seat-ends, whereas elsewhere the projection varies from 2 to 4¼ inches. It looks as if both the presses and seats were an early addition. If the fact that a gap in the row of presses occurs at this point is considered along with

the difference in the wall-space between the last two windows, already noted, the existence of an end "closet", as at Corpus, is suggested. When this was thrown into the library, the half-press on each side was naturally pushed back to the new east wall.

In Laud's wing was a mathematical library, "fitted with shutters made before the shelves to keep both books and instruments in better safety".[1] Some of these "shutters" of beautiful open iron-work—partly gilded and variously patterned with Laud's crest and other devices—are preserved in the President's house. By his courtesy I was allowed to inspect these. They have been made up as panels in doors of a wardrobe and of a bookcase. Much of the woodwork to which they are now attached is, I believe, original, though it is hard to trace the exact extent of alterations made in adapting it to its present use. The ironwork "shutters", though far more elaborate, resemble those of the archive presses in the Bodleian (p. 212).

Recapitulation

(1) In the earliest stage the library was entered through a small vestibule. There was a screen, probably of wood, across the room between the first two windows, against which a half-press backed on either side. The presses at this time were about 6 ft. 8 in. high, exclusive of cornice, and were provided with fixed desks sloping at about the same angle as those in Durham Cathedral. The east wall of the library went through the middle of the presses lettered BC and UV (see plan), the nearer (C and V) side of these presses constituting half-presses against this end wall. This wall may have been a partition separating the main library from a small end room, as at Corpus and, probably, at Merton in the east wing.

(2) The end wall was taken down and the half-presses were made into whole presses, still with sloping desks.

(3) The desks were altered to their present aspect, and the shelves lowered some 6 or 7 inches. At the same time, or shortly afterwards,

[1] S. Gibson, *Some Oxford Libraries*, p. 87 (Milford, 1914).

the presses marked DE, WX (with desks on the new model) were added; the vestibule was thrown into the library by removing the screen, and the halves R and Ψ and S and Ω were set up.

(4) All the presses were increased in height—either by one or two stages—and the present urns and pediment were added.

(5) The chains were removed, and to hide the scars a certain amount of reversing of shelves (and occasionally of planks composing the press-ends) took place. Also, for the same reason, the presses were heavily puttied and painted—probably in 1745, the accounts for that year show an entry for two coats of paint.

Would it be too great a presumption on my part to suggest to the College authorities the possibility of removing this paint—as was done at Trinity thirty years ago? The ancient oak would then stand out in all its beauty. Scars would be visible, but these would offend the eye less than in the smooth and tidy eighteenth century. And they would reveal history, a thing which nowadays we value more than neatness. And if the history they revealed should in some points fail to tally with the reconstruction I have here attempted—that would be no great matter.

V

THE BODLEIAN

Duke Humphrey

In 1444 Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, Chancellor of Oxford University, gave the University a handsome present in books. Books in large numbers are sometimes an embarrassing benefaction. Cobham's Library at St. Mary's could accommodate no more; and, in thanking the Duke for his generosity, the University ventured the hint that he should build a second storey over the Divinity School, which was not yet completed, to form a new University Library. The letter points out, with perhaps a pardonable exaggeration, that in the existing library so many books were already chained

to the lecterns that, for every student who has room to read, three or four must be kept waiting.

Jam enim si quis, ut fit, uni libro inhaereat, aliis studere volentibus ad tres vel quatuor pro vicinitate colligationis praecludit accessum.

The response to this letter was the building of the oldest part of the Bodleian, known as *Duke Humphrey's Library*—finished 1480. His books were scattered in the post-Reformation troubles in 1550, and six years later the fittings, *subsellia librorum*, were ordered by Convocation to be sold.[1]

Clark takes it for granted that Duke Humphrey's fittings were on the Stall-system. This is highly improbable. I calculate that "two-decker" presses on this system, of the same length as those now in this chamber, would accommodate more than 3,500 volumes. Cambridge University in 1435 had a library of 122 volumes; and as we know the size and number of windows (and therefore of lecterns) in Bishop Cobham's Library, we can calculate that it would have been overcrowded with 170: Duke Humphrey gave in all 600. Lecterns fitted to the dimensions of this much larger room, and with a shelf below the desk, would have held easily 1,000 MSS. The original woodwork in this glorious perpendicular building would have been in the perpendicular taste; that is to say, the lecterns would have been in general style like those at Lincoln Cathedral (p. 17), but on a grander scale.

Sir Thomas and his Library

In March 1598 Sir Thomas Bodley wrote to the Vice-Chancellor a letter, still extant, offering at his own charges to refit Duke Humphrey's desolated library:

Where there hath bin heretofore a publicke library in Oxford: which you know is apparant, by the rome it self remayning . . . I will take the charge and cost vpon me, to reduce it again to his former vse: and to make it fitte, and

[1] The Register gives the date 1556. Mr. Strickland Gibson showed me a reference to *Epistulae Oxonienses* (Catalogue of MSS. of Corpus Christi, Cambridge, p. 320) which states that "the stalles and desks, on both sides librarie wise, weare taken away and sold to Christes Church" when one Wally was proctor (*i.e.* 1563).

handsome with seates, and shelfes, and Deskes, and all that may be needfull, to stirre vp other mens benevolence, to helpe to furnish it with bookes.

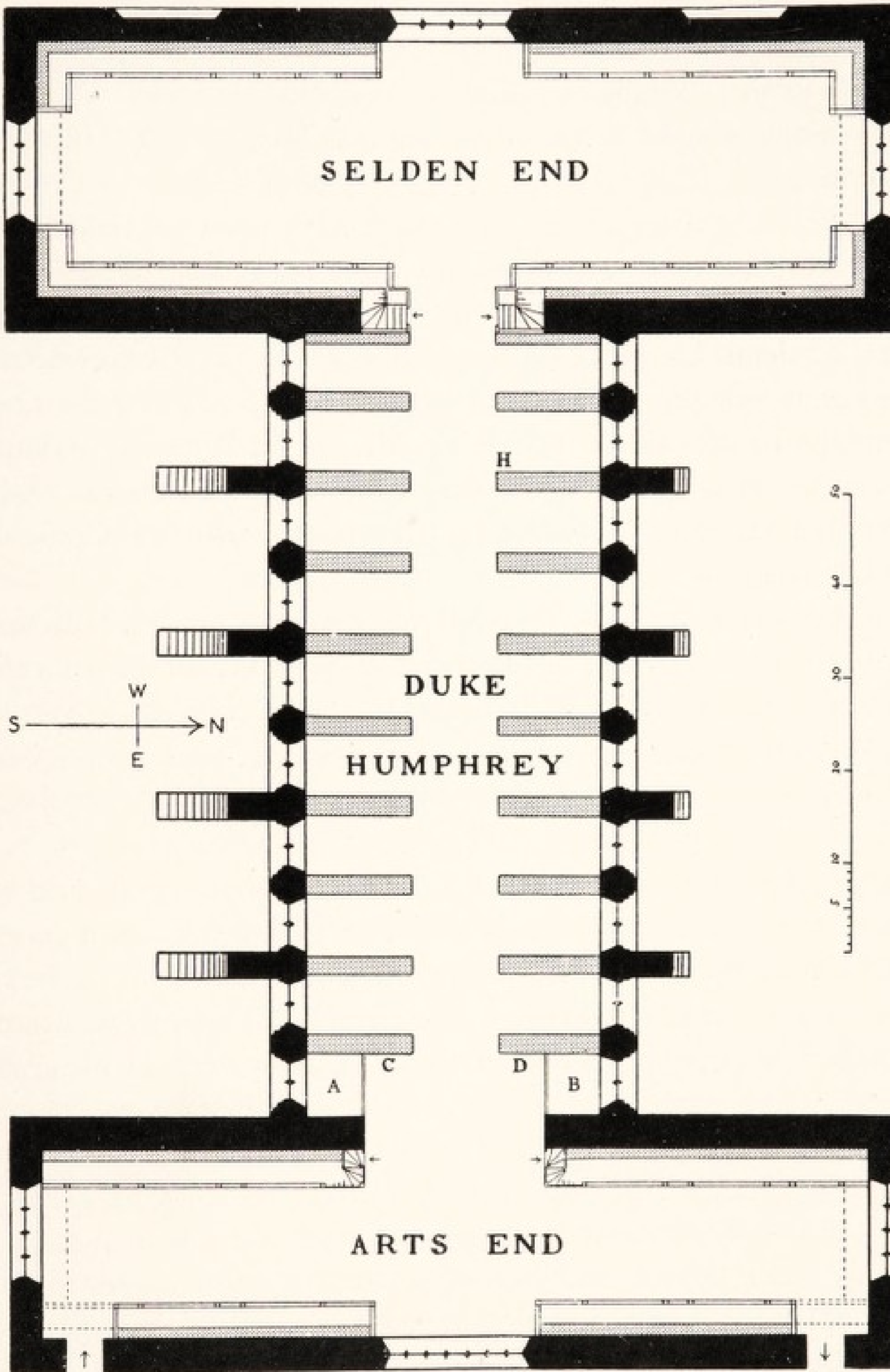
His own College, Merton, supplied him with already seasoned oak. The model he selected for the fittings was, we have seen, the "three-decker" Stall-system recently developed at Hereford. The renovation of the roof, and other matters, caused delay, but the presses were finished by 1600; books came next, and it was opened for use in November 1602.

This oldest part of the library is still commonly spoken of as *Duke Humphrey*. It is a fine room, 86 feet long and 32 feet broad; and was originally entered from what is now the far end—by a staircase which was demolished when the present Convocation House and *Selden End* were built. Ten years later Sir Thomas almost doubled the size of the building by adding, transversely across the east end of *Duke Humphrey*, the extension (89 feet × 22 ft. 6 in.) known as *Arts End*. This extension has been discussed above (p. 72 ff.) as the earliest example in England of a library fitted up on the "Wall-system".[1]

By his will Bodley left money for future extension; and from this bequest, but not till 1634, was built, athwart the other end of Duke Humphrey's Library, the wing known as *Selden End*. In length and position *Selden End* is the architectural counterpart of *Arts End*; except that, being built over the Convocation House, its width (28 feet) is determined by that of the building below, which had recently been erected by Archbishop Laud. The library thus assumed the form of the letter H, *Duke Humphrey* being the cross-bar of the H, and forming a kind of wide gallery connecting the two *Ends*.

Selden End, like *Arts End*, was fitted on the Wall-system, with a gallery supported by columns similar to those in *Arts End*, but more ornate. Here, as in *Arts End*, the books were originally chained. The illustrations on p. 73 should be referred to. The two excerpts from Loggan's print, drawn about 1675, show the two *Ends* with the

[1] Bodley changed his plan; *Arts End* was designed for the Stall-system. Cf. G. W. Wheeler, *Letters*, p. 223 *n*.



PLAN OF THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY

original stairs to the galleries. In the original print the ends of seats between the presses in *Duke Humphrey*—which is seen through the archway in the illustrations—are just visible.

Beside the letters written by Sir Thomas Bodley to the University concerning his library, no less than 231 of his letters to Thomas James, the first Keeper of the library, have been preserved. The letters are continuous over a period from 1599 to 1613, the year of his death, and are full of minute instructions extending even to points of detail in regard to the chaining and the arrangement of books on the shelves. Both these collections of Bodley's letters have been edited with careful indexes by Mr. G. W. Wheeler, and are a mine of information for the student of library evolution, as well as interesting for their revelation of the idiosyncrasies of a redoubtable personage.

To the very end of his life Bodley insists that his aim is to make his library a model, from the aesthetic as well as from the utilitarian standpoint. In one of the latest letters (to James, No. 216) he writes:

> I hope for the beame yow will take suche a course, as there shalbe no want of beauty & strength to the walle, which are the very maine & principal pointes that I aime at in my building.

One of his idiosyncrasies was a dislike of books smaller in size than folio or quarto. Sir Thomas would only allow folios and quartos to be chained to the presses; smaller books were to be kept in the two little "closets", as he names them, on each side of the present entrance to *Duke Humphrey* (illustration, p. 211), now used as librarians' studies. Thus smaller books were not accessible to the general reader, except on special demand made to the librarian. In the course of time the number of small books, which could not be excluded from the library, became so large that when Sir Thomas came to build *Arts End* he arranged that, while the larger books were chained to the shelves above the seats which run round the walls, smaller books should be stored on shelves in the gallery, to which only the librarian had access.

In the old system of library arrangement, as still preserved in Hereford, a folio and a duodecimo may be chained side by side on the same shelf. This is the logical result of assigning one side of a book-press to books on a particular subject or *classis*—a term of which the exact usage is discussed, p. 318. Bodley saw that the system was extremely wasteful of shelf-space; but he still retained, with modifications, the system of *classes*. On the cornice above the face-end of each press, as at Hereford and St. John's, there is painted a brief title of the main contents of the press, *Libri Theologici; Lib. Facult. Medicinae*, etc. The titles had to be rearranged when, to make room for the increase of books in other subjects, the Arts books were removed to his new extension—which thereby got the name of *Arts End*. But they remain to-day as Bodley finally left them. Ultimately the difficult problem of shelf accommodation for books of different subjects and different sizes led him to devise a new system of cataloguing, details of which are given by Mr. G. W. Wheeler in his *The Earliest Catalogues of the Bodleian Library*.

Bodley's regard for what he deemed the dignity proper to a University library not only made him prefer books of a stately size, but found a more vigorous expression in the matter of their contents.

> I can see no good reason [he writes to James, letter 221] to alter my opinion, for excluding suche bookes, as almanackes, plaies, & an infinit number, that are daily printed, of very vnworthy maters & handling, suche as, me thinkes, both the keeper & vnderkeeper should disdaine to seeke out, to deliuer vnto any man. Happely some plaies may be worthy the keeping: but hardly one in fortie. For it is not alike in Englishe plaies, & others of other nations: because they are most esteemed, for learning the languages & many of them compiled, by men of great fame, for wisedome & learning, which is seeldom or neuer seene among vs. Were it so againe, that some litle profit might be reaped (which God knowes is very litle) out of some of our playbookes, the benefit thereof will nothing neere counteruaile, the harme that the scandal will bring vnto the Librarie, when it shalbe giuen out, that we stuffe it full of baggage bookes.

Mr. Strickland Gibson, in whose interesting book, *Some Oxford Libraries*, I first saw this quotation, notes the irony of this denun-

ciation of English plays, while a man named William Shakespeare was still alive and writing. Let us hope that his plays were among the few which in Bodley's opinion might haply be worthy the keeping!

The Presses

The fittings in Duke Humphrey's Library were on a grander scale than in the older Oxford libraries. The exceptional width of the room (32 feet) was conditioned by the fact that it was built, as a kind of afterthought, over the Divinity School; thus the gangway between the presses is full 9 ft. 3 in. wide; and the presses themselves are of the exceptional length of 11 ft. 3 in., *i.e.* nearly double the length of those at Corpus. Since at this date the presses at Corpus (and of Magdalen, from which these were copied) were less than 7 feet high, having only two shelves above the desk, Bodley's presses would have seemed impressive. The Hereford presses also are of above average length, 9 ft. 9 in., the press-ends of both libraries are of exceptionally heavy timber, and in height and width they are of the same dimensions (8 ft. $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. × 2 ft. 2 in.). The catalogue frames, of which two still survive at Bodley, are a little larger than those at Hereford—there were more books in each press to be enumerated. The shelves in *Duke Humphrey* are $1\frac{1}{8}$-$1\frac{1}{4}$ inches thick; indeed they are thicker than those of any libraries of this kind, except Merton. The reason for this was, I imagine, partly aesthetic; thin shelves would have looked skimpy on such long and heavy presses. But it was mainly because—the shelves being divided into the usual three *partitiones*—the length of the shelf between each of the upright supports is unusually long, so that the shelf loaded with folios would sag unless it was made extra strong.

In two respects the woodwork in *Duke Humphrey* shows signs of being a later improvement on that of Hereford. The cornice is slightly more elaborate; and the ground-supports, under the uprights between the *partitiones*, are more elegant. At Hereford these are formed by a couple of heavy straight unornamented pieces of

THE BODLEIAN. PRESSES AND DESKS IN *DUKE HUMPHREY*

timber; Bodley's have a curved outline, resembling the cross section of an enormous urn (illustration left-hand press, p. 205). A similar pattern is to be found in the one still visible ground-support at Corpus and in the eccentric half-press at Merton (p. 143); both of these are, I believe, later than *Duke Humphrey* and are probably copied from it.

The Chains

Bodley took great interest in the chaining of the books, and frequently mentions it in his letters. I quote a typical passage:

> Hauing sent yow nowe by the cariar 500 clippes, of which I knowe not what want yow may haue: and withall towards 5^{ll} weight of wire, which is, as I suppose, of a good conuenient cise (Wheeler, *op. cit.*, p. 23).

The wire was for making chains, as appears from another letter (p. 27):

> It were well that the cheinman were sent for with the soonest, and I will send yow more wire by the next.

The "clippes" mentioned by Sir Thomas are evidently the brass clips for affixing the chains to the books. The usual arrangement was for a library to have a sheet of thin brass and a pair of shears with which a strip of the metal was cut out for each book as it arrived. (See the extracts from the accounts of Eton College, 1519, given in Willis and Clark, *Architectural History of the University of Cambridge*, quoted, p. 96 *n.*) The clips on the Hereford books have clearly been prepared in this way, and so vary greatly in size and shape. But the problem Bodley had to solve was the chaining of a new library at which books were arriving by the hundred; evidently he had found in London some brass-worker capable of what in those days was an experiment in "mass-production".

As regards the later history of the chains, some interesting information is given by W. D. Macray, *Annals of the Bodleian Library* (2nd ed., p. 121 *n.*). The account books show that the librarian was procuring additional chains as late as the year 1751. The fact that

at Cambridge as early as 1628 a grand library like St. John's was never fitted with chains is a remarkable instance of the difference already noted in the traditions of the two universities in the matter of library fittings. But in 1761, only ten years later, there was a revolutionary change of policy. Instead of chaining new books, a beginning was made of unchaining the old ones; and 1,448 books were unchained, at a cost of ½d. a book. In 1769, some long chains were sold at 2d. each, some short ones at 1½d.; and then 19 cwt. of old iron was sold in one lump at 14s. per cwt. Probably the old iron included rods and hasps. A couple of chains still survive.

Seats and Desks

The ends of the readers' seats can just be glimpsed in Loggan's print; and they are faintly indicated in the illustration of the library in Williams' *Oxonia Depicta* of 1732. But they were removed long ago; the precise date I have been unable to ascertain.

The distance between the presses averages about 6 ft. 6 in., as against 6 feet at Corpus. The additional 6 inches is due to the fact that the width of the windows and of the wall-space between them was conditioned by that of the windows of the Divinity School underneath—two windows of the library are over each of the wide perpendicular windows below (illustration, p. 120). As the greater space between the presses had to be filled, the desks were made wider than at Corpus. The desks are now divided into three sections, and are hung on modern hinges, which are fixed to a strip of timber occupying the place of the original "slot" through which went the chains to the bottom rod. Originally the desks were in a single piece, with a hinge at each end. Scars of the vertical strap of the original hinges, 10½ inches long with an interesting pattern, can be seen on the edges of most of the press-ends. The corresponding scar of the strap of the hinge on the desks has been partially (sometimes wholly) obliterated by cutting off about 1¼ inches from the ends of the desks. But on most desks, some of the nail-holes can be seen—more

particularly on the desk marked H in the plan, where the sawing has been done extremely carelessly.

The desks have also been flattened, partly by cutting down the back part of the bracket (as I suggest, p. 145 f., has happened at Merton), partly by nailing on to the front part of it a thin wedge of wood. The ornamental brackets under the face-end of the desks are not part of the structure of the desk-bracket, but are an early addition. They are either imitated from those at Jesus, or are a result of the later fashion of which the brackets at Jesus are an example.

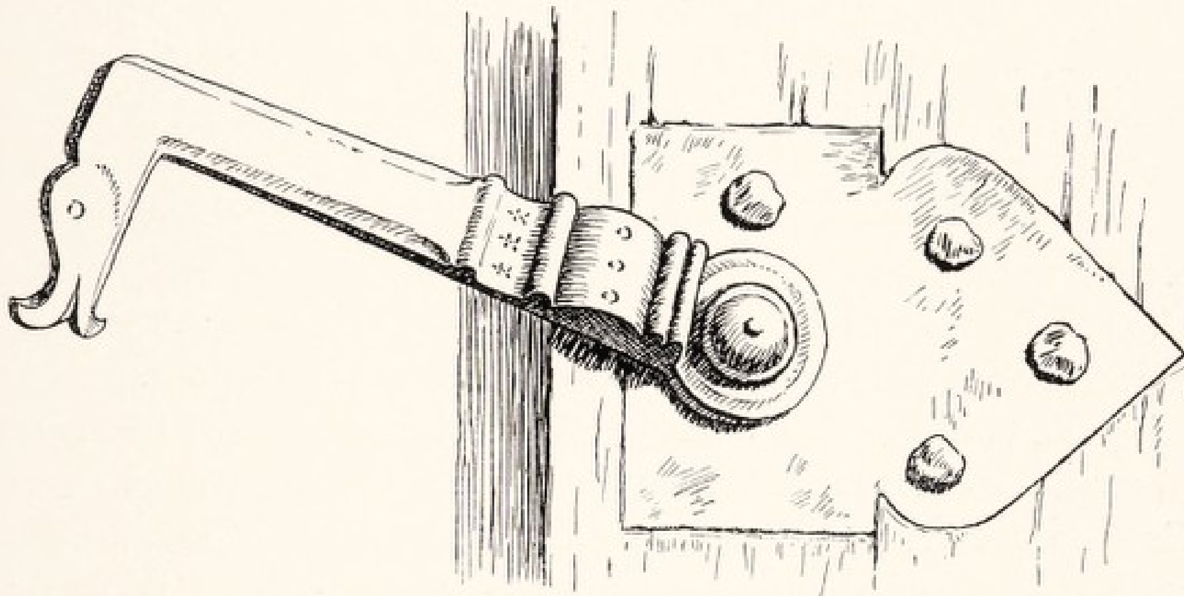
Mr. Nicholson, the late librarian, states in his tercentenary volume, *Pietas Oxoniensis*, that the desks were originally 5 inches broader than at present. This, and a similar statement by J. W. Clark, is due to a miscalculation of the original width implied by the desk-hooks, most of which are still in place. The hooks are, on an average, 18 inches above the bottom shelf; and the edge of the desk, when turned up, undoubtedly now falls a long way short of the hooks. But this is because the tops of the brackets have been lowered an inch and a half, and the desks hinged in a different way. As they were originally fixed—with the knuckle of the hinge level with the top of the bottom shelf, and with an interval of 1½ inches (it may have been greater) for the slot between the back edge of the desks and the knuckle of the hinge—desks 16½ inches wide would when turned up have reached the hooks. At present the desks are from 15 to 15½ inches wide; so they have only been reduced by about an inch.

The Ironwork

In the earliest of his letters to James, dated Dec. 24 [1599], Sir Thomas Bodley writes:

> Within this fortnight, I trust, I shall haue ended with my carpenters, ioiners, caruers, glasiers, and all that idle rabble: and then I goe in hand, with making vp my barres, lockes, haspes, grates, cheines, and other gimmoes of iron, belonging to the fastning and riuetting of the bookes: which I thinke I shall haue finished, within two or three monethes.

Of the ironwork of Bodley's presses only the desk-hooks and the cross-shaped supports of the rod-sockets survive. But scars on the press-ends show that the locks and hasps were of the same type as those at Hereford. The scars of desk-hinges (averaging $10\frac{1}{2}$ in. high), clearly visible on the edge of many of the press-ends, show a longer and stouter hinge—naturally, since the desks being 2 feet longer were so much the heavier than those at Hereford. The patterning of the hinges—as well as of the desk-hooks and socket-supports—must have been rather more handsome. The socket-supports



DESK-HOOK, BODLEIAN (¼ *in. less than actual size*)

on the outside edges exhibit a feature which I have not seen elsewhere. Supports fixed at the junction of uprights and shelves are always shaped like a cross; but those fixed on the edge of the press-end usually lack the outside arm of the cross. In Bodley's presses this arm appears in an attenuated form, about the size of a halfpenny with one edge flattened. In many cases this has been broken off, but on B.16 Theol. face-end and on several wall-ends it can still be seen. This round protrusion may have been bent backwards at right angles so as to go round the corner and lie flat on the press-end.

The desk-hooks are of the same size and shape as those at Hereford; but are worked up into a spirited design (see above). The plates

on which they revolve are also patterned, and, instead of being simply nailed on, are sunk so as to be flush with the surface of the wood.

On the presses on the south side of the library the desk-hooks, instead of revolving on a plate fixed to the inside of the press-ends as at Hereford, are fitted into a narrow slot in the press-end. J. W. Clark is at pains to exhibit this arrangement by a special illustration, being under the impression that it is original. I owe to Mr. Norman Ault the observation that this is not the case:

(1) On the opposite side of the room all but one of the hooks are "side-hooks", fixed, as at Hereford, on a plate on the inside of the press-end, the side next the plate being flat, the other side ornamented.

(2) Scars of similar plates, which are slightly countersunk, are to be found on the inside of *all* the presses where the hooks are at present fixed in slots.

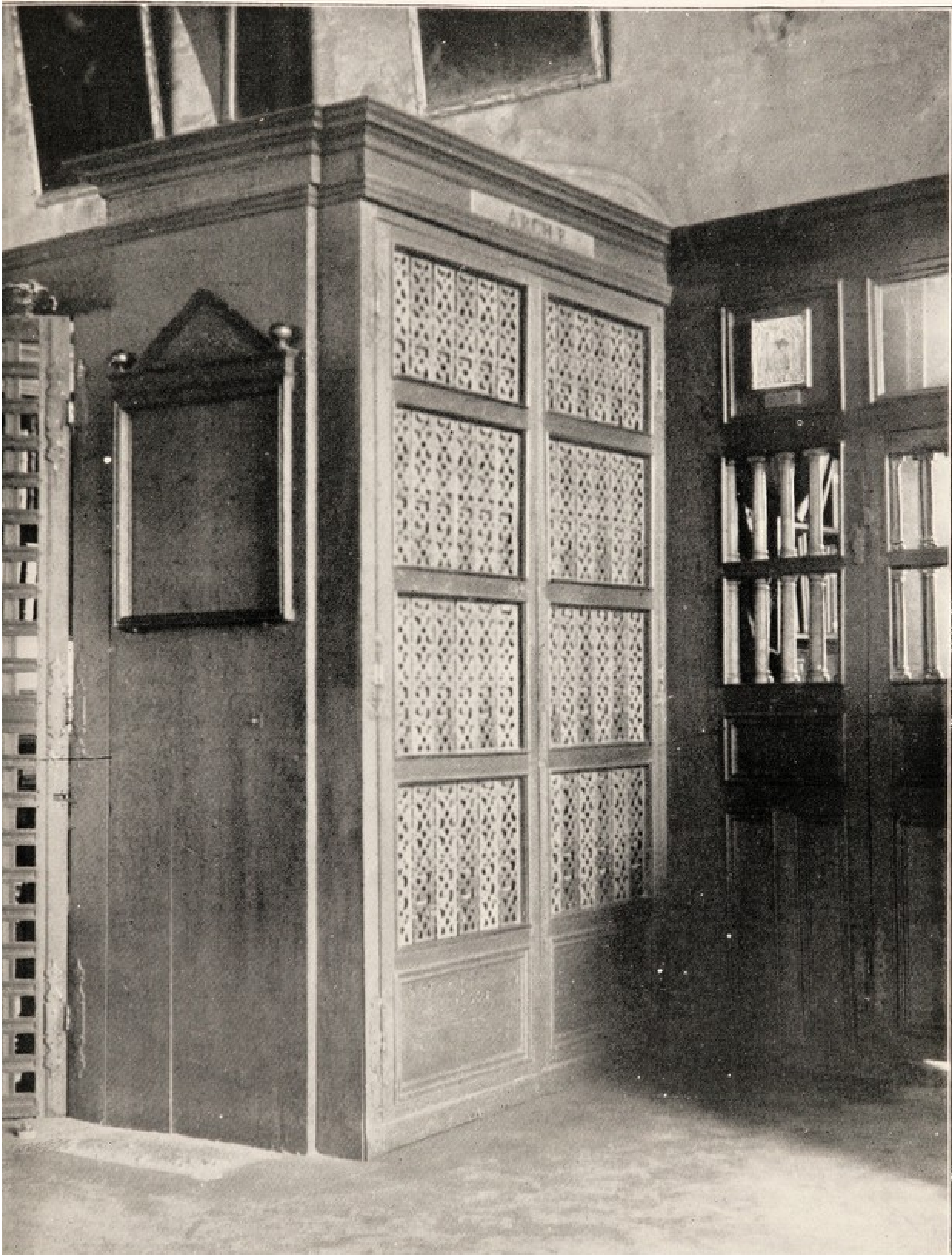
(3) The hooks fixed in slots have one side flat, one ornamented, which implies that they were originally fixed as side-hooks.

(4) All the desks show dints on the under side worn by the hooks when the desk is raised. Where the hooks are slotted there are two dints—one corresponding to the present position of the hook, the other (and that the deeper) corresponding to what would be its position if fixed inside the press-end.

Closets, Grates and Tables

Three minor points in the construction are worthy of being noted in regard to the two presses on either side of what is now the entrance (originally the far end) of Duke Humphrey's Library. The sides of these (marked C and D in plan, p. 201, shown also in the illustration opposite) are treated in a special way.

(1) In the angles between the presses and the wall are small "closets", to use Sir Thomas Bodley's own word (A and B), about 6 feet square, half the length of the press forming one side of the closet. These were intended by Bodley for octavos and smaller books; they



LATTICE DOOR, CATALOGUE FRAME, "GRATES", "CLOSET". BODLEIAN

are now used as librarians' studies. (2) The part of each of these presses not included in the closet is made into a cupboard, the doors of which are panelled with patterned iron-plating. Over these is now painted *Archiv. E and F*. In Bodley's letters these are spoken of as "grates", and were intended for books (and other objects) of special value (Wheeler, p. 26). (3) The lattice-work doors between these and the adjoining presses (to the left in illustration), which convert the bays between them into additional studies, are old but not original.

In his letters, Sir Thomas Bodley often speaks of the "Tables" affixed to the face-ends of the presses, giving a list of the books in each. Mr. Wheeler, who has made a special study of the history of the cataloguing of the library, tells me that the earliest printed catalogue of the Bodleian seems to have arisen out of the idea of reprinting these lists, which had been printed in slips of a size to fit into the catalogue frames. The word "Tables" is also used of the frames themselves. The two (one is seen in illustration on p. 211) on the presses on either side of the present entrance to *Duke Humphrey* are intact, except for the loss of a central partition. The rest survive in part. The illustration (p. 205) shows that against the face-ends of the other cases there have been fitted small modern bookcases. The tops and knobs of these modern cases are those of the old catalogue frames worked into the new fabric.

The Prisoner of Learning

A quotation from the *Anatomy of Melancholy* may conclude this section:

> King James, 1605, when he came to see our University of Oxford, and amongst other edifices now went to view that famous library, renewed by Sir Thomas Bodley, in imitation of Alexander, at his departure brake out into that noble speech, "If I were not a king, I would be a university man: and if it were so that I must be a prisoner, if I might have my wish, I would desire to have no other prison than that library, and to be chained together with so many good authors *et mortuis magistris*."

VI

JESUS COLLEGE

THE Old Library of Jesus College is less famous than it deserves to be. Its presses, we shall see, are half a century older than is commonly supposed; and in general effect it is quite one of the most beautiful of Oxford libraries. The chains, and the ironwork which chains entail, have been completely removed; but the woodwork is more nearly in its original condition than that of any other Oxford example of the Stall-system. On the south side of the room nothing has been altered but the hinging of the desks and, apparently, the substitution of new wood at the ends of these to get rid of the scars left by the old hinges.

On the north side of the room most of the seats have been removed; but resting on the top of the presses is a new and interesting feature, viz. a gallery to which access is given by a winding staircase of very graceful workmanship. The gallery and staircase are later than the presses, but fall within the seventeenth century. The gallery, we note, is a feature derived from the Wall-system, which Bodley had introduced to Oxford in the *Arts End* of his library.

The scars show that the vanished locks and hasps were of the same type as those at Hereford and Corpus. The woodwork retains the Bodleian "three-decker" structure; but in the matter of the moulding and ornamentation of the seat-ends, cornices and catalogue frames, it represents the next stage in development. The library which most closely resembles Jesus is that fitted up in 1623–24 at Westminster Abbey by Lord Keeper Williams (illustration, p. 263).

A library was built for Jesus College by Sir Leoline Jenkins, 1622–1623; but it was taken down as ruinous in 1640. It was built over a cloister, so perhaps the foundations of some of the pillars had been insecurely laid. The present building was put up by Sir Eubule Thelwall, and was opened in 1679. Anthony Wood states that in the interval the books of the College "were laid in an upper room or loft

over those chambers that are above the Buttery and Kitchen". From this statement Willis and Clark (iii., p. 446) argue that the existing presses could not have been those of the earlier library. "Their severe archaic appearance must be due to the fidelity with which the earlier specimens were copied by the carpenter who made them." It is not obvious how the carpenter could copy specimens which had ceased to exist; nor yet why, if the College had liked the old work well enough to keep some as a pattern, they should not have kept the whole lot. Moreover, at that period builders and architects in Oxford were the reverse of anxious to reproduce past styles; they preferred to make experiments of their own. Fortunately, there is evidence that the woodwork of the earlier library was preserved—though not in the same room as the books.

Mr. L. B. Cross, the librarian, produced, and helped me to decipher, an old MS. volume in which—in the handwriting of Francis Mansell, who, as a Royalist, was ejected from the Principalship in 1649—occurs the following entry:

> When the Old Library was taken down, all the waynscot, with the rods, Barres, Chaynes, and other the like Materials, were removed and put in the Bursar House.
>
> Also Payne a Joyner behind All Hallowes Church drew in a sheet of Paper the Number of Windowes, the Height and the Breadth of them, and the distances between them, and so for the seats throughout. And this remaynes still in one of the Boxes with the College writings. This was done, and with all the waynscot, was put by in a due Order, that it might be readily knowen and serve agayne, when a new library should be built agayne.

At first, I supposed that the "waynscot" referred to in the above extract meant the panelling in the present library. I was put on the right track by reading (or rather re-reading) the passage from the antiquary Cole, quoted p. 64, where the term "waynscotte" is used of the presses at Clare. The library at Christ's Hospital (*Stowe's Survey*, p. 130) had "deskes and settles of waynscot". So Westminster (p. 262). To suppose that at Jesus the term had this

PRESSES AND SEATS, JESUS COLLEGE, OXFORD

meaning makes clearer the purpose of the proceedings described above. It explains also the entry which occurs a few lines further on:

> The Blankes between the Windowes, 3 foot & 4 fingers
> The splays of the Windows—one foot & 6 fingers.

The object of this careful measurement of the window-spacing was to secure that the new building would fit the old presses. Again, the sentence "and so for the seats throughout" becomes luminous when we remember that the word "seat" is regularly used (cf. p. 44) to include the presses and desks of a library.

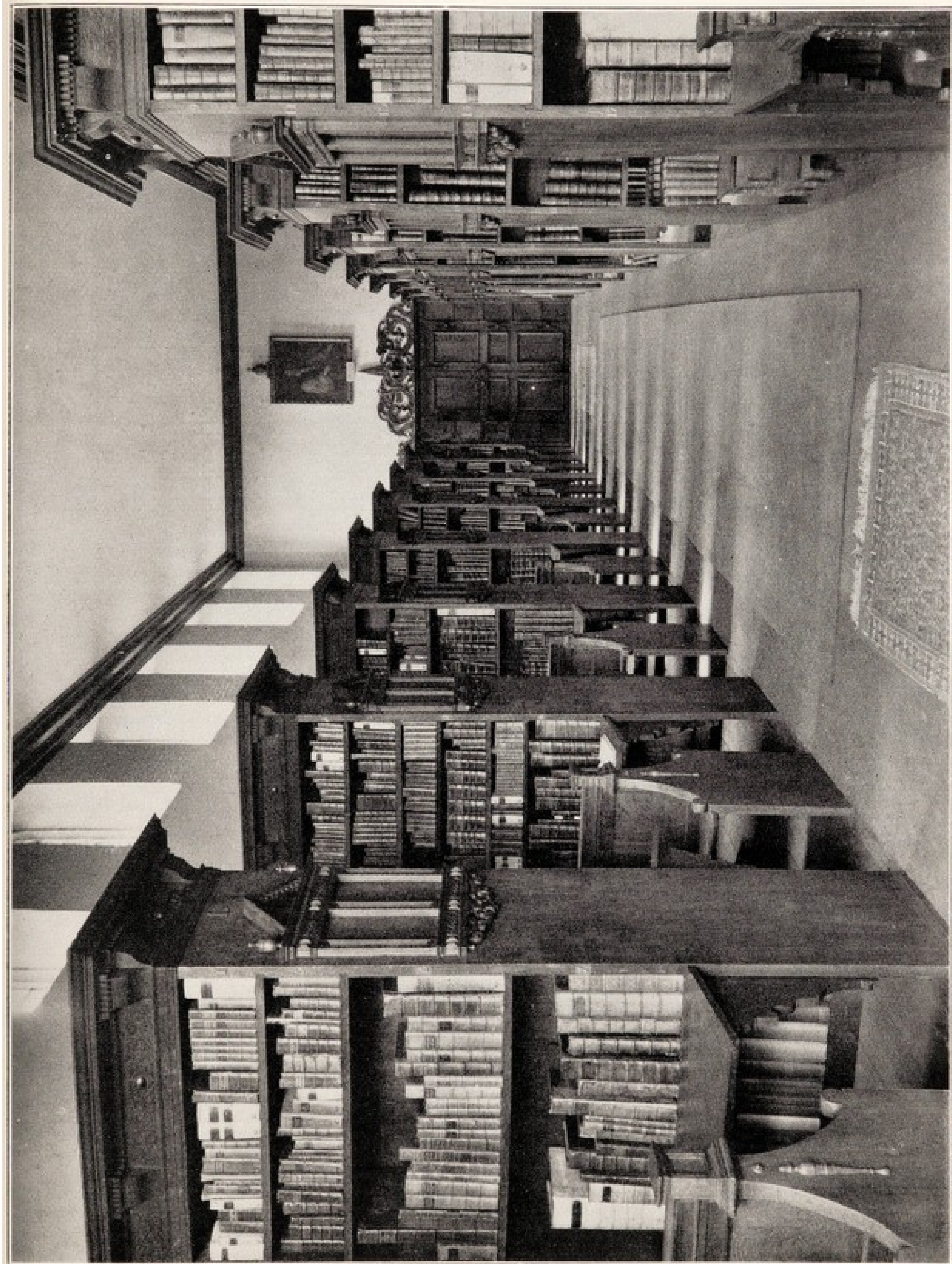
A further entry states that the "waynscot" was "set up in the Bursar House" in accordance with the plan made—meaning, I take it, that the woodwork of each press was piled separately so that they would not get mixed. The fact that the presses were not stored along with the books explains the statement of Anthony Wood.

The "archaic" appearance noticed by Willis and Clark, and the resemblance to the presses made for Westminster Abbey at precisely the same date, confirm the conclusion that the present woodwork at Jesus is that which was set up by Sir Leoline Jenkins, 1622–23. Moreover, Sir Eubule Thelwall was a pupil of Mansell's and made it his aim to carry on his policy; and Mansell, as the extract in his hand attests, had planned for the restoration of the original presses.

Mr. Moffatt adds the point that the "split baluster pendants" on the seats, and the "trusses" under the cornice, fit a date *c.* 1623.

Another entry in the same book, dated May 16, 1649, states that, among other articles in a study in the Principal's house, which were due to be removed to the Bursar House, "there are some hundreds of chaynes of the library".

A remarkable feature in this library is that the cornice boards and the shelves at that end of the press which touches the wall, instead of being supported, as in all the other libraries, by upright wall-ends corresponding to the face-ends, are cut into the panelling and solely supported by it. Even more remarkable to my mind is



JESUS COLLEGE, OXFORD. THE LIBRARY, LOOKING NORTH

the fact that the panelling has proved adequate to support the weight of the books for 250 years, only giving way in one or two cases. I suspect the old wall-ends were discarded in 1679.

Despite the difference in ornamentation, the dimensions of the presses, seats and desks are the same as at Corpus. There are eight presses on each side of the room with half-presses at both ends. The half-presses, however, on each side of the large window at the far end are fitted with doors panelled with pierced ironwork and labelled "Archivae". But unlike the similar cupboards at the Bodleian, the doors or "gratings" do not reach down to the floor, and these half-presses, like the others, are provided with a desk. The scars of locks on the face-ends have, as usual, been neatly filled in with wood, and the scars of the rod-sockets can be traced on the edge of the face-ends; but only on a few of the presses (towards the far end of the library) can scars of the sockets at the junction of shelves and uprights be seen. On most of the shelves these scars must have been planed away; or, as I think more probable, the shelves have been reversed so as to get the scarred edges inside. As the presses have no wall-ends, I was for some time puzzled to know how the rods were supported at the end nearest the wall. I found, however, after some searching, on the front edge of a few of the shelves just before they go into the panelling, an abnormally long scar. This indicates that there were once fixed here rod-sockets of a special design made for these presses. So far as the rod below the desk is concerned, the problem was solved by making a hole (into which the end of the rod went) in the inside end-bracket supporting the desk—the bracket itself being nailed flat on to the panelling.

The presses, which are 7 feet long, are divided into two sets of *partitiones* by a central upright. Below this is a ground-support of the same kind of pattern as those in the Bodleian, but a little more elaborate and of much thinner wood.

There is only one desk-hook per press, small and of a light pattern, which is let into a slot in the central upright. This position,

however, is not, I think, original. Scars appropriate to desk-hooks of this kind occur in the usual place on the inside of the face-ends. This implies that the hooks now in the centre were once on the face-ends. Since the absence of a wall-end precluded the fixing a second hook there, the removal of the hooks from the face-end to the middle upright was undoubtedly an improvement.

The woodwork at Jesus is extraordinarily light; the face-ends are only 1¼ inches thick as against 2 inches to 2½ inches at Hereford and the Bodleian. Similarly, the ledges which support the bottom shelf and protrude so as to form brackets for the desk are only about half the usual thickness; but they are supplemented at the face-end by the addition of ornamental brackets, as can be seen from the illustration. Similar brackets are found in the Bodleian, but there (p. 208) I think they are later additions. This type of bracket, first found at Jesus, occurs also at Westminster Abbey. It was developed in a still more elaborate form at Queen's.

The former of the two illustrations given in this chapter is the one which best exhibits the points of resemblance and difference between the decorations at Jesus and Westminster Abbey. The second illustration was taken during a temporary removal of the low modern cases which normally cumber the central avenue. I would call attention to it at the end of this discussion of technical detail. Such discussion may fatigue; not so the contemplation of the quiet beauty of the whole.

VII

THE OLD LIBRARY, TRINITY

The Library of Durham College

The Old Library at Trinity has suffered greatly from nineteenth-century alterations; but it preserves, disguised by later alteration, woodwork set up about 1625 in a building two centuries older. The building was erected as a library for Durham College, a "cell" or educational "nursery" in Oxford of the great monastery of which

Durham Cathedral was the Abbey church. In the Chapter Muniment Room of the Cathedral, accounts and other documents relating to Durham College (or Durham Hall as it is occasionally called) are still preserved. The site and buildings of Durham College were surrendered to the Crown by the Dean and Chapter in 1544, and, after being occupied as a sort of private hall by Walter Wright, Archdeacon of Oxford, and Vice-Chancellor, 1547–49, fell into disrepair. On February 20, 1554/5, they were bought by Sir Thomas Pope, who restored them as the nucleus of his new foundation, Trinity College.

The fabric of the library was begun in 1417; but "desks", presumably lecterns, were still being put into it in 1431. A payment for this purpose is shown in the accounts of that year:

> Item in descis noviter factis in libraria cum tabulis et aliis necessariis emptis ad eandem vi^{li} xvi^{s}. viij^{d}.

In 1436 the accounts show a payment for glazing a window of the library:

> Item in vitriacione unius fenestre in libraria xxvj^{s} viij^{d} (*Oxf. Hist. Soc.*, xxxii., p. 10 *n.*).

This window may be identified as the present south window, in the quatrefoil of which are the arms of Hatfield, the founder of Durham College, and below them those of the University—a very early example—and of the Duke of York. The old library at Balliol also (not the Old Hall, but the less known chamber on the first floor) is of approximately the same date. This retains nothing of its original fittings except portions of the ancient glass, and these include an early representation of the University arms; so evidently it was a motif thought appropriate in a library. Not only in the upper part of the large south window, but also in the smaller windows looking east, there are considerable remains of ancient, if not actually original, glass. It has been rearranged and restored at least twice. This was first taken in hand by Thomas Warton, author of the well-known *History of English Poetry*, in 1765; he fortunately left

an account of what he did. In the 'seventies of the last century it was again rearranged, and the glass remaining in the west windows (which were perhaps endangered by looking on the Quadrangle) joined that in the east side. It is interesting to notice that the saints depicted experienced very gentle treatment at the time of the Reformation—Thomas à Becket coming off not quite so well as the others. The faces of the figures are cracked, but *merely* cracked—as though the breaking was done in obedience to orders, but orders reluctantly obeyed. The cracking of the faces helps the visitor to distinguish between the old and the restored figures in these windows. The stonework of the south window is an interesting example of a style transitional between Early English and Decorated which does not survive elsewhere in Oxford, but occurs in more than one of Loggan's prints, for example in the window over the old entrance to Queen's College.

At the time of the dissolution of the monasteries many of the books, being the property of Durham Abbey, were taken to Durham, where some were identified by Dr. Blakiston, the present President of Trinity, in the Chapter Library. What happened to the woodwork during the five years before the purchase of the site by Sir Thomas Pope—during which it became, in the picturesque phrase of Anthony Wood, *canilia lustra* ("dog kennels")—is not known. Nor is it known how the not inconsiderable number of books presented to the newly-founded Trinity College by Sir Thomas Pope and his friends were housed. Oak makes good firewood, as well as being useful for building purposes; and a derelict building would be likely to attract riflers.

The Seventeenth-Century Library

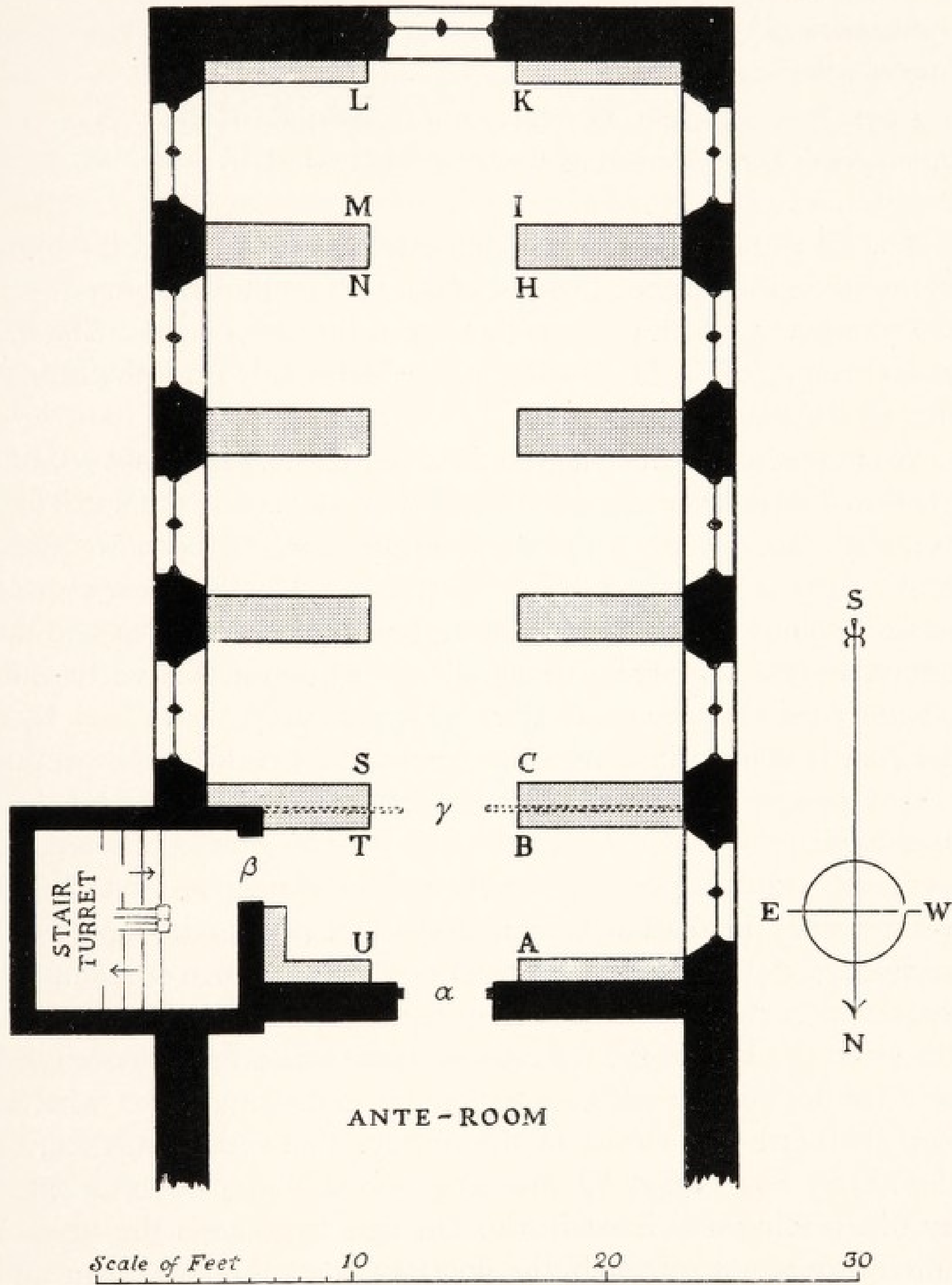
Definite knowledge begins again with the fact that about 1625 the library was completely refitted from a bequest of Edward Hyndmer, an ex-Fellow of the College, who died in 1618.[1] About thirty

[1] See *Oxf. Hist. Soc.*, xxxii. (1896), p. 25.

years ago inscriptions (just under the place where the cornices were originally fixed) were discovered by Dr. Blakiston under a thick coating of paint with which the presses were then covered. The inscription was originally in the form *Edwardi Hyndmeri donum* (the word *donum* being underneath the name); and this was repeated on all, or almost all, of the presses. Unfortunately, when the paint was removed, the inscriptions were removed with it, and only one remains, slightly retouched, without the word *donum*.

At present the library is usually entered from an ante-room to the north through a doorway (the oak framework of which is obviously mediaeval) at the centre of the north end; the entrance thus looks straight along the gangway between the two rows of presses. There are four presses and two half-presses on each side of the gangway, those on the one side protruding from the wall 6 ft. 4 in., those on the other 6 ft. 6 in. The windows, as usual, are between the presses; those on the right-hand (the west) side have been considerably altered, probably in the nineteenth century; those on the left-hand side are original. They are in a simple perpendicular style, with one mullion and one transom each; at their widest splay they are 5 ft. 2 in., the wall-space between them averaging 29 inches.

But the present entrance doorway was only discovered in recent years. On the library side it was hidden by a large book-cupboard; inside the ante-room, which was then part of the President's lodgings, it was completely concealed by a coat of plaster. Till this doorway was reopened in 1888, the library was entered through a side door—in the first bay on the left of the present entrance. This side door is approached from below by a staircase in a kind of square turret projecting out some feet from the original building. The turret and staircase—as well as the dormers which light the attics (or "cock-lofts" as they were called) above the present ceiling of the library up to which it leads—date from about the year 1600.



PLAN OF LIBRARY, TRINITY, OXFORD

By good luck there is a mention of the library, giving its original dimensions, in a survey and valuation of the site and buildings of Durham College made in 1541:

A Fayre Library well desked and well-floured, with a Tymber Floure over it, in Length xxvij Fote and in Bredethe xviij Fote. (*Oxf. Hist. Soc.*, xxxii., p. 21.)

The "Tymber Floure" probably refers to the internal boarding of the old ceiling, shaped like that at Corpus (see illustration, p. 150), the remains of which can still be seen in the attics above. The flat plaster ceiling of the library as it now is dates only from the formation of the attics.

We note also that the length of the present library is not 27, but 36, feet. The floor boards, however, for about 9 feet at the north end are much narrower than the rest, and, unlike the others, are made to run transversely right across the room. Evidently, then, a space of about 9 feet (once otherwise occupied) has been thrown into the library by the demolition of a wall or partition at the north end. The original entrance of the library must therefore have been by a doorway (in the position marked γ in the plan) in the middle of this demolished partition. This is borne out by the fact, for which I shall shortly give the evidence (p. 226), that the two presses ST and CB were originally half-presses, S and C, and therefore must have backed against some kind of partition. This doorway would have been immediately opposite to, but separated by some 9 feet from, the door which now connects the ante-room and the library. Dr. Blakiston thinks that the intervening space was originally occupied by a landing, with a staircase leading up to it from under what is now the north-east corner of the library. The extension, then, of the library was gained by throwing into it the space once filled by this landing and its staircase. On that hypothesis the present entrance was not originally the doorway from the ante-room into the library; it was the door leading from the landing of the staircase into the ante-room. The ante-room is now entered from

a door at the opposite (the north) end, which opens on another landing approached by a modern staircase (fitted into a turret of the same date as that mentioned above) still further to the north.

The flooring of the present library is remarkable. If it is original, I hazard the following explanation: Mediaeval libraries, though rarely built on the ground floor, were frequently tiled. The present tiling at Merton only goes back to 1623, though this may have been a replacement of older tiles. But the tiling in the library at Clairvaux (Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 113), which was completed in 1503, was noted as specially fine. Is the phrase in the survey, "well floured", a statement that at Trinity there was a good floor, *although* it was not tiled? At any rate, it is the fact that the present library (or rather the older part of it) has a *double* floor, and the under floor is a good one in the sense of being strongly supported. From a room, once part of the old vestry, entered from the President's yard, the original flooring of the library can be seen from below. A longitudinal centre beam gives additional support to strong transverse joists, and on these are laid planks which run longitudinally to the main building. But these planks are not visible from above. The visible flooring of the old part of the library consists of oak planks of very great width, very curiously arranged. That is to say, on the west side they run lengthways, on the east side they run crossways; but the width of the part that is floored with lengthwise boards (and therefore also the length of the crosswise boards) is not uniform. Such an arrangement, of course, would be structurally unthinkable except in boards which rested on another floor.

The Presses

On all the presses (with exceptions to be discussed shortly) there are scars of locks, of nail-holes for hasps, and of holes for the rods under the desks (very neatly filled in). But the seats, desks and ironwork have been completely removed. The positions of the shelves have been altered, a modern skirting has been nailed round the

bottoms of the presses, its top edge butting on a fixed shelf a foot above the floor; and a moulding 1½ in. wide and 3 in. deep has been fixed along the line of the original desks. Horizontal joints in the face-ends and wall-ends show that the presses must once have been only 8 ft. high, approximately the same as at the Bodleian; below the join is oak, above elm. The cornices now touch the present seventeenth-century ceiling; but it is of interest to note that (as in the similar elevation of the presses to touch the ceiling carried out at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge) the original cornices have been preserved.

A close inspection of the woodwork makes it possible to get behind the various stages of later alteration to something like the original form. But as it is not easy—even with the aid of the plan and illustration—to visualise all the details involved, I advise the general reader to skip the remainder of this sub-section, and pass on to the account of the chaining on p. 230.

The presses CB and ST, as I have already mentioned, bear traces of having been originally half-presses C and S. The side T (of the face-end ST) is the only such board in the library which goes right up to the ceiling without a join; it is obviously modern and bears no scars of locks and hasps. The corresponding board B on the first press on the west side has these scars; but it is 14½ in. higher than the other original boards of this press before it has a join —a difference which has a further significance which will appear shortly.

It would seem that the raising of the height of the presses took place in two stages. This is to be inferred from an examination of the two half-presses L and K on either side of the south window, and the whole press CB. In all the other presses the original oak ends go up to a height of about 8 feet; on the top of this is an addition in elm of about 3 ft. 6 in. In these two half-presses there are two lines of joining. One of these occurs at the usual height of 8 ft.; but here the first addition was only 14½ in., and was in *oak*,

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TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD. THE LIBRARY

not elm. On the top of this addition there has been a further addition of about 28 in., which brings the half-presses up to the ceiling. A similar phenomenon is noticeable on the press CB; but it is slightly more complicated. Here the central and left-hand boards on the C side of the face-end have been raised in the same way as the half-presses L and K, viz. in two sections, the first being 14½ in., the second 28 in. The right-hand board (*i.e.* that lettered B) has one join only; but that is at the level of the *top* of the 14½-in. addition to the adjoining boards on the C side of the press. Evidently the board B was added later than those on the C side of the press, which (like the corresponding press on the east side of the library) was originally a half-press with its back towards the now demolished end wall. Thus the addition which converted the half-press C into a whole press CB was made *after* (or at the time of) the first heightening of the presses, but *before* they were raised a second time.

It is impossible to believe that one whole press and two half-presses were raised 14½ in., while all the rest were left untouched. Why then do we only find traces of one joining on the other presses? The explanation is simple. To patch the ends of a bookcase with *two* additions, showing two transverse joints, is barely tolerable in a half-press which is supported against a wall; but in the whole presses which have not that support it would be structurally unsound as well as unsightly. I suggest, therefore, that, when it was decided to raise the presses right up to the ceiling, in order to avoid the twofold joining the former 14½-in. addition was taken away, and a 3 ft. 6 in. addition substituted for it. The material used being elm—which is both cheaper and easier to work than oak—the extra expense would be very little; the gain in neatness and in strength would be considerable. This conclusion is borne out by the analogy of Chetham College, Manchester. Here also the presses have been twice raised—first by 14 in., then by an additional 3 ft.; on the wall-ends both these additions, in timber of two different thick-

nesses, survive; but on a few face-ends the 14 in. addition was removed at the time of the second raising, and replaced by a single addition of 4 ft. 2 in. (*i.e.* 3 ft. + 14 in.).

There remains to be accounted for the half-press U on the left of the main entrance. This is ancient; for it was originally of the same height as the other presses before they were raised, and once it bore a lock. But there was no room for an extra half-press before the library was extended. I venture the conjecture that this was "an overflow" half-press, set up *outside* the library on the landing, which probably extended on this side to the wall, and may have had a window occupying the place of the seventeenth-century entrance. The half-press A, on the right of the entrance, creates no such problem; for it shows no scars of locks and hasps, and therefore cannot be original.

The cornices, which are of oak, appear to be original; and are therefore of special interest to anyone who is studying the evolution of structure and ornament of library fittings. In six of the presses the cornice shows a row of dentils underneath the upper moulding; and in some of them there survives a lower moulding, some 3 in. below. In all the half-presses and in the two whole-presses ST and CB, I incline to think that the upper part of moulding only was preserved when the presses were raised—the dentils and the lower member being eliminated, presumably in order to get in an extra shelf for small books.

The presses have all been planed and are extraordinarily smooth; partly, the President tells me, the result of being carefully scraped down after the paint was removed about thirty years ago. To be planed the presses must have been taken to pieces, and they were probably planed between the joints as well as on the surface. At present they vary in width from 23 to 23½ in.; but they may well have lost a quarter inch in the course of this planing. A curious feature is that the scars of the locks on the right and left of the face-end are hardly ever on a level. It may be that, when the presses

were taken to pieces, the boards got mixed and were wrongly re-assembled; or it may be that they were affected by damp and slightly rotten where they touched the floor, and pieces varying from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 in., according to the extent of the rot, were cut off the bottom. This seems to have happened at Corpus; but there the portion removed was replaced by new wood of the appropriate width. The fact that the old oak ends at Trinity are from 2 to 3 in. shorter than those at the Bodleian would be explained if something has been cut off at the bottom.

On a few of the presses scars of the nails of hinges by which desks were attached can be traced, but in quite as many there are no traces. It may be that they have been obliterated; or possibly the desks were originally fixed to the brackets, and when it was afterwards resolved to provide them with hinges the project was only partially carried through. At any rate, it is clear that all the presses once had desks, for all had the apparatus for chaining, and chained books must have a desk. The distance between the presses averages 5 ft. 8 in.; as this would be a tight fit for back-to-back seats, it is probable that they were provided, as at Merton, with backless benches, or possibly (as at Chetham College) with movable stools.

The Chaining

A notable feature, which I have not observed in any other library, is the fact that extra locks and hasps were added for the additional shelf gained by the first heightening of the presses. The scars—slightly smaller than those left by the locks below—show that these locks were fixed a few inches below the top of the original press-ends. These appear on all the presses; on the press and half-presses where the $14\frac{1}{2}$ in. addition still remains—but not on the others—there can be seen higher up, on this addition, the nail-holes of the hasps which were fastened by these upper locks. Books on the fourth shelf above the desk must have required chains of exceptional length. This proves that the first raising of the presses must have

taken place at a quite early date when it was still thought absolutely necessary to attach books by chains.

The earliest library accounts that survive begin in 1726. Mr. J. R. H. Weaver, the librarian—besides other valuable information —has put at my disposal some items from these accounts which bear on the use of chains. Evidently by this date a distinction was already made between books sufficiently valuable to require chaining and books which might be left unchained. Chaining and unchaining went on concurrently, as the following entries show:

1727. To Mr. J: Hurst his Bill for Chains	£2	1	10
1730. Pittaway's Bill for Chaining, unchaining etc.	£5	2	0
1733. Smith's Bill for chains, etc.	£1	14	2

N.B.—"Smith" = "the smith" = Pittaway. This is quite clear from other entries.

On the inside cover of this account-book there is a note in the hand of Warton, dated 1765, of a College order:

The Librarian to review y^e unchained Books once a Quarter at least.

Evidently a large number of books still retained their chains in 1765. Subsequently the word "unchained" in this entry was scratched out—implying that the librarian should review *all* the books, presumably because the remaining chains had now been removed. It is possible that this unchaining was done shortly afterwards. There was a general renovation of the library in 1764–65, in the course of which the windows were taken down and reset. The (for those times) heavy smith's bill in the next item to be quoted *may* have been for taking off all the remaining chains:

1765.	Smith's Bill	£6	3	8
	Painter's Bill	£13	7	6½
	Glazier's Bill	£16	3	0

An interesting fact about this library is the existence of a *Catalogus Librorum qui in Capsula continentur* of about the year 1697.

This contains a list of the MSS. and certain other books of special value, which appear to have been kept not on the shelves but in *capsulae* or chests. As these chests have assigned to them the same letters (A-V) as the presses, it looks as if they were placed underneath the presses marked with the corresponding letters. At Hereford (p. 320) there was a *capsula* under one press; but I know no other example of their use for storing books on such a large scale at this late date.

VIII

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE

Hawksmoor or Wren?

In the Lansdowne collection in the British Museum is a MS. dated 1720, which gives a list of buildings designed by Sir Christopher Wren. The document is in the handwriting of one of Wren's sons, and it is signed by Sir Christopher himself. In this occurs the entry: "1682, *Capellam collegii Reginae apud Oxon. extruxit*". This statement raises some difficult questions. The existing Chapel of The Queen's College was begun in 1713 and consecrated November 1, 1719. The plan may have been Wren's; the interior of the Chapel is certainly worthy of Wren at his best. The College tradition is that the work of the Front Quadrangle was carried through by Wren's pupil, Hawksmoor. The late Provost *conjectured* that a large copperplate print—which he reproduces in his history of the College, p. 67—represents a design made by Wren in 1682 for the façade of the Hall and Chapel; but he may be mistaken, and the plan actually followed may have been Wren's, as there exist yet other designs which must have been considered and ultimately rejected. I would myself venture the suggestion that in the list of Wren's works, by a slip of memory (either on the part of Wren or his son), the word "Chapel" has been substituted for "Library", and possibly the figure "1682" for "1692", which was the date when the Library was begun. As, however, Hawksmoor became Wren's "scholar and

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD. THE LIBRARY IN 1828

domestic clerk" in 1679 and was assisting him all through the building of St. Paul's Cathedral (finished 1716), the probability is high that both these famous architects had a hand in the design of the Queen's library. At any rate, alike the building and the interior fittings (which were finished by 1696) are typically in the Wren style. The elaborate stucco ceiling bears the date 1695, and is known to have been executed by Roberts at a cost of £148 : 9 : 8.

The Chaining

In the mediaeval accounts of the College there are constant references to the chaining of books; several of the more interesting of these are quoted by the late Provost, Dr. J. R. Magrath, in his monumental work, *The Queen's College*, I. p. 77 *n.* (Clarendon Press, 1921). The earliest goes back to 1381–83, when xxviij[d] is paid *in cathenis pro vj libris catenatis cum quinque stapulis*. Usually the chaining was done by a local smith; but in 1430–31 the College seems to have gone to London for its chains, in spite of the cost of carriage; in that year vj s. viij d. is paid *pro cathenis pro libris cathenandis et cariagio earundem à Londonia* [Cicero would have been puzzled by *cariagium*]. In 1392–93 considerable additions were made to the fittings of the library. Boys are paid for carrying "deskes" to the library—presumably in pieces to be assembled in the room—from the carpenter's shop; also large keys are bought for the "deskes".

> Item pueris portantibus descos librarie a domo Andree carpentarii j[d] obolum [in mediaeval Latin an obol is a halfpenny]. . . . Item eidem Andree pro magnis clauis [*sic*] emptis pro descis iij[d].

A library chain, which had come into the possession of the Carmarthenshire Archaeological Society—having been found in a cupboard with a label saying that it was from the old library of Queen's College, Oxford—was restored to the College in 1917 by the courtesy of that society. The character of the ironwork makes it probable that this particular chain has come down from the mediaeval library.

The present, most un-mediaeval, library was finished in 1696. It is described by J. W. Clark as an interesting "return to ancient forms", that is to say, as a case of the survival of a structure of presses, desks and seats designed for chaining in a library where "there is no evidence that the books were chained". To test this statement I had scrutinized the presses more than once, without seeing any reason to doubt that Clark was right. Indeed, I had actually sent the MS. of this book to the printer—with the section on the Queen's Library treated from this point of view as the first unchained library in Oxford—before the suspicion crossed my mind that his conclusion was wrong.

What first set me thinking was the discovery that the college copy of Le Neve—a book published in 1716—bore marks of chaining; but this could be accounted for on the hypothesis that it had come to Queen's from some other library. A few days later I noticed that the moulding on the north edge of the presses marked L and M (Plan I., p. 245) was thinner than the rest by about an eighth of an inch—lacking the outermost member of the moulding as it appeared on the edges of all the other presses. Seeking an explanation of this, I noticed in one or two of the presses a very thin crack, which suggested that this member of the moulding was a later addition. I connected this with the recollection that in one press at Hereford a thin strip of moulded beading had been added in a similar position (p. 100) to conceal scars left by the iron fixings of chain-rods. I then asked Mr. F. Smith, the library assistant, if he could find any more books printed later than 1700 which bore marks of chaining, and which did *not* have a book-plate indicating them to be later presentations to the library. In ten minutes he produced half a dozen. It then seemed time to ask if the librarian had any objection to my removing a piece of the moulding, in order to test the hypothesis that it had been added to conceal scars. The moulding being stripped from presses N and P, there stood revealed, on the edge of the wall-end, scars of the ordinary rod-sockets, and, on the edge

EDGE OF FACE-END, WITH SCARS OF LOCK AND (BELOW) OF DESK-BRACKET, QUEEN'S

of the face-end, the old lettering and numbering of the presses, and scars of the desk-bracket, hasp and lock (see illustration opposite).

I then initiated a search for old library accounts; and the muniment room yielded up an account book, in which, under the heading "Aug. 1779 to Dec. 1780", appears the entry:

> Nat.[l] Bull, for unchaining Books, £11 : 18 : 2½.

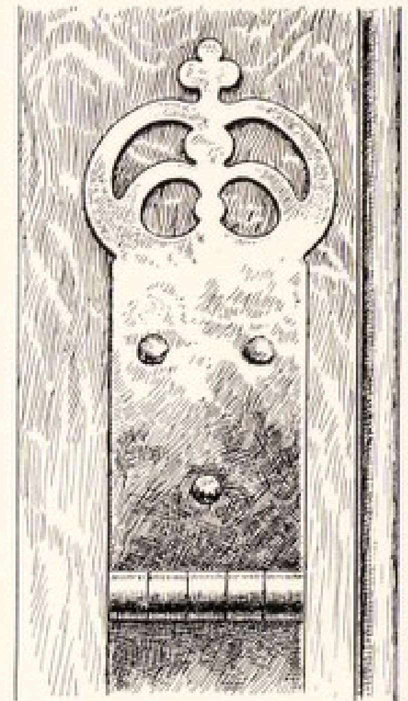
The odd ½d. looks at first sight strange; but the Bodleian accounts for 1761 show a payment for unchaining 1,448 books at ½d. each. Presumably, therefore, ½d. a book was a standard rate for the unchaining which at this period was going on all over Oxford. If so, it would appear that 5,717 books (which must have been the great majority then in the library) retained their chains till 1780.

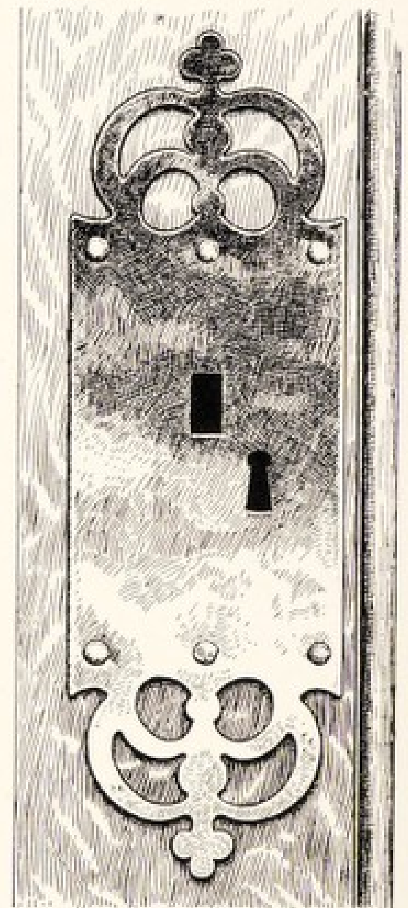
A few days later, I happened upon further evidence. In the midst of a summary of the original accounts of the building of the library which Dr. Magrath (*op. cit.*, p. 70) has transcribed in a footnote from an early eighteenth century MS., without noting their significance, occur the items: "Chains, locks, etc." and "Wyerdrawer". The wire, of course, was for making chains (cf. p. 206). The books removed from the old library (p. 255) would have had chains already attached to them; but the main reason for building the new library had been to provide accommodation for the books which had come to the College under the will of Bishop Barlow (d. 1691). Chains would have been wanted for these; for books in private libraries were not as a rule chained.

A couple of months later Mr. F. Smith showed me a MS. note by Dr. Magrath (which must have been written shortly before his death) giving a reference to the *Report of the MSS. of the Earl of Verulam* (*Hist. MSS. Com.*). The writer visited Oxford Aug. 11, 1769, and in the notes in his diary concerning Queen's writes:

> The library is a very handsome room of the Corinthian order; dimensions 130 ft. by 90. What hurts the appearance of this library is that all the books are chained in their places.

The ornamentation on the face-ends of these Wren-Gibbons presses made it impossible to fit them with locks and hasps in the same way as in the libraries heretofore discussed. An alternative arrangement, with a small lock, like a cabinet lock, let into the edge of the press-end, had therefore been employed. From the scars on two presses from which I removed the strip of moulding, it is possible to trace quite clearly the delicate pattern of the lock-plate. Two feet higher up the press-end appears a similar scar made by the hinge of the hasp. On this evidence Mr. Ault has drawn the accompanying reconstruction of the lock-plates and the upper part of the hasps.





LOCK-PLATE (below) AND HASP-END (above) restored from scars and sun-prints

The crown pattern was doubtless suggested by the name of the college. The hasps must have been rounded over the rods like those in *Selden End* of the Bodleian (p. 74), except that the outside end of the curve holding the rod must have been stopped. The scars of the rod-sockets on the wall-ends mark the position of the original shelves. The rod for chaining the books on the bottom shelf was probably (as at Jesus College, and in the presses 35 and 94 at Merton) fitted into holes made in the brackets which supported the desk, not in the press-ends. As the brackets have disappeared, it is impossible to say how these rods were locked; the carving precludes

outside locks, but there may have been one in the middle support of the desks, as in the Laurentian Library.

The Wren-Gibbons Presses

Chaining, as I have frequently pointed out, necessitates desks and readers' seats. At Queen's these no longer exist. Fortunately, however, the College possesses a fine water-colour drawing made in 1828 by J. C. Buckler, which brings out—evidently with great precision of detail—the general character of the desks and seats which at that date were still in existence. The reproduction of this (p. 233) has been courteously put at my disposal by the Oxford University Press. The seat-ends, it will be observed, were of an unusual height and pattern. The ornamental brackets supporting the desk were developed with great elaboration in the Grinling Gibbons style—thus harmonizing with the rich carving on the presses. Scars on the panelling under the windows show that the height of the seat-ends was 3 ft. 4 in. and the width about 2 ft. 5 in. The desks sloped at a slightly steeper angle than is found elsewhere at Oxford, and the highest part was 2 ft. 10 in. above the floor. At the wall-end, instead of a hinge, the desks seem to have moved on a pin ½ inch in diameter, which revolved in a hole in a brass plate nailed to the panelling. At the face-end there was doubtless a similar pin revolving in a hole in (or in a socket on) the bracket.

The presses are considerably larger than the normal, being 10 ft. 5 in. high, 2 ft. 6 in. wide and 9 feet long. The distance between them is 7 ft. 6 in. Four of the presses (lettered E, H, P, S in Plan I., p. 245) are 15 inches wider than the others, display more elaborate carving and are topped with a decorative pediment. The extra size of these presses is explained by the greater width of the wall-space between the windows at these points, due to the great piers that support the pediment surmounted by an eagle (p. 246), which is the conspicuous feature of the outside façade of the library. In spite, however, of the extra height, all the presses still

carry on the "three-decker" tradition. Buckler's drawing—which can be checked in this respect by the scars of the rod-sockets on the wall-ends—shows that originally there were only three shelves, one level with, two above, the desk; and a study of the woodwork proves that originally there were none below it. The space gained by the unusual height was utilized, not for a fourth shelf, but for a pair of shallow cupboards below the cornice, the doors of which are panelled with openwork carving. These could be locked, and were intended for books too small to be conveniently chained; and within living memory they were still mainly filled with quite small volumes. Similar cupboards, but uncarved, are found at Lincoln College (see illustration, p. 251). Originally each of the cupboard doors at Queen's (4 ft. 3 in. long by 16¼ inches high) swung on ornamental hinges fixed on the press-ends. At some time, probably in 1871, each door has been divided into two and re-hung with small modern door-hinges.

A feature of the library is the carving now on the half-presses (lettered A and W on plan) on either side of the entrance from the common-room staircase. These half-presses have been made into cupboards (for keeping the MSS.) by pairs of great doors 8 ft. 6 in. high and 4 ft. 3 in. wide, which are carved with extraordinary depth and richness by Grinling Gibbons or one of his pupils. The six-foot standing figure in the illustration opposite may help the reader to estimate the magnificent scale of the carving. These doors, however, are not in their original position. Scars on the panelling show that the half-presses A and W were originally provided with desks and seats, and therefore could not have had doors reaching down to the ground. Also, on the north side of the presses L and M there are the scars of four hinges—corresponding to similar scars seen on the inside of the doors—on which the doors originally hung. These facts are explained by an order which occurs in the College Minute Book under the date November 9, 1871:

CARVED DOORS ON MSS. CUPBOARD, QUEEN'S

That the MSS. of the library be removed from their present position to the south end of the library. That the necessary alterations in the presses be made.

The "alterations in the presses" spoken of evidently meant the removal of these carved doors from the presses L and M (where they faced the north window of the library) to their present position on the half-presses A and W. Unfortunately, the fine ornamental hinges, of which the scars are evidence, were replaced by modern door-hinges.

The catalogue frame, which is a notable characteristic of the Stall-system of library fittings, appears at Queen's in a changed form. There is a concealed door in the panelling of the face-end which opens to reveal a list of the books in the press pasted up inside. The edge of one of these, half opened, can be seen on the right-hand side of the illustration, p. 241. For the history of this form of catalogue frame we must go back to St. John's, Cambridge. Here the two small square panels (see illustration, p. 71) on a level with the lower part of the second shelf from the top of the press are hung on hinges, which open and show the list of books pasted behind them. The idea was further developed by Wren in the great library at Trinity, Cambridge, which was begun in February 1676; but here, there is one single hinged panel of the same shape as at Queen's. The carving in the library at Trinity, Cambridge, is known to have been executed by Grinling Gibbons. The carving at Queen's is in a style so nearly identical that, if not by Gibbons himself, it must be by a pupil of his. Curiously enough, although very elaborate accounts of the building of the Queen's Library survive, the names of the carver and of the architect are left unmentioned.

The position of the windows is a kind of compromise between the position traditional in libraries designed for the Stall-system and the position (with the bottom of the sill *above* the tops of the presses) which Wren had introduced at Trinity, Cambridge. The windows are still between the presses; but, as the bottom of the

sill is 7 feet above the floor, it is only between them for the top one-third of their total height. The cornice of the presses is continued over the panelling which covers the narrow space (8½ inches) between the edge of the press and the window, and then turns at right angles along the splay of the window opening. In the bays at the north end the panelling and cornice were continued round the wall to the great window. The half-presses—shown on the plan in dotted lines—which now partly conceal this panelling only date from 1871. The effect of this panelled bay, one side formed by the great carved doors—which were then seen in the full light of the north window—must have been very fine.

The carved doors, in their original position, are the Grinling Gibbons equivalent of the iron panelled "grates" in Duke Humphrey's library or the wooden-meshed cupboards at the end of the east wing at Merton. Thus, while in every detail of structure the fundamental plan of the traditional Oxford Library is retained, it is everywhere translated into the high classical style. The library of Queen's, as I have said before, is related to that of Merton in the same way as Michelangelo's work in the Laurentian Library at Florence is to the Gothic lecterns at Lincoln Cathedral or at Zutphen.

The Lower Library

The building of the library, for what in 1692 was the immense sum of £5,247—mainly collected or given by the then Provost, Timothy Halton—determined the ground plan of the whole college as it now exists. Like Archbishop Laud's extension of the library at St. John's, and like Wren's library at Trinity, Cambridge, it was built over a cloister. The open walk of the cloister faced towards what is now the Back Quadrangle. When, shortly afterwards, the original college was pulled down, the present Front Quadrangle was so built that its cloister should be a continuation of that under the library. The vista down a cloister over 320 feet long, running from the High Street to Queen's Lane, must have been one of the

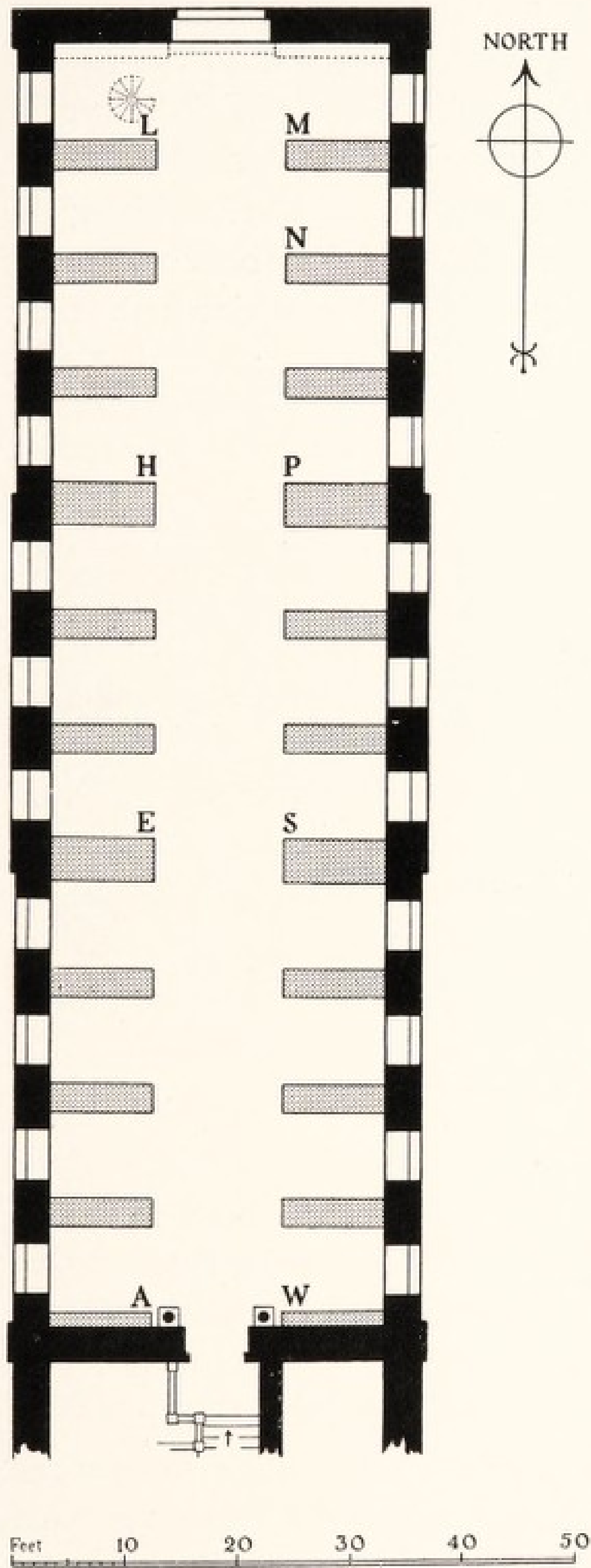
most striking things in Oxford. But in 1841 the College had a bequest of £30,000 from Dr. Robert Mason—who also left £40,000 to the Bodleian—with the provision that it must be expended on books within ten years. In the result, so far as books are concerned, the College came to possess one of the most valuable libraries in Oxford—but the problem of what to do with them became acute. It was solved by walling up the arches of the cloister under the library and piercing or removing the walls of the narrow chambers behind it, so as to make the whole of the ground floor into a single room. Thus was formed the *Lower Library*.

Provost Halton had engraved two copper plates of elevations of his projected buildings—presumably for the information of possible subscribers. One of these shows the east front of the library, over a cloister open to what is now the Back Quadrangle; it also gives a ground-plan which I reproduce in Plan II—adding the mediaeval walls of what is now the Fellows' garden.

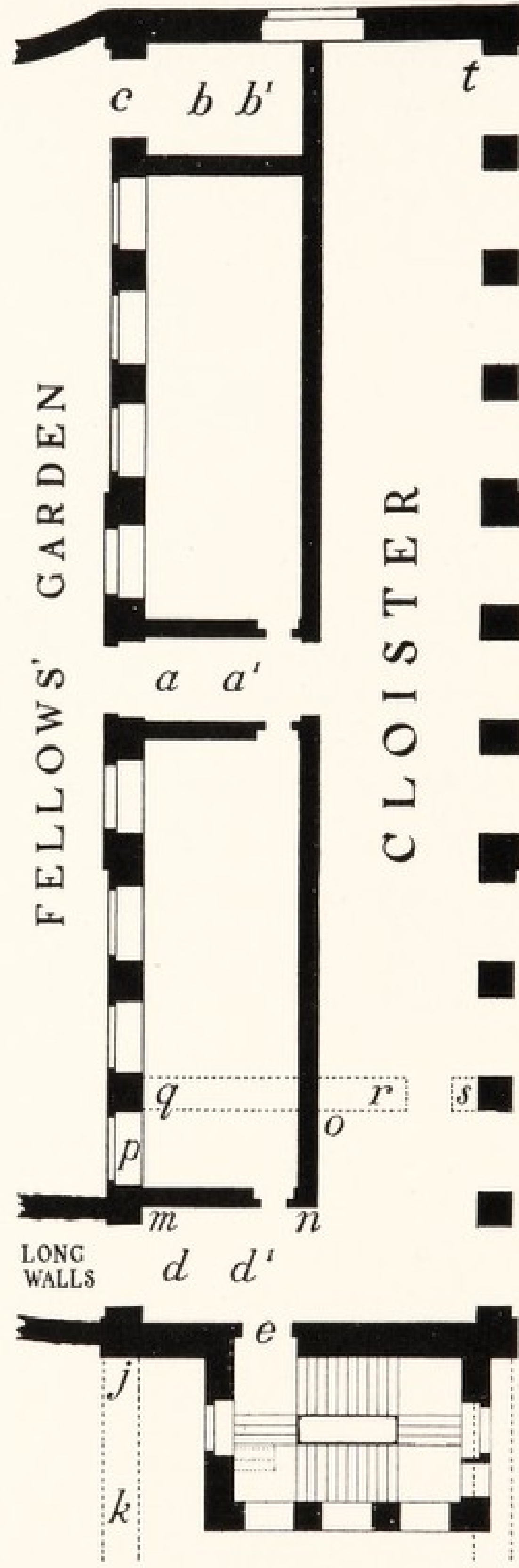
This ground-plan shows that the Fellows' garden was then entered by a tunnel (marked *a a′* in the plan) under the centre of the library approached from the back of the cloister, through what is now the door into the garden from the Lower Library. There is a small chamber, *b b′*, at the north end, with an open entrance, *c*, from the Fellows' garden, designed either for a summer house or a tool-shed. The entrance to this chamber is seen in the print by Michael Burghers (p. 246), probably struck in 1720; and in an illustration of the garden front of the library in Ingram's *Memorials of Oxford*, published 1837—a work from the prospectus of which I cannot refrain from quoting the deliciously phrased aspiration:

> to combine picturesque illustrations of a superior order, suited to the present state of the arts, and the taste of the age, with authentic historical information; and by the union of the two to form such a Memorial of Oxford, as shall be worthy of its ancient renown, and acceptable to all those who feel an interest in the history of this celebrated university, or its magnificent buildings.

The space *d d′* which, at the south end of the library, corres-

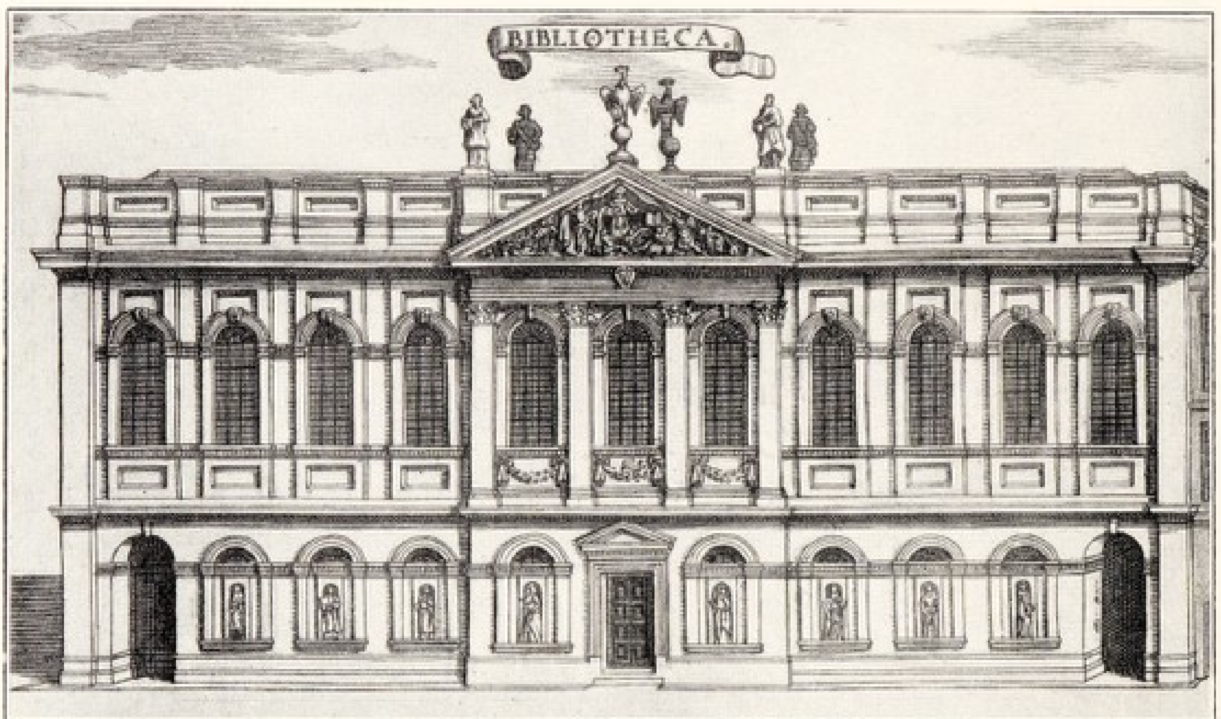


THE (UPPER) LIBRARY, QUEEN'S
PLAN I



THE LOWER LIBRARY
PLAN II

ponded to the chamber *b b′* at the north, was open at *both* ends; it thus formed a tunnel, leading out of the cloister into the picturesque mediaeval passage-way known as "the Long Walls". On the left-hand side of this tunnel was the entrance (marked *e* on the plan) of the staircase leading up to the library on the first floor; the blocked-up archway of this entrance is still visible. About 1710 most of the annexe containing the staircase was pulled down to make



GARDEN FRONT, QUEEN'S, 1720, BY BURGHERS

room for the continuation of the cloister along the west side of the new Front Quadrangle. The staircase was pushed back to a new wall *j k*, and turned round so that it entered from the continuation of the cloister, and afforded access to the newly-built common-room as well as to the library.

To house the Mason books, the walls *m n o* were taken down in 1841 —a pillar of Portland stone being placed at the point *n* to bear the weight of the superstructure. A new entrance to the Fellows' garden was made at the point *p* in the place of the alcove which then held the statue of Queen Henrietta Maria. The open entrance *c* to the

chamber b b' was blocked up so as to form an alcove; and into this alcove was placed the dislodged statue of the Queen. That is why, instead of being beside her husband, King Charles, with her head inclined in his direction, she is now separated from him by King Edward the Third and his Queen, the Founder and three other benefactors of the college, and stares outwards, as in dudgeon, at the garden wall. The form of the archway over her head still shows that at this point an alcove has replaced an entrance. A new wall q r s was built, indicated by dotted lines, the arches of the cloister from s to t were blocked up to half their height, and the upper part of the arches became a row of windows. Then, by the removal of the internal walls, the whole space between the line q r s and the north wall was converted into a single room. This being known as the *Lower Library*, the name *Upper Library* is given to what was originally *The Library*. To connect the Upper Library with the Lower Library, a spiral staircase was inserted.

Varia

The cast of the Florentine boar, which is so conspicuous an object in Buckler's drawing, was a gift of Sir Roger Newdigate, the founder of the Prize Poem. It has since been removed to the Ashmolean Museum. In place of the boar—or rather, standing on the sill of the window behind—what now strikes the eye is a contemporary statue in wood of Queen Philippa, wife of Edward III., which stood in the Hall of the mediaeval College. At the instance of her chaplain, Robert Eglesfield, the founder, she commended to her successors, the Queens Consort of England, the acceptance of the title of Patroness of the College—whence the name "The Hall of the Queen's Scholars," changed by Elizabeth to "The Queen's College."

In the north window are portraits in stained glass of Henry V. and Cardinal Beaufort. These apparently are the portraits mentioned by Anthony Wood as being in the room above the old gateway of

the College (opposite St. Edmund Hall) in which Henry V.—tradition says also the Black Prince before him—lived when a young scholar, Beaufort being his tutor. These rooms and the gateway were the last remains of the mediaeval buildings; they were pulled down to make way for the east wing of the Front Quadrangle, which was finished by 1735 (Magrath, *op. cit.*, p. 83 *n.*).

A College Order of March 2, 1871, interpreted by the minute book then kept of the Library Committee's proceedings, dates the making of the shelves below the top cupboard adjustable.

A College minute, dated March 16, 1871, has:

> Estimates for the construction of intermediate bookcases in the Upper Library and for bookcases against the North Wall of the same library were considered and accepted.

The new half-presses against the north wall are indicated on the plan by dotted lines; it seemed unnecessary to mark the low "intermediate" presses which stand between the great presses in the position originally occupied by the seats.

The row of low presses down the central avenue is still more recent. They were added to accommodate the bequest by Prof. Morfill in 1909 of 4500 volumes of Slavonic literature.

Curiously enough I cannot find a minute referring to the removal of the desks and seats. Prof. Sayce tells me that it was done before he became a Fellow of the College in 1869. Dr. Magrath (*op. cit.*, II. p. xi) says it was "about 1868". Let it then remain an undated crime.

Despite the disappearance of the seats and desks, with their carved brackets, the library of the Queen's College is still architecturally and aesthetically one of the finest in Oxford. To the student of library fittings its interest lies in the completeness of its reproduction, in a Palladian building with Wren-Gibbons woodwork, of the mediaeval tradition. To the reader who sees all these libraries only through the medium of illustrations, the seats and desks are still there. To him it will be evident that, as the ornamen-

tation at Jesus is to Corpus, so is that of Queen's to Jesus. And if, turning back to the illustration of Merton, p. 137, he will imagine away the tops of the presses, and concentrate on the adze-smoothed timber and backless benches, he can envisage in these four examples the evolution of the library in Oxford from the mediaeval to the classic style.

IX

LINCOLN COLLEGE

Migrations of the Library

In the *vetus registrum* of the College occurs the following entry:

> Whereas the Right Hon[ble] John Lord Crew Baron of Steane in the County of Northampton hath been pleased to be a Benefactor to our Colledge by turning the old chappell (which lay uselesse) into a Library, as also the old Library into convenient lodging roomes (about which publick worke he layd out almost two hundred pounds). We the Rector and fellowes of Linc Coll in Oxon on the 6th day of May 1662 did at our publick meeting or Chapter judge fitt and unanimously agree and it is by us ordered and decreed that the hon[ble] Nathaniel Crew Esq. sonn to the sayd Lord Crew Master of Arts and fellow of the sayd Colledge shall have and enjoy all the sayd chambers not only during his residence in the sayd Colledge but also for the full terms of his naturall life. . . .

The original Library and Chapel built in 1437 occupied the first floor of the north side of the Old Quadrangle—the Chapel being over the present common-room. The move, therefore, from the Old Library to the Old Chapel was only across a landing. In the eighteenth century the Gothic windows were made rectangular in accordance with the prevailing taste. The Old Library included the bedroom, as well as the sitting-room, of the set now attached to the office of the sub-rector; and the room in the north-west corner of the College (which is only separated by a thin partition) may have been part of the library, or a "closet" connected with it.

The above extract from the *vetus registrum* I owe to the Rector, Mr. J. A. R. Monro, by whose courtesy I am also enabled to quote

from a MS. book of notes compiled by the well-known antiquary, Andrew Clark.

> The original Library . . . was glazed. It was strewn with rushes, and periodically cleaned. The books were removed into the vacant old Chapel, circ. 1659 (?). Hence, at this time, we find considerable expense incurred for chaining the books after their change of quarters.

The real reason, I surmise, for the great expenditure on chaining, which is here noticed in the accounts, was the fact that the original library was fitted on the Lectern-system, while the old Chapel was fitted up on the Stall-system. Chains for the Lectern-system are quite short; the Stall-system demands long chains. No re-chaining at all would be required on moving books from one room to another, if both were fitted on the Stall-system. The chained books at Hereford could be removed to Corpus without altering a single chain. But where books are chained to a lectern, the chains are not only shorter, but are attached to a different part of the cover.

The same MS. includes three items from the accounts bearing on the chaining of books:

> 1660. The smith's note for chaining of bookes in the Library, 11s.
> 1661. Chaining bookes in the Library, 13s. 3d.
> 1663. For chayning books, 6s.

Andrew Clark's MS. notes do not go beyond the seventeenth century; but from his History of the College it appears that in 1739 the library was refitted from a benefaction of £500 given by Sir Nathaniel Lloyd two years before. The donor disapproved of the way the money had been spent, for in three consecutive wills occurs the clause:

> Item, I gave to Lincoln College, Oxford, where I was a commoner, £500 in 1737, but it is not being laid out as I directed, so no more from me.

In 1906 the presses and books were moved to the present New Library. The room in which they now are had been specially designed to take the bookcases exactly as they stood in the Old Chapel,

LINCOLN COLLEGE. PRESS IN LIBRARY

except that the central bay was widened to admit a fireplace, and the gallery at the north end modified.

Standing out at right angles to the wall, with the usual avenue between them, are eight whole presses 8 ft. 8 in. high, $23\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, with a half-press on each side of the south window. At the north end is a combination of bookshelves and cupboards. On the west side there are windows between the presses; but on the east side the corresponding space is occupied by bookcases against the wall. These wall-cases are made to match the others, but are about 1 foot higher; when they stood in the old Chapel they blocked up glazed windows, and there is no reasonable doubt that they are an addition. The presses which stand out at right-angles to the wall, and the half-presses, represent the refitting of the library in 1739 which stirred the wrath of Sir Nathaniel Lloyd; the wall-cases, though later, would seem to belong to the same century.

The Last of the Chained Libraries

These presses exhibit yet another variety of structural ornamentation—in a severe eighteenth-century taste. But perhaps the most interesting thing about them is that, in spite of their late date, they were undoubtedly fitted with chains. The presses at Lincoln, therefore, as representing the latest development of the chained library, merit a detailed examination.

It is evident that the refitting of 1739 was essentially a remodelling and redecorating of older presses. The press-ends and the shelves are of old English oak, black with age; but the ends have been cased with a veneer—if I may misuse that word of material nearly half an inch thick—in a reddish wood, which I fancy is Baltic oak, perhaps slightly stained. The elaborate cornices are carried out in the same wood; and a strip of the same timber with a bevelled edge has been fitted to the front of the old shelves.

The presses preserve the traditional three-decker structure, with

the addition of a pair of shallow cupboards just below the cornice, like those at Queen's, except that the doors of the cupboards are not carved. The illustration shows one of these slightly opened. The height of the shelves at Lincoln (as at Chetham) differs somewhat from the standard measurement. The distances between the shelves, beginning from the desk-level (those below are modern) are respectively 18½ inches, 13 inches and 15 inches; so that large folios can only stand on the bottom shelf. The traditional pattern allows for large folios on all shelves. The change reflects the fact that the proportion of smaller books to larger was one that steadily grew.

At a point which varies from 2 ft. 9 in. to 2 ft. 10½ in. above the floor level, there is a joint in the "veneer" on the edges of the presses, and the grain of the wood on the lower portion differs from that above. This means that originally there were fixed here brackets, perhaps like those at Jesus, supporting the desks; when the desks and brackets were removed the lower portion of the veneer was added to conceal the gash.

The Ironwork

Scars of rod-sockets—of a lighter and more elegant variety than usual—appear at the junctions of the shelves with the ends and with the uprights. On some of the presses locks can still be seen; on the others the place of the locks is covered with an added piece of wood; underneath the piece of wood the lock still survives in one press, and I think probably in all. The locks (though smaller) resemble those in *Selden End* at the Bodleian, and are fitted on the *inside* of the presses. A feature not elsewhere found in Oxford is that there are *two* locks on each side of the face-end—the bottom of the locks being on a level with the top of the second and the third shelves respectively. The only other examples I know of two locks, one above the other, corresponding somehow to the different shelves, are to be found in the bookcases in the side chapels at King's,

Cambridge, and in one wing of Chetham College, Manchester (see pp. 286, 266). But in both these libraries the locks are, as usual, on the outside of the face-end, not on the inside as at Lincoln. Curiously enough, the earliest of these is dated 1659, the year of the removal of the Lincoln Library to the Old Chapel. It is probable that the locks at Lincoln are those of the presses then made; and that when in 1739 these were veneered the locks were left in place, a key-hole being pierced through the veneer to make them still available. At any rate the key was inserted from the outside of the face-end; the scars of the key-holes and their brass scutcheons appear on the outer casing. The locks are small, being only $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches high by $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches wide. They differ from those in *Selden End* in that their narrow side is not visible on the edge of the press; but opposite to each lock there are, in the casing on the edge of the press-ends, square holes (now plugged) which show the point at which the staples of the hasp (or whatever it was) that stopped the rods entered the locks. No scars of hinges by which hasps were attached are apparent. Possibly the hinges of the hasps were nailed to the top of the brackets supporting the desks; possibly, instead of a hasp, there was a detachable fitting, with two staples corresponding to each of the two locks, which was completely removed from the press when it was desired to slide out the rods.

The shelves (between cupboards) against the north wall are provided with a couple of locks, one above the other, of the same size as those on the other presses, but nailed flat on to the surface of a wide upright. Here there are scars which look as if each of these locks was provided with hasps—hinged respectively above and below.

Holes in the old oak for rods below the desk are found in all the presses; but they are stopped up on the face-end by the "veneer". It follows that in 1739 some other method was devised for fixing the rods for the bottom shelf; probably, as at Jesus, the new rod-holes were in the brackets supporting the desk.

Like all the Oxford libraries, Lincoln has lost something. It is fortunate in that everything that has been added has been conceived in the same style and taste. It is still a unity. The last of the chained libraries has the formal dignity of the age of reason.

ADDITIONAL NOTE

The Mediaeval Library, Queen's

Money and books for the Library were given by William Rede, Bishop of Chichester, 1373–74; and books were already being chained there by 1381. The building in Loggan's print stands very nearly on the site now occupied by the Provost's Lodgings; one end of it is partially hidden by the mediaeval Lodgings. Five equidistant windows are visible, and the roof-line allows space for two more. At the south end is a large bay window—presumably lighting a vestibule.

The scars of chaining on books which survive from the Old Library are such as to suggest that it had been refitted on the Stall-system before 1600, like Merton and All Souls. About 1630 a project was on foot for increasing the number or height of the presses. The Donors' Book, 1659, records a gift by a Fellow, B. Robinson, of £40 *ad supellectilem hanc librariam ampliandam*; it adds, however, that the College only secured one-fourth of the money, plus half his books, by an arrangement with the heirs.

A similar entry has the further interest that it throws a lurid light on contemporary conditions.

Henry Wheeler, Gentleman-Commoner of this College, when on the point of setting out for Spain, about the year 1635, made a Will in which he left to this Queen's College, Oxford, £100 for enlarging the library furniture (*ad librariam hanc supellectilem augendam*). Shortly afterwards he died, stabbed by ruffians set on him by some Scotchman or other (*a Sicariis per Scotum nescio quem immissis*) at Madrid or Valladolid. He had made heir to his property a relative and namesake, —— Wheeler, a citizen of Westminster, living in the street, Channel Row. Being approached by us more than once about paying the legacy, he proceeded first to make friendly promises, then to spin delays, lastly with increasing violence explicitly to refuse (*demum increscentibus turbis, aperte praevaricari*). The time will come when, with the favour of Heaven (*favente Numine*) if not to us, at any rate to our successors, there will be granted what it is lawful and right to demand.

I venture the surmise that, notwithstanding these disappointments, some presses were added. The earliest catalogue, dated 1663, seems to imply 180 *partitiones*, besides two archive cupboards. That number would be provided by a library in which there were six *partitiones* to half a press, if on each side of the central avenue there were seven whole presses, with an archive press at one end and a half-press at the other. Such an arrangement would require eight windows. If one supposes that the vestibule lighted by the large bay-window, indicated in Loggan's plan, had by this time been thrown into the Library, the required number of windows was there.

CHAPTER IV

FIVE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY LIBRARIES

SYNOPSIS

There is a break of seventy years in the series of chained libraries in Oxford. The interval is bridged by the five libraries described in this chapter.

I. Westminster Abbey

The old Dormitory was fitted up, 1623–24, as a library on the three-decker Stall-system, by Lord Keeper Williams. It thus forms a bridge between *Duke Humphrey* and St. John's, Cambridge, which Williams began the same year. Its decorations resemble those of Jesus College, Oxford. In the pediments and wall-panelling there are hints of the developments found at St. John's.

II. Chetham College, Manchester

The buildings are those of an old castle turned, *c.* 1421, into a residence for the Collegiate Church, now Manchester Cathedral. After 1654 the Dormitory and Chapel were used by the executors of Humphrey Chetham to found "the oldest free library in Europe".

The method of chaining is in certain respects unusual. Probably about 1745 chaining was abandoned and the books were guarded instead by the picturesque gates, which are a unique feature of this library.

The presses were originally "three-deckers", but have been twice raised in height. They were provided with movable stools instead of fixed seats.

III. Wells

The present woodwork is mainly the gift of the famous "whipping Headmaster", Busby, in 1685. But the room, 1424–44, was designed for the Lectern-system. To adapt it to the Stall-system alternate windows were blocked up, and the presses, desks and seats were made unusually wide.

Locks, hasps and rod-sockets survive intact; also 285 of the old chains, but detached from the books.

IV. King's College, Cambridge

The Old Library—unique at Cambridge in retaining its chains till 1777—occupied five chantries in the great Chapel.

Five large half-presses (in three chantries) survive from a refitting, 1659–80.

The problem presented by Cole's description of the library in 1744. This can be solved by the hypothesis that the original fittings were on the model still to be seen at Durham Cathedral.

In 1851 the materials of the old bookcases were converted into seats in the Chapel. The carved end of fourteen of the seats now in the Chapel is of the same size as the *podium* on the bookcases at Peterhouse, and of similar design. The cornices also at Peterhouse are identical with those at King's.

From these data it is possible to reconstruct in elevation the presses at King's as seen by Cole. There were desks adapted both for sitting and standing readers.

Two locks survive on each of the remaining presses.

V. Durham

The Old Library was the Refectory of the Abbey, fitted up as a library *c.* 1684.

It was never chained, but is of special interest as combining the structure of the Stall-system (with sloping desks) and the dwarf bookcase and standing lecterns of the Cambridge tradition.

Assuming the correctness of the above reconstruction at King's, Durham is a further development of the same model. It forms, as it were, the end-stop to the series of libraries described heretofore.

CHAPTER IV

FIVE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY LIBRARIES

In the series of libraries studied in the last chapter there is a break. The woodwork at Jesus College, Oxford (1623), is separated from that of Queen's (1695) by more than seventy years. Into that period fall the pediments and desks of St. John's; a general heightening of presses; and the furnishing of Trinity and Lincoln, but the present aspect of the fittings of these two libraries reflects a later date.

During this break of seventy years the evolution of the chained library must be studied outside Oxford—at Westminster Abbey (1623–24), Chetham College, Manchester (1654), and Wells Cathedral (1685). King's College, Cambridge (1659–80)—for reasons which will appear—may profitably be studied along with the unchained library of Durham Cathedral (1684).

I

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

The mediaeval library of Westminster Abbey has disappeared, along with the old library building; but in 1623 John Williams, Lord Keeper, and Bishop of Lincoln, was Dean; and in one and the same year he embarked on two magnificent projects. At his own sole charges he began the building of the library of St. John's College, Cambridge; at Westminster also he fitted up as a library and furnished with books a room, 60 ft. by 30 ft., to the east of the cloister, which had been the dormitory of the old Abbey.

But at Westminster he did not initiate any important departure from the three-decker Stall-system model. This is the more remarkable in so much as the building invited experiment, since it is lighted with large windows high above the floor, and therefore lacked the row of equidistant windows at the level of the presses which the Stall-system presupposes. The gallery at the north end is an addition—probably late seventeenth century.

There are twelve presses and two half-presses. One of the presses, to make room for the present staircase, has been displaced, and now stands under the gallery. At the south end between the half-presses intrude a fireplace and cupboards of later date; but these are topped (see illustration) by original cornice and pediments.

In ornamentation the presses resemble those at Jesus College, Oxford; and, curiously enough, they are described by Brayley (*Abbey Church of Westminster*, 1823) as "large presses of *wainscot*"—the word used at Jesus. The seats have disappeared; but the outline, still traceable against the panelled wall, shows they were of the Jesus pattern. So also are the ground-supports and the brackets of the desks on the face-ends.

The pierced pediments, all of identical pattern, are a new feature. This pattern, though without the carved faces, is approximately repeated at Clare and St. John's, Cambridge. The design carved on the catalogue frames is the same in character, on a smaller scale, as that on the cornices.

The desks are specially notable in that they are still fixed by their original hinges, leaving a slot between the desk and the bottom shelf from $1\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide. The hinges are sunk into the wood so that the upper surface of the iron is level with that of the wood. This insetting, to judge by the scars which survive elsewhere, is unusual. The hinges at Hereford and St. John's, Oxford, have, as has been pointed out, certain peculiarities; those at Westminster are thus, except for their being sunk into the wood, the sole surviving specimen of what seems to have been the normal type of desk-hinge.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY. THE LIBRARY, LOOKING SOUTH

The presses have been heavily painted; but, by comparing one with another, the scars left by the ironwork can be distinctly read. The hasps are unusually narrow, barely an inch. The upper hasp was fixed *below* the cornice of the catalogue frame; the lower just under the hole for the bottom rod. On the face-ends and shelves are scars of rod-sockets of the usual type. The lock-plates, like those at Jesus, were a trifle smaller than at Corpus.

The face-ends and cornices are of oak; the wall-ends, shelves and desks are of soft wood—probably pine. So is the wall-panelling which I speak of later. On the desks, at the face-end, a piece of oak about 4 in. wide is mitred into the pine. The desks, I should add, originally averaged 12½ in. wide, but some have been slightly reduced. The presses rest on oak foundation-beams, which (between the presses) have been cut down and covered over with a deal floor two or three inches above the old level.

The panelling is of interest. As Williams was adapting an old building, he was faced with an architectural problem not heretofore presented to furnishers of libraries, viz. what should be done with the space between the presses which elsewhere is occupied by a window. At present this space is occupied by bookshelves against the wall; but these are clearly a later addition. Behind them the wall is panelled. The panelling, without these bookcases, can be examined under the gallery. The point to notice is that the cornice of the presses is here seen to continue along the top of the panelling. Elsewhere, when the shelves were put in front of the panelling, the cornice has been moved forward.

The idea of a panelled wall topped by a cornice continuing at right angles that of the presses was applied by Williams—with a difference—to St. John's, when a year or so later he was putting in the woodwork there. St. John's has windows in the usual place; but the space between the wall-end of the press and the side of the window is a little wider than usual. This space he panelled, and continued the cornice of the presses above the panelling. It may be doubted whether,

but for the success of his previous experiment at Westminster, he would have thought of this idea. Here, and in the pediments, the library at Westminster Abbey is an essential link in the chain of evolution between the Stall-system and the new experiment at St. John's, Cambridge.

II

CHETHAM COLLEGE, MANCHESTER

Chetham College, Manchester, inherits the site, and some of the buildings, of the castle of the Norman baron who became the first Lord of the Manor of Manchester. The baronial hall is now the kitchen. The buildings were extended and adapted, 1421–27, to form a residence for the Warden and Fellows of the Collegiate Church which is now the Cathedral of Manchester. At the Reformation the College buildings became a town residence of the Earls of Derby. In 1654 they came, in a somewhat dilapidated condition, into the hands of the executors of Humphrey Chetham, who carried out the testator's intention of acquiring part of the buildings for a Blue Coat School, and part for the housing of a Library. This library is stated by Baedeker, who should be on such a point an authority, to be "probably the oldest free library in Europe".

I was unable to make a personal inspection of this library until after this book was in galley-proof; but Mr. Norman Ault spent a day and a half there, and what is new in this chapter is mainly due to observations made by him and to documentary information courteously put at my disposal by the Librarian, Mr. C. T. E. Phillips.

Chetham College Library, like those of Merton and St. John's College, Oxford, occupies two long narrow rooms on the first floor of the building at right angles to one another. The shorter of these was the Chapel of the pre-Reformation College, and continued to be so used during the occupation of the Earls of Derby, 1549–1642; the altar rails, belonging to the latter period, are still preserved, and now form a barrier and gate (*x*, *x*, *x* on plan, p. 272). The longer

room is usually called "the Dormitory". The illustration opposite shows this as seen from the Chapel end.

Chetham expressly provided in his will that the books

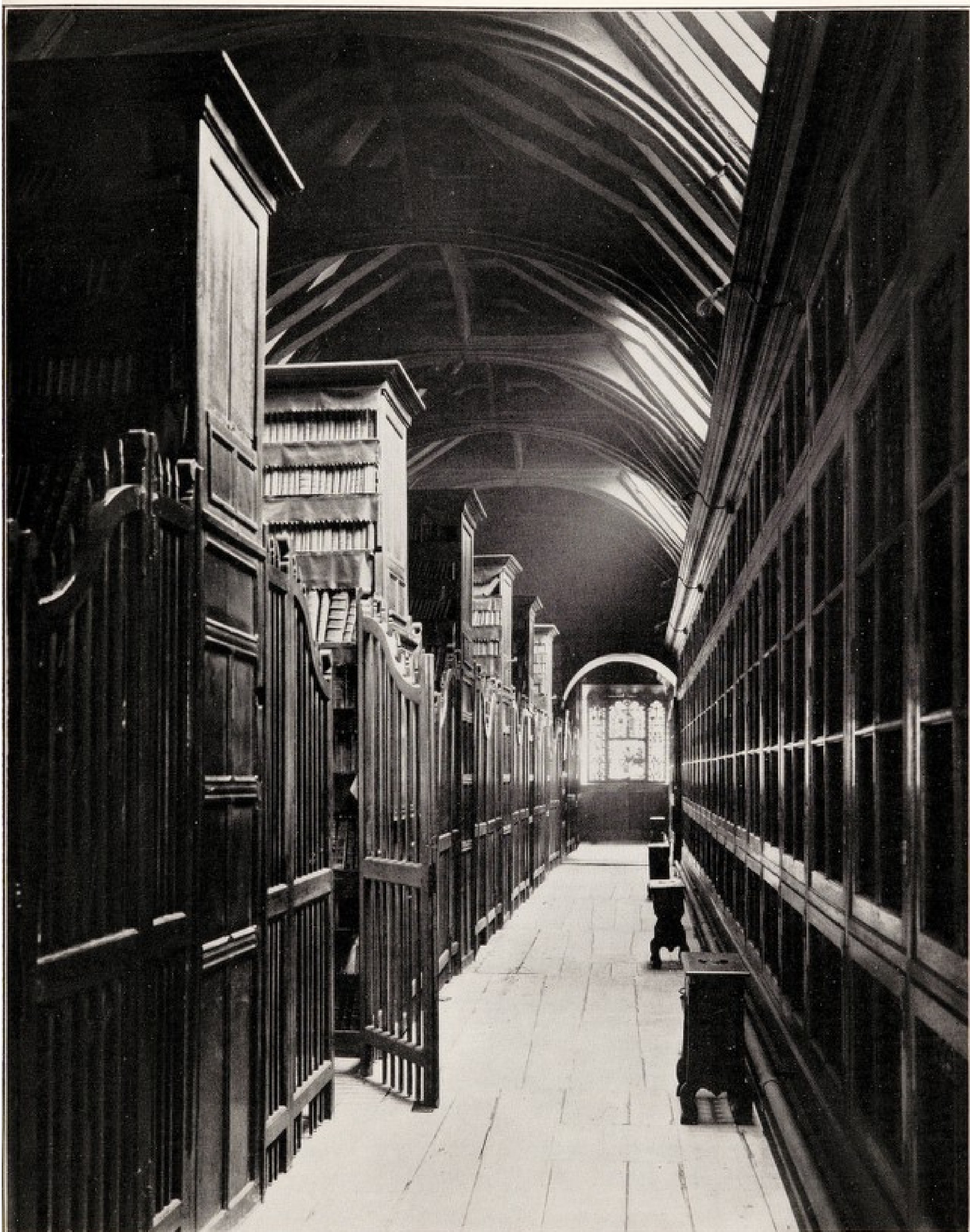
be fixed and chained, as well as may be, within the said Library, for the better Preservation thereof.

The practice of chaining fresh accessions to the library went on well into the eighteenth century. The following are the three latest entries in the accounts for chaining:

To Mr. Battersby, Chains	£6	6	0	Apr. 18, 1736
John Heap's bill for chaining books		16	4	Oct. 30, 1740
To John Heap's bill (for chaining books)	2	0	0	Dec. 30, 1742

The locks are fixed on the face-ends of the presses; but they are of a smaller size than usual, being only $3\frac{1}{8}$ in. by $2\frac{3}{4}$ in. In the longer room there were formerly two locks, one above the other, as at King's, Cambridge, and at Lincoln College, Oxford; and, as in those two libraries, there are no scars of hasps. Obviously some mechanism which dispensed with hasps was common to these three libraries, which are all more or less of the same period. In the longer room the lower locks have been removed and the scars carefully filled up with wood. The upper locks remain *in situ*; but as one has fallen out, and the hollow left by it is visible on the first press in the illustration, the reader can note their exact position. On the wall-ends there are scars of the rod-sockets for two shelves corresponding to these locks. The scars (which presumably exist) of the rod-sockets on the face-ends are concealed by the woodwork on which the gates are hung.

The presses on the shorter (Chapel) wing of the library have only one lock, which is on the level of the lower locks in the longer wing; and there are no scars of others. Similarly the wall-ends in this wing exhibit scars of only one rod-socket. It is not unlikely that, when the library was first opened, the presses in the Dormitory also had only one lock—the upper lock there being a later addition.



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CHETHAM COLLEGE. "DORMITORY", LOOKING NORTH

In the bookcases at Gorton and Turton, which are also due to Chetham's executors, a single rod along the shelf in the middle does duty for the books above and below. On some of the old books there is a scar of chaining on the *top edge* of the cover, almost touching the back of the binding, as if they were placed back outwards, and chained to the rod on the shelf above. The majority, however, have them on the *fore-edge*, as usual with the Stall-system.

There is, however, a still more remarkable fact, viz. that in both wings of the library only one side of each press has (or shows signs of ever having had) a lock. Yet there are scars of rod-sockets on the edges of the press-ends on the sides which lack the lock. This is probably to be explained by the hypothesis that on this side of the presses the rods were secured by a central lock, as in the neighbouring libraries of Gorton and Bolton. The library opened with only some 500 books; it would look as if the apparatus necessary for chaining was added *gradually*, with the increase of the number of books to be chained.

The picturesque gates between the face-ends of the presses are a unique feature of this particular library. J. W. Clark's description (*op. cit.*, p. 261) was based on a complete misapprehension of the phenomena. The gate (except in the very narrow bay G.H.) is not hung on the actual press-end, but on a narrow strip of fence, if one may so call it, which is nailed to the face-end. This "fence" conceals any scars on the edge of the face-end which might give a clue to the nature of the fixing of the rods at this end; but as the locks are on the outside of the face-end, the fence makes impossible any connection at all between rod and lock. The important conclusion follows that the rods, and therefore the chains, must have been removed *before* the gates were set up. The gates, therefore, were an *alternative* to chaining; they were not an additional precaution for the preservation of the books.

Chaining in Oxford and elsewhere was being gradually abandoned in the last half of the eighteenth century. If, therefore, we

were to make a guess at the date of a device which is essentially a half-way house between the chained library (still in fashion at the beginning of the century) and the open shelves (which were practically universal at its end), we should guess the middle of that century. This presumption lends significance to an entry in the accounts for the year 1745, which otherwise is merely puzzling:

For locks, hinges, and screws £5 15 9

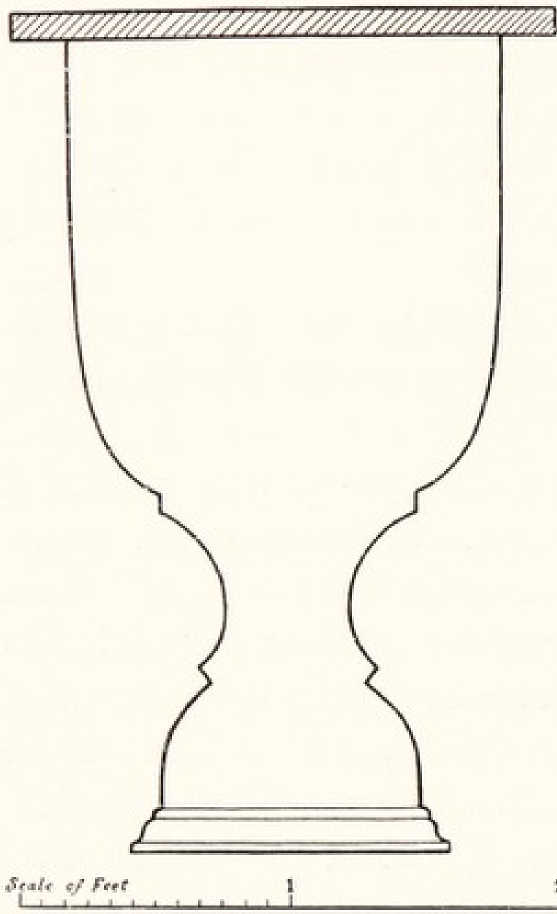
Locks, hinges and screws would be required for the setting-up of the gates. No mention is made of timber; but the gates and fences may have been a present.

The presses, as at Corpus and Trinity, Oxford, have twice been raised in height. Originally they were only 7 feet high. The join between the original presses and the first elevation (which, as at Trinity, Oxford, was only 1 ft. 2 in.) is covered by a piece of transverse moulding, which may be seen in the illustration on the level of the top bar of the fence on which the gate hangs. The small double panel above this line represents the extent of the first raising. The large panel above this represents a second heightening, which added nearly 3 feet (see also p. 228 f.). The cornice may be original, or may date from the first heightening. The panel immediately below the point where the top bar of the gate touches the press once bore painted titles of the contents of the presses; some of them are still legible in a good light.

In width the presses average 2 feet; in length about 10 ft. 1 in. The distance between them in the Dormitory is 5 ft. 11 in.; but in the Chapel wing it varies from 7 ft. 2 in. to 4 ft. 8 in. The last measurement is exceptional; it is due to the fact that the press marked HI in the plan has been moved in order to make room for the staircase. The half-presses marked J and K in the plan appear to be of later date than the others.

The original presses, though only 7 feet high, were nevertheless what I have elsewhere called "three-deckers". Like the presses at

Lincoln College, Oxford, they were not intended to house folios on every shelf—the distance between the shelves (reckoning from the bottom shelf upwards) being respectively 18½ in., 16½ in. and 11 in. The earliest catalogue, 1680, mentions under each *Classis*, first the "Quartos", then the "Folios"; and the "hand list" of the eighteenth-century librarian, Thyer, shows that in 1733 he found the shelves arranged with quartos on the top shelf, and folios on the other two. From the same "hand list" it appears that there were as yet no shelves below the desk. The desk shelf is 3 ft. above the floor; and the fact that originally there were no shelves below this is evidenced by the character of the ground-supports as well as by the catalogue. The presses are divided by two uprights into three sets of *partitiones*; and there are two ground-supports. In pattern these differ somewhat from those found in the Oxford libraries, as is shown in the appended diagram. When it was desired to put shelves below the desk level, support was needed for the ledges on which these additional shelves were to rest. To provide this there were added boards, straight on the outside edge, but on the inside edge cut so as to fit exactly into the complicated curves of the ground-supports.



CHETHAM COLLEGE. GROUND-SUPPORT

Robert Thyer was appointed librarian on February 7, 1732/3. On March 6, 1733, it was

Ordered that such alteration shall be made in the shelves of the library as shall be thought proper . . . and the proper shelves shall be put in

that part of the library called the Archives for the better disposal of ye Bookes.

Mr. Ault identifies the part of the library called the Archives with the room beyond the archway seen in the illustration (see dotted line in plan). The shelf-list of 1680 shows only the letters A to I, and L to Z. The presses at present lettered J and K are later additions—indeed since they exhibit no signs of chaining, they must be later than the series Aa-Dd of which I shall shortly speak. The letter K occurs in Thyer's hand-list, but may refer to a case which the present one replaces. The letters I and J were not then reckoned as two for such a purpose. The presses in the additional ("Archive") room start a fresh series Aa, Bb. This series is continued, from Ee onwards, in the row of back-to-wall cases seen on the right of the illustration and in the plan. Thyer's catalogue, which he *began* in 1734, includes numerous books with shelf-marks of this series. The wall-cases, therefore, or some of them, date from his time; but they may well be rather later than the presses in the Archive room. These cases are now fitted with doors panelled with a wire mesh; but these only date from an Order of 21st July 1819.

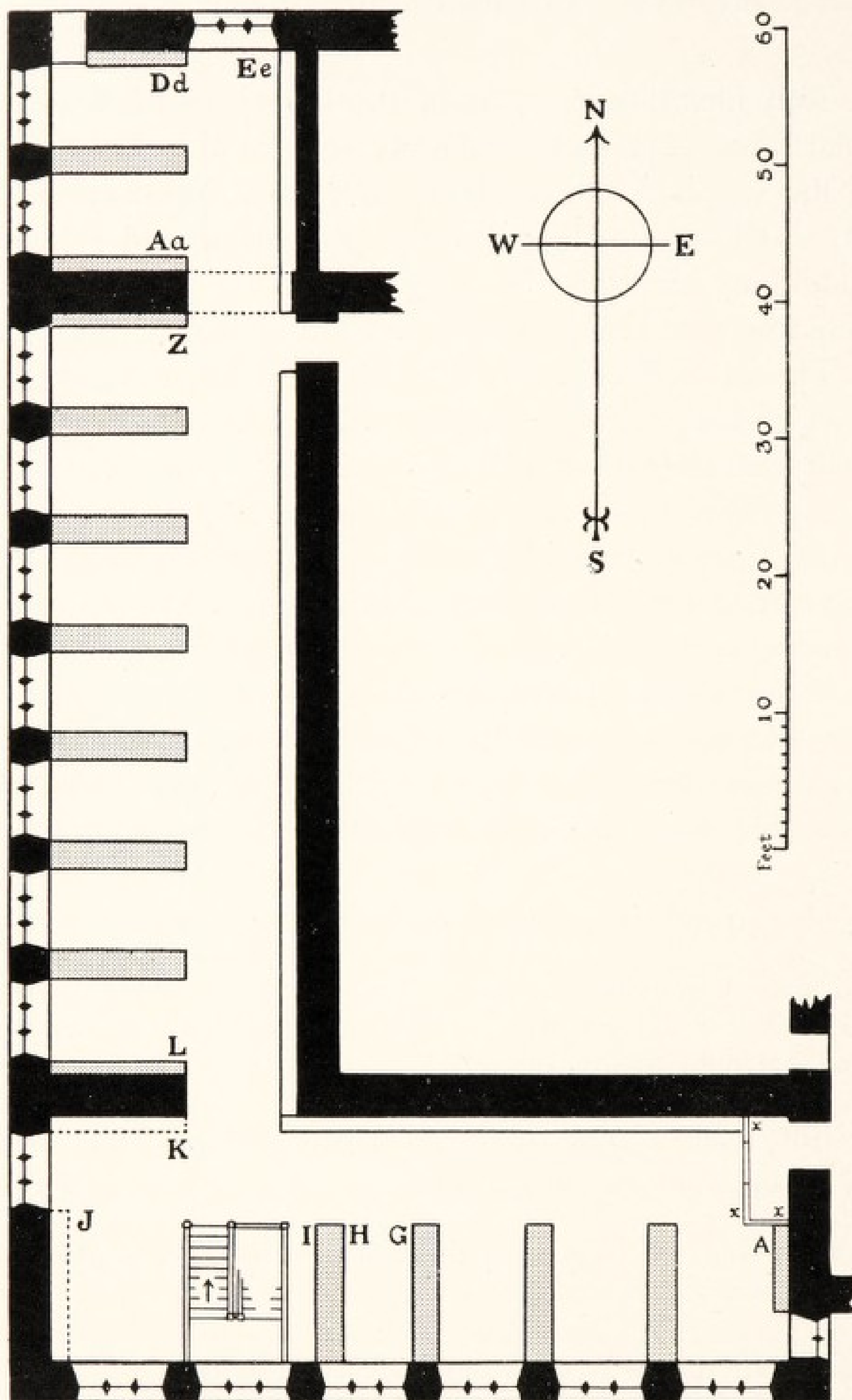
On July 4, 1787, John Radcliffe was elected librarian; and it was

Ordered that a Committee be appointed to inspect the library . . . and that such Committee shall have power to repair and make such alterations in the library as they think proper.

Radcliffe made a new catalogue which was published in 1791. In the introduction to this he says,

several cases could no longer contain their own books. The old cases had therefore to be made higher . . .

I suspect that this is a reference to the alterations made by the Committee appointed in 1787. If so, the first heightening of the presses must be assigned to that date.



THE LIBRARY, CHETHAM COLLEGE

A minute of July 21, 1819, reads:

Ordered that the Library be closed for a month, for the purpose of cleaning and making necessary alterations in the shelves.

The alterations here referred to, Mr. Phillips would identify with the second heightening of the presses.

There are in the library 26 beautiful old stools, in two patterns, examples of which are seen in the illustration. They represent a slight elaboration of the type of library stool found in St. John's College, Cambridge. Tradition says that these stools were originally used as the readers' seats between the presses. Mr. Ault could find no scars or other evidence that there had ever existed *fixed* seats between the presses, so the tradition is almost certainly correct.

III

WELLS

The Cathedral Library at Wells exhibits certain striking features peculiar to itself. The meaning of these becomes apparent when, and only when, we realize that here, as at Merton College, Oxford, library fittings on the Stall-system have been set up in a chamber originally designed for the Lectern-system, and no doubt originally fitted up on that system.

The problem, however, of adapting the Stall-system to a building designed for the earlier Lectern-system was solved at Wells in quite a different way. At Merton it was solved by making the presses exceptionally narrow—so narrow indeed that they could not possibly have held a double row of folio volumes back-to-back. At Wells it was solved by an opposite device. First, *alternate windows were blocked up*; then, in order to fill up the abnormally large wall-space thus produced between the remaining windows, the presses, desks and seats were all made of an otherwise absurdly exaggerated width. In a building designed for the fully developed Stall-system,

the usual distance from centre to centre of the windows is from 8 ft. to 8 ft. 6 in.; the wall-space between the windows being about 3 feet. At Wells the distance from centre to centre of the *original* windows was 5 ft. $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. (*i.e.* it was practically identical with the distance at Merton, which is 5 ft. 6 in.); the wall-space between the windows was about 2 ft. 3 in. as compared with 2 feet at Merton. The windows, though unlike Merton they have a double light, are slightly narrower than the Merton windows at their widest splay inside, owing to the wall being thinner and the splay less spreading. As a result of this blocking-up of alternate windows at Wells, the wall-space between those that remained was increased to 7 ft. $10\frac{1}{2}$ in. Somehow or other this space had to be filled up; everything, therefore, in the library at Wells was made exceptionally broad. The width of the presses is just over 3 feet, as against the usual 2 feet or 2 ft. 2 in. The desks vary somewhat, but average 22 inches (as against 15 inches elsewhere), not counting the width of the slot (2 inches) between the desk and the press; the seat-ends are 2 ft. 3 in. wide (at Corpus they are 2 feet), while the benches of the seats are so broad that they project on each side 4 inches beyond the ends, making a total width of nearly 3 feet. Even so, the distance between seat and desk is such that to read a book resting on the desk one has to lean forward more than is quite comfortable.

The known facts about the history of the library fit in with these observations on its peculiar structure. I derive my knowledge of its history from a pamphlet by the Rev. C. M. Church (formerly sub-dean) kindly lent me by the present Dean.

The library was built over the east walk of the cloister from a bequest of Nicholas of Bubwith, Bishop of Bath and Wells, who died in 1424. Its total length, including what is now the vestibule, is 165 feet; but the work seems to have been carried out by instalments over perhaps twenty years. The narrow distance between the windows proves, as I have already indicated, that it was designed for fittings on the Lectern-system; and, as there are windows

on both sides of the room, it may be presumed that there were two rows of lecterns.

This probably lasted till 1685. In that year the Chapter decreed that "the library be repaired and beautified with Dr. Busby's donation, as the said Dr. Busby doth desire". Dr. Busby, besides being a dignitary of Wells, was Headmaster of the King's School, Westminster; and he has been rendered immortal, not by his numerous merits, but by the exclamation of Sir Roger de Coverley, awe-struck before his monument in the Abbey: "Dr. Busby! A great man! He whipped my grandfather. A very great man!" The Dean of Wells at the time was Bathurst, also President of Trinity College, Oxford, who was probably concerned with some of the alterations in the structure of the library of that College which have been mentioned in an earlier chapter.

In 1728 the library was enlarged. A Chapter Minute orders

> the partition in the library room to be taken down for enlarging the same by adding three desks [note the survival of the old word "desk"] or places for reception of the books given to the new library by the late Bishop Hooper.

The presses then added are the three nearest the entrance from the vestibule to the library proper. The ironwork on these is slightly inferior; but they do not differ from the older presses in any substantial respect. Against the partition is a half-press, which is formed into a kind of cupboard by a wooden grill with a square mesh, like those at Merton (p. 147). This half-press is probably Busby's work, though now separated from the rest of it by the three intruded presses; it would be natural, when the partition was moved to the north some 30 feet, to move along with it the half-press fixed against it.

Of the ancient chains, no less than 285 were found some years ago on the top of the presses, where they had apparently been thrown on being removed from the books. Most are now hanging in clusters on the walls; but a few have been fitted to a restored rod on one of the presses. One book only, a Polyglot Bible, is actually

chained; but the clip by which this chain is affixed to the cover does not strike me as original. I noticed, however, at the loose end of one of the other chains, an original brass clip of the usual kind. Clark says that, apart from the Polyglot, he could discover no indications of chaining on any of the books. He infers that none of them ever were chained:

> the cases are a curious instance of the maintenance of fashion. Dean Bathurst ordered a bookcase, and it was supplied to him with all its fittings complete, whether they were to be used or not.

I only had time to examine a dozen or so of the books, mainly in one press; but more than half of those that I happened to lay my hands on bore clear scars of chaining. The position of the scars varied. Most of the books had the scars in the usual place on the fore-edge; in one book it was against the joint of the cover. Clark noted a similar phenomenon on the Polyglot, and inferred from it —correctly, I believe—that it meant that this book was placed on the shelf back outwards, as in a modern library. Some of the books have scars on the top edge, showing that, when first chained, they were in a library on the Lectern-system. This is only what one would expect to find at Wells, where the present Stall-system only dates from 1685.

I proceed to note some features peculiar to this library. The woodwork, including the panelling on the walls, is of deal, with a handsome grain rather like pitch-pine. All other similar libraries are of oak.[1] But at this period deal (imported from Norway) was a fashionable wood for panelling.

The desks are fixed; and I could see no trace of hinges. At present they are covered with baize which was once red; this is not modern, but perhaps not original. Possibly because the desks were not hinged, at Wells shelves below the desk have never (as in all other such libraries) been added later to accommodate extra books.

[1] Westminster is no real exception, as the "show parts" are of oak.

WELLS CATHEDRAL. FACE-END, WITH HASPS

The ironwork is in certain ways unusual; it should be studied in the illustration, p. 277. The hasps are ornamented with a kind of "gimped" pattern. The hasp which stops the rod below the desk is not, as elsewhere, fixed by a hinge. It is detachable and is dropped down from above through a slot in the wooden moulding that runs horizontally across the face-end of the press on the level of the desk; it then hangs suspended from a pin on the lock-plate which is concealed by the end of the upper hasp. The upper hasp, when locked, overlaps the lower and prevents it slipping off the pin. The lock is about half the ordinary width. The cup inside the bulges on the upper hasp is in the form of a small octagonal pocket about 1 inch deep, circular inside and just large enough to receive the end of the rod. The rod-socket adjoining the hasp is thus rendered superfluous, and is replaced by a round hook open at the top, which helps to support the weight of the rod, but does not prevent it being lifted when the hasp cup is released.

The chains are there, to the number of 285; the books are there; all the ironwork required for chaining is there, except plain rods, which of all things are the most easy to replace. It seems a pity that some public-spirited person should not come forward and offer to re-wed the books and chains so unhappily divorced.

The wall-space between the press and the window is panelled, and the cornice of the press is returned along the top of this panelling. This feature first occurred, as we have seen, at St. John's College, Cambridge, and became general in unchained libraries; but it is not found in any other chained library, except Queen's College, Oxford, and (in germ) at Westminster Abbey.

Although the presses are 8 ft. 6 in. long, they are divided into only two sets of *partitiones*; under the dividing upright is a ground-support shaped rather like the Bodleian, but of thin board, only about half the weight of ground-supports in the older libraries.

The large panelled effect of the face-ends, seen in the illustration,

is another new feature. The character of the pediments, which vary considerably in detail, is also unusual. The Gothic, Tudor and Jacobean traditions have here completely disappeared.

IV

KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

THE library at King's College, Cambridge, from the year 1570 until the completion of the new buildings by Wilkins in 1828, was in five small chantries, which are continuous with the vestry on the south side of the Chapel. This library is unique among Cambridge libraries in that it retained its chains as late as 1777.

The library was refitted at intervals from 1659 to 1680 from money bequeathed by three several Fellows. Except for the difference in the initials and arms of the testators, there is no noticeable difference between the work that dates from 1659 and that copied from it some twenty years later. From this seventeenth-century refitting there remain five handsome half-presses (8 ft. 3 in. high; 7 ft. 6 in. in length), distributed in three chantries (p. 281).

The Cambridge antiquary Cole has left in MS. a minutely detailed description of the library as he saw it in 1744. From a long extract from this printed by Willis and Clark (i., p. 539) I excerpt the following:

> The Classes for ye Books in this Library are all of Norway Oak elegantly fitted up and neatly carved; 5 of wch are in each Chapel, viz: 2 at ye extremities, wch are but half one's, and 3 in ye body, of wch ye middlemost is much loftier y^n ye rest. Over each of these classes, both in Front and at ye ends are the Arms and Crest of ye Donor, wth ye Initial Letters of his name in Gold Capitals several Times, thus T.C. . . .

Cole's description raises a difficult question. The existing half-presses are 14½ inches wide; whole presses which matched these need not have been exactly twice as wide, but they could hardly have been less in width than the standard minimum of 2 feet. As

the locks prove that the books were chained, and chained books require a desk, the existence of a desk of some sort must be postulated. But here comes the difficulty. The normal width occupied by a whole press and its desks on each side is rarely as little as 5 feet; the space therefore required for three whole presses and two half-presses with their desks would be not less than 20 feet. But the total length of a chantry is 20 ft. 7 in.; it would seem, then, that the library was designed for readers who, like the pack-of-card figures in *Alice in Wonderland*, existed in two dimensions only.

A College Order dated February 21, 1851, reads:

> Agreed that Mr. Rattee be employed to convert the materials of the Bookcases in the Side Chapels into Seats with Book Boards and Kneeling Stools for the Chapel, at a cost not exceeding £25.

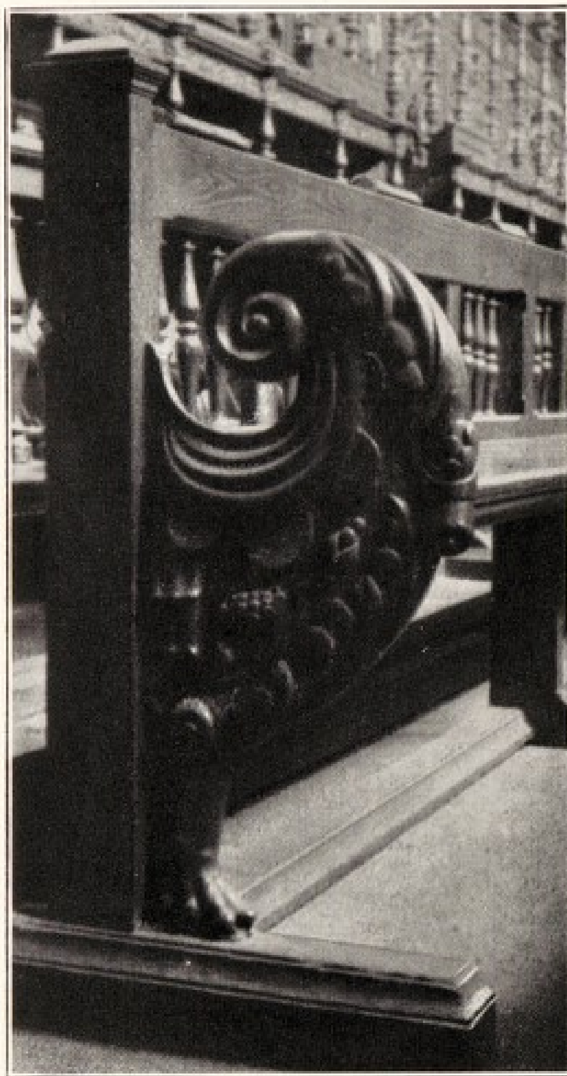
Much of the material derived from the break-up of the bookcases would be in lengths of 7 ft. 6 in., that being the length of the surviving presses; and it is likely that the carving spoken of by Cole would have been worked in somewhere. Now there are in the Chapel fourteen very plain seats, the benches of which are incongruously supported by elaborately carved brackets; but the carving is at one end only. Eight of these seats are 7 ft. 6 in. long.

Mr. Ault noticed the resemblance of these brackets to a feature at Peterhouse to which Willis and Clark (iii., p. 456) give the name of *podium*. This observation led to another. The problem of squeezing into the chantry the presses enumerated by Cole can be solved on the hypothesis that they were like those at Durham—a library fitted up by a Dean who was a Cambridge man (illustration, p. 286).

In the reconstruction indicated on p. 284, the design is organically related to traditional Cambridge models. It combines the dwarf bookcase (with desk on top) seen at St. John's with the *podium* of Peterhouse. This *podium* is a kind of box seat, 12 in. broad, 21½-23½ in. high. It is attached to the press (which, having no chains, has no desk) so that the reader sits with his back to the press. The carved brackets of the seats are of the same size as the carved

KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE. HALF-PRESS IN CHANTRY

ends at King's, and of similar ornament. But at King's, unlike Peterhouse, the books were chained, so a desk was required; the *podium*, therefore, was transferred from the tall press to the dwarf bookcase, precisely as, later, at Durham.



KING'S. SEAT-END IN CHAPEL

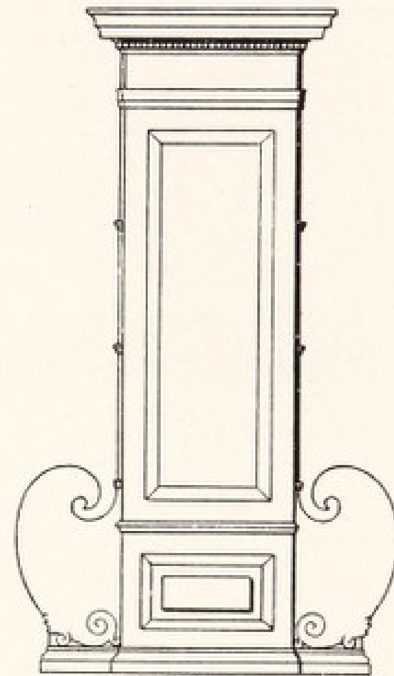
PETERHOUSE. END OF "PODIUM"

The cornices also at King's and Peterhouse are identical.

On the inside of the carved seat-ends at King's is a groove, about $\frac{3}{8}$ in. wide and deep, forming a quadrant descending from the outer edge of the bench. This means that the benches supported by the carved ends, though at present fixed, were originally hinged, so as to flap downwards. In seats attached to a desk-topped bookcase, such an

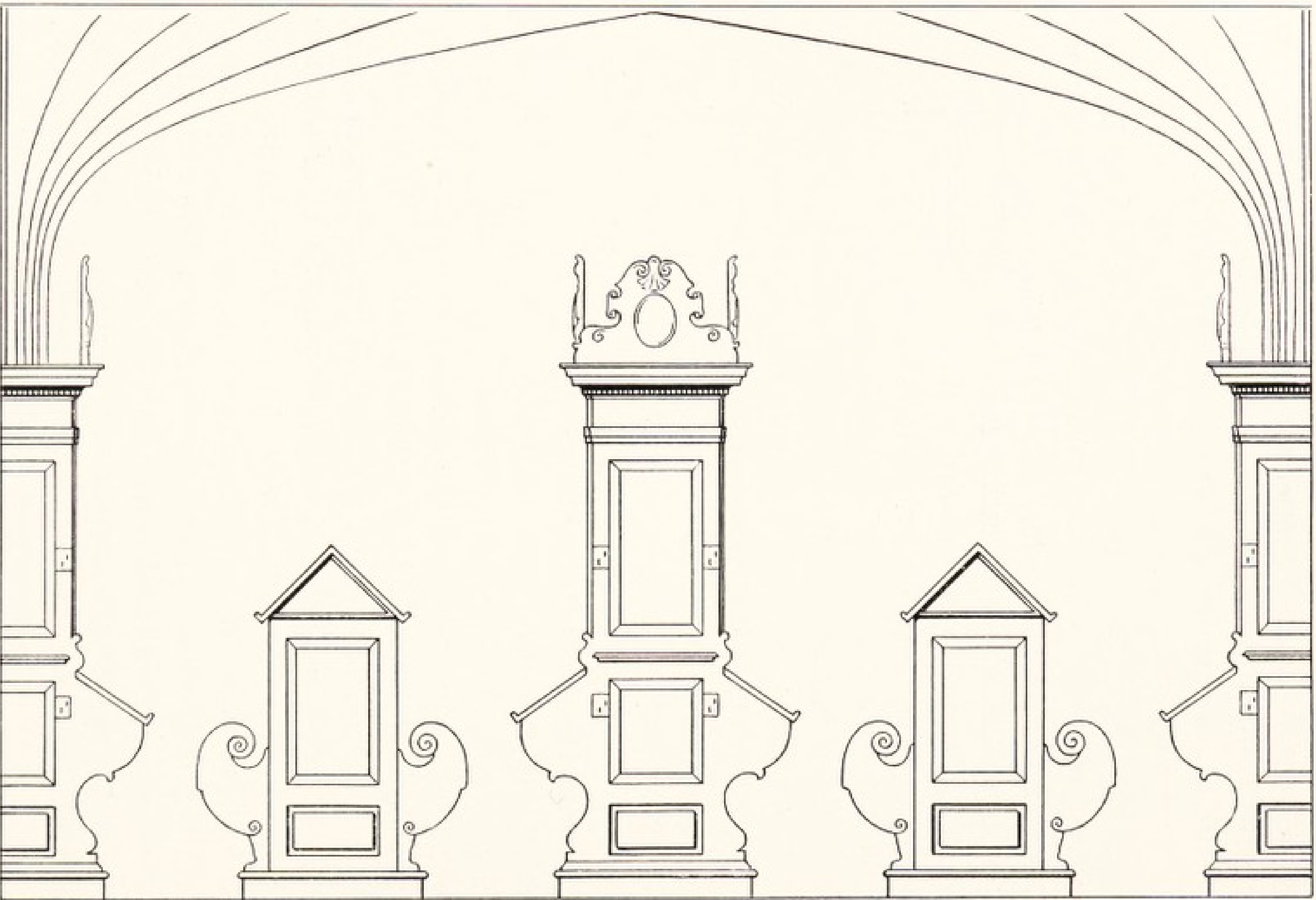
arrangement would be a convenience. With the bench temporarily out of the way, it would be easier for a standing reader to study books resting on the dwarf bookcase.

Mr. Ault's reconstruction satisfies Cole's description. There are "at the extremities" two presses "which are but half ones"; and there are three "in the body, of which the middlemost is much loftier than the rest"—the word "rest" meaning the two dwarf bookcases. These bookcases, having their desk on top (instead of projecting into the room), occupy about two-fifths of the space required by tall presses with projecting desks. Thus the difficulty raised by the dimensions of the chantry simply disappears.



PETERHOUSE.
ORIGINAL ELEVATION OF PRESS WITH "PODIA"

In the illustration on p. 281 there can be seen, 3 ft. 6 in. above the floor, just below the level of the broad shelf, small pieces of wood about $1\frac{1}{8}$ in. wide (of a different texture to the other woodwork) let into the press-ends and the central pilaster. These evidently fill up gashes left by the removal of the desk. But the gashes are not high enough above the floor to be scars of a desk convenient for a standing reader; they suit the back of a steeply-sloping desk for a sitting reader like that of Durham. There can also be seen a projecting curved foot, above which is a gash about 1 in. wide on the outside edge of the press-end extending to a point 4 in. above the broad shelf. A comparison with Durham (illustration, p. 286) suggests that this gash was caused by the removal of the bracket which supported the desk. At King's this bracket, for ornamental reasons, rose 6 in. above the desk at the back. On the central pilasters there are faint scars of a central bracket.



KING'S. RECONSTRUCTION OF OLD LIBRARY

On the face-ends there are two locks, one above the other, $4\frac{1}{4}$ in. high by $3\frac{1}{8}$ in. wide. There are scars of sockets for a rod, on a level with the top shelf, and again below the broad shelf. The top of the lock is in each case level with the line of the rod. The books on the broad shelf were evidently chained to a rod below the desk, which must have had the usual "slot" at the back. As at Chetham College (p. 266) and at Lincoln, Oxford (p. 254), there are no scars of hasps.

V

DURHAM

The "Old Library" at Durham Cathedral, originally the Refectory, was fitted up as a library by Dean Sudbury, who died in 1684, before the completion of the work. It was never chained.

Originally what is now the top shelf of the presses was closed in by panels, with a moulding below, in the same style as, and continuing, the panel (lettered F, etc.) and moulding on the face-end. Probably, as in the similar closed-in top shelf at Queen's and Lincoln, Oxford, these panels were hung on hinges as cupboard doors. Before they were removed, the presses were "three-deckers".

The remarkable thing is the combination of opposites—of the traditional back-to-back seat of the Stall-system with the dwarf bookcase (with a desk on top for a standing reader), which at St. John's College, Cambridge, is a *substitute* for that seat. If the above reconstruction of the library of King's be correct, this combination was not a new one; Durham is a development of the King's model. Dean Sudbury, a graduate of Trinity Hall, had acquired the taste for standing-desks.

Finally, it should be noted that the large plain panels on the face-ends recall the almost contemporary chained library at Wells.

This interesting combination of diverse elements from the older systems marks out the Old Library of Durham as being a kind of "end stop" to the series in the development of the Mediaeval and Renaissance Library.

(J. R. Edis, Durham)

THE OLD LIBRARY, DURHAM CATHEDRAL

CHAPTER V

GRAMMAR SCHOOL AND PARISH CHURCH LIBRARIES

SYNOPSIS

A LARGE number of churches have one or two chained books; a few have from four to seven volumes chained to a desk; three have from nine to thirteen. One of these—Wootton Wawen, between Stratford-on-Avon and Birmingham—preserves an interesting desk, of which an illustration and description are given.

Of the churches and grammar schools which once had chained libraries, only nine retain a substantial number of the original chains.

At Chirbury, Guildford and Denchworth, books and chains survive, but the original bookcases have perished. At Guildford the woodwork has been skilfully restored.

Wimborne Minster and Grantham Parish Church have much in common. They are both in upper chambers, approximately 15 feet square, approached by a winding staircase, and both are fitted with back-to-wall bookcases. The chains and the method of locking at Wimborne resemble, and may have been suggested by, the Laurentian Library at Florence.

Still more closely related to one another are the group of libraries in the environs of Manchester—at Bolton, Gorton and Turton. These represent a remarkable combination either of the almery or of the book-chest with the practice of chaining.

All Saints', Hereford, has—after the Cathedral—the largest collection of chained books in England. The woodwork represents an interesting transitional form between the almery bookcase of Bolton and Gorton and certain types which are familiar in modern domestic furniture.

CHAPTER V

GRAMMAR SCHOOL AND PARISH CHURCH LIBRARIES

Books in Chains

In 1890, under the title *Books in Chains*, the late Mr. William Blades published a booklet of some sixty pages containing a survey of all the chained books in England in regard to which he could obtain information. This work takes the form of a catalogue, arranged alphabetically under the names of places. It is a document of great value, although from some of the answers of correspondents which he prints it is evident that the precision of the information afforded him varied a good deal with the intelligence, or the degree of interest in the matter, of his several informants. That the author has succeeded in making his list of chained books complete is, as he himself says, unlikely. A much longer list is given in Cox and Harvey's *English Church Furniture*, p. 338 ff. Neither list includes the chained MSS. at Winchester described later (p. 345 f.) or the so-called "Hexham Bible" in the Cathedral Church at Newcastle-on-Tyne—a thirteenth-century MS. which has attached to it a chain of 23 links, but lacking a swivel.

A study of the facts thus collected brings out some interesting results. In the vestries of parish churches, in grammar schools, and in other institutions, there were once quite a number of chained libraries containing anything from 40 to 350 volumes. Still more frequently there occurred one or more books chained to a desk in the body of the church for general use. But, alike from libraries and desks, the chains have, as a rule, disappeared; though often a book or

two remains, with a ring, with or without a few links, still attached. About ninety churches have either one or more books with their original chains. Sleaford in Lincolnshire has thirteen volumes with chains. At Wootton Wawen (between Stratford-on-Avon and Birmingham) there are nine volumes which are chained to a desk. At St. Helen's, Abingdon, Berkshire, there are as many as eleven chained books, which are now preserved in glass cases; but, owing to the neglect of previous generations, all but one are in a state of decay. It is notable that, where a single book is chained in a church, Foxe's "Book of Martyrs" or one of Jewell's works (usually his *Apology for the Church of England*) appear rather more often than the Bible. The explanation of this curious fact (at least let us hope so) is that Bibles disappeared sooner—worn out by much reading.

Of the collections of chained books mentioned by Blades, only nine are of sufficient extent to justify the use of the term "library". The largest—it still contains 313 chained books—is in All Saints' Church, Hereford. The character, however, of the desk preserved at Wootton Wawen gives this little collection also a right to inclusion in a volume which deals with the development of library furniture.

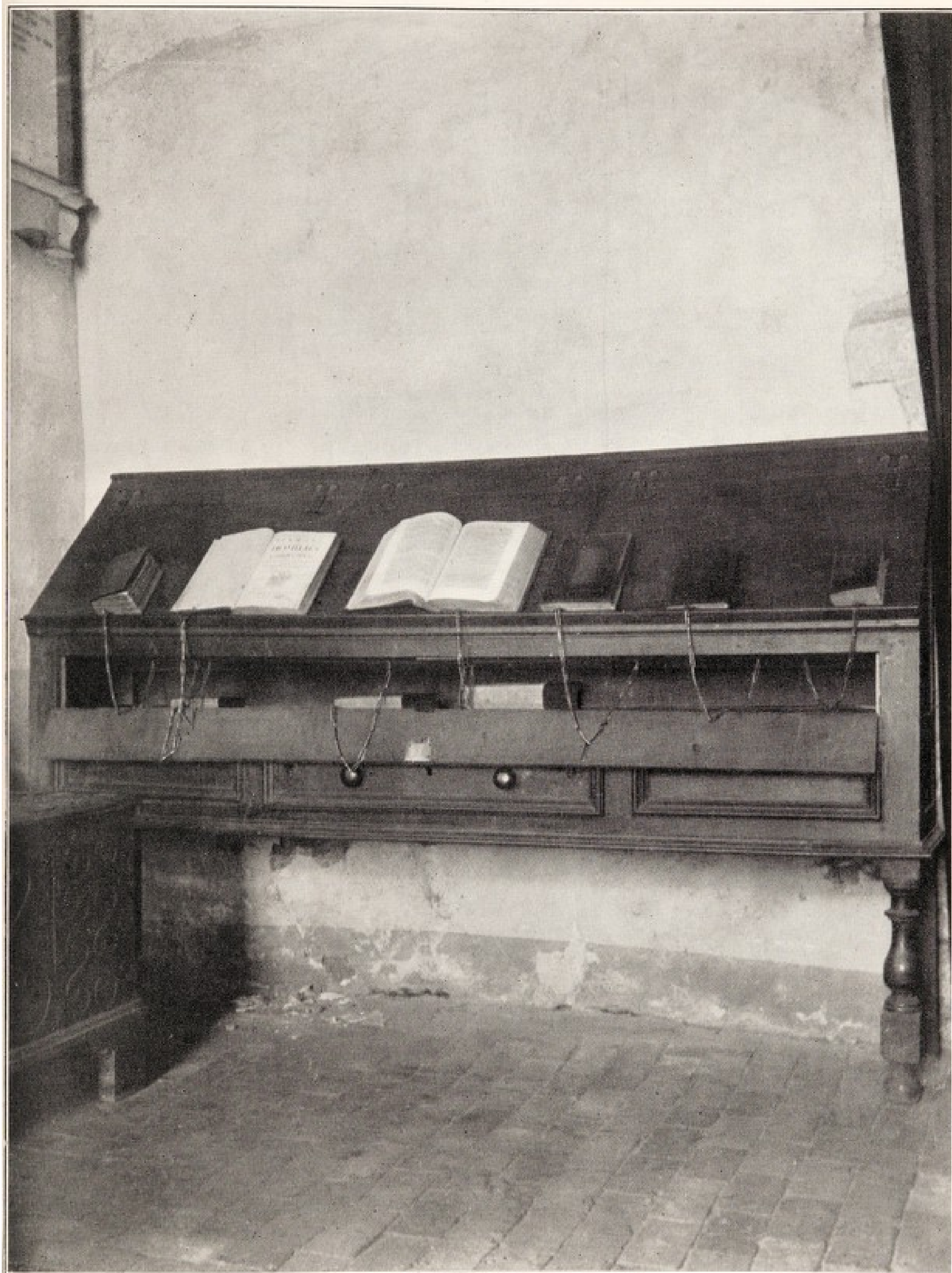
The libraries may conveniently be grouped in four divisions:

(1) Those which have lost their original woodwork, without any evidence as to its character having survived, viz. Chirbury and Guildford Grammar School; to which may be added Denchworth.

(2) Those where the books are arranged, either on shelves fixed against the wall, or in a plain bookcase not markedly different from such shelves, viz. Wimborne Minster and Grantham Parish Church.

(3) Those which are essentially the ancient almery, or else the book-chest, provided with chains, viz. Bolton, Gorton and Turton.

(4) All Saints', Hereford—which I conceive as the "missing link" between the almery bookcase and certain types which are familiar in modern domestic furniture.



THE CHAINED BOOK-DESK, WOOTTON WAWEN

Wootton Wawen

The desk on which the books at Wootton Wawen are chained is of great interest (illustration overleaf); it looks as if it was a direct, or at least a collateral, descendant of the old Lectern-system. Authentic information as to its origin is preserved in the British Museum, in the papers of Thomas Baker, the Cambridge historian.[1] Baker seems to have been present at the time when the books were chained to the desk. Speaking of the then incumbent George Dunscomb, he says:

> He gave some good books for the use of his Parishioners, which were preserved in the Vicaredge House, till at the request of the people they were chained to a Desk in the south Isle of the Church, April 11th, 1693.

The desk, it will be observed, follows the model of the second stage at Lincoln and the Italian Lectern-system, when a shelf was placed underneath; but, like the very different libraries of Bolton and Gorton (both of which I shall shortly discuss), it combines with chaining a locked cupboard which is really a relic of the ancient almery. The rod on which the chains run is permanently fixed on the inside of this low cupboard. Most of the chains are fastened to the books at the bottom of the right-hand board; this is the position at Cesena and in the Laurentian Library, both of which are furnished with a shelf below the lectern. The chains are similar to those at Hereford; but there is a swivel on the ring attached to the book, and also on that which runs on the rod.

Chirbury, Guildford, Denchworth

It is odd that, besides the Chapter Library and that of All Saints' Church, there should be in the diocese of Hereford yet another chained library—in the village of Chirbury, Salop. An

[1] *T. Baker's Collect., Harl.*, 2045, p. 463. I owe this reference to the Rev. L. A. Pollock, formerly Vicar.

account of the library, including a catalogue of its contents, is given in an article by Mr. St. John Hope in the *Journal of the British Archaeological Society*, 1883, vol. 29, p. 394. Several of the books in this library bear the names of members of the Herbert family, to which belonged Lord Herbert of Chirbury and the poet, George Herbert. Mr. Hope argues that these books, and possibly the bulk of the collection, are the remains of a library of chained books formed by the poet George Herbert in Montgomery Castle, which is only about three miles distant from Chirbury. He quotes from Izaak Walton's *Life* of George Herbert the following extract, which, since it occurs in some editions of that work in an abbreviated form, I reproduce:

> The rebels burnt and destroyed a choice library which Mr Herbert had fastened with chains in a fit room in Montgomery Castle, being by him dedicated to the succeeding Herberts that should become the owners of it.

The chaining of books in a private library was unusual.

These books, Mr. Hope suggests, or at any rate some of them, after the sack of the castle came into the hands of E. Lewis (Vicar of Chirbury, 1629–1677), who built and endowed a school in the churchyard, and provided it with a chained library.

The books of this library are said to have been stowed away in an old box on the school premises; they were transferred to the vicarage in the latter part of the last century. I cannot help wondering whether the "old box" may not have been the remains of an almery bookcase of the kind still preserved at Bolton and elsewhere, which I shall shortly describe. The library is now the property of the Lewis Charity Trustees, and a full list of the books is given in a schedule of their property issued by the Charity Commissioners. It is now housed in two modern bookcases of pitch-pine. With the assistance of my friend, Mr. Winnington-Ingram, the present Vicar, I counted the books. The larger bookcase contains 115 books, of which 83 still have the old chains attached to them; the

smaller contains 89 books, of which 51 have chains. Most of the unchained books bear the scars of chaining, and there are four loose chains. The chains are similar to those in the Chapter Library at Hereford; but the end not attached to the fore-edge of the book hangs loose, as there are no rods fitted to the bookcase.

The incongruity of an ancient chained library in a modern pitch-pine bookcase, and that without any rods for the chains to run on, is glaring; and the covers of many of the books are in bad condition. Altogether the situation is one that cries out loudly for the intervention of an intelligent restorer, which I am sure no one would welcome more than the present Vicar, who is the *ex officio* custodian of this interesting collection.

The library of the Royal Grammar School, Guildford, had its origin in a bequest of Bishop Parkhurst of Norwich in 1573. A full account of it is given in the history of the school by G. C. Williamson, of which a copy has been kindly presented to me by Mr. A. J. B. Green, the present head master. An admirable photograph of the library appeared in *Country Life*, July 30, 1904; but, by a curious slip, though the letterpress refers to Guildford, the name "Winchester" has been substituted in the caption under the illustration.

This library was visited by J. W. Clark in 1893. It was then in a sadly neglected state; but as a result of his exhortations it was restored, with appropriate shelves and desk in 1897. Nearly 90 books are chained. J. W. Clark (*op. cit.*, p. 158) gives an illustration of an unusual swivel attachment on a chain he saw there, which partly, but not exactly, resembles that at Zutphen. Mr. Williamson, however, states that in 1898 none of the chains had swivels; though he remembers that

> in the chain that I showed to Mr. Clark there was a swivel close up to the very first link of the chain, but apparently that chain must have disappeared or been altered.

In Denchworth Church till 1852 there was a chained library in a room over the porch, as at Grantham. The books, which include two *incunabula*, and a first edition of Raleigh's *History of the World*, are now in the vicarage. Only two of them have their chains still attached; but there are 110 of the original chains lying loose. Here surely is an opportunity for an intelligent restoration.

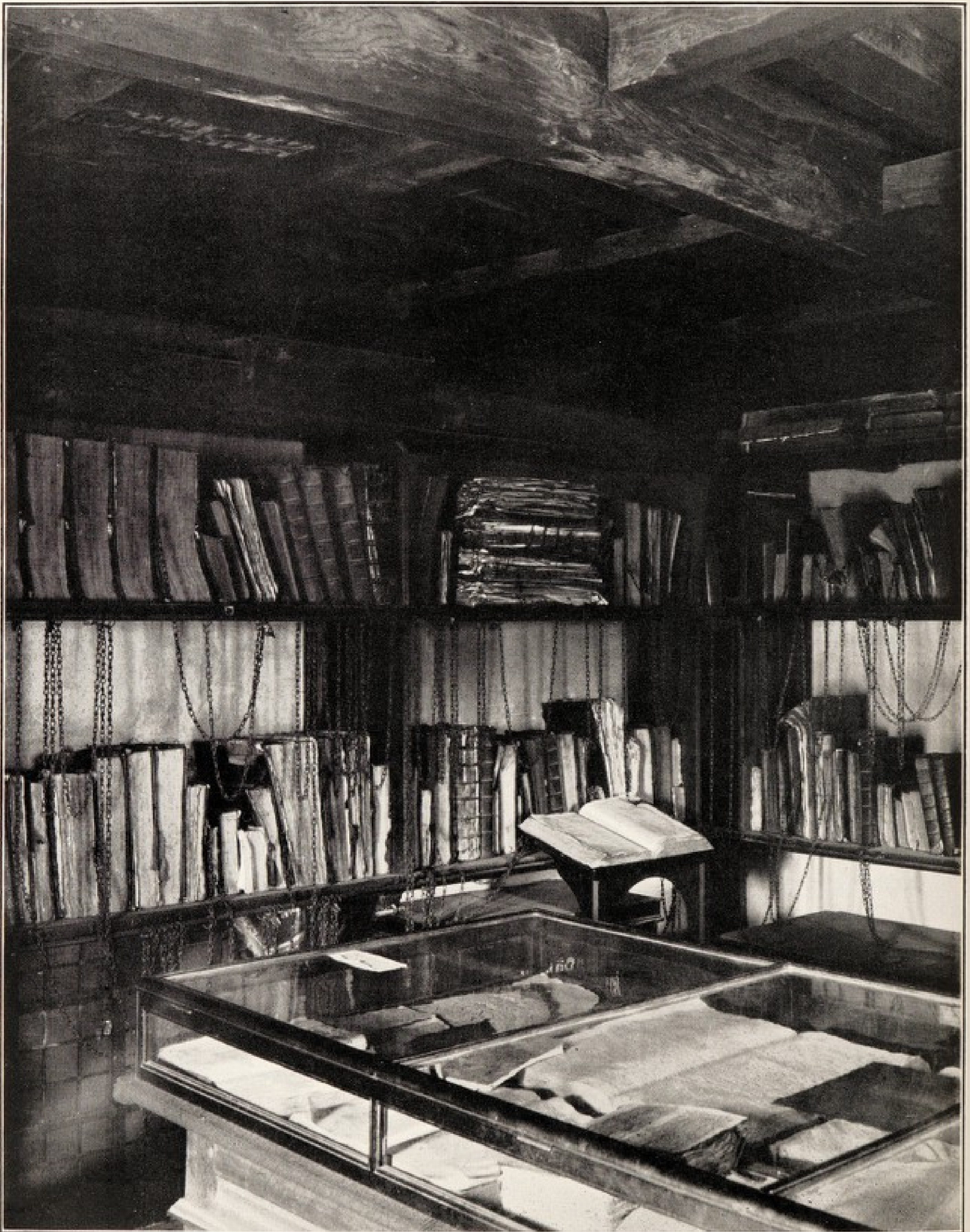
Wimborne and Grantham

The historical interest and the aesthetic charm of these two libraries depend largely on their situation—in little upper chambers in ancient churches, approached by a winding stair. The visitor finds himself, as it were, in a secluded cell—encircled by bookcases festooned with chains.

In Wimborne Minster the library, founded 1686, is in a room over the vestry about 15 feet square. I was unable to visit this library before sending this to press; but Canon Keith, the present vicar, kindly lent me a large-scale photograph (of which I reproduce a section overleaf), and answered a variety of questions.

The books are on two plain shelves which run round three sides of the room. W. Blades visited Wimborne Minster Library, and published a pamphlet on it (*Bibliographical Miscellanies*, No. 2). From this I derive the information that in 1856 new shelves were substituted for the old ones, which had become too rotten for safety. J. W. Clark (*op. cit.*, p. 261), without giving his authority, states the interesting fact that originally a movable desk and stool were provided. Wimborne, it should be added, boasts the possession of one MS. among its chained books.

There are now 200 volumes with chains still attached; and about 50 whose chains have disappeared. The chains at Wimborne are of an unusual pattern—"figure 8". As is shown in the two diagrams on p. 297 (which give the actual sizes), the links resemble those in the Laurentian Library at Florence. The chains are further noteworthy for having two swivels each—one at the rod end, and

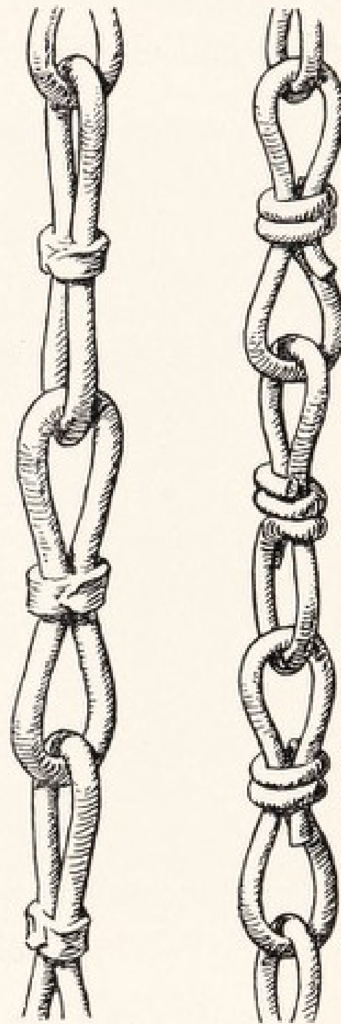


(Copyright, A. O. Yardley)

WIMBORNE MINSTER. THE CHAINED LIBRARY

one on the ring attached to the book — like those at Wootton Wawen.[1]

The method of securing the rods looks like a rough imitation of that employed by Michelangelo in the Laurentian Library. In both a piece of iron is welded on to the rod at right angles to it—near the middle, not at the end, of the rod; and this piece of iron is secured by a lock. The difference is that in the Florentine example it is secured by a lock attached to the central "ground-support" of the lectern; at Wimborne it is (or, rather, was once) padlocked to a bracket which takes the place of this ground-support. This statement can be checked by comparing the sketch of the device used at Wimborne, as given by Willis and Clark (*Architectural History of Cambridge*, iii., p. 424), with the sketch of that in the Medicean (= Laurentian) Library in J. W. Clark's *Care of Books*, p. 239. A resemblance between two libraries in regard both to the shape of the links and the method of securing the rods—both being unlike the usual English pattern—can hardly be accidental.



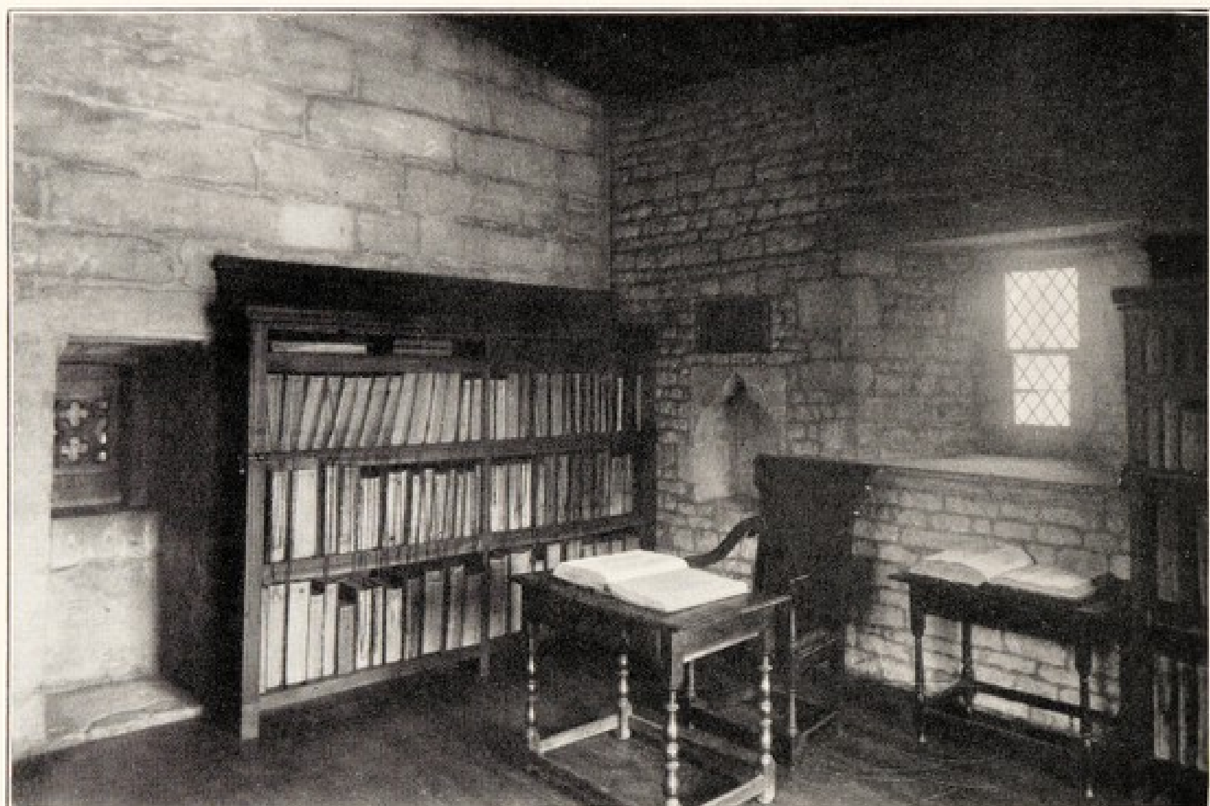
CHAIN-LINKS AT LAURENTIAN (LEFT), AND AT WIMBORNE (RIGHT)—ACTUAL SIZE

In Grantham Parish Church, the library, founded 1598, is in a room 16 ft. by 14 ft. built over the south porch. There are three bookcases, about 6 feet high and 6 feet long, the bottom shelf being only a few inches above the floor.

In 1894 there was a thorough restoration. Mr. Ault, who

[1] There is a chain of similar pattern fitted to a book on a fifteenth-century desk in the church at Bury, Hants; but I misdoubt its antiquity.

examined the library for the purpose of this book, reports that the ends of the present bookcases and the chains are original; but that the shelves and the rods belong to the restoration. Canon Markham, the present vicar, writes me that 83 of the books still have the original chains attached to them; 153 bear traces of once having had chains; others, having been rebound, exhibit no traces



GRANTHAM. THE CHAINED LIBRARY

of chaining. The chains resemble those at Hereford, except for the swivels. Only 28 of the swivels remain; but in every case these are at the rod-end of the chain.

Bolton, Gorton and Turton

The three libraries I am about to describe are all in the near neighbourhood of Manchester. They are among the most interesting, and the least often visited, of the English libraries which still preserve their chains. They are alike in the fact that, in addition to their

chains, they each perpetuate an ancient library-form—either the almery or the book-chest.

The chained libraries at Gorton and Turton are the sole survivors of five libraries for parish churches in Lancashire provided for in the Will of Humphrey Chetham, dated 1651—the same instrument which led to the founding of Chetham College, Manchester. That at Bolton—the Grammar School has recently been rebuilt on a magnificent scale—is of slightly later date, but, being in a better state of preservation may be taken as the type specimen. It bears the inscription, "The gift of Mr James Leaver citison of London 1694". It contains some 40 books still attached by chains. Many of the books appear to have come from the library left to Bolton Parish Church by Chetham, which has disappeared.[1]

I have already called attention to the library at Bolton as an example of the combination of the ancient *armarium* or almery with the lectern, out of which, I suggest, the two-decker Stall-system was evolved. This relation will be made clear by a glance at the two illustrations overleaf—one with the doors of the almery shut, the other with doors open, showing the books chained on two shelves divided into *partitiones* above a desk. The photographs were specially taken for me, through the kind offices of the head master, Mr. E. Percival Smith.

The desk and cornice have been restored; but a photograph, which forms the frontispiece of Christie's *Old Lancashire Libraries*, shows the old desk hacked with schoolboys' knives. So far as the desk is concerned, the restoration has been accurate. The front moulding of the present cornice differs from that there shown; but it seemed to me to have been made of old oak, recently sand-papered smooth.

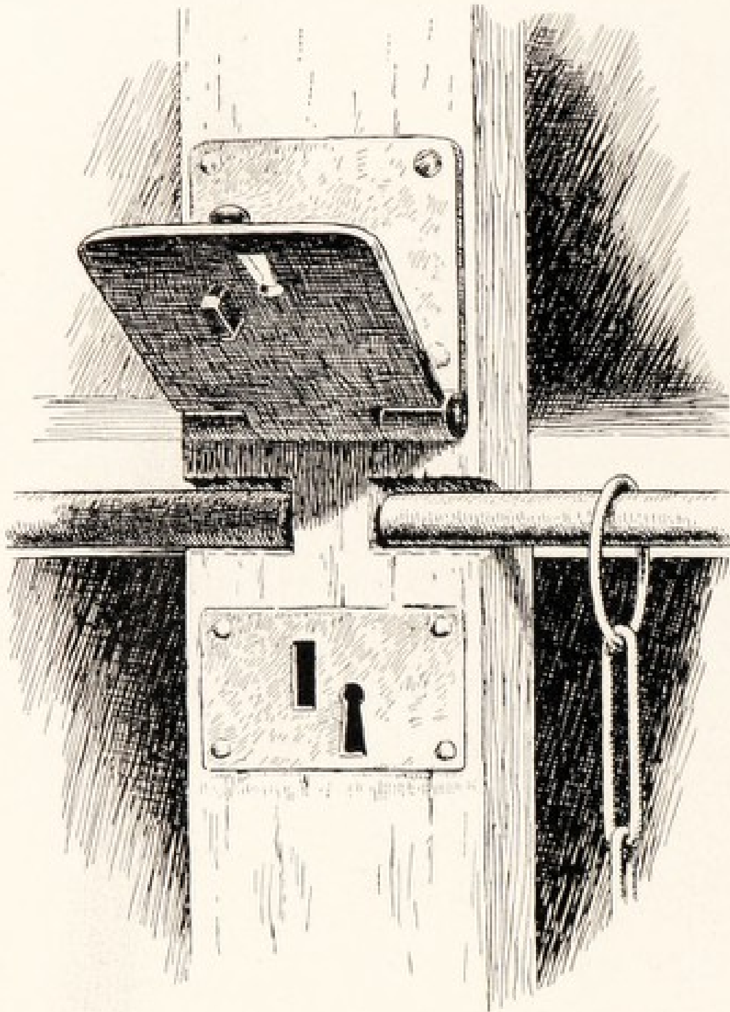
The illustrations make unnecessary a general description; they merely require supplementing by a few measurements to indicate

[1] R. C. Christie, *Old Church and School Libraries of Lancashire*, published by the Chetham Society, Manchester, 1885, p. 56.

THE GIFT OF MR IAMES LEAVER CITISON OF LONDON 1694

ALMERY BOOKCASE, BOLTON SCHOOL: DOORS CLOSED (*above*); OPEN (*below*)

the scale. The height from floor to top of cornice is 6 ft. 6½ in., the width (excluding the overlap of the almery cornice) is 6 ft. 4½ in. The depth of the almery front to back is 1 ft. 6½ in. The legs which support the front edge of the desk stand out 11½ in. over all from the almery. The rods are looped at the end, and are fixed to the sides of the almery by staples passing through these loops. The diagram illustrates the way in which the rods from each end rest, at the middle, in slots in the central upright, and are held there by a locked hasp, 3½ in. long by 2⅝ in. wide. A curious feature is the keyhole, which is pierced through the hasp to give access to the lock. The chains are in the same style as at Hereford, with the swivel in the middle.

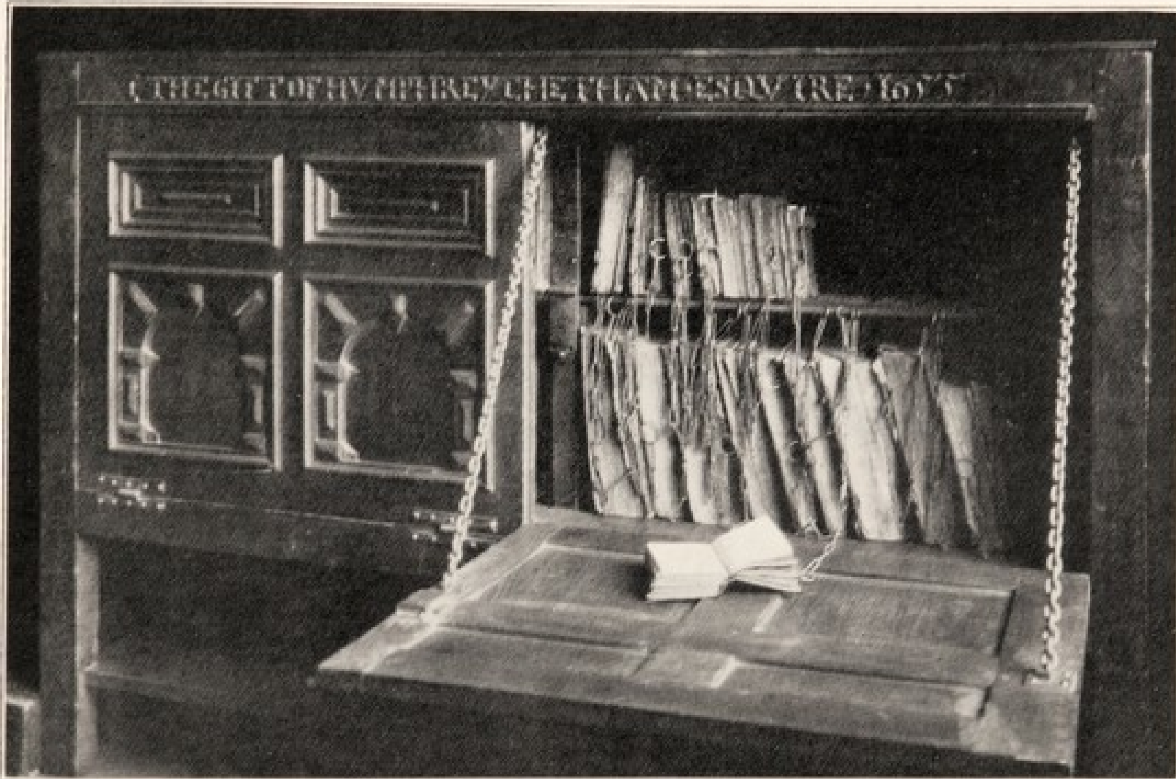


BOLTON SCHOOL. LOCK, HASP AND ROD-SLOTS

The narrow shelf at the top was, I think, designed for a heavily bound two-volume edition of Foxe's "Book of Martyrs" given by James Leaver, which is too high to stand upright on the shelves.

A brief description of the libraries at Gorton and Turton, as they were in 1856, is to be found in a publication by the Chetham Society—*Humphrey Chetham's Church Libraries*. From this it appears that at that date the Gorton press was provided with "a

low sloping shelf in front and immediately below the doors, apparently intended to rest the volume on when in use, as the attaching chains are of just sufficient length for that purpose". At that time, then, in general appearance it must have been very like the Bolton press—for which indeed it probably provided a model. The desk had disappeared by 1885, when the bookcase was examined by J. W. Clark, though from the scars he inferred that



GORTON. THE CHAINED ALMERY

there had been a desk. It was then in the parish school, but has now been brought back to the Church of St. James, where I recently examined it.

In order to replace the missing desk, the old hinges have been removed from the side to the bottom of the doors, and strong modern chains have been provided, so that the doors let down as seen in the illustration. This is ingenious, but not restoration.

The dimensions of the almery here are 7 ft. wide, 3 ft. 6 in. high, 19 in. deep. The legs, having been shortened, are only 22 in. high.

The half-inch oak board on the top is a modern addition, taking the place of the lost cornice.

The hasp and lock-plate are more elongated than those of Bolton ($5\frac{3}{8}$ in. as against $3\frac{1}{2}$ in.), and are cut with an ornamental pattern at the top and bottom; otherwise they are identical. The tinning of the chains is well preserved; they are of the Hereford type, with swivel in the middle, but with rather smaller links. The original key has been preserved.

I counted 45 books properly chained to the rod, and saw at least one with a portion of a chain attached.

In Turton Parish Church the chained library takes the form of a chest, 7 ft. 6 in. long and 14 in. deep, which contains 45 books, with chains still attached to them. Clark says, "The bookcase at Turton resembles that of Gorton so closely that it needs no particular description." His reason, I imagine, for so saying is that he supposes that, as at Gorton and Bolton, the chest originally stood on legs with a desk in front, but that it has suffered amputation. This idea was probably a deduction from a statement in the above-mentioned work on Humphrey Chetham's Libraries that, in order to save space in the Chapel in which it once was, it was raised on legs "high enough to walk under". But this was not in the Chapel as it existed in Chetham's time, and seems to refer to a kind of platform. Mr. Ault examined the chest and came to the conclusion that it has not suffered any serious mutilation. The present legs, which are about $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches high, he considers original. On a subsequent occasion I examined it myself and incline to concur in this judgment. The existing top is obviously original; and it is suitable as the top of a chest resting on the ground. On a piece of furniture 6 feet high one would expect a wider cornice; also behind a cornice there is usually a hollow dip.

The top of the press, being only about 3 ft. $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. above the floor, forms a table on which books taken from the chest below can be

TURTON. THE CHAINED BOOK-CHEST

rested to be read by a standing reader. Thus Turton represents a distinct type of bookcase—more closely allied to the ancient book-chest than to the almery.

There is only one cross-shelf; but on one side of the central upright it is about 2 inches higher than on the other. The end of the rod on the right-hand side is now bent (behind the beaded strip of wood which divides the doors of the chest) so as to meet the end of the left-hand rod; these ends are riveted together with an iron pin. But as the shelves and rods were renewed some time before 1856, it is possible that originally there was some method of locking the rods which cannot now be ascertained. On the other hand, if the chest was originally made to fit the books actually bequeathed by Chetham, it may have been thought that, like a more famous number, they could neither be diminished nor increased, so that no good purpose would be served by making them removable.

Considerable trouble was involved in having the chest moved into a position where the light was good in order that a photograph (C. E. Willis, Bolton) might be taken. For this, and other courtesies, my thanks are due to the vicar, the Rev. J. Platt.

All Saints', Hereford

The library of All Saints', Hereford, was founded in 1715 by William Brewster, M.D., who left it 285 volumes, a number which was afterwards considerably increased.

After the Reformation one of the ancient chantries at All Saints' became the vestry; and until recently the two bookcases which form the library stood at right angles to one another in one corner of this. In 1930, in the course of a general—and extremely successful—restoration of the Church, the vestry was converted into a Lady Chapel; and the bookcases now stand facing one another against the north and south walls.

The method of chaining, in accordance with the Will of the founder, was imitated from the Cathedral. The rods are secured

ALL SAINTS, HEREFORD. CHAINED BOOKCASE

by a lock and hasp similar to, though of slightly lighter workmanship than those in the Chapter Library.

The chains remain on 313 of the books, and I counted five others which bore the marks of having once been chained. It is thus, after the Cathedral library, easily the largest collection of chained books in England.

About sixty years ago the library had a narrow escape. It was actually sold by the churchwardens to a London bookseller, who intended to use the books for export purposes to the United States. The story is told by Blades, who had it from the bookseller direct. At the last moment it was discovered that such a transaction required the assent of the patron of the living; and the then Dean of Windsor, acting in that capacity, withheld his consent. Accordingly the books, which had been already forwarded to London, came back to Hereford.

The structure might be described as a three-shelved bookcase fixed standing on a table. The front part of the table serves to rest a book on when it is being read, and takes the place of the sloping desk elsewhere. The table on the north side of the Chapel is 8 ft. 1½ in. long, 1 ft. 3⅜ in. wide and 3 ft. high; the height of the bookcase part, above the top of the table to the bottom of the cornice, is 3 ft. 2 in. Thus the total height is about 6 ft. 6 in. The bookcase on the south side is slightly larger, the length of the table being 8 ft. 6½ in., and the height above the table being increased by 11 in. The middle leg of this table is several inches out of the centre.

The cornices are a quite modern restoration. A notable feature of the shelving is the fact that the top shelf is of a height to take folios, and is mainly filled with books of this size; but the two lower shelves are adapted for, and filled with, quartos and octavos. This arrangement at first struck me as remarkable; bookcases, ancient or modern, usually have the high shelves at the bottom and the shallower at the top. But, if the case is of this height, the arrange-

ment at All Saints' is really more sensible; for if the shallower shelves are below, the top shelf is low enough to be well within reach; whereas, if the high shelf is at the bottom, the top shelf could only be reached conveniently by a tall person.

The small movable bookcase of the kind seen at Bolton and All Saints' is not, like the fittings of the great libraries which I have described, intended to be an integral part of the structure of the building. The presses in the libraries discussed in the earlier chapters of this book are all of the nature of what we call "landlord's fixtures"; at Bolton and All Saints, the border-line is crossed, and we are dealing with what is really domestic furniture. Looking at the bookcases of All Saints' from this point of view, we notice that we have only to close in the space under the table, and so make it into a cupboard, and we get what is perhaps the commonest model of bookcase in everyday use at the present day. When, on the other hand, a bookcase has a glazed front, it is the lineal descendant of the Bolton model—substituting glass for carved oak doors.

CHAPTER VI

MORE ABOUT HEREFORD

SYNOPSIS

The origin of the error attributing the Hereford presses to Walter de Rammesbury, 1394.

Identification of the presses and half-presses added by Thornton after 1590.

Light thrown on the history of the Library by the old catalogues.

Reconstruction of the arrangement of the presses when in the Ladye Chapel.

A minor perplexity.

Summary statement, distinguishing the original elements in woodwork and ironwork from additions made in the restoration—(I) in Transept Chamber; (II) in Upper Cloister.

A Hundred Years Ago.

CHAPTER VI

MORE ABOUT HEREFORD

To have prolonged the earlier chapter on Hereford would have been to retard, and thereby obscure, the survey of the development of the English library attempted in the chapters that followed. It might also have seemed to exaggerate the importance admittedly belonging to the Hereford example from its unique state of preservation. But those who have visited it, or who contemplate doing so, will naturally ask how the library was arranged, and what was its general aspect, when first set up in the Ladye Chapel in 1590. They may also desiderate further evidence for some of the statements made in the earlier chapter. Again, when an ancient monument has been restored, it is highly desirable that there should be available in a succinct form a record which will make it easy to distinguish between what is replacement and what is original.

I propose therefore to take up again my story of investigation and discovery at the point where I left off.

Walter de Rammesbury

The books about Hereford all state that in 1394 Walter de Rammesbury, Precentor of the Cathedral, gave £10 for desks in the library. J. W. Clark accepts the statement:

> Throughout these changes some very ancient bookcases have been preserved. They have been taken to pieces and altered several times, but are probably, in the main, those put up in 1394.

Naturally, I began by accepting this verdict. But the more closely

I studied the development of structure in mediaeval libraries, the more difficult I found it to interpolate Hereford into the series at a date as early as 1394. There is no evidence that the Stall-system had been invented antecedently to the year 1480; and the earliest examples of this system are all "two-deckers". The "three-decker" variety, to which Hereford belongs, does not look primitive.

Professor Garrod had mentioned the interesting fact that Walter de Rammesbury was also a Fellow of Merton; and he had referred me to the following statement in G. C. Brodrick's *Memorials of Merton* (Oxf. Hist. Soc., 1885, p. 212).

> Walter Romysbury or Rammesbury, S.T.P. He was Proctor in 1364, and Bursar in 1365–6 and afterwards. He subsequently became Precentor of Hereford Cathedral. In 1394 he gave £10 for new desks in the east part of the library, and ten marks for new stalls in the Chapel. He also gave the College many books. He died in 1406.

My colleague, Canon Bannister, who has edited many volumes of the ancient registers of Hereford, told me that, though the name of Rammesbury was of frequent occurrence, he could find no mention of him in connection with the library. But on looking up the name in Browne Willis' *A Survey of Cathedrals* (*Hereford*), 1727, p. 538, I saw the following:

> Walter Rammesbury, S.T.P. (called by mistake, *Richard*, in *Le Neve*) occurs possessed of it [*i.e.* of the Precentorship] 1385. He gave An. 1394 10 marks towards making the Choir Stalls and 10*l*. for the Desks in the Library, and died possessed of it 1406.

That Walter de Rammesbury, being both Fellow of Merton and Canon of Hereford, should confer a benefaction on each of the corporations of which he was a member, and that he should give the same amount to each, is in no way remarkable. What did strike me as curious was that both these bodies should be engaged in the same year in the double enterprise of refitting a library and re-seating a choir. Was it a case of coincidence—or of confusion?

I wrote to Mr. Norman Ault asking him to look up in the Bod-

leian the reference to Le Neve given by Browne Willis. In Le Neve's *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, 1716, p. 115, under "Precentors of Hereford", occurs:

> 1370 Richard Rammesbury, about 1370 *Hist. E. Antiq.* Oxon L.2. p. 398. Here I am obliged to leave a wide gap, not finding any more till 1465.

Le Neve notes a similar gap about this date when giving his lists of the Chancellors and of the Treasurers of Hereford; evidently he could not find certain of the registers of Hereford. Supposing these to be still missing when Browne Willis was making his researches, Mr. Ault deduced that he had looked for information in the other source indicated by Le Neve. This is Anthony Wood's *Historia et Antiquitates Universitatis Oxoniensis*, 1674, Bk. ii., p. 398. Wood names Rammesbury as Proctor, with the note:

> Sacrae Theol. Professor et Ecclesiae *Herefordiensis* Cathedralis Praecentor dein evasit. Libras decem Collegio suo paulo ante obitum largitus est, quas in pluteis novis ad orientalem Bibliothecae partem erigendis collocari voluit; donatis pariter marcis totidem, unde chorum Ecclesiae subselliis novis, quoad fieri id posset, instruendum decrevit.

From this extract it is quite clear that what Walter de Rammesbury really did was to give £10 to the College for the library, and ten marks towards the new choir stalls in the College chapel. This chapel at Merton replaced a church older than the College; and within my own memory it was also used as a Parish Church. Accordingly, in the College records it is commonly spoken of, not as *capella*, but as *ecclesia*; but Browne Willis took the word "Church" to refer to the Cathedral; and then, by a slip of memory, has given the Cathedral the money for the desks as well. Thus is history made.

Thornton's Additions

Thomas Thornton had been tutor to Sir Philip Sidney; he was the Vice-Chancellor at Oxford in 1583 and again in 1599—the year in which the Bodleian presses were made. He held canonries at Here-

ford and Christ Church, and a prebend at Worcester. On his tomb in Ledbury (*ob.* April 20, 1629) there is commemorated the elegance of his latinity and his work for the Hereford library. *Eccl. Cath. apud Hereford. Bibliothecam sumptibus suis ornavit, librisque locupletavit.* Havergal makes some general statements in regard to his restoration of the library, but does not mention his authority; someone suggested I should search the Donors' Book.

This begins with a list, in a hand which I take to be Thornton's, of 178 MSS. which were ancient possessions of the library, but of which the donors were unknown. Books of which the donors' names were known are entered according to the alphabetical order of their surnames—a large number of blank pages being left under each letter for the names of the donors whom it was hoped that the future would produce. In the same hand are three lists of books (the shelf numbers in the margin refer to the arrangement of books after the move of 1897, and are in a modern hand). The first list names sixteen books purchased from the entrance fees of Canons and Prebendaries, presumably the firstfruits of the provision in the statutes of 1583 (p. 348 ff.) ordering that the customary payment of 40s. made on admission towards ornaments of the church should be henceforth assigned to the purposes of the library. There follows another list also naming sixteen books purchased for the library during the librarianship of Thomas Thornton up to the year 1598. A third list gives fifty-six books as purchased under the same librarian up to the year 1618.

It occurred to me to look among the names of donors for that of Thornton. At the end of the list of books presented by him to the library was the following note:

> Idem D[s] D[r] Thornton non contemnendam pecuniae summam ad duos pluteos totidemque semipluteos cum eorum subselliis omnibusque armamentis conficiendos erogavit, ac alia nonnulla huic Bibliothecae necessaria sumptibus propriis suppeditavit.
>
> The same Master Dr. Thornton spent no inconsiderable sum of money on the making of two presses and as many half-presses with their seats and all their

equipment; and he provided at his own expense certain other necessaries for this Library.

This is incontestable evidence that two presses and two half-presses, with seats and all fittings, were given by Thornton.

This discovery (made August 26) at once raised the questions—Which of the presses we still have were the two added by Thornton, and what has become of the two half-presses? The endeavour to answer these questions led me into an investigation which incidentally threw a good deal of light on the later history of the library. A study of the ironwork leaves no doubt that five presses are older than the rest, viz. the four now in the Transept Chamber (Plan, p. 102), and one of those, (B)C, which now stand in the Upper Cloister (Plan II. p. 99). These five form two groups. The hasps and lock-plates of the presses marked (E)(D) and LM are identical. The hasps of the other three (A)H, IK and (B)C are of a slightly different pattern, and the lock-plates are more nearly square; but these are identical with one another. The ironwork in all is tin-coated. Curiously enough the timber of the face-ends of the two presses (A)H and IK in the Transept Chamber is 2½ inches thick; in the other three presses it is 2 inches—that is to say, the difference in the pattern of the ironwork cuts across the difference in the weight of the timber, and so does not constitute a reason for assigning the presses to more than one date.

The ironwork on the other presses is black, not tinned. The plates of the rod-sockets are rough and plain, instead of being cut into a pattern; the desk-hooks are larger and coarser. Still more noticeable is the great variety in the shape of the hasps and lock-plates (illustration overleaf). Those under N are identical (except for the tinning) with those of (B)C, (A)H, IK; they may have been a spare set made at the same time. Those on the left-hand side, (G), of the right-hand press in the illustration are an inferior copy of the same. Those under O and P—the "classes" which originally contained the MSS., and formed the last bay on the south side of the

Ladye Chapel—are of a different pattern, but do not quite match one another; and the lock on P is much lower on the press. Those (F) seen on the extreme right of the illustration are again different; the lower bulge of the upper hasp seems originally to have been 4 inches higher up, and to have been cut off—another being riveted on lower down—as if the smith had measured wrongly and then corrected his mistake, or else a hasp from elsewhere had been adapted.

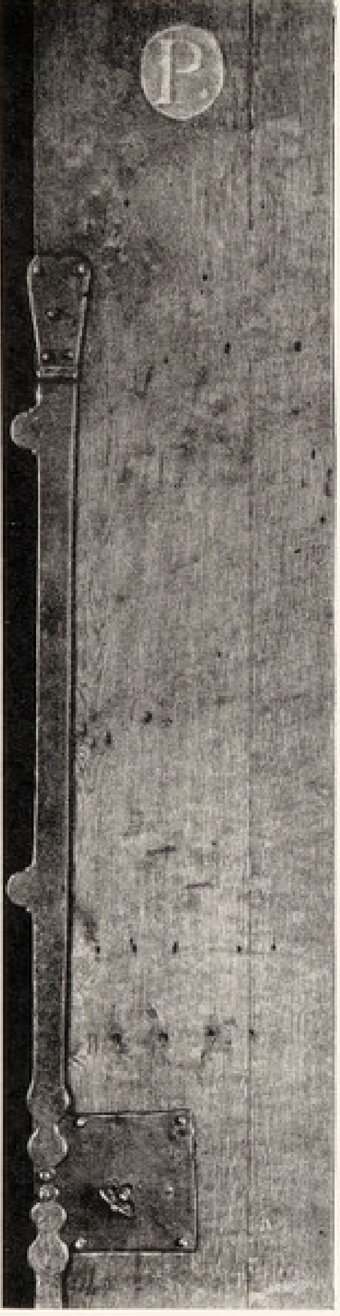
We cannot, however, say simply, and without reservation, that all these presses are Thornton's. There is a complication.

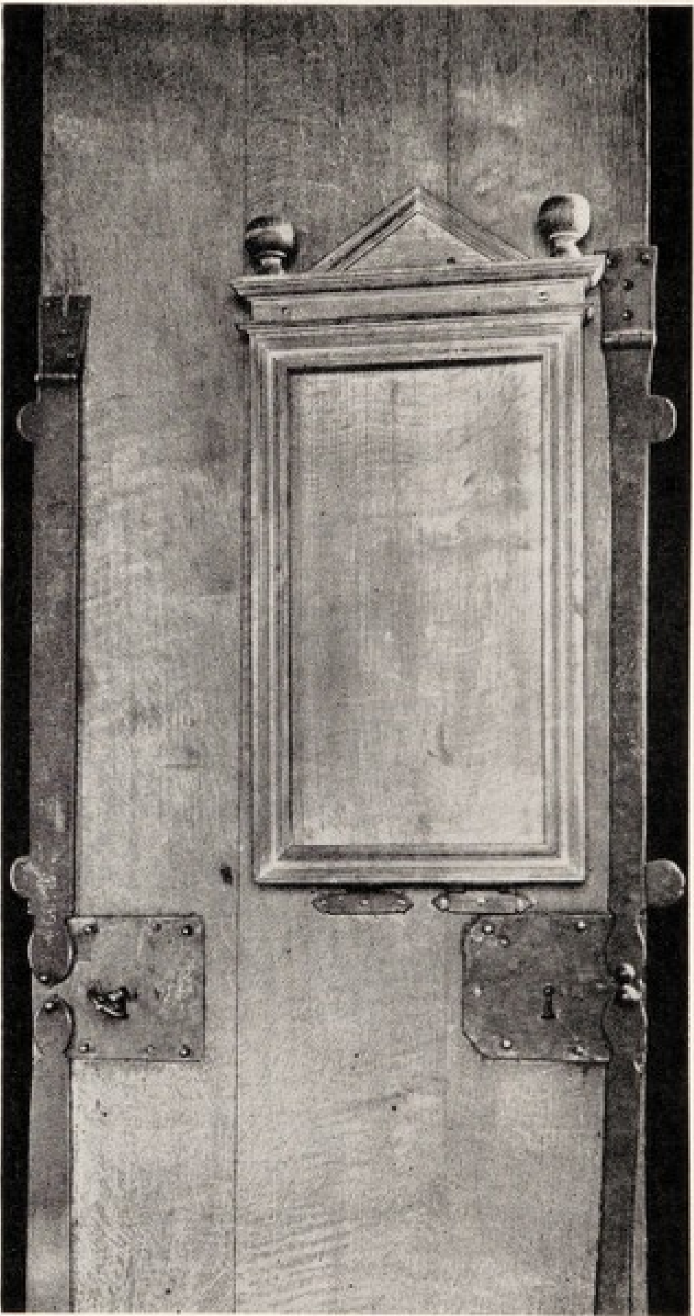
The press (G)(F) is much thinner and has been planed very smooth; and it presents other eccentric features the explanation of which only became clear to me after scrutiny of the old catalogues of the library, and a reconstruction of the arrangement of the presses when in the Ladye Chapel.

The Old Catalogues

The old catalogues are not only interesting in themselves to the student of library evolution, but afford evidence as to the identity and adventures of certain presses.

The earliest is at the end of the Donors' Book. There is first a catalogue of the printed books. This is not arranged on any alphabetical principle, but according to the *classis* and *partitio* to which a book is assigned. This catalogue may be approximately dated 1718; for it includes in the original handwriting one book as late as 1717, but barely half a dozen printed after 1700. And there are entries in another hand which I can date 1720. The catalogue details six *classes* on the north side of the library (as it stood in the Ladye Chapel) and six *classes* on the south side. Each *classis* is divided into nine *partitiones*, and a list of the books in each *partitio* is given. The *classis*, therefore, corresponded to one side of a press, divided by its shelves and uprights into nine "pigeon-holes", called *partitiones*. A later hand has added titles to the *classes*, the same as (or an abbreviation of) those which appear in the later catalogues





LOCKS AND HASPS (UPPER CLOISTER, HEREFORD) ON PRESSES P, N O, (G)(F)

and are painted on the cornices of the face-ends of the presses. The MSS. are not included in this catalogue; but at the end of the book are pasted in two leaves from a printed book. This is Bernard's *Catalogi Librorum MSS. Angliae et Hiberniae*, printed at Oxford, 1697. This gives a list of 206 MSS. as existing in the Cathedral Library of Hereford; at present the library possesses 227.

The next catalogue is also arranged on the plan of setting out the books in the same *classes*, marked by *numbers*, not letters; but this is preceded by what is called *Index Generalis Alphabeticus Authorum qui in sequente Catalogia Continentur*. This is an alphabetical list of names of authors with a reference to *the page in the catalogue* on which their works occur; if only the references had been directly to the shelves on which the books stood, this index would have been itself a library catalogue of a modern type. The catalogue is undated, but inside the cover is an unsigned note stating that it was delivered to the writer, presumably a newly appointed librarian, in November 1745 by the executors of Dr. Morgan. In the same hand are two loose sheets of paper, evidently intended for the information of users of the catalogue.[1] One of these looks like a draft for the title-page (the catalogue has no title-page):

A CATALOGUE OF THE BOOKS
IN
HEREFORD CHURCH LIBRARY
1745

with a note that Class M and N of the printed books "wants still to be added" and also a catalogue of the MSS. The lacking *classes* must have been added soon afterwards; for they appear in the catalogue in the same professional scrivener's hand as the rest of the book. Another hand has appended the catalogue of the MSS. The other loose sheet contains odd bits of information, *e.g.* that the *Atlas Geographicus* is in the *capsula*, or chest, under this press, that

[1] I have since found, in unbound sheets, a draft catalogue in the same hand, dated 1745. Here the *classes* are *lettered* A to F and H to N; and the books within the *classes* are rearranged.

the hebdomadary keeps the key of it, and will not refuse it to any prebendary. This sheet, too, begins with a sketch for a title-page of the catalogue, this time in Latin, with the same date:

Libri impressi in Bibliotheca Ecclesiae Cathedralis
Herefordensis A.D. MDCCXLV

On the last page of this loose sheet are the names of the *classes* as follows:

CLASSES CUM TITULIS

A. S. Biblia—Concord—Lexic.
B. Commentat: in S. Biblia.
C. Commentat: in S. Biblia.
D. Libri Reformatorum—et Theologi.
E. Libri Juris Canon:—Civilis—et Statut.
F. Libri Antiqu:—Bibliothec—et Miscellan.
G.
H. Patres.
I. Patres—Concil—Eccl. Histor.
K. Histor: Eccl—Lexicogr.
L. Historici—et Classici.
M. Libri Scholastici—et Artium.
N. Libri Pontificiorum.

Four points deserve notice:

(1) The letters and the titles correspond to those painted on the face-ends of the presses. The letters from H to N inclusive are still there; on the other presses the letters (except C) have been erased; but in a good light traces of the letters ED (in that order) can be seen on the press which now contains the MSS.[1]

(2) The same titles stand in the 1745 catalogue; but here the *classes* are distinguished by *numbers*, i, ii, iii, etc., and not by letters. As in the Donors' Book, they are numbered as i to vi on the north side, and as i to vi on the south side. Apart from some additions,

[1] Before the presses were "pickled" to remove a hideous brown stain with which they had been covered, the "ED" was clearer. On some presses an addition to the title had been added in slightly different paint (evidently after the reassembling of the cases in 1856) which is now concealed under the lower member of the cornice.

the books included in each *classis* are the same as in the Donors' Book. Since, then, the *classes* which the loose sheet alludes to as "M and N" are the same as those which the catalogue calls *Classis v*, and *Classis vi, ex parte australi*, it follows that the letters must have been already painted on the presses by 1745.

(3) It will be noticed that the letter G in the above table of *classes* has no title corresponding to it. The titles with letters A to F correspond to those of i to vi north in the catalogue; those with letters H to N correspond to those of i to vi south. It looks, therefore, as if the letter G represents an extra *classis* recently interpolated into the series.

(4) The MSS., which appear at the end of the catalogue, are divided between *classis vii* and *classis viii*, with a heading (evidently intended to apply to both *classes*) describing them as *on the south side*.

The next catalogue is dated 1749. Here the *classes* have the same titles, but are distinguished, as on the loose sheet quoted above, by a single series of letters A to P, instead of by two series of numbers —i to vi north, and i to viii south. But under the letter G there are still no books entered in this catalogue. To the MSS. are assigned the letters O and P; and those letters, painted on presses, which also bear the title "Cod. MSS.", still survive—the first complete press in the Upper Cloister being lettered "N O" and the portion of a mutilated end now made up as a short bookcase bearing the letter "P".

A catalogue of 1780 exists in two copies (one of them misleadingly dated on the cover 1857, presumably the date at which it was rebound). In this the old system of cataloguing is abandoned; and the books are arranged alphabetically under authors' names as in a modern catalogue—the old letters and partition numbers are retained but are treated as shelf references. But there are still no books assigned to the letter G.

It would seem to follow that the side of a press (or the half-press)

to which the letter G was assigned was added to the original series not long before 1745; but that for many years few, if any, books were put in the addition. Indeed, to the present day very few of the books have the shelf-mark G; and of these several have the letter N struck out.

The Library in the Ladye Chapel

In 1804 was published Duncumb's *History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford*. He says practically nothing about the library, except (p. 565) that it was in the Ladye Chapel, and that the books were arranged in "fourteen classes". He proceeds, however, to enumerate these classes, with their titles—six on the north side, and eight on the south side, the seventh and eighth being the MSS. The titles, it is notable, are practically identical with those in the above table. Since we know from the catalogues that the letters H to P corresponded to *classes* i to viii on the south side, and as all those letters are still clearly painted on the presses, there is no doubt at all as to which presses stood on the south side, nor as to the order in which they were arranged.

The only other description of the library, when in the Ladye Chapel, that I have been able to discover occurs in a rare book, *Notes on the Cathedral Libraries of England*, by Beriah Botfield. This was published in 1849; but the author had evidently visited the library at least eight years earlier, when it was still in the Ladye Chapel, and writes in ignorance of the fact of its removal therefrom since his visit. I quote two paragraphs (171 ff.):

> The books are placed in projecting cases upon open shelves to which they are attached by chains, *more monachorum*, which chains are fastened to a bar co-extensive with each shelf, and confined by a lock at the end of each case. Of these the Canons in residence possess the keys; even the Catalogue of the Library is riveted to the desk on which it stands, and all additions to the Collection are chained beside their elder brethren.

We have here definite evidence that all the books were still chained up to the time of their removal from the Ladye Chapel. Indeed the

preservation of such trifles as the brass clips which attached the chains to the books (and indeed of the chains themselves) can only be accounted for if the unchaining was done in, or soon after, 1856 when the books were placed in the reassembled presses which, being now deskless, made chained books no longer usable. I had previously inferred this from the fact that the box in which the clips were kept was a cheap packing-case of mid-nineteenth-century character.

A second paragraph gives further details:

> These projecting cases are placed on each side of the Chapel, in a series descending from what was once the altar to the wooden screen, which divides the part appropriated to the Library from the lower portion of the Chapel. On entering the Library, the Manuscripts consequently are the first to attract attention. . . .

But one thing in Botfield's account long puzzled me:

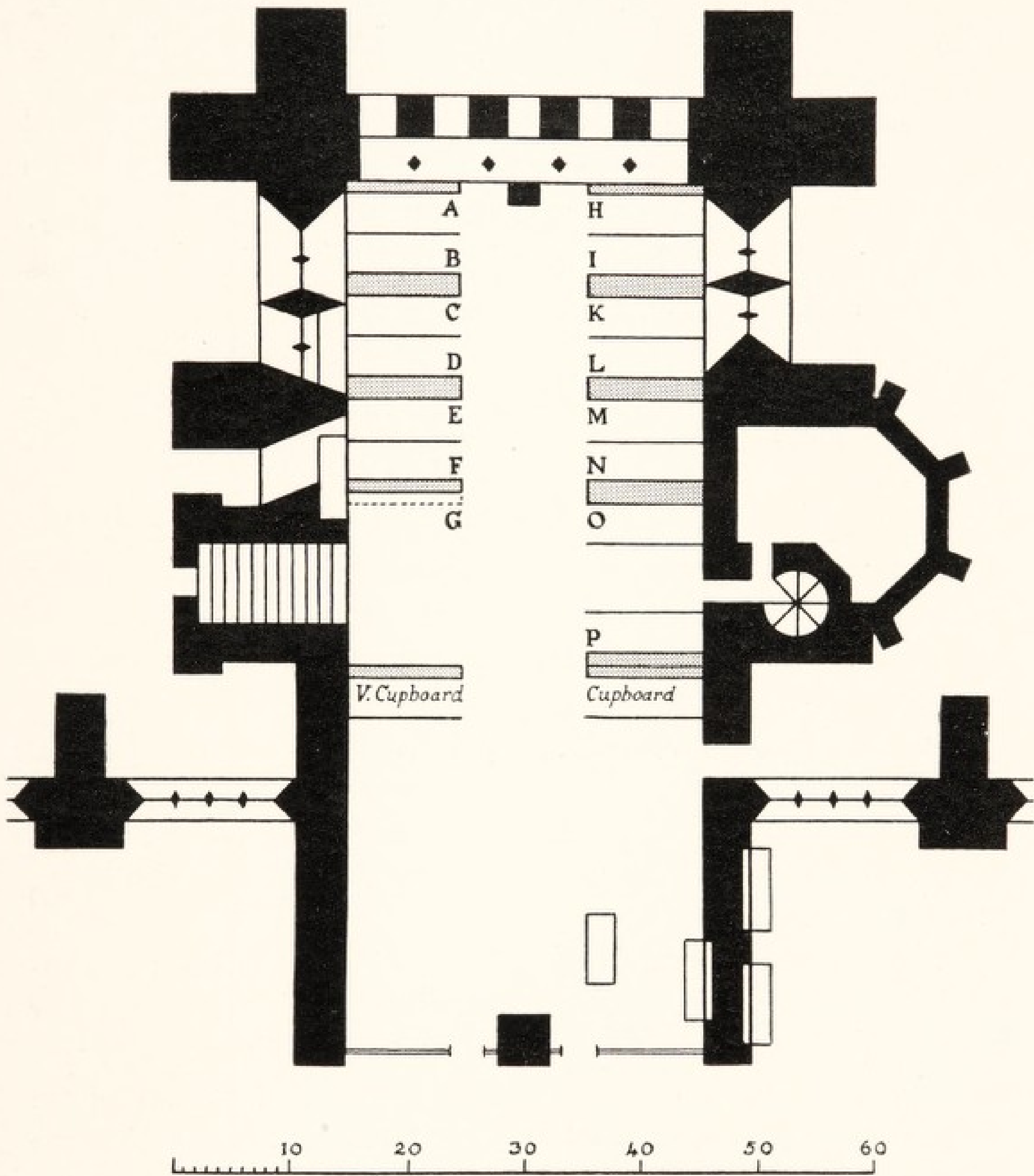
> The books are arranged in classes in the several cases, which are numbered in the following manner.

He then gives eight headings beginning:

> i. S. Biblia—Concord. Lex. S. Patres.
> ii. S. Patres. Concil. Eccl. Hist. Comment. in S. Biblia,

and so forth, ending with "vii and viii Codd. MSS."

In the titles above quoted he has lumped together under i the titles of A and H, under ii those of B and I, and so on throughout —an apparently hopeless confusion. For long I thought he must have mixed up his notes; then I recollected that an *additional* title "Classis Secunda" is painted on the long cornice-board of LM. A similar title was doubtless once on all the presses; it reflects the arrangement in the earliest catalogue before the presses were *lettered* on the face-end. These titles would show *classes* i to vi on the north, and i to viii (the MSS. being vii and viii) on the south side. Botfield did not realize that the two series were independent; he supposed that what was labelled "*classis prima*" on the north side



THE LADYE CHAPEL, HEREFORD, AS A LIBRARY
(*Cf*. Browne Willis' Plan on p. 329)

was the same as what was labelled "*classis prima*" on the south, and so on. But this confusion of his is evidence of three things.

(1) All presses then bore on the long cornice the old class titles. Two of these only survive (*secunda* and *sexta*), and both, in the reassembling of the presses in 1856, have wrongly got on to the same press; when I discovered the meaning of them, it was too late to alter the mistake.

(2) Botfield's list of titles includes all those shown in the catalogues from A to F and H to P; we infer that no title of a class had been painted on the cornice over the new letter G.

(3) The series of presses on the north side began at the same end of the Chapel as the series on the south side—otherwise the two presses marked "classis i", etc., would not have been opposite one another.

This last inference is further confirmed by his statement that the cases were in "a series descending from what was once the altar to the wooden screen" at the west end of the Chapel; and that *consequently* the MSS. are the first to attract attention on entering the library. We have already found that the presses lettered H to P stood on the south side—H being at the altar end, and O and P (which then contained the MSS.) being nearest the entrance. From the statement of Botfield, confirmed by his error about the classes, we get the additional information that the series A to F also began at the altar end.

Of this series of letters only "C", and "E D" (almost obliterated), can still be seen on the presses. But the information we now have is sufficient to enable us to infer the original letters where they have been erased. The letters on the face-end of presses of the north side, we have seen, must have run from right to left. Now the letter C is on the left-hand side of the face-end of the press; the obliterated letter on the right-hand side of this press was therefore B. It follows that the letter A must have been on a half-press against the east wall of the Ladye Chapel.

We can identify this half-press A. The third press in the Transept Chamber bears the letter H on the right side; the letter on the left side has been erased. For a long time I naturally supposed that G had been the letter erased. Mr. Ault, who happened to be on a visit to Hereford, called my attention to a difference (concealed by the cornice) of 2 inches in the height of the two planks of which the face-end of this press is composed, and a slight difference in the height of the coloured band on which the titles are painted. These indications prove that this press is made up of the face-ends of what were once two half-presses, which have been fitted back to back in the reassembling of 1856. The erased letter, then, was A. The side marked H was the half-press against the east wall of the Chapel, which commenced the series on the south side; the side A was in a similar position on the north side. These two half-presses, however, are of the oldest and most massive type; they cannot be the half-presses added by Thornton of which we are in search.

The letters F and G have still to be accounted for; and there is one press from which the letters have been completely erased—the eccentric press (now at the far end of the Upper Cloister) to which I have already alluded. Since the letters on the north side ran from right to left, they would have been painted on the press in the order GF. I will now show how this order explains both the late appearance of the letter G in the catalogues and the eccentric features of this particular press.

The hasps and plates on the two sides of this press differ remarkably in pattern. When the locks were taken out to be cleaned, it was observed that the cutting of the wood underneath the G lock was different from, and looked more recent than, that under the F lock. On the G side the scar left by the desk-hook is different. The wood is thinner than in the other presses, and the whole face-end has been planed smooth. Lastly, the discoloration left by the catalogue frame (plainer before the press was "pickled"), and the scars of its hinges, imply a frame of half the usual size, and that fixed,

not in the middle, but to the F side of the face-end. A half-size catalogue frame, almost complete, was found in pieces, and has been replaced on this press, in the position indicated by the scars.[1] Clearly the side F was once a half-press—about 15 inches wide—and only contained one *classis*. The letters A to F correspond to the six original *classes* on the north side. Evidently, then, somewhere before 1745 an extra plank was fitted on to this half-press F, so as to widen it into a whole press; and the whole face-end was naturally planed down. The additional side thus gained is the intrusive *classis* G.

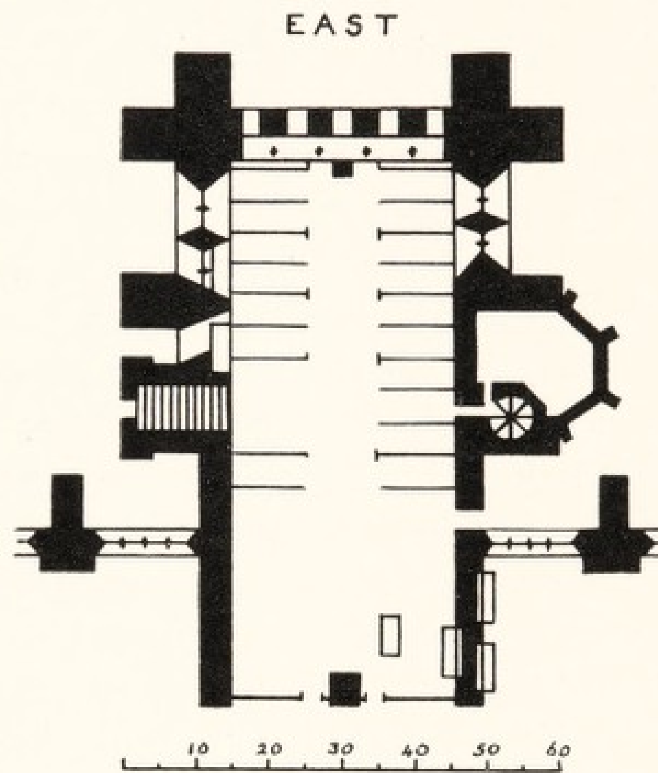
Thus the half-press F, which the ironwork shows is one of those added by Thornton (which we set out to identify), is now disguised as a whole press.

Where is Thornton's other half-press? The press-ends recovered from the vestry cupboard had the holes for the bottom rod, but bore no scars of lock or hasps. At first I assumed that they were the two planks of a wall-end, though I was perplexed by the fact that, if put together side by side, they would have made a press a full 2 inches wider than the others. I tried various hypotheses to explain the additional width. One day (August 25) I noticed that one of them had a band of green paint similar to those on which the titles of the other presses are painted, in between the scars of the upper and lower member of the cornice. This showed it to be a face-end—probably of a half-press 14 to 15 inches wide. But as no titles had been painted on the band of green, and there were no scars of lock or hasp, this half-press had not been used for chained books; and the catalogues do not encourage the belief that there were any books except in the chained *classes*. It occurred to me that it might have been used for keeping music in; music, being frequently wanted in the choir, could hardly have been chained.

When, next day, I pointed out these facts to Mr. Davies, he

[1] Since writing this I find that, through a curious misunderstanding, the half-frame on this press is a copy; the old one (since the photographs reproduced on p. 319 were taken) has been fixed on to press P—which also originally carried a half-frame.

added the additional observation that the front showed that it was that of a half-press facing towards the left side. This was perplexing, since the arrangement of the Ladye Chapel as we then conceived it demanded a half-press facing towards the right. Another perplexity was the apparent half-press marked with the letter P and over it *Cod. MSS.* Mr. W. E. H. Clarke had long ago pointed out to me that the raw edge on the right of this must have been made by a saw-cut of quite recent date; it was, therefore, half the face-end of a whole press. But, if so, the sawn-off half ought to have been lettered Q—but there was no trace of books indexed under this letter in any of the catalogues. Again, it was later noticed that discoloration on the surface showed that the catalogue frame of this press, like that on GF, was a half-frame, fixed not centrally, but on the P side. Presumably, therefore, whatever else the missing side had contained, it was not books.



BROWNE WILLIS' PLAN OF LADYE CHAPEL

The solution of the mystery came later. Mr. Ault noticed a plan of the Cathedral in Browne Willis' *Survey of the Cathedrals*, in which is indicated the position of the "desks" (note the survival of the mediaeval term) in the Ladye Chapel.

I reproduce above a tracing of the relevant section of this. A larger plan, showing the arrangement of lettered cases which I conceive it to imply, has already been given on p. 325.

It is evident that, in order to leave a passage-way to the

Audley chantry on the south of the Ladye Chapel, a wider space was left between the last two presses on the south side; and these presses, instead of having one back-to-back seat between them, were provided with two single seats with a passage-way between them. One might have anticipated that a way to this chantry would have been left open. But no one, without the evidence of the actual plan, could have guessed that, opposite to this on the north side, an unoccupied space was left over the stairway which leads down to the Crypt with a doorway entered outside from the Close. The motive may have been aesthetic or the archway below may then have been insufficiently secure to bear the weight of presses loaded with heavy books. At any rate, the plan shows that there was a kind of lobby, two sides of which were formed by the backs of two half-presses, and the third by the high blank wall over the *outside* entrance from the Close into the Crypt. Probably a table, and perhaps the desk to which the catalogue was chained, stood here. This lobby arrangement required a left-facing half-press at the end of the series on the north side. This was the half-press (lettered V in plans, pp. 99, 325) which had been made into a vestry cupboard; Browne Willis' plan shows that it was provided with a (single) seat. The half-press V was matched on the south side of the Chapel by the missing side of the press P. This is proved by the fact that a seat is shown at the outside end of the series on the south side. Thus Browne Willis' plan presupposes six back-to-back seats and four single seats. The plan also shows that the partition made to separate off the Ladye Chapel when it was turned into a library was along the line of what now stands out clear as a central column. Combining this with some remarks by Dean Merewether, in his booklet appealing for funds for the restoration of the Cathedral in 1842, it appears that the floor level at the lower end of the Chapel had been raised to the same height as the rest, so blocking up the interior stairway to the Crypt. This was rectified in 1841; the present altar steps have been added since.

The ends and rails of the eighteen pews made up out of the old library seats show there were once four single seats and seven back-to-back seats. This is one too many. How do we account for this seventh seat? I have already shown that the half-press F was expanded shortly before 1745 to make the whole press GF. The new half, labelled G, had a desk, for the hinge scars remain. It must, therefore, have had a seat also. An extra seat, then, was made when this press was altered; if at the time it seemed likely that the library might require further extension, it would be natural to make it a back-to-back seat. The rails of the seats vary a good deal in thickness. Five are very much heavier than the rest; these (being possibly the oldest) have been fixed on the seats in the Transept Chamber. The rest are lighter. But there is one markedly lighter than any of the others; this, I suggest, is the rail of the extra seat added about 1745.

Single seats are not very common. The only examples I know are at St. John's College, Oxford. Usually the series of presses is finished by a half-press against the end wall, or more rarely by a press, of which the outward side is a cupboard, as at the east end of *Duke Humphrey*; so that, normally, back-to-back seats only are required. Special circumstances caused four single seats to be wanted at Hereford. But single seats could be turned into pews without any material alteration; thus, I suspect, it was the existence of four pews ready-made that suggested the idea of adding to that number by making two pews out of each back-to-back seat. But for this, they might have become firewood. The seats, it is probable, were converted into pews some time before the ejection of the presses from the Ladye Chapel. Mr. Poulter recollects an old man, who as a boy had been employed to ring the bell for service, saying that he remembered the pews (then standing in the transepts) being in the presbytery—between the altar steps and the choir stalls (Gilbert Scott replaced the stalls further east). They must therefore have been already in position before 1841, when Dean Merewether

began seriously to contemplate the restoration of the choir. I do not think the conversion of the seats into pews can be laid to Wyatt's door; he was a malefactor on a grander scale. But it is the sort of thing they would have thought clever in the days when his star shone.

But what was the purpose of the two press-sides facing west—the vestry cupboard half-press and the missing side of P? They held no books, but yet had desks and seats. I think these sides must have been fitted as cupboards—probably with lattice doors. At Jesus College, Oxford, there are two cupboard half-presses labelled "Archivae"; there is a half-press so fitted at Wells. At Merton there are several (p. 147); and in the east wing a pair with books on one side and a cupboard on the other—as I suggest was the case with the P press at Hereford. It may well have been the fact that the half-press on the north side was so fitted that suggested to some ingenious person the idea that it would do for a vestry cupboard if refitted with larger doors.

It will be seen that both on the north and on the south sides of the Chapel the older presses began the series; Thornton's presses come after these in both series. This is precisely what we should expect. The presses made in 1590, *sumptibus fabrice*, would be put in position first. The new ones would be added afterwards—most probably at intervals. The character of the ironwork caused us to select five presses as older than the rest; one of these presses proved, on examination, to be a combination of two half-presses (A and H). Originally, therefore, these two half-presses stood on either side of the place where the altar had been; following down from them there were on each side two whole presses. Thus the library started with five *classes* on each side, *i.e.* A to E and H to M. To these Thornton added on the south side the presses lettered NO, and P—which latter, before the cupboard side was cut off, would have been a complete *pluteus*. On the north side he added the half-press F—to which a later generation added the side G—also the half-press

LIBRARY IN UPPER CLOISTER, HEREFORD

recovered from the vestry which, being a cupboard, bore no letter or title, but which I have called V.

This reconstruction of the arrangement of the presses in the Ladye Chapel leads on to a gratifying conclusion. So far as the face-ends are concerned, nothing of the original library has been lost, except the cupboard side of the press P, which never bore hasp or lock.[1]

A Minor Perplexity

The elucidation of a minor difficulty occurred a little later. Mr. J. Poulter had on August 27 shown me in a newspaper cutting, dated March 24, 1897, an interview with Dean Leigh, from which I transcribe a paragraph:

> "We have already moved the two side bookcases", he said, "and the five others will be in the new room by Monday. Three of them will be placed against the walls, and five will stand across the room at intervals of 4 feet. . . . I contemplate having two, at least, of the cases perfected in every way. The locks which fasten the rods holding the rows of books do not at present work properly. . . ."

Dean Leigh, it will be observed, was at that time contemplating the restoration of two presses to their original condition; and he calls special attention to the fact that the locks were not in working order. This explained a perplexity raised by a discovery made about a fortnight before by Mr. Davies. The locks on most of the presses were taken off to be cleaned and put in order. The internal working of the locks on the MSS. press and the one next to it was that of the modern cupboard lock, whereas all the others were of a different and older make. From the external appearance these locks should be, if anything, older than any of the others. The interview with Dean Leigh explains the discrepancy between the inside and outside. These presses—the MSS. press and that which stood next to

[1] Dean Merewether, in his appeal for funds for the restoration of the Cathedral in 1842, speaks of panelling removed from the east wall of the Ladye Chapel. This is doubtless the panelling now at the end of the vestry, which is of exactly a width to fill the wall-space on the east end between presses (A) and H.

it—would naturally be the two which he intended to restore completely; and he had begun by making the keys in these locks work—calling in a locksmith, who took unwarrantable liberties in so doing.

Old and New in the Restoration

The following summary will enable a visitor to the library to distinguish exactly between original work and the results of restoration. It should be read in connection with the plans of the library (pp. 99, 102).

(I) *The Transept Chamber*

(A) *Woodwork*

All the woodwork of the presses and seats in the Transept Chamber is original except as explained below.

The lower member of the cornice on the right-hand (D) long cornice board of the MSS. press is original; and so is about 1 ft. 3 in. of the same on the K side of the press IK—above which is the surviving fragment of the upper member of the original cornice. The rest of the cornice on all the presses is new

Both desks on the MSS. press are original. That on the side M of the adjacent press is also original; the two boards of which it is composed had been slightly shortened and used as cornice boards; but scars of hinges showed that they originally formed a desk—or perhaps the halves of two desks. The other desks are new.

The bracket at the wall-end of the left-hand side (E) of the MSS. press is original so far as its length is concerned; the projecting portion has been patched to restore it to its original width. Fifteen other brackets are original—including the outside right-hand (D) bracket of this press with slot for hinge. These had all been sawn off flush with the edge of the bottom shelf. They have been refixed by concealed iron bolts; but can be identified by observing the saw-cut. The other brackets belong to the restoration.

The catalogue frames are all original, but those on presses IK

and (A)H required some minor repairs, including three new knobs.

The dust-boards within the cornice were rotten (I think they were of elm). They have been replaced in new oak. The diagonal cross-ties (concealed between the rows of books) and the ledges which support the shelves, are additions made for the security of the structure, as the old joints had been loosened, and sometimes damaged, in the many removals of the library. For the same reason iron angles have been fixed here and there inside the cases out of sight.

All new work that was required in the restoration (except the dust-boards inside the cornice) was carried out in very old oak provided by Mr. Walter Davies. The phrase "new wood", therefore, as used above, means "added in 1930–31". Old oak was also used for the two large show-cases in the windows, designed by Mr. W. E. H. Clarke to harmonise with the other fittings.

(B) *Ironwork*

All the locks, hasps and chains on the presses are original. The original key is preserved in a glass show-case. All the rod-sockets are ancient; those which are tinned and are fixed to the woodwork by a plate with a trefoil pattern are the oldest; the others are of coarser work and originally belonged to the presses added by Thornton. In the various removals of the library the two kinds have got somewhat mixed.

The hinges of the catalogue frames are original, except on the press IK. It should be noted that three different patterns occur in these hinges: (*a*) LM and (D)(E); (*b*) (A)H; (*c*) NO and P—the third being in the Upper Cloister.

The desk-hooks on the left-hand (E) side of the MS. press were found *in loco*; so were the pair fixed on the wall-end of the press IK. The latter are larger and of a coarser pattern. It is probable that this

wall-end originally belonged to one of Thornton's presses; but the distinction between his and the older presses was not discovered till after this press had been put together again after the removal. Then the possibility of damage to the old woodwork, if once more taken to pieces (to effect an exchange of wall-ends with one of the presses now in the Upper Cloister), was too great to be worth risking for so small a gain in precision. Three desk-hooks of the older pattern were found loose in the old box containing the brass clips; they are now fixed on the wall-end (E), the face-end H, and the face-end L. A desk-hook of the Thornton pattern, found in the same box, has been fixed on the face-end I.

Of the 72 rods on the presses in the Transept Chamber, 55 are original. These are easily distinguished from the modern substitutes, by the remains of the old red colouring, and by the fact that they are made with the hammer and are rarely of uniform width or have the ends cut off square.

All the great long-headed nails on the lock-plates on (D)(E) and (A)H are original; and so are four of those on IK and three on LM.

The portions of an original hinge, which (along with the hollow for the lower strap on the outside bracket on the MSS. press) gave the pattern for the desk hinges, are now in a glass show-case in the library.

(II) *The Upper Cloister*

(A) *Woodwork*

All the seats are original throughout.

All the face-ends of the presses are original; but some patching was necessary. About 1 ft. 6 in. which had been cut off the bottoms of (B)C and P had to be replaced; to the right side of P and V there was also added a strip of oak 4 in. wide.

All the wall-ends are original, except one board of (F)(G). The wall-ends of (B)C and P required the same patching as the face-ends.

The catalogue frames on NO and P are original, with minor repairs; that on P is of special interest as being a half catalogue frame. The top and bottom rails of that on (B)C are original. The half-frame on (F)(G) is a copy of the old half-frame now on P. That on P was not yet in place when the photograph reproduced, p. 319, was taken.

The "ground-supports" of NO are original; also the shelves and uprights on the C side of (B)C. The rest of the shelving in the Upper Cloister is mainly composed of original shelves of the presses dismembered in 1856. Most of the shelves of these dismembered presses were cut into short lengths in order to form two rows of shelves below the desk-level in the five remaining presses. As these short pieces were cut approximately to the length of a *partitio*, they could, with the addition of modern ledges, be used again. Some full-length shelves of the original oak were obtained from the top and back of the vestry cupboard.

(B) *Ironwork*

All the locks, hasps, and chains are original. The old ironwork on the press (B)C matches that on (A)H and IK in the Transept Chamber. A new button was supplied to one hasp. On the C side there are two rod-sockets of the oldest type.

The face-end of NO is the best preserved of Thornton's presses. It retains three of its original rod-sockets, and (on the O side) one of its original desk-hooks. The wall-end of this press probably belonged originally to the press (B)C; it has (on the N side) a desk-hook of the older pattern.

Four of the rods in this room are old. The modern rod-sockets can be distinguished from the old as easily as can the new from the old rods. There are on (F)(G) three original rod-sockets—one at the junction of shelf and upright.

The hinges on the catalogue frames on NO and P are original. They are (as noted on p. 336) of a pattern slightly different

from either of the patterns on the frames in the Transept Chamber.

Of the great nails on the lock-plates, all on P, 6 of the 8 on (B)C, 3 on NO, and 2 on (F)(G) are original.

Rarely have restorers had command of such an abundance of original materials.

A Hundred Years Ago

In 1831 John Britton, a leading authority of the time on architecture, in his *History and Antiquities of the Cathedral Church of Hereford*, wrote:

> From this brief account of the interior of the Lady Chapel, and from the engravings, a stranger, and an admirer of Christian architecture, will lament to learn that this fine room is filled and lumbered with old bookcases.

It was well to restore an early English Lady Chapel to its ancient use; but the taste of to-day judges otherwise than that of a Hundred Years Ago a Chained Library of the Elizabethan age.

CHAINED BOOKS (HEREFORD)

EPILOGUE

A MISGIVING steals over me. Is it a desecration to assail these venerable libraries by methods of structural analysis and historical research—to view them as a series conceived in evolutionary terms? Listen to Dean Swift's account of the origin of chaining books:

> Books of controversy, being of all others haunted by the most disorderly spirits, have always been confined in a separate lodge from the rest; and, for fear of mutual violence against each other, it was thought prudent by our ancestors to bind them to the peace with strong iron chains. Of which invention the original occasion was this: When the works of Scotus first came out, they were carried to a certain library, and had lodgings appointed them; but this author was no sooner settled, than he went to visit his master Aristotle; and there both concerted together to seize Plato by main force, and turn him out from his ancient station among the *divines*, where he had peaceably dwelt near eight hundred years. The attempt succeeded, and the two usurpers have reigned ever since in his stead: but, to maintain quiet for the future, it was decreed that all *polemics* of the larger size should be held fast with a chain.

A poet will prefer the Dean's account; a scientist may rather favour mine. Be theirs the choice.

APPENDIX I

THE CHAINED LIBRARY, ENKHUIZEN

At Enkhuizen in Holland there is an unusual example of the Stall-system. My information in regard to it is partly derived from an off-print of an article (with illustrations) by Dr. D. A. Brinkerink in the *Tijdschrift voor Boek en Bibliothekwesen*, 1908, and from the introduction to a catalogue of the library by the same author, kindly supplied me by The Rev. Dr. Brouwer, who has charge of the library, partly from an article in the Journal of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society (viii. 387), by J. W. Clark, who visited it in 1894.

Enkhuizen on the Zuyder Zee, not far from Amsterdam, is now a town of about 9000 inhabitants, but at the zenith of its prosperity in 1625 it was one of the great ports of Holland. The library is in a room 20 ft × 17 ft. attached to the Westerkerk, one of the principal churches in the town.

The most notable of the primitive features retained in this library concern the seats and desks. The seats are plain backless benches, as at Merton College, Oxford; they are even less ornamental than those at Zutphen. The desks are fixed at a very steep angle—more than 45 degrees—with a ledge at the bottom to prevent the book falling off, as at Durham and Bolton.

There are two whole presses, and one half-press, which is backed against the end wall. The ends of the presses are not butted against the wall between windows in the usual manner; they stand centrally, so that there is a passage along both walls of the room. As at Merton there is a foot-rest. There are three shelves above the desk, and of course none below. The two lower shelves are adapted for folios, the top one for quartos. The woodwork is rough deal, but there is some carving on the brackets which support the desks; and there are scroll ornaments along the edges of the press at both, and on the central upright which divides each shelf into two *partitiones*.

In 1839 the chains were taken off the books, in order to make it easier to save them in case of fire—an ancient library having been burnt down the year before in the church of the neighbouring town of Hoorn. A few of the chains are still preserved in an old chest. The chains are of brass—the only instance I know of the use of brass for this purpose.

Clark says that the chains are of twisted wire, each link being $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, and that they are attached to the books by a plate nailed to the board near the top, and to the bar by a padlock. I think he must mean, not that each chain has its own lock, but that the rod is fixed by a padlock.

The catalogue includes the titles of nearly 400 works. Of these the great majority were printed between 1540 and 1631; to the latter year no less than 8 belong. About 30 are later than that year. An up-to-date working library in a prosperous city would be planned to receive—and would receive—accessions of fresh books. Hence a date later than 1610–20 is improbable.

Structurally the library may be described as the union of a "three-decker" press with the bench and steeply-sloping desk of Zutphen; or, alternatively, as a combination of the presses in *Duke Humphrey*, the seats at Merton, and the desks as they were at St. John's College, Oxford, in 1600. Clark suggests the possibility that the designer had seen Merton; and, if Merton, why not the other two? Sir Thomas Bodley had been both a notable man and a *persona grata* in the Netherlands; the fame of his library would have reached Holland, and a Dutch divine, wishing to found a library, may well have paid a visit to Oxford.

APPENDIX II

THE WINCHESTER CHAINS

THE library of Winchester Cathedral suffered very severely both at the Reformation and during the Civil War; it has retained comparatively few of the books which belonged to the old library, of which the original building has also disappeared. The present Chapter Library consists, in the main, of the library of Bishop Morley, who died 1684, leaving his books to the Cathedral. The low room is barrel-vaulted, lined with continuous back-to-wall shelving surmounted by a beautifully carved cornice and pinnacles. These were evidently designed for a much higher room, and they also exhibit signs of adaptation at the window openings. It is probable, therefore, that the bookcases were made for the library when it was in Farnham Castle, and came to Winchester along with the books. It is quite evident that these bookcases never bore chains. Libraries which were the private possession of individuals were rarely chained.

There are, however, four MSS. which belonged to an earlier library, and which exhibit chaining of a type unusual in England.

One, a tenth-century MS. of Bede, was written in Winchester. Two were given to the Cathedral by John Bridges, prebendary 1565–1610, and Bishop of Oxford, 1604–18, viz. the *Unum ex quatuor* (early thirteenth century) of Zachary of Besançon, and a fourteenth-century collection of historical and romanic works. The fourth (Lives of Saints) dates *c.* 1200. But though they differ considerably in age, they are all bound uniformly in rough calf in a style which was common during the thirty years before and after the year 1600. All four were once chained; two of the chains and three of the clips survive. From two of the books the chains have been violently torn—possibly in the duress of the Commonwealth period.

The chains had only one ring—at the rod-end. This ring is of the exceptional diameter of $2\frac{3}{8}$ inches, and it has the swivel attached to it. The chains are 2 ft. $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. long, and consist of twelve links which vary from 2 inches to 3 inches in length. The wire of the links is square and thicker than usual, and twisted to form a spiral pattern for about two-thirds of the length of the

long sides of each link; but the ends of the links are plain. J. W. Clark gives an illustration (*op. cit.*, p. 159) of a book chained with links (two only) of a similar pattern from a Dominican House at Bamberg, South Germany.

The clips which attach the chain to the cover are made of iron instead of brass, and are forged so as to resemble two tiny spades, which grip the cover of the book, connected by a round staple. The end link of the chain is held by this staple, the ring which usually connects the clip and the end link being omitted. The iron clips of the Bamberg example are similar.

The length of the chains and the fact that the clips are on the fore-edge of the books favour the view that at the time when they were rebound, 1600, they were in a library fitted on the Stall-system. William of Waynflete was Bishop of Winchester, and his successors were Visitors of Magdalen College—where this system first appears.

APPENDIX III

ARCHBISHOP PARKER AND ANGLO-SAXON MSS.

(*An Unpublished Letter*)

IN the earliest of the Hereford Chapter Act Books (f. 210 b), under the date January 20, 1565/66, is the following entry:

A copy of a lett^r und^r wrytten

I am gladd to heare that yor Lordshipp ys in so good recuverye and geve you thankes for that you dydd not forgett to cause Hereford librarie to be serched for Saxon bookes whereof ye mak mention to me. Praying yor L. to cause them to be sent unto me by the carryar to have the use of them for a tyme. Meaninge wth thankes shorttlye to ret^rne them agayn, or yf any other old historye of England be in the same librarie or in yor owne store. That Capper of Monmorthe wold be hardlye brought to confesse the havynge of the Saxon psalter ye may see what Mr. Smyth[1] can do in the recuverye. And thus I byd yor L. well to fayr as my selfe, from my howse at Lambith this xx^ti of January 1565.

Yo^r lovynge brother

MATTHUE CANTUAR.

At the request of whiche lett^r these bookes und^r wrytten were sent to my lord busshopp of Heref. the viij day of February An^o dni 1565 viz:

Vita Sti Marcelini
Sermones dominicales
Vite quorundam sanctorum saxonice script.

The Archbishop—like some other borrowers of books—forgot to return the three Anglo-Saxon MSS. On his death his collection of Anglo-Saxon MSS. went to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. As there are several copies of *Sermones* in the Corpus Library, one of them may have come from Hereford; the other MSS. I cannot trace.

[1] Probably Nicholas Smyth, Archdeacon of Salop.

APPENDIX IV

AN ELIZABETHAN LIBRARY STATUTE

INJUNCTIONES sive Statuta Ecclesiæ cathedralis Herefordensis Collegii Vicariorum choralium ejusdem Ecclesiæ et domus Eleemosinariæ Ethelberti ibidem Authoritate Literarum patentium serenifsimæ Dominæ nostræ Dominæ Elizabethæ Angliæ Franciæ & Hiberniæ reginæ &c. per Ejusdem delegatos promulgata vicesimo Sexto Die mensis Martii 1583: Anno Reginæ Elizabethæ &c. vicesimo Quinto.

. . . . . .

DE BIBLIOTHECÂ

Ut Bibliotheca jam Situ et Squalore obsita et vetustate fere collapsa pristinum suum usum recuperare possit Custodem eidem ex Canonicis Residentiariis unum Quotannis rationibus Solennibus istius Ecclesiæ relatis et finitis (quem auditum vocant) præfici volumus.

Hujus munus erit Bibliothecam sartam tectam conservari, libros Catenis affixos et clausos reponi, Indicem eorum ad Extremitatem cujusq^{e} plutei præfigi curare; a quovis Canonico sive Præbendario ab Initio felicifsimi Regni jam Regiæ majestatis antehac personaliter admisso aut ab ejus Executoribus quadraginta Solidos ad Ornamenta Ecclesiæ restauranda pendi et debitos et solitos ad usum librorum coemendorum convertendos in Posterum et in communem Cistam reponendos exigere: a quovis autem personaliter posthac in possessionem Canonicatûs sive Præbendae admittendo antequam Admittatur dictam pecuniarum Summam Repræsentari et in Cistam illam reponi procurare: quos sic repositos nummos cum ad justam Summam excreverint in eos libros qui arbitrio Decani et Capituli maxime videbuntur opportuni per dictum Custodem coemendos expendi atq^{e} Erogari volumus: quem quidem Custodem quotannis omnium sic Acceptorum et Expensorum

APPENDIX IV

AN ELIZABETHAN LIBRARY STATUTE

INJUNCTIONS or Statutes of the Cathedral Church of Hereford, of the College of the Vicars' Choral of the same Church, and of the Alms House of Ethelbert [St. Ethelbert's Hospital] in the same place, by the authority of letters patent of our most serene Sovereign, Lady Elizabeth, Queen of England, France, and Ireland, etc., promulgated through the commissioners of the same on the 26th day of the month of March, 1583: in the twenty-fifth year of Queen Elizabeth, etc.

. . . . . .

CONCERNING THE LIBRARY

In order that the library, which is now covered with dirt and mould, and almost falling down with age, may be restored to its original serviceableness, we provide that every year, at the formal report and settlement of accounts of that Church (which they call the Audit) a Keeper be put in charge of the same, being one of the Canons Residentiary.

It shall be his business to see that the library is kept weather-tight, the books kept chained and locked, that a list of them is fixed on the end of each *pluteus*[1]: also to recover from any Canon or Prebendary heretofore personally admitted since the beginning of the most happy reign of Her present Royal Majesty, or from his executors, the 40 shillings which was the due and customary payment for the upkeep of the ornaments of the Church, henceforth to be applied to the purpose of buying books and to be deposited in the common Chest: but from anyone after this date admitted to the possession of a Canonry or Prebend to recover the aforesaid sum of money before admission. He is to see that the money is produced and put into that Chest: which coins thus deposited, when they have amounted to a reasonable sum, we appoint to be paid out and expended by the aforesaid Keeper for the purchase of those books which in the judgement of the Dean and Chapter shall seem most appropriate. And we order that the Keeper give annually a faithful account

[1] This word is used indifferently of lecterns or presses.

coram Ratiociniorum magistro (quem Auditorem dicimus) rationes fideles referre nec ante Apocham sive acquictantiam ferre jubemus quam omnes hujusmodi nummos Intra annum sui muneris deberi cæptos persolverit: quod si Reliquator fuerit deprehensus, tantundem de fructibus et Emolumentis Sibi alioqui distribuendis deduci et in communem Cistam ad Usum Bibliothecæ reponi volumus.

Sin autem aliquis nunc Canonicus sive Præbendarius personaliter antehac admissus dictos [et] Quadraginta Solidos (licet admonitus) intra mensem non persolverit ejus diaria sive majoris sive minoris Communiæ tantisper detinebuntur quoad dictæ pecuniæ inde excreverint. Valde etiam expedire censemus ut et in duobus Libris omnia Librorum nomina describantur (quorum unus in Archivis Ecclesiæ alter in Bibliotheca asservetur) et Decanus duobus Canonicis sive Præbendariis comitatus quater Saltem quotannis omnes Libros percenseat & perlustret, quo si quid peccatum fuerit custodis Incuriâ ejus Damno possit resarciri.

of all that he has received and paid to the Master of the accounts whom we call the Auditor, and that he shall not have a receipt or acquittance until he has accounted for all monies of this sort which ought to have been received during the year of his office. And if he shall have been found a defaulter, we appoint that a deduction to that amount be made from the profits and emoluments to be divided to him on some other account, and the sum to be deposited in the common Chest for the use of the library.

But if any present Canon or Prebendary personally admitted before this date shall not (after due notice) have paid the aforesaid 40 shillings within one month, his daily allowance, whether of the greater or of the lesser commons, shall by that amount be held back until from that source the aforesaid monies have accrued. We also judge that it is highly expedient that all the names of the books be written out in two books (of which one shall be kept in the Archives of the Church, the other in the Library), and that the Dean, accompanied by two Canons or Prebendaries, shall at least four times in every year inspect and review all the books, so that, if anything has gone amiss from the negligence of the Keeper, it can be repaired at his expense.

Postscript

After the above was already in page-proof, Dr. Craster, who had been asked to examine the old family documents at Pitchford Hall, Shrewsbury (noted as a rare survival of the Elizabethan half-timbered country house), found there a copy of the Elizabethan Statutes of Hereford Cathedral. This proved to be Thomas Thornton's own copy, in which he has numbered in the margin and underlined the passages relating to the duties of the Master of the Library.

It is on paper, bound in a large double folio from a fine fourteenth-century antiphoner on vellum, with the ancient music, presumably of the Hereford Use. It probably came to Pitchford Hall through a member of the family, Dr. Adam Ottley (Bishop of St. David's, 1713), who became Prebendary of Hereford in 1686.

Excepting in punctuation and the use of capitals, its text differs from that of the Bishop's copy, in the passages printed above, in the addition of the word *Sancti* before *Ethelberti* (which is spelt Æ) and in the transposition of a couple of words later. The Bishop's copy is in a nineteenth-century hand, but has so few mistakes that, on the chance that it may have been made from the original, I have not corrected the above by Thornton's text.

General C. J. C. Grant, D.S.O., the present owner of Pitchford Hall, has most generously presented the manuscript to the Chapter; and it is now in one of the show-cases in the Library.

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