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BOOKS AND READERS IN CERTAIN  
EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PARISH LIBRARIES

by

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A Doctoral Thesis

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for the award of  
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## PREFACE

With regard to the dating of library transactions within the following analysis it should be noted that during the period 1582-1752 England continued to use the Julian Calendar and English dates were therefore eleven days behind those on the Continent. During a similar period in England the new year began on 25 March and that fact can lead to some ambiguity when isolated loans are recorded prior to 1752, though more normally, the presence of a sequence of contemporary loans clarifies the situation. Library transactions recorded during a period January to March prior to 1752 have been presented in the form 1728/9, for example, whilst in Appendix I, all dates are modernized to a year beginning January first.

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Unless otherwise acknowledged, the work here presented is my own original contribution and the analysis, interpretation and presentation remain entirely my own responsibility.

March 1985

G.B.

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## ABSTRACT

An introductory chapter outlines the provenance, circumstance and background relating to the provision of individual books and libraries within English parish churches since the Reformation. Such sources as private benefactions, endowments and royal and episcopal directives are cited as instrumental in creating the patchwork provision of books that was the inheritance of the eighteenth century, and to which was added the extensive work of Dr Thomas Bray, his Associates, and the various religious societies.

A second chapter places within this historical context the specific development of five libraries situated at Wisbech, Doncaster, Witham, Rotherham and Maidstone; each of which, out of different circumstances, was operating a lending library under parochial administration for some period of the eighteenth century.

A detailed analysis of borrowers and books at the five libraries follows in chapter 3 and is derived from the extant book-issue records associated with each library. Such aspects as anticipated and apparent demand; patterns and scope of use; borrower status; and the nature of the books loaned are investigated.

A further chapter augments the evidence from these five libraries with other parallel or related material. Specific reference is made to diaries, benefaction details, and to recorded loans made from private libraries at Castleton, Derbyshire; Idmiston, Wiltshire; and Llandissilio, Wales.

A concluding chapter draws together certain common themes, reading trends and shared administrative features whilst highlighting the differing scope and nature of the borrowing communities, patterns of benefaction and effects of individual and associated philanthropy.

Appendix I additionally provides a short-title union listing of identifiable books recorded as borrowed during the eighteenth century conflated from the five main libraries which form the basis of chapters two and three.

## ABBREVIATIONS

BI	Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, York
BM	British Museum (British Library)
<u>B.U.C.O.P.</u>	British Union Catalogue of Periodicals
DCL	Doncaster Central Library
<u>D.N.B.</u>	Dictionary of National Biography
DRO	Doncaster Record Office
ERO	Essex Record Office
HCL	Huddersfield Central Library
HRO	Halifax Record Office (Calderdale Metropolitan District)
KAO	Kent Archive Office
MMAG	Maidstone Museum and Art Gallery
RCL	Rotherham Central Library
<u>Venn</u>	J. and J.A. Venn, <u>Alumni Cantabrigienses</u> (1922).
WFM	Wisbech and Fenland Museum
<u>Wing</u>	D. Wing, <u>Short-title catalogue...1641-1700</u> (1945).

## CHAPTER I

### HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

Within the family of libraries that by common usage were dubbed 'parish' or 'parochial' during the early years of the eighteenth century, there were some individual collections which could be credited with a pedigree, or direct lineal descent, dating from the early years of the Reformation. Other libraries had their roots firmly in the seventeenth century, both in terms of conception and foundation and with regard to the dominating provenance of their content. Yet others were of relatively recent origin, a new generation of purpose-made parish libraries, conceived and nurtured in the orthodoxy and philanthropy of the early eighteenth-century Church of England.

As of consequence there was no equality of provision. Across the parishes of England and to a lesser extent those of Wales, there existed an extensive yet haphazard pattern of book donation and acquisition, often associated with the parish church though overall having no standard format. Each collection of books as it survived (or otherwise) was a reflection of how local interest or local disinterest, local care or neglect, affected the intrinsic nature of what had been the original endowment, benefaction or acquisition.

In this sense it is convenient, if not entirely accurate, for one to apply the term 'parish library' retrospectively to a whole family of indigenous and idiosyncratic book collections. And thus it is that the consanguineous nature of the libraries is confirmed by the 'parish'/'parochial' label; applied according to ownership, control, or use, as stated or perceived.<sup>1</sup>

So it is, that in addition to the familiar plethora of ready-made parish libraries intended for clerical use and provided through the remarkable efforts of the Reverend Thomas Bray and his Associates during the earlier decades of the eighteenth century, many other,



often purely local, exertions had already resulted in parish libraries being formed. The sources of the books thus acquired were indeed varied, but at least in this particular area there exists a certain common ground. For books could only be donated by those who owned books, and money only forthcoming from those able and inclined to be generous with what they had. Such an eleemosynary method emerges as increasingly relevant if one is to consider parish libraries in the light of their anticipated usefulness, actual use received and their ultimate fate.

Such a consideration might well anticipate that the terms and conditions of an original bequest or foundation would largely determine the actual use, preservation and perhaps even the very survival of a library. However, this was not necessarily so and neglect in many cases did inevitably occur, for it was clearly an exceptional and far-sighted founder who sought maximum longevity for his benefaction by providing a continuing endowment, and maximum usefulness by opening the collection to all interested persons. Further, in many cases, it is not possible to assign accurately a specific foundation date, nor is it possible to identify a single original founder for what was often a fortuitous yet persistent growth in the number of books made more or less available within the parish.

In essence, by far the most common procedure was the effecting of a simple transfer, perhaps by bequest, of a book or books from private ownership to parochial care. Little or no provision was made for housing, maintenance or development and often there was only a brief indication of intended use. There were however some notable exceptions, but generally speaking it was this simple transfer of ownership from individual to institution that created a potential for public access out of private use. The extent to which that potential

was realised, however, was determined by a number of factors.

Not the least of these factors was the nature of the books themselves. Learned works in foreign languages for example would obviously lessen the potential for use amongst the majority of parishioners at least, limiting the anticipated use to the well educated. Whilst one could confidently predict that books: "Written in the English tongue, for the good and benefitt of the volger and not so well learned sort of people" would tend to increase that potential for use, regardless of whether or not the stated aim was to make that library popular at all.<sup>2</sup> In this regard one can construct a link with those volumes often absorbed into eighteenth-century parish libraries but which pre-date such foundations by many years, having what may be said to be a stronger in situ pedigree. These volumes can be identified as legacies from a variety of royal and episcopal decrees, directives and instructions issued at intervals during a long period following the Reformation. Such works appear common to many parish libraries and the background to their provision forms a necessary backdrop to any consideration of potential and actual use of parish book collections.

The specific decrees and directives that concerned themselves with prescribed reading in the years after the Reformation reflect an interest by the authorities in creating an instrument for the promulgating of sound Protestant doctrine. The clergy were thus to preach according to 'healthy' and orthodox doctrine as received and consolidated by certain selected printed texts. The laity on the other hand had made available to them the Word of God, printed in English, and supplemented by works which clearly expounded the tenets of sound religion that they might read and learn. The sword was two-edged however, and from the very earliest years of the Reformation attempts were also made to curtail the printing and distribution of undesirable

works using a series of restrictive measures. As early as 1534, the very year that Henry VIII repudiated papal authority and commenced his dissolution of the monasteries, an Act of Parliament<sup>3</sup> could speak of 'a marvellous number' of printed books that had arrived in this country from abroad, the contents of some of which were considered undesirable or even heretical. Measures were taken to stem this flow and tight restrictions were imposed to regulate and control the booktrade, and consequently, what was available to be read.<sup>4</sup>

The earliest royal injunction relating to books was issued in 1536. Thomas Cromwell as vicar-general to the King, issued by authority of the King the following instruction to the clergy of the land:

"Item, that every parson or proprietary of any parish church within this realm, shall on this side of the Feast of S. Peter ad Vincula next coming, provide a book of the Whole Bible both in Latin and also in English and lay the same in the choir for every man that will to look and read thereon, and shall discourage no man from the reading of any part of the Bible, either in Latin or in English; but rather comfort, exhort and admonish every man to read the same as the very word of God, and the spiritual food of man's soul, whereby they may the better know their duties to God, to their sovereign lord the King, and their neighbour...".<sup>5</sup>

The order was renewed and repeated some two years later in October 1538 when a second royal injunction, significantly, placed more emphasis upon the method whereby the provision was to be made. Reference was made to a Bible 'of the largest volume in English'<sup>6</sup> along with instructions whereby the cost of the book "...shall be ratably born between you, the parson and the parishioners aforesaid, that is to say the one half by you, and the other half by them".<sup>7</sup>

To what extent these injunctions were obeyed it is difficult to say, especially in the absence of a systematic analysis of surviving

parish records. And even this would not produce an answer relative to the first injunction where the cost was presumably to be borne by the parson or proprietary and may well therefore not have been recorded in the parish accounts. References do exist however in a number of places to expenditure associated with various 'half Bibles' (referring to the method of purchase outlined in the second royal injunction of 1538).<sup>8.</sup>

That the provision of Bibles in the churches was not as high as expected however is confirmed by a further Royal Proclamation of May 1541. This attempted to coerce the clergy and parishioners into buying a Bible, the price of which, the proclamation added, had been brought down by order of the King to facilitate the provision.<sup>9.</sup> Despite this, there may well have been a certain lack of enthusiasm manifest towards the proposals by the conservative clergy, some of whom were opposed to putting scripture in the vernacular into the hands of the populace.<sup>10.</sup>

Some eleven years after Henry VIII first issued the injunction regarding Bibles, the order was repeated by King Edward VI in 1547. Once again, a Bible 'of the largest volume' in English was referred to, but significantly, two further works were specifically mentioned as being necessary. Incumbents were to make available within the parish church, within one year of the next visitation:

"...the Paraphrases of Erasmus also in English upon the Gospels, and the same set up in some convenient place, within the said church that they have care of, whereas their parishioners may most commodiously resort unto the same, and read the same."<sup>11.</sup>

Incumbents were also instructed to acquire the Book of Homilies (as it later became known):

"...because through lack of preachers in many places of the King's realms and dominions the people continue in ignorance and blindness, all persons, vicars and curates shall read in the churches every Sunday one of the Homilies, which are and shall be set forth for the

same purpose by the King's authority...".<sup>12.</sup>

The same set of Royal Injunctions further referred to all clergy under the degree of bachelor of divinity who were to provide for themselves, within three months of the next visitation, not only the Paraphrases of Erasmus but also a New Testament in both Latin and English. It was explained that the purpose of this was in order that they might diligently study and learn: 'conferring the one with the other'.<sup>13.</sup>

It has been quite reasonably suggested<sup>14.</sup> that these instructions gave considerable impetus to the chaining of books in churches, and it is as well to remember that this indeed was the usual method of securing such volumes at the time. In some cases parish accounts record a twofold expenditure associated with the purchase of new books; the price of the book itself and the cost of securing with chain and nails. In other cases (as at Wimborne, Dorset in 1542) a reading desk was also provided; with lect<sup>r</sup>urns and tables too being e/ not uncommon.<sup>15.</sup> Such extant copies of these prescribed volumes as survive often do so by virtue of the chaining process or alternatively as a consequence of their incorporation into later and larger parish libraries. Appreciable numbers of both Erasmus's Paraphrases and the Book of Homilies do in fact survive.<sup>16.</sup>

A further work, ordered to be placed in every church by Archbishop Parker in 1564, was Bishop John Jewel's An Apologie...in defence of the Church of England.<sup>17.</sup> There existed evident widespread demand for this work, with no fewer than fifteen editions of the Latin and other foreign language editions being published before 1685. A Defence of the Apologie... was issued in 1567 in reply to an attack by the Jesuit Thomas Harding and some years later, in 1603 and 1611, appeared the collected Works of Bishop Jewel.

Considerable numbers of the Jewel volumes survive, being a

popular choice for chaining within the churches. Certainly there was some effort made by the Church authorities to make this the case. For with reference to the collected Works of Jewel, Archbishop Bancroft, writing a letter in July 1610, could thus express his intentions: "I have been content that all Bishop Jewel's works should be printed together in one volume, to the end that every parish in England might have one of them."<sup>18</sup>.

An interesting relationship is revealed elsewhere in the same letter between a leading printer of the time and the church leader, who, for differing reasons, may both have wished for a wide circulation of the work. The publisher of the 1609 edition of Jewel's Works was Bonham Norton and he is mentioned by the Archbishop in connection with an arrangement whereby copies of that same work were to be bound up and prepared: "...that hereby the said parishes may have these books near at hand, which will the better encourage them to buy them."

As an indication of the popularity of this work as a candidate for provision within the churches, one listing could provide the names of twenty-five churches where copies survive, significantly, all showing some evidence of chaining.<sup>19</sup>.

A further episcopal directive was issued by Archbishop Whitgift in 1585-86 and in a similar vein to the Royal Injunction of 1547 it concerned the non-graduate clergy. A requirement was thereby made that such clergy should, under supervision, read and make notes on the Swiss reformer Bullinger's Sermons. As a consequence, copies were acquired where appropriate, though apparently in nothing like the numbers associated with the Jewel works.<sup>20</sup>.

From amongst the variety of other candidates thought suitable and desirable for display and use in the parish churches, one, Foxe's Book of Martyrs, was perhaps the most popular from 1562/3 when the

first English edition was issued.<sup>21</sup>.

The source of this popularity may in part be due to the requirement of the Canons of 1571 that all higher clergy should set up in their homes and make available to visitors, not only the Bible 'of largest volume' but also Foxe's Martyrs. There was no such onus on parish churches however, although evidence of surviving volumes suggests that The Book of Martyrs was a frequent additional choice.<sup>22</sup>.

There were however many losses of these works. In the throes of the Reformation, injunctions were repealed and books later re-acquired according to the changing nature of royal influence upon the Church generally. Queen Elizabeth in 1559 had repeated the 1547 injunctions of Edward quite simply, as Ker points out, because what was set up by Edward was taken down again by Queen Mary.<sup>23</sup>. Individual action in removing offending works could also be drastic, and quite final, as the following shows:

"Memorandum that i burnyd all the boockes. In primys a bybyll of rogers translatyon the paraphrases / Englysche A communion boocke yn / Halles cronekylles the b<sup>y</sup>shop of canterberyes booke Latimers sermonttes Hopers sermontes A psalter."<sup>24</sup>.

By the mid seventeenth-century however, many of the prescribed works had gone through a number of editions, with churches acquiring and re-acquiring copies over the years. In many cases, it should be stated, the books, once acquired as directed or chosen, were cared for with some thought (and expenditure) going into their care and security. This being so, it would be quite feasible for a rural parish church, by the mid seventeenth-century, to have acquired a small and orthodox collection of books, perhaps chained, though nevertheless available for use within the parochial community. Further benefactions from local inhabitants and elsewhere could soon effect the emergence of a

small library.

Many such donations had the specified intention of benefiting the local incumbent or clergymen and in not a few cases gifts were from the clergy to the clergy. Other likely benefactors were local patrons of livings or pious gentry and tradesmen, philanthropically motivated to improve the learning of their local minister. Consequently, the book collections that emerged during the seventeenth century should not necessarily be considered as miniature 'public' libraries in the nineteenth-century sense of the word. There is little evidence for example that substantial sums of parochial money were being spent on these collections and often the location and subject matter of the books themselves would automatically restrict use, if not just to the clergy, then to relatively few well-educated and pious individuals.

However, books continued to be a popular object of bequest as they had been since pre-printing days when, quite rightly, they were often prized for their intrinsic beauty and workmanship in addition to the value placed on the text which they preserved. The increased availability of books that the printing presses facilitated did nothing to diminish the book as a popular gift from those so disposed and able to give.

One historian, in investigating education and learning in late medieval and early Tudor York, gives some indication of what sort of book was popular as a gift in northern England during pre-Reformation days.<sup>25</sup> Of that class of literature which can be considered as an aid to the clergy - sermons, homilies and instructions for parish priests - it can be said that such books represented approximately forty-five per cent of all titles identified as being bequethed. Specifically, the figure rises from about fifteen per cent at the end of the fourteenth century to between fifty and sixty per cent between 1480 and 1510.



Considerable numbers of such books were to be found in the hands of the laity; other popular types of literature were service books, devotional tracts, religious histories, grammar texts and priests' manuals.<sup>26.</sup>

In post-Reformation England the popularity of certain texts may have changed according to the prevailing religious climate, but the urge to give and acquire books remained the same. One inventory of 1599 for St. James's, Bury St. Edmunds, lists upward of 200 volumes mostly given between 1595 and 1599. The donors are tradesmen and common councilmen of the Borough, a grocer, clothiers, a school-master, a lawyer, neighbouring squires and, inevitably, clergymen. Further gifts continued to be made sporadically during the following century, the tenor of such gifts being typified by one Robert Plummer who, in 1680, gave a copy of Foxe's Book of Martyrs to the library in a church 'for ever', adding: "Cursed be he that depriveth the church of itt".<sup>27.</sup>

In the vast majority of cases there was no continuing endowment for upkeep, housing, or new purchases of books, though some exceptions do exist.<sup>28.</sup> What was often specified in a bequest (though not always followed to the letter) was the scope of intended use: 'to the minister and his successors for ever'; 'to the minister and neighbouring clergy'; 'to the inhabitants of the parish'; all were popular dedications. Whilst 'to all interested persons' and 'for the good and benefitt of the volger and not so well learned sort of people' were obviously the exception rather than the rule.

A further influence on the intended scope of use was the specified mode of access. Some benefactions came with unequivocal instructions stating for example that the books were not to be lent or that they were to be secured by chains somewhere within the church. Others, as at Repton in 1622-23, were available for loan, it being

specifically stipulated that the books were not to be chained or retained in the church, but made available, under certain conditions, to the parishioners.<sup>29</sup> Further examples of what was not a widespread practice can be given as at St. Margaret's, King's Lynn (1631), Spalding (1637) and Halifax (1645).

These book collections, or small libraries, were made available from within chests, on lecterns or tables, or from purpose-built book presses situated at some convenient place within the main body of the church. Precise locations varied, from belfry to vestry, and from the chancel to the room over the south porch of a parish church. If housed in the chancel, as at St. Martin's, Leicester, the books were subject to opinion and dispute regarding the position of the communion table and the proper use of the chancel.<sup>30</sup> If subsequently moved out of the church completely, again as at St. Martin's, Leicester, then parochial control over the collection was effectively ended and other authorities such as a town corporation or school trustees could take control. Alternatively, though in few cases, a special building, usually within the precincts of the church or parsonage, was erected to house a library. Such buildings were erected at Brent Eleigh, Suffolk and at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire, for example, and are probably associated more with the eighteenth than with the previous century.<sup>31</sup> And as has been pointed out elsewhere, a secure home was all-important to the success and to the very survival of such libraries.<sup>32</sup>

However, throughout the seventeenth century, the chaining of books within parish churches remained a popular alternative and the practice followed-on directly from that associated with the various earlier injunctions and directives concerning prescribed reading. At Woodton W<sup>1</sup>wen, Warwickshire, for example, certain books that had been the object of a bequest by the vicar in 1652, were brought out of the

vicarage in 1693, at the request of the parishioners and chained to a desk in the south aisle of the church.<sup>33</sup> Well into the eighteenth century individual copies as well as small collections of books continued to be secured in this fashion despite the growth in the number of un-secured parish libraries. Thomas Kelly designates the last known example of chaining within a church to Grinton, Yorkshire, where, in 1752 a copy of Burkitt's Commentary was thus made available 'for the use of the inhabitants'.<sup>34</sup> Later examples can however be cited at Slaithwaite, near Huddersfield (1758), and at Darton, near Barnsley (after 1756).<sup>35</sup>

One further important library endowment from the middle of the seventeenth century deserves mention, highlighting as it does a number of moot points with regard to need, benefaction and method of implementation. Humphrey Chetham, a wealthy merchant of Manchester who died in 1653, bequeathed amongst other gifts, £200 to be spent on "godly English Bookes... for the edification of the common people". The books thus acquired were to be chained to desks within a number of churches in the locality and subsequently, between 1658 and 1668, some 474 volumes were duly provided. At Manchester itself over two hundred books were set up whilst the chapels of Bolton-le-Moors, Gorton, Turton and Walmsley each profited with between twenty-five and one hundred and eight books each.<sup>36</sup>

Chetham's bequest thus confirms the trend toward a provision of books in English for ordinary people within the poorer and perhaps isolated parishes of England. The bulk of Chetham's bequest, £1000 plus the residue of his estate, went to establish a chained reference library in Manchester 'for scholars and others', confirming an important educational link. The key to this particular library's success and longevity is directly attributable to a continuing endowment provided

by the Trustees who invested in land and thus provided an income for expansion and development, as well as for the payment of a librarian. Such provision was not however typical, but, though exceptional, it was a pointer to the future.<sup>37</sup>

The books provided by such an endowment were generally designated as being 'put into a public way of being useful' and typify the growing desire of benefactors to make public use out of private means. In not a few cases, as for example with the Chetham bequest, there existed a strong educational link with an endowment, and many individuals involved in the provision of libraries were also benefactors to both existing and new schools or to the education of the poor. In most cases, books allocated as educational or for 'edification' were dominantly theological in nature and links with the Anglican establishment were strong.

The Clarendon Code had for instance reimposed ecclesiastical control over the schools and their schoolmasters after the Restoration and the Act of Uniformity (1662) and Five Mile Act (1665) sought to prevent dissenters from continuing as schoolmasters. From 1581 it had been compulsory for teachers to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles of the established church before being granted a licence to teach by the bishop.<sup>38</sup>

Specifically, a parish library could be designated as playing both a formal and informal role in connection with a local school or indeed within the local educational climate generally. Formal, because many schools were directly associated with the parish church, the incumbent perhaps also serving as schoolmaster. A library in such circumstances might well have to fulfil the multiple demands of the cleric, scholar, pupil and parishioner and inevitably control would be associated with location. In some cases, such as at Chirbury, Shropshire,

in 1677, a clerical library was perceived as being of most use within an educational setting and was thus beque<sup>a</sup>th<sup>h</sup>ed directly to the local school. In this particular case the school was situated within the churchyard and though chained, the books were intended to be used by parishioners also.<sup>39</sup>

The informal educational role played by a parish library is somewhat more tenuous though nevertheless important and bears some resemblance to that role played by the libraries of the gentry during a similar period.<sup>40</sup> For both types of library acted as magnets to which the pupil, the antiquarian, the scholar and the merely curious would be drawn, and of the two types, the parochial library was the more accessible. Subsequent informal use was often extra to the perceived function of the library and because of its haphazard and fluctuating nature it is difficult in retrospect to quantify.

Elsewhere, educational needs could usurp the original foundation and whole book collections pass into the care and control of a school. Appropriations of this kind occurred for instance at Guildford in the later sixteenth-century, at Bury, Lancashire during the first half of the seventeenth century and at Worsborough, at a still later date.<sup>41</sup>

However, the original foundation was important, representing the seed from which a useful facility might grow. From the use and provision of books by and for the individual, a process typical of most of the seventeenth century, a progression was made into a period when benefactions and schemes of endowment concerned themselves more with the associated group. Kirkman Gray identifies this manifestation as the 'new associated philanthropy', specifically alluding to the final decade of the seventeenth century as the most important in the history of philanthropy. A new starting point had been reached following the upheaval of the Commonwealth years and the Restoration, and our consideration of this period, it is argued, should be permeated by a feeling

for the power of association.<sup>42</sup>

Appropriately, the last twenty years of the seventeenth century and the earlier years of the eighteenth are marked by a dramatic increase in the number of endowed libraries that were founded or re-founded. Kelly attempts to quantify this expansion<sup>43</sup>, though any such attempt must only be indicative of what was a fluctuating though perceivable increase of library establishments and re-establishments. What is clear is that a renewed spirit of piety was evident and led directly to the proliferation of religious and clerical societies, bookclubs and associations, and hospitals and charity schools. Considered alongside the increased availability and ownership of books, a rise in literacy, and an increased awareness of the needs of many of the poorer clergy, such circumstances can be seen as conducive to the rapid growth of library establishments.

The new impulse for association was also having an effect upon certain older libraries such as those in the towns which had come into existence during the later sixteenth century. For newly-formed schools, subscription libraries, or club or society associations could gradually dominate the use of such collections and the church or parochial authorities, who were associated with the original foundation, could well lose control, especially if the library were physically displaced from the church; indeed, few town libraries of sixteenth-century foundation were retained in full parochial (church) care into the eighteenth century.

New library foundations increased too, and the central concept of their establishment was that of association. Clerical and religious societies, subscription libraries, and schools attracted and facilitated the provision of books in increasing quantities. In some cases a library was considered a prerequisite; in others, a collection of books grew out of a group's perceived function. Conversely, the very existence of a library where there was little other similar provision could, it

appears, cause the drawing together of interested or like-minded individuals.<sup>44.</sup>

The new patchwork of library provision was at its most threadbare however in the poor country parishes. Not only was there scanty provision for 'the common people' but the country cleric, or curate, himself could well be completely lacking in what were thought of as essential: the books of commentary, doctrine and ecclesiastical history that would provide a sound knowledge of scripture and an argument for orthodoxy.

It was estimated that at the close of the seventeenth century, there were over two thousand parishes in England and Wales where the income was under £30 per annum. Of these, 1,200 had an income of less than £20 and a further 500 had under £10 per annum.<sup>45.</sup> Such meagre provision (cf. the average wage of an agricultural labourer early in the eighteenth century which was about £20 per annum<sup>46.</sup>) could be contrasted with the richly-beneficed livings of £200 - £300 per annum; cathedral prebendary posts, which at Windsor for example were worth £450 (duties often being nominal); and with the top rung of the ladder, the bishoprics, worth anything between £450 (Bristol) and £7,000 (Canterbury).<sup>47.</sup>

Such blatant<sup>a</sup> disparity opened up a social gulf between the poor curate or parson who was 'passing rich with forty pounds a year' (according to Goldsmith) and his well-beneficed, perhaps pluralist, colleague who held various 'commendams' and sinecures; such a disparity did not go wholly unnoticed. Dr Johnson was asked twice by Boswell about the situation (he thought that it could not be helped) and writers such as Addison, Steele and Thomas Stackhouse wrote about the problem.<sup>48.</sup>

Individuals such as Chetham at Manchester, Oley at Carlisle and Thurscross in Yorkshire attempted to redress the balance on a very small scale regarding the provision of books, but more than any other

individual during the reign of the later Stuarts and immediately after, Dr Thomas Bray was instrumental in seeking to improve the spiritual and intellectual welfare of the poorer Anglican clergy.

The central feature of Bray's efforts was the provision of suitable books and libraries to those clergy, who, because of their poorly-paid status, could not otherwise afford to buy them. Some confusion does however surround the so-called 'Bray libraries', as has been pointed out<sup>49</sup>, insofar as some were founded by Thomas Bray himself, some by his Associates after his death, and yet others by a number of other societies and agencies with which Bray had an intimate relationship. Yet in purely statistical terms alone, Bray's influence and achievements are impressive.

Between 1695 and 1699, Bray was instrumental in raising grants totalling £107.10s. for the establishing of thirty-six lending libraries in Montgomeryshire and sixteen in England.<sup>50</sup> After 1699 his efforts were aided by the newly-formed S.P.C.K. who were responsible for establishing clerical lending libraries in each of the four Welsh dioceses during the period 1708 to 1711.

For the purposes of providing parochial libraries, Bray established a special committee in 1705 whose full title was, Trustees for Erecting Parochial Libraries and Promoting other Charitable Designs. This body, by 1730, had established at least fifty-six libraries in England and a further ten in Wales. Each library cost in excess of £20.<sup>51</sup>

After the death of Bray, his work was continued by a newly constituted body: The Associates of Dr. Bray, who, during the period 1753 to 1768, founded a further total of twelve lending libraries and more than seventy parochial libraries. In addition, during his lifetime, Bray had personally endowed with books, or with money, five or six parishes (including his own at Sheldon), and grants were made to a



further twenty-two libraries. A further sixteen parishes on the Isle of Man benefited from grants of money ranging from 15s. to £6.

As Bray himself was careful to acknowledge, he was not the first to devise such a scheme of book dissemination, unrivalled though his results were. In one of Bray's published library schemes, deference is paid to 'the noble Sir Roger Twysden' and his project for acquiring libraries for all smaller vicarages.<sup>52</sup> Similar sentiments had also been expressed by John Evelyn writing in 1689 to his friend Samuel Pepys<sup>53</sup>. and an actual practical application had indeed already materialised via the will of the Royalist divine, Barnabas Oley. This scheme, operating within a geographically restricted area, involved the provision of ten sets of sixteen volumes which were distributed to poor livings within the Diocese of Carlisle during 1687. Each set of books cost £10.10s.8d. and it was intended that the books were to be kept within the churches for the use of the vicars and their successors.<sup>54</sup>

Dr Thomas Bray's plans for this country were first published in 1697, when appeared: An Essay towards Promoting all Necessary and Useful Knowledge both divine and Human, in all parts of His Majesty's kingdom, both at Home and Abroad. Specifically, libraries were intended for the one-third of the parochial clergy who were thought unable to purchase the necessary texts because of poverty. Access to the texts was to be by means of lending libraries situated in every Deanery throughout England. The funds for such provision would be expected to come from the gentry, who, would give 'in their generosity what they shall think fit' and from the clergy themselves, giving in turn 'some small matter proportionable to the value of his living or circumstances in the world'.<sup>55</sup> Books to the value of £30 could thereby be acquired and the collections situated in market towns, being available for use by both clergy and gentry. Additionally, catechetical libraries for country curates were to be made available.

Indeed, one of Dr Bray's earliest concerns was the ability of the clergy - especially the poorly beneficed - to catechize properly. His concern centred on the less well-educated, the poorly endowed, and the rural isolate who probably lacked the means for self-improvement. Bray himself was honest enough to acknowledge that "I know there is nothing a more common jest than the poverty and ignorance of the poor clergy in Wales and the Northern parts of this Kingdom".<sup>56</sup> Accordingly, in 1696, he published the first part of his Catechetical lectures and completion of the work taking a further six years, it was not until 1702 that the final five-part work appeared.

This specific concern developed into a practical scheme for providing suitable books for catechizing instruction and was printed under the title: Bibliotheca Catechetica or, the country curate's library. One could do worse than quote the somewhat lengthy sub-title as a convenient summary of the scheme: 'Being an essay towards providing all the parochial cures of England endow'd with not above Ten pounds per Annum with a study of usefull (sic) books of like value to enable the Ministers thereof to Catechize the youth, and to instruct the people in all things necessary to salvation'.

On a practical level the scheme involved providing complete libraries of books, specifically chosen as suitable, for the use of the curate, assistant, or Reader. (The rector having 'a larger field of business to mind'.)<sup>57</sup>

Three types of library, representing three sizes of collections, are specified: Bibliotheca Major, Bibliotheca Minor and Bibliotheca Minima, and detailed catalogues of the books to be incorporated in each are included. To give some indication of size, the last named Bibliotheca Minima (intended for the lowest cures, not exceeding £10) itself consisted of some seventy-five titles and all books to be in English. The books were firstly classified by subject-type and secondly, they

were ordered in descending profitability of use.

Elsewhere in the same scheme Bray draws special attention to the needs of the Isle of Man, Wales, and 'other northern parts', as he asks his readers to consider how barbarous and ignorant these places remain.<sup>58</sup> Whilst he also tries to allay fears of embezzlement, loss, or conversion to private use, by using three precautions; firstly, books were to be lettered on the covers showing to whom they belonged; secondly, registers were to be made and deposited with the bishops; and thirdly, yearly visitations were to be made by the Archdeacon or his deputy.

Such detail is remarkable and yet is typical of Bray's elaborate schemes and deserves inclusion here as an indication of the care, forethought and effort that Thomas Bray put into his plans, whilst further justification for highlighting this one particular scheme lies in the fact that it was perceived by its author as 'a considerable advance both toward lending and parochial libraries throughout the kingdom'.<sup>59</sup>

With that statement we come a little closer to understanding what Bray's larger aims really were. In addition to Bibliotheca Catechetica published in 1699 (re-issued 1702), there also appeared Bibliotheca Parochialis (1697; second edition 1707), and An Essay towards promoting all Necessary and Useful Knowledge... (1697), each proffering more elaborate library schemes. It is when we consider these in toto, that one begins to appreciate the full extent of the vision and enthusiasm that motivated Bray to instigate his schemes of library provision, both at home and abroad.

The development of such a vision, quite simply, reflects a growing awareness of need; awareness of the great disparity between the rich and poor clergy; awareness that the poorer clergy needed help in their pastoral duties (such as being able to catechize properly); and awareness of the important role that a small collection of well-chosen

books could play in educating the isolated or poorly-endowed clergyman.

After his appointment as Commissary to Maryland, Bray must have become aware of the need for books in that province. These books could not be afforded by the ministers themselves and yet without them Bray deemed they could not fulfil their function as Christian educators. And as he learned of the extensive cultural poverty of many people in the colonies, his plans enlarged to encompass them. However, as appeals were being made for aid, comparisons must have been made with conditions within Bray's own mother country, especially relating to the 'barbarous North', and it seems there was a certain feeling that charity begins at home, and Bray's attention was indeed drawn to the plight of certain clergy in his own country.<sup>60</sup> Such attention as Bray gave to the English and Welsh clergy became a starting point from which others could continue. For thereby, the various societies he helped found went on to achieve much and thereby he influenced such men as James Kirkwood, who, after being involved in the early work of the S.P.C.K., went on to furnish even more ambitious library schemes in Scotland.

One further by-product of Bray's enthusiastic efforts was the first piece of library legislation to appear on the statute book. The Act for the better Preservation of Parochial Libraries<sup>61</sup> was accomplished with the help of Bray's friend Sir Peter King, and came into effect in 1709. It extended to all parochial libraries, whether instigated by Bray or not.

Such prescription and imposition with regard to parish reading matter echoes the pious injunctions and directives of the sixteenth century and in one sense developments had moved full circle. Though circumstances had changed, the un-coordinated and dendritic growth of libraries and patterns of book ownership continued apace. Moreover, those book collections perceived as being of a loosely parochial nature, themselves withstood, adapted, or newly emerged from the vicissitudes

of the new century. Few, if any, such libraries can therefore be 'typical' of the genre and in considering the recorded and apparent use of certain parish libraries during the eighteenth century, the specific and individual nature of each emerges as important and should first be presented in the light of the foregoing generalized picture of development.

Five such libraries fortuitously present themselves and are associated with the parishes of Wisbech, Doncaster, Witham, Rotherham and Maidstone.

1. Cf. Thomas Kelly, Early public libraries. Library Association, 1966. p.243., where in an appendix on library nomenclature, a distinction is made between parochial libraries, that is, libraries under the control of the parochial authorities, and parish libraries, which are designated as those designed for the use of the inhabitants of the parish. However, no such fine distinction is made in the present work and the terms are interchangeable.
2. The quoted text is associated with a gift of seven books to the library of St. Martin's Church, Leicester (now the Cathedral) sometime during 1593-4. (F.S. Hearne, History of the Town Library and of the Permanent Library, Leicester. Leicester: W.H. Lead, 1891. p.3.)
3. 25 HENRY VIII, c.15.
4. Vide: H.S. Bennett, English books and readers 1475 to 1557. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952. Chapter 3: The Regulation of the booktrade.
5. W.H. Frere, Visitation articles and injunctions of the period of the Reformation. Longmans, 1910. ii, p.9. Note that modern spelling and punctuation have been used throughout this and the following injunction texts, according to Frere. The only complete version of the Bible, in English, available at the time of this first injunction was that bearing the name of Miles Coverdale, printed in 1535.
6. Later known as the 'Great Bible' or 'Cranmer's Bible'. This Bible did not appear until 1539, post-dating the second royal injunction by some six months because of printing delays.
7. Frere, Visitation articles, ii.35.
8. For example, as at St. Mary, Cambridge (ca 1539-48); Tintinhull, Somerset (1541/2); and Ecclesfield, Yorkshire (1540/1). For the former two see: J.Charles Cox, Churchwardens' accounts from the fourteenth century to the close of the seventeenth century. Methuen, 1913. p.118., and for the latter, see: J. Eastwood, History of the parish of Ecclesfield. Bell and Daldy, 1862. p.185.
9. Frere, Visitation articles, ii.35.
10. Claire Cross, Church and people 1450 to 1660. Collins, 1976. p.72.

11. Frere, Visitation articles, ii.117. Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536) produced his principal work, Novum Instrumentum in 1516, being a new Latin version of the New Testament, with commentary. The first English translation was published in 1547 and consisted of only the four gospels and Acts; the remainder of the work was published some two years later.
12. Frere, Visitation articles, ii.128-9. The Homilies appeared as a direct result of a decision taken by Convocation in 1542, "for stay of such errors as were then by ignorant preachers sprinkled among the people". (J.Charles Cox, English church fittings, furniture and accessories. Batsford, (1923). p.195.) The volume that was presented to Convocation in 1543 failed to receive approval but was nevertheless printed in 1547 on Cranmer's authority. By 1553, when Convocation gave its sanction, the original twelve Homilies had been divided into thirty-two. The full original title of the volume was: Certain sermons or Homilies appointed by the King's Majesty to be declared and read by all parsons, vicars and curates every Sunday in their churches where they have care.
13. Frere, Visitation articles, ii.122.
14. Cox, English church fittings, 195.
15. Some credence may be placed in Cox's shrewd observation (Ibid.) that, as the Book of Homilies was intended to be read from the pulpit in place of a sermon, the book itself was less likely to be chained. However, chained examples do survive. (For instance at Cavendish, Suffolk).
16. For a list of extant (circa 1907) copies of the Paraphrases see Cox, Churchwardens' accounts, 337-340. A 1551 edition of the same work, in its original binding, survives at Bramfield, Suffolk, whilst a 1548 edition is recorded at Chediston in the same county. (John Fitch, Suffolk parochial libraries: a catalogue. Mansell, 1977. p.x.) By 1589, the parish church at Ecclesfield, Yorkshire, could acquire a copy of the work for as little as 2s., to which had to be added the price of chains (12d. for two volumes) and the cost of affixing them (2d.). (Eastwood, Ecclesfield, 176.) Early purchases of the Book of Homilies are recorded at Yatton, Somerset, where during 1547/8, 2s. was paid for the work, and at Warwick (St. Nicholas) when in 1563, 5s. 4d. was similarly paid. (Cox, Churchwardens' accounts, 116.) The Second tome of Homilies was issued in 1563 and incorporated were the Thirty-nine Articles.

17. Cox, Churchwardens' accounts, 119. Jewel's Apologie was first published in 1562; the Latin edition, entitled Apologia ecclesiae Anglicanae, was published the same year.
18. Edward Cardwell, Documentary annals of the reformed Church of England. New edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1844. p.160.
19. Cox, Churchwardens' accounts, 195. At Sotterley, near Beccles, a 1567 edition of Jewel's Defence of the Apologie survives, whilst copies of the Works were bought at Youlgrave, Derbyshire, in 1611 (cost 26s.) and at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire, during 1612/13, for example. Nearby Leicester St. Martin's paid 24s. for the Works in 1614, whilst in 1621, Ecclesfield parish paid 20d. for the making of a desk on which to keep both the works of Jewel and Harding (and this despite - or because of - the antagonism that had been evident between the two theologians fifty years earlier).
20. Cardwell, Documentary annals, ii.21. The requirement was entitled: Certain orders for the increase in the unlearned sort of minister. At Sotterley, Suffolk, a copy of Bullinger's Fiftie Godly and learned sermons (London, 1587) survives having been acquired in May 1588, as recorded on the flyleaf. (Fitch, Suffolk parochial libraries, 47.) St. Martin's, Leicester, paid 8s. in 1581/82 for Bullinger's 'Decades' (probably the 1577 edition listed in the manuscript catalogue of the Leicester Town Library (as the library at St. Martin's became) made in 1669).
21. The Latin text, published at Strasburg in 1554, was entitled Commentarii Rerum in Ecclesia Gestarum. The English edition, published in folio in 1563, began its title: The Actes and Monuments of these Latter and Perilous Days..., but was popularly known as The Book of Martyrs or Foxe's Book of Martyrs.
22. Central Council for the Care of Churches, The Parochial libraries of the Church of England. Faith Press, 1959. p.15. An example can be cited from St. Michael's, Cornhill, where in January 1571/2, a vestry meeting decided to chain both Foxe's Martyrs and the Paraphrases of Erasmus to the church eagle brass. (Raymond Irwin, The Heritage of the English library. Allen and Unwin, 1964. p.254.) The same two works were similarly coupled at St. Mary's, Devizes, in 1636.
23. Central Council for the Care of Churches, op.cit., p.15.



24. Ibid. The entry is from a note in Autores historiae ecclesiasticae (Basle, 1557), from the parochial library of Cartmel, Lancashire (no.211).
25. Joann H. Moran, Education and learning in the city of York, 1300-1560. York: Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, 1979. pp.16-17, 22 et seq.
26. Ibid., pp.36, 49.
27. Fitch, Suffolk parochial libraries, 48.
28. A small endowment of 10s. per annum was available at Bury St. Edmunds for the purchase of books for the library there. Other later examples can be found, such as those at Coniston, Bampton and Holy Trinity, Hull.
29. Kelly, Early public libraries, 82-83.
30. See C.E. Welch, The Downfall of Bishop Williams. Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society. 40. 1964-65. p.52.
31. The Library or Repository was built at Brent Eleigh ca 1720 and demolished in 1859. The building is described in the Brent Eleigh Parish Terrier of 1801 (Bury St. Edmunds and West Suffolk Record Office. Ref., EL 26/3.) At Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire, a building was erected in the vicarage garden ca 1730 and probably stood for a hundred years. A large inscribed slate tablet that was at one time situated over the library door, exists today, incorporated into the vicarage wall. At Barnstaple, Devon, a room for a library adjoining the church was built at the expense of the Corporation during 1665-1667.
32. Central Council for the Care of Churches, op.cit., p.27.
33. B.H. Streeter, The Chained library. Macmillan, 1931. p.292. The desk is illustrated in: Central Council for the Care of Churches, op.cit., plate IV(c).
34. Kelly, Early public libraries, 95.
35. At Darton, north of Barnsley, a Book of Homilies survives with a chain attached; the edition date is 1756. The same book was set up in the Old Chapel at Slaithwaite, near Huddersfield, in 1758, during the incumbency of one Mr Thornes, and was still chained to a desk in 1864. (Charles A. Hulbert, Annals of the Church in Slaithwaite....from 1593 to 1864. London: Longman, Huddersfield: J. Brook, 1864. p.50).

36. Kelly, Early public libraries, 83-84. A more limited scheme was envisaged by Timothy Thurscross, Archdeacon of Cleveland, who died in 1671 and who directed by his will that his books should be distributed between three Yorkshire churches 'for the vicars therein and their successors for ever'. (Central Council for the Care of Churches, op.cit., p.92.)
37. See above n.28.
38. See D.W. Sylvester, Educational documents: 800-1816. Methuen, 1970. p.167., where is reproduced a typical testimony to the conformity of a schoolmaster, signed by the vicar and churchwarden in Leeds in 1714.
39. Kelly, Early public libraries, 82.
40. Vide: Keith Dent, The Private library of the landed classes: its role in informal education in the eighteenth century. Informal agencies of education. K.S. Dent, ed. History of Education Society, 1979. pp.37-59.
41. The Worsborough Grammar School collection, for instance, (now kept at Sheffield City Library) contains books previously given for the use of the Lecturer and vicar of the parish church there, and their successors. A Book of Homilies (shelf mark W.349) for example, is inscribed, "This booke belongs to y<sup>e</sup> Church" and a copy of Pearson On the Creed is inscribed, "This Book was most probably left by Mr Kighley to the Lecturer of Worsborough". (Personal inspection by the author, 15 February, 1983.)
42. B.Kirkman Gray, A History of English philanthropy from the dissolution of the monasteries to the taking of the first census. P.S. King, 1905. pp.79-80.
43. Kelly, Early public libraries, 91.
44. See for instance, Edmund McClure (ed.), A Chapter in English church history: being the Minutes of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge... S.P.C.K., 1888. p.321. Here a letter from a Mr Selyard of Surrey to the S.P.C.K. Committee, dated 20 February 1700/1, considers the erection of a lending library: "...besides its benefit to the inferior Clergy may in time be a means to draw the Clergy together, & to frame them into a Society."

45. The figures are reproduced in Irwin, English library, 258-9.
46. Basil Williams, The Whig supremacy: 1714-1760. 2nd revised edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962. p.125.
47. A.S. Turbeville, Johnson's England: an account of the life and manners of his age. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933. i. p.18.
48. Thomas Stackhouse wrote a pamphlet in the form of a letter addressed to Bishop Gibson and entitled: The Miseries and great hardships of the inferior clergy in and about London. (1722)
49. Kelly, Early public libraries, 105.
50. Ibid., p.106.
51. Ibid., p.109.
52. Thomas Bray, Bibliotheca Parochialis. E.H. for Robert Clavel, 1697. (unnumbered pages). Wing 4290.
53. Thomas Kelly, A History of public libraries in Great Britain, 1845-1965. Library Association, 1973. pp.4-5.
54. Central Council for the Care of Churches, op.cit., pp.18-19.  
Evidently, the books were not well cared for, though twelve volumes do survive: eight from Dalston and four from Ainstable.
55. Quoted by George Smith, Dr Thomas Bray. Library Association Record, 12, 1910. p.246.
56. Thomas Bray, Bibliotheca Catechetica. William Hawes, 1699. p.5. (Wing 4289).
57. Ibid., p.2.
58. Ibid., p.9.
59. Ibid., p.vi.
60. Smith, Thomas Bray, 245.
61. 7 ANNE, c.14. The full text of the Act is reproduced in : Central Council for the Care of Churches, op.cit., pp.48-50.

## CHAPTER II

### FIVE PARISH LIBRARIES

## Wisbech

The library which was the inheritance of the eighteenth century at Wisbech, had its nascency in the troubled years of the Commonwealth period. The town, which had been garrisoned for Parliament during the civil war, was provided with a collection of books as common stock by certain of its leading citizens. It was considered appropriate, or expedient, to house the library within the parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul and to this end the room above the south porch was procured. In order to adequately accommodate the books, the Capital Burgesses of the town 'with one assent and consent order this Chamber to bee prepared and furnished with shelves and other necessaryes for a Library out of the Towne stocke.'<sup>1</sup>. It is, however, most likely that the 'other necessaryes' did not include the books themselves, but rather, using a standard eleemosynary method (which was to persist in this country up to and including that employed by the first public libraries of the mid nineteenth-century) the book stock was to be donated by those individuals interested or involved in the undertaking.

Some books are likely to have been in situ within the church prior to this new provision though whether or not they numbered sufficient to constitute a library is not yet clear. A special relationship between the town and parish authorities is however evident from as early as 1592 when Corporation records show, for example, that in line with many other parishes at the time, a copy of Foxe's Book of Martyrs was to be made available within the parish church:

Y<sup>e</sup> xi January, 1592. M<sup>d</sup>. y<sup>t</sup> there was payd to y<sup>e</sup> x men by Wydow Pull and Wydow Rechell x 1<sup>s</sup>. for to buye y<sup>e</sup> booke of y<sup>e</sup> martyrs, gyven and bequethed by y<sup>e</sup> last wyll of John Megytt, & ys comytted to y<sup>e</sup> hands of Tho. Edwards to buye y<sup>e</sup> same... I bought y<sup>e</sup> booke w<sup>ch</sup> cost 57<sup>s</sup> 2.

Local conditions were not good at the time of this gift; the plague had

broken out in Wisbech five years earlier and a bad fire damaged the town a year after that; whilst nationally, four years earlier, the Spanish Armada had set sail for Britain.

It would have been the practice to chain such a book as the Book of Martyrs in position in order to preserve and secure it, nevertheless, the same work was again acquired, as a replacement or duplicate, some forty-four years later. The instigator was one Robert Gooderidge, whose bequest of £8 purchased a three-volume edition in 1636. A reading desk was also provided for the volumes and on it carved an inscription detailing the gift:

Robert Gooderidge, son of James Gooderidge, Blacksmith, borne in Wisbeach St. Peter's, deceased at London one Easter day, in the yeare 1635, and gave by his last will and testament 8<sup>li</sup> buy theise three books of marters, and to have them set in y<sup>e</sup> church of Wisbeach aforesaid, which was performed according to his will in y<sup>e</sup> yeare of our Lord, 1636.<sup>3</sup>

What additional books the church held at this time is not known, though the garrisoning of the town by Parliamentary troops during the civil war would not augur well for the survival of any books connected with the church or the incumbent - especially if there were any suspicions that the latter was a Papist.<sup>4</sup> Libraries in particular seem to have been singled out by Parliamentary forces for destruction or dispersal.<sup>5</sup>

An even earlier bequest of books to the parish church at Wisbech may be suggested by the provenance of a number of surviving books which bear the name of Thomas Turswell. However, Turswell (1548-1585) was not from the locality, neither did his medical duties, stewardship, or prebendary posts apparently associate him with the neighbourhood (though he was associated with King's College, Cambridge) and it is likely that these, and similar books appeared at Wisbech via circuitous routes of

ownership.<sup>6</sup> Further work would probably reveal that the Turswell volumes were all later donated by Henry Peirson (sometimes spelled 'Pierson'), a major benefactor to the Wisbech library.

Peirson's substantial bequest was made later during the seventeenth century, the majority of the books arriving during the post-Restoration period. He had been born at Wisbech, though at the time of his bequest he lived at Downham Market, some miles distant. Some seventy books had been given to the library 'in his lifetime', and when he died in 1664 a further gift of fifty-five folio volumes; one hundred and twenty-two quartos; and two hundred and forty-eight octavos was made.<sup>7</sup> In addition, were many other books; "some whereof were sold and disposed of according to the direction of the Capitall Burgesses for other more usefull Bookes".<sup>8</sup> Such a policy reveals an interesting attitude by the town authorities and suggests a discriminatory element in the book selection, not elsewhere evident. It would be of great interest if the nature of those books sold as not useful could be determined.

By the time of the final Peirson bequest of 1664, the library within the parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul had already been set on a firm footing by the joint efforts of the Capital Burgesses and the parochial authorities. The room over the south porch, formerly a muniments room, had been prepared at the expense of the town authorities and many gifts of money and books received.<sup>9</sup>

The earliest dated donation associated with this establishment relates to the gift of fourteen volumes by William Fisher esquire, Sheriff of Cambridge and Huntingdon; and the date, March 1654/5, may well closely approximate to the year in which the library was established in this form. Watson<sup>10</sup> gives the date of foundation as 'about' 1657: the same year in which a gallery was erected within the parish church for Cromwell's Principal Secretary of State, John Thurloe - a son of the town and himself a donor of £50 to the library. A total of twenty-three

benefactors of books or money are initially formally recorded and in addition to William Fisher's gift of 1654/5, a further three are dated: those of Samuel Buck (1665)<sup>11</sup>; Edward Brooke (1673); and Dr Thomas Plume (1675).<sup>12</sup>

Of these twenty-three early benefactors, sixteen are given the title 'gent.' or 'esq.', whilst the remaining seven are clergymen. Amongst the latter category are William Coldwell, vicar of Wisbech; Algernon Peyton, rector of Doddington; Barnabus Frencham, rector of Walpool; John Machin, vicar of Elme; and Edward Brooke, rector of Walsoken - all representing neighbouring parishes.

Donations persisted therefore until at least 1675 despite the assertion in R. Middleton Massey's preface to A Catalogue of books in the library at Wisbech (printed in 1718) that after the time of the Restoration the library was in a neglected state until 1712.<sup>13</sup> Certainly the initial instigation had produced a remarkable collection of books and manuscripts as testified by one early visitor, Samuel Pepys, who recorded in his Diary for 18 September, 1663:

...we took leave of our beggarly company, though they seem good people too, and over most sad Fens (all the way observing the sad life that the people of that place...do live, ...to Wisbeech, a pretty town and a fine church and library, where sundry very old Abbee manuscripts - and a fine house, built on the church ground by they say Secretary Thurlow, and a fine gallery built for him in the church, but now all in the Bishop of Elys hands.<sup>14</sup>

Borrowing of the books and manuscripts may have been possible during the later decades of the seventeenth century though evidence for this is at present slim. There are however some seventeenth-century loan entries in the manuscript catalogue, though they are entered in a haphazard fashion and are, additionally, crossed out.<sup>15</sup> The earliest entry decipherable, records that on 2 April, 1670, Edward Edwards had taken out 'Consilio Medic.' (William; James senior; James junior; and Robert Edwards were all early benefactors to the library.)



Further evidence relating to the library during the latter years of the seventeenth century is lacking and it is not possible at this stage to wholly refute the assertion by R.M. Massey that the collection became neglected; in spite of the earlier active interest of both town and parochial authorities. It is such a duality of interest which is, however, a notable feature of the library's early years and itself represents a somewhat Puritanical binding of municipal (civic) policy with parochial (church) function in the encouragement of piety and learning.

Such an arrangement is not unique. Similar joint ventures were undertaken at Leicester (ca 1587, with the assistance of 'The Puritan Earl': Henry Hastings)<sup>16</sup>; Grantham (1598); nearby King's Lynn (1631); and Newcastle-upon-Tyne (1677) for example; whilst other towns show degrees of control which range from pure municipal (e.g. Norwich, 1608) through to pure parochial town libraries as at Bath, Stamford or Halifax. True control, and indeed access, in most cases can be said to be directly related to physical location: possession being paramount. At Leicester for example, the town library that emerged during the seventeenth-century had its beginnings in a book collection housed in the belfry of St. Martin's parish church (now cathedral) and that by 1587. At some later stage the books were moved into the chancel of the same church and from there into the adjacent Guild Hall, from which time the town authorities appear to have taken full administrative control of the library.

The Wisbech library however stayed in situ for a far longer period in its original home above the south porch of the parish church and was not moved until 1878 when part of the collection - the medieval manuscripts admired by Pepys - were moved to the Wisbech Museum. In 1891 the printed books followed and there at the Museum, in the shadow of the parish church, the entire library of approximately 1100 volumes remains.<sup>17</sup>

The library as it existed at the beginning of the eighteenth

century was therefore substantial in size and diverse in subject matter. Such diversity was due, in part, to the fact that with probably only a few exceptions - such as the Thurloe gift of fifty pounds - books had been received as gifts and not chosen, their appropriateness assumed at the discretion of the donor; a hallmark of the eleemosynary method. The precise purpose and specific intention for which the library was instigated and the donors motivated to provide was recorded as being 'the advancement of piety and incouragement of Learning',<sup>18</sup>. and thereby did a somewhat puritanical birthright seek to determine future development. Where money was given, choices were made; thirty-two works in eighty-one volumes were acquired with Secretary Thurloe's fifty pounds; six volumes with William Fisher's six pounds; and the works of Grotius with the two forty shilling donations of John Richards and John Garner. Otherwise, those works thought appropriate to intention were given, most probably taken out of the private libraries of the individual donors. Thus Samuel Buck gave Bishop Hall's Works in 1665; Edward Brooke, rector of nearby Walsoken, gave Bartholomew Castello's Lexicon medicum Graeco-Latinum, in 1673; William Coldwell, vicar at Wisbech, gave books which included Foxe's Martyrs and the works of St. Augustine; William Cooke gave James Tyrrrell's History of England; and Edmund Medow senior gave Camden's Britannia in English.

Elsewhere in the locality, similar patterns of donation and acquisition had resulted in not dissimilar parish and town libraries being founded in some numbers, giving a regional context to the developments at Wisbech.

Not too distant at King's Lynn, the nearest town of any reasonable size to Wisbech, two pre civil-war libraries had been founded at St. Nicholas's church (1617) and at St. Margaret's (1631). The latter foundation bore some similarities to Wisbech insofar as the original collection of books (of 1631) had belonged to the Mayor and Corporation

of King's Lynn; the library numbering some three hundred and nineteen volumes by 1641. Kelly<sup>19</sup> maintains that this was a lending library from its inception until 1657 when loans stopped because of losses. A similar development apparently took place at Spalding, where a library, founded in 1637 for the use of the minister and his successors, was available for loans to those who were benefactors.<sup>20</sup>

Other seventeenth-century foundations in the region were at Norwich (1608, and another by 1629)<sup>21</sup>; Swaffham (1622(?), kept in the 'priest's chamber' of the parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul); Stamford (ca 1626 and originally kept in the chancel of St. Mary's); and Boston (1634) where Sir Nathaniel Brent, Archbishop Laud's Commissary, required the room over the south porch to be fitted out to make a library.

Wisbech, however, is quite alone in such a regional context in having a library founded somewhat later during the years of the civil-war period and when, in a wider national context, very few libraries were initiated. What Wisbech does share with its regional counterparts, which is most significant, is a place in the clearly-perceivable revival of interest that such libraries experienced during the first two decades of the eighteenth century.

At Boston for instance, revived interest is evident in the purchase of vicar Edward Kelsall's books which took place in 1719 and in the catalogue produced in 1724.<sup>22</sup> At Stamford, a rare continuing endowment (derived from ten pounds laid out at seven per cent) enabled at least a little expansion and development to take place (the latest imprint of such additional volumes that survive being 1748) and a listing was made in 1720.<sup>23</sup> Swaffham in Norfolk may well have been adding to its seventeenth century church library in 1737<sup>24</sup>, whilst at King's Lynn the two seventeenth-century church libraries (those of St. Margaret and St. Nicholas) were amalgamated and a number of augmentations took place

in 1714.<sup>25</sup> At Ely, according to an S.P.C.K. manuscript, a library was available and "all that will may have the free use of it".<sup>26</sup> Whilst the S.P.C.K. itself was active at Dullingham, Cambridgeshire, where a seventy-two volume library was provided and at How in Norfolk, similarly in 1729. Finally, at Spalding the well known Gentlemen's Society, which had its beginnings in a series of tavern meetings during 1707/08, formulated its rules in 1712. Many gifts of books were then received and were added to the Free School library which itself had been derived from the old parish library and now formed the nucleus of the Society's collection.<sup>27</sup> Two catalogues of the enlarged collection were produced during the second decade of the century.

At a similar time to the foundation of the Spalding Gentlemen's Society, in 1712, and generally in line with a clear regional pattern of eighteenth-century revival, at Wisbech:

some of the Neighbouring Clergy and Gentlemen, considering the Advantage of Parochial Libraries, form'd themselves into a Club or Society; and agreed anually to contribute Twenty Shillings each to buy Books; hoping that others would take this Opportunity to forward such a Publick Good: Nor were they at all disappointed in their Expectations; meeting with several considerable Benefactors...<sup>28</sup>.

Heading the list of chief benefactors is John Bellamy, vicar at Wisbech, whilst other clergy are Hugh James, rector of Upwell and Martin Challis, vicar of Elme. 'The present Lord Bishop of Ely' may refer to John Moore.<sup>29</sup> Four other benefactors are listed: Will Hawkins, 'Ludimagister'; Fr. Whistones; Captain David Waite and Lieutenant Thomas Life.

Despite the benefactions of these men, the library itself, catalogued as consisting of some six hundred and ninety-four works, was still considered to have 'great Deficiencies'. R. Middleton Massey, author of the Preface to the printed catalogue of 1718, suggests that the present listing could be used by those who wished to further the project

to identify what the library lacked and provide accordingly.

Massey himself is included amongst the 'Gentlemen of the Club' for 1718, listed elsewhere in the catalogue and which otherwise comprises of seven whose names are suffixed esquire or gentleman; probably five who were clergymen; and additionally, Henry Bannier (elsewhere 'Banyer') surgeon.

In writing the preface and catalogue, Massey was acting within his capacity as library keeper, an appointment he had held since 1714 when the Capital Burgesses formally made him 'Keeper of the Publick Library' at a salary of 40s. per year.<sup>30</sup> Not only is interest in the welfare of the library thereby confirmed, but active and practical assistance in the administration and better exploitation of the books is seen to be facilitated. To what extent the newly-formed society dominated the use of the library is difficult to assess, though it is tempting to think that there was little other usage at this time.

Such groupings into clubs or societies were not uncommon, neither were they out of place within the new movement to associate for common or the public good.<sup>31</sup> However, Wisbech is an early example of a 'mixed' club or society (that is, clerical and lay members), as more normally at this time such groups consisted entirely of the clergy. Many such purely clerical societies were appearing elsewhere; some were associated with the various movements for the reformation of manners, others with mutual self-improvement and edification. Not a few are referred to in the correspondence of the S.P.C.K. from the beginning of the century onwards<sup>32</sup>, though there was a fear amongst some clergy that gatherings of this kind broke canonical law (the seventy-third Canon is quoted by one S.P.C.K. correspondent<sup>33</sup>.) and consequently clarification and episcopal approval were being actively sought. It was generally acknowledged though that the drawing together of the clergy and of like-minded individuals was a good thing, and as happened at

Doncaster for example, the payment of a subscription was seen as an economical and beneficial way of gaining regular access to good books and good company. The only difference at Wisbech was that books acquired with the twenty shilling subscription were probably not sold or equally divided amongst the members after circulation on true book club lines,<sup>34</sup> but rather, that some effort went into increasing and improving an existing and permanent collection of books. Otherwise, Wisbech can be cited as an early 'mixed' club, operating some twenty-five years before 'the first identifiable club not restricted to the clergy' at Leicester, founded ca 1740.<sup>35</sup>

Loans were made from the newly-augmented library at Wisbech during the second decade of the century when it was under the auspices of the club or society.<sup>36</sup> Though it is not possible to state with any certainty exactly what books were acquired with subscription monies from 1712 onwards. However, only forty-one books from the six hundred and ninety-four listed in the 1718 catalogue have eighteenth-century imprints.<sup>37</sup> Additionally, in some cases, the catalogue does append the name of the donor to a book entry, and if these donors are matched against the club membership for 1718, then some indication of what was thought necessary or appropriate at the time is revealed.

Richard Lake for instance gave a German Bible (Amsterdam 1632); Thomas Lake, mercer, a copy of Dugdale's Imbanking and drayning; Thomas Edwards, an atlas ('M. Pitts') and the works of Isaac Barrow; Henry Bannier, the surgeon, a copy of John Godolphin's Repertorium Canonicum (1678?); and Richard Tayler, Bentley's translation of Horace. Similarly, John Kelsall esq., donated John Harris's Lexicon technicum (first published 1704 and the first alphabetically arranged encyclopaedia to be published); Edward Cross, rector of Walsoken, gave Marius Nizolius' Lexicon Ciceronianum; Joseph Edwards donated Memoirs of Scotland (1714); and R.M. Massey, the library keeper, gave George Hickes's Linguarum

veterum septentrionalium thesaurus grammatico - criticus et  
archaeologicus (1703-5?).

The scholarly and diverse nature of the works provides some indication of the hoped-for scope of the library whilst also confirming the impression that this was to be a learned man's library of particular use and interest to the serious minded scholar or antiquarian. As of consequence, such use as the library received at this time would be severely limited despite its title of 'Publick Library'; limited if not by virtue of the type of literature available then by the very nature of the club or society utilizing the books at that time.

By contrast, if such be needed, at nearby March (then a large hamlet belonging to the parish of Doddington) Philip Williams, rector at the latter place 1685-1719, had left a benefaction of fifty pounds at his death. The money was to buy land, the rent from which was each year to be laid out on books for distribution amongst the poor of March, the scheme being under the auspices of the curate and churchwardens there.

It is to be regretted that we have no idea of how the poor of March received and used their gifts of books and yet little knowledge of the extent to which the gentlemen and clergy of Wisbech exploited their own increasing library. Nevertheless, that which does survive is important by virtue of its rarity and in fine relates to certain recorded loans made from the Wisbech library nominally over the period 1713 to ca 1800, though in essence, during the lesser period, 1728 to 1766. Analysis of this use appears in Chapter 3.

## Doncaster

The parish library that was long associated with the parish church of St. George, Doncaster, originated with a society of clergymen which was formed in the locality early in 1715. The members of this society - there were originally ten - arranged to meet on the first Thursday of every month, their "design and purpose" being "the Improvement of One another in Christian knowledge".<sup>38</sup>.

The society members met at a variety of venues, including each other's homes, though the library which grew out of these mutual-improvement gatherings was static and by October 1716 was housed in the Old Vestry of St. George's church. Such an establishment occurred despite the original intention, which was to disperse the books acquired by subscriptions between members; a normal feature of earlier eighteenth-century book clubs. A year's purchases could be divided out between members, perhaps by drawing lots, and such a procedure is confirmed by a short preface written into the Society's Minute Book:

Doncaster Epiphany 1714 (ie. 1715): We agree to meet the first Thursday of every month at one anothers houses successively for the Improvement of One another in Christian knowledge; & for the Purchasing Such Books as may be useful to Read... the Books after they have been perused by the subscribers to be Divided Equally by Lot... And this obligation To Continue for a year after the Date mentioned unless any of the Subscribers shal be Removed to an Inconvenient Distance<sup>39</sup>.

The first recorded meetings would appear to confirm the peripatetic nature of the society, being held at the following venues: Finningley (7 April 1715)<sup>40</sup>; Arksay (4 May 1715); Bramwith (2 June 1715); Warmsworth (7 July 1715); Wadworth (4 August 1715); Sprotborough (1 September 1715); and Doncaster (6 October and 3 November 1715). With the exception of the second recorded meeting (Wednesday 4 May) all the meetings do indeed appear to have been held on the first Thursday of



each month and the pattern continues until at least July 1718 when venues cease to be recorded.<sup>41</sup>

Associations or societies such as this were not uncommon and similar enterprises can be traced elsewhere in England and Wales originating in the first two decades of the eighteenth century and possibly earlier. Most involved only clergymen and as has already been mentioned, a number of the gatherings were associated with the various societies for the reformation of manners and with the S.P.C.K.<sup>42</sup> The society of clergymen centred on St. John's parish church, Bedford, founded in 1700, is a notably similar institution to that at Doncaster whilst the club operating at Wisbech, from 1714, also has clear similarities.<sup>43</sup> In all three examples a permanent standing library was formed out of contributions of books or money from both clergy and gentry, and although it was always anticipated that any benefactor should be allowed free access to the books, in most cases the collections were seen as being of most value and benefit to the clergy.<sup>44</sup>

Appropriately, many club or society libraries were thought to be best housed within their respective local parish churches and yet they were markedly different in character to the ubiquitous and eleemosynary parish libraries which they often soon surpassed in terms of size and which they could physically supplant, as was the case at Wisbech and at Spalding.<sup>45</sup>

Firstly, as at Doncaster, these society libraries were subscription libraries whereby a single or annual payment was required in order to gain membership and have access to the books. The original ten subscribers at Doncaster each paid ten shillings (half-year subscription?), though by 1726 a contribution of twenty shillings (or books to that value) was necessary for membership. Secondly, a distinctive book club element was manifest in the regular meetings of members that took place, though

at Doncaster, the often associated dispersal of books connected with such meetings appears not to have taken place to any great extent, despite the original statement of intent to the contrary.<sup>46</sup> Indeed, to such societies as that at Doncaster, the building up of an extensive, representative and permanent collection of good and useful books appears to have become a primary intention.

Somewhat significantly, tangible links can be found to exist between geographically separated societies. At Doncaster (which was of later foundation than the society and library at Bedford) reference is made in the Society Minute Book and in the Accounts to such links:

Nov.8 1722 This day was Com̄unicated to the Rev.<sup>d</sup> Society by Mr Pearson a Copy of the Settlem̄t of the Lib̄ry of Bedford....

Dec.6 (1722) To Mr Pearson for a Copy of y<sup>e</sup> Settlement of Bedford Library & Postage 0.5.9

Dec.6 1722 (Mr Recorder Bradshaw to be asked:) to draw-up a Form conforming to that of the Settlem̄<sup>t</sup> of the Library of Bedford...<sup>47</sup>.

The dates of these entries are contemporary to within six months of an Indenture relating to library rules and administration at Doncaster, the text of which incorporates many of the Bedford features. This Indenture<sup>48</sup> is signed by Edmund Withers, the then treasurer of the Doncaster Society, and clearly forms an integral part of the active preparations then afoot to effect a sound, legal formalisation of the Society library and its administration. Such preparations, involving as they did every member of the Society in preparing and writing a scheme for the settling of the library in trustees,<sup>49</sup> culminated in the lengthy and detailed Settlement of 1726.<sup>50</sup>

There is then, clear evidence of the influence of the older library establishment at Bedford upon the efforts being made at Doncaster to effect a similar institution. That the Doncaster clergy perceived the

Bedford establishment as a model from which they should create their own society and library is not surprising neither was it a unique sentiment. Evidence from S.P.C.K. correspondents suggests that developments at Bedford (and within that county) at the turn of the century with regard to clerical societies, were well known and emulated elsewhere.<sup>51</sup> At Doncaster, the similarity of rules and regulations adopted to those at Bedford is most marked. Both libraries were for instance founded by contributions of clergy and gentry and both were originally housed within their respective parish church vestries; the vicar of St. George's Doncaster and the rector of St. John's Bedford (and their successors) being appointed Library Keepers.<sup>52</sup> At Bedford, ten shillings was asked from members as a subscription, whereas at Doncaster after an initial payment of probably the same amount, by the 1720s, the subscription was twenty shillings (though successors in the posts held by the original member — benefactors could be admitted for ten shillings).

Both libraries had deeds of settlement<sup>53</sup> which made provision for the books to be subsequently moved out of the parish church and into more suitable accommodation if the need arose, whilst actual library opening hours were identical: every Saturday, ten a.m. to four p.m. Individual books from both collections were to be carefully marked on the title page with the donor's name (or purchase price) along with the name of the library, in order to prevent alienation.<sup>54</sup> Borrowers at either library could only take out two books at one time and then only if a deposit of equal value to the book, or alternatively a promissory note, were left. At Doncaster, a folio volume could be borrowed for three months, a quarto volume for two months and 'a small book' for one month; whereas at Bedford the figures were respectively: two months, six weeks and one month.<sup>55</sup> Additionally, precisely the same overrider applied to borrowers who were themselves authors, or potential authors, or as the

Doncaster Trustees specified it:

...(any person who has the) intention to furnish himself with Materials for Publishing any thing that may be useful to Religion or Learning or any other ways conducing to the good of the Publick.<sup>56.</sup>

Such intentions were rewarded at both libraries with enhanced facility to borrow six books for four months, but on condition that a copy of the completed work be donated to the library when published.

Further similarities between the two libraries do exist, however, perhaps sufficient has been cited to establish a clear commonality of administration over and above that which was generally applicable. For further general guidelines with regard to parochial libraries were then already available to those involved in their establishment or administration being written into national legislation in the form of the Act of Parliament of March 1708/9 relating to parochial libraries.<sup>57.</sup>

Further help and guidance from the Church itself would no doubt have eventually been made available had not Convocation been prorogued in 1717 as a direct result of the Bangorian Controversy. For amongst the topics represented in the business before the Convocation of 1717 was, notably, the establishment of parochial libraries.<sup>58.</sup> In the absence of such central help and guidance, groups and societies apparently created their own precedents and procedures, possibly with reference to established systems and certainly with reference to the framework provided by Thomas Bray's Parochial Libraries Act of 1708/9.

Neither were the Trustees at Doncaster ignorant of this relevant national legislation, for at some time during 1721 they bought (for 6d.) a copy of the Parochial Libraries Act.<sup>59.</sup> However, it was subsequently proposed that the intent and purpose of the Doncaster Society was to create an "extra-parochial" library and that specifically outside the compass of the Act and in imitation of that established at Reigate.<sup>60.</sup>

This particular library (specifically excluded from the terms of the Act) is described as : "...a publick Library... for the Use of the Freeholders, Vicar and Inhabitants of the said Parish, and of the Gentlemen and Clergymen inhabiting in Parts thereto adjacent; the said Library being constituted in another Manner than the Libraries provided for by this Act."<sup>61</sup>. Such a description could well have found favour with the Doncaster Trustees who therefore evidently spent a good deal of effort in achieving the correct and appropriate legal and administrative framework for their own similar project. Their treasurer, Edmund Withers, even went so far as to write to the London bookseller, William Innys, early in 1725, apparently about the nature of the Reigate library settlement, for Innys replied on 17 February, 1725 stating that he had written to a clergyman near Reigate in order to procure 'an exact Acc<sup>t</sup> of the Settlement of that Library'.<sup>62</sup> Very soon after on February 26, Innys wrote to Withers again and enclosed a letter from John Bird of Reigate in which the latter clergyman set out one or two general features of the library and its administration.<sup>63</sup>

The intended scope of the Reigate library was not very different from that anticipated at Doncaster, details of which appeared in an Indenture of 1722. This source expresses clearly that the 'religious design and purpose' is intended:

...to and for the Use of Us the sd Associated Clergymen Our Successours & others Literate Persons of the Gentry Clergy & ffreeholders in the sd Town & Neighbrhood of Donc<sup>r</sup>.<sup>64</sup>

Such a statement either confirmed or redefined the anticipated scope of the library at precisely the time when preparations, both physical and administrative, were moving apace and which culminated, after due consideration, in the wordy Deed of Settlement of April 1726,<sup>65</sup> and in the institution of a borrowers' register in the December of the same year.

By 1726, the growing collection of books was firmly in situ above

the south porch of St. George's parish church in a room which had been especially fitted-out for the purpose. Exactly where the books had been removed from is not clear, for the Minute Book entries for 1721 suggest that they were not then in the vestry of the same church (as they had been in 1716). At the society meeting of 6 July 1721, the members had heard that a room might be available in Doncaster and at the next meeting on 3 August, it was duly ordered that Mr Dujon, Mr Withers, Mr Fox and Mr Pearson 'or as many more of the Society as please' should go and see the room over the south porch of the parish church to ascertain 'if it be convenient for depositing the Books'.

The members' report was presumably favourable for in September of the same year the Rev. Patrick Dujon was asked to gain consent of the Archbishop for the conversion of the room into a library and in anticipation of that consent being given, conversion work commenced in November 1721.<sup>66</sup>.

The move is recorded in the Society accounts<sup>67</sup> by an undated entry (1721-1722):

Expenses in fitting up y <sup>e</sup> Library over y <sup>e</sup> Ch. Porch as particulars in ye blew book...	6. 6.8
--	--------

Further incidental expenditure is recorded in the same source and continues into 1723:

1722 For paper to write a Catalogue of y <sup>e</sup> Books to be presented to Archbishop Dawes	0. 0.3
To Tho Barrow for dressing y <sup>e</sup> Books	0. 2.0
To Parkinson for ditto and making fires	0. 2.0
To Whitelam for a table for y <sup>e</sup> Library	0. 8.0
Boards for shelving 2 <sup>sh</sup>	0. 2.0
Working and nails	0. 2.2
A form Leaf 1 <sup>sh</sup> : 4 <sup>d</sup> Ink & Paper 3 <sup>d</sup> in all	0. 1.7
1722 Spent at ye Mitre <sup>68</sup> .	0. 4.0
For painting y <sup>e</sup> door	0. 1.0

October 6 (1722)	Load of coals for y <sup>e</sup> Library	0. 5.4
	for getting y <sup>m</sup> in	0. 0.4
December 6 (1722)	To Mr Pearson for a copy of y <sup>e</sup> Settlement of Bedford Library and Postage	0. 5.9
October 30 (1723)	Hall a quire of paper	0. 0.6
December 3	Two Locks for Drawers	0. 3.8
December 21	For ye Book Press	1. 5.9
January 10	For curtain (etc.)	0.17.6

By 1726, preparations both physical and administrative to establish a 'Publick Library' were complete and the official title was to be 'The Society's Library' or 'The Society's Library at Doncaster'. The whole property of the library was transferred by a Deed of Settlement (1726) into the hands of twenty-three Trustees; thirteen of whom were clergymen; nine were gentry or titled 'esquire'; and one other, the Mayor of Doncaster. Most of the Trustees were also benefactors to the library.

#### Witham

Of the original establishment of the library at Witham, nothing is known. Neither does it appear that any books survive. Such evidence regarding content and use as exists at present derives solely from the extant registers of book loans associated with the library. The two manuscript volumes (there may well have been more) relate to book loans made during two twenty-one year periods: 1757-1778 and 1847-1868.<sup>69</sup>

Somewhat ironically, for a library of which we know so little, the Witham Church Lending Library emerges as a parish library in the narrowest and most obvious sense of the word. That is, the books that appear as available from the parish church during the middle of the

eighteenth century in this small Essex community are not overly scholarly (with probably no texts in Greek or Latin) and most date from the eighteenth century. Subsequent recorded use of the books is not therefore dominated by either clergy, gentry, or by educated and scholarly individuals indulging their antiquarian interests, for indeed, the library would appear to have had little of scholarly interest to offer such individuals. However, the number of recorded borrowers is high (58) in proportion to the number of different books borrowed (216) and in all likelihood, recorded use reflects a very localized demand by parishioners and regular church attenders; witness for example the predominantly persistent days of the week on which library use is recorded (Sunday; Wednesday; Friday) and which are likely to coincide with the local pattern of church service attendance.<sup>70</sup>

The beginning of the twenty-one year period of the eighteenth century for which we have a record of library loans coincides, to within a year, with the commencement of the Seven Years' War with France and it may not be accidental that this small yet tangible display of bookish seriousness and piety coincides with a period of national emergency and ferment. For one knows that even within the remote and relatively isolated English countryside, there existed a strong contemporary reaction to certain national events: events which themselves had the power to create some hardship and anxiety.<sup>71</sup> There may well have existed a demand for reading topics associated with such national and international developments (i.e. geography, topography or history) but the lending library at Witham, as it appears to have been constituted, had neither the depth nor breadth of subject matter to meet such demands. Rather, it appears that this wholly theological collection of books (marked by a distinctly dissenting flavour) appealed to a number of pious parishioners who were satisfied to find an unexceptional depository of devotional and expository literature.



Elsewhere in Essex, as elsewhere in the country, book collections could be not quite so 'public' despite being bigger and the objects of larger endowments. At nearby Maldon, Thomas Plume had bequeathed a library in 1704, the anticipated use of which was for 'any Gentleman or Scholar'.<sup>72</sup> The book collection was housed in a purpose-built room over the local school and, more importantly, the library enjoyed a continuing endowment for maintenance and for the purchase of new books. As of consequence, by 1843, the library had a total of 5,330 books and manuscripts: some 5,000 of which survive to this day.

The size and quality of a benefaction however offered no guarantee of continued use. At Colchester a town library had been founded in 1631 by Archbishop Samuel Harsnett, the specific purpose being "... that the Clergie of the Towne of Colchester and other Divines may have free accesse for the reading and studieinge of them".<sup>73</sup> And although special accommodation was provided for the library, by March 1654/5 the books had been mortgaged to the Town Chamberlain for £50; "Books being then grown useless when everything was done by pretended Revelations".<sup>74</sup> Further neglect followed until a local M.P., Charles Gray, had the library moved to his castle in Colchester during the 1720s. In this new home the books were made the nucleus of a clerical subscription library (the Castle Society Book Club of Colchester) where they functioned and were administered on regular book club lines.

Nearer to Witham, at Chelmsford, four hundred books had been given by Anthony Knightsbridge which had previously belonged to his brother John (died 1677). The foundation was made in 1679 and significantly, for a library that again survives to this day (with ca 2,000 volumes), special accommodation was provided to house the collection over the south porch of St. Mary's parish church (now the Cathedral). The intended scope of the Knightsbridge Library was 'in usum vicinorum theologorum'.<sup>75</sup>

A similar intention would have applied to the far more modest, though earlier, bequest which was made at West Hanningfield, Essex, ca 1632, whereby George Darell, the late parson:

...out ( ) his Charitable dispositio (&) Love to Learninge  
by his last will & testament did ( ) not only ffortie shillings  
to y<sup>e</sup> poore of y<sup>e</sup> said pishe. but also gaue vnto ( ) &  
( ) of y<sup>e</sup> Same Church for ther time present & to all y<sup>e</sup>  
succeedinge parsons ( ) this Church ( ) for y<sup>e</sup> benefit of  
ther Learninge & studies (those) five Bookes vnd<sup>r</sup> named  
fowre Tomes of Belarmime in thre bookes  
A Concordance of y<sup>e</sup> olde & new Testament  
An Orthodoxall consent of y<sup>e</sup> best writers vpō y<sup>e</sup>  
Sacramēt of y<sup>e</sup> Lords Supp<sup>r</sup>. 76.

The somewhat restricted access to these works was confirmed by the fact that Darell stipulated they were to be 'stedfastly annexed' to some part of the parsonage.

Even earlier, within the region, certain books had been made available within the parish churches in accordance with the various royal and episcopal directives to this effect. One inventory of implements, dated 1613, can be quoted, for example, originating from Great Dunmow and includes a Bible; Erasmus's Paraphrases; the Book of Monuments (Foxe's Martyrs); four books of Common Prayer; and a book of Articles of Religion. Additionally, at some later stage, a Dunmow church library did exist.<sup>77</sup>

Within this county-wide context, the lending library at Witham was by no means an early establishment, although we have no relevant evidence as yet relating to the seventeenth century there. The evidence offered by library's book titles suggests a provenance (possibly private) which dates back to the later years of the seventeenth century at most, with apparently no inclusion of surviving volumes from earlier edicts and directives such as works by Erasmus, Bishop Jewel, or the Book of Homilies.

The emergence of such a library at Witham is not however untypical of developments elsewhere and may have formed a part of the general upsurge in church library establishments that took place during the first half of the eighteenth century. Endowments such as that at Hatfield Broadoak, ca 1708, and the bequest of books at Sible Hedingham by the rector Moses Cook in 1733 were regional examples of an apparently national phenomenon related to the new associated philanthropy and the growth in the number of privately held libraries.<sup>78</sup> At Stansted Mount Fitchet, fifteen books are mentioned as belonging to the vestry there in the church accounts <sup>79</sup>, whilst a lending library was set up by the Corporation of Harwich within a local church (either St. Nicholas or All Saints) and put into use by 1711 with possible assistance from the S.P.C.K.<sup>80</sup> The same society established a standard seventy-two volume library at Newport, Essex, in 1710, which was subsequently housed over the south porch of the parish church there.

Just as Archbishop Harsnett's seventeenth-century bequest of books at Colchester had been later absorbed into a society book club, so too were certain eighteenth-century parish libraries similarly at risk later in the century. For far fewer parish library establishments were being made later in the century whilst book clubs, reading groups and literary societies were becoming more common. A 'Society for Reading' for example, was established at Clavering, Essex, in 1786 (surviving until 1932) whilst the Thaxted Book Society dates from 1805.<sup>81</sup>

The fate of the Witham Church Lending Library after the eighteenth-century record of loans ends in 1778 is not known apart from the fact that it did indeed survive, in one form or another, into the nineteenth century as the second record of loans testifies. A detailed examination of this manuscript source, covering as it does loans made during the period 1847-1868 (curiously, a second twenty-one year period) would no doubt reveal, in part, the nature of the book collection as it then existed.

## Rotherham

Though the parish library at Rotherham for which we have a detailed and extensive record of use spanning two centuries was of certain eighteenth-century origin, as may be anticipated, the books were not the first to be acquired and kept within the parish church of All Saints. Towards the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign, the church accounts record some expenditure on the care and security of certain volumes which were then chained within the church:

It. pd. for 2 large red lether skines for y<sup>e</sup> coveringe of y<sup>e</sup> bybells, and 2 other serves bouckes 20d., for coveringe them 8d., for claspes to them 18d., all is 3s. 10d.

It. pd. to Rob<sup>t</sup>. Wyghtman, for mending one of the bokkes that is cheyned in the church 8d. <sup>82.</sup>

Elsewhere, in earlier accounts, prompt compliance with the injunction of Edward VI (issued 1547) is recorded having regard to the provision of Bibles and the Paraphrases of Erasmus. <sup>83.</sup>

The opportunity was also taken, apparently about the same time, to rid the church of certain unwanted books. For it is recorded in the same source, within a somewhat curious statement, that some volumes were removed to Doncaster and York; and such action may have resulted from an ecclesiastical directive issued in tandem with the royal injunctions regarding book provision. The despatching of the church books is thus recorded:

There were charges for carrying of the Chirche Bokes to Doncaster, Ale when they were packyed, Corde to trusse the said bokes in 1s. 6d. and to Robt. Prouentorye, of Doncaster, for the Carege of all our bokes to Yorke 3s. 4d. <sup>84.</sup>

Such compliance with the fluctuating demands of both episcopal and royal injunctions and directives concerning reading matter would mean that parish books could be acquired, re-acquired, or disposed of

in circumstances over and above those related to local interest, lethargy or neglect. As a consequence of similar actions to that at Rotherham, elsewhere, few parishes succeeded in holding their pre-Reformation books and manuscripts into the eighteenth century.

At Rotherham, by the eighteenth century, a list of goods belonging to the parish church could include only four books: a large church Bible; two large books of Common Prayer; and a book of Psalms.<sup>85</sup> Volumes such as these may have been secured to an eagle brass or other lectern, though it is known however, that a reading desk was set up in the church at this time.<sup>86</sup> At some later stage, it is probable that most of the church's books were incorporated into the parish library which was situated in the vestry from 1728. Amongst the books recorded as loaned from that library during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, are a handful relating to 'the book with the chain' though unfortunately, no title is specified.<sup>87</sup>

However, the new spirit of charitable philanthropy and apparent concern for the intellectual needs of the clergy that marked the early years of the eighteenth century, did not pass Rotherham by. And although the principal benefaction which was to create the parish library proper did not occur until 1728, there is evidence that in line with developments elsewhere, some books were appearing before that date within the parish, being associated with both clerical and school use.

An inscription contained within an extant copy of the works of Henry Moore (1708) records that "This book is given by the Honorable Thomas Wentworth, Esq., to the church of Rotheram (sic) for the use of the present incumbent and those who shall succeed him."<sup>88</sup> The suggestion is that here is represented an even earlier concern for the needs of the incumbent; manifest perhaps some twenty years before the Mansel bequest of 1728. Significantly, the same volume - Henry Moore's Works (1708) - was presented by the same benefactor to the church of Darton, near Barnsley,

and survives there along with a Book of Homilies.<sup>89</sup>.

Thomas Wentworth<sup>90</sup>. was also a generous donor to the Doncaster Clerical Society and had been active during the early years of the S.P.C.K., subscribing towards the erecting of catechetical schools and libraries in various market towns as well as towards the provision of parish libraries in the English plantations in America.<sup>91</sup> The Wentworth family owned a large house and estate to the west of Rotherham at Wentworth Woodhouse<sup>92</sup>. and as a number of Thomas Wentworth's benefactions show a marked geographical bias towards the south Yorkshire region, it may be that one can perceive the fragmentary remains of a specific or perhaps random scheme of library benefaction and certainly further work needs to be carried out to illuminate this aspect.

Wentworth's inscription in the Henry More volume at Rotherham is quite specific regarding intended use, i.e. the present and succeeding incumbents. The parish library that developed in the late 1720s however, clearly widened potential readership to include parishioners (who could borrow books) and 'any person whatsoever' for reference purposes. The greater emphasis on public use in the later benefaction represents a subtle development in the motivation of local benefactors in this respect.

A rather more limited scope of use would naturally have been anticipated for books acquired for school use. At Rotherham, the undated (ca 1716) local school accounts reveal the following purchases:

Paid for bookes - 12 Horn bookes, 2 dozen and a half of spelling bookes, 15 Testaments, 9 Bibles, 6 common prayer bookes, 19 Chatechisme bookes, 24 paper bookes, 12 accidences, and 1 of Dr. Tallbott's bookes, and carriges £2.15.9½<sup>93</sup>.

The nature of the books, especially James Talbot's The Christian School-Master<sup>94</sup>, suggests a link with the S.P.C.K., but this has yet to be ascertained. It would be certainly difficult to imagine that there were no links between the parish school, the church and its library. One

does know for instance, that the local schoolmaster, William Withers, was a regular preacher in the parish church from 1702 to 1719 and that in the same place there existed a 'scholar's loft'; no doubt where the pupils assembled when they attended the church services.<sup>95</sup> Evidence from elsewhere<sup>96</sup> also suggests that it was somewhat inevitable that a parochial library should play an educational role within the community that was of both a formal and informal nature, despite, or in line with, the specified intentions of the benefactors.

For the Rotherham parish library that dates from 1728, was, like its near neighbour at Sheffield, a lending library from its nascency. This much was made clear by Mrs Frances Mansel - the original benefactress - whose gift of £100 in 1728, after the death of her second husband the Reverend Edward Mansel - enabled a substantial library to be formed.<sup>97</sup> The purpose and intended use of the library was stated to be:

For y<sup>e</sup> Use & Advantage of y<sup>e</sup> Clergy & Parishioners of  
Rotherham for ever, Any of whom may Have y<sup>e</sup> Use of  
Any Book In y<sup>e</sup>: S<sup>d</sup>: Library...<sup>98</sup>.

The books thus purchased were 'Lodg'd And Reposited in The Vestry of The Church In Rotherham',<sup>99</sup> and such a location is indeed confirmed by the heading of the loans register which commences in 1730 and begins: 'Books lent out of ye Library in ye Vestry'.<sup>100</sup> The loan entries themselves end some one hundred and thirty-eight years later (1868) - a remarkable time-span for such a record albeit not continuous - and there is no evidence to suggest that the books were moved from their original home in the vestry during this period.<sup>101</sup>

Originally, not all the books were to be borrowed. Those specified as not available for loan formed what Thomas Bray would have called a 'standing' library and which one would now designate a reference library. The nature of those works considered not suitable for loan is briefly referred to by the generic title 'y<sup>e</sup> Commentators'; whilst one specific

work - Jeremy Collier's Great historical dictionary - is similarly designated.<sup>102</sup> These volumes were "not to be Taken out of y<sup>e</sup>: Vestry: but may upon any occasion be Read & Consulted there, by, Any Person whatsoever".<sup>103</sup> A later transcription of this same passage, to be found elsewhere in the loans register, has been crossed out and would indicate a later revision of this rule as contained in the undated Additional Rules, written within the first ten years of the library's life.

Further provisions regarding the loan facility relate to the security that was to be given by the clergy and parishioners against the loan of any book. The precise nature of this security is not specified, though it may be, as elsewhere, that a monetary deposit equal to some proportion of the cost of the volume to be borrowed was required. Such an idea was not new; similar schemes had been operating at Bedford (1700); Reigate (1701); Maldon (1704); Tiverton, Devon (1715); with Whitchurch, Hampshire (1731) following the practice shortly after Rotherham. The Thomlinson Library at Newcastle-upon-Tyne (1735, augmented 1745), was similarly cautious with loans and serves as an example of particularly stringent precautions being applied.<sup>104</sup> No records pertaining to deposits or securities at Rotherham have been found and it is relevant that at least three of the above mentioned libraries (Bedford, Reigate and Tiverton) allowed alternative written undertakings or oaths to be made in default of a monetary deposit on a loaned book.

Elsewhere in the Rotherham loans register is a listing of twelve 'Additional Regulations for the Order Conduct and Management of Mrs Mansells Parochial Library in the Church of Rotherham'. The precise date of these additional rules is not known, however, two rules further clarify the loan/deposit aspect. The first (Rule 5) identifies the clergy, parishioners and "respectable householders" of Rotherham as potential borrowers "Provided they give good and sufficient lawfull security to the vicar in the rate for the time being (or their Librarian)..."; and the second



(Rule 10) prohibits the use of the library by any who are not of full age; of good moral character; and respectable householders.<sup>105.</sup>

It is significant that such additional rules as these were specifically alluded to in the Parochial Libraries Act of 1708/09,<sup>106.</sup> wherein section nine gives authority to the Ordinary - with or without the donor - to make such rules which result in 'the better governing of the said libraries, and preserving of the same'. The rules were considered to be valid if they be 'over and above, and besides, but not contrary to such as the Donor of such Benefactions shall in his Discretion judge fit and necessary'.<sup>107.</sup>

At Rotherham, as was the case at Doncaster a little earlier, full awareness of the legislation regarding parochial libraries is evident as a lengthy extract from the text of the Act written into the manuscript register of loans testifies. This extract is penned by the same hand as that which entered the additional rules and together the texts reveal certain interesting insights into the projected use and intended purpose of the library.

Firstly, the books were perceived as a 'collection of the Best Authors on Divine Subjects' and as such were specifically acquired from the monetary benefaction of Mrs Mansel. In this manner, by not depending on the otherwise arbitrary and chance donations of suitable books from interested individuals, there existed the opportunity to acquire the best possible library within the stated terms of reference and within the financial restrictions that £100 imposed. There is some evidence, however, to suggest that not all the money was immediately spent, for some subsequent purchases were made many years later and additional bequests were also made and incorporated. In April 1750, for example, four volumes were received off Thomas Westby (Mrs Mansel had the maiden name Westby) though it is uncertain if these were gifts or merely misplaced loan returns.<sup>108.</sup> The same caveat does not however apply to

those books recorded as bought by Mrs Jane Westby in 1759 with "part of the Money left by Mrs Mansell (sic) for that use".<sup>109</sup>. Thus it is confirmed that some thirty-one years after the original benefaction, at least a portion of Mrs Mansel's original £100 remained unspent.

Nevertheless, the library was secure and as the record of loans attests, it was also being used. Additional rule seven neatly outlines the hoped-for purposes to which the books were to be put and, as an illuminating statement of attitudes, is worth quoting here in full:

As this is a very valuable collection of the Best Authors on Divine Subjects systematically arranged and judiciously selected by that able scholar and Pious Divine good Mr Hemmingway it is hoped that its whole and entire perfect preservation for the sake of God the Church Religion the Pious Foundress and the improvement of the rising generation will be most carefully and strictly attended to.<sup>110</sup>.

Thus it is that we have revealed the identity of the individual entrusted with the task of creating the library. It is likely that 'good Mr Hemmingway' referred to in additional rule seven, is one Isaac Hemingway (sic) who was ordained on 21 July, 1728 (the same year in which Mrs Mansel made her bequest). Hemingway had proceeded B.A. from Emmanuel College, Cambridge, in 1722/3, being made deacon at York in 1723. He became vicar of Attercliffe (now a suburb of Sheffield, situated to the north-east of the town centre) in 1729, though he died soon after on 3 March, 1730/1, aged twenty-nine. It is possible, though this is conjecture, that since no mention was made in the Additional Rules at Rotherham of 'late' Mr Hemmingway that the rules were written before the latter's death in 1730/1 and yet after Mrs Mansel's bequest of 1728. It is clear however, that Hemingway was designated as 'a man of learning and ability' and therefore suitable to be deputized as library-keeper; insofar as that person's duties included the selection and arrangement of the books. Under additional rule one, the vicar of Rotherham had the authorisation to appoint such a person.

The link with nearby Sheffield, through Hemingway, may be significant as a parochial lending library already existed there, well before the establishment at Rotherham. As at Rotherham, the books were kept in the vestry of the parish church at Sheffield and the collection is mentioned as early as 1704/5 in the Notitia Parochialis of that year.<sup>111.</sup> The library evidently stayed intact for at least a further eighty years, as catalogues of the books are appended to Sheffield glebe terriers for 1764, 1777, 1781 and 1786.<sup>112.</sup> That the collection was a lending library has not previously been obvious, however, the will of James Hill of Sheffield and Earl Sterndale, Derbyshire, proved at York on 11 June, 1712, alludes specifically to this point in connection with a bequest of books to the same library.<sup>113.</sup> Sheffield parish church also had an assistant minister, the Reverend John Dickinson, who held office 1752 to 1766 and who had an acquaintance with the Wisbech parochial library, having used it quite intensively over a two-year period, 1732-1733.<sup>114.</sup> The mobility of such clergymen, from one geographic region to another, could well have contributed to a cross-fertilization of ideas, aims and procedures with regard to the book collections held by the parish churches.

At Rotherham, in establishing the nature and circumstance of the original benefaction and establishment of the parochial library, one can discern certain significant features which would help determine the scope and future use of the book collection.

Firstly, a monetary gift, as the major benefaction, enabled the desired books to be chosen, rather than (as was more often the case) merely accepted as random gifts and bequests from existing book-owners. Having the option to choose the contents of one's library must have been a rare opportunity to establish exactly the type of library which was perceived as expedient and desirable. Secondly, the book collection, was, of consequence, seen to be a valuable library 'of the best authors on divine subjects' by its contemporary administrators. Thirdly, the

intended scope of use was clearly stated to be for the clergy and parishioners of Rotherham for ever, subject to the provisions made in the subsequent Additional Rules. Fourthly, the administrative rules initially divided the book collection into a standing library of reference works and a loan collection, whilst also restricting the latter facility to one book per reader at a time. Finally, the preservation of the books was not only seen to be necessary for sound religious and charitable reasons, but also for 'the improvement of the rising generation'.

As might be expected from a library acquired through monetary benefaction, few of the books that survive have any discernable provenance.<sup>115</sup> The majority of books do however have written on the title page "Rotherham Library" and at least one volume<sup>116</sup> still has a printed paper roundel thus: "Rotherham Library N<sup>o</sup>. (blank)" inside an ornamental border. These may well be the original parish library designations. Some books do contain the signatures of previous owners and may represent books that were donated or bought second-hand.<sup>117</sup> Three donations are formally recorded on the fly-leaves of the respective volumes; the earliest, a gift of Thomas Wentworth Esq., has already been discussed,<sup>118</sup> whilst the other two date from the later eighteenth century. One such, appropriately, is of Thomas Bray's Bibliotheca parochialis (2nd edition, 1707), given by Rev. Bayliffe, vicar of Rotherham,<sup>119</sup> on 21 June, 1797; whilst in addition, the gift of Francis Godwin's Episcopi de praesulibus angliae commentarius (1743) in 1789 by the Right Honourable Thomas, Earl of Effingham is similarly recorded.

As far as the borrowing of such works is concerned, some evidence from the loans record suggests the consistent application of the appropriate Additional Rules. Rule six for example, which concerns the re-borrowing of books after monthly inspection and the limiting to one book per person, appears to have been quite consistently adhered to

throughout the century. The administrative procedure was to find and delete the original issue date on the loan entry and replace it with subsequent renewal dates. (Persistent renewals are thereby made increasingly difficult to decipher.) Excepting for Isaac Hemingway, who, as the second recorded borrower, took out five volumes on one occasion, the one-book rule was largely adhered to with some exceptions not becoming evident until ten years after the 1728 establishment. Though even then, few individuals borrow more than two volumes at one issue, and for the rest of the century the one-book rule is followed by the vast majority of the borrowers.

#### Maidstone

One of the earliest references to reading material connected with the parish church of All Saints, Maidstone, relates to a benefaction in the will of one Peter Brown, a butcher of the town who died in 1567. The will, proved on 2 February, 1566/7 enabled a Bible to be purchased and made available 'for all men to read forever'. The exact terms of the bequest are recorded thus:

Peter Brown, of Maydestone, bocher, testator, wills 26s. 8d. unto the buying of a great Bybill of the largest volume, that was used to be set in the nether end of the church of Maydestone, in the place where it was wont to be set in the time of the late King Edward VI.; and the same to be fast bound with a chain, to be free for all men to read for ever.<sup>120</sup>

The reference to the existence of an earlier Bible probably reveals a former compliance which the church had made to the 1547 injunction of Edward VI (which itself repeated the first such injunction regarding Bibles in churches, issued by Henry VIII). Additionally, King Edward's injunction instructed that the Paraphrases of Erasmus and the Book of Homilies should also be made available.

Such works thus provided in parish churches may well have been removed or discarded during the return to Catholicism under Queen Mary, and so it was that individuals, such as Peter Brown the butcher, may have found it necessary to make the new provision whilst simultaneously, fulfilling Queen Elizabeth's new injunction of 1559 which repeated the earlier instructions of King Henry and King Edward.<sup>121.</sup>

To the Brown benefaction of 1567 was added at least one other bequest that we know of, though it occurred some twenty-nine years later. In 1596, one Thomas Aierste, yeoman of Maidstone, died and beque<sup>a</sup>th<sup>k</sup>ed money for the specific purpose of purchasing an edition (in English) of Calvin's Institutes of the Christian religion. Once again, the book was to be chained and a desk at the lower end of the parish church is referred to. The purpose of the benefaction was stated as being 'for the better instruction of the poor and simple'.<sup>122.</sup>

Later provision of books at Maidstone occurred during the mid seventeenth century and, significantly, involved the town Corporation. Evidence for this is a municipal order issued during the Commonwealth period, in July 1658, which instructs the Town Chamberlyn (sic) to buy '... for the use of this Corporation a Greate Bible newly printed in the Easterne Languages, and likewise that he take order for a Lexicon of the said Languages.'<sup>123.</sup> The anticipated scope of use is somewhat broadened and the exact location of the provision explained in a further order:

(the said Bible to) be disposed of for publiqve use of such Ministers or others as have recourse to the same for theire readinge and studyes, and for that end that it be for the present placed (untill further orders), in the Vestry Roome of the Parishh Church in some convenient Presse with shelves, and chayned in convenient manner; and that there be two keyes provided for the same Presse, one whereof to be left with the Minister for the time beinge, and the other with the Maior.<sup>124.</sup>

The Great Bible 'newly printed in the Easterne Languages' to which these instructions refer was most probably Bishop Walton's English

Polyglot Bible, first issued between 1654 and 1657. Over

fifty years later, a note in the Maidstone parish records, dated 1716, confirms the then existence of a polyglot Bible in seven volumes, though whether or not the volumes were still chained in position is not made clear.<sup>125</sup>

The background to the seventeenth-century provision of books by the municipal authorities at Maidstone involves a certain Puritan unrest in the town not unconnected with the high-church minister of All Saints, Robert Barrell. The latter, appointed in 1618 by Dr. Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury, was at the centre of certain disputes with the municipal Corporation and by 1640 a (second) petition to the House of Commons by the corporation Puritans complained, amongst other things: that Barrell preached sometimes only once in four or five weeks; that he rebuked someone for preaching twice on one Sunday; and that he was 'covetous and contentious' and 'a common tavern hunter'.<sup>126</sup> Perceived in this light, the action of the Corporation regarding provision of reading matter reflects a genuine and perhaps growing concern with the spiritual welfare of the local clergy. For elsewhere similar provisions were being made in the corporate towns and in some cases, where the municipal authorities provided special accommodation for a library or collection of books, ownership and control passed out of the church's hands completely.<sup>127</sup> Such a fate was postponed at Maidstone until 1867, when, probably for different reasons, the library was moved to the local museum.

However, by 1716, it could be recorded at Maidstone that there existed a parochial library of some twenty-three works (in 31 volumes) in addition to the six works described as 'Folios there before'.<sup>128</sup> These latter volumes are clearly those acquired by the church authorities and the Corporation during the second-half of the seventeenth century, and possibly earlier. The books are: 'Polyglot Bible in 7 vols'; 'Comber

on the Common Prayer'; 'Manuscript Latin Bible'; 'Large English Bible'; 'Book of Homilies'; and 'Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical'.

The polyglot Bible has already been referred to and was subsequently recorded in the register of loans as borrowed three times during the second-half of the eighteenth century; in 1759, 1770 and 1773. In 1810, when John Finch, the assistant curate at All Saints, rearranged and re-catalogued the parish library, he found that many books were missing or irretrievably damaged. Amongst such works were two copies of Walton's Polyglot Bible.<sup>129</sup>.

Both the Book of Homilies, the manuscript Bible and Comber On Common Prayer appear in the pages of recorded loans that commence in 1755; the latter two works appearing additionally after 1800. The manuscript Bible is referred to in 1840 as 'Biblia Vulgata LSS' and in 1842 as 'Manuscript copy of Bible illuminated'.<sup>130</sup>.

At the time the 1716 listing of books in the parochial library was made, the Rev. Samuel Weller, LL.B. had been Archbishop's curate at Maidstone for four years, having previously acted as assistant curate during the brief curacy of Josiah Woodward, 1711-1712. Both men were conscientious and philanthropic individuals and both can be associated with the reforming work of Dr. Bray and the S.P.C.K. And despite holding the curacy at All Saints for such a short period (some eighteen months only), Josiah Woodward was nevertheless responsible for the founding of the Maidstone Blue Coat School which was then associated with the parish church. As minister of Poplar, before his appointment to the post at Maidstone, Woodward had taken an active part in the work of the S.P.C.K. from May 1699, and is referred to in their minutes; for instance, in November 1701 when he is thanked for his 'care and pains' in compiling a treatise The Seaman's Monitor.<sup>131</sup>. Numerous other pamphlets and works were written by him, one notably: An Account of the rise and progress of the religious societies in the City of London.<sup>132</sup>.



Woodward was also collated to the rectory at Newchurch, Romney Marsh, on his appointment to Maidstone by Archbishop Tenison in 1711, and that, in order that he might keep an assistant at the latter place. Samuel Weller, thus appointed assistant curate at All Saints, stepped into the elder man's position soon after in 1712 and, along with the rectory of Sundridge, held the Maidstone curacy until 1753.

At the time of the 1716 listing of books held by All Saints church, the curacy at that place was worth some £300 per annum.<sup>133</sup> The church itself, described elsewhere as Kent's 'grandest perpendicular church',<sup>134</sup> was spacious and well provided for. A new organ was subscribed for under Weller's curacy in 1747 and an organist provided with a salary of £30. Three galleries existed and in 1700 the church had been re-pewed providing some 1682 sittings, 387 of which were declared free.

During the seventeenth century, the few books that the church owned were situated within the main body of the church building, probably chained to a reading desk. The collection of books, as it grew, may have been moved into the vestry though the 1716 listing of titles is unhelpful in this respect. Certainly there is some evidence that the library was housed in the organ loft of the church at some period during the first-half of the eighteenth century.<sup>135</sup> By the time of John Denne's appointment to the living in 1753 the books may have been kept in the vestry or elsewhere after the fire of 1731 (the spire was struck by lightning) and the installation of the new organ in 1747.

Prior to Denne's curacy, in 1741, services were held in the church twice on Sundays and morning prayers, every other day of the week. Additionally, on Saturdays, holidays, and all during the season of Lent, evening prayers were held each weekday. Catechizing of the young took place on Wednesdays and Fridays and Holy Communion at least every first Sunday in the month.<sup>136</sup> Attendance figures at these services are not

forthcoming, though there is some evidence that the church was small for such a populous parish. In 1695, Gilbert Innes, by means of a house-to-house visitation, estimated the population to be 3,676 and when John Denne repeated the exercise in September 1782 the resulting figure was 5,755.<sup>137</sup> (The re-pewed parish church in 1700 could seat 1682.) Thomas Turner, a shopkeeper of East Hoathly, who took a day out to visit Maidstone in April 1764, recorded of All Saints church in his diary: "... the church is modern built, and excessively handsome, but small."<sup>138</sup>

The staple industry within the parish, prior to the rise of the brewing concerns of the nineteenth century, was linen manufacture; then some two hundred years old, having been introduced by the Dutch Walloon community who settled in Maidstone during the 1560s and 1570s. There was also a prosperous market and the town benefited from its central position within the county.

As a prelude to the eighteenth century, Celia Fiennes the traveller and writer, spoke about Maidstone thus, in 1697, when she visited the town:

...a very neate market town as you shall see in the Country, its buildings are mostly of timber work the streets are large... there is also a large Goal... there are very pretty houses about the town look like the inhabitations of rich men, I believe it is a wealthy place, there are severall pretty streetes, this was Market Day being Thursday.<sup>139</sup>

If the limited collection of orthodox theological works that served as the Maidstone parochial library in 1716 could have been described as unremarkable and modest, then the same is not true of the same library twenty years later, when, in well-known circumstances, the Rev. Samuel Weller was successful in acquiring for the town a substantial portion of the library of the late Dr. Thomas Bray. The terms of Bray's

will had specified that any market town with sufficient interest and enthusiasm to raise £50 in order to purchase all the historical, chronological, and geographical books in his library (valued at £100) might have the advantage of the books: "towards the raising a Lending or Publick Library."<sup>140</sup> Weller's influence and zeal was such that a subscription was raised, the money was received and the substantial collection used to augment whatever books were already in situ. A catalogue of the Bray books lists some 238 folios; 129 quartos; and 192 octavos: a total of 559 books.<sup>141</sup> Weller himself soon set about producing a catalogue of his own which covered the new parish library in its entirety. This catalogue, printed in 1736, lists some 681 volumes<sup>142</sup> and thereby reveals the size that the original Maidstone parochial library had grown to by the 1730s (i.e. over 120 volumes). Russell suggests that the library was now housed in the room over the vestry at All Saints<sup>143</sup> though the subsequent assertion that little attention was paid to it previous to 1810 is not in fact borne out by the evidence of the loans register which survives. What is not known however is the use made of the collection prior to the new appointment of a perpetual curate at All Saints in 1753 when Weller died, having been curate for forty-one years. For it was Weller's successor, the Rev. John Denne, who was evidently responsible for the commencement (or re-commencement?) of a register of loans issued from the parish library and that starting in 1755.

Such parochial library development during the first half of the century; from a modest thirty-one volumes in 1716, to a substantial library of six hundred and eighty-one books in 1736, was largely due to the efforts of one man, in circumstances (with regard to the augmentation of the Bray books) that were unique. Elsewhere in the county the development of such libraries followed a more typical pattern, though

the provision at Maidstone nevertheless appears favourable within a regional context.

Close to Maidstone, at Detling for instance, a seventy-two volume S.P.C.K. library (Trustees for Erecting Parochial Libraries) was founded in 1710 (it was sold in 1875 for £1)<sup>144.</sup> and a similar foundation of sixty-seven volumes was made in the same year at Preston-by-Wingham.<sup>145.</sup>

Elsewhere in Kent, Thomas Bray had personally assisted the parochial authorities at Deal and Gravesend with gifts of £2.10s. each towards the establishment of parish libraries. His gifts were made late in 1699 when on his way to Maryland in his capacity as Commissary there.<sup>146.</sup>

In the cathedral city of Canterbury, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, there were apparently no parish libraries in the vicinity nor did the local clergy meet as a society or group.<sup>147.</sup> In the cathedral, library rules had been drawn up in 1672 whereby books might only be borrowed by the Dean and prebends, though other 'Gentlemen' or ministers could be 'brought in' to use the library for reference and study purposes. The loans that were made apparently numbered only one or two a week,<sup>148.</sup> though according to Kaufman such loan records as survive relate only to a period very late in the century (1797-1817).<sup>149.</sup>

The historian and S.P.C.K. correspondent, John Lewis of Acryse (near Canterbury) writing in April 1701, provides a valuable though brief account of conditions relating to the church at the time. He points out, for example, that there were no charity schools in the neighbourhood; the people being generally ignorant 'and but little Care to make them otherwise'. He further maintains that the livings are poor and that there are few ministers who are not non-resident pluralists holding two, three or four livings each.<sup>150.</sup> His conclusion, that catechising was thereby wholly neglected, can be taken to mean that parish administration generally, in not a few places was, if not in abeyance, then in the hands of a poor

curate.<sup>151.</sup>

Nevertheless, by 1740, a library for the use of 'Religious Societies and other well disposed persons' was set up in the Eastbridge Hospital, Canterbury. The impetus, significantly, came from elsewhere, being created from a charity instigated by one Edwin Belke of London, and the library probably consisted of approximately seventy-eight volumes.<sup>152.</sup>

Later benefactions in other parts of the county conform with the growing tendency elsewhere for individual philanthropy; especially that involving the clergy, many of whom now had the means, and the inclination, to acquire sizeable libraries. Not a few, when writing their wills, beque<sup>th</sup>ethed their books to their successors 'for ever': such private philanthropy being the means whereby substantial numbers of parish libraries were created, as provision by associated bodies and societies declined.

At Doddington, east of Maidstone, approximately three hundred and sixty-four books were given by the executors of Daniel Somerscales, vicar there 1694-1737<sup>153.</sup>, whilst in the west of the county, at Westerham, Charles West gave several hundred volumes, in 1765, to the parish church of St. Mary (they were missing by 1856).<sup>154.</sup> At Thurnham, an inventory from St. Mary's church, of Easter 1751, lists approximately one hundred and thirty books that were kept in a bookcase within the church.<sup>155.</sup>

Somewhat earlier, by 1728, Richard Forster, rector of Crundale, had been motivated to leave some eight hundred and fifty volumes to his parish for the use of his successors in the living for ever.<sup>156.</sup>

As the century progressed however the establishment of such endowed libraries did diminish, just as those of a different type became more common. At Margate, a Book Club was in operation for some time

before 1768 (at which date it expired) and less than twenty years later a circulating library flourished in the same place. Other book societies flourished within the county later in the century, as at Wye (1786), Rochester (1797) and Sittingbourne (1797).

Many substantial private libraries too must have existed amongst the gentry as the library habit was widespread amongst the landed classes at this time.<sup>157</sup> Two minor examples are the library of the Fowler family of Ash-by-Wrotham (west of Rochester), part of which found its way into a parish library of nineteenth century origin, attached to the rectory at the same place<sup>158</sup>, and similarly the proposed parish library at West Farleigh of 1824 which was to be formed out of a collection of books which had belonged to the Fitzherbert family and dating from 1773.<sup>159</sup>

1. W(isbech) and F(enland) M(useum) MS Catalogue of the Town Library. p.370.
2. N. Walker and T. Craddock, The History of Wisbech and the Fens. Wisbech: Richard Walker, 1849. p.361. For further discussion on the provision of Foxe's Book of Martyrs within parish churches, see above pp.7-8.
3. Ibid. The carved inscription survives (without the reading desk) affixed to the west wall of Wisbech parish church.
4. Wisbech was at one time (1595) regarded as the most conspicuous place for Catholicism in England.
5. See B. Anthony Bax, The English parsonage. John Murray, 1964. Chap.8: Conspiracy and rebellion.
6. Details of the life of Thomas Turswell are to be found in D.N.B.
7. WFM, MS. Catalogue, 362. The entry has faded badly and may have led to the erroneous statement by the Historical Manuscripts Commission that only six works were given by Peirson's will of 1664. (Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, Ninth Report. H.M.S.O., 1883. p.294.)
8. WFM, MS. Catalogue, 362.
9. For example, the Town Bailiff was authorised to buy two new chairs for the library in the church in October 1657. (R. Banger, Some thoughts on the Town Library. Wisbech Society Report. 1983. p.3., where Wisbech Corporation records are quoted.)
10. W. Watson, An Historical account of the ancient town and port of Wisbech ... and of the circumjacent towns and villages. Wisbech: H. and J. Leach, 1827. p.384.
11. Not 'Samuel Buch' as recorded in H.M.C., Ninth Report, 294.
12. Thomas Plume (1630-1704) was archdeacon of Rochester (from 1679) and founder of the Plumian Professorship of Astronomy at Cambridge. In 1675, the year of his gift to Wisbech, he was vicar of Greenwich and quite why, or how, he gained cognizance of the foundation is not yet clear. It was, however, a project with which he would have had sympathy, for at his own death, amongst many other benefactions, he gave his books, manuscripts and maps to the library and school which he had already erected in his home town of Maldon, Essex. A library keeper was to be there appointed at a salary of £40 a year and the books made available 'to any Gentleman or Scholar'; all of whom could borrow against a deposit. (See Central Council for the Care of

- Churches, Parochial libraries, 89. ; D.N.B. Supplement ; Charity Commissioners, Thirty-second Report (1837-1838), 573-577.)
13. The Catalogue was presumably printed at Wisbech (there is no imprint) in 1718 at the request of the Wisbech Corporation. The Catalogue was the work of R. Middleton Massey, recently appointed 'Keeper of the Public Library', and one hundred and fifty copies were produced at a cost to Massey of approximately, £3. 10s. (P. Cave, Richard Middleton Massey MD, FRS, FSA, 1678-1743. The Wisbech Society 43rd Annual Report. 1982. p.10.)
  14. The Diary of Samuel Pepys. New and complete transcription by R. Latham and W. Matthews. G. Bell, 1971. iv. p.311.
  15. Some appear on the preliminary pages of the MS. Catalogue, for example.
  16. C. Cross, The Puritan Earl: the life of Henry Hastings, Third Earl of Huntingdon, 1536-1595. Macmillan, 1966. p.126. .
  17. The latest catalogue of the library has been produced with the aid of a British Library grant, by Miss Ruth Banger. A microfiche edition of the catalogue is at present (September 1984) being produced.
  18. WFM, MS. Catalogue, 370.
  19. Kelly, Early public libraries, 95.
  20. Ibid.
  21. A third, at St. Andrew's church, had been in existence by 1586.
  22. Central Council for the Care of Churches, Parochial libraries, 69-70.
  23. Ibid., 99.
  24. A bookplate belonging to this library, dated 1737, is British Library, Franks 33865.
  25. Central Council for the Care of Churches, Parochial libraries, 84.  
Two such augmentations were by Thomas Thurlin, rector of nearby Gaywood parish and John Horn, schoolmaster.
  26. Quoted by Kelly, Early public libraries, 245. The library later became the nucleus of the Ely Pamphlet Club.
  27. The Minute Book of the Spalding Gentlemen's Society, 1712-1755.  
Selected by D.M. Owen. Lincoln: Lincoln Record Society, 1981. p.xii.
  28. (R. Middleton Massey), A Catalogue of books in the library at Wisbech. (No imprint.) f.2r.
  29. John Moore (1646-1714) was bishop successively of Norwich and Ely; his own library of almost 29,000 books and 1,790 manuscripts was known throughout Europe. However, 'the present' Bishop of Ely could alternatively refer to William Fleetwood, Moore's successor in 1714.
  30. Cave, Richard Middleton Massey, 10.



31. See above p.15.
32. McClure, S.P.C.K. Minutes, 111, 338, 342 etc., where are mentioned, for instance, societies at Burton, Lincolnshire; Exeter; and Warrington.
33. Ibid., 306.
34. As defined by Kelly, Early public libraries, 136.
35. Ibid., 137.
36. See below p.83 et seq.
37. A full breakdown reveals 6 fifteenth-century imprints; 214 sixteenth-century imprints; 428 seventeenth-century imprints; and 41 eighteenth-century imprints. Five further works are duplicates.
38. D(oncaster) R(ecord) O(ffice) P1/5/E1. Minute Book of St. George's Parochial Library. f.1r.
39. Ibid.
40. The first recorded meeting at Finningley would have been at the home of Rev. Levitt Pearson, rector of the same place. The Minute Book, op.cit., records the death of 'this worthy member of the Society' in December 1723.
41. Meeting venues (along with notes of what books were borrowed) are recorded in the MS. Minute Book op.cit.
42. Such groups as the Society of Welsh Clergy, of Almondbury, Huddersfield (Hulbert, Church and parish of Almondbury, 75.) ; the Bedford Clerical Society; and indeed the whole gamut of newly associated clergy which met during the earlier part of the eighteenth century, needs much further research.
43. For Wisbech, see above pp.29 -39 , whilst for Bedford see Bedford Literary and Scientific Institute and general library catalogue of the circulating and reference libraries and of the old library, founded in 1700 together with a history.... Bedford: Mercury Press, 1892.
44. At Hackness near Scarborough for instance, (foundation 1700) the benefactors to the parish library were privileged with access to the books, but no one was allowed to borrow books and take them from the church.
45. At Spalding, the eighteenth-century Gentlemen's Society augmented the collection of books held in the parish church there since 1637 and which had originally been intended for the use of the minister and his successors for ever. A similar society at Stamford however, founded ca 1721, appears not to have usurped the earlier (ca 1626)

- parish library which, significantly, enjoyed a continuing income derived from the bequest of its founder, Richard Banister.
46. However, certain books which emerge as popular loans during the period 1715-1717 inexplicably fail to reappear in the recommenced borrowing record of 1726 (notably, Bingham's Antiquities) and may have been dispersed or lost.
  47. DRO P1/5/E1. 8 Nov. 1722 ; 6 Dec. 1722. D(oncaster) C(entral) L(ibrary), MS. H780. 'A Copy of the deed of Settlement of the parish library together with a list of benefactors and items presented' (and including an abstract of accounts). 6 Dec. (1722).
  48. Y(orkshire) A(rchaeological) S(ociety), MS. M340. 'This Indenture made 12 July 1722... relating to the Library as regards rules signed by Edmund Withers, Master of the Grammar School, Doncaster'. In: Memoranda respecting the Clerical Library of St. George's Church, Doncaster.
  49. One such set of proposed rules, suggested by Thomas Rodwell, vicar of Arksey, is to be found in YAS, M340.
  50. A copy of the Settlement is to be found in DCL, H780.
  51. See for example, Mr Price of Wrexham to Mr Chamberlayne of the Society, 18 February 1699: "That y<sup>e</sup> Clergy in Denbighshire & Flintshire have associated according to y<sup>e</sup> Bedfordshire model...". (McClure, S.P.C.K. Minutes, 279.) The S.P.C.K. Committee itself evidently took a direct interest in the Bedford Library establishment, when, after an approach from Mr Frank of Cranfield, advice and certain suggested amendments were given toward the draft settlement of 1703. Full settlement took place at Bedford in 1704.
  52. With regard to the nature of the establishment at Bedford, reference has been made to : 'An Abstract of the Settlement of the Library'. In: A Catalogue of books in the library at Bedford... Joseph Downing, 1706. (pp.i-ii)
  53. Bedford Deed of Settlement is dated 20 October, 1704 (foundation 1700), and that for Doncaster, 14 April, 1726 (foundation 1714).
  54. At Doncaster, books were to be inscribed as follows: "This book belongs to the Society's Library in the Town of Doncaster" along with the donor's name or purchase price.
  55. These terms were more generous than those enjoyed by Samuel Coleridge towards the end of the century from the Bristol Library and which prompted him to write to the librarian there: "...I had the books just three weeks. Our learned and ingenious committee may read

through two quartos, that is, one thousand and four hundred pages of close printed Latin and Greek, in three weeks, for ought I know to the contrary. I pretend to no such intenseness of application or rapidity of genius." (Quoted by Kelly, Early public libraries, 135.)

56. DCL, MS. H780. p.19.
57. 7 ANNE, c.14.
58. J.H. Overton and F. Relton, The English Church from the accession of George I to the end of the eighteenth century. Macmillan, 1906. p.20.
59. DCL, MS. H780. p.111, et seq. 'Books bought and money laid out for y<sup>e</sup> use of The Society'.
60. 7 ANNE, c.14. Paragraph XI specifically excludes the "publick Library lately erected in the Parish of Ryegate".
61. The full text of the Act is reproduced in Central Council for the Care of Churches, Parochial libraries, 48-50.
62. DRO P1/5/E2,3. Item 12: William Innys to Edmund Withers, Feb.17, 1725.
63. DRO P1/5/E2,3. Item 13: William Innys to Edmund Withers, Feb.26, 1725; Item 11: John Bird to William Innys, Feb.23, 1725. The Reigate foundation does not pre-date that at Bedford, being established by Andrew Cranston in 1701 and confirmed by a deed of foundation of 4 November, 1708.
64. YAS, MS. M340.
65. Cf., DCL, MS. H780. p.19., where is a copy of the Deed of Settlement.
66. Sir William Dawes, Archbishop of York, granted permission in September 1722. Parish libraries were also moved in the opposite direction, at Spalding for example, where a library, having first been set up over the south porch of the parish church, was later transferred to the vestry.
67. DCL, MS. H780. p.113.
68. Society meetings were held at various local hostelries such as The Mitre (later The Wellington) as well as at members' homes. Other hostelries used were The Three Cranes and The Crown.
69. E(ssex) R(ecord) O(ffice) D/P 30/28/3-4.
70. See below p.168.
71. Thomas Turner, The Diary of a Georgian shopkeeper. 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979. p.xxiii. See also, for example, Turner's diary entry for 18 July, 1756, where he records that "the nation is all in a ferment" over the recent loss of Minorca.

72. Central Council for the Care of Churches, Parochial libraries, 89.
73. Will dated 13 February, 1630/1; proved at York, 28 June, 1631.  
Quoted by Gordon Goodwin, A Catalogue of the Harsnett Library at Colchester. Richard Amer, 1888. pp.xxiii-xxiv.
74. Ibid.
75. Central Council for the Care of Churches, Parochial libraries, 16.
76. ERO D/P 247/1/1. (The document is holed and creased; the text is therefore incomplete.)
77. D.E. Reed, Hon. Cathedral Librarian, Chelmsford Cathedral, to the author, 13 January, 1982.
78. See above pp.14-15.
79. ERO D/P 109/3/2. One recorded volume is Milton's Paradise lost. A notebook, dating from the later nineteenth century (ERO T/P 68/25/3.), mentions four seventeenth-century books in the church library at Stansted Mount-Fitchett.
80. Kelly, Early public libraries, 247.
81. Kaufman, Libraries and their users, 53-54.
82. John Guest, Historic notices of Rotherham: ecclesiastical, collegiate and civil. Worksop: Robert White, 1879. p.179.
83. Ibid., 178. The undated entry (ca 1547) reads: "It.to Wm. Symkynson, for our perrapharus (paraphrase) 13s." A similar purchase at Yatton, Hereford, in 1548/9, cost 11s. 4d.
84. Ibid.
85. Ibid., 195. The listing is headed: "Goods belonging to y<sup>e</sup> Parish Church of Rotherham 7 June, 1705."
86. Ibid., 279. The reading desk was taken away during re-pewing in 1743.
87. Such a designated book is not recorded as a loan until July 1796 and again in November of that year.
88. The book is now in what remains of the Rotherham Parish Library, at Rotherham Public Library (Reserve Stock).
89. For the significance of the Book of Homilies see above p.26 n.35.
90. Thomas Watson Wentworth, son of Lady Anne Wentworth and Baron Rockingham, succeeded to the family estates in 1695 on the death of William Wentworth, 2nd Earl Strafford. Evidently, he was 'distinguished rather for his private virtues than his political interest and influence' and was popularly referred to as 'His Honour Wentworth'. See Rev. A. Gatty, Wentworth Woodhouse and its owners. Yorkshire Archaeological and Topographical Journal, VI, 1881. pp.343-384.

91. McClure, S.P.C.K. Minutes, 4,10,12, et seq. See also below p.124.
92. The house was reputed, for many years, to be the largest in England; it is now used as a teacher-training college.
93. Guest, Historic notices, 420. A copy of Talbot's Christian school-master was recorded as borrowed from the Rotherham parish library in November, 1796. The specific entry is ambiguous; it may either describe that volume as 'the Chaine Book', or alternatively, indicate that the Talbot volume was borrowed with the chained book.
94. For which see R.W. Unwin, Charity schools and the defence of Anglicanism: James Talbot, rector of Spofforth 1700-08. York: University of York, 1984. p.17, et seq.
95. Guest, Historic notices, 202, 281.
96. See for instance the recorded borrowing patterns at Wisbech and Doncaster in the present work.
97. Kelly, Early public libraries, 94., follows Central Council for the Care of Churches, Parochial libraries, 96., and repeats the 1704 foundation date error. Edward Mansel was sometime vicar of Ecclesfield; his wife was first married to Henry Saxton, son of William Saxton, vicar of Harworth, and grandson of Henry Saxton, vicar of Coningsborough. Mrs Frances Mansel's father was George Westby of Gilthwaite. (See Eastwood, History of Ecclesfield, 202.)
98. R(otherham) C(entral) L(ibrary), Mansel Collection. MS. Catalogue and issue book. f.2r. This version (probably the earliest) is repeated in a later reiteration of the library rules and regulations elsewhere in the same MS, and a similar text appears on a wooden 'shield' associated with the collection.
99. Ibid., f.1v.
100. Ibid., f.3r. A similar choice of location - the vestry - is given by Central Council for the Care of Churches, Parochial libraries, 28., for no fewer than fourteen other parish libraries and doubtless there were many more besides. Two entries in the Accounts of the Feoffees of the Common Land of Rotherham (quoted by Guest, Historic notices, 402.) also refer to the setting up of the library at Rotherham: "20th May (1728) ...paid Mr Hebden for painting the Booke presse for the Bookes Mrs Mansell gave 8s. 6d. (Undated:) To Abraham Arnold for the Booke presse in the Vestry £3.15.00".
101. The library was eventually offered to, and accepted by, the Rotherham Free Library Committee in 1893 at which time it consisted of 204 volumes.

102. RCL, Mansel Collection. MS. Catalogue and issue book.f.2r.
103. Ibid. The first recorded loan of Collier's Dictionary was in 1737/8, though no further loans were recorded until May 1756. Bible commentators such as Quesnel, Whitby and Hammond were first borrowed (according to the issue book) in 1740, 1749 and 1752 respectively.
104. For a recent account of this library see Susan Jeffery, The Thomlinson Library: an introduction. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: City Libraries, 1981.
105. RCL, Mansel Collection. MS. Catalogue and issue book.f.14r. - 16v.
106. 7 ANNE, c.14.
107. Central Council for the Care of Churches, Parochial libraries, 50.
108. 'Westby of Howorth' appears in the loans record, ca April 1744, as having in his possession 'upwards of 3 years' the fourteenth volume of Rapin's History.
109. RCL, Mansel Collection. MS.Catalogue and issue book.f.7r.
110. Ibid., f.14r. - 16v.
111. Lambeth Palace MSS.960-965. (Sheffield is return no. 1014.) The Brief, to which such places as Sheffield replied, was dated 28 February, 1704/05, and was issued to raise money for rebuilding work at All Saints, Oxford. It addressed <sup>itself</sup> to every parochial church or chapel in England, setting out ten questions to be answered. Question six asked: "What library is settled or settling in your Parish, and by whom?" (See Central Council for the Care of Churches, Parochial libraries, 22.)
112. Borthwick Institute, Terrier F. Sheffield.
113. Borthwick Institute, Wills 1712-13 (Oversize) Vol.68, f.66.
114. See below pp.91-92.
115. Fifty-three volumes (and additionally the MS.Catalogue and issue book) survive together in Rotherham Public Library (Reserve Stock). Some doubt must be cast, however, on the inclusion of certain volumes that are unlikely to have been a part of the eighteenth-century library. The latest catalogue of the collection is C. Cassin and D. Steele, Catalogue of the Mansel Collection held at Rotherham Public Library. Sheffield: The University, 1980., lists forty-six volumes containing seventy-two works.
116. Joseph Hoole's An Address to parents (1724).
117. For instance, Francis Revell; William Andrews; and David F. Markham.
118. See above p. 53.

119. Mr Bailiffe (sic) 'of Greast' and Thomas Bayliffe appear in the issue book borrowing eight volumes between February 1794 and October 1800; see below pp.177; 180; 187.
120. J.M. Russell, The History of Maidstone. Maidstone: William S. Vivish, 1881. p.110.
121. For a fuller explanation of this aspect of early book provision in parish churches see Chapter 1 above.
122. Russell, History of Maidstone, 111. Such a gift and sentiment have parallels elsewhere. A similar circumstance arose at Leicester, for instance, in 1593/4 when one Symon Craftes gave seven books to be chained in the parish church of St. Martin. The works were to be 'written in the English tongue, for the good and benefitt of the volger and not so well learned sort of people'. (F.S. Hearne, History of the Town Library... Leicester. Leicester: W.H. Lead, 1891. p.3.)
123. J. Cave Browne, The History of the parish church of All Saints... Maidstone. Maidstone: G. Bunyard; J. Burgiss-Brown, 1889. p.214., quoting Burghmote Records, C.C. ff.94, b; 96, b.
124. Ibid.
125. Since the Corporation had paid 6s. 6d. for six chains for the Great Bible in 1660 (See Russell, History of Maidstone, 110.) it is quite likely that the volumes were still thus affixed in 1716. Notably, it was a gift of Walton's Polyglot Bible that inaugurated the parochial library at Beverley, Yorkshire, in 1699.
126. Russell, History of Maidstone, 113.
127. Cf. Leicester Town Library.
128. K(ent) A(rchives) O(ffice), Burial Register of All Saints, Maidstone, 1678-1715. The listing is headed 'Books in Maidstone Parochial Library, 24 June 1716' and has been transcribed by, W. Nigel Yates (County Archivist) for the author, 7 October, 1982.
129. Russell, History of Maidstone, 121. In 1981, Maidstone Museum and Art Gallery held the following: 'Soft leather bound index ledger with handwritten entries. A note inside signed Robert Finch, October 1st 1810 states that he catalogued it in that year and that it contained 710 vols worth £165'. (Four other catalogues (two undated; one dated 1882 and another printed in 1736) exist at the same place.) R.A. Stutely to the author, 12 August 1981.
130. See S.W. Kershaw, On manuscripts and rare books in the Maidstone Museum. Archaeologia Cantiana, II, 1877. pp.189-198. (It is not clear

- from this article which particular MSS. formerly belonged to the parish library collection and which came from elsewhere.)
131. McClure, S.P.C.K. Minutes, 153. In June 1703, the S.P.C.K. Committee ordered that 5,000 copies of the work An Address to the officers and seamen in Her Majesties Royal Navy be printed. (Ibid., 231.) A fourteenth edition of The Seaman's Monitor was published in 1799.
  132. The Account was first published in 1697; a third edition appeared in 1701 and a seventh edition was published in 1801. Jablonski, the Chaplain to the King of Prussia, translated the work into German and the work is said to have influenced the Pietistic movement as well as the Methodist movement in Wales. (See Rev. Thomas Shankland, Sir Thomas Philipps: the S.P.C.K.: and the charity-school movement in Wales, 1699-1737. Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion. Session 1904/05. 1906. p.84.)
  133. All Saints ceased to be a perpetual curacy in 1866, becoming a vicarage. Gilbert Innes, curate 1692-1711, took a dispute over tithes to law in 1707 and the subsequent trial revealed the income figure of £300. (Russell, History of Maidstone, 120.)
  134. N. Pevsner (ed.), The Buildings of England: West Kent and the Weald. Penguin, 1969. p.381.
  135. Russell, History of Maidstone, 128.
  136. Ibid., 122.
  137. Of this number, 727 people were living in the rural parts of the parish, whilst in the town proper there were on average almost 5.5 persons to a house.
  138. Thomas Turner, The Diary of a Georgian shopkeeper. 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979. pp.62-63.
  139. Celia Fiennes, The Journeys of Celia Fiennes. Edited by C. Morris. Cresset Press, 1949. p.130.
  140. Central Council for the Care of Churches, Parochial libraries, 98-89.
  141. Bodleian Library, MS. Rawl. C. 155, ff.286-292. The heading is 'A Catalogue of the Books left by Dr Thomas Bray to be sold for £50, for a publick Library in some Market Town, and which were sold accordingly for th(a)t Purpose to be set up in the Town of Maidstone in the County of Kent'. The listing consists of 238 folios (ff.286r. - 288r.); 129 quartos (ff.288v. - 289v.); and 192 of octavo and smaller size (ff.290r. - 292v.).
  142. A Catalogue of all the books in the parochial library...Maidstone. Margate: (At the expense of the Rev. John Lewis), 1736.



143. Russell, History of Maidstone, 121.
144. A catalogue of the Detling parochial library is Canterbury Cathedral Library MS. Y.4.30. 141-3.
145. The original book-cupboard and forty-one volumes survive. 'The catalogue of Preston Library April y<sup>e</sup> 16th 1730 Then exhibited by the vicar at the visitation' is Canterbury Cathedral Library MS. Y.4.30. 133-139.
146. Kelly, Early public libraries, 106; 258-259.
147. Mr Braddock of Canterbury to Mr Chamberlayne of the S.P.C.K., 3 April, 1701. (McClure, S.P.C.K. Minutes, 327.)
148. Kelly, Early public libraries, 65.
149. Kaufman, Libraries and their users, 76, et seq.
150. Prebends were anyway exempt from the one-living rule.
151. Mr John Lewis to Mr Chamberlayne of the S.P.C.K., 28 April, 1701. (McClure, S.P.C.K. Minutes, 333-334.) Lewis was a prolific writer, now mainly remembered for his histories and topographical works which deal mostly with Kent.
152. Kelly, Early public libraries, 248., quoting S.P.C.K. MSS. John Lewis (see previous note) was granted the Mastership of the Hospital ca 1717 and therefore could have been involved in the establishment of a library there.
153. See F. Hull, Guide to the Kent County Archive Office. Maidstone: Kent County Archive Office, 1958. pp.116, 118., where reference is made to catalogues of 1744 and 1774. An earlier catalogue of ca 1743 relating to the Doddington library lists 71 folios; 30 quartos; and 263 octavos.
154. Central Council for the Care of Churches, Parochial libraries, 104.
155. Ibid., 101.
156. Catalogues of the library are Canterbury Cathedral Library MSS. Y.4.30 and Y.4.31.
157. Dent, Informal agencies of education, 55.
158. Central Council for the Care of Churches, Parochial libraries, 65.
159. Sources for library history: east Midlands. Library History, 6(2) 1982. p.30.

### CHAPTER III

#### BOOKS AND BORROWERS DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

WISBECH

One of the manuscripts that survives within the Wisbech library as it is now constituted is a folio volume, the content of which indirectly relates to the earlier administration and history of the collection itself.<sup>1</sup> The manuscript contains a list of benefactors and of books thereby acquired<sup>2</sup> in addition to three catalogues of the library made at various times. Between the second and third catalogues<sup>3</sup>, covering some twenty-three pages, is the main record of loans made from the library (beginning in 1726); elsewhere<sup>4</sup>, a single page contains a brief record of the earliest recorded consecutive loans (ca 1713-16), whilst other scattered entries record a small number of loans dating from the second and last decade of the eighteenth century. In addition, is a list of thirty-seven works simply headed 'Lent from y<sup>e</sup> Club', though disappointingly, the listing is incompletely dated as 'August 27', however, it most probably refers to a year after 1712 and before 1720.

The revival of interest in the library during the second decade of the eighteenth century, testified to by R.M. Massey in the preface of the printed catalogue of 1718<sup>5</sup>, is therefore supported by the evidence of the recorded loans that survive. Certain of the earlier loans however (the first of which is dated 25 September, 1713) are not associated with the club or society established in 1712 by the clergy and gentlemen of the neighbourhood, but with school use.<sup>6</sup>

The earliest recorded borrowers from the library during the eighteenth century are therefore Thomas and Edward Cole, whose brief entries appear under a page-heading: 'Taken out for y<sup>e</sup> Use of y<sup>e</sup> School'. Although the first entry and the second for 7 March (1713/14 ?) are not signed, the hand is almost certainly the same as that in the third entry which bears the date 2 July, 1716 and the name of Thomas Cole. The next entry is undated, though in the same hand it allocates Denys Lambin's edition of the works of Horace to Edward Cole, whilst a final entry is signed 'T. Cole' and dated merely '17 October' (1716?).

The school in question may be Wisbech Grammar School (which dates from 1379<sup>7</sup>.) though the schoolmaster at this time, Thomas Carter, in post 1697-1727, does not appear by name in the pages of the loan book. The Rev. Thomas Cole S.T.P., was in fact vicar of Wisbech (1714-1721) and whether he was booking out volumes on Carter's behalf or taking books for use with another school (perhaps a charity school?) is conjecture, though links of this nature between parish church and local school, are not unusual. Sometimes the incumbent performed the dual roles of vicar and schoolmaster, whilst elsewhere, accommodation was shared and parish books would become a useful local resource for the schoolmaster in the absence of suitable school books.<sup>8</sup>

Such may have been the case at Wisbech, where loans of Horace, Virgil and Ovid suggest a classical curriculum fortuitously assisted by the early printed editions held in the parish library. Cole also borrowed Jeremy Taylor's Great exemplar; two Grotius commentaries; and 'Dodwel'. The latter entry probably refers to Francis Brokesby's Life of Henry Dodwell (referred to in later loan entries) which had been published only a year or so before Cole's loan of it, suggesting that it was one of the additional works acquired for the library out of the subscription money of the newly activated club or society.

The pluralist Thomas Cole held both the Wisbech living and the rectory of Newton, also in the Isle of Ely, from 1716 to 1730. After his seven-year appointment at Wisbech, he became rector of Raynham, Norfolk, in 1721 and served as Dean of Norwich, 1724-1730. Despite his pluralism, Cole was evidently resident at Wisbech, at least during the early years of his incumbency, as his library loans suggest and also by the fact that he was made Wisbech Town Bailiff in 1717; the earliest of many recorded library users who were to hold this post.<sup>9</sup>

The remainder of the haphazardly recorded issues spanning the second decade of the century probably relate to borrowing activity associated with the newly-formed club. Three such recorded borrowers appear

in the 1718 catalogue as club members: Elisha Smith, Richard Lake and Henry Banyer, whilst three others are recorded in the same source as being benefactors: Francis Whistones, William Hawkins and Thomas Adderley.

Approximately thirty-four loans are entered in the manuscript during this period, though what proportion of the total borrowing activity this represents is not yet clear. Perhaps no systematic recording of loans was taking place and the evidence we have may simply relate to casual loan entries made by the more punctilious club members.

From such entries as were made, it emerges that some interest was being shown by borrowers in the Trinitarian Controversy: the roots of which can be traced to Bishop Bull's publication of Defensio fidei Nicaenae (1685), and which by the close of the seventeenth century was occupying the pens of some of the leading divines of the period.<sup>10</sup> Borrowed at Wisbech were works by Dr Samuel Clarke; especially his Scripture doctrine of the Trinity (1712) which was to become an important, though controversial work, labelled 'the textbook of modern Arianism'.<sup>11</sup> Also borrowed was Edward Welchman's reply to Samuel Clarke and other theological works such as Laurence Fogg's Theologiae Speculativae Schema (1712) and the sermons of Bishop Bull.

Henry Banyer, medical writer and local physician, registers the earliest recorded loans of the medical volumes, borrowing three works on surgery for a ten-month period, probably in 1717, whilst also taking out Harris's Lexicon Technicum; a volume of Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society; and John Godolphin's Repertorium Canonicum (1678). Banyer appears unique as a library borrower in that his recorded loans span the second and third decade of the century. No other recorded borrower from this earlier period reappears in the recommenced loan record of 1726 onwards (Banyer's last recorded loan being circa December 1732).

However, probably before the end of the second decade, a further listing of thirty-seven works borrowed from the club was entered in the

manuscript, though more detail is lacking.. The list is transliterated below, as it represents what is at present, in all probability, the earliest yet recorded listing of library loans from an eighteenth-century club or society. Contemporary with this information is the previously unrecorded, and more detailed, record of library borrowing connected with the Doncaster Clerical Society<sup>12</sup>. and thus are comparisons facilitated.

'L Bos Septuagint' (i.e. Greek version of the Old Testament by Lambert Bos (1709?))

Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, The True historical narrative of the Rebellion...in England.

William Bates, Vitae selectorum. (1681?)

Isaac Barrow, Works.

William Wake, State of the Church and clergy in England. (1703)

'Clemens Alexandrinus' (i.e. Clemens, Titus Flavius, Alexandria.)

'Euripides'

'Petavii' (i.e. a work by Denis or Paul Petau.)

Bernard de Montfaucon, Palaeographia Graeca. (1708)

John Mill (1645-1707), New Testament in Greek.

Seth Ward (1617-1689), Determinationes theologicae.

'Sylvestinae summa'

John Godolphin, Repertorium Canonicum. (1678)

(Thomas?) Jackson (1579-1640), Works. (1672-73?)

An abridgement of the Royal Society's Philosophical transactions.

Jean de Serres, Inventaire general de l'Histoire de France.

'Valerius Maximus'

'Ravennati comp. Juris canonici'

Thomas Jackson (1579-1640), Justifying faith.

'Costers Enchy. Controversian' (i.e. Franciscus Costerus, Enchiridion controversiarum)

Joseph Hall, Meditation and vowes, divine and morall.

'Suetonius' (probably, Lives of the first twelve Caesars by Caius Suetonius Tranquillus.)

'Lynds via deria'

'Petrarch'

Thomas Bennet (1673-1728), Essay on the Thirty Nine Articles

Jean Froissart, An Epitome of Frossard. (Compiled by J. Sleydane?)

'English Atlas' volume one.

'Memoirs of Scotland'.

Jean Le Clerc, Historia ecclesiastica.

Humphrey Prideaux, The Old and New Testament connected, in the history of the Jews.

Franciscus Suarez, Metaphysicarum disputationum.

'Hapocraton'

'Present state of great Britain' (J. Chamberlayne's Magna Britannia (??))

Edward Stillingfleet, Origines sacrae.

'Philo-Judaeus'

'Josephi Opera'

'Irenaeus' (Greek edition)

A number of years separate the last of the recorded loans from this early period from the first of those which begin a second short period during 1726; however, it is not possible to say whether or not loans were still taking place during these intervening years.

Certainly the town itself flourished in this period, with a considerable trade in shipping; much of the produce being provided from the fertile lands around which made up the twelve thousand acres comprising Wisbech parish. The bread riots that periodically took place due to the fluctuating price of grain had then subsided and money was found (£2,000) in 1722 to build a workhouse for the poor. A more opulent style, and no less money, was needed, and found, to build Bank House in the same



year. Then owned by the wealthy Southwell family, it later became the residence of the Lord Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, by which time however the neighbourhood had become unfashionable for the gentry and families such as the Traffords, Colvilles and Peytons had moved elsewhere.<sup>13</sup> The town, which was Dutch in appearance, thrived when climatic conditions were good, with Saturday markets and yearly horse and cattle fairs. Horse racing was also popular and the town was famous for its annual bull-running through the streets on Shrove Tuesdays. On the darker side, the nature of the country was such that flooding was a regular hazard and frequent incursions of water inflicted much damage and loss of crops. In 1729, a petition from the leading inhabitants of the town concerning the disrepair of the roads in the neighbourhood and the problems with London traffic, was presented to the House of Commons, but to no avail.<sup>14</sup> Neither does it appear to have been a particularly healthy place to live, especially during the third decade of the century when, in 1727, there were 309 burials: the greatest number recorded in any one year during the eighteenth century.<sup>15</sup>

At the parish church, an organ had been installed as early as 1711, despite the lingering opinion of some that they were superstitious and Popish, and probably serves as an indication of High Church inclinations.<sup>16</sup> The church itself, with the vicarage on the south side, is of unusual design and was described by the antiquary William Cole thus:

It is the oddest built church I ever met with, yet not withstanding its irregularity, it is a very noble pile of building, both within and without...<sup>17</sup>

Cole further alludes to the ties between municipal and parochial authorities when he points out that one of the two chancels is called 'the town chancel'.

Thomas Cole, who may have been related to William, resigned the Wisbech living in 1721 when Henry Bull was made his successor. Bull

appears not to have made an immediate impression upon the administration of the library for loans are not once more recorded until 1726 (briefly), and for Bull himself, not until 1728. However, the new period of systematically recorded library activity that commences in March 1727/8 does clearly represent a fresh start.

This development can be interpreted in a number of ways. Either, in order to respond to a new surge of interest (and therefore activity) in the library, the listing simply emerges as a reflection of that event, or alternatively, some new effort was being made to actually control and record the continuing use of the books. A further possibility presents itself, in that the rules controlling library use (written or perceived) were possibly relaxed, and a move made to accommodate borrowing from what may have been more or less a reference collection. However, this is merely conjecture, as we have no supplementary information on rules or conditions upon which loans were or were not made.

The loan entries themselves for the period 1728-1733 offer no standard format and are not fully consistent in the information that they provide. They are, in addition, written in differing hands and from internal evidence we may be fairly certain that the majority of entries (at least until ca 1751) are in the hands of the individual borrowers. It is possible however to discern the persistent monogrammatic appearances of "E.P." (interwoven letters in a simple device, elsewhere expanded to "Edm Pyle"), over the period 1728 to 1731. Not only does this name or monogram appear against his own loans, but it often appears as a co-signature to the loans of others; and further, to the return of such issues. This latter point is significant, as generally, relatively few entries have such information, whereas Pyle is scrupulous in the recording of return dates. He further appears to be active in distributing or delivering books to certain individuals as the following extracts illustrate:

27 September 1728	"Taken out for Mr Lovell by E. Pyle"
(April-June) 1729	"to Mrs Marshall E.P."
12 January (1730)	"Taken out for Mr Newson E.P."
13 October (1730)	"to Mr Kellsal by E. Pyle"
21 June 1731	"delivered to Mr Kilner : Edm Pyle"

Because Edmund Pyle's handwriting is strikingly similar to that which heads the entries beginning March 1727/8 (his own first loans are made exactly three weeks later) and because of the evident attention he gave to both loans and returns, it seems not unreasonable to suggest that Edmund Pyle was perhaps acting as library keeper; or at the very least, as someone exercising regular control or oversight over the collection. Fortunately, in this particular case, we know a good deal about the man, largely because of his correspondence with Samuel Kerrich, vicar of Dersingham, Norfolk<sup>18</sup>, and it is possible to integrate Pyle's appearance in the loan record at Wisbech into the wider context of the man's life and career.

Edmund was the eldest son of Thomas Pyle (1674-1756): friend of Bishop Hoadley and of the Wisbech-schooled Archbishop Herring, and minister of St. Nicholas, King's Lynn, from 1701.<sup>19</sup> Edmund (1702-1776) apparently benefited from his father's influence in high places and after succeeding his father as Lecturer at St. Nicholas, King's Lynn, in 1730/31 (when his father became vicar of the same) he was appointed Chaplain in Ordinary to George II in 1738. To this honour was added the rectory of Gedney, Lincolnshire, where he took up residence in 1743, and the Archdeaconry at York in 1751. Soon after that he became friend and companion to the ageing Bishop Benjamin Hoadly who gained for him his final sinecure; that of Prebend at Winchester.

It is possible to fit in Edmund Pyle's active period at the Wisbech library (April 1728 to January 1731) in between his proceeding M.A. from Corpus Christi, Cambridge, in 1727 and his appointment as Lecturer at King's Lynn in 1731/2. More specifically, Pyle's library use occurs

after he had been made deacon at Norwich in 1726 and is exactly contemporary with his ordination at Lincoln in June 1728. It is therefore significant that Pyle borrowed Bennet's Thirty-nine Articles on 1 June, 1728, just a fortnight before his ordination on 16 June, after having taken out Samuel Newman's Concordance; Whitby's Commentary; Medes Works; Richard Fiddes' Body of divinity; and Locke's Works during the three months previously. Such reading matter confirms the contemporary view that at least some reading was considered necessary prior to ordination.<sup>20</sup> His loans resume in July 1728 and continue with six further loans during the following year including Thomas Stanley's History of philosophy and Prior's Poems. In a letter dated 7 July, 1729, written from Wisbech<sup>21</sup>, Pyle expresses his pleasure to the Rev. Kerrich on being recommended for a fellowship at Clare College, intimating that he will be in Cambridge the following week to be admitted. The following day, Pyle visited the Wisbech library and borrowed Robert South's Sermons; not returning the volume until the following January at which date his loans recommence after a six-month break; no doubt connected with his appointment at Cambridge. A further fourteen loans are then made, the last in January 1731, and include works by Horace, Theophrastus and Thucydides; a second issue of Locke's Works; Cellarins Geography; and Pascal's apologist work, Pensées (the only recorded loan of that work). The last 'E.P.' monogram appears against an entry (of Edward Bellamy's) for 8 January 1731, whilst no fewer than seventeen volumes, some loaned as early as January 1730, were returned by Pyle in June 1731 at a time when he was about to take up the Lynn lectureship from his father.

Such a record of library loans, twenty-eight works over an active two-year span, is a remarkable testament to the breadth and depth of reading thought necessary by a newly-ordained minister within the eighteenth-century Church. Perhaps he had been given the same advice as that passed on to his friend and correspondent Samuel Kerrich by Charles Kidman,

Chief Master of St. Paul's:

As to composing Sermons you know y<sup>e</sup> custom and practice will make it easier every day. That business must be undertaken some time or other & y<sup>e</sup> sooner y<sup>e</sup> better, for y<sup>e</sup> older you grow y<sup>e</sup> more averse you will find y<sup>r</sup>self to it. Be sure to write but upon one side & in a large Hand y<sup>t</sup> yo<sup>r</sup> discourses may be legible w<sup>h</sup> yo<sup>r</sup> sight decays.<sup>22.</sup>

A readily available library would no doubt assist in such a task, and indeed it was then not unusual for a sermon to be read directly from a printed source. However, Pyle was to find life less arduous in years to come, for when acting as companion to Bishop Hoadly he found very little time even to read, despite the 'temptation' of a fine library.<sup>23.</sup> His description of the life of a prebend is illuminating and is often quoted in order to illustrate the not very arduous life of eighteenth-century cathedral dignatories:

The life of a prebendary is a pretty easy way of dawdling away one's time; praying, walking, visiting; - & as little study as your heart would wish. A stall in this church is called a charming thing.<sup>24.</sup>

As far as the library borrowing pattern connected with Pyle's younger days as a newly-ordained minister is concerned, a somewhat similar pattern of use also emerges for John Dickinson (1707/8-1790) who used the library at Wisbech for a relatively short, but intense, period from February 1732 to July 1733.<sup>25.</sup> Once again, the period of recorded library use is contemporaneous with a transition from university to the Church and again coincides exactly with the man's ordination.

John Dickinson, the son of Thomas a Sheffield plumber, matriculated to St. John's, Cambridge, in April 1725, proceeding B.A. in 1728/9 and M.A. in 1732, having been made deacon at Lincoln in September 1731. His first library loans date from February 1732 when no fewer than nine volumes were taken out, and included South's Sermons; Fiddes' Body of divinity; and the works of Locke (all of which had also been borrowed by

Pyle) - returning them all two months later in April. Ordination took place on 23 June, 1732, at Ely; his recorded loans having subsided in May, having further borrowed Bullinger's Commentary on Acts; Samuel Newman's Concordance; and Burnet's History of the Reformation, as well as the only recorded issues of Pliny's Natural history and Bossius' 'Etimol. Lat.'. Library use recommences just as vigorously in October 1732, though the nature of works borrowed is somewhat different; there being fewer Bible commentaries and more scholarly, linguistical works: Montfaucon's Palaeographia Graeca; Skinner's Etymologicon linguae Anglicanae; Hickes's Institutiones Grammaticae Anglo-Saxonicae; along with both Dryden's and Lauderdale's editions of Virgil. Dickinson's last recorded visit to the library is on 9 July, 1733, when ten volumes were borrowed; bringing to a close an active eighteen-month period, during which, not less than forty-one books were borrowed.<sup>26</sup> Such an abrupt end to loans is not easily explainable, especially when it is likely that Dickinson served the nearby parish of Leverington Parson Drove from 1749 to 1790, rebuilding the parsonage there circa 1760.<sup>27</sup> His links with his home town Sheffield were however strong, and his appointment as Assistant Minister there, from 1752 to 1766, along with the living at Ecclesall in the same county during the same period, may indicate non-residence at his Cambridgeshire living.<sup>28</sup> One publication of Dickinson's, having a Sheffield connection, has been traced, comprising of two discourses on false weights and measures, preached at Sheffield in December 1754.<sup>29</sup>

A further identifiable borrower, George Kilner, displays a somewhat similar loan-pattern, completing a trio of newly-ordained young men, who were active in their use of the Wisbech library during the period 1728-1733. Kilner's recorded loans span the full six years of this period and represent the longest continuous borrowing period for any library user at Wisbech for whom we have record. George Kilner, a Lancashire man, son

of Thomas, husbandman, gained his B.A. from St. John's, Cambridge, in 1723/4 (before either Pyle or Dickinson had graduated) being made deacon at Ely on 19 June, 1725. He first appeared borrowing at Wisbech ca March 1727/8 when Nichol's Conference with a Deist was borrowed. Two further works were taken out before his ordination on 12 July, 1728: 'Journey through England' (v.2) and 'A Vindication of Christian Divinity'. Just over a week after his ordination he visited the library again to borrow 'Ductor dubitantium', after which a further fifteen visits are recorded involving twenty-six issues of books; the last in January 1733. Both South's and Jeremy Taylor's Sermons are taken out twice along with works by Hoadley, Burnet and Josephus, whilst unusual borrowings include a 'Hebrew psalter' and Tournefort's Herbal (one of only three recorded loans). No further entries can be linked to Kilner despite his probable holding of the living at Wiggenhall St. German, Norfolk, from 1740-49.

The only other recorded borrower of the Hebrew Psalter was Rev. Edmund Castle who took it out in August 1730, soon after his appointment as vicar of Elm and Emneth (a parish to the south of Wisbech). Castle was a scholar of considerable learning<sup>30</sup>, rising to become Master of Corpus Christi, Cambridge; Rector of St. Paul's School; and Dean of Hereford. He had evidently accepted the living at Elm (his first) despite the advice of friends to the contrary, and his inclusion here is not by virtue of his single recorded borrowing from the Wisbech library, but because of the illuminating description he gives in one of his surviving letters, of his new life, away from Cambridge, in the isolated Fens:

I could not have been sent to a place more unsuitable to my constitution and disposition almost in every respect. I have a very burdensome and laborious Care, w<sup>ch</sup> is almost beyond my Strength to discharge, & it is exceedingly difficult to get in the profits; I find it necessary to deliver some of my obstinate unrighteous folk to y<sup>e</sup> Iron hand of y<sup>e</sup> Law, w<sup>ch</sup> is a very grievous thing to my Temper.... I have suffer'd very severe agonies of Repentance for resigning my Preferments at Cambridge, & am

astonisht at my perverseness in not hearkening to y<sup>e</sup> prudent advice of all my Friends.... I have received the Benediction of the Country, viz. an Intermitting Fever.<sup>31</sup>.

No doubt the Hebrew Psalter, borrowed in August 1730, provided a temporary diversion from such troubles and one could express surprise that no further use of the library is recorded by Castle (though he was removed to the living at Barley, Hertfordshire, in 1731) who would, one assumes, in the words of Henry Newman, have relished the library as 'an agreeable Companion to a Man of Letters destitute of Books in a Solitary Country'.<sup>32</sup>.

A little more contemporary use of the library can be allocated to Castle's successor at Elm, John Newson, who in sharp contrast to his predecessor, served a lengthy term of thirty-one years as vicar (1731-1762). Newson had previously acted as Master at the Wisbech Grammar School during Castle's incumbency at Elm, confirming a link alluded to in the first recorded loans of the library.<sup>33</sup>. He became Master in 1727; his library loans beginning appropriately, in June 1728 with a loan of Henley's Latin Grammar, 'a Pamphlet'. Although the office of Librarian to the parish library was, according to Gardiner<sup>34</sup>, traditionally filled by the Master of the Grammar School, it is unlikely that this was yet the case, considering Newson's few entries in the loans register and the apparently stronger case for Edmund Pyle holding the post. Apart from a further issue of a book 'for' Newson in January 1729/30 and an issue of Whitby's Commentary in June 1731, no further entries occur until May 1750 when the Whitby Commentary and four other works (not recorded as being issued) were returned: possibly a loan of some nineteen years in the former case.<sup>35</sup>.

Newson was replaced at the Grammar School in 1731 by Richard Foster who stayed in office until 1749. Once again however, recorded use is minimal with a single entry for April 7, 1732, when Bishop Bull's Sermons (v.1) were borrowed.<sup>36</sup>.



If recorded use of the library by local schoolmasters is light during the period 1728 to 1733, then a similar picture also emerges for the vicar of Wisbech at the time. Henry Bull served the cure for twenty-eight years (1721-1749) being elected Wisbech Town Bailiff in 1725. His five recorded loans span 1728 to 1736 (?) and are remarkable only in that they take place on four occasions: each of which is in the June of a separate year.<sup>37</sup>.

By way of contrast, the Rev. Edward Cross, rector of Walsoken (now a suburb of Wisbech) 1717-1733, made far more extensive use of the library, borrowing some twenty-six books during an active eleven-month span. Many of Cross's borrowings are of classical or scholarly works and include various editions of Horace, Virgil, Euripedes, Terence and Tacitus. The library catalogue of 1718 reveals that he was a donor by that earlier date having given a copy of the Lexicon Ciceronius by Marius Nizolius.<sup>38</sup>.

The links between church and municipal authorities - spiritual and secular interests - in some ways manifest in the nascent years of the library (and in the subject matter of the books themselves) are also evident from the position and standing in the community of certain library borrowers during the period 1728-1733. The appearance for example of Simon Hamlen in the loan record, who, in addition to being rector of nearby Outwell, Norfolk (1722-1758), also acted as magistrate for the Isle of Ely for many years.<sup>39</sup>. Hamlen's recorded loans amount to just three, the perimeter dates being ca March 1728 to February 1732, and are: Bentley's edition of Horace (returned by Edmund Pyle); Prior's Poems; and Derham's Astro-theology.

A number of other recorded borrowers are likely to have been leading public figures - at least locally. R. Tayler, esquire, who borrowed Dugdale's Imbanking and drayning and Cowper On the musc{u}s(?), is likely to have been Richard Tayler Esq./Gent., who was Wisbech Town

Bailiff in 1722 and again in 1732. Tayler was also listed as a member of the Book Club in 1718. Robert Gynn(e) similarly, who borrowed five books between 1732 and 1733 was also Town Bailiff in 1737; as was Robert Wensley in 1746 and 1753, whose ten loans cover the period December 1730 to May 1732<sup>40</sup>. and include Desagulier's Hydrostatics; Montfaucon's Antiquities and a copy or copies of 'Rehearsal'<sup>41</sup>. Whilst tentative identifications can also be made of Edward Bellamy, borrower of approximately twenty-six books over three years 1729-1732; one of the same name was Town Bailiff in 1700. (Rev. John Bellamy was vicar of Wisbech, 1702-1714.) Bellamy's loans are distinctive in that many are medical books and include works by Harvey, Angelucci, Glisson and Heurn, suggesting that like Henry Banyer, Bellamy was a local physician or surgeon.

J. Marshall, recorded on only one occasion (during 1732) using the library to borrow the works of Tacitus may either be John Marshall junior who had been Town Bailiff in 1716 or 'Jo. Marshal, Gent.' who was a member of the Book Club in 1718.<sup>42</sup>

Captain/Mr Waite also only appears once during this period (and once later on Easter day, 1762 when he is styled Mr Waite) borrowing Dugdale's Imbanking and drayning. David Waite was Town Bailiff in 1752 and additionally one of the deputy-lieutenants for the county.<sup>43</sup>

Far more use of the library is credited to Anthony Lumpkin, who, between 1730 and 1733 borrowed at least thirty-seven volumes on his nine recorded visits. Lumpkin, styled 'gentleman', is recorded as Town Bailiff for 1714 and again in 1718 and was probably related to John Lumpkin, gentleman, who painted various verses from the Bible over the arches of Newton church and who is buried there in the north aisle having been churchwarden for fifty-two years.<sup>44</sup> Gardiner supposes the singularity of the name to be enough to link the Wisbech individual with the Tony Lumpkin in Oliver Goldsmith's She Stoops to Conquer<sup>45</sup>, though there appears to be no evidence to support this claim. There is no mention

of Lumpkin earlier than March 1730 when his first loan is recorded (he does not for instance appear as a member of the Book Club in 1718) though his subsequently recorded library use is relatively intense. History and topography are well represented in his loans which include Blackmore's King Alfred; 'Journey through England' and 'Journey through Scotland'; Scheffer History of Lapland (the only recorded loan); Montfaucon's Travels; and a history of the Balearick Islands. Cooper's Mystery of witchcraft and Humphrey's Antiquities are only once-issued works for which Lumpkin is responsible.

With the appearance of Samuel Massey in the loan record between September 1729 and the same month four years hence (Dr Massey also appears similarly in 1758 and 1761 and is probably the same man) one can be a little more definite in identification. According to Gardiner, Dr Massey was a resident physician with a taste for art and some public spirit, evidenced by certain copper-plate engravings he had made of various views of Wisbech.<sup>46</sup> Samuel (1694-1773) was the younger brother of Richard Middleton Massey (1678-1743) physician, antiquarian, and friend and correspondent of Sir Hans Sloane.<sup>47</sup> Richard was sometime deputy keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, but by 1705 had been admitted to the College of Physicians and practiced medicine in Wisbech. His antiquarian interests no doubt played a part in his appointment as 'Keeper of the Publick Library' (i.e. the parish/Town library) at Wisbech in 1714 and it is to R.M. Massey that we owe the published catalogue of 1718.<sup>48</sup> Somewhat surprisingly, Richard Massey's name does not appear in the pages of the loans record, though he had left Wisbech by the time regular loan entries commenced in 1728. Samuel, his younger brother, however, stayed and practiced medicine becoming Town Bailiffe in 1738 and again in 1756 when latterly he is titled M.D. His recorded loans begin in September 1729 and include two works by Vertot: the Roman Republic and Revolution in Spain, whilst a loan of Montfaucon's Travels

between 1733 and 1736 is repeated in April 1761 when the borrower is styled Dr Massey. No explanation can as yet be offered for the twenty-two year gap in his recorded loans (1736-1758) when other loans do in fact continue to be recorded, be it spasmodically, until 1751.

The Southwell family too, being a prominent and distinguished family long associated with the town, are represented by at least three, possibly four, individuals whose recorded use almost spans the entire recorded loan period. The first to be entered is Henry Southwell who borrowed Burnet's History of his own time twice during 1726-1728, and is probably the Henry who attended school in Wisbech, matriculating in 1712, and who became High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire in 1754. Edward Southwell's loans begin in 1728, with thirteen volumes being credited to him before November 1730 and include Raleigh's History of the world; Pope's edition of Homer; Chandler's Defence of Christianity; and sermons by Bull and South. Edward was brother to Henry, just mentioned, and may have been the donor of 'Petavii Dogmata' in three volumes, given to the Wisbech library at an unknown date.

Henry Southwell junior may be the son of Edward, just mentioned, and if so, was ordained in September 1754 and became Rector of nearby Outwell parish (1758-60) and rector of Asterby, Lincolnshire until 1779. Two loans only are recorded on undated occasions between 1741 and 1749 and involve issues of Prideaux's 'Connections' and Prior's Poems.<sup>49</sup>

Finally, a group of four loans (ca 1760-1764) are simply allocated Mr Southwell and are thereby rendered unidentifiable; they involve loans of Dugdale's Imbanking and drayning; Prior's Poems; and 'History of England and Ireland'.

A further firm family identification from the loans register during this period relates to the Bell family of Outwell. Two different hands enter loans under the name Beaupré Bell and relate to the father and son of the same name who were notable antiquaries and sometime owners

of Beaupré Hall Manor, Outwell, in Norfolk, where they lived some five miles to the south-east of Wisbech. The father, fourth in lineal descent from Sir Robert Bell (d. 1577), acquired the estate at Outwell by marriage and was somewhat eccentric.<sup>50</sup> Beaupré Bell the younger (1704-1745) shared an interest in antiquities with his father and amassed a notable collection of books, medals and coins, as well as manuscripts which, on his death, passed to Trinity College, Cambridge.

There are no chronological overlaps in the borrowings of the two men from the Wisbech library, which occur between May 1731 and October 1733, and may suggest that each was borrowing for both. Neither are there any winter visits (the latest in any one year being dated 25 October); probably in consideration of the inclement weather and state of the roads. The entries in the first hand, record loans of eight books between May 1731 and October 1732, whilst those in the second and neater hand record loans from May 1732 to October 1733. As may be anticipated, such loans are overwhelmingly of a scholarly and historical nature.

Beaupré Bell the younger was also an active member of the Spalding Society,<sup>51</sup> producing several papers in connection with it and he apparently assisted other authors (no doubt from his own library) such as Blomefield, with his history of Norfolk, Thomas Hearne and C.N. Cole. The latter produced an edition of Dugdale's Imbanking and drayning in 1772 and it was corrected from a copy of the same work held by Beaupre Bell (and incidently therefore not borrowed by Bell from Wisbech).<sup>52</sup>

A further notable borrower at Wisbech during this period was Henry Banyer (also spelt Bannier) a surgeon or physician who had been a club member in 1718 and a donor of Godolphin's Repertonium Canonicum (before 1717). Banyer's earliest loans probably date from 1717 when three books on surgery are borrowed in addition to the Godolphin volume, Harris's Lexicon technicum and volume three of Philosophical Transactions. It was in 1717 that Banyer published his Methodical introduction to the art of

surgery and therefore his library loans may have been made in connection with the final preparation of that publication. Banyer also published: Pharmacopoeia pauperum, or the hospital dispensary, containing the chief medicines now used in the hospitals of London (1721) which reached a fourth edition by 1739. By that date, Banyer had been admitted to the College of Surgeons, by extraordinary licentiate, in 1736; his library loans as recorded at Wisbech recommencing in 1728 and ending in 1732 having included Quincy's Lectures on pharmacy and Castell's Lexicon Medicum.

A tentative identification can be made of 'J. Childe' who borrowed on a single occasion in July 1726 and who may have been one John Childe who was a collector of customs in Wisbech during 1725, and who, by 1735 was Deputy Customer of Lynn.<sup>53</sup> Whilst J. Fearnside who borrowed at least twelve volumes during 1732/3 (and possibly again during 1751-53 when Mr Fernside (sic) appeared twice) may also have been a collector of customs.<sup>54</sup>

The use that these individuals made of the parish library at Wisbech during the period 1728-1733 emerges as the most intense recorded for any period there during the eighteenth century for which evidence remains. Yet the dramatic falling away of recorded loans that occurred towards the end of 1733 is not, as yet, easily explainable; especially when one considers that even regular borrowers such as George Kilner, John Dickinson and Anthony Lumpkin fail to be recorded again after 1733 even though some loans do continue to be occasionally entered.<sup>55</sup>

However, just as the commencement of recorded loans is simultaneous with the appearance of Edmund Pyle (and with the new schoolmaster John Newson) the demise of the same is contemporary with their departure from the area. And because internal evidence from the loans manuscript suggests that the guiding and administrative hand of Edmund Pyle was exercising some control and care of book issues, then it is probably true to say that the absence

of such a man was the major factor in the apparent decline that took place after 1732. Loans may well have continued to take place - though unofficially and without record - whilst the possibility does remain that some external factor exerted a disrupting influence.

This period of greatest recorded activity does also apparently coincide with a decay of trade in the town about 1730, following on from the year (1727) when there were the greatest number of burials recorded for any year during the eighteenth century.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, the petitioning of Parliament in 1729 about the roads, bridge and traffic does not suggest that the town authorities were happy with the state of affairs locally; and yet it is these very people along with the clergy and gentry who continued to make use of the library. Obviously, they were not oblivious to the practical help that such a collection of books could provide via loans of such works as Dugdale's Imbanking and drayning; Desagulier's Lectures on hydrostatics and the medical textbooks of Cooper, Verheyen and Harvey; nor to the recreational possibilities offered by a library containing a diverse collection of history, topography and travel. If the library was unable to provide the latest offerings from the burgeoning provincial and London presses (Chamber's Cyclopaedia was first published in 1728 and the Gentleman's Magazine in 1731); then perhaps it could provide sound and scholarly texts of classical authors and the Church fathers, whilst also having available authoritative works of history to provide context and continuity to such contemporary national events as the accession of George II in 1727 and Britain's war with Spain.

Numerically, over the active period 1728-1733, a total of one hundred and ninety-five library loan transactions are recorded<sup>57</sup> and involve the issuing of some four hundred and sixteen volumes. During the same period, the number of active borrowers each year was as follows: 1728, ten (possibly twelve); 1729, fifteen; 1730, twenty-three; 1731, seventeen; 1732, twenty-one; 1733, ten (possibly twelve). The resulting

average of sixteen borrowers a year visiting the library twice, and taking out two books on each occasion is, despite being a generalisation, a useful gauge of the strength of demand.

More specifically, the distribution of library loan transactions across the days of the week is, as may be anticipated, not equal. It emerges that the most popular day for making loans was Friday, followed closely by Tuesdays and Thursdays, whilst Saturdays and more especially Sundays were not hardly used.<sup>58</sup> It was probably therefore not thought appropriate to take out books from the library when attending church on a Sunday; though as generally speaking, Wednesdays and/or Fridays were considered the 'Stations or Half-fasts',<sup>59</sup>, then the public prayers held on those days might well have encouraged the parishioners (on a Friday at Wisbech) to also visit the library over the church porch.

If in fact they did continue to use the library after 1733 then we have little record of it, for entries of loans continue only spasmodically during the years 1734 to 1752.

When one William Johnstone made his one and only recorded loan entry in October 1736, he provided us with a useful indication of the then flexibility (or more likely laxness) regarding control of loans when he promises to return his four volumes 'when Demanded'. Such an attitude may reflect an assumption of indefinite loan periods.<sup>60</sup> Other casual borrowers recorded before 1752 include Samuel Massey; Dr (Robert) Wells, a physician of nearby Leverington Parson Drove; ( ).H. Hall; Thomas Barrian (or Bowrian); Henry Southwell junior; E.G. Hooper; and Mr Fernside.

A second somewhat revived period of recorded use commences in 1753 when five borrowers use the library: only two of whom (Mr Fernside and Dr Massey) had borrowed before. However, loans peter out in 1766 when five volumes are issued and further isolated issues are recorded for 1771, 1792 and ca 1800.



During the earlier period, minor peaks of recorded use are reached in 1753 (thirty-two volumes issued), 1757 (twenty-two) and in 1764 (fifty-four) whilst at no other time do recorded loans rise above the yearly equivalent of one book per month.

Such a modest revival may again be due to the influence or interest of one individual; and preceding the period in question were two local appointments: Henry Burrough as vicar, replacing Henry Bull who died in 1749, and John Clarkson who became schoolmaster in the same year. Neither man is however recorded as an extensive borrower and the possibility remains that a third, as yet unknown, individual was responsible for neat and precise loan entries that commence in June 1751, but which are entered regularly from February 1753.

Henry Burrough(s) was vicar at Wisbech from 1749 to 1773 and served as Town Bailiff in 1750 and again in 1772. It appears that he also held the livings of Little Gransden from 1747 and Waterbeach from 1745, probably gaining a prebend's stall at Peterborough in 1762. His single recorded loan visit is entered for June 1760 and states that he took out of the Wisbech library the copy of Dugdale's Imbanking and drayning and Barnes's edition of Euripedes, 'which he received off Ed Southwell Esq.'. Burrough did nevertheless have an interest in books, setting up his own private printing press from which we have record of one publication of his own: Sermons on several subjects and occasions.<sup>61</sup> A further volume of sermons, not from his own press, was published in Cambridge, in its second edition, the year Burrough died, 1773.<sup>62</sup>

Seven years earlier, in 1766, John Clarkson had died: a contemporary clergyman of Burrough and Master of the Grammar School since 1749. In April 1753 a Mr Clarkson is recorded borrowing Harris's Lexicon Technicum and 'Sulpicii Hist Sacrae' and, if he be the same man, was the 'exemplary and kind-hearted clergyman' who was father of Thomas Clarkson, later to become the prominent anti-slave trade pioneer.<sup>63</sup>

The remaining identifiable borrowers from this period appear not to differ significantly from the middle-class type<sup>64</sup>. outlined as library users earlier in the century, between 1728 and 1733. Town Bailiffs, no doubt drawn from the prominent men of the borough, occur in the loans register no less frequently than they did earlier, and probable candidates are: Mr Warmol, Robert Wensley, Mr Maplesdenn, Mr Waite, Mr Vavazor, Mr Sumpter and Mr Mann-Hutchesson.

Of this group, Mr Warmol's prominence was probably trade-based: he sent his apprentice to borrow an 'English atlas' in November 1757 whilst also taking out Chillingworth's Works, Cooper's Anatomy and all five volumes of Montfaucon's Travels on one occasion in January 1766. (None of which appear again in the loan record.)<sup>65</sup>. Mr Waite is likely to have been either David Waite who served as Town Bailiff in 1752 or John Waite, gentleman, who served in the same office during 1771. The former died in 1766 having held the office of deputy-lieutenant for the county. The Waite using the library, borrowed Dugdale's Imbanking and drayning for a year (1762/63) having it passed on to him from Mr Sumpter of Walsoken who had held it for sixteen months. John Sumpter Esq., of Walsoken was High Sheriff of the county between 1750 and 1754 and therefore quite likely to have been well acquainted with Deputy-Lieutenant Waite.

A second High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire is probably indicated by the loan of Camden's Britannia to Mr Vavazor in May 1760 (returned a month later). Sir Philip Vavazor (knighted 1761) was twice Town Bailiff and High Sheriff 1760-63, his prominence again being trade-based on a successful business as a wine merchant.

Finally from this group, Mr Mann-Hutchesson, who, somewhat more modestly, was a local solicitor, with some antiquarian interests. Gardiner records the debt owed him by the town for rescuing from 'chaos and confusion' the Trinity Guild records and presumably, from this work, and his interests, he was thus qualified to write the Introduction to the

Charter of Wisbech, published in 1791.<sup>66</sup> Mr Mann Hutchesson junior borrowed the three volumes of Clarendon's History of the Rebellion in March 1764 and to the same name is credited an isolated loan: of 'Regiam Majestatom Scotia' dated 21 October 1771.<sup>67</sup>

This latter loan took place during the later years of Henry Burrough's incumbency at St. Peter's, Wisbech when neither he nor his replacement, John Warren (afterwards Bishop of St. David's and of Bangor) appear to have taken much interest in the library. By this time, it may have become the practice to employ the schoolmaster of the Grammar School as librarian (this was certainly the case during the first half of the nineteenth century) though we have very little evidence regarding administration and use during this period. However, some dissatisfaction with the way the books were being managed is expressed in a freehand note entered in the manuscript catalogue which reads: "and God send us a Better Librarian 1774."<sup>68</sup>

James Burslem replaced John Warren as vicar of Wisbech in 1779 and it was during the former's incumbency that the Wisbech Literary Society was founded in 1781. It appears however that the Rev. Thomas Sheepshanks, rather than James Burslem, was instrumental in the Society's establishment.

Significantly, it was decided to create a library in connection with the Society and Watson speaks of an 'original note' concerning a meeting at the Rose and Crown Inn: "for the purposes of establishing a well chosen library on a permanent and increasing plan".<sup>69</sup> The note, dated 29 March 1781, is signed by Mann Hutchesson, the local solicitor, and three others, and by some later date, no fewer than eighty subscribers had been attracted to the venture. Clearly such a development is significant with regard to the older church library which by this time, with no continuing endowment or income, was probably suffering from neglect.

However, some later loans are recorded from the parish library

over the south porch of St. Peter's, but they are haphazard and few. A total of nine further issues relate to the final decade of the eighteenth century and involve four borrowers: S. Dewer (?) (during 1792); Rev. A. Goode; Rev. W. Hardwicke; and Rev. Dr Morgan (all ca 1800/01). Montfaucon's Antiquities confirms its lasting appeal by being taken out by two of these borrowers, whilst also borrowed are Walton's Polyglot Bible; Bishop Burnet's History of the Reformation; Clarendon's History of the Rebellion and Samuel Newman's Concordance.

Soon after these loans, some interest was shown in the books by the Rev. Martin Coulcher, Master of the Grammar School, who arranged and catalogued the collection in 1801. Though inevitably, a later holder of the same post, Rev. George Thompson, deplored the neglect and misuse of the books, and in line with a long cyclical pattern of decline and amelioration that stretched back to the seventeenth century, the books were once more reinstated by the singular efforts of an individual parishioner.<sup>70</sup>

Over the whole period of the eighteenth century for which records survive a total of some ninety-four library borrowers appear by name.<sup>71</sup> Thirty-eight of these are recorded as borrowing on only one or two occasions (that is, 40 per cent) whilst only seven have over twenty loans allocated to them. With the exception of Mr Turnough (who made his twenty-eight loans during 1764/5), these seven borrowers all appear during the period 1728-1733; four are clergymen (three newly-ordained) whilst one (Mr Bellamy) was probably a physician or surgeon. Individual recorded usage is as follows: Rev. John Dickinson, 41 loans over seventeen months; Rev. George Kilner, 33 loans over fifty-eight months; Anthony Lumpkin, 29 loans over thirty-nine months; Rev. Edmund Pyle, 28 loans over thirty-three months; Mr Turnough, 28 loans over circa twelve months; Edward Bellamy, 26 loans over thirty-six months; and Rev. Edward Cross, 26 loans over forty-six months. The remainder of the recorded

borrowers are noted as borrowing on between three and fourteen occasions; the larger groupings emerging at the lower end of that borrowing span.

Of the four identifiable women borrowers, Miss Bull is recorded as taking out the most books (5 works) when she used the library on two occasions in 1753. (Henry Bull was vicar at Wisbech, 1721-1749.) The other women are Mrs Marshall (at least two loans during 1729); Mrs Francklin (one loan in 1729); and Miss Rosenhagen (one loan in May 1756).

In 1718, when the Wisbech library catalogue was published and the Book Club had been operating for a number of years, the library itself comprised of 694 works (according to Massey's Catalogue) and naturally, many more volumes. Apart from the manuscripts (which were not catalogued<sup>72.</sup>), a breakdown of imprints reveals the overwhelming majority to have been of seventeenth-century origin (approximately 428 works); exactly half that number have sixteenth-century imprints, whilst at least six works were incunabula.

Only forty-one works have eighteenth-century imprints and with the appearance of Whitgift's Life by Bishop Strype, accessions up to and including 1718 are included in the catalogue of the same date. (There is some evidence that books continued to be acquired after 1718, though when such augmentations ended - probably at a time contemporaneous with the demise of the Book Club - is not yet clear.<sup>73.</sup>)

During the period of the eighteenth century for which we have a record, a total of 246 identifiable and partially-identifiable works were borrowed.<sup>74.</sup> Approximately half of these, according to the loan record, were only borrowed once, whilst no single work appears to have been issued more than nineteen times.

In this context, the most popular authors and works were Montfaucon's Travels (19 issues); the Royal Society's Philosophical Transactions (18)<sup>75.</sup>; Clarendon's History of the Rebellion (11); two scientific works by John T. Desaguliers (9 total issues)<sup>76.</sup>; the works of John Locke (9);

Robert South's Sermons (9); William Dugdale's Imbanking and drayning (8); Pope's translation of Homer (8); Bishop Burnet's History of the Reformation; and the eight issues recorded against various works by Daniel Waterland. Three works have seven recorded issues: Camden's Britannia; Burnet's History of his own time and Samuel Clarke's Scripture doctrine of the Trinity. A further seven works have each six recorded issues: Vertot's Roman Republic; the works of Isaac Barrow; Richard Fiddes's Body of divinity; Prior's Poems; Prideaux's 'Connections' (i.e. Old and New Testament connected); John Harris's Lexicon technicum; and Richard Bentley's edition of the works of Horace. Whilst a final group of seven works each have five recorded loans: Nichol's Conference with a Deist; 'Journey through England'; Thomas Salmon's Examination of Bishop Burnet's History; an edition of the works of Tacitus; Dryden's translation of Virgil; Thomas Stanley's History of philosophy; and the sermons of Bishop Bull.

In consideration of the chronology of such loans and the apparent fluctuation in demand for certain titles within the two main loan periods, 1728-1733 and 1753-1766; it emerges that some works were more or less only in demand during the earlier loan period. Those works are: the Royal Society's Philosophical Transactions (though one issue was in 1765); Vertot's Roman Republic; both the histories of Bishop Burnet (one issue of the History of the Reformation took place ca 1800); and finally the five combined issues recorded for Derham's Astro- and Physico-theology.

With regard to the later borrowing period (1753-1766) it appears that no works, gaining five or more issues, wholly belong to that period alone, that is, none appear to have come into demand which were not also borrowed earlier. Works of six or more issues each, recorded as spanning both separate borrowing periods, number ten, and may be designated within this context, as the most lastingly popular: Montfaucon's Travels; Clarendon's History of the Rebellion; Locke's Works; Dugdale's Imbanking

and drayning; Pope's edition of Homer; Camden's Britannia; Isaac Barrow's Works; Samuel Clarke's Scripture doctrine of the Trinity; Harris's Lexicon technicum and Bentley's edition of Horace.

The important collection of medical books held by the library via a seventeenth-century bequest<sup>77</sup>. deserve mention; though they were not extensively borrowed (or more accurately, not recorded as extensively borrowed). In fact, four individuals account for very nearly every loan of such works and are: Dr Wells, Mr Bellamy, Samuel Massey and the author and surgeon, Henry Banyer. The latter published in 1717 Methodical introduction to the art of surgery; the same year in which he returned three similar books to the library at Wisbech and both Banyer's library use and that of the other local doctors, surgeons and apothecaries needs further investigation in relation to the usefulness, both anticipated and perceived, of the remarkable bookstock held by the Wisbech library.

1. W(isbech and) F(enland) M(useum) MS. Town Library Catalogue. (The volume is Item 20: Folio Catalogue ("made in the eighteenth century") of the books in the Wisbech Town Library... In: Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, Ninth Report. H.M.S.O., 1883. Part 1. Report and Appendix. The Manuscripts of the Corporation of Wisbech, by John Cordy Jeafferson. pp.293-299.)
2. Ibid., 374. 'A catalogue of those who have beene Benefact<sup>rs</sup> towards the fittinge this place and furnishinge it with bookes'.
3. Ibid., 149-172.
4. Ibid., 49.
5. See above pp.32; 36-37.
6. They are, additionally, as far as the present work is concerned, the earliest recorded loans from the eighteenth century.
7. Charter granted by Edward VI in 1549.
8. It is therefore quite feasible that Thomas Herring (1693-1757), Archbishop of Canterbury, had access to the Wisbech library, as he attended the Grammar School in the town, matriculating to Jesus College, Cambridge, in June 1710.
9. Details of Edward Cole have not been discovered, except that one of the same name matriculated to King's College, Cambridge during Lent, 1713/4, some fourteen years after Thomas Cole. It is probable that they were related, and they may have been brothers.
10. Charles J. Abbey and John H. Overton, The English Church in the eighteenth century. New edition. Longmans Green, 1887. pp.200-201.
11. Ibid., 198, 204. Arianism, was a general name given to a belief that Christ was something more than man, but less than God.
12. See below pp.115-119.
13. F.J. Gardiner, History of Wisbech and neighbourhood. Wisbech: Gardiner and Co., 1898. p.38.
14. W. Watson, An Historical account of the ancient town and port of Wisbech... and of the circumjacent towns and villages. Wisbech: H. and J. Leach, 1827. p.281.
15. Ibid., 276.
16. Abbey and Overton, English Church, 458-459. Henry Dodwell wrote The Lawfulness of instrumental music in holy offices, in response to the setting up of an organ at Tiverton in 1696.
17. Quoted by Watson, Historical account, 235.
18. Edmund Pyle, Memoirs of a Royal Chaplain, 1729-1763. The correspondence of Edmund Pyle, D.D. Chaplain in Ordinary to George II, with Samuel



- Kerrich..... Annotated and edited by Albert Hartshorne. John Lane, 1905.
19. See D.N.B. entry. Thomas also held the livings of nearby Outwell (1709-1722) and Watlington (1710-1726).
  20. Pyle, Memoirs, 15-16.
  21. Ibid., 68.
  22. Ibid., 17.
  23. Ibid., 191.
  24. Ibid., 266.
  25. If, as is possible, Edmund Pyle had been serving as a curate at Wisbech or a neighbouring parish during his recorded loans period, then John Dickinson, appearing soon after Pyle's departure, may have been the latter's replacement.
  26. Appended to this last entry of Dickinson's are the words "a conceited ass"; the epithet is written by the same hand as that which enters the adjacent loan: Anthony Lumpkin.
  27. Watson, Historical account, 472, 478.
  28. A library had been set up in the vestry of Sheffield parish church as early as 1705 when it had a lending facility. Catalogues of the library, attached to Sheffield glebe terriers are contemporary with Dickinson's appointment there. See above p.59.
  29. John Dickinson M.A., Two Discourses on the injustice and wickedness of false weights and measures; preached at the Parish Church of Sheffield, on Sunday, December 15th, 1754. Sheffield: Francis Lister, 1755. (The imprint of Francis Lister is that of a local printer who was the first to print a newspaper in Sheffield and who died in the same year as the Dickinson work was published. See Enid C. Gilberthorpe, Book printing at Sheffield in the eighteenth century. Sheffield: City Printing Department, 1967. p.1.)
  30. See D.N.B. entry.
  31. Edmund Castle to Samuel Kerrich, n.d. In: Pyle, Memoirs, 89.
  32. Henry Newman to Hudson, Middle Temple, 13 July, 1725. S.P.C.K. Archives E.L. 1 CS/1, p.204. Quoted by Central Council for the Care of Churches, Parochial libraries, 32.
  33. See above pp. 82-83.
  34. Gardiner, History of Wisbech, 215.
  35. John Newson died in 1762 and therefore one further recorded loan of Cowper's Anatomy, issued to Mr Newsom (sic) on 26 June, 1751, could be allocated to the same man.
  36. John Foster, rector of Walsoken parish (adjacent to Wisbech) 1742-1788,

- does not appear in the loans record.
37. i.e., 18 June, 1728; 11 June, 1730; 30 June, 1731; 30 June (1736?). One possible explanation is that Bull was a non-resident pluralist, serving another (healthier?) parish during the winter months and visiting Wisbech during the summer. Such a practice was not uncommon.
  38. Of the fourteen names listed in the 1718 Catalogue as being 'Gentlemen of the Club' only Edward Cross, Henry Banyer and Richard Taylor reappear as recorded library borrowers after 1726.
  39. Watson, Historical account, 535.
  40. The loan for 24 December, 1730, of Pope's edition of Homer is allocated to Robert Wensley junior.
  41. Possibly The Observer; then (ca 1704-1709) known as The Rehearsal of Observer. Collective title: A View of the times, their principles and practices, by Philalethes (Charles Leslie). 2nd edition, 1750. (See B.U.C.O.P.)
  42. Mrs Marshall is recorded as borrowing on two occasions during 1729.
  43. Cf. Watson, Historical account, 502. A monument to David Waite, d. 1 February, 1766, aged 75, is in Wisbech parish church.
  44. Ibid., 480.
  45. Gardiner, History of Wisbech, 215. The plot of She stoops to conquer, involving the mistaking of a private house for an inn, is supposedly based on similar incident from Goldsmith's youth. There appears however to be no East Anglian connection and in fact the Wisbech Lumpkin wrote his will the year that Goldsmith was born in Ireland. (The Will, dated 20 August, 1728, is referred to in H.M.C., Ninth Report, 294.
  46. Gardiner, History of Wisbech, 38. Two views (of 1756) are reproduced ibid., 36.
  47. See P. Cave, Richard Middleton Massey MD, FRS, FSA 1678-1743. The Wisbech Society 43rd Annual Report. 1982. pp.7-14.
  48. Massey produced 150 copies of the Catalogue at an approximate cost of £3.10s. which he himself paid; he also produced the library's bookplate on his own press. (Ibid., 10.)
  49. This Henry Southwell was at one time reputed to be the author of The Universal Family Bible (1773) though the real author was apparently Robert Saunders. (See Gentleman's Magazine.53.1895 . p.311)
  50. He kept some five hundred unbroken horses, which he had bred, inside as well as outside the dilapidated Manor House at Outwell, for instance. (Watson, Historical account, 540.)

51. See above p.36.
52. D.N.B. entry.
53. Watson, Historical account, 306, 313.
54. Ibid., 313. Other individuals not further identified, who used the library during the period 1726-1733, are as follows: J. Benson; Frances Bloodwick/Bludwick; James Dodson; B. Fennick; J. Ford; Mr/Mrs/J. Francklin; William Hallam; William Hathorne; Thomas Hill; Mr/George Johnson; P. Kelsale/Mr Kellsal; E. Marriott; Edward Mason; Mr Meers; Richard Peachey; J. Syer; H. Travers; Edward Twells; J. West; and J. Young.
55. The last regular loan to be entered for this period is dated 7 September, (1733), though four more entries probably extend the period to 3 December, 1733. Regular entries stop mid-page, eliminating the likelihood of missing leaves after the bottom of a page had been reached.
56. Watson, Historical account, 309, 387.
57. This figure represents 65 per cent of the total loan transactions recorded for the full time span, 1713-ca 1800.
58. Thirty-eight of the one hundred and ninety-five transaction dates (19 per cent) are either incomplete or otherwise doubtful and are not included in this analysis. The complete figures are: Sundays : 1 loan recorded (0.5 per cent); Mondays : 27 (13.8); Tuesdays : 31 (15.9); Wednesdays : 25 (12.8); Thursdays : 30 (15.4); Fridays : 34 (17.4); Saturdays : 9 (4.6).
59. Abbey and Overton, English Church, 431., quoting William Whiston. Daily services, though diminishing generally, may still have taken place at Wisbech.
60. None of the four volumes taken out by Johnstone appear again in the pages of the issue book.
61. The British Library copy (4455.ee.7.) is described as '(Printed at the private press of the author) : Wisbech; 1770'. The octavo volume has 364 pages.
62. Lectures on the church catechism, confirmation, and the nature and obligation of religious vows..., 2nd edition. Cambridge: J. Woodyer, 1773.
63. Gardiner, History of Wisbech, 407. Thomas Clarkson was six when his father died.
64. As defined by Basil Williams, The Whig supremacy: 1714-1760. 2nd edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962. p.144. Viz. Parsons, yeomen, J.P.s and squires in the country, and 'substantial citizens engaged

- in business and the professions' in the towns.
65. A slab in the south aisle of St. Peter's, Wisbech, records the death of one Edward Warmoll (sic) in 1772.
  66. Gardner, History of Wisbech, 91, 479. The Introduction was printed in Wisbech by W. Nicholson in 1791: price 3s.6d., 4to, 22pp. The author is styled there: Mann Hutchesson, F.S.A., Town Bailiff of Wisbech.
  67. Other individuals, not yet further identified, who used the library during the period ca 1736-1766, are as follows: Thomas Bourian (?); Mr Chadwick; Mr Hazlett; E.G. Hooper; Mr King; Mr Maugham; Mr Priestly; Mr Purkis; Mr and Miss Rosenhagen; M.Smith; Mr Tawney; Mr Turnough; Mr Walker (Richard Walker the horticulturist and founder of the Cambridge Botanic Garden, was rector of Upwell, 1757-1765); and Mr Welch (a monument to James Welch (d.1766) is in the north aisle of Walsoken church).
  68. WFM, Library Catalogue, 374. The note is in a poor hand: the word 'Librarian' could be plural and the signature appended approximates to 'Isulin Reud( )'.
  69. Watson, Historical account, 349.
  70. WFM, Library Catalogue, 228., where are detailed notes on the work done by both Coulcher and Thompson in connection with the library.
  71. Additionally, six loans are allocated to 'school use' and five to unknown borrowers.
  72. See above pp.32,33.
  73. One work known to have been acquired later than 1718 is the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society in the edition edited by H. Jones and published in 1721 (covering the years, 1700-1720). The work is first recorded as a loan in July 1730.
  74. A further 34 are either ambiguous, incomplete or undecipherable.
  75. Inclusive of both the Lowthorp edition (covering years to the end of 1700) and the further abridgement by Jones.
  76. The two works were probably, A Treatise on hydrostaticks and Lectures on physico-mechanical experiments. (Entries are often much abbreviated, therefore it is not possible to be certain.)
  77. See above pp.30-31.

DONCASTER

The main sequence of recorded book issues from the Society's Library at Doncaster commences in November 1726 coinciding with a new Deed of Settlement of that year and with what might be described as a fresh start for the collection: newly administered within a comprehensive and legal framework of Trustees and newly housed within the parish church of St. George. However, a previous record of loans from the library does exist and relates to the period 1715-1717: some ten years previous to the main issue-record and contemporary with the very commencement of the Doncaster Society of Clergymen.

This early loans record is a valuable addition to the very few such records that survive and represents one of the two earliest substantial listings yet discovered (the other being the handful of loans recorded for 1714- ca 1719 at Wisbech<sup>1</sup>).

Two methods of recording library loans were at first employed. The first (and more successful) involved indicating, within the contemporary Minute Book, in a chronological sequence of loans associated with each monthly meeting, specifically what was borrowed and by whom. The second method was used briefly in 1716 and 1717, again in conjunction with the Minute Book, where a separate listing used a sequence of book titles (each heading a page at the back of the volume) and associated with each is a list of borrowers' names with loan dates.

Over the twenty-seven months covered by this earlier record (April 1715 to June 1717), twenty Society meetings apparently took place; nineteen of which were used by at least one member to borrow books. (The exception being 12 January, 1716.) All the loans recorded by date coincide exactly with Society meeting dates.<sup>2</sup>

Within this period a total of thirteen borrowers is recorded along with a total of only sixteen (possibly seventeen) books borrowed. These thirteen borrowers made a total of 74 loans over the twenty-seven month period as follows, 1715 : 31 loans ; 1716 : 35 loans ; 1717 : 3 loans; and five loans unallocated being undated.

Books were therefore issued at an average rate of between three and four per meeting, or, on average, at between two and three books per month over the whole period of twenty-seven months. Each borrower made on average between five and six loans over the same period, whilst each book was borrowed on average between four and five times. However, such figures as these disguise a far more subtle borrowing pattern.

All recorded subscribers to the Society during this period borrowed books<sup>3</sup>, though as may be anticipated, use varies. There were ten original signatories to a statement of intent dated 'Epiphany 1714'<sup>4</sup>, being the ten subscribers who each paid an initial ten shillings for membership: Patrick Lujon (vicar of Doncaster); Edmund Withers (vicar of Owston and schoolmaster at Doncaster); Levitt Pearson (rector of Finningley); Thomas Rodwell (vicar of Arksey); Charles Arthur (vicar of Wadworth); William Lamplugh (rector of Sprotborough); Mr Epworth (not yet identified); Edmund Wolley (sometime rector of Sprotborough); Richard Turbutt (sometime rector of Warmsworth); and John Fox (vicar of Cantley).

Three further members were later recruited and first appear as borrowers of books during the summer of 1716: Jeremy Fawkes (rector of Warmsworth); Robert Stuart (rector of Armthorpe); and George Webster (possibly a curate at St. George's, Doncaster).

Over the initial twenty-seven month period, Charles Arthur apparently made most use of the books, borrowing on nine separate occasions (involving fourteen volumes), whilst Levitt Pearson borrowed on eight occasions (eleven volumes) and Edmund Withers on seven occasions (thirteen volumes). No fewer than ten of the thirteen members borrowed books at the meeting of 2 August, 1716, though after this peak, recorded use quickly drops away and only three loans are recorded for 1717.

The size of the membership remained static however, with twelve members recorded for each of the years 1720, 1721 and 1722; during the following two years the number dropped to eleven.

A system of forfeitures was operating during this period, with 6d. being asked of members for each meeting missed. The money thus received was to be paid into the entertainment fund, required to assist those who played host to the Society in their own homes. Some measure of actual attendance rates can however be thereby gauged according to forfeiture sums recorded. As an example, during 1718, ten shillings and sixpence was received in forfeitures, representing some twenty-one absences during that year. It therefore emerges that Society members were good attenders with an average, for 1718, of between ten and eleven members per meeting.

When the record of loans recommences in December 1726, six of the original subscribing members reappear as borrowers, seven do not. Amongst those who do reappear are Jeremy Fawkes<sup>5</sup>. and John Fox.

The appearance of John Fox in the library loans register for 1715 (at which time he would have been twenty-six and newly-graduated though not yet in his first Church appointment) echoes similar appearances elsewhere in similar circumstances. At Wisbech for instance, one can identify George Kilner, Edmund Pyle and John Dickinson; all of whom borrowed from that library in similar circumstances, whilst the same is also true of Isaac Hemingway (ca 1728) at Rotherham.

The four volumes of Bingham's Antiquities, borrowed by John Fox in 1715, had been newly acquired by the Society in that year for one pound. These volumes emerge as the most-borrowed work by far during the period of recorded loans 1715-1717, gaining a total of twenty-one issues (which represents approximately one quarter of all recorded issues for the period). No fewer than nine of the thirteen subscribers borrowed at least one volume of the work whilst Edmund Withers along with John Fox managed to borrow all four volumes consecutively. Curiously, the work does not reappear again in the loan record after November 1716 and may suggest that it did not survive as a part of the library that was extens-



ively used after 1726.<sup>6</sup>

The Bingham volume was an early purchase by the newly formed society along with William Reeves' translation of the Apologies of Justin (two volumes cost 11s.); (Thomas?) Brett's 'Considerations' (6d.); Bennet On the Resurrection (4s.9d.); John Clarke's Scripture doctrine of the Trinity (6s.3d.); and an Historical account of Lent (4s.4d.). Whilst sent for during 1716 were Prideaux's 'Connections' (one part, 6s.4d.); 'Cave's Historia Literaria' (two volumes, £2.5s.); William Nichols' Paraphrase on the Common Prayer (15s.); Bishop Burnet's History of the Reformation (three volumes, £3.3s. and 2s. carriage); and Hamon L'Estrange's Alliance of divine offices (5s.4d.). At least some of the books may have been bought locally, as a Mrs Taylor is mentioned in the Society's Minute Book on one occasion receiving £2.2s.6d. for books.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to these titles, certain works appear to have been borrowed though no record of their purchase survives, and such books may well have been gifts. In this category are: 'Brown's answer to Toland'; Grabe's Specilegium SS. Patrum; Henry Maurice's Defence of Diocesan Episcopacy; 'Penitential discipline'; and 'Turner against the Apostles'.

That this quickly growing collection needed a secure home is evident from a Minute Book entry of September 1716 where a bill from a Mr Kitchen (sic) is presented for building and materials costs involved in erecting a book-press in the vestry of St. George's, Doncaster. Thus was a further £1.11s.4½d. spent of subscribers' money.<sup>8</sup>

It is difficult to reconcile this now static collection of books, housed in the church vestry, with the still peripatetic meetings of the Society members; the dates of which match the dates on which loans were made. However, after September 1716 when the books were housed in the vestry, only seven further loans are recorded, that is, until a new start is made in December 1726, and it is possible that the then static collection prevented books being borrowed on meeting days when the group

might well be some miles removed from St. George's Church. Certainly the library continued to grow and the new book-press was provided in October, 1718. Appropriately, it was proposed in February 1720 that each meeting be held in Doncaster and 'The Mitre' (Mr Holiday's) became a popular choice of venue. The subsequent offer and acceptance of the room over the south porch of the church has already been related<sup>9</sup>, and it was to be here that the library would enjoy its longest period of sustained use and here that it unfortunately finally perished in the disastrous fire of 1853 which also destroyed most of the church structure.

With regard to the earlier twenty-seven month period (1715-1717), a total of eighty-five issues of individual volumes were recorded and form some thirteen per cent of the total issues, 1715-1776. The most popular work, according to the recorded loans made during this earlier period, was Bingham's Antiquities (21 issues). Each with less than half the Bingham issues, the next two most-borrowed works were Grabe's Specilegium SS. Patrum and Reeve's translation of Justin (9 issues each). Together, these three works account for almost fifty per cent of total contemporary issues. The discourse on the History of Lent was issued seven times, whilst 'Penitential discipline' similarly, five times. All the other books mentioned earlier as being bought by the Society were borrowed between one and four times each with the exception of four works. These four, specially purchased by the Society, were not recorded as being loaned during this period and are: 'Bennet vs Clarke'; Bennet On the Resurrection; Nichols On Common Prayer; and Bishop Burnet's History of the Reformation.<sup>10</sup>.

Acquisitions such as these appeared on the library shelves through a combination of methods. Some were unchosen donations, given according to the good sense or inclination of the benefactor, whilst others were specific purchases bought directly from booksellers, or at auction, with money that had been either bequeathed or subscribed to the society.

Over the whole period of accounts as they survive, some £56<sup>11</sup>. is recorded as being given to the Trustees of the Society and that in addition to subscription monies. The largest single donation appears to be £10.10s. given by the Corporation of Doncaster (and was equalled by an undated bequest of the same amount by Viscount Downe). Significantly, the Corporation's gift came during September 1726: the very year of the Deed of Settlement and the year in which the regular recording of loans newly began. The Society acquired just four works (comprising of at least thirteen volumes) with the Corporation's ten guineas: Poole's Synopsis (five volumes, cost £4.5s.); Grabe's Septuagint (four volumes, £1.15s.); Bishop Patrick's Commentary (three volumes, £2.2s.); and Lowth's Commentary (price unknown).

The emphasis is plainly on Old Testament study and such was probably perceived as a suitable and appropriate starting point, or foundation, for study and improvement in Christian knowledge. Similarly, with the appearance of Bishop Burnet's History of the Reformation; Dupin's Ecclesiastical history; and a 'History of ye Canon', an indication of the desirability of a knowledge of ecclesiastical history is revealed. Further early purchases include William Nichols' On Common Prayer; Richard Fiddes' Body of divinity; and the non-juror, Charles Leslie's Divinity.

The Society did, however, purchase certain non-theological works, notably, Rapin's History of England (in two folio volumes) and Rollin's Ancient history (in twelve volumes); significantly, these works were not acquired until at least 1736 or 1737 (the respective publication dates of the two works), some ten years after the Society's formal foundation date. Two other works of civil history were donated by lay benefactors. Mrs Wrightson, widow, gave a copy of Raleigh's History of the world in August 1725, and Mr Lister gave Sprat's History of the Royal Society. Two further works of localised history were again the gift of lay benefactors: Francis Drake's Eboracum, given by William Wrighton, and

'Antiquities of Canterbury', given by Francis Wilkinson Esq., of Lincoln's Inn, possibly as early as 1717.

One method of benefaction at this time involved the purchasing of the first subscription to a new work, by an individual, on behalf of the library. Thus in 1717 did Levitt Pearson, rector of Finningley, provide for the first payment towards Hudson's edition of the works of Josephus, at a cost of £1.16s.

Not all the money received by the Society at this time was spent on the books themselves. There were not insignificant costs, for example, incurred in the carriage and transportation of books from a variety of locations. The Society accounts, between 1715 and 1718, show frequent entries for such expenses, viz: 'carriage of Books fm York' (1s.); 'carriage of Books fm London' (5s.6d.); 'Box at London & Portr<sup>ge</sup>' (3s.6d.).<sup>12</sup>

Some account entries clearly relate to the moving of second-hand books which had been given or bequeathed to the Society.<sup>13</sup> Yet others must indicate the use of provincial booksellers (at York for instance), despite the fact that the Society had direct contact with a London agent and bookseller, William Innys<sup>14</sup>, in connection with whom many entries for payments of postage appear in the accounts. Such a person, based in the capital at the centre of the book trade, was evidently necessary at this time and even the provincial booksellers themselves needed such agents.<sup>15</sup>

The correspondence which survives between William Innys and Company, and Edmund Withers, Society treasurer at Doncaster, represents an important source of incidental information; not only regarding the Society and its affairs but also for the light it sheds on various aspects of the contemporary booktrade.<sup>16</sup>

As might well be anticipated, the majority of the correspondence relates to book purchases and enquiries, though two surprising exceptions

to this general rule emerge.

The first, concerns an evidently previous enquiry from Withers about the printing costs involved in producing a 'Charity Sermon'. Innys's reply, dated 8 August, 1723, sets out such costs as would be involved in producing two hundred and fifty sermons in quarto (£3.15s.) or five hundred similarly (£5) with the size of the intended publication running to about four sheets.<sup>17</sup> Whether or not similar quotations were sought from provincial and local printers is not known.

The second non-purchasing enquiry from Withers relates to the extensive preparations, in progress before 1726, to establish the Society and its library on a secure, legal foundation and to administer the same effectively. The clergymen at Doncaster knew of the differing forms that a 'parish' library could take; they knew of the national legislation relating to parochial libraries and had evidently become aware of the 'extra-parochial' status of the Cranfield (Bray-supplemented) library at Reigate<sup>18</sup>. A letter from treasurer Withers to Innys at London had presumably asked the latter if he would be instrumental in gaining information concerning the settlement of the library at Reigate. Innys's reply is dated 17 February, 1725:

Yours we have been favoured with. I have writ to a clergyman near Ryegate & hope in a Post or two, to have an exact Acc<sup>t</sup>. of the Settlement of that Library. As soon (as) we receive it, we will forward it to you. <sup>19</sup>.

In due course, Innys wrote again (26 February, 1725) enclosing a letter from John Bird of Reigate which briefly set out the circumstances of the 'extra-parochial' nature of the library there.<sup>20</sup>

More mundane matters also appear in the correspondence. A faulty Bible it is suggested should be returned to London, or else the imperfect portions will be sent up to Doncaster to be fixed in. Information regarding the availability of certain works is also given: 'Dr Lupton's sermons are not yet gone to the press' (11 July 1724); 'We expect Dr

Berriman's sermons soon' (11 July 1724); 'Wesley's Job is published' (14 May 1736); 'There is already 21 no's published (of Rapin's History) & every week they publish a new one till the whole is compleated' (5 January 1733).<sup>21</sup>.

Some books were evidently sent on approval, with or without a request for that facility. A letter dated 25 April, 1730<sup>22</sup> confirms that Bishop Gibson's Codex (the abridgement) is sent on approval, whilst an earlier letter (10 August, 1725) appears to suggest that unsolicited approvals were being sent out: "We have added the first Volume of our memoirs of Literature, if You don't find it for your purpose we will take it again at any time."<sup>23</sup> On this occasion the volume was evidently well received and a further letter from the booksellers, two months later, confirms that when the second volume of the work is finished it will be sent. (In fact, this particular work appears to have been loaned out of the library only twice: in February 1731 and in February 1745.)

Correspondence from provincial and local booksellers has not survived though certain references in the Society Minute Book and accounts confirm that they were used.

An early reference to Mrs Tayler (sic) being paid £2.2s.6d. "this summ for the Books sent" confirms a connection with a local bookseller. The woman may well have had a vested interest in seeing the Society succeed and its library grow, and she also gave three works as a gift sometime between 1717 and 1719, being referred to as 'Mrs Taylor, bookseller in Doncaster'.<sup>24</sup> This act of generosity to a parish library by a book-supplier was not unique and a further example can be cited at Hackness, near Scarborough, where a parish library, founded in 1700, received a benefaction in that year from Daniel Brown, "Bookseller in London".<sup>25</sup>

Other booksellers identified as being associated with the Society library are Francis (Hildyard?) of York and Paul Vaillant of London.<sup>26</sup>

The former wrote to treasurer Edmund Withers in February 1726, evidently with some difficulty,<sup>27.</sup> and enclosed a bill for Grabe's Septuagint (four octavo volumes, £1.15s.) and Poole's Synopsis (5 folio volumes, £4.5s.). Paul Vaillant appears in the Minute Book being referred to in connection with a subscription taken out by Patrick Dujon, vicar of Doncaster, for the works of Chrysostam on 7 May, 1719.<sup>28.</sup>

Other benefactors are drawn from a wide geographical area and consist of both clergy and laity;<sup>29.</sup> some of whom are known to have had access to large libraries of their own. Cavendish Nevile, for example, rector of St. James, Norton, Derbyshire (1710-1749) who bequeathed his own substantial library to the church at Norton<sup>30.</sup>; and the Rev. William Steers, who, as incumbent at nearby Bradfield and Wadsley (1725-1741) had access to both the Bradfield and Ecclesfield parish libraries.<sup>31.</sup> A further benefactor at Doncaster was Thomas Wentworth, esquire<sup>32.</sup>, who can be linked with gifts to other parish libraries at Rotherham and Earton<sup>33.</sup>; with the S.P.C.K. library at Bolsterstone<sup>34.</sup>; and with the early work of the S.P.C.K. generally.<sup>35.</sup>

If Thomas Wentworth's influence was effective locally in church matters, then one whose influence was, in the same sphere, national, was Bishop Thomas Sherlock who in turn appears as a benefactor at Doncaster in May 1727. This was the year in which Sherlock was made Bishop of Bangor, after being Dean of Chichester and of Salisbury, and just one year after the Deed of Settlement was written at Doncaster. His substantial gift was that of St. Augustine's Works in eleven folio volumes, published in Paris in 1541.

Other benefactors include: Admiral Fairfax, alderman of York (October 1720); Rev. Mr Simpson, Master of the Free Grammar School at Gainsborough (April 1740); and Viscount Downe, who, in addition to a £10.10s. gift, donated what was to become one of the most persistently borrowed works from the Doncaster library: Chambers' Universal dictionary.

The general borrowing activity associated with the library was carefully monitored over the years and the records of loans divulge the names of some seventy-five borrowers between the perimeter dates of 1715 and 1776.<sup>36</sup> Predictably, the majority of borrowers are clergymen. No fewer than thirty-four individuals can be more-or-less certainly identified as clerics, whilst a further seven are probable. Of the remainder, nine can be confidently identified as lay borrowers (three of these being women) and a further one is probable. Twenty-four borrowers remain unidentified (thirty-two per cent) and it emerges that of those of whom something is known, two-thirds to three-quarters are clergymen.

Of the non-clerical borrowers the earliest to be recorded is R(oger) Perkins, indeed, his name is the first to appear in the newly-commenced loans register of 1726:

Dec<sup>r</sup> 5 1726 I promise to return y<sup>e</sup> first Volume of Burnetts History in 2 month's time in y<sup>e</sup> condicon I rec'd it or make it good. R. Perkins 37.

However, Perkins, an apothecary and Mayor of Doncaster (1719), may not have been a member of the Society although eligible to borrow by virtue of his benefaction to the Society of £1 in June 1722. He probably used the library on just three other occasions, the last of which was in October 1731.<sup>38</sup>

A further Mayor of Doncaster (1723), borrowing on a single occasion in October 1728, was Dr John Neal who practiced medicine in the town; his loan of Chambers' Dictionary coinciding with the same year in which he gave certain (unspecified) books to the Society Library.<sup>39</sup> Additionally, a third borrower, Mr Heaton (one loan, 1744), may have been Thomas or John of the same name, both of whom were Mayors and both of whom served as churchwardens at St. George's church.

One William Ellerker was also churchwarden, in 1752,<sup>40</sup> and may be the Mr Ellerker who appears borrowing works on six occasions between February 1740 and April 1749.



Two further non-clerical borrowers style themselves 'Esq.': George Cooke of Wheatley and Robert Copley of Nether Hall. Both men had in fact attended Clare College, Cambridge: Robert Copley matriculating in 1703 and George Cooke in 1706. Neither made extensive use of the library at Doncaster, though curiously their first uses coincide to within a month during 1728; Cooke making a total of four loans between 1728 and 1735, and Copley eight loans, 1728-1744.<sup>41</sup> Whilst a single loan, credited to a Mr Burden in December 1743 (Dugdale's Monasticon), may refer to Robert Burden Esq., a local attorney.

At least three women also appear as borrowers<sup>42</sup>, though again, two of them, Mrs Alder and Miss Rodwell<sup>43</sup>, have only single loans recorded against their names (in June 1745 and August 1772 respectively) whilst Miss Ann Hall has two such during 1733.<sup>44</sup>

Recorded use of the library is light amongst these non-clerical borrowers and unsurprisingly, none appear in the earliest years of the Society records when membership appears to have been limited to clergymen only. Not a few of these lay users were also benefactors and that fact could account for their status and eligibility to borrow. The women borrowers appear later in the records (the first not until 1733) and then only briefly, borrowing the works of Dr (Thomas?) Scott (Ann Hall); Prior's Poems (Mrs Alder); and Francis Drake's Eboracum (Miss Rodwell).<sup>45</sup>

The latter work was also borrowed by Robert Copley (twice during 1743/4), who also took out Lowthorpe's edition of the Royal Society's Philosophical transactions and Lord Strafford's Letters. Other repeated issues to non-clerical borrowers include Willughby's Ornithologiae (Copley and Perkins); Chambers' Dictionary (Copley and Neal); Wood's Athenae (Cooke and Ellerker); Bishop Burnet's History of the Reformation (Perkins (twice) and Ellerker); Dugdale's Monasticon (Cooke and Burden); and Watson's Clergyman's law (Cooke and Heaton).

The loans in this category are not predominantly of theological works and neither are they extensive nor persistent. Rather, loans to non-clerical borrowers appear scattered throughout the loans record, reflecting no particular concerted demand from the townspeople, out rather, a limited, occasional and varied interest.

The library books themselves can be closely identified with Doncaster parish church; indeed, for the major part of its existence the library was housed within that building and as a direct consequence was sometimes, somewhat incorrectly, referred to as the 'Church Library'.<sup>46.</sup>

It follows therefore that the contemporary incumbents of St. George's may well have played a significant role in the development and administration of the collection. Three such incumbents span the years to which we address ourselves (those years for which loan records survive) and two of these can be said to be familiar names within the record both as Society members and as library borrowers in their own right. In fact it seems to have been established, almost from the start, that the vicar of St. George's should act as Library Keeper to the Society and its books, and in this capacity served both Patrick Dujon and Hollis Pigot respectively, until 1762. During this latter year one George Hatfeild (sic) was appointed to the living, however, his name, either by choice or circumstance, does not appear in loans register.<sup>47.</sup>

Patrick Dujon was appointed vicar of Doncaster by Archbishop Sharp in 1706, at which time the former would have been about thirty-five years old.<sup>48.</sup> Dujon built himself a vicarage house in 1707<sup>49.</sup> and gained a prebendary post at York (Riccall) in 1711. His name, significantly, appears heading the list of the original ten local clergymen who formed themselves into the Doncaster Society of Clergymen early in 1715.<sup>50.</sup> Dujon is recorded as borrowing six volumes between June 1715 and the August of the following year, loans which included the popular translation of Justin by Reeves (twice borrowed) and works by Prideaux and Ditton;

though not the most-borrowed work of the time, Bingham's Antiquities. Curiously, Patrick Dujon does not reappear in the recommenced borrowing record of 1726 even though he was still in post, and it may be significant that his death was then only two years away.<sup>51</sup> He had evidently still been active in library matters in 1719 however, when he subscribed (for the library) to Chrysostom's Works with Paul Vaillant the London bookseller; and once again in 1723 when travelling with Mr Arthur to a Sheffield book auction to purchase certain works for the library.<sup>52</sup> He last appears in the loans register, acting in his capacity as library keeper on 4 July, 1728, when he issued to R. Copley the second volume of Chambers' Dictionary, under six months before his death.

The Dujon that appears borrowing books between September 1730 and September 1734, sometimes referred to as John Dujon, was Patrick's son and he would have been about twenty years old when first recorded.<sup>53</sup> The younger Dujon had proceeded B.A. in 1726/7 (St. Catharine's, Cambridge), joining that band of young graduates destined for the Church and who, coincidentally, were active library users at a number of locations immediately before and after their ordination.

In particular, John Dujon's library loans can be fitted in neatly around the date of his ordination, which took place at York on 4 June, 1732; and can thereby provide some information on reading interests, prior to, and following that occasion.

Three works are borrowed by Dujon before ordination; the first, Pemberton's View of Newton, in September 1730, and fifteen months later during December 1731 he took out, appropriately enough, both Potter On Church government and Ecton's Liber valorum. Both these latter works were returned prior to his ordination the following June and no further transactions are recorded until May 1733 when the Pemberton volume is returned (a loan of thirty-two months) and Bedford's Scripture Chronology issued. Two further loans appear in 1734: Clarke's Scripture doctrine

and Jones's abridgement of the Philosophical transactions (v.2). John Dujon was twenty-six when these last loans were recorded and he did not live for long after, for he died in 1738, having out-lived his father by only ten years. However, it can be recorded that Dujon the younger was also a borrower 'by leave of the Dean' at York Minster Library, where, during March 1728, he is recorded on a single occasion as borrowing two editions of Juvenal (both incunables) and which were returned on the 12 August following. At that time, it will be recalled, Dujon had already proceeded B.A. though he was not yet ordained and the connection with York may have been via his father, Patrick, who held a prebendary stall there and may thereby have held accommodation in the city.

In the same year as the younger Dujon borrowed from York Minster library, Patrick Dujon, the father, died and was succeeded at Doncaster by Hollis Pigot who went on to hold the living for thirty-four years. Pigot too also held a prebendary stall at York (South Newbold) but from 1742, whilst also holding in commendam the rectory of Epperstone, Nottinghamshire, from 1749.

On the death of Patrick Dujon, the Trustees of the Society at Doncaster were quick to appoint a temporary library keeper in his place, presumably only to serve until the new vicar was appointed. Thus on 6 February, 1728/9 was Edmund Withers appointed provisional library keeper, a job he took in addition to that of treasurer to the Society. Withers was also Master of the local grammar school and a long-standing member of the Society.<sup>54</sup>

Fortunately, the new vicar of Doncaster, Hollis Pigot, who had attended school in the town (possibly under Edmund Withers), was apparently in favour of the library.<sup>55</sup> The first recorded loan to him personally took place in December 1729 when he borrowed 'Ye Alcoran',<sup>56</sup> and from early in 1730 Pigot appears regularly in the record, both issuing books to others and borrowing books in his own right. A total of fifty-five

loans are credited to him between December 1729 and June 1753.

By a curious coincidence, a very similar family situation arose to that of the previous incumbent, Patrick Dujon, whereby the son of the vicar (on this latter occasion, John Pigot) duly appeared as a library borrower in precisely the same circumstances, that is, after leaving university and about the time of ordination.

John Pigot, son of Hollis Pigot, was ordained at York in September 1749, some seventeen years after John Dujon. His loans from the library at Doncaster can once again be fitted around that occasion at York, echoing similar loans made by John Dujon. On this occasion the young graduate (he would have been approximately twenty-three in 1749) borrowed Patrick's Commentary (in July 1749) and Thomas Baker's Reflections upon learning (4 September, 1749) immediately before his ordination on 24 September of that year; the latter volume not being returned until October 1749. Thereafter, his loans - a further eighteen - involve only five different works. Two of these are historical, and involve some twenty-eight volumes of Universal history and Rollin's Ancient history. Additionally, three theological works were borrowed: Fiddes' Body of divinity; Stillingfleet's Acts of religion; and Thomas Sherlock On prophecy.

By 1749, John Pigot's father held in plurality the living at Epperstone, Nottinghamshire, and John himself was curate there sometime after that. Hollis Pigot was however, a far more active borrower from the library, which was of course, housed within his parish church at Doncaster. His reading is far more persistently theological in nature than that of his son's, though he did evidently share with the latter an interest in the Universal history volumes, borrowing nine such between December 1749 and November 1750. This period overlaps with John Pigot's borrowings of the same volumes and the possibility remains, as the borrowing pattern suggests, that John was merely borrowing on behalf of his father or vice-versa.<sup>57</sup>

Hollis Pigot borrowed other works of history too, both ecclesiastical and civil: Burnet's History of the Reformation; Paolo Sarpi's History of the Council of Trent; Drake's Eboracum; Rollin's Ancient history; Collier's Ecclesiastical history; and Rushworth's Historical collection. He was also one of only three recorded borrowers of Milton's poetical works and the only recorded borrower of "London cases". Of the theological writers borrowed, John Kettlewell is a favourite as is Daniel Waterland. Hollis Pigot's last recorded loan is dated 15 June, 1753 (despite holding the living at Doncaster for a further nine years) on which occasion he borrowed Hanley's Lives of the philosophers (returned 2 August, 1753). However, interest in the collection generally appears to have declined rapidly after 1753 with a total of only five loans recorded for 1754; nine for 1755; one for 1756; two for 1757; none for 1758; and possibly three during 1759. Thereafter a further eight loans span sixteen years to 1776.

During these latter years of declining use, no fewer than four curates of St. George's church can be identified as borrowers and the appearance of a total of six such curates serves to emphasise the close relationship that existed between the Society library and the parish church.<sup>58</sup>

George Webster, chronologically the earliest such curate to be identified was an early member of the Society, borrowing two works in 1716.<sup>59</sup> According to Jackson<sup>60</sup>, Webster was a curate of St. George's from March 1721/22 and certainly 'The Green House' - the Rev. George Webster's - was used as one of the venues for the then peripatetic Society.<sup>61</sup> John Lister, who served as curate soon after, is first recorded as a library borrower one month after his appointment as a deacon at York, and appropriately, after some twenty-six loans were recorded, his loans end in March 1730, just before his appointment as the first Headmaster of Bury School, Lancashire.<sup>62</sup> Lister's own reading tastes reveal

a predilection for sermons, those of Tillotson, Barrow and Smalridge being taken out more than once.

Other curates who are recorded as borrowers are Jo Holme(s) (who became rector of nearby Kirk (or Little) Sandall); Thomas Loxley (who became rector of Sprotborough); E.(?) Westby Alderson; James Godmund; and Luke Willey (who became curate of Loversall and who appears as one of the last recorded borrowers at Doncaster, borrowing Rollin's 'Method' in 177(1?) despite holding the mastership of Doncaster Grammar School until 1806).

The name of John Ray, curate at St. George's in 1778 and afterwards vicar of Cantley, does not appear in the loans register; neither does the contemporary vicar of St. George's, George Hatfeild (sic) who was instituted in June 1762 and who served until 1785.<sup>63</sup> General interest in the library had by that time waned, according to the evidence of the recorded loans, with a total of only twelve volumes recorded as issued during the 1770s; and it is evident that Hatfeild, and his curate Ray, did little to reverse this downward trend in library activity.

The remainder of the clerical borrowers, in the main, are drawn from local and neighbourhood parishes lying within a seven-mile radius of Doncaster. Some individual clerics however, were drawn from further afield, from such places as Rothwell (possibly the Rothwell south-east of Leeds); Hemsworth (some twelve miles north-west of Doncaster); and Blyth (over ten miles south).

In the latter case, 'Mr Tomlinson of Blyth' was one of approximately ten very occasional users recorded in the loans register, and in his particular case a single loan only is entered on 20 October, 1733. Matthew Tomlinson was vicar of Blyth from 1729, the year in which he received holy orders (he was also vicar of Harworth in 1739) and the single work he borrowed was John Ecton's State of Queen Anne's Bounty. The book was actually signed out on behalf of Tomlinson by Hollis Pigot,

vicar of Doncaster, and thereby library keeper. Clearly, in these circumstances which were not unique, a Society member took out a book on behalf of a friend or colleague, perhaps on the occasion of a visit. Such loans were not however always punctually returned, and in this case the Ecton volume stayed with Tomlinson for six months.

Similar loans by proxy were made to the Rev. Moye and to Rev. Robert Stuart. Stuart was rector of Armthorpe, an adjacent parish to Doncaster, and a benefactor to the library, giving on an undated occasion a volume of 'Milton'.<sup>64</sup> The manner of the loans ('delivered to Mr Stuart') and of the returns (by Mr Webster from Mr Stuart) perhaps suggest non-attendance at meetings, and further, that Stuart was borrowing by virtue of his previous benefaction. His four recorded loans during the early period (1716-1717) are of Bingham's Antiquities; 'Prideaux' (i.e. Old and New Testament connected); 'Brown's answer to Toland'; and the 'Historical account of Lent'.

The Rev. Moye was also a benefactor to the library (ca 1717), giving Hooker's Ecclesiastical polity and John Clarke's Boyle's Lectures (first volume). Like Stuart, he apparently used the library but little, and is recorded on six occasions (November 1730 to November 1734): four of the entries being made by others on behalf of Moye.

A further clerical benefactor from the neighbourhood was Joseph Banks who similarly appears not to have made great use of the books. Banks was rector of Hooton Roberts (1714-1757) and his loans of five books span May 1727 to February 1730/1 involving Laurence Echard's Ecclesiastical history; Nichol's On Common Prayer; Fiddes' Body of divinity; Bishop Patrick's Commentary; and the Innys-published Memoirs of literature.<sup>65</sup> The cessation of loans to Banks which occurred in February 1730/1 can be partially explained by a curious letter written to the Rev. Jeremy Fawkes by Banks in March 1730/1<sup>66</sup>; no further loans being allocated to Banks despite his holding of the rectory at Hooton Roberts for a further six-



teen years. (He died in 1757.) His evident enjoyment of the Society's company and his obvious loss at his deprivation are clear from the text of the letter, however, his exclusion appears self-imposed and the full circumstances of this curious incident remain tantalizingly vague.

Joseph Banks had been born in Hull where his father, Robert, was vicar of Holy Trinity, 1689-1715. Banks senior died in that latter year, soon after his son Joseph had been installed in the rectory at Hooton Roberts (a living which had also been held by Banks senior). Significantly, Holy Trinity, Hull, had a parish library of its own dating from 1665 and Joseph's father, Robert, is known to have been a benefactor to the parish library at Hackness, near Scarborough, though the details of his bequest are not known.<sup>67</sup> The daughter of Banks senior, Ann (sister to Joseph of Hooton Roberts) married William Steer, vicar of Ecclesfield who himself was a benefactor to the Doncaster library (he gave a Scottish Common Prayer book). At Ecclesfield, Steer was fortunate in having in situ his own parish library which dated from 1549.<sup>68</sup> This family connection with various Yorkshire parish libraries and their books ends with 'Mrs Banks of Hooton Roberts' (widow of Robert Banks?) who, by her last will and testament, gave the works of the author of the Whole Duty of Man to the Doncaster Society library.<sup>69</sup>

Joseph Banks was a contemporary at St. John's, Cambridge, of two other library users at Doncaster: John Fox and Robert Wright. Both came from humble origins the former being the son of a dyer from Thwaites, Cumberland, and the latter, son of John, husbandman of Anstell, Yorkshire. Both were admitted sizars in June 1709 to St. John's, proceeding B.A. in 1712/3; whilst Wright was ordained at York in September 1715 at the same time as Fox received deacon's orders. The latter had commenced borrowing from the Doncaster library in the May of that year in which his diaconate began, and in May, June and July borrowed volumes one to three inclusive of Bingham's Antiquities. Volume four of the same work was

taken out four months later in November (after he had received deacon's orders) and only two further loans follow in 1716: 'Penitential discipline' and 'Brown's answer to Toland'. The following year Fox received priest's orders and was appointed vicar of Cantley, an adjacent parish to Doncaster. His library loans recommence some ten years later being recorded anew along with many others in the reorganised library administration of 1726 onwards. In fact, John Fox, as recorded, emerges as one of the most persistent and active library users, having a total of some sixty loans credited to him. His last loan, (of Rogers' Sermons<sup>70.</sup>) is dated 15 February (1751/2) some thirty-seven years after his first pre-ordination loans of Bingham's Antiquities in 1715. The only non-religious works to be borrowed in this period are recorded as Chambers' Dictionary (five loans); Locke's On human understanding (one loan in 1729); and Lowthorpe's edition of the Philosophical transactions (one loan in 1748). Of the rest, Watson's Clergyman's law; the works of Isaac Barrow; Bishop Potter On Church government and works by Rogers and Waterland predominate.<sup>71.</sup> Such an active pattern of use by John Fox was not repeated by his son, John Fox junior, whose six brief loans appear between July 1748 and October 1751. These loans involve only two works: Chambers' Dictionary and Pemberton's View of Newton.<sup>72.</sup>

Robert Wright, John Fox senior's contemporary at St. John's, became curate at Harworth (west of Bawtry) some eight miles from Doncaster, in 1726. His loans (fifteen in total<sup>73.</sup>), overlap in time with those of his colleague, John Fox, being between 1732 and 1748. Somewhat earlier references to Mr Wright's house at Harworth are found in the Minute Book (for example, 4 May, 1721) and an extant letter from Robert Wright to Edmund Withers, then Society Treasurer, asks for a list of benefactors, "with which to wait on S<sup>r</sup> Thomas Saunderson", revealing a tiny vignette of how potential benefactors were appraised of the Society's scheme and needs.<sup>74.</sup>

Wright's reading, as recorded in the loans register, reveals a similar taste for works by Waterland to that of Fox; whilst works by Stackhouse, Gastrell and Smalridge are also represented. Robert Wright was, in addition, the first of eight borrowers to take out Lord Strafford's Letters.

Certain other local clergymen can be identified as very infrequent library borrowers; in some cases where a single loan justifies their inclusion. Mr Willats for example, who took out Sprat's History of the Royal Society two days before Christmas day, 1749<sup>75</sup>; and the Rev. Alderson, rector of Burghwallis (north of Doncaster), who borrowed the deistic work, Christianity as old as creation by Tindal, on 8 April, 1734, and who is not further recorded.

A further, perhaps notable, single-borrower was 'Sam Wesley' (?), who, in March 1730/1 borrowed the third volume of Walton's Polyglot Bible; a volume not returned until over four years later in July 1735.

Samuel Wesley, father of John and Charles, was then rector of Epworth, Lincolnshire, a living he had held since 1695 and where his ten children were brought up. Epworth lies some fifteen miles due east of Doncaster, and Samuel Wesley would have been about sixty-nine in 1731 when the book may have been issued to him. Later that very year, on 4 June, Wesley was disabled by a fall from his waggon and apparently he never fully recovered. He died on 25 April, 1735, and the Bible, coincidentally, was returned to Doncaster three months later on 24 July, 1735.

Further evidence that the elder Wesley had links with, or at the very least, a knowledge of the Doncaster Clerical Society library, appears in a list of benefactors to the same. Here, the Rev. Mr Wesley 'of Wroote' is recorded as giving to the library, on an undated occasion, a folio edition of Joseph Mede's Works along with a work by Justus Lipsius. The designation 'of Wroote' is significant, for Samuel Wesley held, in addition to the rectory at Epworth, that at Wroot(e), some five miles

to the west. That latter living was held from 1722 and it is quite probable that he sometimes resided there.

Samuel Wesley's own Dissertationes in librum Jobi, published after his death, was in due course acquired by the Doncaster library; it is recorded as borrowed in July 1737 by Edmund Withers. The correspondence between the London printer Innys and Withers, Society treasurer, mentions the work in a letter of 14 May, 1736; it simply states that 'Wesley's Job is published'.<sup>76</sup>

Three further infrequent borrowers present themselves; the first, Rev. Ayde, rector of 'Barnburgh' (?), was also a benefactor sometime after 1744, but who also took out two works in November 1746: Stackhouse's Body of divinity and 'Barrow' (probably the Works of Isaac Barrow). Secondly, Mr Butterfield (on Brian Cooke's account) took out Burnet's Commentary on the thirty-nine Articles and the Paraphrase and annotations of Henry Hammond. Butterfield is elsewhere recorded as being of Hatfield (a parish to the north-east of Doncaster) and was a library benefactor ca. 1729. Thirdly, a Mr Gibson is credited with three loans between October 1750 and June 1752, by which time loans generally were in decline. (One of the same name succeeded John Lister as vicar of Fishlake parish in 1755, and died in 1768, aged seventy-four.)

Even earlier in the loan record, however, during the more active years following the newly-established library of 1726, not all clerical borrowers were extensive users. Quite a number appear in the pages of the loan book somewhat briefly ca. 1728-1731, coinciding with the period associated with a change of minister at St. George's, Doncaster, where of course the library was housed.<sup>77</sup>

One such is Jonathan Beighton (six loans; December 1728 to November 1730) whose reading includes three works by Bishop Gilbert Burnet; sermons by George Smalridge; Potter On Church government; and Drake's Life of Archbishop Parker. Beighton was rector of nearby Adwick-le-Street

from 1721 to 1731 at which latter date he died.<sup>78.</sup>

A little more is known of Rev. Thomas Beaver, sometime curate of Swinton, a parish eight miles west of Doncaster, towards Rotherham. Beaver was admitted a member of the Doncaster Society on 1 October, 1724 having paid £1.1s. subscription and having been a signatory to the yearly re-affirmation statement produced by the Society in the August of the same year.<sup>79.</sup> He was not recorded, however, as a frequent user of the library, with only three loans against his name between February 1726/7 and February 1730/1: those of Wollaston's Religion of nature delineated; Philosophical transactions (volume 5); and a Life of Henry More. The loans do however coincide with his appointment as perpetual curate of Bolton-on-Dearne, in 1728.

A similar period (and intensity) of use emerges for Charles Cowper (or Cooper) who borrowed four works, 1728 to 1731. Though in this case, if apparent library use at Doncaster is slight, the same is not true of subsequent use made by Cowper of York Minster Library during the years of his later appointment there as a canon residentiary.<sup>80.</sup> Cowper's earlier period of library use at Doncaster coincides with his appointment as vicar of Rothwell,<sup>81.</sup> after having proceeded B.A. from St. John's, Cambridge, in 1717/8 and M.A., in 1725. He is recorded as the only borrower of Limborch's Body of divinity (two loans; August 1728 and April 1731); a book given to the library by Edmund Withers in 1719. In addition he borrowed Sprat's History of the Royal Society (June 1729) and the works of Pindar (November 1730). Cowper appears to have been living at Thorne at this time, evidence for this being a reference in the list of benefactors to 'the Rev. Mr Cowper of Thorn' and the fact that Charles Cowper junior was born at that place in 1725. The latter went on to receive his LL.B. in 1752 and died, unmarried, before his father. Charles Cowper senior was appointed to a prebendary stall at York in 1736 (prebend of Riccall) in which post he stayed until his death

in February 1774. We know from the letters of Edmund Pyle (contemporary prebend at Winchester) that the demands of such an appointment could be quite light.<sup>82</sup> Yet at York, Charles Cowper appears to have delighted in study and the record of loans from the library there show him to have been a frequent borrower from 1741 to 1758, with two further, and final, loans in 1768.<sup>83</sup> The loans involve such works as Plutarch, Plato, Justin and Calvin; The statutes of Queen Anne, and Blackstone's Commentaries on the laws of England; Bayle's Historical and critical dictionary; five volumes of Universal history; Knolles' Generall Historie of the Turkes, and Mosheim's Ecclesiastical history; as well as books of practical divinity such as Patrick and Lowth's Commentary. Such loans testify perhaps, to the fulfilment of a text used by Charles Cowper (either father or son) in a sermon published in 1756: "that ye Study to be quiet, and to do your own business".<sup>84</sup>

If Cowper found the library at York useful and beneficial during his residence there, then similar benefits were derived from the Doncaster library by those local clergy, who, by need or inclination, made repeated loans from it. Certain periods of recorded use by individuals stretch over many years and in more than one case, the two distinct periods of recorded loans (1715-1717, and 1726 onwards) are bridged by certain longstanding member-borrowers.

One such is Jeremy Fawkes, rector of Warmsworth (a small parish to the west of Doncaster), 1716-1744, whose loans from the Doncaster library also span precisely those years. Fawkes would have been thirty years old when he first used the library in July 1716 (coincidental with his appointment at Warmsworth), borrowing Hooper's Discourse on Lent; and fifty-eight years old when he took out his last work, Conybeare's Defence in March 1744 - just three months before his death.<sup>85</sup> A further thirty loans are scattered throughout the intervening years (apart from the period 1718 to 1725 for which we have no record, and when, according

to the Minute Book, Fawkes was labouring under a severe illness.) Early loans (1716/17) include: Maurice On the Episcopacy and Prideaux's 'Connections', whilst broader interests are reflected in such later loans as Willughby's Ornithologiae (borrowed in 1731 and 1734); Sprat's History of the Royal Society (1730); Drake's Eboracum (1742); and Rollin's Ancient history (1742). Elsewhere appears an apparently staple diet for a pious eighteenth-century cleric: Burnet's Thirty-nine Articles (four loans); Watson's Clergyman's law; with Sherlock and Smalridge also represented. Jeremy Fawkes was the father of Francis Fawkes (1720-1777) the poet, translator, and sometime Chaplain to the Princess Dowager of Wales. Francis was baptized at Warmsworth on 4 April, 1720 and educated at Bury Free School under the Rev. J. Lister (himself an earlier Doncaster library user when a curate at St. George's) and for whom Francis evidently had some regard. So it is that the two main male influences on the young Francis Fawkes were both associated with the Doncaster library, even though we have no direct use recorded by Francis himself.<sup>86</sup>

At least three other library users span the years 1715 to ca 1745 (be it spasmodically): Charles Arthur; Thomas Rodwell; and Edmund Withers, respectively the vicars of Wadworth, Arksey and Owston.<sup>87</sup>

Charles Arthur was vicar of Wadworth from 1712 after having gained his Oxford M.A. in 1710. He was one of the original ten Doncaster Society members and some of the early meetings were held at his house. He borrowed two volumes of Bingham's Antiquities (volumes 1 and 3) at the very first meeting of 7 April, 1715 and a further twelve other volumes were taken out before 1717. In April 1718 he gave to the library a copy of the works of Irenus (the work does not appear in the pages of the loans register) and he was still active in library affairs in October 1723 when he is recorded as having travelled to Sheffield with Patrick Dujon, to attend an auction in order to purchase certain books for the Society library. Eighteen months later, Charles Arthur gave to his

brother John - an attorney and Mayor of Doncaster in 1737 - a copy of the Bedford Library Settlement, according to the request of the Doncaster Society, in order that he might draw up a similar legal document for local use. This was apparently done and two copies of the document survive.<sup>88</sup>.

Charles Arthur's early loans (1715-16) were of works by Bingham, Prideaux and Grabe, whilst a further seventeen loans are recorded ca October 1727 to September 1746 and include Willughby and Ray's work of ornithology; Cave's Lives of the Fathers; Chambers' Dictionary (three loans); Rapin's History (two loans); and Drake's Eboracum. The last named work being the last recorded loan against Charles Arthur's name before his death in August 1748.<sup>89</sup>.

A remarkably similar borrowing pattern emerges for Thomas Rodwell, vicar of Arksey, 1703-1748 (a parish adjacent to, and north of Doncaster). Seven loans were made during 1715/6 by Rodwell, three of these being of Reeves' translation of Juvenal. Somewhat later, in response to a decision of the Society on 14 June, 1722 to ensure: "That at our next meeting at Harworth each Member of the Society shall severally & singly exhibit in writing a Scheme for the settling (of)... their Library and appointing Uses & Limitations for the better Preserving & Regulating the same according of the best of his Judgm<sup>t</sup> & Opinion."<sup>90</sup>. Thomas Rodwell put his name to a list of seven necessary steps, as he saw them, needed to establish or 'settle' the Society's library. Generally speaking, his advice, concerning taking a room in the church for the books ("w<sup>ch</sup> Grant I presume will not be denied"); the transfer of ownership to Trustees; and other prescribed 'uses and limitations', was not very far removed from what eventually emerged as the desired practice.<sup>91</sup>.

After 1726, Rodwell's loans span the years to June 1745 when, coincidentally, his last loan was of Drake's Eboracum as had been his neighbour Charles Arthur's similarly, and who died just one month and two days



before Thomas Rodwell.<sup>92</sup> Rodwell had also borrowed Watson's Clergyman's law; Domat On civil law (v.2); Raleigh's History of the world, along with Conybeare's Defence; Heylin's Life of Laud; Wheatley On Common Prayer; and a Life of David.<sup>93</sup> A letter written by Rodwell in which he asks to be excused from any further attendance at the Society meetings explains a gap in his recorded use that emerges between May 1729 and June 1733.<sup>94</sup>

The recipient of the foregoing letter, Edmund Withers, is a familiar name within the records of the Society.<sup>95</sup> And like messrs Rodwell, Arthur and Fox, Withers' own association with the Society and its books stretched from the earliest years up until the year of death; in his case, 1744. In 1715, when Withers signed the original Society statement of intent, he was rector of Rossington (four miles south-east of Doncaster), soon to be vicar of Owston (1719). Equally importantly, he had been Master of Doncaster School since 1707; a position which he held until 1737. Thereby, does Withers present one with a further instance of a familiar link seen elsewhere; that between a parochial library and the local school.<sup>96</sup> In the case of the Withers family a further such example is evident through the appearance of William Withers, brother to Edmund, as a borrower at the not too distant Rotherham parish library, at which latter place William too was a Master of a grammar school. So, somewhat curiously, we have the two Withers brothers, living some twelve miles apart, each master of their respective town schools and both active borrowers from their respective parish church libraries.<sup>97</sup>

Edmund Withers's teaching record at Doncaster was apparently good, the school, according to Hatfield, having "... attained extraordinary success under the popular mastership of the Rev. Edmund Withers, and was in his time acknowledged to be the principal institution for the education of the sons of the gentry in the neighbourhood".<sup>98</sup> Hollis Pigot (afterwards vicar of Doncaster), Bryan Cooke (later Recorder at Doncaster) and Edward Simpson, of Fishlake, Knight, were all his pupils. And yet some doubt may be cast on the discipline maintained at the same school,

especially during 1729/30, when the boys, in open rebellion, locked out their Master and barricaded themselves into the school. The Corporation, who had decided in 1719 to pay the schoolmaster £10 per annum, were evidently not pleased and a minute in the Corporation records of 15 January, 1729/30, refers to the incident thus:

Ordered that the Schole Windows, which were broke by the Schoole Boys at the time of their barring out the Master, be for this time repaired at the Charge of the Corporation; but it is unanimously agreed... that there shall be no barring out for the future, nor that the Master by any Orders be tyed from correcting the Boys...<sup>99</sup>.

Any further broken windows were to be paid for out of the Master's salary, which by 1731 had risen to £30 p.a. and appears to have been irregularly and grudgingly paid. Edmund Withers had to write to the Corporation in 1721 for example, to complain that his salary had not been paid and the Mayor, and others, subsequently visited him to discuss the arrears.<sup>100</sup>.

Perhaps Withers found solace in reading, for his name appears regularly in the newly-commenced loans register from February 1726/7. Patrick's Commentary (three loans, in 1728); Lowth's Commentary; Law's Christian perfection; Prideaux's 'Connections'; and Nichol's On Common Prayer are representative of his earlier theological loans; whilst Chambers' Dictionary and Pemberton's View of Isaac Newton are amongst the non-religious loans. The latter work was borrowed for just over a month immediately prior to the school lock-out incident and Withers returned a book (possibly by Conrad Gesner) on the very day that the Corporation minuted its view of the incident; 15 January, 1729/30. On that same visit to the library, Withers took out Willughby's Ornithologiae and kept it for almost a month, whilst later in the year he borrowed Raleigh's History of the world (the first of only three borrowers to do so); Chambers' Dictionary once again; and a copy of Bede's Historia.

His total loans amount to some seventy-three, thirteen of which

are in the earlier period 1715/6. Of these thirteen, four are of Bingham's Antiquities and two of Grabe's Specilegium SS. Patrum, whilst the History of Lent; Maurice's Defence of episcopacy; and Hamon L'Estrange's Alliance are amongst the others. In 1719, Withers had been appointed vicar of Owston and in April of that year he donated two books to the Society library: Limborch's Body of divinity and Daniel Heinsius' Exercitatus ad New Testament. (The former volume was borrowed twice only; both times by Charles Cowper, once in 1728 and again in 1731, whilst the latter volume is not recorded as being borrowed at all.) After 1726, when loan records begin again, Edmund Withers duly reappears borrowing between one and eight volumes a year until his death in 1744. Unsurprisingly, his use of the library fluctuates, with no loans at all being recorded against his name during 1736 or during the period 1741-43. However, eight loans are recorded for 1731 and for 1739, the latter year significantly being the one following his retirement from the mastership of Doncaster school when he would have been about sixty-five years old.

At what stage he retired as Treasurer of the Society is not clear, though he certainly served in that capacity for a good many years. All the surviving correspondence between Innys, the London bookseller, and the Society, is addressed to Withers for example, and his name, along with those of John Fox and Hollis Pigot (his former pupil), is the most often seen accompanying the statements that confirm the regular quarterly inspection visits of the library demanded by the Society.<sup>101</sup> Such statements begin in November 1731 and end on February 6, 1755 (though pages are probably missing for the period February 1746-August 1753); the last Withers' signature appearing in February 1743/4. The last Withers' loan is made on 28 April following (it was of Pemberton's View of Newton) the book being returned after his death, in September 1744.

An earlier loan of the same work had been made by Withers during 1729; the year that the members, at their February meeting, had appointed

Withers temporary library keeper to the Society following the death of Patrick Iujon, the late vicar of Doncaster. In the same year Withers had also borrowed Chambers' Dictionary and Bishop Burnet's History of the Reformation, along with other works of history, both civil and ecclesiastical which figure as loans in subsequent years: Eusebius' Ecclesiastical history; Dugdale's Monasticon; Calmet's Dictionary; and Rollin's Ancient history, being a representative selection. Both the Calmet work and the Rollin History were borrowed consecutively, volume by volume; the first between January and June 1734 (four loans: two of volume 2) and the second between March and September 1739 (six loans of two volumes each, covering volumes 1 to 12). Return dates in all cases are recorded and Withers is scrupulous throughout in the detail of his entries.

Subsequent masters of the Doncaster school appear but rarely in the loan record. Mr Davile, appointed Master 29 August, 1737, as successor to Edmund Withers, has two loans allocated to him in January and September 1740 (both works by Rollin). His tenure of the post did not last long however, for it was ordered by the Corporation that Davile's salary be "taken off" at Martinmas, 1742/3 for having neglected the school.<sup>102</sup> His replacement, Rev. John Jackson, rector of Rossington, was appointed soon after, though his name fails to appear as a library borrower. In 1747, the Rev. Richard Croachley was appointed Master after being Under-Master at Westminster school, and a single loan entry exists for 22 April, 1757 where 'Taylor's Lysias' is 'sent to' Mr Crouchley (sic) by Hollis Pigot. According to one source Richard Croachley died "near broken-hearted in distress and misery".<sup>103</sup>

Two further school masters used the library: Thomas Trant and the Rev. Mr Simpson of Gainsburgh (sic). Simpson was master of the Free School at the latter place and gave to the library, in April 1740 (possibly in lieu of membership subscription money) a work by William Cave in two quarto volumes. However, only two subsequent loans are recorded to him:

Milton's Poetical works, issued 11 April, 1740 (returned three months later); and 'Junii Homerus' issued 6 November, 1740 and returned the April following.

The Thomas Trant recorded borrowing on twelve occasions (fourteen issues) between December 1726 and March 1737 may well have been Thomas Trant, son of Gabriel, sometime rector of Lowther, Westmorland, who was ordained during September 1725 and subsequently appointed Master of Hemsworth School, Yorkshire, in 1732. His recorded loans commence a year after ordination and appropriately enough include such works as Watson's Clergyman's law; Waterland's Defence; and Potter On Church government. Later loans include Prior's Poems; Nichols' On Common Prayer; the third volume of a polyglot Bible; and Pemberton's View of Newton, returned in April 1737. Thomas Trant was subsequently appointed rector of Holdenby, Northamptonshire, a living he held from 1739 until his death in 1759.

Presented purely in numerical terms the most popular books in the Society library, according to the number of recorded issues 1715 to ca 1776, were: the Universal history (41 loans recorded); Chambers' Dictionary (32); Joseph Bingham's Origines ecclesiasticae; or, the antiquities of the Christian Church (21); Charles Rollin's Ancient history (18); Bishop Burnet's History of the Reformation (15); the sermons of George Smalridge (14); and William Watson's The Clergyman's law: or, complete incumbent. (14). The first two mentioned works account for over ten per cent of the total recorded issues 1715 to ca 1776.<sup>104</sup>.

However, if one considers the popularity of authors in a similar fashion (where for instance one particular author may be represented by a number of his published works), a slightly different picture emerges. The list, following Universal history and Chambers' Dictionary, which retain their lead, would then be: Bishop Burnet (31 issues of his works); Charles Rollin (28); Joseph Bingham (21); George Smalridge (14); John Rogers, 1679-1729, (14); Daniel Waterland (14); and William Watson (14).

Such bland, simplified tables like these, offered without some further explanation and description, can however only present a crude and generalised indication of the true picture. A picture that must for instance take cognizance of the time span to which such issues refer and to a lesser extent, to the number of different borrowers involved in each total.

The Bingham volume, for example, fails to appear at all in the recommenced borrowing record of 1726 onwards. All twenty-one issues of the Antiquities are compressed into the period April 1715 to November 1716, making this by far the most-issued work at that time and one that most contemporary Society members borrowed at least one volume of. This is not to say however that the work, relatively suddenly, became unpopular, but rather that it was probably no longer available to the members by 1726.<sup>105</sup> Nevertheless, it was one of the earliest books to be acquired by the Society (sent for ca 1715 and £1 paid for four volumes) in whose 'mutual-improvement in Christian knowledge' aims it must have centrally figured.

The Universal history volumes similarly, at a later period, enjoyed an intensity of use unmatched elsewhere in the loan record. The various volumes (up to nineteen are recorded) are issued on a total of forty-one occasions within a relatively short period of four years (December 1749 to November 1753); thirty-two volumes alone going out in one year (December 1749 to December 1750). Significantly, these loans involved only seven different borrowers and thus examples emerge of persistent and sequential borrowings involving one borrower and up to sixteen volumes.<sup>106</sup>

Not all the most-borrowed works enjoyed such intensity of use. By contrast, one can cite the thirty-two recorded issues of Chambers' Dictionary which were spread over some twenty-three years (1728-1751); the two-volume work having been given to the library by Viscount Downe in 1722. The resultant average of between one and two issues a year

over the recorded period, compared with a figure of between ten and eleven for the Universal history, presents a very different borrowing pattern to that which the bare issue figures reveal. Further, despite the span of loan-years being some eight times longer for Chambers' Dictionary than for Universal history, only four more borrowers were involved in the loans of the former than with the latter (i.e. eleven borrowers accounted for the thirty-two Dictionary loans whilst seven accounted for the forty-one Universal history loans.)

The evident popularity of history as a reading topic at this time is not unusual and has parallels elsewhere in the records of other eighteenth-century library loans.<sup>107</sup> At Doncaster, there were other works of general or civil history in the collection, though their issues are not recorded as being substantial - with the possible exception of Rollin's Ancient history, borrowed on eighteen occasions between March 1738/9 and April 1772.<sup>108</sup> Further historical works present were Francis Drake's Eboracum (7 loans over thirty years: 1742-1772); Paul de Rapin-Thoyras' History of England (6 loans: 1737-177(?)); Bishop Samuel Parker's History of his own times (4 loans: 1727-1731); and Raleigh's History of the world (3 loans: 1730-1748).<sup>109</sup>

Of the non-theological works included in the library and not already mentioned, Pemberton's A View of Sir Isaac Newton's philosophy is recorded as being loaned nine times (1729-1749) whilst a 'History of ye heavens' went out five times between 1741 and 1746.<sup>110</sup> Sprat's History of the Royal Society has five recorded loans (1729-1749), whilst Nehemiah Grew's Rarities of the Royal Society, only three (1727 (2) and 1734). The Rev. Jeremy Fawkes, rector of Warmsworth, was responsible for three of the Sprat and Grew issues between 1727 and 1734. Appropriately, Edmund Withers the schoolmaster, was one of four borrowers of Thomas Baker's Reflections on human learning, whilst he was also one of the early borrowers who took out the John Ray printing of Francis Willughby's Ornithologiae (nine loans, 1727-1736).

Various volumes of the Philosophical transactions are also issued between 1727 and 1748 and take the form of abridgements by Jones and Lowthorpe. Whilst two further works only just merit inclusion: the French lawyer John Domat's On civil law (two loans in 1728) and Locke's Essay concerning human understanding with a single recorded issue to John Fox, senior, vicar of Cantley, in August 1729.

There are two recorded instances of works by Milton being donated to the library; the first in 1717 when Paradise lost was given by a Mr Wilkinson and a later gift by Rev. Stuart, rector of Armthorp, which volume is identified only as 'Milton'. Three loans only are recorded of the poet's 'Works' during 1737-1740. The poems of Matthew Prior similarly, merit little attention, with only two recorded loans. Memoirs of literature, the Innys-produced work, sent on approval by the publishers in August 1725, also leaves the library just twice.

As befitting a library with its foundations in a society whose aim was mutual improvement in Christian knowledge, theological works, whether historical, doctrinal or overtly controversial, appear as the more regular fare of the Society member. However, there are clear discrepancies within broadly similar areas, probably resulting from individual preferences. Hence, Bishop Burnet's History of the Reformation in England<sup>111</sup> for instance which receives fifteen loans, 1726-1750; whilst Peter Heylin's work on the same subject received only one in 1755. Both Echard's General ecclesiastical history and Jeremy Collier's Ecclesiastical history receive but three loans each, the latter between 1750 and 1754 despite being published 1708-1714. An abridgement of Bishop Gibson's Codex juris ecclesiastici anglicani, offered on approval by Innys the bookseller in 1730, was obviously acceptable for five loans of it are recorded, 1730-1752. Additionally, an edition of Bede's Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum by Abraham Wheelocke, appears but once, being loaned to schoolmaster Withers in November 1730.

Edmund Withers it is again who accounts for four of the five



recorded loans of Augustine Calmet's Dictionary<sup>112</sup>. during 1734 and who also appears as first borrower, in October 1731, of Arthur Bedford's Scripture chronology. Four further loans take place by May, 1751; and it is Withers once again who is responsible for the only two recorded issues of Christopher Cellarius' Notitia orbis antiqui, sive geographia, during 1734.

Those books of sermons that proved to be issued the most often are Smalridge's with 14 loans, spanning 1727-52; those of Tillotson, 12 loans, 1727-1755; Barrow, 10 loans, 1728- ca 1760; and John Rogers with 9 loans, 1731-1755. Other collections present in the library but borrowed little, include those of Kettlewell, Conybeare, Warren and Mede. Whilst if the same procedure is applied to commentaries on the Bible, then Dean Patrick's Paraphrases and commentaries on the Old Testament emerges as the most borrowed with a total of eleven loans, 1727-1749, along with Prideaux's 'Connections' having the same number of issues, 1716-1743. Also present are works by Ainsworth; Davenant; Hammond; Lowth; Poole; and Samuel Wesley, though the latter's Commentary on Job has only a single issue recorded in 1737.

Although not the most heavily borrowed works in the library, the foregoing sermons and Bible commentaries do immediately appear as the most enduring. That is, the time-span covered by their loans is in many cases substantial and corresponds more or less with the active life of the library. Thus Burnet's Reformation; the sermons of Smalridge, Tillotson and Barrow; Patrick's Commentary; and Prideaux's 'Connections'; all are issued soon after the recommenced borrowing record of 1726 and, be it somewhat spasmodically, retain their apparent usefulness until the middle of the century.

By that time, interest generally in the library appears to drop away, a phenomenon perhaps not entirely unconnected with the series of deaths that took place, 1744-1750, of at least three of the original or early members of the Society. Members, who, in their most active years

had taken a vigorous, if orthodox, interest in the persistent theological controversies which ebbed and flowed via the printed page.

Unsurprising book titles held by the library and borrowed by members, and which reflect the orthodox stance of these Doncaster clergymen include: Thomas Sherlock On prophecy (5 loans), Wall's Infant baptism (6); both Wheatley and Nichols on Common Prayer; Bishop Potter On Church government (10); and William Law's Christian perfection (5). In addition, both Conybeare's and John Rogers' defences of divine revelation are present, the former being acquired evidently soon after its publication in 1732, as loans commence in June 1733. Both these works were issued by their authors against, and in reply to, the deistic writing of Matthew Tindal whose Christianity as old as the creation (published 1730) provoked these and probably one hundred and fifty other replies from such leading divines as William Law, John Clarke and Daniel Waterland.<sup>113</sup> Tindal's provocative and controversial work 'the peak of deistical writings' is present in the Society library, though it is recorded as being loaned only twice: in 1732 (to Edmund Withers) and in 1734 (to Thomas Alderson). Withers was also one of only five readers to borrow a second blatantly deistical work in the collection: Thomas Wollaston's Religion of nature delineated; the last recorded loan being in July 1749, some sixteen years after the author had died, imprisoned and insane.

Daniel Waterland, mentioned above in connection with the deistic controversies, was active earlier in contentious theological matters. In 1719 he published a Defence of some queries on the divinity of Christ; a work attacked in turn by the Arians and to which Waterland replied with A second vindication of defence of Christ's divinity (1723). The Society of clergymen at Doncaster evidently felt strongly about the controversy and wrote to Dr Waterland apparently setting out in detail, point by point, their approval of his arguments. To this letter (which may not survive) Waterland replied on 2 November, 1719, and the content of this letter was read out at the Society meeting of 10 December following.<sup>114</sup>

Waterland refers elsewhere in the letter to his sermons, soon to be published, and these along with four other published works are recorded as being borrowed from the Society library. And although there survives no contemporary record of loans for precisely that period of the Waterland correspondence, later loans of Waterland's works (after 1726) amount to fourteen in total and range in time between 1730 and 1748.

There is further evidence that Dr Waterland was indeed aware of the existence of the Society at Doncaster, prior to the correspondence referred to above. The Society Minute Book refers to a letter from Dr Waterland on 1 August, 1717, suggesting that a reply be sent at the first opportunity in response to his gift of two guineas to the Society.<sup>115</sup>

Such an active role in a contemporary theological controversy by the Doncaster Society may well not have been an isolated incident. Elsewhere, the Minute Book records (1 June 1721) that an address of thanks be drawn up to the Right Hon. the Earl of Nottingham for, "his excellent Treatise in Defence and Vindication of the Orthodox Christian Faith". The letter<sup>116</sup>, speaking in glowing terms of this "excellent answer to Mr Whiston's letter" was conveyed to his lordship by Thomas Wentworth Esq., of Woodhouse, and confirms the Doncaster clergy's evident integration into the contemporary theological arena not simply through their active book borrowing patterns but by their direct involvement with leading churchmen, authors, booksellers and with other libraries.

1. See above, pp. 84-86.
2. Similarly, absences of book issues in particular months coincide with absences of recorded Society meetings. Months where neither meeting nor book issues occur are: March, June and December 1716, and February to May, 1717 (inclusive).
3. With the possible exception of Henry Cooke (later, rector of Stokesley, Yorkshire, 1723-50) whose signature appends a Society reaffirmation statement of 5 July 1716 and who, therefore, may have been a Society member though no loans are credited to him.
4. i.e. 1715.
5. See above pp.139-140.
6. Seven other works were similarly borrowed during this earlier period and fail to appear again, as loans, after 1726. It is possible that they became less popular, though such a relatively sudden demise is curious and may suggest that some limited dispersal of books did take place amongst the early members of the Society. (See above p. 42.) The works in question were Thomas Brett's A Review of the Lutheran Principles; Grabe's Spicilegium SS. Patrum (Grabe's Septuagint was bought in February 1726/7 and first borrowed in March 1729/30); Humphrey Ditton's Discourse upon the Resurrection; 'Historical account of Lent'; 'Penitential discipline'; Reeve's translation of Justin (for which 11s. had been paid ca 1715); and Hamon L'Estrange's Alliance of divine offices. Three of these works that were not recorded as borrowed after 1726 (the works by Bingham, Grabe and Reeve) account for almost fifty per cent of the pre-1718 recorded loans. In numerical terms these eight titles include the five most popular works from the same period (where popularity is equated with number of recorded issues).
7. DRO, MS. P1/5/E1. f.2r.
8. Ibid. The entry, dated 6 September, 1716, is made up of charges as follows: 6 whole Deals (9s.6d.); 4 slitt (sic) half Deals (7s.10½d.); 6 day's work (9s.); iron work (4s.); and stay-nails and glue (1s.).
9. See above p p.45-47.
10. The first recorded loan of Burnet's History of the Reformation is in December 1726 when alderman Perkins borrowed the first volume for two months.
11. The figure is calculated by Paul Kaufman in: New light from parochial libraries. Libraries and their users: collected papers in library history. Library Association, 1969. p.97.

12. Elsewhere, carriage (and binding) costs were a significant consideration when purchasing new books, and could form a substantial amount of the total cost of acquiring a work. A copy of Poole's Synopsis (1669) held in the Norton Parish Library (at Sheffield City Library) contains an inscription by one W. Strode explaining that of the total purchase cost of £6.9s.6d., approximately 8s.4d. went on carriage costs (London to York) and 24s. on binding.
13. For example: "For bringing ye Books fr̄m Sawnb̄y w<sup>ch</sup> were given by mr Cawley 10s." (D(oncaster) C(entral) L(ibrary), (Local History) MS. H.780. p.111.)
14. See Henry R. Plomer, A Dictionary of the printers and booksellers who were at work in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1668 to 1725. Oxford: The Bibliographical Society, 1922. pp.167-168.
15. Terry Belanger, Publishers and writers in eighteenth-century England. Books and their readers in eighteenth-century England. Isabel Rivers, ed. Leicester: University Press, 1982. p.11.
16. DRO, P1/5/E2,3. (Old number 19/50.) Twenty-seven letters are included in this collection.
17. Ibid. Item 3.
18. See above p.44.
19. DRO, P1/5/E2,3. Item 12.
20. Ibid. Item 13.
21. Also interesting, though not strictly relevant, are references by William Innys to the progress, or otherwise, of the printing of Chambers' Dictionary (presumably in response to queries from Withers at Doncaster). Four extracts are here presented, as they appear not to have been reproduced before.
 

18 November, 1729. The price of the Dictionary is quoted as £6 and the author is said to be "now preparing material for a new edition w.<sup>ch</sup> he reckons will take him up to 5 or 6 years to compleat...". (Ibid. Item 20.)

26 January, 1732/3. Innys anticipates that it will be three or four years before the new edition of the Dictionary will be ready. (Ibid. Item 23.)

14 May, 1736. "Chamber's we daily expect to see go to the Press" (Ibid. Item 25.)

5 February, 1736/7. "Chambers dictionary is reprinting but can't say when it will be done". (Ibid. Item 26.)
22. Ibid. Item 19.
23. Ibid. Item 7.

24. DRO, P1/5/E1. f.3v. Mrs Taylor is not mentioned in Plomer, op.cit., nor in Plomer, Dictionary of printers, 1726-1775.
25. Y(ork) M(inster) L(ibrary), Hackness Parish Library. Benefactor's Book. Benefactors to the library were to enjoy access to the same, but no books were to be lent out of the church. (Approximately 200 volumes from Hackness survive at York Minster Library.) For Daniel Brown(e), bookseller, see Plomer, Dictionary... 1668 to 1725, 53.
26. Hildyard operated as a bookseller for almost fifty years (1682-1731) at York and kept 'what many considered to be the most important and fashionable bookshop in the City, receiving frequent visits from the country families, clergy and even royalty...'. (W.K. and E.M. Sessions, Printing in York from the 1490s to the present day. York: William Sessions Ltd., 1976. p.27.)
27. The bookseller wrote: "I have y<sup>e</sup> Gout in my Right hand makes me write so badly". Francis (?Hildyard) to Edmund Withers, 9 February 1726. (DRO, P1/5/E2,3. Item 15.)
28. DRO, P1/5/E1. Entry for 7 May, 1719.
29. Residents of Doncaster were also evidently benefactors to other parish libraries. Samuel Mellish of Doncaster, Esq., is recorded as having given certain books to the parish of Womersley, according to the Notitia Parochialis of 1705. (Central Council for the Care of Churches, Parochial libraries, 106.)
30. The collection survives at Sheffield City Library and consists of 447 volumes, most of which have Nevile's bookplate in them.
31. At Bradfield, a previous incumbent, Robert Turie had bequeathed all his books 'unto the Minister of Bradfield Chapel... and to his successors there' (Eastwood, History of Ecclesfield, 337. Forty-nine volumes survive at Sheffield City Library); whilst at Ecclesfield, Steers inherited a far older collection of chained books, the initial benefaction dating from 1549. (Eastwood, History of Ecclesfield, 517.)
32. See above p.76. Wentworth's gift of five works is that most probably referred to in a letter written by Patrick Dujon to Edmund Withers and reproduced in C.W. Hatfield, Historical notices of Doncaster. Third Series. Doncaster: Brooke, White and Hatfield, 1866. p.306.
33. See above pp.53-54.
34. In 1748: 'The Rev<sup>d</sup>. Mr Pertak the curate (at Bolsterstone) who fled from Prague for his religion, and his wife, being the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Thos. Wentworth's Ladies woman, are buried in Spink Hall seat. His honour built him a cellar at Brockhole Hurst and stocked it with liquers; procured the parochial library, and was his great friend'. (Eastwood,

History of Ecclesfield, 478.)

35. Wentworth was one of the original signatories to the 1699 Preamble regarding the foundation of the S.P.C.K. In 1706, he paid an admission gift to the Society of £5.7s.6d. and elected to pay an annual subscription of £10. (See McClure, S.P.C.K. Minutes, 4, 10, 12, etc.)
36. The main sequence of recorded loans is to be found in the MS. Issue Book ("Doncaster Clerical Library, 1726-1776" (sic)): DCL, (Local History) H.695.
37. Ibid., f.2r. This particular entry is seriously misquoted in Kaufman, Libraries and their users, 94.
38. Roger Perkins died 9 July, 1733, and therefore cannot be the 'Dr Perkins' credited with a loan of Francis Willughby's Ornithologiae on 12 June 1736. Rather, this latter loan probably involves a Dr Perkins of Stainforth who was also a benefactor of four books to the library, one of which was the Willughby work.
39. John Neal's father was George Neal, M.D., of Leeds. (See Charles W. Hatfield, Historical notices of Doncaster. (First Series.) Doncaster: Brooke, White and Hatfield, 1866. p.366.)
40. Mr Ellerker, a parishioner, was elected as a Trustee for the House of Maintenance for the Poor of Doncaster in June 1743.
41. George Cooke was buried at Arksey, September 16, 1763. His father, George Cooke senior (d.1732), was elected M.P. for Aldborough, Yorkshire, in 1698, and his brother Bryan, who succeeded his father as Baronet in 1732, was sometime M.P. for East Retford, Nottinghamshire.
42. There exists the possibility of more; some titles are difficult to read accurately and of the unidentified borrowers, Bradshaw; Spencer; and Wrighton could be titled either Mr. or Mrs.
43. Thomas Rodwell (see above p. 141.) was vicar of Arksey, 1708-1748.
44. Mrs Ann Hall, widow of the late John Hall, gave seven works to the Society's library in April 1726.
45. Cf. Elizabeth Brunskill, Eighteenth-century reading: some notes on the people who frequented the Library of York Minster in the eighteenth century and on the books they borrowed. York: York Georgian Society, 1950. Where, of the ninety-three legible borrowers' names, recorded as using York Minster Library during the eighteenth century, four were women and all appeared during the second half of the century. Works borrowed include Tillotson's Sermons; a life of Socrates; two volumes of Universal history; Turner's Herbal; and Biographia

- Britannia. For an instance of far more active library use by women borrowers see the account of Witham parish library in this work (below, pp. 168; 170 ).
46. See, for example, Jackson, History of St. George's Church, xxv-xxvii.
  47. Hatfeild stayed at Doncaster until 1785. He may not have had an interest in the library, though by 1762 when he was appointed to the living, recorded interest was already dwindling. Apparently, he had little influence on the steady decline in recorded library use which was to lapse altogether during the following decade.
  48. Dujon may have previously acted as Lecturer at Doncaster. He succeeded the Rev. John Jackson as vicar, whose son, John Jackson junior, was sometime Master of Wigston Hospital, Leicester, and was the author of Chronological antiquities (1752).
  49. Jackson, History of St. George's Church, lxx.
  50. See above, p.116.
  51. Patrick Dujon died in December 1728, aged fifty-seven.
  52. They obtained on this visit: Isaac Barrow's Works (£1.6s.) and 'Laud vs Fisher' (4s.).
  53. A second child (unrecorded in the loans register) may have been Elizabeth Dujon, who is recorded as marrying T. Strather of Leeds on 9 January, 1727.
  54. DCL (Local History), H.780. p.1. Edmund Withers is further discussed above p.142 . The appointment of Withers to the office of library keeper echoes that at Wisbech where the post was traditionally filled by the Master of Wisbech Grammar School. At nearby Rotherham, it was evidently sufficient to be 'a man of learning and ability'. (See above, p.58.)
  55. Hollis Pigot's father, John, was sometime vicar of Rolleston and rector of Ordsal, Nottinghamshire; he was also vicar of St. Mary's, Sandwich, and prebendary at Southwell (1700-1727). He died in 1727; further information regarding the Pigot family is provided in Hatfield, Historical notices (First Series), 441.
  56. i.e., the sacred book of the Mohammedans: the Koran. The earlier form of the word, as used by Pigot, was then common; O.E.D. provides no example later than 1796 for this earlier form of the word. *NOT So.*
  57. John, for example, borrowed volumes seven and eight of the Universal history in June 1750 after his father had borrowed volumes one to six sequentially over the previous six months.
  58. Apparently, one studious curate moved his bed into the library. (Edward Miller, The History and antiquities of Doncaster and its vicinity.



Doncaster: W. Sheardown, n.d. (?1804) p.93.)

59. No fewer than ten members of the Society (including Webster) borrowed books on 2 August, 1716: the most intense occasion of use recorded during these early years. Webster, as a new borrower, took out Bingham's Antiquities and was joined by Rev. Robert Smith, sometime rector of Armthorp parish, who, also borrowing for the first time, took out the 'Historical account of Lent'.
60. Jackson, History of St. George's Church, lxxviii.
61. The S.P.C.K., as early as 1699, in its Second Circular Letter to clerical correspondents, had recommended with regard to the meetings of clergymen who had formed themselves into societies for the propagation of Christian knowledge: 'That the place of meeting be, if possible, a private house...'. (McClure, S.P.C.K. Minutes, 45.)
62. One of Lister's first pupils at Eury was Francis Fawkes, later poet and divine (see above p.140.), son of Jeremy Fawkes rector of Warmsworth. The father, though not the more famous son, appears as a regular borrower at the Doncaster library. One later work by Francis Fawkes: A Description of winter from Gawin Douglas (1754) was dedicated thus: 'To the Rev. John Lister, A.M., formerly my preceptor'. (See entry for Francis Fawkes in D.N.B.)
63. For a pedigree of the Hatfield family see Joseph Hunter, South Yorkshire: the history and topography of the Deanery of Doncaster in the Diocese and County of York. For the author by J.B. Nichols, 1828. p.178.
64. A copy of Milton's Paradise lost was also donated by a Mr Wilkinson in November 1717, along with two other works. A total of three loans are recorded for 'Milton's poetical works': two in 1737 (by Mr Lawson and Hollis Pigot) and one further in 1740 (by Mr Simpson).
65. See above, p.123.
66. Viz: 'Dear Sir, I beg you will please to communicate to my Rev. Brethren of the society, yt as I have sold up part of my goods, and drawn myself into a corner of my house, and it is thereby rendered incapable of receiving much company, I am under a necessity of withdrawing from them at present, but hope if I shall live to fill it again, to have ye happiness of being readmitted. I heartily wish a continuance to the Society, and cannot but look upon my being depriv'd of the pleasure and benefits of it as one of ye most afflicting circumstances of life. These things, grievous as they are, will well fit me for keeping this holy season of Lent in a suitable manner. - I am sir, your's and my brethn of the Society's most affecnate and obedt and humble servant, Jo Banks. - Pray present my service to Mrs Fawks, and ye rest of yr

fireside.' (Reproduced by Hatfield, Historical notices, (First Series), 306.)

67. YML, Hackness Parish Library. Benefactor's Book.
68. See above p. 24 n.16.
69. Probably not the works of Richard Allestree, who is now known to be the author of the Whole duty of man.
70. The works of 'Dr Rogers', in four octavo volumes, are recorded as a gift to the Society library made in February, 1730/1 by Rev. Mr Fox, rector of Edlington.
71. One particular period of Fox's borrowing record is notable, when, during the twelve months following November 1735, seven loans were made; four loans were of Bishop Potter's Church government and three were of Dr Roger's Civil establishment and clearly represent a response to some preoccupation, perhaps with parish administration.
72. The following publication written by one John Fox B.A. (Minister of Kildwick Piercy) may relate to one of the Doncaster library borrowers of that name: An Earnest persuasive to a manly defence of our happy constitution in Church and State. York, 1758.
73. There remains the distinct possibility that the entries in the loans record variously credited to Mr Wright/Robert Wright/and Mr Wright of Grove represent the borrowing activity of more than one person.
74. DRO, P1/5/E2,3. Item 18.
75. Jackson, History of St. George's Church, xlix., records that one Lionel Willats, Clerk, died 20 May, 1760. The archaic form of title reveals his clerical status.
76. DRO, P1/5/E2,3. Item 25.
77. Rev. Patrick Dujon died in December 1728 and Edmund Withers was soon after appointed temporary library keeper in February 1728/9. Hollis Pigot, the new vicar of St. George's, begins to appear regularly in the record of library loans from December 1729.
78. Judging from the date of Beighton's B.A. (1717/8), he would have been about thirty years old when using the Doncaster library and obviously died young. A Catalogue of the library of the Rev. Mr Beighton. (with prices in MS.) is B.M.269. k.7. The Christian name in this publication is, however, Thomas, perhaps a relation.
79. Reaffirmation statements are frequently recorded in the Society's Minute Book (DRO, P1/5/E1.) and originate in the earliest years of the Society. On the occasion that Thomas Beaver was a signatory, there were ten other signatures.
80. John Dujon, son of Patrick, vicar of Doncaster also used both libraries, but is only recorded as borrowing on a single occasion at York Minster

Library. (See above, pp.128-129.)

81. The Rothwell appointment is given in Venn, Alumni Cantabrigienses, 389., though the nearest place of that name to Doncaster is west of Castleford, and does not apparently tie in with the Thorne connection. Confusion may have resulted from the fact that there were three generations of Charles Cowpers; two of which (Rev. Charles Cowper of Thorne and his son) appear to have been scholars and authors and holders of clerical appointments at York. Further work would no doubt reveal the separate nature of their achievements.
82. See above p.91.
83. Loan entries are recorded in YML, MS. ADD.217/1.
84. 1. Thessalonians 4:2. Charles Cowper LL.B., A Sermon preached at the Cathedral Church of St. Peter in York; On Sunday March 28, 1756 at the Lent-Assizes held at York before the Honorable Sir Thomas Birch, Knight, one of the Justices of his Majesty's Court of Common Pleas. York: For S. Stabler and B. Barstow, 1756.  
The following also exist: Charles Cowper, A sermon...May 5th Thanksgiving day...for putting an end to the late bloody and expensive war, by the conclusion of a peace. (York): A. Ward, 1763.; and Charles Cowper, Self-love. Set forth in a sermon preached...December 30, 1750. York: J. Hildyard, 1751.
85. A monumental inscription at Warmsworth (translated from the Latin) reads: "Rev. Jer Fawkes, A.B. long the esteemed Rector of this Church, adorned with native talent and with learning, distinguished by graceful manners and refinement of conversation, excelling in benevolence, sincerity and integrity: in life the friend of all good men, he died lamented by all, in the 58th year of his age, in the year of our Lord 1744". (Hatfield, Historical notices, 343.)
86. The content and nature of Francis Fawkes's own library (sold in 1778, according to D.N.B.) would be of interest in this respect.
87. Sometimes spelt Auston or Ouston.
88. Two copies of the Settlement, on parchment, with library catalogues appended are DRO, P1/5/E4. The Society Minute Book records that such copies were to be made, in an entry dated 4 February, 1724/5.
89. A further single loan is allocated to a Mr Arthur in August 1773 and he may have been a relation. Charles Arthur did in fact lose at least three sons within his own lifetime: Thomas, buried 13 July, 1718; John, buried in February 1732; and Charles, who died in college April 1741, having matriculated in 1738.
90. DRO, P1/5/E1. Entry for meeting of 14 June, 1722 at Thorne.
91. Thomas Rodwell's signature appends one set of proposed rules in:

Memorandum respecting the Clerical Library of St. George's Church, Doncaster. Y(orkshire) A(rchaeological) S(ociety) MS. M340.

92. Miss Rodwell is recorded as having made a single loan in August 1772 and that also of Drake's Eboracum.
93. The Domat volume is recorded as a loan on only one other occasion, to Edmund Withers, and that on the same day as Rodwell borrowed a volume of the same work. The loan date was 1 August, 1728, and both returned the volumes in November of the same year.
94. Thomas Rodwell to Edmund Withers, 2 February, 1731. Quoted by Hatfield, Historical notices, 306. A Mr Bird, mentioned in the letter, does not appear elsewhere as a Society member nor as a library borrower.
95. To the Yew Tree. A Pindaric Ode. By 'Mr Withers of Doncaster' is DCL (Local History), MS. L820WIT. The Ode begins: 'Hail verdant Yew!/  
The Statleest of thy kind that ever grew./Long hast thou stood/The  
Pride and Envy of y<sup>e</sup> Wood/...".
96. See above, p. 82.
97. Their father was curate at Doddington, Cambridgeshire, and rector of Halton, Lancashire (1677-1706), at which latter place he was a benefactor to the school and to the poor; he died 26 May, 1706. For information regarding William Withers of Rotherham, see below, p. 181.
98. Hatfield, Historical notices (Second Series), 97.
99. John Tomlinson, Doncaster Grammar School. Old Yorkshire. (Old Series) W. Smith (ed.) Longmans Green, 1884. v. p. 175.
100. Ibid.
101. That such visits should be made was decided by the members ca 1730; any three or more of the perpetual Trustees to meet in the library on the first Thursday in February, May, August and November: "... and every year forever hereafter at ten of the clock in the forenoon to inspect the sd Bookes and to see that all and every the Articles & Conditions Trusts and Agreements... have been well and truely observed and kept and to give orders for the Redress of any neglect Misdemeanor Matter or Thing they shall find to have been omitted or committed concerning the premises". (Society Minute Book entry; DRO, P1/5/E1.)
102. Tomlinson, Old Yorkshire (Old Series) v. 176.
103. Hunter, South Yorkshire, 30-31. Name spelt 'Crochley'.
104. This listing varies considerably with a previously published account of the borrowing activity from the same library. (Cf. Paul Kaufman, Libraries and their users: collected papers in library history. Library Association. 1966. Chapter VII: New light from parochial libraries.) There are at least three reasons for this disparity.

- Firstly, the Kaufman article takes no account of the pre-1726 recorded loans at Doncaster; secondly, certain titles are compounded by Kaufman, thus inflating the issue figures of some works (e.g. Universal history and Rollin's Ancient history); and thirdly, simple numerical discrepancies arise from Kaufman's "not less than 10 per cent error", which in turn arose from the non-identification of fifty-two book titles and forty-three borrowers' names.
105. The possibility of book-dispersal during the early life of the Doncaster Society is discussed above, pp.117-118; 153 n.6.
  106. Mr Shar. Bache (sic, possibly referred to on one occasion as Rev. Mr Batche), for example, who first used the library in April 1739. (The Rev. Sharington Bache, of Adwick le Street, wrote to the Archbishop of York in September 1768 asking to be excused attendance at a forthcoming confirmation ceremony at Doncaster. (Borthwick Institute, Bishopthorpe Papers R. Bp. 5/292.)) His loans of the Universal history start on 9 January, 1750 with volume one, and end with the return of volume nineteen during autumn, 1753, having taken out, in between, a further fourteen volumes. Loan periods for each volume vary between one and two months; the shortest loan period being for volume five (9 October to 7 November, 1750) and the longest such for volume nine (29 March to 6 August, 1751). Similar persistent and sequential readings of multi-volume works of history occur at Maidstone for example, and there involve the fifteen volumes of Salmon's Modern history. (See below, pp.202-203; 210-213.)
  107. See below, pp. 246-247.
  108. The same author's Traité de la Manière d'Étudier et d'Enseigner les Belles Lettres, was acquired by the Society and accounts for a further ten issues, 1739-1745.
  109. This work was donated to the library by Miss Jane Wrightson (widow of Thomas Wrightson, Esq.) on 4 August, 1725.
  110. The Society accounts mention that Lord Malton, in 1740, gave to the library a copy of abbé Pluche's Histoire du Ciel and this is most likely to be work referred to in the borrowing lists. The work was attacked by Warburton who suggested that parts of it were taken from his own Divine legation.
  111. A three volume edition was bought by the Society (possibly in 1716) for £3.3s. with 2s. carriage.
  112. Augustine Calmet, Dictionnaire historique, antique, et chronologique de la Bible. The English edition, to which the loans probably refer, was translated by Samuel D'Oyley and John Colson and appeared in three

folio volumes in 1732.

113. S. Pargellis and D.J. Medley (editors), Bibliography of British history: the eighteenth century, 1714-1789. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951. pp.120-121.
114. The text is reproduced in Jackson, History of St. George's Church, xxvi-xxvii.
115. DRO, P1/5/E1., entry for 1 August, 1717.
116. Ibid., entry for 6 July, 1721.

WITHAM

Evidence relating to the use made of the Witham Church Lending Library and indeed, the only evidence relating to the very existence of that library, is to be found in two manuscript registers of loans that survive.<sup>1</sup>

The earlier of the two registers consists of an alphabetically thumb-indexed notebook where the listing of loans is recorded under borrower surname - an unusual technique as far as one can gauge from surviving eighteenth-century parish library loan registers - and one which would be most appropriate to a relatively limited and known clientele.<sup>2</sup>

The loan entries themselves are somewhat inconsistent, though in the main they consist of the normal three-part format: borrower's name (usually a page heading), a short-title note of the book borrowed, and the transaction date. In considerably fewer cases, the date the book was returned is added and unfortunately, in a number of other cases (amounting to approximately 25 per cent of all entries), the book title is substituted by a one or two-digit number (possibly a shelf mark) and identification of all these volumes has therefore not been possible.

Entries that relate to an earlier period of the eighteenth century - up to the mid 1760s - appear in a haphazard fashion across the page, though one particular hand does seem to dominate these entries. However, at some later stage, a tabulated pro-forma has been added to most pages underneath the earlier loan entries and consists of the following headings: 'No.'; 'Title of Book'; 'Vol.'; 'Borrow'd'; 'Return'd'. Entries continue below in some cases, though none such are dated prior to October 1770 and as this minor reorganisation apparently coincides with a break in recorded borrowings (1768-1769) it may indicate fresh interest or control being exercised in 1770.

Additionally, an undated listing of books survives, headed: 'Witham Church Lending Library' and consists of forty-six separate works (and two duplicates) in fifty-one volumes, lettered A-Z, AA-VV.<sup>3</sup> This lettered



sequence apparently bears no resemblance to the numerical code used on some occasions to record loans.<sup>4</sup>

The library books themselves, as revealed by the loans register, are wholly theological in nature and yet they can not be said to be wholly 'standard' in the way that the libraries of the S.P.C.K. were.<sup>5</sup> Rather, the books would appear to reflect a personal and idiosyncratic pattern of choice. This would not be surprising if the books had been the object of a personal bequest the likelihood of which would have increased as the century progressed. Here, at Witham, are no works by Tillotson, Whitely, More, Kettlewell, Gastrell, Cave or Wall; names which would have been the backbone of a carefully chosen S.P.C.K. library, though present are William Beveridge's Private thoughts and Robert Nelson's Practice of true devotion and Companion for the Festivals and Fasts of the Church of England (to which Kettlewell and Cave contributed). Moreover, there appears a distinctly independent or dissenting flavour to the collection, witness the presence of the Hymns and Psalms of Isaac Watts; Philip Doddridge's 'Family religion'; and Elizabeth Rowe's Devout exercises.

Also present is the ubiquitous William Burkitt with both his Commentary on the New Testament and The Poor man's help; whilst a similar epithet could also be applied to the then anonymous author of the Whole duty of man (Richard Allestree) and the New whole duty of man. William Sherlock's On death and On future judgement are, additionally, unsurprising inclusions of an oft-read contemporary divine, and similarly, Bishop Edmund Gibson On the Sacrament and Pastoral letters. Whilst in a parish library notable for its lack of classical authors in Greek or Latin editions (or indeed in translation) and for the absence of the Church Fathers, Thomas à Kempis' Imitation of Christ stands alone as an earlier medieval work - probably the only work in the library originating from before the later seventeenth and the eighteenth century.

Not all the forty-six works listed in a simple catalogue<sup>7</sup>. appear in the pages of the loan record and, vice versa, books are recorded as borrowed which do not appear in the listing. This apparent inconsistency is somewhat further complicated by the previously mentioned habit of recording certain books by a number only. In some cases, subsequently recorded short titles have facilitated identification, but there remains a maximum of twenty-seven titles (incorporating forty-seven issues) which can not be identified.<sup>8</sup>.

The most popular work, in terms of recorded issues, was Burkitt's Commentary on the New Testament with a total of twenty-five loans over the period April 1760 to September 1776. Length of loans where ascertainable, vary from three to nineteen months per volume, though one borrower, Elizabeth Darby, managed to borrow all five volumes between April 1760 and December 1761.<sup>9</sup>. It does not necessarily follow that there was any formal religious education associated with such demand for biblical exposition and commentary and no pattern of borrowing suggesting such a process is evident in the loans register. Expository works appear to have been popular texts for the more pious reader of the time and many directions and schemes were available to assist in the task.<sup>10</sup>. ('Plain directions for reading the scriptures' appears in this library's manuscript book list though not as a recorded book loan.)

In the more 'orthodox' circles of the contemporary Anglican church there was some prejudice against hymns; whether medieval and therefore regarded as Popish, or modern and English and therefore of dissenting origin. The appearance of the Psalms and Hymns of Isaac Watts in the loan record (eighteen loans are recorded) would therefore tend to emphasise an evangelical or perhaps dissenting influence at work in Witham. However, such recorded loan figures are small (Watts, eighteen loans over a sixteen-year period; Burkitt, twenty-five loans similarly) and it would be wrong to impart to such figures a significance over and above the modest

indications they provide about reading preferences in a small Essex community. Nevertheless, given that a choice of reading matter was available from the parish church, albeit a limited choice, it is worth recording how that choice was exercised in the absence of other information.

Thus it emerges that after the Burkitt and Watts volumes, works by William Sherlock were the next most-borrowed texts; On death registering ten loans and On future judgement, six loans. Whilst the anonymous Whole duty of man and New whole duty of man do a little to confirm their oft-credited popularity by being borrowed twelve times in total. The same number of loans are also credited to two works by Robert Nelson: the Practice of true devotion and Companion for the Festivals and Fasts. Between them, these five authors; Burkitt, Watts, Sherlock, (Allestree) and Nelson, account for almost forty per cent of total recorded issues. Other borrowed works include the 'New manual of devotion' (nine loans); Bishop Symon Patrick's Glorious Epiphany (six); Elizabeth Rowe's Devout exercises (five); Benjamin Jenks' Prayers (five); and Bishop Gibson's Pastoral letters (five).

The remainder of the works borrowed (as many as fifty-six) have between one and four issues recorded for each; forty-two of them (almost 20 per cent of the total number of works borrowed) recorded as taken out only once or twice. The overall pattern of borrowing, though not the works borrowed, is therefore a familiar one and, to a certain extent, is repeated in the recorded borrowings of far larger libraries where records survive. That is, whereby use is concentrated on a few relatively popular works, whilst the majority of loaned books, or a substantial portion of them, leave the library only once or twice.<sup>11</sup>

In this particular library the borrower to book ratio is low; forty-six works are named in the brief listing and an additional unlisted thirteen are recorded as borrowed. It is possible therefore, that there were only some sixty to seventy works in the entire library (there are a

total of seventy titles and numbered volumes in the issue) and over the twenty-one year period covered by the record, a total of fifty-eight borrowers are entered. Of these fifty-eight borrowers, at least thirty-four were women; the highest such proportion recorded in any of the surviving sources.

Recorded use generally, fluctuated over the period 1757-1778. There are no recorded loans, for example, for the years 1768, 1769, 1772 and 1777 and only one recorded loan during 1771 and 1778. Yet in the year the record begins (1757) there are no fewer than fourteen (possibly fifteen) active borrowers (20 volumes issued), rising to seventeen borrowers in 1758 (41 volumes issued) and 1759 (47 volumes issued). Thereafter, however, is a marked and steady decline in recorded use over the following nine years; 1760: eleven borrowers (26 volumes issued); 1761: six (11); 1762: five (7); 1763: four (5); 1764: three (4); 1765: five (8); 1766: four (4); 1767: two, possibly three (3); 1768: none. Recorded use briefly rises again in 1774 with six active borrowers and continues into 1775 with eleven borrowers (17 volumes issued), though decline once again follows; 1776: two (4); 1777: none; 1778: one (1).

Of those who are recorded as library users during the most active years, before the almost blank years of 1768-1773, only four reappear during the temporary revival of 1774-1776. All four are women: Sarah Robinson; Elizabeth Livermore; Mrs Linguard; and Hannah Chapman, and they are joined by nine further women from the thirteen other new borrowers.

Over the whole period under consideration, a total of 185 visits to the library by individuals are recorded. Of these visits, 172 (92 per cent) can be positively identified regarding date of transaction. It emerges that Sundays, Fridays and Wednesdays (in that order of popularity) were the most frequently used days by library borrowers and most likely coincide with the services held at the parish church.<sup>12</sup>

The church services and the majority of parish affairs were probably

under the direct control of a curate as the two vicars of Witham whose incumbencies overlap with the time-span of the loans record, held the living in commendam. Additionally, both George Sayer, vicar 1722-1761, and Lilly Butler, vicar 1761-1782, held other ecclesiastical posts and both died out of the country; Sayer at Brussels in August 1761 and Butler at Boulogne in January 1792.

Consequently, neither man appears to have had any discernible effect on the parish library in terms of administration or use. The record of library use begins at Witham in 1757, four years before the death of George Sayer in 1761, and may not be linked directly with him, even though he had been active within the parish during the earlier period 1723-31, when he much enlarged the vicarage.<sup>13</sup> His death in 1761<sup>14</sup> and the subsequent appointment of Lilly Butler to the living have no discernible influence on recorded library use at Witham; use which was in steady decline after the peak year of 1759.

Butler too, as a pluralist, holding livings at Wooton Underwood, Buckinghamshire, and Battersea, Surrey, probably had little, if any, influence on the day-to-day affairs of the Witham parish.<sup>15</sup> Rather, it is likely that some, as yet, unidentified curate or pious parishioner was the guiding hand behind the parish library and its administration. One Thomas French is the first borrower to be recorded on 19 October, 1757, though there is no evidence that this date marked a new beginning in library administration, but rather, that continuing use is being monitored, and 19 October, 1757, marks only the first date of extant records.

One early borrower, Will. Roberts, appends his name 'The Clarke' (i.e. Clerk, the archaic form of title for a minister) and borrows on three occasions, December 1757 to June 1758. Whilst the Rev. Mr Chappel appears but once, in January 1764, borrowing Patrick's Glorious Epiphany for a fortnight.

The vast majority of recorded borrowers are likely to be parish-

ioners and a preponderance of Christian names in borrower entries may indicate the relative youthfulness of many borrowers. Those who apparently used the library the most frequently were Elizabeth Darby: 18 visits (22 loans); John Skynner: 16 (18)<sup>16</sup>; Thomas Falsam: 13 (13); Sarah Robinson: 11 (12); Sarah Jackson: 9 (9) and Thomas French: 8 (8).<sup>17</sup> Such figures should, however, be considered within the individual time span to which the loans apply if any indication of intensity of use is to be ascertained. Elizabeth Darby: active borrowing span (from first to last recorded loan) 46 months; John Skynner: 35 months; Thomas Falsam: 10 years; Sarah Robinson: 19 years; Sarah Jackson: 24 months; and Thomas French: 33 months. Twenty-five individuals (43 per cent) are recorded as library borrowers on only one occasion, whilst a further fourteen (24 per cent) visited only twice.

1. ERO, MSS D/P 30/28/3-4. Only the earlier of the two records (that covering the years 1757-1778 and inaccurately described as relating to the years 1751-1775) will be dealt with here. The second of the two registers covers a further twenty-one year period, 1847-1868.
2. For a short period of time, a similar technique was used to record loans made by the Society of Clergymen at Doncaster (see above p.115.) Otherwise at Doncaster, Maidstone, Wisbech and Rotherham, eighteenth-century loan records are listed in chronological order.
3. The list is in the second of the two registers: ERO, D/P 30/28/4.
4. A further list of books, added in 1840 and during following years, has an additional 282 entries.
5. A 72-volume example of which was despatched to Newport, Essex, in 1710, to be housed over the south porch of the parish church.
6. Elsewhere in Essex, for example, at Hatfield Broad Oak, the vicar George Stirling set up a library ca 1708; and at Sible Hedingham the rector Moses Cook (d. 1733) bequeathed his personal library to be kept in the rectory there. (See above p51.)
7. See n.3 above.
8. As not all titled works, recorded as borrowed, have been identified by number, these twenty-seven works may simply represent forty-seven extra unallocated issues of books already identified. Subject to this proviso, total book issues, as presented, are liable to a possible maximum error of twenty per cent.
9. Of the five volumes that comprised the work, volume one is recorded as borrowed most, receiving one third of all recorded loans.
10. Vide, Thomas Preston, Biblical criticism, literature, and the eighteenth-century reader. Books and their readers in eighteenth-century England. Isabel Rivers, ed. Leicester: University Press, 1982. pp. 97-126.
11. See for example, the loan patterns involving Rapin's History at Rotherham parish library and Salmon's History at Maidstone parish library in the present work.
12. See above p. 102.
13. W.J. Lucas, Witham. Essex Archaeological Society Transactions. New Series, IV. 1893. p.85.
14. Recorded in Gentleman's Magazine, XXXI. August 1761. p.382., where Sayer is described as 'dean of Bocking (Essex) and archdeacon of Durham'.
15. Lilly Butler resigned the living in 1782 and subsequently became Chaplain to the Duke of Buckingham in Ireland, and Dean of Armagh,

1785-90. His death at Boulogne is recorded in Gentleman's Magazine, LXII. February 1792. p.182.

16. Appended to the name Samuel Skynner are the words 'in ye Workhouse'. Skynner is first recorded as using the parish library on Christmas Eve, 1758 when he borrowed the Whole duty of man. Two further works were borrowed in February 1759.
17. Seven visits are recorded by Mrs Linguard and Samuel Stafford; five visits by Mrs Barwel, Hannah Chapman, Robert Pomfrett and Stephen Steward; four visits by Mr London and Mary Sayer; and three visits by Matthew Butcher, John Jarvis the younger, Elizabeth Livermore, Will Roberts and ( ) Sumpner.



ROTHERHAM

The manuscript issue book which records loans made from the parish library at Rotherham is remarkable in that it applies to a period of time spanning some one hundred and thirty-eight years, commencing in 1730 and ending in 1868.<sup>1</sup> Although the record is not entirely continuous, it must, nevertheless, represent an important source within what is by common consent, a highly restricted field of records.<sup>2</sup>

For the purposes of the present work, a cut-off date has been applied at December 31, 1800, creating an artificial, though workable, notional period of seventy-one years within the eighteenth century.

Of these seventy-one years, some twenty-nine are blank as far as recorded loans are concerned and are as follows: 1733-1735; 1739; 1755; 1758-1781. Given the distinct twenty-four year break in the record (1758-1781) the remainder of the record can, for the purposes of this work, be seen to consist of two separate loan periods: 1730-1757 and 1782-1800.

During the course of these years, as may be anticipated, recorded use fluctuates greatly. However, generally speaking, as a total of some 743 loans are recorded over an active forty-two year period, then the resulting rough average of eighteen loans per active year provides some indication of the overall intensity of use. If renewals of issues are also taken into account then the average issue rate rises to almost two books a month over forty-two active years. A more detailed analysis of borrowing patterns however reveals a far more complex picture of library use.

The Mansel bequest of £100, which enabled the Rotherham parish library to be established, came from the widow of a local clergyman in 1728. Samuel Ferrand was then incumbent of All Saints' parish church, though it fell to one Isaac Hemingway, then curate of nearby Attercliffe chapelry, Sheffield ('that able scholar and Pious Divine') to select and arrange the collection of books. Contemporary parish accounts confirm the establishment and record certain expenditure for the erecting and painting of a book-press within the vestry of All Saints' during May 1728.<sup>3</sup> The

library issue-book which survives from this period commences at a date soon after, in 'March 1730', and appropriately, Hemingway and Ferrand are the first recorded users.<sup>4</sup>

The books newly made available - both reference and loan volumes - were considered a valuable collection of the best authors on divine subjects, though as will be seen, some secular history was included, if not initially, then during the first ten years of the library's life. It was anticipated that such a library should benefit both the clergy of the parish and the parishioners, any of whom could use the collection within the terms of the contemporary Additional Rules.<sup>5</sup>

Controversial or polemic works of theology do not appear to have predominated in the collection despite a wealth of such literature being available. If controversies such as that involving the Nonjurors were, by 1730, at rest, then further controversies involving Deism and Socinianism were being argued out in print. 1730 was also the year in which the 'Deist's Bible' was published<sup>6</sup> and the year in which evangelical non-conformity was heralded with the formation of the Methodist Society by John and Charles Wesley at Oxford. The effect of such developments on the clergy and parishioners of Rotherham is not however evident in the pages of the library issue book, the literature thus made available being of a more orthodox nature.<sup>7</sup>

Approximately twenty-four loans were recorded during the first year that records were kept, though such initial enthusiasm evidently soon waned with very few further loans recorded before 1736.<sup>8</sup> Joseph Eccles had been appointed vicar of All Saints' on the death of Samuel Ferrand in January 1733, though he in turn died soon after and John Lloyd was appointed vicar in October 1734. Soon after that, at least by January 1735/6, recorded loans had risen again to their initial level of about two issues per month and largely involved the various volumes of the Rapin History; a work which was to dominate issues over the next

seventy years. The trend was not to continue however and loans once again fell back with only three recorded for 1738 and none at all for 1739.

A trickle of new borrowers are attracted to the books in the vestry during the following twelve years of Lloyd's incumbency, 1740-1752 (between one and seven per year). Schoolmasters, clergy and tradesmen borrow between three (1750) and twenty (1744) books a year (the latter year's issues coinciding with the declaration of war on Britain by France and Austria) and comprise mainly of loans of Rapin's History.

The Rev. John Lloyd evidently did have some interest in the fabric of his church at this time and a major re-seating took place within the parish church in 1743. Amongst other things then removed from the church were a reading desk and 'scholars' loft'. The church and the district generally must have prospered at this time. The vicarage, then adjacent to the parish church, was referred to as 'the Palace'<sup>9</sup> and the population of something approaching one thousand families which the incumbent served (there were approximately 130 to 180 communicants<sup>10</sup>.) had cause to celebrate in April 1746 when news came to them of the defeat of the Jacobite rebels and the fear of fighting in the town was removed.<sup>11</sup> 1746 was also the year that Samuel Walker and his brothers established the celebrated Masborough ironworks, a local industry which brought much economic growth working in tandem with the collieries around Sheffield.<sup>12</sup>

Four new borrowers were attracted to the parish library at All Saints', Rotherham during 1746, though only seven transactions are recorded for that year, and for whatever reason, recorded loans came to a temporary end eleven years later in 1757. No loans whatsoever are recorded for the period 1758-1781.

The recommencement of recorded loans from the library in 1782 is significant, coinciding as it does with certain national and local events. The parish had been given powers, along with other parishes, derived from Gilbert's Act, to administer the Poor Law, and locally, John Lloyd, vicar of All Saints' since 1734 died in April 1782 and was replaced by William

Harrison. Either (or both) events may have had an immediate impact on the administration of the parish library, for loans are once again regularly and carefully recorded from May 1782.<sup>13</sup>

It is difficult to gauge whether such newly-recorded loans were the result of fresh interest or whether they reflect a tightening up of administration within the parish generally, whereby, the continuing use of the books was expected to be recorded formally. Perhaps the balance is tipped toward the latter possibility by the appearance of a new manuscript catalogue of the collection, dated 1782, within the issue book. Approximately one hundred and sixty works are listed and a proliferation of marginal notes indicates a contemporary, or later, stock-check. At least twenty-five other works are added in a later hand (many are books of music and hymns) and an explanatory note is added: "Books bought with the Publick Money belong assuredly to the Public Parochial Library".<sup>14</sup>

Such evidence of renewed interest, in 1782, follows a somewhat conflicting picture of local conditions and circumstances. On the one hand a new charity school had been built in 1774, and there was no shortage of subscribers to the new church organ appeal of 1777.<sup>15</sup> Yet there were long and severe storms recorded in 1767 and 1774 which caused great hardship, and 1771 has been described as a time of great distress when the parish authorities paid out £27.5s. in bread and coals for the needy. The Minute Book of the parish Feoffes for 1774 records the following lamentable account of conditions:

This year putting in with a long and very severe storm, provisions being very dear, and very few labourers could get employment, the Feoffees considered to relieve them in a more general and liberal manner, with coals, bread weekly, and money. A wagon load of coals was generally divided amongst three families, and sometimes amongst four. Nine score of 4d. loaves were distributed on the Sunday after evening service, one, two, or three, according unto y<sup>e</sup> number of their families, or distress for want of employment...<sup>16</sup>

Perhaps conditions improved during the early years of the new decade and the arrival of a new vicar in 1782 may have improved parish

administration. Library loans during the decade 1782-1792 are not great however and with the exception of 1786, never exceed an average of one per month. However, recorded use is steady and is maintained by the appearance of between two and seven new borrowers who are attracted to the library each year.

The final decade of the century is marked by a significant increase in recorded library use (an increase probably artificially interrupted by the December 1800 cut-off date) and once again the change in fortune is accompanied by a change of vicar at All Saints'. Thomas Bayliffe was appointed to the living in 1794 (having been an assistant minister at Sheffield), the very year in which recorded loans jump to a figure of twenty-nine - a figure just higher than in any other previously recorded year. Significantly, Bayliffe is recorded as donating to the library a copy of Dr Thomas Bray's Bibliotheca parochialis (2nd edition, 1707) and the Earl of Effingham (to whom Bayliffe was appointed domestic chaplain) similarly a copy of Francis Godwin's Episcopi de praesulibus angliae commentarius (Cambridge, 1743).<sup>17</sup>.

The recorded use made of the library in the last six years of the century rapidly increases and with each successive year new borrowers are introduced. In 1795 there are five new borrowers, whose names have not previously been recorded, and in 1796 there are nine similarly, figures continue thus: 1797 (seven new borrowers); 1798 (seventeen); 1799 (fourteen) and 1800 (thirteen). Such figures are of course cumulative in terms of the total number of people making use of the library, and the issue figures for the same period reflect the growth in user numbers: 1795 (30 transactions); 1796 (74); 1797 (71); 1798 (121); 1799 (125); 1800 (167). There were therefore more recorded loans made during the final year of this period (1800) than were made in total over the first twelve years of recorded loans earlier in the century (1730-1742).

During the time-span covered by the surviving loan records (1730-1757 and 1782-1800), five ministers held the incumbency at All Saints',

Rotherham. Contemporary with the Mansel bequest of 1728 and the first recorded loans of 1730 was Samuel Ferrand, vicar at Rotherham from July 1704 until his death early in 1733. Ferrand had proceeded B.A. from Trinity, Cambridge, in 1682/3 and apparently soon after entered the church, being first rector of Todwick (a village six miles north-west of Worksop) from 1685 to 1687, and then vicar of Calverley, west of Leeds, 1688 to 1693. He would have been about forty years old when he took over the living at Rotherham from the younger local man John Mandevil in 1704 and by 1719 he was evidently influential enough to have gained for his son, Benjamin, the living at Attercliffe, a nearby parish very close to Sheffield. Consequently, the younger Ferrand, not surprisingly, appears as a 'strange minister' (that is, a visiting or guest minister) during 1718 at Rotherham and on at least a further three occasions during 1720.<sup>18</sup>

Either man - father or son - could therefore be the 'Rev. Mr Ferrand' whose name appears first at the head of the chronologically-listed record of loans made from the parish library and dated March 1730. It is likely however that such pride of place was given to the elder Ferrand, Samuel, incumbent at Rotherham and in whose church vestry the books were kept. The very first recorded loan, issued to Ferrand, is that of Bishop Offspring Blackall's Sermons and remains the one and only recorded issue of this work. Apart from one further loan soon after, no further issues are allocated to the name Ferrand.<sup>19</sup>

Such evident lack of use by an incumbent can be again inferred by the absence in the loans register of the next holder of the living at Rotherham, Joseph Eccles. However, this Yorkshireman only held the post for just over a year during 1733-34 in which latter year he died, aged about twenty-nine. The same absence is also true of his successor at All Saints', John Lloyd, who in contrast held the living for some forty-six years until his death in April 1782.<sup>20</sup> It was during Lloyd's incumbency that library loans ceased to be recorded altogether, the last entry for the first period of loans being 23 June, 1757. It is therefore probable

that these are indications of declining interest in the library coupled to a neglect in the administration of library loans. Certainly recorded loans had fallen to a very few indeed during the years 1753, 1754, 1756 and 1757 (with none recorded for 1755) and the physical appearance of the manuscript loan record at this point offers no obvious evidence of missing leaves to suggest an incomplete record.

Significantly, the recommenced listing of book loans of May 1782 is exactly contemporary with the death of Lloyd in April and the new appointment of William Harrison as vicar, most probably in the very same May. And not for the first time it appears probable that the fortune and success of such a library undertaking could be largely determined by the influence and attitude of one or two individuals. In this particular case, one interprets Harrison's influence as positive as the recommencement of the loans record suggests. It is also probable that Harrison personally used the library somewhat more than his predecessors and that he is the one of the same name recorded as returning two books in June 1782 and borrowing a further four books, the last of which, in 1790. The loans include William Cave's Lives of the primitive Fathers; John Ecton's 'Thesaurus' and the sermons of Benjamin Ibbot. William Harrison died in March 1794 aged 79 years after having perhaps held the living at nearby Hooton Roberts from 1757 in commendam.

The contest for the incumbency that ensued between Rev. George Smith, curate at Attercliffe, Sheffield and Richard Burton, curate at Rotherham and grammar school Master there from 1780, did little to affect the steady growth in parish library use which is discernible at this time. New borrowers were few during the period 1791-93 (6), however, in 1794, coincidental with a further change of incumbent, six new borrowers appear in that year alone and total transaction figures for each successive year thereafter show almost uninterrupted growth with thirty such recorded for 1795 and a total number of 167 transactions for 1800.

Such steadily-growing usage (artificially curtailed by the para-



meters of this particular study) suggests the influence of the newly-appointed vicar of 1794 though neither of the two main contestants were appointed. Instead, preference was expediently shown to one Thomas Bayliffe, son of an assistant minister at Sheffield. Bayliffe had been ordained in October 1780 and had been perpetual curate of nearby Greasbrough from 1781, however, some four years after his appointment to the Rotherham living he was made domestic chaplain to the Earl of Effingham. Such duties as that post could have entailed may well have taken Bayliffe away from the parish church at Rotherham, though in fact the loan record provides some evidence of his continued presence. Mr Bailiffe (sic) first appears in the loan record borrowing two volumes of Bishop Burnet's History of his own times in 1794 and as 'Thomas Bayliffe' again in 1795, taking out Parrow's Works. In 1798, the same year as his appointment as domestic chaplain, he borrowed Ecton's 'Thesaurus' and further loans (1799-1800) are of Lally's (?) 'Principles of religion'; Collier's Dictionary; and Thomas Stackhouse's History of the Bible.

Such recorded use by the incumbent is once again not extensive and echoes apparently similar patterns of use by earlier vicars at Rotherham. In two cases however, as has been noted, simultaneous revivals of interest in the parish library coincide with new clerical appointments and do perhaps suggest a certain discernible influence on library use by incumbents, if not by personal example then possibly through instruction, exhortation or delegated administration.

Neither should it be forgotten that there were other clergy associated with the parish church: the curate, the schoolmaster, and local clergymen from neighbouring parishes. All or any one could have played a key role in the development or administration of such a library of books. And it is from the local community that the library seems to have drawn its borrowers, there being little evidence of clergy, or lay borrowers, being attracted from farther afield. Unlike the clergymens' library at Doncaster, whose catchment area extended to at least an eight mile radius from the town, Rotherham appears to have served a smaller local community,

despite its ecclesiastical links with Sheffield. In all probability, the parish library at Rotherham had very little to attract the clergy from a wider area, there being contemporary active lending libraries at both Doncaster to the north-east and at Sheffield to the south-west in addition to the proliferation of parish libraries to the north and west at Bradfield, Ecclesfield, Tankersley and Wentworth.

Extra-parochial clergy are nevertheless identifiable, though none apparently used the library extensively. One such deserving mention is Rev. Isaac Hemingway, an 'able scholar and Pious Divine' who was largely instrumental in the selection and arrangement of the library collection out of the Mansel bequest.<sup>21</sup> Hemingway was minister at Attercliffe, Sheffield, 1729-31, and successor to Benjamin Ferrand there (son of Samuel Ferrand, vicar of Rotherham). Hemingway followed Samuel Ferrand as the second recorded borrower from the Rotherham library in 1730, borrowing on that one (and only) occasion five volumes involving works by Bishop Patrick, John Grabe, John Locke, (Samuel?) Clarke and William Fleetwood. Hemingway died a year later on March 3, 1730/1, aged twenty-nine.

Other individuals designated 'Rev. Mr.' later in the record include, Rev. Mr Kenyon and Rev. Mr Downet, the latter with only a single recorded loan of Rapin's History in 1740. Rev. Kenyon took out seven different works between 1736 and 1747 including Smalridge's Sermons, John Lewis's Antiquities of the Hebrews and Derham's Physico-theology.

With the appearance in the record of William Withers soon after the commencement date in 1730, one has introduced an example of that class of clergy, who, by choice or necessity, combined their clerical duties with those of schoolmaster.

Withers had been appointed Master of the grammar school at Rotherham in 1706 at which time the half-yearly stipend was approximately £4.<sup>22</sup> His successor in 1725 was a Mr Stevenson, and so, by 1730, when Withers was first recorded using the parish library, he may only have had clerical

duties to perform. However, his loans confirm his continued theological studies and include volumes of sermons by (Thomas?) Sherlock, (Francis?) Turner, George Stanhope and William Owtram; and commentaries such as Bishop Patrick's on the Old Testament, John Pearson On the Creed and Prideaux's 'Connections'; the latter two volume work being his last recorded loan, dated August 1743. During the period 1702-1719, Withers is recorded on at least ten occasions as receiving the usual payment of 1s.6d., given to visiting ('strange') ministers for ale when they preached at the parish church, Rotherham.<sup>23</sup> He may well have continued his local preaching after these dates as curate or possibly as incumbent of a neighbourhood parish. Curiously, William Withers had a brother Edmund at Doncaster who was also a clergyman and schoolmaster. Edmund was sometime Treasurer to the Society of Clergymen at Doncaster and made persistent use of the Society library over the period 1715-1744 when some seventy-three loans were recorded.<sup>24</sup>

Of the five further grammar school masters at Rotherham whose terms of office span the remainder of the century (messrs. Stevenson, Pennel, Russell, Tennant and Burton), three are possibly those of the same name that appear in the pages of the library issue book. Rev. Davies Pennel, for example, was chosen as schoolmaster on 18 November, 1746 and first appeared borrowing books in April 1747 when he took away two volumes of Prideaux's 'Connections'. Other commentaries and expositions borrowed were works by Burnet, Whitby and Hammond along with sermons by Smalridge. A volume of Rapin's History (Vol. 3) borrowed in April 1752 represents the only non-theological work issued out of a total of ten issues spanning five years.<sup>25</sup>

Four other borrowers identify themselves as schoolmasters by their entries in the loan record: John Clarke, Thomas Jessop, Mr Lea (schoolmaster at Catcliffe) and Mr Richardson. One other, Mr Adamson, may be he of the same name who was master of the Charity School at Rotherham, 1746-1749, and who is recorded as borrowing as many as twenty-one

volumes between January 1741 and April 1751. No fewer than ten of these issues are of volumes of the Rapin History with additional loans of 'Moral essays', Locke's Works, Bennet's Confutation of Popery and William Wall's Infant baptism.

Messrs. Jessop, Lea and Richardson are token inclusions, recorded as borrowing on only one occasion each (involving loans of William Cave's Antiquitates apostolicae, Gastrell's Certainty and necessity of religion and a volume of Rapin's History), whilst John Clarke merits a little more attention borrowing as he does some twelve volumes in a relatively intense two-year period, 1793-1795. General interest and borrowing activity at the library was growing apace during this period yet Clarke's loans concentrate on only four works: Thomas Newton On the prophecies (3 loans); Rapin's History (5); Grove's Moral philosophy (3); and a single issue of 'Homelys' (probably The Book of Homilies).

As a group, these possible nine schoolmasters made a total of over sixty loans over the complete loans period, a figure higher than that recorded for clergymen alone but less than the issues recorded to lay users who anyway out-number them by at least two to one. No known schoolmaster is recorded as having borrowed Talbot's Christian schoolmaster, a copy of which was bought by a local school ca 1716 amongst other works and a copy of which was, by 1782, incorporated in the parish library catalogue.<sup>26</sup>

The original terms of the Mansel endowment had anticipated that the library would be for the use and advantage of both clergy and parishioners. In purely numerical terms, lay users far outnumber clerical borrowers, as far as can be ascertained from identification of recorded users. Of the non-clerical borrowers, a not insignificant minority are women, and number at least twenty over the forty-five year span of the loans record. Fourteen women appear by name during the first period 1730-57 and a further six during 1782-1800.

Of the twenty women users that can be identified, five share the same surnames as other (male) borrowers whilst a further four are identified in the fashion 'the wife of'. Roughly a half therefore of the women borrowers remain as independent users in the sense that neither spouse nor immediate family members were also recorded as library users; they borrowed in their own right and probably of their own volition rather than in conjunction with another borrower.

Tentative identifications suggest that Mrs Ferrand, who borrowed two volumes of Rapin's History in 1737, was wife of the late vicar of Rotherham who had died four years earlier. Mrs Jessop, borrowed Nourse On the Homilies and 'Sherlock on providence' during the same year and was active during a similar period to Thomas Jessop, a local schoolmaster. Whilst similar circumstances occur towards the end of the century with Mrs Rotherham, who borrowed Thomas Newton On the prophecies on Christmas Day, 1797, and who shares the same name as the local charity schoolmaster of a slightly earlier period.<sup>27</sup>.

None of the women however are heavy borrowers and the majority of them appear on only one or two occasions. An exception is Mrs Crawshaw who borrowed eight volumes between April 1743 and January 1748; six loans being of various volumes of the Rapin History (the other two were Chandler's Defence of Christianity and Cave's Lives of the primitive Fathers). Her choice of the Rapin work is repeated by three other women (all before 1757) though two more popular authors - chosen by six of the fourteen earlier period women - were William and Thomas Sherlock. For three women borrowers William Sherlock was the only recorded chosen author.

After 1785 the six women borrowers all appear as borrowing on only one occasion each. In two instances - four days before Easter Day, 1789, and Christmas Day, 1797 - two women borrow together on the same day. The works chosen on these days were Quesnel's Reflections on the New Testament and 'Revelation explained' (1789); Thomas Newton On the prophecies and the Works of Josephus (1797). Such loans probably coincided with

services in the church and the same is also probably true for the loans in the period February 1744 to August 1755 when, on seven out of eight occasions, issues to women took place exclusively on Wednesdays or Fridays.

Of the remainder of the recorded borrowers, the status of a handful can be positively identified from brief descriptions appended to their loan entries.

From the earlier loan period (1730-1757) such occupations as barber (Thomas Carr/Karr), shoemaker (Joseph Mellor), glover (Thomas Scholey) and mason (John Watkinson) can be identified in this way. In addition, a number of other borrowers can be tentatively identified from other sources. Hence during the same period, 'Mr Bellamy' may be Edward Bellamy, surgeon; Mr/Richard Bingley may have come from a local family of mercers; William Buck was perhaps an attorney; Thomas Radley possibly a glazier or joiner; and Joseph Ludlam a locksmith.

None however were extensive library users according to the loan record, with, for instance, messrs. Mellor, Radley, Ludlam and Bellamy having only a single recorded loan each.<sup>28</sup> Thomas Carr, the barber, was prompted to borrow four volumes of the Rapin History - and nothing else - during a ten-month period, April 1736 to February 1737, at which time the work was newly acquired. In very similar borrowing patterns, Mr Aslabie borrowed five volumes of the Rapin History, September 1736 to February 1737 and is not recorded again; Benjamin Boomer borrowed three volumes of the same work, March 1736-February 1737, with two subsequent similar loans in 1742 and 1745; and Mr Swallow similarly, five volumes, 1738 (?) to 1744 and nothing else. Such borrowing identifies a clear demand for historical reading inevitably centred on the one work of general history then available from the library.

The Rapin History was also the choice of Thomas Scholey, glover, on two occasions, along with Quesnel's Reflections on the New Testament and William Sherlock's Future judgement, the latter, very close in time to Thomas Radley's loan of the same work.

All twenty-one recorded loans to these predominantly local tradesmen took place during the months of winter and spring, October to May. This is despite such loans being spread over nine separate years between 1730 and 1756. Such a seasonal preference for reading may be significant and perhaps relates to cyclical patterns of work and recreation though it must be said that such a borrowing pattern is very much in line with general borrowing patterns over the same period, for very few summer loans were recorded at all.

Of the remainder of the borrowers recorded for the period 1730-1757, the vast majority make loans on only one or two occasions. The main exceptions are Mr/Richard Bingley, who, between 1730 and 1748 borrowed fourteen volumes, nine of which are of Rapin's History. Bingley is also the first (of seven) recorded borrowers of Quesnel's Reflections in December 1740. Similarly, Sam. Parsonson, who borrowed twelve volumes, 1737(?) - 1754, and who chose the Rapin History (seven volumes) and three volumes of Quesnel's Reflections.<sup>29</sup> Finally, Mr Catforthay with eight issues (1740-1744) who took out not only the Rapin History but also works by Henry More, Gaskell and Bingham.

The remainder of the loans, 1730-1757, are spread thinly over some forty-two unidentified borrowers whose most popular choices were (Samuel?) Clarke's Sermons; William Burkitt's Poor man's help; John Goodman's Winter evening conference; and various works by William and Thomas Sherlock.

The recommenced loan record of May 1782 - some twenty-five years after book loans had ceased to be recorded in 1757 - did not evidently herald a new influx of borrowers. Recorded transactions for the following ten years fluctuate between one or two per year to around thirteen in 1790. The recommencement is marked however by fresh administration and the coincidental appointment of William Harrison to the living during 1782 cannot be entirely unconnected with what may have been a partial refurbishment of a neglected asset. Nevertheless, a fuller and more

vigorous exploitation of the library is not recorded until after the death of Harrison in June 1794, whereupon Thomas Bayliffe was appointed vicar of All Saints'. In that very year six new borrowers boost loans to some twenty-nine, and from then on to the end of the century, yearly transactions at the library show an almost steady upward rise: 1795: 30 transactions; 1796: 74; 1797: 71; 1798: 121; 1799: 125; 1800: 167.

On a few occasions, in a similar fashion to the earlier period, user-occupations are briefly recorded. Positive identifications are thereby possible for Thomas May, Glass man; John Hay (or Kay?), Fiddler; and Mr Crofts, ecciseman (sic). John Scholey was probably a 'breeches maker'; Mr Drake possibly a mercer; James Wilkinson possibly a surgeon; and Thomas Wild probably a milliner. Similarly, J. Wild may have been a barber and John Ashley a joiner.

All of these men are recorded as having borrowed on only one or two occasions each before December 1800. Four of the single-issue recipients chose the works of Josephus and three of those renewed their loans, presumably to complete their reading of the work. Thomas May, glass man, borrowed the New whole duty of man in October 1785 and John Hay, Stanhope's Epistles on two occasions during 1790. John Scholey testifies to the continued popularity of Thomas(?) Sherlock by borrowing the sermons of the Bishop in 1783 and 1784; the same being true of the Rapin History which was borrowed, not for the last time, by Mr Drake in 1787.

Such apparent low intensity of use is not however typical of borrowers during this second loans-period and a far smaller percentage of total borrowers only use the library once or twice compared with the overall picture of the earlier period. In not a few cases, which relate almost exclusively to the last three years of the century, quite remarkable patterns of intense library usage are recorded.

One such pattern emerges for Mr Wigfall who borrows on some forty-seven occasions between April 1796 and March 1800.<sup>30</sup> The resulting



average of one book per month during the recorded loan-span of four years is achieved despite an unexplainable lapse in borrowing, September 1798 to December 1799. Many of Wigfall's loans are of sermons and include such authors as Whiston, Atterbury, Owtram, Leng, (George?) Hickes, (Samuel?) Clarke and (Henry?) Newcombe.<sup>31</sup> Somewhat unusually for a regular borrower at this time, no issue of the Rapin History is recorded to Wigfall, two loans of Locke On education are however included.

One aspect of the parish library administration is highlighted by the Wigfall loans insofar as forty-two out of forty-four discernible loan dates occur on a Sunday. Whether individual preference or prescribed library hours determined such a marked phenomenon is not entirely clear, though the loans of Mr/James Oxley during a contemporary period<sup>32</sup> reveal that library transactions were possible on other days of the week, every day except Friday being used by Oxley.

Oxley's loans include the only one recorded for Grotius's War and peace and one of only two recorded loans of John Lewis's Hebrew antiquities and Warburton's Divine legation. Additionally, a systematic borrowing pattern involving Rapin's History occurs February to July, 1799 and involves ten volumes.

Thomas Guest is recorded as a borrower during a similar period to Oxley, October 1796 to March 1800. Fewer different works are represented but many renewals (thirty-four issues) reveal a differing pattern of usage. Once again, the vast majority of recorded transactions take place on a Sunday.

Similar preferences for Sunday borrowing are demonstrated by Thomas Denby, thirty loans 1798-1800, and Thomas Spurr, twenty-eight loans, 1796-1798. Both share an apparent interest in Thomas Newton On the prophecies (six loans each) whilst eleven of Denby's loan/renewals involve Calmet's Dictionary, and Spurr's loans include one of 'the book with the chaine'.

Despite certain individual preferences and idiosyncrasies, a group

of nine further borrowers share distinctly similar use-patterns to those of the above mentioned James Oxley, Thomas Guest, Thomas Denby and Thomas Spurr. The individuals in question are John and James Cooper, Henry and Samuel Taylor, Joseph Clayton, William Owtram, Richard Butler, George Frith and William Williams. Each makes between sixteen and twenty-six loan/renewals between 1794 and 1800, Sundays again dominating as preferred transaction day. The ubiquitous Rapin History dominates the list of most-borrowed works by these individuals whilst the remainder of loans largely centre on biblical commentary and exposition as well as on other works of history. Popular choices include, Collier's Dictionary; Burnet's History of his own time; Lowth On Isaiah; Stackhouse's History of the Bible; and Nourse On the Homilies.

At least five of these borrowers indicate that they came from the neighbouring parish of Masborough<sup>33</sup>. and on a number of occasions are recorded as using the library on the same day. Such a pattern of use may suggest an element of organised or directed study especially when the similarity of loans is considered. Additionally, though this is conjecture, the absence of the title 'Mr' to all eleven borrowers may indicate the relative youthfulness of the group and the possibility of school, club or society use thus emerging towards the end of the century cannot be ruled out.

In its totality, the parish library was overwhelmingly theological in nature, as may be expected from, 'a collection of the best authors on divine subjects'. Commentaries, sermons, expositions, demonstrations and dialogues permeate the collection almost to the exclusion of every other type of literature. However, there were exceptions and significantly the most notable of these non-theological works emerges as by far the most popular in terms of the number of recorded issues.

Paul de Rapin's History of England<sup>34</sup>. was available to the library borrowers at Rotherham in fifteen volumes and can be said to have remained in continuous demand throughout the two recorded loan periods of 1730-

1757 and 1782-1800. In terms of issues of particular authors, those relating to Rapin outstrip any other by more than three to one.<sup>35</sup>

During the first loan period of 1730 to 1757, the seventy-nine loans of Rapin amount to 32 per cent of all the recorded transactions. An even higher percentage of the total number of borrowers (38.5 per cent) borrowed at least one volume of the work during the same period. Twenty-one library users borrowed nothing else but the Rapin work, and of this group, fourteen used the library only once according to the record.

In the later loan period, 1782-1800, whilst the proportion of readers borrowing Rapin does apparently drop to something like a half of what it was (to 15.6 per cent), it nevertheless remains the most-borrowed work and in pure numerical terms there are more issues of the History compared with the earlier period.<sup>36</sup>

With regard to reading patterns connected with the work, few borrowers, it appears, attempted a sequential or chronological approach to the reading of the whole oeuvre. Those who do, appear in the latter years of the record and where individual volume issues can be identified, they reflect a full or partially sequential approach involving anything from four to twelve volumes.<sup>37</sup> Most borrowers it appears were content to choose according to which period of history interested them the most or perhaps according to which volumes were available at the time they wished to borrow. Certainly some volumes of the History do appear to have been more popular than others, though the information that emerges in this respect is tenuous, in that a number of factors could have contributed to the apparent disparity in issues.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, it is worth recording that whilst all volumes appear to lie within the issue-range, five to sixteen; volumes 2 and 3 appear in the record most often (sixteen and fifteen issues respectively), whilst volumes 15 and 7 are recorded the least for no obvious reason (five issues each).

Recorded borrowing of the Rapin History does fluctuate year to year and during the earlier loan period such fluctuations are not out of

line with general movements in the number of issues. However, there is a perceivable surge in issues during 1744 when the highest number of borrowings of the History are recorded. Local factors may well account in some way for this phenomenon, yet significantly, international events (centred on France's declaration of war on Britain and Austria, and Frederick the Great's invasion of Bohemia) constitute coincidental developments, news of which may have prompted a renewed reading interest in Britain's history and her relations with other countries.

As far as the second loan period is concerned, the majority of loans and renewals were made during the final two years, 1799-1800. Although largely superseded as a definitive history by that time - it was some seventy-five years old and meanwhile a new standard work had become available from the pen of Hume - the Rapin History nevertheless had residual interest, no doubt motivated by necessity, if, as was probably the case, no other similar work was locally available.

Modestly popular in comparison to the Rapin work were Clarendon's History of the Rebellion (5 recorded loans: 1783-1800) and Bishop Gilbert Burnet's History of his own times (10 loans: 1794-1800); neither of which were available in the library during the earlier loan period. Similarly, Jeremy Collier's Great historical, geographical, general and poetical dictionary of sacred and profane history, which only left the library on three occasions, 1738-1756, but which enjoyed a perhaps curtailed revival during 1799-1800 when a further eleven loan/renewals took place. From the general to the specific, one can cite Richard Fiddes's Life of Cardinal Wolsey which enjoyed a part of the general revival in library loans at the end of the century and registered nine loan/renewals, 1794-1800.

The library contained, additionally, a number of works on early Church and Jewish history, notably: Joseph Bingham's Origines ecclesiasticae, Thomas Lewis's Origines Hebraeae and Lawrence Echard's General ecclesiastical history. Also present, from 1730, was Cave's Antiquitates apostolicae and from 1782, the works of Josephus. All appear at various

times in the pages of the borrowers' register, the Josephus Works emerging as by far the most popular (thirty-eight loan/renewals) despite in all probability being a relatively late acquisition. The 1782 catalogue lists an edition of the Josephus dated 1755 which may partially explain the absence of Josephus in the earlier loan period (1730-1757); the first recorded loan of the work being dated October 1783. By comparison, Bingham's Origines was loaned a total of seven times (July 1730 - ca January 1741), no loans taking place during the later period, whilst Cave's Antiquitates registered five recorded loans (1730-1750) and a further three, 1786-1800. The Echard Ecclesiastical history and Lewis's Origines have each only four recorded loans and in the former case, all took place in the period 1794-1800.

Thomas Stackhouse (1677-1752) is represented by two works: Body of divinity and New history of the Bible and whilst no early loans are recorded for either work (the History was not published until 1737 and the Body of divinity until 1729) the fifty-one loans recorded during the last two decades of the century make Stackhouse - with under a third of the total loans recorded for the Rapin History - the second most popular author. This is despite the fact that the first recorded loan of the History is not until October 1784 and for the Body of divinity, as late as April 1798 even though both works do appear in the 1782 catalogue.<sup>39</sup>

Such a relatively late rise in popularity is not clearly explainable and it may be that the phenomenon persists into the early years of the nineteenth century. It may give some doubt however to the dubious assertion that Stackhouse's History, in going through 'only' four editions during the eighteenth century, never achieved the popularity of Prideaux and Shuckford.<sup>40</sup> 'Popularity' in the present study is a concept based on actual individual borrowings (implicit in which is the intention to read) whereas, as can be seen from evidence elsewhere in the present work,<sup>41</sup> mere acquisition (and inter alia, sales and number of editions printed) cannot be synonymous with use.

In simple terms, the most popular authors in the Rotherham parish library, measured by the number of loans recorded for each within the period 1730-1800 (where an author may be represented by more than one title) are as follows: Rapin (188 issue/renewals); Thomas Stackhouse (51); Josephus (38); William and Thomas Sherlock (34); Thomas Newton (34); Augustine Calmet (25); Jeremy Collier (24) and Pasquier Quesnel (23). If a similar count is applied to individual works, then there is little change except that William and Thomas Sherlock, who are represented in the library by possibly nine works, drop out and Samuel Clarke and the Homilies appear: Rapin's History (188 issue/renewals); Josephus Works (39); Stackhouse's History of the Bible (35); Thomas Newton On the prophecies (34); Calmet's Dictionary (23); Quesnel On the New Testament (23); Samuel Clarke's Sermons and the Book of Homilies (19).

The loans of Thomas Newton On the prophecies are relatively intense; all appeared between May 1782 and September 1800 (there being no recorded loans during the earlier period) and the work, first published in 1754, may have been a later acquisition. The apparent popularity of the work is notable and is evident despite Dr Johnson's well known disparagements.<sup>42</sup> Amongst other dissertations and commentaries, a group of which complemented study of the New Testament, were works by Quesnel, Whitby, Burkitt and Hammond. Of these, the Frenchman Pasquier Quesnel's Reflections on the New Testament was consistently the most popular, despite its relative age.<sup>43</sup>

A direct comparison between loans of the first period (1730-1757) and those of the second (1782-1800) is not straightforward, in part due to the disparity in the intensity of use.<sup>44</sup> What is evident is that the Rapin History remained in demand throughout, whilst of the ten most borrowed works, 1730-1757, only two fail to appear again after the recommenced issue record of 1782 and before 1800: Prideaux's 'Connections' and Bingham's Antiquities. As probable victims of changing reading tastes in theological literature these two works join a relatively small group

of books known to have been present in the parish library in 1782 (they appear in the manuscript catalogue of that year) but not recorded as issued to library users before 1800. Such works include; Poole's Synopsis criticorum; L'Blanc's Theses theologiae; Nehemia Grew's Cosmologia sacra<sup>45</sup>; Courayer's Validity of English ordination; Du Pin's Method of studying divinity; Wheatley On Common Prayer; Hoadley's Reasonableness of conformity; Kettlewell's Christian obedience and the works (or sermons) of 'Hopkins', Richard Bentley and 'Hancock'.

1. RCL, Marsel Collection. MS. Catalogue and Issue Book.
2. Kaufman, writing almost twenty years ago, identified the extant loan records from Doncaster and Witham only, but also made reference to the borrower's book belonging to the library at St. George's Chapel, Winsor. (See Kaufman, Libraries and their users, 93-101.)
3. Reproduced in Guest, Historic notices, 402.
4. The date is somewhat ambiguous and could refer to either 1730 or 1731.
5. As set out in the MS. Catalogue and Issue Book.
6. i.e. Matthew Tindal's Christianity as old as the creation.
7. John Wesley first preached at Rotherham in 1752 and made his last visit in 1788. The founder of local Methodism was one William Green and the first Methodist chapel was built in 1761, though non-conformist meetings had been held in the vicinity from at least 1706. The Baptists had a regular meeting place (at nearby Masborough) from ca 1789. (F. Crowder and D. Greene, Rotherham, its history, church and chapel on the bridge. S.R. Publishers, 1971. pp.8-9.
8. The MS. Catalogue and Issue Book is in a poor state of repair and it is possible that leaves are missing for this period.
9. John Guest, Relics and records of men and manufactures...of Rotherham. Rotherham: A. Gilling, 1866. p.29.
10. Borthwick Institute, Visitation Returns. Bp. V 1764. Ret. v.2. 217.
11. Guest, Relics and records, 31. At the trial of the rebels at York in October 1746 there were at least ten local townsmen called upon to be jurymen. Two of them, Benjamin Boomer and Richard Bingley, were parish library borrowers at Rotherham. (Ibid., 30.)
12. G.D.H. Cole and R. Postgate, The Common people, 1746-1946. 2nd edition. Methuen, 1946. p.24. Walker's ironworks were soon to rival the Darby works at Coalbrookdale.
13. An issue of Thomas Newton's Dissertation on the prophecies to Mr Tunnicliffe instigated the new loans period. (Ralph Tunnicliffe, gentleman, of Dalton, died 31 January, 1794.)
14. RCL, Marsel Collection, MS. Catalogue and Issue Book. The earliest catalogue (ff.3r.-5v.) is headed: 'A Catalogue of Book's In y<sup>e</sup> Vestry Library of Roth( ) Given by y<sup>e</sup> AforeS<sup>d</sup> M<sup>rs</sup> Mansel'. A second list (f.6r.) is headed: 'Rec'd of Mrs Westby Octo<sup>br</sup> 18th 1758 the following Books'; and a third listing (ff.7r.-8r.) is headed '1759 Books bought by M<sup>rs</sup> Jane Westby being part of the Money left by Mrs Mansell (sic) for that use'. Elsewhere, at the rear of the MS., is 'A Catalogue of the Books belonging to Rotherham Church. 1782', to which has been added the additional volumes.
15. See Guest, Historic notices, 310; 405.



16. Ibid., 405.
17. Both volumes survive in what remains of the Rotherham parish library at Rotherham Central Library (Reserve Stock), and now called the 'Mansel Collection'. The Bayliffe gift is dated 21 June, 1797 and that of Thomas, Earl of Effingham, 1789.
18. Guest, Historic notices, 202.
19. Two further entries do relate to Mrs. Farron/Ferrand and record loans of Rapin's History during 1737.
20. 'Ye Clerk' is credited with a loan of [ ] Taylor's Works in February; the archaic form of title could conceivably refer to Lloyd.
21. See above p. 58.
22. Guest, Historic notices, 346. At Doncaster, where Withers' brother Edmund was also Master of the grammar school, the Corporation, in 1719, payed a salary of £10 p.a.
23. Ibid., 202.
24. See above pp. 142-145.
25. Davies Pennell (sic) was later elected as schoolmaster at Southwell, ca 1762. (Borthwick Institute, Bishopthorpe Papers. R. Bp. Bundle B. 1762. 2.)
26. See above p. 54. The Talbot volume is recorded as a loan on a single occasion in November 1796, when a Mr Waterhouse borrowed it.
27. Borthwick Institute, Visitation Returns. Ep. V 1764 Ret. v.2. 217. Where the Rotherham return records a charity school where the Master is one Bartholomew Rotherham having charge of 20 boys and 16 girls.
28. Their respective loans were of 'A Child's guide'; William Sherlock On future judgement; 'Certainty of Christian religion'; and William Wall's Infant baptism.
29. Curiously, Thomas Best repeats the Rapin - Quesnel combination between 1743 and 1751.
30. As an artificial cut-off has been applied at 31 December, 1800, Wigfall's borrowing activity may well continue into the early years of the new century. As with other borrowers in this and the earlier period, renewals of loans, where entered, have been counted as further loans. The method used to record such renewals - by repeated over-writing of the original loan entry date - makes entirely accurate renewal figures difficult to achieve.
31. Wigfall's son borrowed two volumes of sermons during the fortnight before his father's loans begin, though he is not recorded again.
32. Thirty-four recorded loans; February 1787 and May 1795 to December 1800.

33. Messrs. Oxley, Denby, James Cooper, Clayton and Frith.
34. The author is generally styled 'Rapin-Thoyras'. The History first appeared in French in 1723 (and again in 1725). A fifteen-volume edition, in English, with additional notes by Nicholas Tindal appeared between 1725 and 1731.
35. Total issues of particular authors from the Rotherham parish library over the full loans period, 1730-1800 (where an author may be represented by more than one title) are as follows: Rapin (188 issues); Thomas Stackhouse (51); Josephus (38); Thomas and William Sherlock (34); Thomas Newton (34); Augustine Calmet (25); Jeremy Collier (24); and Pasquier Quesnel (23).
36. The figures are 109 issues for Rapin out of 698 recorded issues (1732-1800) compared with 79 issues out of 242 issues (1730-1757).
37. John Clarke, for instance, during 1793-1794, borrowed volumes 8, 9, 11 and 13 of the History, whilst George Frith followed in 1795 by taking out volumes 1 to 6 inclusive. The lengthiest sequential approach recorded was made by H. Taylor during 1798-1800 and appears thus: volumes 1, 3, 2, ( ), 8, 9, 11, 10, 12, 13, 14 and 15.
38. A note in the 1782 catalogue for instance, indicates that the tenth volume of Rapin's History was missing for some period as was also, at sometime, volume fourteen (which was on unofficial extended loan). Volume numbers were not always recorded anyway, and when they were, it becomes difficult to accurately decipher superimposed volume numbers representing as they do, subsequent loans by the same individual.
39. Nos. 40 and 55 respectively.
40. T.R. Preston, Biblical criticism, literature and the eighteenth century reader. Rivers, Books and their readers, 101. Works by Shuckford fail to appear in the loan records of any of the present five parish libraries.
41. See, for instance, above p.119., where certain early purchases by the Doncaster Clerical Society are identified which do not appear as recorded loans during the period 1715-1717.
42. In a conversation with Dr Adams, Master of Pembroke College, Dr Johnson replied to a comment by the latter that the Dissertations on the prophecies was Newton's great work: "Why, Sir, it is Tom's great work; but how far it is great, or how much of it is Tom's, are other questions. I fancy a considerable part of it was borrowed". James Boswell, The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D. Bliss Sands, 1897. p.469.
43. The book was first published in English in 1692. The work was formally condemned by a Papal Bull of 1713.

44. There were some 242 library transactions recorded over the twenty-seven year first period and some 698 issue/renewals over the eighteen year second period. The second most popular work during period one, for example, with ten recorded issues, would be badly relegated if simply measured against issues recorded for period two.
45. The volume survives, in a folio edition of 1701, along with what remains of the parish library at Rotherham Central Library (Reserve Stock) Mansel Collection.

MAIDSTONE

The first page of the surviving parish library manuscript is headed "Account of Books missing out of the Parish Library of Maidstone August the Ninth 1755"<sup>1</sup>. Beneath are listed sixteen works including 'Camerti Commentar. in Solinum (etc.) Basil 1557'; 'Vertots Revolutions of Sweden' and 'Account of Sweden'. The whole is in the hand of the then perpetual curate and incumbent John Denne who subsequently indicates the return of two volumes: Thomas Comber On Common Prayer and Joseph Bingham's Works. A further volume, Isaac Newton's 'Chronology'<sup>2</sup> is suffixed by the name Mr William Tempest and suggests, almost inevitably, that some borrowing had taken place prior to the formal listing of loans that commenced in 1755.

It is the name of John Denne that heads the main listing of library transactions in an entry of 9 August, 1755 and wherein is recorded a loan of Bernard Picart's Religious ceremonies (2v.) and Thomas Fuller's Church-history of Britain. The following two entries are also in Denne's hand and record backdated loans to Mr Widen and the Reverend Hales for August 6 and 1 respectively. Thereafter, a variety of handwriting styles occur and one may assume that loans (and some returns) were recorded by the individual borrower.

Each page of the manuscript is divided vertically into two columns headed 'Books taken out' and 'Books returned' respectively. Loan entries there recorded consist of what may be termed the standard three-part format, comprising of transaction date, borrower name and brief author and title details. Additionally, in some cases, a letter and two digits are added and in all probability refer to a shelf mark. In the 'Books returned' column, few borrowers bother to record the date of return after 1759 though John Denne himself is scrupulous in doing so.

From August 1755 to December 1800<sup>3</sup> a total of some 552 volumes are recorded as issues from the library and occur by virtue of 402 transaction entries by individuals. Over the forty-six year period covered by

the record, as many as 121 separate individuals are recorded as borrowers.<sup>4</sup> The total number of book returns, recorded with date, amount to only 139, or twenty-five per cent of the issues.

During 1755, when John Denne, minister at Maidstone since 1753, commenced the record of loans with his borrowing of the Picart and Fuller volumes and additionally made his list of missing books, seven other individuals recorded their library use, resulting in a total of thirteen volumes issued. Subsequently, during the following six years, between one (1760) and twelve (1756) new borrowers continued to be attracted to the library each year. Volumes issued per year, however, never exceed the forty recorded as loaned during 1756, the first full year of recorded library use.

Such a number of loans was achieved by a community of seventeen active borrowers, a figure never again reached during the remaining years of the century. However, recorded use (in terms of volume issues) reached a peak in 1766 when thirty-three volumes were recorded leaving the library and significantly such use coincides with the highest proportion of women borrowers in any one year (four out of nine, who account for eighteen issues). After 1766 recorded loans average less than one a month until 1772 in which year no issues at all are recorded.

John Denne's own recorded loans-span (1755-1765, with one further loan in 1770) parallels a pattern of apparently declining interest, though we do know that in Denne's case, after the gaol riot of 1765 in which he was injured, his mental state did severely deteriorate.<sup>5</sup>

After 1772, recorded issues briefly rise once again to a peak of twenty-four in 1774 though, almost inevitably, they fall away again until 1780 when no issues are recorded for that year. The last twenty years of the record are marked by an unexceptional trickle of loans (between one and twenty-four per year) with significantly fewer women and fewer new borrowers present. In any one year during this period, a total of between

one (1785 and 1786) and nine (1799) active borrowers are recorded using the library.

From the total number of borrowers who are recorded as library users between 1755 and 1800 (121) at least thirty-one, (possibly forty-two) can be identified as lay individuals.<sup>6</sup> Of the non-clerical borrowers some twenty-six women can be identified by their loan entry appellations. Hardly a year passes during the first fifteen years of recorded use without the appearance of a woman borrower.<sup>7</sup> After 1770, fewer women borrowers are recorded and most such use centres on the five women active during the limited period 1785-1792. Seventeen of the twenty-six women borrowers are recorded as using the library on only one or two occasions, the main exceptions being Miss Weller (12 visits: 1759-60); Mrs Lewis (7: 1764-67); Miss Mary Turner (6: 1788-91); Mrs May (5: 1766-88); Mrs Crew (4: 1766-68); Mrs Parker senior (4: 1799); Miss Holmes (3: 1788-89); Mrs Marshall (3: 1755-57) and Mrs Weekes (3: 1765).

Miss Weller was no doubt related to Samuel Weller (his daughter?) minister of All Saints', 1712-1753, and the man responsible for the acquisition of the books from Dr Bray's library and for the printed catalogue of books of 1736.<sup>8</sup> Weller senior had died in February 1753, when John Denne was appointed to the living in his place, so that the 'Rev Mr Weller' who appears in the issue book during April 1758 (borrowing Aubry de La Mottraye's Travels through Europe) is probably one of Weller's two sons, either Edward or Samuel.<sup>9</sup> However, it is Miss Weller's relatively intense use of the parish library that is notable, involving as it does, twelve issues over a thirteen-month period, January 1759 to February 1760. No fewer than ten of these issues are of Thomas Salmon's Modern history, whilst her first recorded loan is of Sir George Wheler's Journey into Greece and her last, Bernard Picart's Religious ceremonies. The majority of Miss Weller's loans take place either on a Wednesday or a Friday, though Tuesdays and Saturdays are also used, the ten loans of Modern history (taken in more-or-less sequential volume number order)

occurring during a very short period, October 1759 to February 1760.<sup>10.</sup>

Contemporary with Miss Weller's use of the library is that of Mrs Bellendine (who borrowed four works of history and topography on one visit in March 1759) and Mrs Eastchurch<sup>11.</sup> (who made two visits in 1758 and 1760). The latter woman had taken out Picart's Religious ceremonies in November 1758, not returning it until 23 February, 1760 when perhaps she recommended it to Miss Weller who in turn borrowed it three days later. Similarly, Miss Weller's loan of Wheler's Greece during January 1759 is followed by an issue of the same work to Mrs Bellendine two months later.

Further evidence of the popularity of the Salmon History with women borrowers is provided by Mrs Lewis (seven visits: 1764-67), who took out seven such volumes, whilst one further loan (her first) was also of an historical nature: John Lewis's Antiquities of Feversham. Similarly, Mrs May<sup>12.</sup>, who borrowed four volumes of the Salmon History in 1768 (she also took out Wheler's Greece in 1766); Mrs Crew, eleven volumes of Salmon's History over four visits 1766-68; Miss Mary Turner, seven volumes similarly, 1788-91; Miss Holmes, three volumes 1788-89; and finally, Mrs Parker senior, who, at the close of the century, confirms the lasting popularity of Salmon's History by borrowing four volumes during the winter months of 1799.

The remainder of the women borrowers (15) visited the library on only one or two occasions according to the issue book, nevertheless, four of these women chose the Salmon History and single issues of the following works are also recorded: Camden's Britannia; Clarendon's History of the Rebellion; John Savage's Compleat history of Germany and Richard Grafton's 'Chronicle'.<sup>13.</sup> Other non-historical works borrowed by these women include the Book of Homilies; Prideaux's 'Connections'; Foxe's Book of Martyrs; and Burkitt On the New Testament.

Such library use by women, as is apparent in the pages of the issue book (no cognizance being given however to the wider usage the library would have received as a reference collection) is probably not extensive enough as to be numerically significant. What that use does however tell



us is something about the needs and interests of a section of the population whose education generally at this time has been described as shallow and haphazard.<sup>14</sup> The unifying theme of the women's loans from the Maidstone library is the evident demand for works of history and topography, somewhat inevitably centred therefore on Thomas Salmon's History and the few other works of a similar nature that were available. There is no evidence of organised or directed reading such as might have been associated with school or group use and which might have produced somewhat more regular patterns of recorded borrowing. Rather, use appears to be spontaneous yet specific and purposeful, as individual borrowing records relating to the popular Salmon History show. Whatever formal education had been received by these women - and the relative youthfulness of not a few may be inferred from the informality of their loan entries<sup>15</sup> - it is likely that the curriculum for such did not include such subjects as the arts and sciences, current affairs, the law, English and foreign literature, modern philosophy and history and geography (apart from that perhaps related to classical study).<sup>16</sup> So that a local and accessible library such as that within All Saints' church might well act as a facilitator of further informal education, insofar as an ageing, static and overwhelmingly theological collection of books could do so. Recorded usage would therefore tend to confirm a somewhat limited perceived usefulness by women, which, nevertheless, in its diversity of choice was likely to have been spontaneous and self-determined.<sup>17</sup>

A similar spread of interest is evident from the recorded loans of other lay users of the library, very few of whom thought it necessary to indicate their occupation or status within their loan entries. One obvious exception however is John Cutbush who borrowed from the library on just three occasions between October 1781 and June 1790. He signs himself 'John Cutbush Barge Bilder', an appropriate occupation to the times, given that barges then sailed three times a week from Maidstone carrying hops to London. Cutbush borrowed two volumes of the Salmon History and

a further two volumes of Camden's Britannia, the second volume of which was not returned until seven years after its issue (June 1790 to June 1797). That such a situation could exist says as much for Cutbush's attitude as it does for the lax state of library administration at the time.

Between the loan and eventual return of Cutbush's copy of Britannia, Simon Pine had taken out six volumes of Salmon's History during two months of 1796. He appends to his name 'surgeon' and his last recorded loan is of the second volume of Camden's Britannia, three months after John Cutbush's late return of it.

At least three other recorded borrowers from the last decade of the century were probably leading citizens of the town. G. May, for instance (ten volumes borrowed ca 1786-92), may have been George May who was Mayor of Maidstone in 1794. His loans include the popular Wheler's Journey into Greece, three volumes of Salmon's History and the library's copy of Lambarde's Perambulation of Kent, which, for all its topicality was not widely borrowed. May also borrowed William Bailey's 'On the models and machines of the Society of Arts' and a choice shared by Mr/William Bishop who took the same volume out in 1777. Sir William Bishop was associated with the family firm of distillers who had established a works producing Holland's gin in Maidstone by 1789 and he served as Mayor in 1778 and 1787.

Also sometime Mayor (on three occasions, 1764-1770) was Richard Holloway who appears in the loans register (1778-96) borrowing Bailey's Models and machines and Burn's Ecclesiastical law.

Earlier Mayors who were probably also library borrowers are Robert Pope (one loan of Salmon's History in 1755); Tobias Hammond (a similar loan in 1764); and Thomas Argles (two volumes of Burn's Ecclesiastical law in 1769). Similarly, Thomas Nightingale, one of the twelve town jurates established by the newly-chartered council of 1747, who may be the Mr Nightingale who borrowed Poole's Annotations in December

1756, the only recorded loan of that work.

Dr Teale, who borrowed once during November 1757 (Tillotson's Sermons) was possibly Mushey Teale, graduate of Queens', Cambridge, and Leyden University and who received his Licentiate from the Royal College of Physicians in December 1722. Nothing further is known of him, except that he practiced medicine at Maidstone and elsewhere.<sup>18</sup>.

Two further borrowers, 'Jones' and 'Dorrington' probably signify their higher social status by the style of their name entries. The latter person accounts for one of only two recorded loans of the 'Life of Spinoso' whilst the former borrowed eight volumes between 1766 and 1767, including Savage's History of Germany, the ubiquitous History of Thomas Salmon and works by Abbot, Addison and Tillotson.

The period to which the record of library loans applies commenced in 1755, contemporary with which (ca 1756) was an encampment of some 12,000 Hanoverian soldiers on Cox Heath, three miles outside of Maidstone. Such an encampment would not be without its attendant problems<sup>19</sup>., however, the issue of two books on 17 September, 1756, allocated 'for' Count Aug Keilmansegge (sic) was probably associated with the <sup>en</sup>décampment. The books, returned 7 October following, were the Life of Spinoso and the first recorded loan of the Antiquities of Palmyra.<sup>20</sup>.

A further link with the military involves General William Kingsley, resident of Kingsley House, Stone Street, Maidstone, for whom, on one occasion in May 1758, the 'Life of Sixties the 5th' was taken out. General Kingsley 'a sensible man, and very sociable and polite'<sup>21</sup>. had been made colonel of the 20th Foot in May 1756 at the age of fifty-eight, and may have just returned from leading the Regiment in the Rochefort expedition of 1757 when the book was issued. The Life of Sixties was returned on 23 July, 1758, one year before Kingsley was to distinguish himself at the battle of Minden in August 1759. He was obviously an educated man (one of only three borrowers of the Sixties' Life) and an annotated history of the Seven Years' War of his exists.<sup>22</sup>.

A far more extensive pattern of borrowing can be credited to the clergy of the neighbourhood for whom the parish library, by implication, may have been developed and to whom it was, by its very nature, more suited. Identifiable clerical borrowers, in addition to the Rev. Weller previously mentioned<sup>23</sup>, number at least thirteen and their recorded library use spans the entire period of loan records.

First and foremost deserving mention is the Rev. John Denne, incumbent of All Saints' from 1753 to 1799, whose name heads the borrowing list of August 1755 and whose hand also contemporaneously records a number of missing books, along with two back-dated loans. Clearly, Denne was establishing something of a new start, though whether he was merely tightening the administration of the library and its loans or in fact instigating a completely new period of loaning is not clear. The previous minister at All Saints', Samuel Weller, had died in 1753 and Archbishop Herring's appointment had been John Denne, graduate of Corpus Christi, Cambridge, Fellow 1749-52, and member of the Inner Temple in 1741 who took up the lucrative Maidstone living when he was twenty-nine. Denne's father, John senior (1693-1767), was Archdeacon of Rochester and probably not without influence and in addition to the younger John's appointment at Maidstone, the rectory of Copford, Essex was held in commendam from 1754. John's brother Samuel was the more well-known antiquary and historian of Rochester who, at a similar time (1754), was appointed vicar of Lamberhurst, Kent, and subsequently rector of Lambeth.<sup>24</sup>

One of John Denne's first tasks after his appointment at Maidstone must have been to compose a sermon on the occasion of the election of the Mayor in November 1753. The task was evidently successfully achieved and the text was published the following year at the request of the Mayor and jurates of Maidstone.<sup>25</sup> The text chosen for that occasion was 1 Timothy 2:2 (part) 'That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty', however, such a sentiment was not to be applicable to Denne's somewhat unfortunate incumbency at Maidstone. The prime cause

of his future discomfiture centred on the new (1746) county gaol situated in Maidstone to which John Denne was chaplain. Frequent attempted gaol breaks were made, for instance in 1765, 1776, 1786 and 1788, and it was during the first of these on 7 August, 1765, whilst Denne was officiating at the weekly service, that he received a serious head injury (and the gaoler killed).<sup>26</sup> According to Samuel Denne his brother, John thereafter suffered an intermitting fever of the mind, in which state he continued the last 35 years of his life whilst another source deems him for many years insane.<sup>27</sup> Appropriately enough, John Denne's recorded library use, begun in August 1755, ceases abruptly during 1765 when in January of that year he borrowed the second volume of Burn's Ecclesiastical law, returning it in April of the same year. Loans that had been in the order of one, two or three a year up until then stop, with only a single further visit recorded for 1770, when Tillotson's Sermons, 'Thuanus' and Camden's Britannia were borrowed for three months.<sup>28</sup> Previous loans had included four loans of Chamber's Dictionary; Mede's Works; Antiquities of Palmyra; Wheler's Journey into Greece and Ecton's Thesaurus, each meticulously entered with both loan and return dates.

John Denne's successor at All Saints' was James Reeve who had served as assistant curate, at a salary of £40 since 1788.<sup>29</sup> He evidently found little use for the books and borrowed on just three occasions: Ecton's Thesaurus in 1790; Comber On Common Prayer in 1791; and the oft reprinted, though then anonymous, Whole duty of man<sup>30</sup> on August 4, 1799. The latter date is significant in that it is the day after John Denne died (perhaps solace was being sought in that most enduring of devotional works).

Further token inclusions of clergymen, by virtue of single recorded borrowings, are Rev. White ('Religion of Jesus' borrowed 1765); Rev. J. Howlett (one loan of Cicero's Works in 1777 and a further issue 'for' Rev. Howlett of Ecton's Thesaurus in 1781); Rev. Lord (Burn's Ecclesiastical law taken out in 1781) and the Rev. Pett (both the Ecton

and Burn works in April 1797).

Such evidently lasting demand for the Burn and Ecton volumes is further suggested by Rev. Polhill who makes three loans of the volumes 1765-79, whilst a very different, though familiar, choice is exercised by Rev. Thomas who borrowed nothing else but Salmon's Modern history (eight volumes in total) during the winter of 1756/57.

A similar and contemporary pattern of borrowing emerges for Rev. James Hales, who, from August 1755 to September 1759, took out eight volumes of Salmon's History. Hales was vicar of nearby Chart Sutton<sup>31</sup>. from 1733 to 1766 and published Twenty-four sermons preached in the cathedral church of Rochester on solemn occasions. (J. and W. Oliver, 1766.)

Three volumes of the Salmon History were also borrowed by Rev. R. Bassett, these were out of a total of twenty-nine volumes taken out on seventeen occasions, 1757-1768. Bassett constantly refers to books by their shelf mark only and consequently some loans have not been identified, however, his first recorded loan is one of only two recorded for Webster's History of Arianism. His final loan is of Burn's Ecclesiastical law in April 1768.

Two years later, in 1770, Rev. Lloyd is taken a volume of Camden's Britannia by John Denne (who occasionally acted as an agent in this way) along with volume two similarly at a later date. Lloyd also took out, in January 1773, the first folio volume of the old Polyglot Bible of Bishop Walton which first appeared in the church of All Saints' as a result of a municipal order of 1658.<sup>32</sup>

In the same year that a (second) encampment of soldiers was taking place just outside Maidstone in 1778<sup>33</sup>. (and coincidental with the birth of William Hazlitt in the April of that year in Maidstone), Rev./Thomas Cherry began a period of borrowing from the parish library which ended some thirteen years later and which spans an otherwise lean period of loans from the library. Cherry may be he of the same name who proceeded

M.A. in 1771 and B.D. in 1776 from St. John's, Oxford, probably taking up a local cure soon after. He obviously found useful works in the previously little-borrowed classical and ancient authors and loans include Cooke's edition of Hesiod's Works; Life of Sixtus 5th; 'Lipsius' (volume 8); William Prynne's 'History',<sup>34</sup>; and Hiob Ludolf's Historiam Aethiopicam.

Finally, Rev. Mark Noble of nearby Barming, commenced borrowing during the winter of 1790/91 (with three volumes of Strype's Annals) and thereafter continued to borrow up to three works a year, mostly classical authors, though otherwise his choice is of obscure and previously little-used volumes. Authors such as Xenophon, Lucian and Cicero are borrowed more than once, whilst Thoresby's Ducatus Leodiensis; 'Epitomi of universal history'; De Roye's Favourites of England; and Foxe's Book of martyrs are also borrowed.<sup>35</sup>

The clerical borrowers who have been identified as such do not borrow on regular occasions as might be expected if a club or society were meeting at Maidstone. At Doncaster for example, where such a group was operating, many loans are recorded as taking place simultaneously on the meeting day and a discernible borrowing pattern emerges. At Maidstone, there is no such obvious pattern to clerical borrowing - it is occasional and haphazard - and on only one occasion, as far as can be ascertained, do two clergymen borrow on the same day.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, clergy usually borrow on a weekday, with very few loans before 1770 taking place on a Sunday, whilst after 1778, Sunday borrowing increases.

One further clergyman deserves mention, serving as he did as Master of the Maidstone Grammar School during a period until 1746 when he resigned. Deodatus Bye is an early recorded borrower, such loans as he made taking place after his mastership of the school, by which time he may have held a local living. Five works are taken out 1755 to 1757 and include Savage's History of Germany and Tillotson's Sermons.

Other more substantial borrowers, not further identified, are William Shipley (fifteen loans: 1769-91) who borrowed on no fewer than five

occasions William Bailey's On models and machines; W. Hawkins (fourteen loans: 1773-1789); John Oliver (fourteen loans: 1794-1799); Thomas Veel<sup>37</sup>. (fourteen loans: 1798-1799); Mr Widen (fourteen loans: August 1755 to January 1757, all of which were volumes of the Salmon History); James Jacobson (approximately eight loans during 1799); and James Stonehouse (seven loans: 1755-1756, mostly of Clarendon's History). One further borrower, Richard Hodgson, recorded the most loans of any individual using the library: approximately forty-six issues between 1770 and 1778. Much is history, and his loans include all but two volumes of Salmon's History, whilst more unusual choices include Heylin's Microcosmus; Spon's History of Germany; 'English atlas'; 'History of the Crusades'; and Gilbert Burnet's History of the right of princes.

The most overwhelmingly popular work at Maidstone during the eighteenth century, according to the register of loans, was Thomas Salmon's Modern history, or the present state of all nations available in a fifteen volume edition. Almost one third (30.5 per cent) of all recorded borrowers took out at least one volume of the work and seventeen of those (14 per cent of total number of borrowers) borrowed nothing but the History. The overall dominance of a single multi-volume work such as this is significant, though not unique, and a notably similar borrowing pattern emerges at the Rotherham parish library, insofar as a high proportion of recorded loans focus on a single, non-theological work. At Rotherham the concomitant work, borrowed during a similar time period to the Salmon History at Maidstone, was Rapin's History of England; similarly in a fifteen volume edition.<sup>38</sup>

Such overall dominance by single multi-volume works at both parish libraries is somewhat notable and the fact that both were non-theological works of history and topography adds to the significance considering the overwhelmingly theological nature of the two collections.

In purely numerical terms, there were some 431 issues of books recorded at the Maidstone parish library between 1755 and December 1800.



Of these issues, some twenty-six per cent (113 issues) were recorded against the Salmon History and this involving some 152 volumes. Such demand represents six times as many issues as were recorded against the second most-borrowed work; Camden's Britannia which registers a mere eighteen loans over the same period. Very close to this latter figure are the seventeen loans similarly recorded for Richard Burn's Ecclesiastical law and the sixteen loans of Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, whilst the Thomas Lodge edition of the works of Josephus is recorded as being loaned on twelve occasions. Between them, these five authors: Salmon (113 issues), Camden (18), Burn (17), Clarendon (16) and Josephus (12) represent over forty per cent of the entire issues recorded over the forty-five year period in question. Once again, the prominence of history and topography as subject matter is marked amongst these works that are most borrowed.

Each of the above mentioned works is borrowed, more or less, throughout the full time-span of forty-five years to which the issue record applies, with the exception of Burn's Ecclesiastical law. This latter work does not first appear as a loan until March 1764, appropriately enough, as it was not published until 1760.

Thomas Salmon's Modern history, or the present state of all nations first(?) appeared in a three volume edition during 1739 (with cuts and maps by Herman Moll) and had reached a third edition by 1744. Individual volumes of the History recorded in the register of loans at Maidstone number fifteen (though there is one mention in 1774 of a volume sixteen) and analysis of issues reveals certain volumes to have been borrowed more often than others.<sup>39</sup> All volumes of the Modern history lay within the issue-range three to nineteen. Those volumes recorded as issued most often are volume one (China, Japan and the Far East): 19 recorded issues; volume three (India, Ceylon and Persia (part)): 15 issues; and volume six (Russia and Scandinavia): 13 issues. Such recorded use is spread over the whole loan period, 1755-1800. Those volumes recorded as

issued least often over the same period are volume twelve (France (second part)): 3 issues; volume thirteen (Spain and Portugal): 6 issues; and volume four (Persia (part), Arabia and Turkish provinces in Asia): 6 issues.

During 1756 there were a record number of issues of the Salmon History (16) mainly due to the loans of one library user, Mr Widen; three issues were of volume seven (Poland, Eastern Europe and Germany (part)). Fifteen issues of the History are recorded for 1766 and thirteen for 1774 and in both cases the figures are swollen by the persistent use of certain individuals (Mrs Crew and Mr Hodgson respectively). Three volumes are missing from the work within the library as it now survives (volumes 2, 8 and 9); at least two volumes were still available towards the end of the eighteenth century, for the last recorded loans for each were: volume 2, 1774; volume 8, 1796; and volume 9, 1793.

A significant number of individual borrowers attempted a sequential-volume approach to their reading of the whole work. (Unlike at Rotherham where only a few borrowers did so with Rapin's History.<sup>40</sup>.) Attempts at Maidstone vary from three to fourteen volumes and some are remarkable examples of persistent and quite purposeful borrowing.

Mr Widen, for example, borrowed and returned fourteen volumes of Salmon's History in sequential volume order over a period of twenty months - August 1755 to April 1757 - only omitting volume two, which had been out on loan when he returned volume one. He kept individual volumes in his possession for between nineteen days (v.8) and six weeks (v.15 British Isles part two) and yet Mr Widen is not recorded as having borrowed from the library again after the return of volume fifteen. Five other borrowers attempted partially sequential approaches to the reading of the Salmon work and then appear not to have borrowed again. All commence their task during the first twelve years of the recorded loans period: Thomas Chaplain (3 volumes: winter 1759/60); Robert Chaplain (3 volumes: winter/spring 1767/68); Rev. Thomas (8 volumes: October 1756 - February 1757); Rev. James Hales (8 volumes: August 1755 - September 1759) and Mrs Crew (11 volumes:

March 1766 - June 1768).

Also deserving of mention is Miss Weller, who, in a particularly intense period of borrowing, managed to take out no fewer than ten volumes of Salmon's History within a four-month period: October 1759 - February 1760. Additionally, she borrowed Sir George Wheler's Journey into Greece and Picart's Religious ceremonies.

However, not all borrowers were as intense in their reading. The Rev. Hales took four years to progress through his eight volumes, whilst John Oliver spread his borrowing of twelve volumes over five years. Other sequential borrowers of the Salmon History also took out other works of an historical nature: Mrs Lewis (seven volumes of Salmon's History; 1764-1767) also borrowed John Lewis's Antiquities of Feversham; Samuel Godding (ten volumes similarly; 1793) who also borrowed Camden's Britannia and 'History of France'; and finally Simon Pine (six volumes; 1796) who also took out Camden's Britannia and Josephus' Works.

As the instances of additional borrowings show, there was a sustained interest in history - both secular and ecclesiastical - and also in topography. A significant proportion of borrowers confined themselves entirely to these topics.

Even amongst those who are recorded as having used the library on only one occasion (a figure amounting to approximately half the total number of borrowers), twenty-seven per cent chose either a volume from the Salmon History or from the works of Josephus. The remainder represent loans of some thirty-two different titles, over one third of which can be classified as history or topography.

Within these categories the more popular works were Sir George Wheler's Journey into Greece (first published in 1682); John Lewis's The History and antiquities of the Abbey and Church of Faversham in Kent (1727); works by the ecclesiastical historian John Strype including his lives of Archbishops Parker, Grindal and Cranmer, his Annals of the Reformation and Ecclesiastical memorials; William Lambarde's Perambulation

of Kent (editions published 1574 and 1576); Laurence Echard's History of England (1707); the 'Antiquities of Palmyra'; John Savage's Compleat history of Germany (1702); and Thomas Spratt's History of the Royal Society (1667).

However, the relative popularity of these works should be emphasised and all lie within the recorded issue-range, four to seven issues each. The works obviously also display different borrowing patterns over the time-span in question and some significance may attach to such observations as the fact that no issues of any Strype work are recorded before 1775 (despite the earliest of the works mentioned being published in 1694) and all continue to be frequently borrowed after 1800. Whilst a work such as Savage's Compleat history of Germany has a limited issue-span of eleven years (1755-1766) and that of Spratt's History of the Royal Society, twenty years (1775-1795).<sup>41</sup>.

Certain other volumes of history or topography announce their existence in the library simply by virtue of single recorded issues and may thereby indicate a relative lack of interest. Such works include Aubry de La Mottraye's Travels through Europe; Thomas Frankland's Annals of King James and King Charles; John Lewis's History of the Isle of Tenet (sic); Loubere's History of Siam; John Baptist Nani's History of Venice; Archbishop Parker's History of his own times; Thomas Philipot's Original and growth of the Spanish monarchy; Raleigh's History of the world and James Spon's Histoire de la Ville et de l'Etat de Geneva. Hiob Ludolf's Historiam Aethiopicam meanwhile, was issued on three occasions.

One consideration may have been the language factor, some of the above mentioned works being only available in foreign language editions. Thereby, one can assume, a significant barrier was presented to not a few of the local parishioner-borrowers.

Nevertheless, such interest in history and topography as is manifest by the loans record is remarkable and perhaps cannot be considered in isolation from both local factors and national events. For Maidstone

itself, situated at the centre of the county had played, and continued to play, an important role in regional history and development. It was a centre both administratively and commercially whilst national affairs also had their local impact; from the Civil War, when the town, held by Royalists, had been besieged, to the contemporary garrisoning of thousands of soldiers, firstly in 1756, at the outbreak of the Seven Years' War, and again, two decades later, in 1778 in connection with the fighting in the American colonies.

It may not be surprising therefore that local people sought information on events past and present; on people and places that involved or merely interested them. And though no newspaper was printed in Maidstone until 1786 (apart from the brief appearance of the Maidstone Mercury in 1725) news of events, national and international would be frequently brought into the town stimulating discussion and enquiry.

However, the library, set apart within the parish church of All Saints' was not developing and growing but rather the opposite was more likely to be true. There was for instance, no continuing endowment with which new books could be bought and perhaps it was during the later years of the eighteenth century that neglect and wilful damage began to take their toll.<sup>42</sup> Neither the will nor the means were available to meet what was elsewhere a rapidly growing demand for the printed word in its more accessible forms.

The library did however continue to meet a steady demand for certain of its volumes and after the previously mentioned works by Salmon, Camden, Burn, Clarendon and Josephus (which were the most borrowed) a diversity of other works emerge as modestly popular. William Bailey's On the models and machines of the Society of Arts (9 loans); a Latin edition of the works of Cicero (8); John Ecton's Thesaurus (8); and Picart's Religious ceremonies (8), all continued to be periodically borrowed over relatively long periods, though the Bailey volume was not first borrowed until 1773. The list continues with the perennial Foxe's Book of Martyrs

(7 loans); the works of Joseph Addison (7) and Prideaux's 'Connections' (of the Old and New Testaments) (7). Of these, only the Addison volume shows a markedly truncated issue-span (1756-1766).<sup>43</sup>.

Of the four collections of sermons recorded as borrowed, those of Tillotson and (Offspring?) Blackall are borrowed the most and in the former case go some way toward confirming the assertion that though Tillotson lived and died in the seventeenth century, he was an essential part of the history of the eighteenth.<sup>44</sup> Sermons by Atterbury and Bentley are taken out once and twice respectively.

Two other popular works of eighteenth-century piety, the anonymous (Allestree's) Whole duty of man and the ubiquitous Commentary by Burkitt on the New Testament surprisingly appear but once and twice respectively. And a similar lack of recorded interest applies to Richard Blome's History of the Old and New Testament; Poole's Annotations and Hammond's Commentary on the New Testament ( the latter despite Dr Johnson's endorsement of it<sup>45</sup>). Though it is however possible that such works of commentary were designated reference volumes, not to be loaned (as was the case at Rotherham parish library).

Non-theological works whose presence in the library is announced by solitary loans include: 'The English atlas'; Sir William Temple's Essays; Bacon's Sylva Sylvarum; Peter Heylin's Microcosmus and Richard Grafton's 'Chronicle'.

1. M(aidstone) M(useums and) A(rt) G(allery), Maidstone Parochial Library. Borrowers' Book. The main listing is headed "The Account of Books taken out of and returned into the Parish Library of Maidstone. From August 1755". The last dated entry is October 21, 1871 by which time the books had been moved out of the parish church into the Museum. The whole collection was, in August 1984, being moved into the care of the Kent Archives Office, County Hall, Maidstone.
2. Probably The Chronology of ancient kingdoms amended, issued by Henry Pemberton in 1728.
3. For the purposes of the present work a cut-off has been applied at 31 December, 1800.
4. Only two loan entries have names that are either undecipherable or missing altogether.
5. See above p.p.206-207.
6. Were all borrowers to be fully identified, it is likely that a majority would emerge as lay users with very few more than fourteen clerical borrowers.
7. 1762 is probably the one exception.
8. See above pp.66-67.
9. Edward Weller proceeded B.A. from Corpus Christi, Oxford, in 1752 and M.A. in 1756. Samuel, Edward's younger brother, proceeded B.A. from the same college in 1755 and M.A. in 1759 becoming a pluralist holder of two livings, one at Steeple Langford, Wiltshire and another at St. Martin's, Oxford.
10. Analysis of the record reveals that on average, a new volume of the History was taken out every thirteen days by Miss Weller during this period.
11. Samuel Eastchurch was Town Clerk at Maidstone, 1753-1772.
12. George May was a later Mayor of Maidstone (1794).
13. The work thus abbreviated could refer to the author's edition of Hardyng's Chronicle (1543), the author's own Abridgement of the Chronicles of England (1562) or Richard Grafton's Chronicle at large (1568).
14. Gordon E. Mingay, English landed society in the eighteenth century. Routledge, 1963. p.131.
15. Entries such as 'Miss Mary Turner'; 'Ann Hills'; and 'Miss Elis Oare'.
16. Dent, Informal agencies, 38.
17. By way of contrast (and to illumine contemporary attitudes towards certain other women in that same community), three months after Mrs Hardy borrowed volume two of Salmon's History in April 1769, another

woman, one Susannah Lott, was dragged through the streets of Maidstone on a hurdle on her way to Penenden Heath where she was duly hanged and her chained body burnt at the stake. The woman had been found guilty at the Spring Assizes of murdering her husband. (Russell, History of Maidstone, 290.)

18. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigienses, pt 1. iv. 211.
19. For instance, one incident relating to the prosecution of a soldier had national reverberations. (Russell, History of Maidstone, 366.)
20. Madame Sophia von Kielmansegge, daughter of Countess von Platen, was mistress to George I. She acquired the title Countess of Darlington in 1722. Friedrich Otto Gotthard Kielmansegg (1768-1851) and George Ludwig Kielmansegg (1705-1785) were both German generals.
21. D.N.B. entry.
22. It is mentioned in H.M.C., Ninth Report, iii, 81a. Kingsley died at Maidstone on 9 October, 1769.
23. See above p.201.
24. Samuel Denne (1730-1799), proceeded M.A. from Corpus Christi, Cambridge, in 1756 and became F.S.A. in 1783. Samuel was the author of The Histories and antiquities of Rochester and its environs (1772). See D.N.B. Both John and Samuel Denne may have inherited their antiquarian interests from their father John senior, archdeacon and prebendary of Rochester and an antiquarian himself who wrote on ecclesiastical subjects and was responsible for arranging the archives of Rochester Cathedral.
25. A Sermon preached in the parish-church of All-Saints, Maidstone, In Kent; on Friday, November 2, 1753. At the Anniversary Election of a Mayor for that Corporation. J. Oliver, 1754.
26. Browne, History of All Saints, 134-135; Russell, History of Maidstone, 288-290.
27. Gentleman's Magazine. XXXV. August 1765. p.392.
28. Denne's handwritten loan entry of that year shows no appreciable deterioration over those entries made prior to his injury of 1765. The year 1770, was, coincidentally, the year in which William Hazlitt (senior) was appointed minister of the Week Street Independent Congregation in Maidstone - eight years before the birth of the famous essayist of the same name in the town.
29. By comparison, the Maidstone gaoler's salary, in 1776, was £60 and the organist within All Saints' parish church received £30. Neither George Launder, organist 1747-1795, nor Bartholomew Davis his successor were recorded as parish library users.
30. Authorship is now credited to Richard Allestree (1619-1681).



31. Situated approximately four miles south east of Maidstone.
32. See above pp.62-63.
33. A reserve force of 15,000 men due to be sent to the American colonies.
34. Possibly Prynne's Histrio-mastix of 1632. This 'pamphlet' (it contained over a thousand pages) attacked the contemporary playhouses.
35. Loans continue to be credited to his name until 1804. In addition, Mark Noble junior appears borrowing books from the library between June 1799 and December 1800.
36. The Rev. Bassett and Rev. James Hales on 28 September, 1757, when both men borrowed volumes of the Salmon History.
37. A family tree of the Veals (sic) is reproduced in Archaeologia Cantiana, XXI, 1826.p.75. Daniel Defoe rewrote a popular ghost story in 1706 and called it A True relation of the apparition of one Mrs Veal. (See William Minet, Daniel Defoe and Kent: a chapter in Chapel-le-Ferne history. Ibid., 61-75.)
38. See above pp. 189-191.
39. The work appeared in a variety of editions both in England and abroad (the first part of a Dutch translation was published in Amsterdam in 1729 and an Italian translation appeared in twenty-three volumes, 1740-1761). British editions appear in a number of formats e.g. the London edition of ca 1736-38 which could be bound into thirty-one octavo volumes, and other formats include three volumes in quarto (1739) and three volumes in folio (1744-46).
40. See above p.190.
41. Such observations must be tentative as one knows little regarding the contemporary availability of individual volumes. Certain works may have been late acquisitions and others may have been out of the parish library for long periods on unofficial extended loans - others may have gone missing altogether.
42. A memorandum contained within the MS. Borrowers' Book (MMAG, Maidstone Parochial Library) states that when the books were transferred to the Charles Museum in 1867 some were affected by worm and damp whilst others had 'suffered from wilful and disgraceful mutilation'. (R.A. Stutely, Maidstone Museum and Art Gallery, to the author, 15 July, 1981.)
43. The work is however loaned again after 1800.
44. Abbey and Overton, English Church, 115.
45. Boswell, Life of Johnson, 273.

## CHAPTER IV

### FURTHER RELATED SOURCES

Some advantage may be gained from placing the present analysis of specific parish library usage within an appropriate broader contemporary context. To achieve this, a small group of representative primary sources will be highlighted, all of which have a bearing on the movement and use of books within parish communities. Presented chronologically, in order to illumine the development of both attitude and circumstance, the material has relevance to the reading, loaning and benefaction of books in connection with certain small libraries within the eighteenth century. Considered in parallel to the foregoing analysis of specific library use, a clearer contextual whole is more likely to emerge from the disparate parts.

The first contemporary source is the diary of Robert Meeke, minister of Slaithwaite Chapel, near Huddersfield, 1685-1724.<sup>1</sup> Meeke's incumbency appropriately spans the end of the old century and the beginning of the new, emerging as a useful starting point from which to trace eighteenth-century developments.

Robert Meeke was born at Salford, near Manchester, in December 1656, where his father William Meeke was minister. Robert was therefore twenty-nine when he came to Slaithwaite chapelry in 1685 and he is there described as a 'moderate' learned clergyman and sound divine.<sup>2</sup> Certainly nothing in the diary would appear to challenge such a claim and the received impression is of a man of liberal piety, modest, yet serious and conscientious in his parochial duties.

The added significance of the diary entries, in the present context, is that a proportion of them relate to a collection of books which became the nucleus of a parish library and which, in part, survive to this day.<sup>3</sup> For by his Will of 20 March, 1724<sup>4</sup>, Robert Meeke bequeathed a portion of his personal library to the minister of Slaithwaite for the time being (Meeke was replaced by Rev. John Sutcliffe).<sup>5</sup> The number of books involved in the bequest appears to have been 133, as recorded on

Meeke's gravestone, though the exact terms of the bequest are there altered slightly and the books are seen to be for the benefit of all succeeding ministers. Nevertheless, the gift was made and a potential for continued public use created out of private means.

Although not richly beneficed<sup>6</sup>, Meeke did have the ability and the desire to acquire and accumulate books that he saw were of use to him. Moreover, books were available, and affordable, be they acquired new at bookshops (vide diary entry for 29 April, 1691) or second-hand at auction (vide diary entry for 4 January, 1692/3; 11-12 April, 1694).<sup>7</sup> Meeke is very conscious of the intellectual value of his books and is aware of his responsibility, or duty, to derive benefit from them. Furthermore, Meeke's need and ever-present desire to study and learn is evident from the diary entries, though in frequent bouts of self-recrimination he often laments his inability to apply himself to study either through inclination or circumstance. A representative selection of entries follows.

11 June 1689      Fetched my books from the Waterside and have now set them in a new closet.

1 July "          Studied none to-day, - was busy ordering my books in my closet all forenoon.

11 Sept. "        I was busy looking at the perspective glass which I received yesterday and paid 10s for. Blessed be God.

I have not much money to spare...

25 Nov. 1690      Read some part of Mr Baxter's English Nonconformity; it is sad to read - to consider of the divisions which are amongst us. Lord remove the cause and send us peace. Let not things indifferent cause so much difference. Let there be no such Act of Uniformity, to occasion our deformity. Take away such unnecessary terms of union as breed divisions. Though I can submit to many things which others cannot; yet I would not have able and worthy to be cast out of the church, because they cannot. Lord grant to England's rulers a spirit of wisdom, to know and heal our distempers, and unite their hearts to make up our

breaches.

23 Mar 1691      Went to meet Mr Broome at Almondbury, to appraise Mr Rowbotham's books. Lord, put me in mind of my own departure...

29 April 1691    (At York) Went into the city, bought some things and a book which I had heard of. When I had read it, I thought my money very ill bestowed. I set toward home.

7 Sept. 1691      At home all day, was busy dressing my closet and ordering my books, placing some in a press, new bought. Lord help me to make use of them as I ought, for I have choice of books, a great privilege which many want. I know not how long I may enjoy them.

17 Feb. 1691/2   Stayed at home; studied and read. I have many helps - learned works, both pleasant and profitable to read. O help me to redeem my time, and let my reading be edifying to myself, that I may be an instrument to instruct others.

25 Feb. 1691/2   Read much to day: especially Annotations on the Bible. Lord, give me knowledge of thy will, and teach me to understand the Holy Scripture, that I may open it to others.

14 June 1692      Studied little: only read in a new piece, which I borrowed, concerning several intrigues in King James the Second's reign, which, if true, were sinful and strange, if not true, it is sad to think such books are spread about to deceive; but I am prone to believe they are true...

19 Sept. 1692    Stayed at home all day, reading an Account of Publique Affairs, in a piece called "The present state of Europe", which cometh out monthly. All nations around us are at variance. Lord grant peace, if it be for thy glory.

4 Jan 1692/3      Rode to Halifax, to a sale of books, by auction; bought what came to 10s., and then came home.

13 Jan 1692/3    There came one of my chapelry today, to desire leave for a Nonconformist to preach sometimes in the week-day, I gave my consent provided they would admit none but sound and peaceable divines.

19 March 1692/3 ...In the afternoon, after sermon, one of the congregation desired that my sermon were printed, and another desired to borrow my notes... but I count it (the sermon) not so exact as to deserve the press, many better and fuller being already printed by more learned men. I desire men's approbation and instruction, but their commendation is dangerous, a temptation to pride...

19 June 1693 Read a Monthly Mercury, giving an account of foreign news.

11 April 1694 Rode to Halifax, to an auction; stayed all night.

12 " " Went again to the sale of books by auction; bought as many yesterday as today as came to 24s 2d.

6 July 1694 A little before dinner came Mr Smith, the author of "The Patriarchall Sabbath". He took me wholly from my study.

At a time between the last dated extract from the Meeke diary above and the death in 1724 of its author, there occurred a further library benefaction to the south of Slaithwaite at Earl Sterndale, near Castleton, Derbyshire. Once again, the benefaction created a parish library, but the benefactor was apparently not a member of the clergy and information regarding his bequest derives solely from the text of his Will.<sup>8</sup>

James Hill 'of Sheffield' wrote his Will on 22 December, 1709 and it was proved in York, on the 11 June, 1712. The text of the Will has been referred to earlier in the present work in connection with a reference within it to a lending library at Sheffield which received thereby a bequest of twelve books.<sup>9</sup>

Elsewhere the text of the Will elaborates at length other similar gifts of books, most notably, that outlining a detailed and thoughtful donation of books and money to the chapel at Earl Sterndale. The exact designation is to 'the Townshipp (&) Chapell' of the village, and the twenty volumes that were to be the gift were to be those considered of most practical value: 'the same to be deposed to the sight or reading of any person or persons at any time not abuseing them that shall desire to

see or read the same'.

Hill is thorough in his provision: a table is given for reading the books on; twenty shillings for seats to the table; twenty shillings for a book-press in which to keep the volumes; and finally, twenty shillings for the making of a window (presumably in the church wall) to facilitate better reading conditions.

The works to be donated are of a theological nature and yet it is significant and appropriate that Hill desired books of practical value be allocated to this most practical of bequests. There was obviously a clear desire that the small library be useful, rather than ornamental, and that such anticipated use be further facilitated by a generous and enlightened scope of access i.e., 'any person or persons at any time'. In this Hill may have been influenced by contemporary policy at the Sheffield parish church lending library (which was in existence, within the vestry, by 1705, according to the Notitia Parochialis) though such an intention is quite in keeping with the directives and injunctions regarding the provision of books in churches dating from the previous century. Where Hill differs from the previous benefactor, Robert Meeke, is in his anticipated scope of use which is clearly enlarged to encompass all that are interested and may be construed as a pointer to the future. Other endowed libraries in the area of which we have knowledge, were all of later foundation, such as that at Bradfield founded in 1720 by bequest of Robert Turie, Assistant Minister at Sheffield. Even so, few such foundations were so categorically open to all (Turie, like Robert Meeke, designated the Bradfield bequest for the minister there and his successors) and the chaining of books in situ within churches was still prevalent within the region at this time.

The unrestricted terms of Hill's bequest in fact echo a far earlier and notable foundation within the county at Repton (St. Wyston) where one William Bladon, in 1622, had given fifteen unchained books 'to be employed for the use of the parishe'. The books were to be kept in some convenient place and loans freely made.<sup>10</sup> Such a liberal attitude

was remarkable for its time and the procedure it advocated was by no means common practice,<sup>11</sup> and even James Hill's bequest made some seventy years later at Sterndale, is still notable by virtue of its lack of restrictive rules and conditions and for the unspecific nature of its intended use.

Such use as the bequest did receive is not now known though the Will does specify which practical works of theology were considered the most appropriate in the circumstances. Twelve folios and twelve quarto volumes are mentioned and include Matthew Poole's English annotations, in two volumes (also specifically mentioned by Meeke at Slaithwaite); the Ecclesiastical history by Eusebius; the Book of Homilies; Bishop Ussher's Body of divinity; two works by Robert Baxter; George Lawson's Theo-Politica; Edward Leigh's Annotations upon all the New Testament; and 'Whailleys prototyps'. The latter work is defined by Hill as 'a plaine booke for the comon people' confirming somewhat his desire and intention that all who could, should benefit from his gift. Additionally, as so often occurred with such a benefaction, similar gifts and endowments were also made in association with the welfare, schooling and education of local children. Thus James Hill endowed an annual forty shillings for the schooling of poor children in Sterndale; three pounds to buy Bibles and catechisms for the poor of the chapelry of Hartington; forty shillings to the curate at Sterndale for teaching and explaining the catechism to the children there; and a copy (or copies) of Adam Littleton's Latin dictionary for the scholars at the under-school, Sheffield.

Finally, twenty of Hill's nearest relations (those who could read) were to be permitted by the terms of the Will to take one practical work in octavo each, whilst vicar Drake of Sheffield was to choose twelve of the best remaining books for the lending library at Sheffield.

Such a diversity of bequest was both generous and thoughtful, and speaks of a genuine seriousness of purpose; it ensured that a valuable resource - the collection of books - was not simply dispersed but put to



good purpose by benefiting the maximum number of people. The very number of books involved in the bequest emphasises the size of the original private collection the theological nature of which made it suitable and appropriate as the nucleus of a church-based parish library. More often, such a library would have been the gift of a clergyman, and at a similar time to the first brief recorded school loans at Wisbech parish church and the formation of a handful of south Yorkshire clergymen at Doncaster into their Society, many such benefactions were being made. These foundations enjoyed a new-found security from the recently implemented Parish Libraries Act of 1709 which encompassed and nominally protected a variety of idiosyncratic parochial foundations. Those who had the means therefore gave and such popular acts of piety and philanthropy ensured the new foundation, augmentation, and re-founding of many parish library collections during the first three decades of the century.

Small private libraries, if not the subject of a bequest by the owner would, almost inevitably, be liable to dispersal and removal at the owner's death. However, such private book collections could, at the inclination of the owner, be opened-up to a wider readership (albeit a relatively small circle of known individuals) during the owner's lifetime. Scattered references survive that confirm such a process of informal borrowing, which, though it might not transcend certain social barriers, was a useful process fulfilling different literary needs within the various class levels of the contemporary social structure. Two contrasting examples follow which illustrate such a process taking place as the century progressed.

The first is a modest example of loans made from a private library by a clergyman somewhat isolated in a country parish at Castleton in Derbyshire, close to the previously mentioned Earl Sterndale.

Edward Bagshaw was vicar at Castleton from 1723 to 1769 in which latter year he died aged seventy-nine. According to his monumental

inscription within the parish church he was a sound scholar and a lover of peace and quietness. Whilst at Castleton he kept a diary, or account book, wherein the emphasis is firmly on money matters and includes his general and tithe accounts. The diary survives<sup>12</sup>. and present interest centres on a few references to books and reading recorded therein. This type of entry is not included within the main body of the manuscript text but is entered separately on the paste-down endpapers, not in wholly chronological order. The entries are not extensive and are here reproduced in full as they appear not to have been extracted before.

- 1747 May 2<sup>d</sup> : I sent by Mr Robert Waterhouse a Letter to Hal (his son),  
and 3 books: Readings Life of Xt in 2 volumes: Nelson on  
the Sacrament:
- 3<sup>d</sup> : Sent Mr Swain by Benjamin Kirk Parsons' Christian Directory:
- 1747 May 23<sup>d</sup> : Lent Mr Barsley Ainsworth on y<sup>e</sup> Pentateuch:
- 31 : Lent Mr Jenkinson Schoolmaster of Hope. Wilkins Natural  
Religion:
- June 22 : Sent Hal 4p<sup>r</sup> of Stockings & works of y<sup>e</sup> Whole Duty of Man
- 26 : Lent y<sup>e</sup> Schoolmaster of Hope Scots Xtian Life in 5 volumes:
- 27 : Lent Mr Bardsley Grotij opera Vol: 1<sup>st</sup>
- July 6 : Lent Harry Hall (?) Ishams Devotions:
- Aug 18 : P<sup>d</sup> Molly Hall 6<sup>d</sup> for y<sup>e</sup> Manchester News:
- Oct 5 : P<sup>d</sup> Molly Hall 4½ for the News:
- 1747 Oct 16 : Lent M<sup>( )</sup> Bagshaw Pamela in 4 volumes
- Nov 12 : p<sup>d</sup> Jos: Knowls 6<sup>d</sup> on M<sup>rs</sup> (Tric?)ets account for reading  
Jenny Camerons Life.
- Rec<sup>d</sup> of M<sup>s</sup> Bagshaw Pamela in 4 volumes:
- 30 : Rec<sup>d</sup> from M<sup>r</sup> Swain Parsons Xtian Directory:
- (?) Dec 5 : P<sup>d</sup> Daniel Royse for a new Almanack: 4<sup>(d)</sup>
- 1749 Dec 14 : Rec<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> British Maaazine (sic) for November:

There is little exceptional about the appearance of the Whole duty of man; (Robert?) Nelson On the sacrament; or Henry Ainsworth's Commentary

on the Pentateuch. Though the inclusion of the then recently published (1740) novel Pamela by Samuel Richardson suggests a broadening reading taste and is perhaps a pointer to future trends and demands which, elsewhere were to be partially met by subscription and circulating libraries.<sup>13.</sup>

Some of Bagshaw's earlier diary entries from 1742/3 refer to the regular meetings of a club, though what type of club; clerical, book or reading, or mutual improvement is not discernible. Meetings were held at members' houses (e.g. Mr Bray's in November and December 1742; at 'the Excisemans'; and at Bagshaw's own home) the last recorded being at James Booth's in January 1743.<sup>14.</sup>

On September 25, 1743, Bagshaw records that he preached at Norton (Derbyshire) where one Cavendish Nevile was then rector of the parish church of St. James. Nevile himself owned a substantial library and when he died, some six years after Bagshaw's visit in 1749, he made a substantial bequest of over four hundred volumes to form the nucleus of a parish library.<sup>15.</sup>

Some of Edward Bagshaw's own library of books may survive if in fact any books were amalgamated with the nineteenth-century 'Farren Library' and a detailed inspection of this collection might reveal such a provenance.<sup>16.</sup> Otherwise, the exact size and nature of the Bagshaw library cannot now be assessed except insofar as the diary entries shed a little meagre light.

The size and nature of a mid-century clergyman's library might be expected to be varied and idiosyncratic according to individual means and inclination. The broad social gulf that existed between the clergy at the extremes of the class levels which permeated contemporary society would have sharpened that difference. The poor country curate, existing on a meagre income had little in common with the richly-beneficed, cultured, and perhaps scholarly younger son of a landed family, who, possibly holding a number of lucrative livings, moved in social circles very different to his humble counterpart.<sup>17.</sup> And although a library of

books, held as common stock (such as might be associated with a clerical or literary club) might ameliorate this difference to a certain extent, providing each according to his need, individual wealth and circumstance would be clearly reflected in the composition and nature of their respective personal libraries.

Thus in contrast to the modest scope of the Bagshaw library at Castleton, where an apparently small collection of books was used by a similarly small circle of friends, neighbours and relations, there can be presented the evidence of a very different personal library. Ostensibly of a similar nature (that is, a record of loans made by a clergyman from his own private library) the particular circumstances emerge as both socially and geographically far removed from the isolated Derbyshire peak district.

The Rev. John Bowle (1725-1788) was a scholarly cleric, versed in French, Spanish and Italian, who had a particular interest and knowledge of Spanish literature. Thereby known to his friends as Don Bowle, he was a member of Dr. Johnson's Essex Head Club, holding the vicarage at Idmiston, a village six miles to the north east of Salisbury, until his death in 1788.

In 1781 had appeared his Life of Cervantes, in Spanish, and though unfavourably received in England (Joseph Barreti led the attack) the opposite was true in Spain. Bowle also published numerous contributions to the Gentleman's Magazine; Archaeologia; Granger's History; Stevens's edition of Shakespeare and Warton's History of poetry.

Bowle had proceeded M.A. from Oriel College, Oxford in 1750 by which time he had evidently amassed a substantial library of his own (it was to be sold by auction, after his death, in 1790). Present interest centres on his manuscript catalogue of the library wherein are also recorded some two hundred loans of books made to various individuals over the period 1750 to 1785.<sup>18</sup>

The nature of the library, as it is revealed by the record of loans

and by the catalogue, is very different both in size and scope from the more common orthodox collections amassed by individuals of the eighteenth-century clergy. The library is not a predominantly devotional or theological collection for example, neither is it strong in the church fathers, early church history, or in early editions of classical Greek and Roman authors. Rather, it is a literary collection encompassing contemporary British and European scholars and authors, with notable additional works of historical, linguistical and antiquarian interest. As such, it is not dissimilar to the library of another contemporary clergyman, James Bickham, rector of Loughborough, Leicestershire, 1761-1785. Both Bickham and Bowle were friends of leading literary figures of the time, both were financially secure, yet it was the more obscure, less-scholarly, Bickham who was moved to bequeath his personal collection of books to his successors at Loughborough, creating a somewhat literary parish library there.<sup>19</sup>

At Idmiston, John Bowle made his books available to a wider readership before his death (when his books were dispersed) and the record he made of book loans provides an interesting insight into the use made of what was, if not strictly a parish library, then a parallel phenomenon, privately owned.

The first recorded loans are dated 11 March 1750/1 and involve plays by Fletcher and John Marston and are followed by such diverse literary works as George Whetstone's Rocke of regarde; Ariosto's epic Orlando Furioso; John Boyle's Remarks on Swift; Fielding's Joseph Andrews and Tom Jones; and works by Boccaccio, Rousseau and Voltaire. The poetical works of Milton, Thomas Parnell and Robert Dodsley are also borrowed as are various editions of Shakespeare, Horace Walpole's Royal and noble authors of England<sup>20</sup>, Lewis's Life of Caxton and the Wynkyn de Worde printing of The Golden legend. Travel and topography are topics evidently no less popular here than has been evidenced elsewhere and amongst works lent are the voyages of Anson and Jouvin, and the travels of John Durant Breval, Jonas Hanway, Joseph Baretti and Henry Swinburne. Antiquarian

topics are represented typically by Walter Charleton's Chorea Gigantum (on Stonehenge); Dugdale's Monasticon; Randolph's History of Feversham; Pierce On the history and antiquities of Sarum; and works by the notable antiquarians Andrew Ducarel, John Stow and Edward Thwaite. Also borrowed are numerous works in Spanish; Thomas Coryate's Crudities, hastily gobbled up in five moneths travells; two books on witchcraft (by Scot and Hutchinson respectively) and 'Coke on Littleton', that is, Sir Edward Coke's Institutes of the laws of England.

Such diversity bespeaks the catholic nature of the library and goes some way to confirming the importance of Bowle's collection, not only in an intrinsic sense but in the way it became a useful regional resource for scholars, authors and the gentry. For the evidence of the loans reveals the recipients of the books to be just such a class of person in the main, many of whom would have had their own private libraries and who yet still found it necessary to use Bowle's collection to supplement their own.

Entries which allocate books to 'Jennings', 'Easton', 'Goddard of Tudworth' and to Lord Folkestone probably relate to individuals within the landed classes, whilst a handful of others merit the suffix 'Esquire': John Andrews, James Harris<sup>21</sup>, T. Hayward<sup>22</sup> and T. Branch Hollis.

Clerical borrowers are indicated by the appropriate prefix in the following cases: messrs. Barch, Thomas of Feversham, Williams and Tricker; whilst the scholarly prefix 'Dr.' is given to messrs Baker, Ballendyne, Dawkins, Hancock, Samber, Simpson and Watson of Winchester College.

Four further individuals cited as borrowers merit mention here, representing, as they do, leading figures from various walks of public life.

'Col(onel) Cracherode' probably refers to Mordaunt Cracherode, who commanded the marines in Anson's voyage round the world and who came from an Essex family, his son, Clayton Mordaunt Cracherode becoming a leading collector of books, prints, coins and gems, and the leading book-

buyer of his age.<sup>23</sup> Colonel Cracherode is recorded as borrowing 'Lauders Book & M. vol.<sup>s</sup> 4 & 6' on 18 June, 1753.

'Mr Capell of the Temple, Editor of Shakespeare,' refers to Edward Capell (1713-1781) the Shakesperian commentator and deputy-inspector of plays from 1737. Appropriately, Capell is recorded as borrowing three volumes of Shakespeare's 'quarto' plays ("2,3,4.") on 17 September, 1765 and as returning them on August 26, 1766; some two years before the publication of his own edition of the works of Shakespeare, in ten volumes, in 1768.

A further literary scholar appears borrowing a number of books from Bowle in May 1783, though the allocation to 'Mr Warton, Trinity College Oxford' could conceivably refer to either Joseph or Thomas Warton, brothers, and sons of Thomas Warton the elder, professor of poetry (1718-1728) at Oxford. However, it is likely that Thomas Warton the younger (1728-1790) is referred to, being a Fellow of Trinity from 1751 to his death in 1790. Thomas also became Professor of Poetry at Oxford (1757-1767) and, significantly, edited an edition of Milton's early poems, published in 1785; Bowle having loaned a copy of Milton's 'Maske' of 1637<sup>24</sup>; an interleaved copy of the same author's poems in two volumes, published 1673; and 'Justa Edwardo King 1638' (i.e. Lycidas, Milton's contribution to the memorial volume to Edward King), all of which were borrowed, amongst others, on 18 May 1783. The books were noted as returned by Bowle in February 1786, that is, after the publication of Warton's edition of Milton.

Finally, mention must be made of the Honourable Horace Walpole, Fourth Earl of Orford (1717-1797), son of the Prime Minister and owner of Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, who, in a brief entry for June 1764 is recorded by Bowle as borrowing 'Poetical Miscellanies vol. (?) in which is Licia, or poems of Love' along with 'the Rising of the Crown of R<sup>d</sup>. 3<sup>d</sup>. written by himself'. The loans therefore took place just six months before the publishing of The Castle of Otranto in December, 1764.

Loans such as those recorded for Colonel Cracherode, Edward Capell, Thomas Warton and Horace Walpole place John Bowle squarely in the centre of the contemporary literary scene and are important details within a broader scene of events. More work would reveal the full extent of Bowle's contribution to contemporary literary efforts via the use of his library, yet perhaps enough has been extracted to intimate the obscure though nonetheless significant place such a collection of books could hold by virtue of the circle of scholars it serviced.

There is though, little evidence of loans to parishioners and local people (though a great many individual names have not yet been identified); only brief references to 'Farmer Massey' and 'Councillor Poore' probably confirm the restricted access of the library, by accident or design, to the higher social circles.

Quite the opposite is true of the contemporary library of Rev. John Griffith, curate of Llandyssilio, whose parish straddled the counties of Caermarthen and Pembroke. Griffiths' library, consisting of some eight hundred titles, was made available a little later in the century ca 1770-1796 and though the recipients of the loans appear not to have been of any great social standing, the broad spread of literature being borrowed tends to confirm a trend towards the broadening of subject bases of private clerical libraries, evident in the latter part of the century. Theological works do however appear to predominate, yet loans are also made by Griffiths of such works as 'Compleat Farmer'; 'a Riddle-book'; 'a Cyphering Book'; various volumes of the Spectator; 'a Play-book'; 'a Gazater'; and additionally, Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe.<sup>25</sup>

Borrowers are no doubt local people, both men and women, and some have occupations appended to their loan entries: 'the schoolmaster at Fishguard'; 'the schoolmistress of Rhydwillim'; a taylor; a maid; and a journeyman. Some are distinguished with the title 'Esquire', whilst many more are clergymen, such as 'Mr Harris's curate' and 'a young clergyman at Llanboydu.



Griffiths and his parishioners also had available to them a parish library proper, provided by the Associates of Dr Bray in August 1766 and which consisted of thirty-nine theological works. In all probability, these books would not have been available for general loan. From his own private collection, Griffiths loaned works of history, such as, 'The War of Alexander the Great'; 'History of Greece'; 'History of the late war'; 'Monarchs of England'; and 'Sieges and Battles'. And in addition to numerous pamphlets, hymn-books and works by classical authors, loans of theological works included 'Alarm to the unconverted'; 'Concerning infant baptism'; a work by Humphrey Prideaux; and numerous sermons and Testaments. Further work on the Griffiths register, diary, and catalogue of books would no doubt reveal a far more detailed and comprehensive account of this important yet little-known source.

1. H(uddersfield) C(entral) L(ibrary) (Local History) A920 MEE. Robert Meeke and David Dyson, Two manuscript diaries (Microfiche edition). Also: Robert Meeke, Extracts from the diary of the Rev. Robert Meeke... To which are added notes... and a brief sketch of his life. Huddersfield: (Bohn), 1874.
2. C.A. Hulbert, Annals of the church in Slaithwaite. London: Longman; Huddersfield: J. Brook, 1864. p.28.
3. York University Library: Special Collections. One volume, which evidently migrated from the church in Slaithwaite sometime after 1758, is the Book of Homilies. The book still bears its chain and anchor-ring affixed to the back board and is notable in that it was so secured at the relatively late date of 1758. (See above p.12.)
4. Quoted in full by Hulbert, Annals of Slaithwaite, 42-44.
5. Certain other books were to be sold or were especially designated to friends; the proceeds of those sold going to benefit the poor of the parish.
6. The only endowment at Slaithwaite was four shillings per annum with total earnings of not more than £20 p.a. (H.J. Morehouse (ed.), Village gleanings. Huddersfield: Parkin, 1886. p.xiv.)
7. The auction (at Halifax) that Meeke attended in January 1692/3 is reputed to be the first such held in Yorkshire. The antiquary and topographer Ralph Thoresby was also present. (E.A. Swaim, The Auction as a means of book distribution in eighteenth-century Yorkshire. Publishing History, 1. 1977. pp.49-91.
8. Borthwick Institute, York Wills 1712-1713 (Oversize), v.68, f.66. Will of James Hill. Hill was probably born in Sterndale and could be the James Hill admitted sizar at Magdalene College, Cambridge, in April 1659 and who proceeded B.A. in 1663/4. This James Hill was the son of James senior of Sterndale, Derbyshire, and attended school at Sheffield.
9. See above p. 59.
10. Kelly, Early public libraries, 82-83., quoting Repton Churchwardens' Accounts for 1622.
11. Within the region, however, at Halifax, John Brearcliffe, apothecary and antiquary (1618-1682) recorded, ca 1643; "Item diverse bookes are taken out of y<sup>e</sup> Vestrye in y<sup>e</sup> Church of Hallifax by diverse men & is in y<sup>e</sup> custody of Thomas Marshall Sexstone". (Halifax Record Office, MS. MISC. 182. p.11.)
12. Sheffield City Archives Department, BAG. C. 315. The Bagshaw Diary. There are frequent references within the diary to the collection and

receipt of tithes, many were made up of lead ore and were measured in 'dyshs' of lead.

13. One contemporary family's reaction to reading Pamela was that all 'wept sorely' over it. Nothing, it was thought could be more moving, except perhaps Richardson's second novel Clarissa Harlowe, when in 1749, the same family all agreed that 'there's no reading them without shedding a good many tears... it is so affecting and moving'. (Pyle, Memoirs, 55.)
14. There may well have been more such entries relating to the club meetings and to the loaning of books prior to May 1747 but unfortunately, at least twenty-two leaves have been cut from the MS. which would have referred to a period November 1743 to April 1747.
15. Four hundred and forty-seven volumes survive and are housed in the basement of Sheffield City Library. Almost every volume has the Nevile bookplate, though evidences of previous ownership are also frequently evident and the names of Thomas and John Dand, Garvis and Dorothy Nevile, John Farrer, Henry Humphys and W. Strode (see above p.154 n.12 ) also appear within the books. The library also contains a work by Erasmus, published at Antwerp by Joannes Crinitus in 1546, the binding of which contains fragments of the following: A New Almanack for the year of our Lord 1690, by John Woodhouse, Philomath. R.E. for the Comp(any of Stationers). n.d. (Wing 2868.)
16. See E.D. Mackerness, The Castleton Parish Library. Journal of the Derbyshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, 77, 1957. p.40. A Borrower's Book, associated with the library which is now kept in the vestry of the parish church, survives and relates to a period 1852 to 1887 (and therefore outside the scope of the present work). The instigator of the loans was the then vicar, Rev. F. Farren the latest catalogue of the collection was compiled in 1977 by Joan E. Friedman of Sheffield University.
17. See Abbey and Overton, English Church, 287, et seq.
18. British Museum, Additional MS. 30374. ff.78v.-81v. Copies of two letters concerning the loans of books are also present (f.78v., to the Reverend Clark, 11 August 1781; f.79r., to Mr Hingeston, 2 May 1774). The BM also holds a copy of the fixed-price sale catalogue of John Bowle's library (BM 129. i. 14(2).), which was to be conducted by B. White and Son, Horace's Head, Fleet Street on 19 January, 1790.
19. The books survive at Loughborough Technical College (Library School). The library is described in G. Wakeman, Loughborough Parish Library. The Book Collector, 25 (3), 1976. pp.345-353.

20. Issued from the Strawberry Hill Press in 1758.
21. Possibly James Harris (1709-1780), M.P. for Christchurch, 1761-80, and author of a work of universal grammar.
22. Possibly Thomas Haywood (d. 1779(?)), attorney at Law of Hungerford in neighbouring Berkshire and editor of the British Muse (1738).
23. D.N.B. entry.
24. A Maske presented at Ludlow Castle 1634: on Michaelmasse night, popularly known as Comus.
25. G.E. Evans, John Griffiths clericus: his curious register and diary. Transactions of the Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society and Field Club, VII. 1906-1907. pp.190; 192-193.

## CHAPTER V

### NEW PERSPECTIVES

The perimeter dates which emerge from the foregoing five borrower registers at Wisbech, Doncaster, Witham, Rotherham and Maidstone, almost span the full eighteenth-century (i.e. 1713-1800) though a continuous and uninterrupted record of library activity (conflated from the group) is only possible from 1726. Each of the libraries analysed has some surviving record relating to a portion of the decade 1751-1760, whilst, by contrast, only a relatively few isolated loans can be allocated to the second decade of the century (those at Wisbech and Doncaster). Towards the end of the century, due to the nature of the present work, two sets of loan records have been artificially curtailed at December 1800 (those of Rotherham and Maidstone); records which otherwise continue into the mid nineteenth-century.

That such a span of recorded parish library activity is thereby manifest is indeed purely fortuitous and represents the arbitrary and chance survival of certain manuscripts. It is not therefore possible to take the facts as they emerge and construe them as typical or representative of developments and usage elsewhere. Were such a process possible, the minute sample size (five parishes) would itself not represent a viable base from which to extrapolate reliable or significant generalisations. Yet the survival of any primary source material relating to the use which parish libraries received during this period is remarkable especially when one considers the relative dearth of surviving records from other contemporary libraries and institutions.<sup>1</sup>

It is important to emphasise however, that for a number of reasons, the recorded use which emerges from the analysis of any parish library record may not represent a wholly accurate reflection of the total use such a library received. For it may not have been considered necessary at all times to record all loans made, especially in the absence of a conscientious library keeper or of careful library administration. Neither, it must be stated, can the total usefulness of a library be

gauged merely from a record of loans, albeit imperfect, without due consideration of the library's static role as a reference collection whereby unrecorded in situ use is made of the books. Concern for the careful and proper use of the library books may have prompted an unwillingness to lend at least the more unwieldy folio volumes, which anyway would have tended to consist of substantial works of reference.<sup>2</sup> The protective and restrictive measures often imposed on book use (such as those of a particularly stringent nature laid down at Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1745) may well have played a part in encouraging the in situ use of certain parish library books.

Such books were certainly not free from the practice of chaining at the beginning of the eighteenth century and it was still thought desirable to secure a whole library in this fashion in 1715.<sup>3</sup> Certain individual works of reference continued to be newly secured by chains until the middle of the century<sup>4</sup>, though by this time a legitimate concern for custody had, generally, produced more intangible security arrangements.<sup>5</sup> Such was not the case, by comparison, with the security of people, for male prisoners at Bury St. Edmunds, for example<sup>6</sup>, were still being chained, for want of in situ security, well after the same practice had been discontinued for books in the same town and elsewhere.

In certain circumstances, the reference role of a parish library (that is, in a contemporary sense, the use of the books as a 'standing library') was actively encouraged.<sup>7</sup> At Earl Sterndale for example<sup>8</sup>, James Hill the benefactor certainly anticipated such use, when in 1709, in addition to his gift of books, he bequeathed money not only for a reading table but also for a window to be made in the chapel wall to better facilitate use of the books. Other instances, such as at Doncaster in 1722/23, of money spent on tables, pens and paper, curtains and coal for the library fire further suggest some active provision for in situ use.<sup>9</sup>

It is now impossible to assess such use as a parish library received and no amount of recorded loan analysis will retrieve it.

What does exist is important, however, and represents in the five cases here analysed, listings of more-or-less contiguous library transactions having some internal evidence to suggest that whilst not each and every loan was dutifully recorded (though certain individual borrowers appear meticulous in so doing) it was, nevertheless, generally considered correct to try and do so.<sup>10</sup>

The importance of the individual library-overseer in this context cannot be over-stated. For whether paid or honorary library keeper<sup>11</sup>, incumbent, schoolmaster, curate or parishioner, it was the singular conscientiousness of the individual which, after a secure home, appears to have been of primary importance to the continued use, good order, or very survival of the library's books.<sup>12</sup> On more than one occasion in the foregoing analysis it has been possible to identify an upturn in recorded library activity with the appearance locally of a new incumbent (such as took place in May 1782 and 1794 at Rotherham, and in 1755 at Maidstone) or with another - sometimes unidentified - individual (such as happened at Wisbech in March 1727/8 and February 1753) and whose legacy to the future was at the very least a resumption in the methodical recording of library transactions, or at most, the partial retrieval of parish books unofficially dispersed. At Maidstone, it was the singular efforts of Samuel Weller that brought the bulk of Thomas Bray's library to the town in 1736 whilst an obvious new start in the monitoring of library loans at the same place in 1755 followed soon on from the appointment of John Denne to the living in 1753. Earlier in the century, at Wisbech, the period of most recorded use of the library coincides, almost exactly, with the appearance within the record of Edmund Pyle, who probably served as library keeper during that precise period.<sup>13</sup>

The converse of this phenomenon is also true and an apparent demise in recorded library use can, on more than one occasion, be associated with the departure from the locality of certain individuals. In the longer term, as happened at Doncaster where library activity over a number



of years was apparently maintained by the persistent use of a relatively small group of individuals, the demise of such a group, somewhat inevitably, foreshadowed a similar demise in recorded library use, with few new borrowers emerging to take their place.<sup>14</sup>

Local influences on the recorded use made of these libraries therefore centre on the attitude of individuals connected with the care and security of the books. The subsequent administrative procedures imposed on the day-to-day running of a library may too have limited access both in a physical sense (at Doncaster the library was open Saturdays, ten o'clock until four) and in a more intangible sense (at Rotherham a deposit, or promissory note, was required in order to borrow). At two libraries, marked increases in recorded use follow on from a general deterioration in the health and prosperity of the neighbourhood: at Rotherham during the late 1770s and early 1780s and at Wisbech during 1728-33 when there was a decay of trade in the town following on from the year (1727) in which there were the greatest number of recorded burials for any year during the eighteenth century.

Those individuals who suffered most from fluctuations in the economic prosperity of a neighbourhood were probably not those who at both Maidstone and Wisbech libraries emerge as the most persistent users. For at those two places a marked feature of recorded library use is the middle-class type<sup>15</sup> of borrower who appears to make frequent and consistent use. At Wisbech a handful of Town Bailiffes, physicians, solicitors, two High Sheriffs and one Deputy Lieutenant of the county, all of whom appear as borrowers, would tend to suggest such a middle-class bias, whilst at Maidstone, the appearance of some six Mayors, a physician, Count Aug. Keilmansegge, General Kingsley and at least fourteen clergymen is indicative of a similar class of reader. A contemporary view was that profligacy and an irreligious attitude was more likely to be met at the very top and the bottom of the social order, whilst the middle classes tended more toward the serious and religious.<sup>16</sup>

At Rotherham, library-borrower occupations, where ascertainable, appear to be associated with a lower social order and include a fiddler, a barber, a glassman, a shoemaker, a glover, a mason and a surgeon. The twenty women borrowers identified there (out of a total of some two hundred borrowers) are not recorded as heavy users of the library, whilst at Witham, where a majority of recorded borrowers are women (thirty-four out of approximately fifty-eight) the most intense individual usage recorded (twenty-two loans over four years) is by a woman, Elizabeth Darby. Of the twenty-six women identified as borrowers at Maidstone, seventeen used the library only once or twice according to the record, whilst at Wisbech, where forty per cent of all borrowers are recorded as using the library only once or twice, four of the seven heaviest usages (over twenty loans recorded) are by women. At Doncaster, the majority of borrowers were probably clergymen (thirty-two per cent remain unidentified) and recorded use is light amongst those identified as lay borrowers.

Within the locality of a parish where a church-based library existed, there may have been other books available in addition to those owned by a growing number of households. Individual reading tastes varied and to cater for a growing reading public the burgeoning presses produced a remarkably varied output. Such a variety of literature was not normally available from the more orthodox parish libraries. Where ascertainable, the stated aim or perceived intention of a parish library created a somewhat narrower subject base relative to the library's antecedence. Suitability of material, was, ultimately, at the discretion of the benefactor or donor and yet some evidence emerges, at Wisbech for example<sup>17</sup>, that a simple selection process did take place. A monetary benefaction, such as took place at Rotherham in 1728, would enable a free choice to be exercised according to remit or anticipated use. Nevertheless, there may have existed an intangible sense of appropriateness in the minds of potential benefactors; witness, for example, the caution exercised by William Brome of Withington, Herefordshire, who demurred over the suitability of Pliny's

Natural history for the parochial library within the parish church at Withington.<sup>18.</sup>

Analysis of the subsequent use made of the main parish libraries here under consideration by other such occasional benefactors as Brome at Withington, reveal them to be not extensive users, be they not averse to a philanthropically motivated gesture of support. Such support as was forthcoming, seems never as strong as when it formed a part of the new move toward associated philanthropy which emerged as a potent force at the beginning of the eighteenth century.<sup>19.</sup> Gifts of whole libraries, or of individual volumes, were perceived as being put into 'a public way of being useful' and the philanthropy appears to derive justification from either an act of charity manifest as a subsidiary to a religious attitude or from purely secular motives related to the actual needs of the church or group.<sup>20.</sup> The most characteristic feature of this eleemosynary method of development, with regard to parochial libraries, is that the charity was neither consistent nor constant. When it was manifest, the process imposed the intrinsic nature of the book collection from outside, insofar as the suitability of the donation was presumed, the charity welcomed and the gift received.

From the present analysis of parish library creation and use it emerges that an occasional-benefactor's idea of suitability or usefulness may not have always matched the immediate needs, and subsequent demands, of those for whom the library was established. The possibility also arises, when recorded use is analysed, that such apparent use fell somewhat short of the pious intentions of founders and benefactors alike and that in numerical terms at least (as well as to an extent in the evident preferences expressed for certain classes of literature) demand never quite matched supply. For in four out of the five main libraries here investigated, the majority of recorded use is centred on a relatively few popular works of travel, topography or history; whilst in three cases, a single non-theological work dominates recorded issues (and is borrowed by

at least thirty-eight per cent of all recorded library users during one particular period - at Rotherham). As a direct result of this pattern of borrowing, a large number of books are not recorded as having been issued at all, whilst a further not insignificant number, are entered as loans only once or twice during the entire loan-span for which a record exists.

In more than one instance, the works which emerge as most-borrowed themselves appeared in the library by fortuitous benefaction, or later acquisition, rather than as the result of a predetermined policy related to the initial library establishment. To this extent, the active nature of more than one parish library in the present study was determined not by the stated or anticipated intentions of the founders but by the nature of the benefactions received.

That process would seem never more clear than when a large, multi-volume benefaction was involved, where one man's library, quite suddenly, became parish property and available to a wider readership. Such idiosyncratic book collections accurately reflected the interests and inclinations of their owners (and thereby suggest that they were used) though their interest and usefulness to a broader readership was by no means certain.<sup>21</sup> Whatever the outcome, the charity was in the act of giving and the benevolence in the totality of the gift.

What was thought not appropriate for inclusion in a parish library in this context is therefore difficult to exactly define. However, the quite persistent paucity of certain classes of literature: poetry; belles lettres; novels; plays; and anything ephemeral in nature at the five main libraries under consideration, does suggest a certain antipathy, subject of course to the nature of any private library received as a benefaction. Significantly, according to the present study, where books on secular and ecclesiastical history, topography, or travel are included in a parish library, these appear to emerge (as far as recorded issues are accurate) as the most sought-after books.

However, it was by no means unusual for books of secular history

(such as those which dominated the issues at the Rotherham, Maidstone and Doncaster libraries) to be included in such intrinsically theological book collections. Thomas Bray himself in his Essay towards promoting all necessary and useful knowledge both divine and human (1697) thus explains in the title of his work the scope of his particular aims, and is able to recommend for his projected deanery lending libraries: Puffendorf's Introduction to the history of Europe; Mazaray's History of France; and Sir Richard Baker's Chronicle of the Kings of England, within a collection which has books to the value of some £30.<sup>22</sup>

Many aids, schemes and directions for study in self-improvement were also in print and included the acquisition of both secular and ecclesiastical knowledge.<sup>23</sup> Even Dr Johnson was able to recommend a set of good books for study (for the Rev. Astle, minister of Ashbourne, Derbyshire) which, in a list of twenty-nine works (plus certain Bible commentaries) contained no fewer than eleven works of an historical nature.<sup>24</sup> Johnson's recommended historians are familiar as far as the parish libraries in the present work are concerned and with the exception of Oliver Goldsmith and Thomas Carte, are represented at either Rotherham, Maidstone, Doncaster or Wisbech parish libraries.

The Universal history, recommended by Johnson, has been described as 'a famous example of the century's effort to know everything'.<sup>25</sup> It was a vast multi-volume work which had first begun to appear in sheets in 1730 under the title An Universal history from the earliest account of time to the present.<sup>26</sup> The work comprised of as many as sixty-four volumes (edition published 1747-66) and emerges at the Doncaster library as the most-borrowed work, when, over a relatively short period of four years (1749-53) it was issued forty-one times. It is likely that the edition of the work at Doncaster only consisted of the earlier-published 'ancient' history (completed in seven folio volumes in 1744); 'modern' parts of the Universal history appearing from 1759 (and wherein Tobias Smollett edited or compiled the histories of Italy, Poland, Lithuania and

Prussia).<sup>27</sup> This same work was also a popular choice at York Minster Library, where, of the 210 works recorded as borrowed between 1716 and 1780, approximately one third were works of an historical nature.<sup>28</sup>

At the Maidstone parish library a markedly similar borrowing pattern emerges to that at Rotherham insofar as a significant proportion of recorded loans centre on a single non-theological work of history. For overwhelmingly popular at Maidstone, according to the loans register, was Thomas Salmon's Modern history, or the present state of all nations, in fifteen volumes, whereas at Rotherham it was Rapin's History of England, similarly in fifteen volumes. At Maidstone, almost one third of all recorded borrowers took out at least one volume of the Salmon work and seventeen of these (14 per cent of total borrowers) borrowed nothing but the Salmon work.<sup>29</sup> The issues for the same work account for one quarter of all recorded issues: six times as many issues as for the next most-recorded work, Camden's Britannia. The commencement of the loan record at Maidstone is just one year before the beginning of the Seven Years' War, and news of events abroad could partially explain the remarkable interest shown by readers in foreign lands.

At Rotherham parish library a similar pattern of borrowing centres on Paul de Rapin's History of England which, in terms of issues of particular authors, outstrips others by more than three to one. The work retained its popularity throughout the two periods of recorded library activity, 1730-1757 and 1782-1800, indeed, more issues of the work are recorded during the latter period than in the former.

The apparent popularity of history as a reading topic at Rotherham Maidstone and Doncaster is mirrored in the loans records of other eighteenth-century libraries. At Bristol for instance, the Library Society there, which made some thirteen thousand issues of approximately nine hundred titles between 1773 and 1784, had amongst its ten most popular works: Hume's History of England; Goldsmith's History of the Earth; Robertson's Charles V; and Lyttleton's Henry II<sup>30</sup>. And at Innerpeffray,

Perthshire, where 370 titles were borrowed between 1747 and 1800, amongst the most-borrowed were Robertson's Charles V; Universal history; and Rapin's History of England.<sup>31</sup>.

At Wisbech, the predominance of travel, topography and history as subject matter which permeates any configuration of the most-loaned works is notable and further attests the popularity of these subjects suggested elsewhere.<sup>32</sup>. Loans of the travels of Bernard de Montfaucon, Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, Burnet's History of the Reformation and History of his own time, and Camden's Britannia are frequent, whilst other works announce their presence in the collection by virtue of only one or two recorded loans: John Chardin's Travels; a 'History of the Balearick Islands'; 'Voyage d'Italie'; Sheffer's History of Lapland; Raleigh's History of the world; Vertot's Revolution in Spain; and James Tyrrell's General history of England. Some volumes were apparently used in conjunction, one with the other, as when one borrower took out both Burnet's History of his own time and Thomas Salmon's Examination of Burnet's History just after Christmas in 1729. Other individual borrowers were simply consistent in their choice of reading, like Mr Lovell who borrowed nine separate works of history during the two years (1728-30) for which he is recorded.<sup>33</sup>. His loans from the Wisbech library include one of Bishop Burnet's histories and help to promote that particular author to a position second only in popularity to Montfaucon in terms of recorded loans.<sup>34</sup>.

Gilbert Burnet was sometime Bishop of Salisbury and a conscientious prelate as well as a man of learning. Nevertheless, at Wisbech for instance, his histories were borrowed only once after 1733, though there is some evidence from other parish libraries to suggest that his works retained their popularity throughout the century.<sup>35</sup>. Burnet did not evidently share the general optimism and promise retrospectively perceived to exist at the outset of the eighteenth century.<sup>36</sup>. His vision of a 'melancholy prospect',<sup>37</sup>. partially materialised in the form of many wars

and rumours of wars, earthquakes and increasing ungodliness. Many interpreted such events as the fulfilment of scripture prophecy relating to the last days before the second coming of Christ and events such as the earthquakes of 1755 produced what was probably unprecedented demand for Biblical explanation and interpretation in printed form.<sup>38</sup> Scholarly millenarianism (William Whiston, the learned mystic and mathematician, predicted the end of the world for 1766) grew into popular, folk millenarianism and the spate of pamphlets and sermons on the topic produced by the clergy during the late 1780s and 1790s was matched by a growth in the incidence of popular prophetism during a similar period.<sup>39</sup> It may be no coincidence that loans of Thomas Newton's Dissertations on the prophecies at Rotherham parish library rose so dramatically after 1792 when twenty-seven of the thirty-four recorded loans took place, whilst at the same place, nine of the fourteen loans recorded for William Sherlock's Future judgement took place after 1796. Elsewhere, a more dispassionate and nationalistic interest in international affairs by the more secular may have been a contribution towards the many recorded loans of works dealing with the history of foreign lands. A quite remarkable growth in the loan of such works evident at more than one parish library in the present study, does coincide with a similar growth in the number of works produced in the wake of Britain's alliance with Prussia and declaration of war on France at the beginning of the Seven Years' War in 1756.<sup>40</sup>

As the century progressed, the same latitudinarian rationalism which attempted to reduce the mystery of religion to pragmatic reasonableness coincidentally prompted a growth of interest in the natural sciences, or 'external nature'. Some latitudinarian clergymen were also prominent members of the Royal Society for example, pursuing an active interest in scientific developments and discoveries whilst admitting no conflict with their religious beliefs. Rather, such an interest was construed as healthy relating as it did to intellectual and rational



evidence of God's unfolding plan. Faith, it was argued, was not to be destroyed by knowledge, but enhanced by the wonders which were revealed. Thomas Sprat, Bishop of Rochester, wrote a history of the Royal Society (borrowed at Doncaster and Maidstone libraries later in the century) and leading scientists and philosophers such as Newton and Locke perceived their insights and theories not as challenges to religious faith but as confirmation of the complexity and order of the natural universe.

Evidence from the library at Wisbech, for example, suggests that interest in the natural sciences there was second only to travel and topography according to the nature of the works recorded as borrowed. The Royal Society's Philosophical transactions were, for instance, in numerical terms, the second most-borrowed work whilst also relatively popular in the same terms were works on mechanics and hydrostatics by the scientist John T. Desaguliers; Sir William Dugdale's Imbanking and drayning (with its obvious local application); and John Harris's Lexicon technicum. A not insignificant reading trend is further supported by loans of both Isaac Newton's Opticks and Principia, Heylin's Cosmography and William Derham's Astro-theology and Physico-theology. Also listed, but little borrowed, are Pliny's Natural history, Bacon's Novum organum and Tournefort's Herbal; whilst a miscellaneous selection of other loans indicate a broader than average subject span and spread a wide intellectual net: John Quincy's Course of lectures on pharmacy; Johnathan Richardson's Essay on the whole art of criticism in painting; Isaac Walton's Compleat fisherman; Richard Bradley on gardening; 'Cooper's Witchcraft'; and 'Lilly's Astrology'.

Thus it is that at Wisbech a not insignificant portion of recorded library use centres on secular topics and is derived from a broadening of the subject base of the book collection. Elsewhere, such use is also an important part of overall borrowing patterns, witness loans of Thomas Salmon's History at Maidstone; Rapin's History at Rotherham; and issues of the Universal history and Chambers' Dictionary at Doncaster, without which,

very different and reduced borrowing activity would emerge.

By stark contrast, the forty-six theological works recorded as borrowed between 1757 and 1778 at Witham were neither exceptional nor diverse. Five authors (Burkitt, Watts, William Sherlock, Allestree and Robert Nelson) account for almost forty per cent of the total number of recorded issues. Nevertheless, the recorded borrowers - the majority of whom were women - display borrowing patterns that are no less persistent or intense, in certain cases, than are to be found in other parish libraries in the present study having physically larger and intellectually broader collections. It is likely that the catchment area for such a library as that at Witham was small and may not have exceeded parish boundaries, for such a collection of books had evidently little to attract a wider borrowing group, having the nature of a small and unexceptional clerical library, put to public use.

In itself, book ownership could act as a barrier to the wider use of a text during the eighteenth century. However, at certain social levels, access to what were essentially private libraries was possible under certain circumstances, and a useful, accessible book collection could indeed serve a whole group of unspecified individuals according to certain geographic, intellectual or social criteria.<sup>41</sup> A parish library no less, especially one containing a diversity of books or manuscripts, could act as a magnet to a group of individuals who shared a common interest; be they neighbourhood clergymen intent on self-improvement in Christian knowledge (as at Doncaster); scholars and antiquarians pursuing their special historical interests (as at Wisbech); or pious parishioners indulging a common interest in history and topography (as at Maidstone).

Such an informal educational role has its parallels in the use made of other libraries during the eighteenth century - especially that relating to the private libraries of the landed gentry during the same period.<sup>42</sup> And as the franchise for owning private libraries grew during the century, then so too would a greater movement and exchange of books

take place and access to such books increase via purchase, benefaction or gift. The considerable number of individual benefactions of books which emerge as gifts to the parish libraries here under consideration is evidence further suggesting the widespread existence of individual private libraries, over and above those held by the clergy.<sup>43</sup>

There also emerges evidence of the intricate, yet extensive community of readers, authors and scholars within the present context who could be inextricably linked within an informal and 'invisible' network of library use.<sup>44</sup> Antiquarians such as the Beaupré Bells at Wisbech, whose own books assisted other authors such as Francis Blomefield with his history of Norfolk, Thomas Hearne and C.N. Cole (who used the younger Beaupré Bell's copy of Dugdale's Imbanking and drayning to produce a new edition of that work in 1772); and who themselves, to help produce their own scholarly papers and indulge their mutual interests, became borrowers from the Spalding Society library (the nucleus of which was the old parish library) and the library at Wisbech where copies of Eusebius, Tacitus, Suetonius and works on Roman, ecclesiastical and local history were borrowed. Witness too the Reverend John Harris (1667?-1719) rector of East Barming, Kent, and holder of other ecclesiastical posts, who used the private library of Sir B. Dixwell of Broome<sup>45</sup>. (possibly in connection with his history of Kent) and the library of Rochester Cathedral Library<sup>46</sup>. and who later produced the Lexicon technicum, the first alphabetically-arranged encyclopaedia to be published and which was borrowed from the parish libraries of Wisbech and Rotherham - at the latter place during a four-year period some ninety years after first publication.

That particular usage may have been connected with certain formal schooling taking place within the parish, and many obvious formal links can be identified between the role of a parish library and local efforts to educate schoolchildren, catechize the young and establish mutual improvement societies for the clergy. The unifying factor could be an individual clergyman who could act as both schoolmaster and library keeper

within the parish (as did the Withers brothers at Doncaster and Rotherham respectively) and shared accommodation as well as the use of the parish books as a convenient teaching resource would inextricably link the two factors.<sup>47</sup> At Doncaster, one of the central features of the regular self-improvement sessions of the clerical society which met early in the century must have been the access thereby provided to a useful collection of books. The remarkable intensity of use which such books are recorded as receiving confirms their value to the society members.

The Bray-instigated libraries too had a clearly defined and formal role to play within the poorer provincial parishes and even though exclusive credit for the charity-school movement cannot be entirely credited to the S.P.C.K.<sup>48</sup> such an institution, along with other groups within the associated-philanthropy movement, clearly perceived a formal educational role for the persistent tide of books, pamphlets and tracts which they themselves helped to commission, produce and distribute.

The formal role of a philanthropically-inspired collection of books held by the parish was itself derived from a formal and correct foundation. No little effort, at Doncaster and Rotherham for example, went into formalising the legal and administrative framework within which the parish libraries would operate and there is some evidence that 'the Bedford Method' and 'the Bedford Model', frequently referred to in S.P.C.K. minutes, played a key part in establishing the eighteenth-century genre.<sup>49</sup> At Doncaster, there were tangible links between the two libraries during their early years, resulting in a marked similarity of library rules and administration. It was also thought important at three parish libraries (Doncaster, Maidstone and Wisbech) to produce printed catalogues of the collections and no little effort was expended at Rotherham and Doncaster to clearly establish the 'parochial' or 'extra-parochial' nature of the library establishments in the light of the 1709 Parochial Libraries Act.

Thomas Bray's Act had been a thoughtful and preventative measure designed to protect and preserve a growing patchwork of parochial library

establishments and in itself represented the philanthropic optimism of the new century. Such promise was not, however, matched by performance generally and in the absence of further centralized help or guidance (Convocation being prorogued in 1717), adequate continuing endowments, and careful parochial administration, relatively few parish libraries managed to enter the nineteenth century unscathed by misuse, neglect or decay. The cyclical patterns of decline and amelioration which emerge from the present analysis of certain specific parish libraries turn on the effort and interest which individuals and small groups invested in the acquisition, administration and use of their books. And despite a general picture of decline later in the century, two libraries in the present study carried forward their usefulness well into the nineteenth century, attracting both scholar, antiquarian and parishioner. To quantify such use as the parish libraries in the present work received is to analyse the recorded use of a minute sample, given the ubiquitous nature of that family of book collections dubbed 'parish' or 'parochial'. Yet in revealing only certain evident usage one is, nevertheless, a little nearer to establishing the individual reader's literary preferences and reading intentions in the absence of any other comparable records, and somewhat closer to an assessment of the role played by the parish library within a community.

1. Paul Kaufman, in his Libraries and their users: collected papers in library history (1969), brings together a number of such sources relating to the eighteenth century. In addition to a handful of library-loan records from various cathedral libraries, Kaufman draws attention to similar records associated with a library society at Bristol; a library at Innerpeffrey, Scotland; a number of bookclubs; and the same Doncaster Clerical Society included in the present work.
2. A massive work of reference, both physically and intellectually, such as Matthew Poole's Synopsis criticorum Bibliorum, for example, by its very nature, would not be amenable to borrowing. And though present at four out of the five main parish libraries here under consideration, it is recorded as a loan on only very few occasions. Such a work would, however, be more likely to survive the cyclical process of neglect and amelioration to which parish libraries were subject in comparison to the more portable, and increasingly common, octavo and quarto volumes held by the same libraries. (Cf. C.B.L. Barr, The Minster Library. A History of York Minster, G.E. Aylmer and R. Cant. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977. p.498.)
3. That set up in the south chapel of All Saints' Church, Hereford, by a bequest of William Brewster (d.1715).
4. See above pp.12 ; 26 n.35.
5. Dr Thomas Bray's careful precautions against the alienation of books included lettering on the covers; registers, or catalogues, of the books to be made and left with the bishop; and yearly visitations to the libraries by the archdeacon or his deputy. (Bray, Bibliotheca catechetica, 10.)
6. B. Kirkman Gray, English philanthropy, 186.
7. Generally speaking, the 'Bray libraries', intended for the benefit of the parish curate or incumbent, were not meant to be loan collections. (Bray, Bibliotheca Parochialis, 123.) On the Isle of Man also, Bishop Wilson's parochial libraries, provided for clerical use, were not lending libraries and no records exist to suggest that the books were used in this fashion. (James P. Ferguson, The Parochial libraries of Bishop Wilson. Douglas (I.O.M.): Shearwater Press, 1975. p.78 et seq.) A record of loans made by Bishop Wilson personally, from his own library, does exist and ought to be further investigated. (Ibid.)
8. See above pp.223-226.
9. By 1773, a library such as that established by the Bristol Library Society, could be available for consultation six hours a day, five days a week. (Kaufman, Libraries and their users, 34.)
10. From present evidence it appears that a record of book return stood a

far lesser chance of being entered than a loan entry.

11. 'Library keeper' was the normal appellation applied over a period that extended well into the eighteenth century (Richard Massey at the Wisbech library was thus described in 1714) though during the century the title 'librarian' became the more usual. This latter usage supplanted the earlier meaning of 'librarian' which was scribe or copyist. (O.E.D. attributes an example of the later usage to Richard Steele in 1713.) An interesting combination of the two usages is used in A Catalogue of the books in the library at Bedford..., Joseph Downing, 1706. pp.(i-ii). An Abstract of the Settlement of the library.
12. The extensive personal influence which a clergyman could exercise over his parishioners is alluded to elsewhere. (Abbey and Overton, English church, 299.)
13. The revival of interest in the library which took place during the nineteenth century was only possible due to the retrieval and reordering of the books by Martin Coulcher firstly, and George Thompson secondly, both of whom were Masters at the Wisbech Grammar School.
14. At Doncaster, the deaths of Jeremy Fawkes, Edmund Withers, Charles Arthur, and Thomas Rodwell, during the decade 1743-53 (all of whom were early Society members and subsequently regular library users) precipitated a general decline in recorded library use clearly evident after 1753.
15. As defined by Williams, Whig supremacy, 144. Viz., (in the country) squires, J.P.s, yeomen and parsons; (in the towns) 'substantial citizens engaged in business and the professions'.
16. Abbey and Overton, English Church, 303., where is quoted part of a letter from Archbishop Wake to Pierre Courayer of 1726: 'Iniquity in practice, God knows, abounds, chiefly in the two extremes, the highest and the lowest. The middle sort are serious and religious'.
17. See above p.31.
18. Central Council for the Care of Churches, Parochial libraries, 106., where reference is made to T. Hearne, Collections (1902) vol.6, p.21. Appropriateness was also evidently in the mind of Thomas, Lord Trevor when he wrote to Dr Zachary Grey, the antiquary and scholar, from Bromham in 1747: 'Sir, I think myself obliged to return you many thanks for all favours; ... and am also to thank you, Sir, for your last kind present of books for our small Church Library, and very suitable they seem to be for the same...' (John Nichols, Illustrations of the literary history of the eighteenth century. Nichols , 1822.

iv. p.367.

19. See B. Kirkman Gray, English philanthropy, 80., and above pp.14-15.
20. The dual nature of the philanthropy is identified ibid., 87. The precise nature and extent of the book-centred philanthropy of certain individuals such as Thomas Wentworth, Timothy Thurscross, John Newcome, Humphrey Chetham and Barnabas Oley (each of whom appears to have initiated a scheme of library benefaction) should be investigated and further work in this area is necessary.
21. At Loughborough, in 1785, James Bickham bequethed his own personal and somewhat literary book collection to the parish church for the use of his successors there (See Wakeman, Loughborough Parish Library (1976)); some one hundred years earlier, at Wisbech, Henry Pierson gave books which probably included an important collection of medical volumes; and at Frodsham, Cheshire, the Rev. W.C. Cotton 'as an heirloom for his successors in trust' gave a library of books to the church including over two hundred volumes on bees, bee-keeping and agricultural topics.
22. Such topics were not represented, however, in the smaller 72-volume S.P.C.K. libraries despatched to the isolated and poor parishes of England and Wales during the first half of the eighteenth century. These collections were wholly theological in nature having a total value of approximately £22.
23. For example, Barlow's Directions for the choice of books in the study of divinity (1699); William Wotton's Some thoughts concerning a proper method of studying divinity (1734); John Clarke's An Essay upon study (1731); 'Plain directions for reading the scriptures' (listed at Witham, but not recorded as a loan); and Dupin's Method of studying divinity (listed at Rotherham but not recorded as a loan).
24. Boswell, Life of Johnson, 476.
25. Pargellis and Medley, Bibliography of British history, 369.
26. Louis L. Martz, Tobias Smollett and the 'Universal History'. Modern Language Notes, LVI (1) January 1941. p.1.
27. Ibid.
28. Elizabeth Brunskill, Eighteenth-century reading. Some notes on the people who frequented the Library of York Minster in the eighteenth century, and on the books they borrowed. York: Ben Johnson, 1950. p.30.
29. At Rotherham, thirty-two per cent of all recorded transactions involved the Rapin work, whilst almost forty per cent of all recorded users borrowed at least one volume of the work.
30. Kaufman, Libraries and their users, 31.



31. Ibid., 155.
32. For instance, at Durham Cathedral Library during the last thirty years of the eighteenth century (see N.R. Ker, Cathedral libraries. Library History, 1 (2) Autumn 1967. p.42.) and at the Bristol Library Society, 1773-1784 (Kaufman, Libraries and their users, 31.)
33. The works are Camden's Britannia; Burnet's History of the Reformation; Collier's Ecclesiastical history; Heylin's History of the Reformation; Nicolson's Historical library; 'Journey through England'; Camden's Annals of Queen Elizabeth I; 'History of Queen Elizabeth'; and Strype's Life of Archbishop Grindal.
34. The Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, otherwise the second most-borrowed work, has no single author being an anthology.
35. See, for instance, loans of Burnet works at Rotherham.
36. Abbey and Overton, English Church, 74; 279.
37. Gilbert Burnet, Bishop Burnet's history of his own time. For the Company, 1734. iv. pp.473-474. Where the Bishop says of the year 1700: 'Thus God was giving us great alarms, as well as many mercies: He bears long with us, but we are become very corrupt in all respects; So that the state of things among us gives a melancholy prospect'.
38. J.F.C. Harrison, The Second Coming: popular millenarianism 1780-1850. Routledge, 1979. p.5.
39. Ibid., 30.
40. Pargellis and Medley, Bibliography, 214.
41. As is manifest by the register kept by the Rev. John Bowle, of certain loans made from his own private library (see above pp.229-233 ).
42. See Keith S. Dent, The Private library of the landed classes: its role in informal education in the eighteenth century. Informal agencies of education, K.S.Dent ed. History of Education Society, 1979. pp.37-59.
43. Certain private clerical libraries may have been available on an informal basis to a circle of local clergymen in the absence of a community lending library. (Mr Killingworth of Lilborne, near Daventry, wrote to the S.P.C.K. in November 1701 stating that the neighbouring clergymen gave each other catalogues of their books instead of creating a lending library. McClure, S.P.C.K. Minutes, 357.)
44. See, for example, that outlined above, p.134.
45. See B.M. Add. MS. 40717 f.140. Account of books etc lent...circa 1712.
46. W.H. Mackean, Rochester Cathedral Library: its fortunes and adventures through nine centuries. Rochester: Staples, 1953.

47. The S.P.C.K. teachers' lists of recommended books, published in 1715, contain sixty-eight titles, fifty-eight are on religious subjects. The Whole duty of man was recommended for senior children whilst the Bible itself remained a standard textbook for learning. (W.K. Lowther Clarke, A History of the S.P.C.K. S.P.C.K., 1959. pp.50-51.)
48. Unwin, Charity schools, 17.
49. See above pp.42-44.

## APPENDIX I

Short-title list of books recorded as loans from  
the libraries at Doncaster, Maidstone, Rotherham,  
Wisbech and Witham during the eighteenth century,  
with dates borrowed.

## PRELIMINARY NOTES

(i) The authors and book titles entered are those relating to identified loan transactions recorded within the surviving records of the five main parish libraries analysed in Chapter III of the present work. (Though excluding the brief and undated listing of works associated with the early years of the Wisbech Society, reproduced above pp.85-86.) Certain incomplete, ambiguous or unidentified individual loan entries have not been included.

(ii) Assigned or tentative authors appear in parentheses; where an author but no title of work has been referred to, titles appear thus ( ). Titles of volumes specified 'Works' or 'Sermons' are shorthand entries which indicate briefly the nature of the work borrowed rather than an extract from the title. Where no author has been identified, the book title forms the entry. Literal transcriptions of recorded titles which are ambiguous or, as yet, untraced appear within speech marks.

(iii) Perimeter dates for borrowed books are abbreviated to a decade and year of the eighteenth century, thus, 1758-1775 appears as 58-75. Where either date is doubtful or approximate the number is underlined. The number which appears in parenthesis after each dating represents the total number of loans recorded for that work during the associated period at a particular library.

AUTHOR AND TITLE ENTRY	DONCASTER	MAIDSTONE	ROTHERHAM	WISBECH	WITHAM
ABBOT ( ) Works		66(2)			
ADDISON, Joseph Remarks on Italy Works		56-66(7)		53(1)	
AETIUS, Amidenus ( )				30(1)	
AGREEABLE variety				31-32(3)	
AINSWORTH, Henry Annotations upon Genesis	32(1)				
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SHERLOCK, William Discourse concerning death Knowledge of Jesus Christ On future judgement On providence On the sacrament SHERLOCK ( ) Certainty of religion Sermons Union with Christ			<u>31</u> (1) 37-99(5) 30-00(14) 37(1) <u>31</u> (1) 44(1) 36-98(6) <u>31</u> (2)		57-71(10) 58-63(6)
SIXTUS 5th, Life of		58-83(3)			
SKINNER ( ) 'Etymological ling.' = <del>= Etymologiae linguae anglicanae</del>	<i>Etymologiae linguae anglicanae</i>			32(1)	
SMALPROKE, Richard Vindication of...miracles			42-97(2)		
SNALRIDGE, George Sermons	27-52(14)		47-83(3)		
SOUTH, Robert (1634-1716) Sermons				28-64(9)	
'SPINOZA, Life of'		55-56(2)			
SPON, James Historie...de Geneva		70(1)			
SPRAT, Thomas History of the Royal Society	29-49(5)	75-95(4)			
STACKHOUSE, Thomas (1677-1752) Body of divinity History of the Bible	40-55(5) 45-51(6)		98-00(16) 84-00(35)		
STANHOPE, George Paraphrase upon the epistles Sermons			90-00(12) 37-94(4)		
STANLEY, Thomas (1625-78) History of philosophy	53-55(2)			<u>15</u> -32(5)	
STILLINGFLEET, Edward Origines sacrae Unreasonableness...separ'n	48(1)		36(1)	30(2)	
STRAFFORD, Thomas Earl see WENTWORTH, T.					

STRYPE, John Annals of the Reformation Ecclesiastical memorials Life of Edmund Grindal Life of John Whitgift Life of Matthew Parker Memorials...Thomas Cranmer		78(2) 90-98(2) 75(1)  99(1) 98(1)		30(1) 28-33(3)	
SUETONIUS TRANQUILLUS History of...twelve Caesars				30-33(4)	
TACITUS, Publius Cornelius ( )				31-57(5)	
TALBOT, James Christian schoolmaster			96(1)		
TAYLOR, Jeremy Golden grove Great exemplar Sermons Works				16-52(2) 31(2)	65(1)
TEMPLE, <u>Sir</u> William 'Essays'		79(1)	31-43(3)		
TERENCE, Publius ( ) t. Richard Bentley	55(1)			31-61(2)	
THEODORET Ecclesiastical history	31(1)				
THIRLBY, Styan see JUSTIN - <u>Martyr</u> , <u>Saint</u>					
THORESBY, Ralph Ducatus Leodiensis		73-96(3)			
THOU, Jacques Auguste de ( ) 'Index to Thuanus'		70(1)		32(1) 32(1)	
THUCYDIDES ( ) t. Thomas Hobbes				31(1)	
TILLOTSON, John Works/Sermons	27-55(12)	56-70(5)	30(1)		
TINDAL Christianity old as creation	32-34(2)				
TOURNEFORT, Joseph P. de Compleat herbal				32-33(3)	
'TRIAL of the seven bishops'	31-45(7)				

TULLY (Conflate with Cicero) Works		99(1)		<u>15</u> -64(4)	
TURNER, ( ) Apostolic constitutions Wisdom of God	16-32(5)		98(1)		
TYRRELL, James Disquisition on...nature General history of England			42(1)	31-32(2)	
UNIVERSAL history	49-53(41)	63-? (2)			
USSHER, James Annales veteris et N.T.	48(1)				
VANDERLINDEN ( )				29(1)	
VERHEYEN ( )				29-56(2)	
VERTOT, Rene Abbe Revolutions...Roman Republic 'Revolution in Spain'				29-32(6) 29- <u>50</u> (3)	
VIRGIL ( ) t. John Dryden ( ) t. Richard, Earl Lauderdale				28-53(5) 32(2)	
VITRINGA, Campegius Sacrarum observationum				33(1)	
VOSSIUS, Gerardus ( )				33(1)	
'VOYAGE d'Italie'				53(1)	
WAKE, William On the Church catechism The Genuine Epistles			97-98(2)		57(1)
WALL, William History of infant baptism	27-36(6)		36-95(4)		
WALTON, Brian (ed.) <u>English?</u> polyglot Bible	31-49(3)	59-73(3)		<u>00</u> (1)	
WALTON, Izaak The Compleat angler				26(1)	
WARBURTON Divine legation of Moses			94-97(5)		
WARREN, John Daily self-examinant Sermons	46-48(2)				<u>58</u> -75(2)



WATERLAND, Daniel					
'Defence of some queries'	31(1)				
Doctrine of the Trinity	41-48(2)			32(1)	
History of the Creed	30-46(5)				
Second defence...divinity	33-42(2)			31-36(4)	
Sermons	43-46(4)			32-53(3)	
Vindication of...divinity				28-53(3)	
WATSON, William					
The Clergyman's law	26-51(14)				
WATTS, Isaac					
Hymns and spiritual songs					57-75(10)
Psalms of David imitated					58-70(8)
WEBSTER, ( )					
'History of Arianism'		57-78(2)			
WELCHMAN, Edward					
Doctrine of the Trinity				15(1)	
WENTWORTH, <u>Sir</u> Thomas					
1st Earl Strafford					
Letters	39-42(11)				
WESLEY, Samuel					
Dissertationes...Jobi	37(1)				
WHEATLEY, Charles					
C. of E. man's companion	29-40(5)			65(1)	
WHEELER, <u>Sir</u> George					
Journey into Greece		57-87(7)			
WHISTON, William					
Of scripture prophecies			41-96(3)		
WHITBY, Daniel					
Paraphrase on the N.T.			49-98(13)	28-64(3)	
WILKINS, John (1614-1672)					
Gift of prayer			97-99(5)		
Towards a real character		00(1)			
WILLUGHBY, Francis					
Ornithologiae	27-36(9)				
WINWOOD, <u>Sir</u> Ralph					
Memorials...affairs of state				32(1)	
WOLLASTON, William					
Religion of nature	27-49(5)		94(1)	28-64(3)	
WOOD, Anthony a					
Athenae Oxonienses	28-42(4)				

WOODWARD (?Hezekiah) Sermons			87(1)	
WOTTON, William Defence of the reflections Reflections upon learning				32(1) 28-31(3)
XENOPHON ( ) Cyropaedia. t. Henry Savile		96-99(3)		55(2)

1. A fuller transcription of the title is The Advancement of arts, manufactures and commerce; or a description of the useful machines and models contained in the repository of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce:...Vol.1. (For the Author) London, 1772. Volume 2 appeared in 1779.
2. At Wisbech, one further undated loan of this work appears ca 1800.
3. A pseudonym.
4. That is, an edition of Bernard Nieuwentijdt's Religious philosopher, or the right use of contemplating the works of the Creator.
5. Possibly John Henley's The Child's guide for the Reverend Mr. T. Harrison... (London, 1729.)
6. A later publication of Clarke's Boyle Lectures of 1704 and 1705.
7. Including A Treatise on hydrostaticks.
8. Seven editions of this work appeared 1723-96; those appearing in 1754 and 1763 were published as Thesaurus rerum ecclesiasticarum.
9. That is, The Body of divinity.
10. Or, Septuaginta interpretum.
11. Or, A Catalogue and description of the natural and artificial rarities...preserved at Gresham College (1681). Colloquially referred to as 'the rarities'.
12. 'Cooke's Hesiod'.
13. The title of a later edition of Microcosmus.
14. That produced by William Innys, printer (see above p.123).
15. That is, Practical discourses on several subjects; being some select Homilies of the Church of England, put into a new method and modern stile... (London, 1708).
16. Probably, Rollin's Method of teaching and studying the Belles Lettres, or an introduction to languages... (1734) and may therefore refer to the previously listed book.

## APPENDIX II

### SAMPLE PAGES FROM BORROWER RECORDS

- a. MAIDSTONE MMAG, Maidstone Parochial Library. Borrowers' Book.
- b. ROTHERHAM RCL, Mansel Collection. MS Catalogue and Issue Book.
- c. WISBECH WFM, MS Catalogue of the Town Library
- d. WITHAM ERO, D/P 30/28/3

July 4<sup>th</sup> 1756 The 3<sup>rd</sup> Vol of  
Edison's Works Mrs Marshall  
Aug<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 1756 The 12<sup>th</sup> Vol of Salmon's  
Modern History Mr Widen

Antiquities of Palmyra and  
the Life of Spinosa taken out  
Sep<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 1756 For Count Aug.  
Keilmansegge

Sep<sup>th</sup> 23 1756 The 13<sup>th</sup> Vol of  
Salmon's History Mr Widen

Oct<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 1756 2 & 3 Vol of  
Salmon's modern History  
The Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr Thomas

Oct<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 22<sup>nd</sup> 1756 1<sup>st</sup> Vol of  
Blackall's Sermons  
Mr Baxter Sen<sup>r</sup>

Oct<sup>th</sup> 24 1756 The secret History  
of France Mr Stonehouse

Nov<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 1756 The 8<sup>th</sup> Vol  
of Salmon's modern History  
The Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr Hales

Nov<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 16 1756 The 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>  
Vol of Salmon's History  
The Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr Thomas

Nov<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 17 1756 Lodge's Josephus  
Mr Pett

Nov<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 26 1756 The 14<sup>th</sup> Vol.  
of Salmon's History Mr Widen

Dec<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> 1756 Poole's Annotations  
Mr Nightingale

Feb<sup>th</sup> 25 1757 The 3<sup>rd</sup> Vol of Addison's  
Works returned by Mrs Marshall  
Sep<sup>th</sup> 23 1756 The 12<sup>th</sup> Vol of Salmon  
returned

Oct<sup>th</sup> 7 1756 Antiquities of Palmyra  
& Life of Spinosa returned  
by Count Keilmansegge

Nov<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 26 1756 The 13<sup>th</sup> Vol of  
Salmon's History returned

Nov<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 16 1756 The 2 & 3 Vol  
of Salmon returned

Nov<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 16 1756 The 1<sup>st</sup> Vol of  
Blackall's Sermons returned

Dec<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 30 1756 The secret History  
of France returned

March 4<sup>th</sup> 22 1757 The 8<sup>th</sup> Vol of  
Salmon's History returned by The Rev<sup>d</sup>  
Mr Hales

Dec<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 31 1756 The 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Vol of  
Salmon's History returned  
Returned

Jan<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 11 1757 The 14<sup>th</sup> Vol of Salmon's  
History returned by Mr Widen

May 3 1757  
Returned into the Library

Mr Philips March 36 11b

Feb Tho's Guest - Gresham's 36

March 2 1799 City

April 7 Will. Outman 1799

April 4 Tho's Heritage 1799 of the life

of Edward 1799

March 24 1799 Mr. Houston the History

May 5 1799 Mr. Oxley History of England

May 5 1799 Henry Taylor History of England

May 5 1799 Mr. Oxley 1799

May 5 1799 Mr. Oxley 1799

May 5 1799 Mr. Oxley 1799

May 5 1799 Mr. Oxley 1799

August 1799 Douglas 1799

July 30 to John Howard 1799

History of England 1799

June 4 1799 Mr. Oxley 1799

May 5 1799 Henry Taylor 1799

England 1799

Aug 1799 Mr. Oxley 1799

April 11.

Spenser's Shind. Let. -

Kramer's Concordance - J. Dickinson

Apr 17

Binson on y' Creed  
Waterland's Defence  
Clark on y' Trinity -

J. Dickinson

John

27

The Works of Tacitus Vol 1 J. Marshall

May 5<sup>th</sup>

Turnell's Introduction to the Hist. of Eng.

M<sup>r</sup> Gynae

Let.

19

Burnet's Hist. of y' Reformation Vol 2 & 3 - J. Dickinson

Eng. Hist. Let. S. 39. - J. Dickinson

9

Monasticon Angl. M<sup>r</sup> Marshall -

19

Burnet's Hist. of y' Reformation H. 16. G. G. G. Vol 1 st -  
Fabricii Bibliothecae Graecae V. VII. 4<sup>o</sup> B. B. B.

Salmon's Examination of Burnet's History - Turn'd

Salmon's Examination of Burnet's History.

R Psachy May 22. 1732.

~~His. Ang. Script. minores. Ed. Genter. Sol. P. B. B.~~

{ In The Porty Blunt Kramer's upon Archy. G. G. G. Return'd

J. Dickinson

~~Don't know what it is. J. G. G.~~

Observations on y' Waterlands & Defence

Indication of y' Vicinity by y' Waterlands

Scripture Family explained -

Laoy Moyers Lectures of Waterland

Newton's Opticks

Letter of H. Kierulff to H. Kierulff

STOR-A-FILE IMAGING LTD

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# DOCUMENTS OF POOR ORIGINAL HARD COPY



C D E F G H I <sup>Id</sup> K

~~Chapman (Hannah) Burkhitt's Book Main's Help. 13 Nov. 1757  
Returned 21 Dec. 1758.~~

Chapman (Hannah)

turned

N <sup>o</sup>	Title of Book	Vol	Borrow'd	Return'd
59	Newton on proph <sup>y</sup>	1, 2	July 19, 1775	Nov. 24, 1775
59	---	3	Nov. 24, 1775	Jan. 24, 1776
56	Burkhitt on 3 new Test	1	May, 15, 1776	Sep. 13, 1776
56	---	3	Sep. 13, 1776	

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- BI, Bishopthorpe Papers R. Bp. B.1762.2.
- BI, Terrier F. Doncaster vicarage (1663-1825).
- BI, Terrier F. Sheffield.
- BI, Visitation Returns, Bp. V.1764.Ret.v.2, 217.
- BI, York Wills 1712-13 (Oversize). Vol.68, f.66. Will of James Hill.
- BK, Additional MS. 30374. Catalogue of the library of the Reverend John Bowle. ff.78v-81v. Memoranda concerning books lent and returned at various dates between 1750 and 1785.
- Bodleian Library, MS. Rawl. C.155, ff.286-292. A Catalogue of the books left by Dr Thomas Bray to be sold for £50....
- DCL (Local History), MS. H.695. Issue Book, Doncaster Clerical Library, 1726-1776 (sic).
- DCL (Local History), MS. H.780. A Copy of the Deed of Settlement of the parish library together with a list of benefactors and items presented. (Including an abstract of accounts.)
- DCL (Local History), MS. L820WIT. To The Yew Tree. A Pindaric Ode by Mr Withers of Doncaster.
- DRO, P1/5/E1. Minute Book of St. George's Parochial Library, 1715-1725.
- DRO, P1/5/E2,3. (Old number 19/50.) Folder of letters (restored) mostly to the Reverend Mr. Withers from Innys the Bookseller in London.
- DRO, P1/5/E4. Copies (2) of the Deed of Settlement of the Doncaster Clerical Society Library (with catalogues appended).
- ERO, D/P 30/28/3-4. Registers of books loaned from the church lending library (Witham), 1751-1775 (sic); 1847-1868. (2 volumes) With list of books in library, c.1850.
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- HRO, MS. Misc.182. Antiquarian notes of John Brearcliffe.
- KAO, Burial Register of All Saints', Maidstone, 1678-1715. Memorandum of books in Maidstone Parochial Library, 24 June, 1716. (Transcription.)
- MMAG, Maidstone Parochial Library. MS. Borrowers' Book.
- RCL, Mansel Collection. MS. Catalogue and Issue Book.
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WFM, MS. Catalogue of the Town Library.

YAS, MS. M340. Memoranda respecting the Clerical library of St. George's Church, Doncaster: (a) Proposed rules (b) An Indenture made 12 July 1722, and (c) Bill for books, binding etc.

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