

# THE CASE FOR A PAROCHIAL LIBRARY

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The appearance of an early eighteenth century two-stage oak cupboard, of modest size and with no particular decorative pretensions, might normally arouse little comment beyond the facts of its good, apparently original, condition and well-aged patination (Figure 1). However, an extensive paper label covering the inside of the top door proves it to be a very special cupboard indeed (Figure 2).<sup>1</sup>

The cupboard, of rather squat proportions, has a single panelled door to each stage, an overhanging moulded cornice and bracket feet. Curiously, the doors have keyhole escutcheons and locks on both sides, and while the doors now open from right to left there are vestiges of hinges on the opposite side, suggesting that the cupboard was adapted for different sites. The lower stage has locating blocks for the top, which simply lifts off, and both stages are backed by three vertical boards. There is a single fixed shelf in each stage, dividing the space roughly into half in the upper stage and one-third and two-thirds in the lower part; there is no evidence of alteration in this arrangement (Figure 3). Although now difficult to read in places, the label on the inside of the door reveals its precise purpose as a bookcase to house a collection of theological books for the use of the clergy, known as a parochial library. As well as rules for its management, the label lists the contents and even notes the prices of the books and the case itself.

The cupboard is said to have come from the home of an elderly lady in the south of England who had owned it for a long time, and underneath the upper section there is an old depository label for Lewis & Co Chichester. Above the printed label on the inside of the door is the heading 'NUMB 63' handwritten in ink, and an inscription, also handwritten and now mostly illegible, which starts with 'F' and ends with 'gh'. The printed label sets out 'RULES for the better Preservation of Parochial Libraries' and 'RULES prescribed by the Act of Parliament for the better Preservation of Parochial Libraries,' in other words two sets of regulations, one laid down by Act of Parliament and the other by the Founders of the Parochial Libraries. In each case the incumbent must make a catalogue of the books, to be delivered both to the 'Ordinary' – the bishop of the diocese or his deputy – and to the Founders. These two bodies are to have access to the library, no doubt to check on its satisfactory management.

Additions and benefactions to the library are to be recorded in a book, and the Founders' rules lay down that the incumbent is not to lend books out of the library, and if 'the said Library is placed out of the Dwelling House of the Incumbent, there shall not above six Books at a Time remain out of the Library.' Finally, 'No Book offered to be added to the Library which is contrary to sound Religion, or good Manners shall be accepted by the Incumbent.' The 'Remedy for the Recovery of Books embezzelled', leaves no doubt that the 'Ordinary' or his representatives will seek redress for losses of books: 'treble damanges may be recovered, with Costs of Suit.' At the same time a search may

be made with a warrant from a Justice of the Peace (place unspecified) and any books found returned to the library.

A large part of the label comprises a list, shelf by shelf, of the books that were to be kept in the case, with their prices. Some are specifically stated to be folios, explaining the reason for the arrangement of space in the lower stage and identifying the bottom shelf as Shelf I. The total price for the books on that shelf comes to £8.9s., the highest of the four totals. The other books would have filled the shelf spaces above. The costs of these totalled £4. 12s. 8d. (Shelf II); £4. 10s. 6d. (Shelf III), and £3. 6s. 1d. (Shelf IV): this would have been the highest and shallowest shelf, in the upper part of the cupboard. The case itself is listed as £1 6s. while packing, carriage and incidental charges come to £1.5s. In total, the library cost £23. 9s. 3d.

The list of books is interesting if, to present-day sensibilities, it sounds like turgid reading – ‘grave, dry, abstruse and dreadful’, as one writer put it.<sup>2</sup> As far as it is possible to interpret the label, it comprises the following:

#### Shelf I

*The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius &c* [1698]  
*Archbishop Tillotson's Works, 3 vol in Folio* [1684 onwards]  
*Whitby's Comment on the N. Testament, 2 vol in Folio*  
*Bishop Pearson on the Creed* [1705]  
*Dr Bray Catechetical Lectures* [1696]  
*[William] Allen on the Two Covenants* [1673]  
*[William] Allen Discourse on Faith* [1703]  
*Kettlewell Practical Believer* [1703]  
*Dr [Henry] More Collection of Philosophical Writings* [1662]  
*Dr [Henry] More Theological Works* [1708]

#### Shelf II

*Bp. Bradford Salmons Mr Boyle's Lecture*  
*[Francis] Mason's Sermon Concerning the Authority of the Church in making Canons*  
 [1607]  
*Bp [Offspring] Blackhall's Practical Discourses upon our Saviour's Sermon on the Mount, 8 vol* [1717]  
*Dr Comber on Ordination*  
*[Robert] Jenkin's Certainty of the Christian Religion, 2 vol* [1698]  
*[Robert] Nelson's Address to Persons of Quality* [1715]  
*[Robert] Nelson's Festivals and Fasts of the Church of England* [1704]  
*[Robert] Lucas' Sermons, 4 vol* [c. 1699–1722]  
*[John] Kettlewell on Obedience* [1681 onwards]  
*[John] Kettlewell on the Sacrament* [1683 onwards]  
*[Jean La Placette] Placette's Christian Casuist* [1705]  
*Bp Godeau Pastoral Instruction* [English translation, 1703]

Shelf III

- Bp Sharp's Sermons*, 4 vol [c.1700]  
*Arndtio de Vero Christianismo*, 2 vol  
 [William] Reeve's *Translation of the Apology of Justin Martyr Tertullian min felix, etc, with the Commonit. of Vine Div. ests*, 2 vol [1709]  
 [Thomas] Bennet's *Confutation of Quakerism* [1705]  
 [Thomas] Bennet's *Confutation of Popery* [1701]  
 [Thomas] Bennet's *Abridgement of the London Cases* [later ed. 1728]  
 [Jean Frédéric Osterwald] *Ottervale's Causes of the Corruption of Christians* [1700 onwards]  
*Ottervale's Of Uncleaness* [1708]  
 [?] Drexelius] *Dunster's on Eternity* [1710]  
 [John] Howell's *Discourse on the Lord's Day* [1704]  
*Bp Sandridge's Sermons*  
*Dr [Isham] Divine Philosophy* [1706]  
*Dr [John] Goodman, Penitent Pardoned* [1679 onwards]  
*Bp Williams Natural Religion* [1708]  
*Dr William Cave Primitive Christianity* [1675]  
*Spicket [?] in God*  
*Dr [John Worthington] Great Duty of Self Resignation* [1675]

Shelf IV

- Bp Wake's Sermons* [1708]  
*Dr [Henry] More's Divine Dialogues* [1668]  
*Dr More's [?] Life*  
*Dr More's Enchiridion Ethicum* [1668]  
*Mr Le Fevre's Sufferings on Board the Gallies in France and his Death in a Dungeon* [1708]  
*An Apologetical Vindication of the Church of England*  
 [?] Bonnett's *Life*  
*Bp Burnett's Pastoral Care*  
*Dr Goodman's Winter Evening [Confer]ences* [1705]  
*Mocket's [Doctrina et] Politia Ecclesia Anglicanae* [1616]  
*Zouch's Descriptio Juris & Judicii Ecclesiast. Fecund. Can. Anglic.* [1683]  
*Zouch's Descriptio Juris & Judicii Temporalis Fecundum Consuetudine Fudales & Normanicas*  
*March's Sermons*  
*Nelson's Practice of True Devotion* [1715]  
*Dupin's Church History Abridged*, 4 vol [1713]  
 [William] Allen *On Divine Assistance* [1679]  
*Lucas's Practical Christianity* [1693]  
*Dr [Samuel] Clarke's Three Practical Essays* [1699]  
*Wall's Conference about Infant Baptism* [1706]  
*Bp. King's Inventions of Men in Worship of God* [1694]  
*Kettlewell on Death* [1695]

- Addison [...] Christian's [Daily] Sacrifice* [?1724]  
*Bp Gastrell Christian Institutes* [1707]  
*Dr [Thomas] Bray's Catechetical Instruction* [1704]  
*Dr [Thomas] Bray's Baptismal Covenant* [1694]  
*Dr [Thomas] Bray's Pastoral Discourses*  
*Bp Beveridge's Church Catechism Explained* [1704]  
*Ostervald's Ground & Principles of the Christian Religion* [1704]  
*Bp Beveridge's Private Thoughts in 2 parts* [third ed. 1709]  
*Bp Beveridge's Public Prayer*  
*Bp Beveridge's Frequent Communion* [1708]

The dates are the author's additions, based on entries in the British Library and Bodleian Library catalogues; wherever possible the first publication year of each work is cited. These show that the earliest book in the collection was 1607 and the latest 1717, adding credibility to the supposed date of the cupboard itself as circa 1720. The majority of the books were first published between 1668 and 1715. A parochial library consisting of almost the same books was sent to Whitchurch in Hampshire in 1720, and its cost is recorded as precisely the same as the one described here – £23 9s. 3d.<sup>3</sup>

This cupboard emerges as a well-documented survivor of the parochial libraries that once formed a professional and spiritual resource for clergy throughout England, and in Wales and Scotland. The inspiration for the scheme for setting up nation-wide ecclesiastical libraries came from Dr Thomas Bray (1656–1730). This enlightened clergyman, born in Shropshire, and educated at Oswestry and Oxford, might have remained an obscure country parson in Warwickshire had he not attracted attention, first with an assize sermon at Warwick and later with his 'Course of Lectures upon the Church Catechism.' These were published in 1696, going into several editions, and established his reputation as 'one of the ablest men in the Church'.<sup>4</sup>

He was soon appointed by the Bishop of London, Henry Compton, to oversee the missionary clergy sent out to the American colony of Maryland and, realising that most of these were men of the slenderest means and often not much education, Bray insisted that a library of books should be provided for their use and encouragement. Supported by a whole benchful of bishops, headed by Archbishop Tenison, Bray's scheme for parochial libraries was put into operation not only for Maryland but other colonies as well: the education of negroes in the West Indies was another of his concerns. Money was subscribed and books donated, but Bray himself often supplied the shortfall out of his own modest pocket. One of these libraries, at Annapolis, consisting of about 1,000 volumes and costing £400, was the first lending library in America.<sup>5</sup> Princess (later Queen) Anne made a 'noble benefaction'; Annapolis was, of course, named after her.<sup>6</sup>

By 1697 Bray had formed (and published) a similar scheme for parochial libraries in England: *A Proposal for erecting Parochial Libraries in the meanly endow'd Cures throughout England*. More than 2,000 livings at that time yielded less than £30 per year, and the clergy were too impoverished to buy their own books. In the same year Bray drew up another great scheme, this one for the formation of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and it was the committee of trustees of the SPCK, made up of both clergy and laymen, that was to undertake the management of the parochial library



scheme from 1705 onwards.<sup>7</sup>

In 1699 Bray made the voyage to Maryland, even on the way laying the foundation for a library in Gravesend 'for the Use of the Deanery of Rochester, more especially for the Clergy, Gentlemen & naval officers that shall abide by the River, for any time, outward bound.'<sup>8</sup> He did the same in Deal and, when he arrived in Plymouth and found the existing library in a poor state 'tho' it has some Excellent Books in it,' he persuaded both the local clergy and the gratifyingly zealous mayor to put things right and enlarge its provision of 'the Choicest Books not only in Divinity but History; of Voyages also and in all the faculties.'<sup>9</sup>

Bray had already spotted the potential value of setting up libraries in ports. Ships were often delayed from setting off on their voyages by contrary winds and other adverse conditions, and their passengers might wait for weeks, even months, in port. Bray recognised the opportunity for his missionaries (and others) to spend this time in useful study as well as 'to prevent the expence and scandal to which they might be exposed, by sauntering away whole hours together in coffee-houses, or perhaps less sober places.'<sup>10</sup>

After six busy months in Maryland, Bray came back to England, setting up the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel as a result of his experiences. In 1706 he accepted the living of St Botolph without Aldgate, which brought him into the city and perhaps a more convenient position to gather influential people into his sphere, but at the same time resulted in a much more demanding parish life than he had enjoyed in his former country parish. He managed a busy schedule of services and sermons alongside his wide-ranging charitable works, training choirboys to lead the singing in church, encouraging monthly communion among his congregation (unusual at that time) and making efforts to strengthen the deanery system as a support for clergy; he seems to have been a beacon of conscientious ministry in a period often regarded as one of laxity in the church generally. Beyond the parish, his activities embraced prison reform and promoting church schools for poor children as well as the SPCK, the SPG and his great library scheme.

Originally, Bray planned lending libraries in every deanery, each consisting of a prescribed collection of books, 'sufficient to make a good foundation,' and costing up to £30.<sup>11</sup> The intention was for 500 or more, but by 1707 this was clearly too ambitious and it was pruned to approximately two in every diocese, each library usually consisting of between 67 and 80 volumes. The minutes of the SPCK trustees' meetings record the lengthy discussions over the suitable books to be included in each library, and how they were to be acquired. The bishops of the dioceses were invited to nominate appropriate parishes to receive libraries, preferably in 'such Livings where the Patrons or others might be prevail'd upon to contribute 5 pounds towards the charge of a Library.'<sup>12</sup>

Undeterred by that perennial problem, 'the excessive scarcity of money' for charitable projects, Bray set out detailed practical arrangements for gathering subscriptions and gifts towards these libraries, and how they were to be managed once set up.<sup>13</sup> While the incumbent, patron or a local benefactor was expected to contribute £5 towards the cost of a library, the rest was defrayed through the management committee's funds.<sup>14</sup> The books were to be uniformly bound in calf and 'marked on the Covers to what Deanery they belong.'<sup>15</sup>

Among other conditions he planned that the books 'be made up in such Boxes, or Book-Presses with Shelves in them and Locks and Doors to 'em, as will serve both to

preserve 'em in the Carriage down, and in the Place where they shall be deposited for the Public Benefit. And being kept in such moveable Repositories, they can at any time be remov'd to any other part of the Deanary, as by the vote of the Clergy at a Visitation shall be judged most convenient to have 'em log'd in; and that without the Charge of building any Room wherein to lay 'em up.'<sup>16</sup>

In preparation for the scheme, in 1707, the trustees assembled a sample library for which 'a plain, decent Wainscot Case' was made for a cost of £1.1s. 6d.<sup>17</sup> The trustees approved of both library and case, and shortly afterwards agreed that 'Mr Skeate be desired to take care for buying 5 Cases to be made in Imitation';<sup>18</sup> two more were soon added. The first parochial libraries were on the way, with many more to follow: at the meeting of 1 May 1708 Mr Skeate was 'desired to buy 42 Cases of the best Season'd Oak according to the Models already made.'<sup>19</sup>

The trustees' minutes and the accounts for 1708 record several batches of bookcases made by three different joiners. Fifteen were provided by Thomas Ratcliff for a total of £15. 16s.; in addition Ratcliff was commissioned to make a 'Pattern of a double Case' for which he was paid £1.6s.<sup>20</sup> On 29 September 1708 the minutes record that 'another model of a double Case was made by Mr Bateman in Pettyfrance,' while a further sample was procured from Martin Quintus.<sup>21</sup> The meeting of the trustees on 27 October 1708 gave the go-ahead for more of these: 'The Trustees having view'd the Patterns of the double Cases sent into the Repository Order'd that Mr Bateman be agreed with to make 14 Double Cases of the best Season'd Oak conformable to the Pattern he has sent in, but so as to afford them at 25s. each (and) Mr Quintus be desir'd to make 10 Double Cases conformable to the Pattern he has sent in, excepting that instead of 2 Pannels in a Door there should be but one.'<sup>22</sup> It is worth noting that of the three joiners commissioned to make cases for these parochial libraries, only Martin Quintus is recorded in Beard and Gilbert's *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers 1660-1840*.

When they were eventually despatched, some of the libraries were packed in single-unit cupboards, with handles at the sides for convenient transport. An example is preserved at Bridlington Priory, Yorkshire. This was sent by water in 1710, at a cost of 2s. 6d.<sup>23</sup> Others were assembled into two-stage cupboards like the one illustrated. The minutes for the trustees' meeting of 25 January 1710 'Order'd that double Cases be sent to ye Dioceses that are most remote.'<sup>24</sup> In his grand plan Bray had even thought out the borrowing arrangements for the books in the libraries, once in situ: 'a Month for a Folio, a Fortnight for a 4<sup>o</sup>, and a Week for an 8<sup>o</sup>, which will have this good Effect, that a Book will be read over with speed and care; which if one's own might lye in a Study without being quickly or very carefully perused.'<sup>25</sup>

Lending libraries run on varying lines were of course not a new idea in the 1690s. Books had been kept in parish churches from the middle ages onwards and, in the post-Reformation period of the late sixteenth century, the habit took on a new momentum, with collections of ecclesiastical books donated or bequeathed by local worthies. They were designated for use by the local clergy or, occasionally, by both clergy and lay people. William Smarte's library at Ipswich was a typical example of this.

In 1599 the wealthy but childless William Smarte died leaving 'my Latten printed bookes and writen bookes in volume and p'chmente...towards one librerye safelie to bee keepte in the vestrye of the parishe church of St Mary Tower in Ipswich...&the doore to

have two sufficiente lockes and keyes th' one to remayne in the custodye of the minister of the parish for the time beinge and the other to be kepte by the Churchwardens of the sayde p'ishe... to be used ther by the com'on preacher of the sayd Towne for the tyme being or any other pre'cher mynded to preache in the said p'ishe church.'<sup>26</sup> Starting with eight manuscripts and 26 printed books, this working library for preachers was continued and added to by local benefactors, and in 1614 it was housed in the dormitory of the former Dominican friary. Two book presses were made 'by Pumfrey the Joyner' for £10. 7s., with more added in 1618 for the growing numbers of books the library attracted. It consisted almost entirely of theological works, some of which appear in the catalogues of parochial libraries later. By the eighteenth century the library books seem to have been available to others in Ipswich besides the clergy and preachers: 'any person that he (the custodian) should think proper.' Bailiffs, portmen or common-council men are listed as suitable borrowers.<sup>27</sup>

In Essex, a collection of church books is recorded at Dunmow, alongside furniture and vestments, in an inventory of 1613, and West Hanningfield enjoyed a bequest of church books, to be kept in the parsonage, in 1632.<sup>28</sup> In 1685 the Reverend Barnabas Oley gave 16 volumes to each of 10 poor vicars in the diocese of Carlisle, 'the several books... to be kept within the church... for the use of vicars there.'<sup>29</sup>

Bray's outstandingly practical and dynamic approach made his project more far-reaching and systematic than the haphazard arrangements of earlier philanthropists. He attracted many individual benefactors into his scheme, including leading clerics and prominent laymen, and his example inspired other independent lending libraries, set up on different principles, like the one organised by the Reverend Andrew Cranston at Reigate 'for freeholders, vicar and inhabitants' or the Chetham's libraries in and around Manchester 'for the edification of the common people'.<sup>30</sup> Those established at Bedford, Nantwich, Kimbolton and Northampton, were also apparently a direct result of Bray's influence. No fewer than 80 Bray libraries were set up in England and Wales during his lifetime, and more were added later.

The efforts of Bray and his fellow trustees to get parochial libraries onto a secure legal footing were rewarded with the passing of the Act for the Preservation of Parochial Libraries (1709). The Act quoted on the label on the cupboard illustrated (Figure 2) is a *precis* of the original wording of this Act. Bray died in 1730, stipulating with characteristic altruism that his funeral should 'be conducted in the most private manner possible that more might be left for charitable purposes.'<sup>31</sup> One cannot help warming to this man of vision and humanity who, although born without great wealth or social influence, achieved so much lasting good, through his drive, determination and practical good sense. As the *Dictionary of National Biography* puts it, Bray's 'various appeals are plain, forcible and racy.'

As we have already seen, the label on the cupboard under discussion, linking it to the parochial library scheme, brings to light considerable detail about its origins. The number heading the label, 63, is of even more precise significance. This identifies it as the case for the parochial library of 72 books sent to the parish of Flookburgh in Lancashire (now in Cumbria) in 1725.<sup>32</sup> Apparently, this library was originally destined for another parish: among the trustees' letters, the following was written in December 1723.

'Whereas New Chappel at Whitehaven in Cumberl<sup>d</sup> and Diocese of Chester was

recommended to us by James Lowther Esq<sup>r</sup> for a Parochial Library, and it was agreed at a Meeting of the Trustees the 5<sup>th</sup> June 1719, that a Library be sent thither accordingly, and Mr Lowther having signify'd his desire that the said Library may be rather sent to Flookborough a Chappel of Ease [a subsidiary building to the main parish church, often served by a curate, rather than the rector or vicar] in the Parish of Cartmell Lancashire in the said Diocese of Chester, the Value of which is Certify'd to the Governor of Queen Anne's Bounty, to be but nine pounds twelve shillings per Annum certain to the Incumbent. These are therefore as much as in us lies, to authorise Henry Newman (secretary of the SPCK) to send the Parochial Library that was intended for the New Church at Whitehaven, to Flookborough aforesaid, when Mr Hoare shall be secure of the Five pound Premium for the same.'<sup>33</sup>

Two letters from Henry Newman to Richard Hudson, curate of Flookburgh, recounting the arrangements for the delivery of the library throw light on the benefactor involved and the watertight plans for its future management as well as the practicalities of transporting it from London to the Lake District. As befitted a library sent to a remote parish, this one was packed in the double bookcase.<sup>34</sup>

Revd Sir,

Yesterday there was deliver'd to Mr Knowles Junr, the Lancaster Carrier, a Parochial Library for yor Chappel at Flookborough, in 2 Cases, cover'd with Matts, and directed to You.

They are a Present to yor Chappel from some Gentlemen who are Founders of several Parochial Libraries, and, at the Desire of Sir Thomas Lowther, who has been a Benefactor to the Undertaking, this Library is sent to You, in Hopes You will take due Care of it, as the Rules direct, so that the Books may be all safely transmitted to yor Successor.<sup>35</sup> I have sent, in the least Case, 2. Catalogues, with a Receipt endors'd, which you are desir'd to sign in the Presence of Your Church-Wardens, or other noted Inhabitants in your Parish or Neighbourhood, and to send one them [sic] to your Diocesan, and the other when sign'd to me, under Cover to Sir Thomas Lowther in Red Lion Street.

The Key of both Cases is fasten'd to the under Part of the Least Case under the Matt.

Sir Thomas Lowther desires You would give Directions for conveying ye Cases from Lancaster to Flookborough, at the first of which Places Mr Knowles has promis'd to deliver it next Monday Sennight, to which Place also, i.e. Lancaster, the Carriage is paid here.

Pray let me hear from You as soon as You receive the Library if not before, because I am to fill up a Bond, in the Bishop's Name, in the Penalty of £30 only, which you are to execute, as all the Security the Founders require of You, that You will not embezzle or destroy the Books, but preserve them as the Act of Parliament, and the Rules of the Founders prescribe for your own Use, and the Use of Your Successor.

I wish them safe to You, and am,

Rev<sup>d</sup> Sir,

Your must humble Servant  
Henry Newman.

You will see the Form of the Bond which You are to execute in the Register which accompanies the Library.

Reverend Sir,

I have Yours of the 24th past under Cover to Sir Thomas Lowther, with the Catalogue of the Library sign'd; and as You make no Complaint of the Books not being in good Order, I hope they were carefully deliver'd.

I herewith send the Bond, which You are to sign and execute in presence of Your Church-Warden and principal Parishioners, which, when done, I must desire You to send under Sir Thomas Lowther's Cover to me: for tho it be taken in the Bishop's Name, I am to lay it before the Founders of the Library for their Directions to transmit it to the Bishop of the Diocese, but the other Catalogue, which I sent to You, You are desir'd to send to his Lordship, as mention'd in my Letter of the 12th of last Month.

I wish You may long enjoy the Effect of Sir Thomas' Kindness to You, which must be an agreeable Companion to a Man of Letters destitute of Books in a Solitary Country, and, if rightly used, must enable You to do more good, as a Minister of the Gospel, to feed with Heavenly Truths the Flock committed to your Care.

Please to let me know where they are plac'd, whether in the Vestry or your dwelling House, that I may be able to inform the Founders thereof being,

Revd Sir,

Your most humble Servant

Henry Newman

After Bray's death, The Associates of the late Reverend Dr Bray continued the work of setting up parochial libraries, many of them eventually becoming lending libraries, but the momentum slowed almost to a standstill by the late eighteenth century. In the mid-nineteenth century much neglect and misuse was reported; some libraries had disappeared altogether. The books from others had been deposited in public or college libraries (and would continue to be secured in this way), but a few remained in the parishes that originally received them. The books of Flookburgh's parochial library are preserved in the church vestry there to this day. This church is not the eighteenth century chapel building but one built in 1900 on a different site. The catalogue of the surviving books corresponds closely with the list on the cupboard label, although some volumes are missing from multi-volume publications.

When the books became separated from their two-part oak case is uncertain, but it is possible that the bookcase left Flookburgh around the time of the building of the new church. The Chichester depository label on the upper section of the bookcase gives this some plausibility, since it connects with two former vicars of Flookburgh, John Fowler and his son, Charles. John was vicar of Flookburgh from 1896–1915, and thus during the time the new church was built. Later he became vicar of Rye, in the diocese of Chichester (1922–1940), and he ended his career as Prebendary of Sidlesham in Chichester Cathedral: his last recorded address was 1 Vicars Close, Chichester.<sup>36</sup> His son, Charles Binstead Fowler, was vicar of St Paul's Chichester (1951–53) before moving to Flookburgh, where he was vicar from 1953–63.<sup>37</sup> His sister, a Mrs Warrinder, is also

known to have lived in Sussex. She may well have been the elderly lady in the south of England who was said to have owned the bookcase for a long time before it came on to the market.

While these connections go some way to explain the bookcase's recent history, it would indeed be gratifying if it could be restored to Flookburgh and reunited with its parochial library once more.

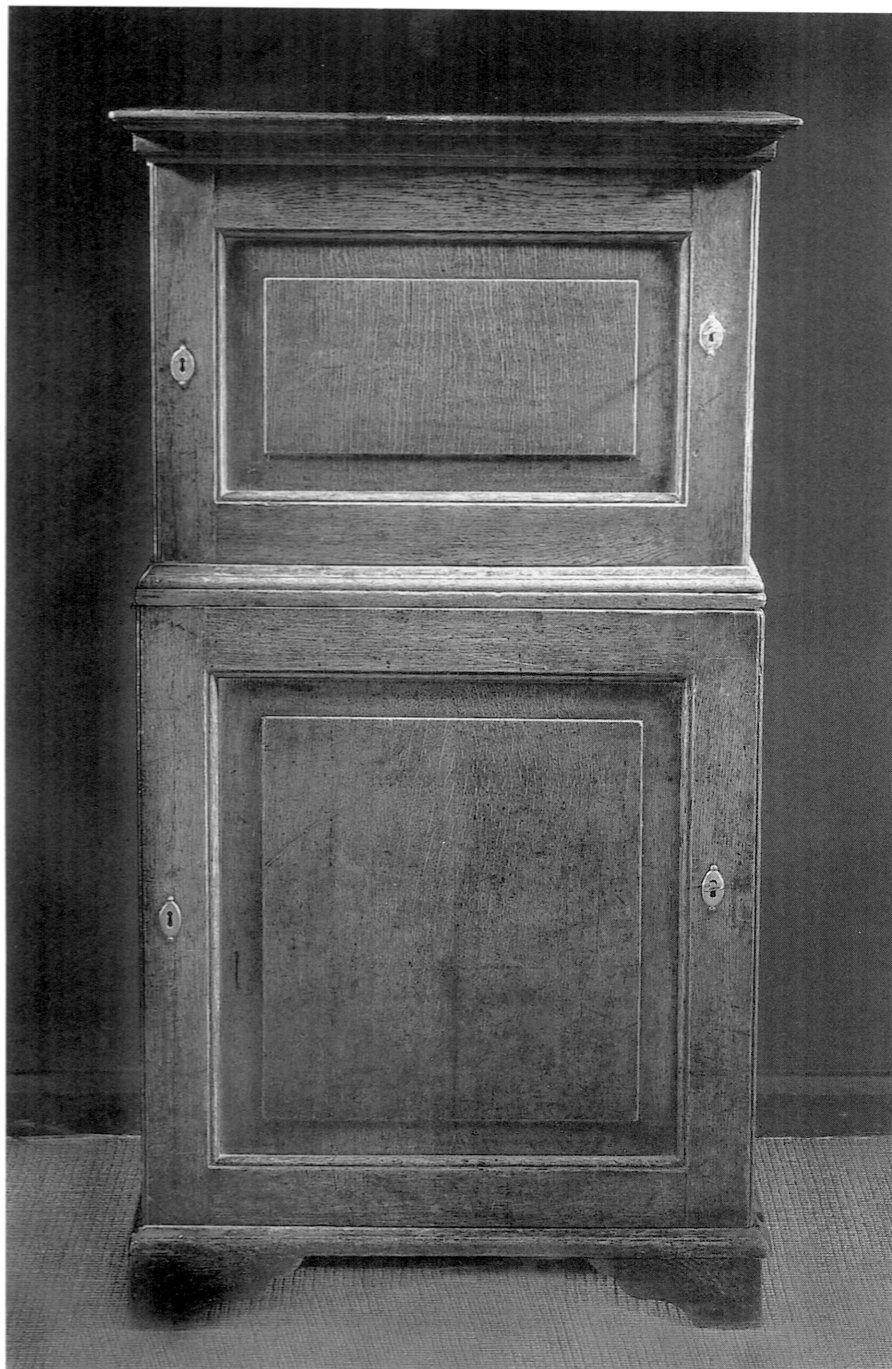
#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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#### REFERENCES

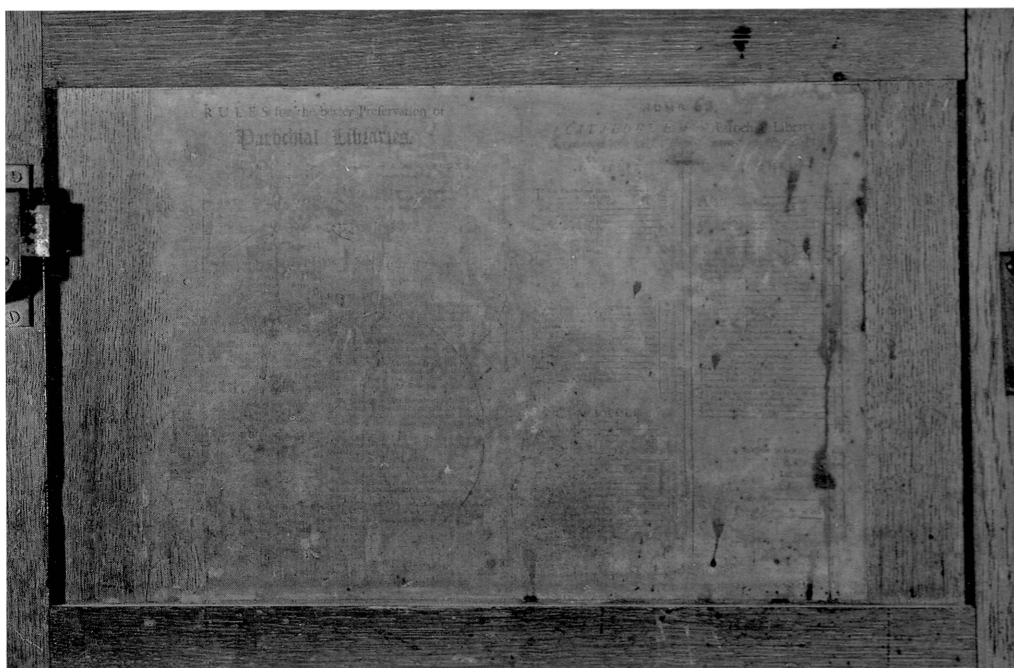
1. With the specialist in early oak, Andrew Singleton of Suffolk House Antiques, Yoxford.
2. M.C. Tyler, *A History of American Literature* Vol I 1607–76, 1879, pp192–3; quoted by Neil Ker (ed), *Parochial Libraries of the Church of England*, London, Faith Press, 1959, p13.
3. The catalogue survives in the Bodleian Library (MS Rawlinson D.834, f.31); it is set out in Neil Ker, *The Parochial Libraries of the Church of England*, London, Faith Press, 1959, p38.
4. George Smith, 'Dr Thomas Bray', *Library Association Record*, May 1910, Aberdeen, The University Press, 1910 (n.pn).
5. Ibid.
6. *Dictionary of National Biography*.
7. The minutes book records 'The Proceedings of the Trustees for Erecting Parochial Librarys and Promoting Other Charitable Designs.' The trustees eventually comprised Sir Humphrey Mackworth, Robert Nelson, Henry Hoare, Samuel Brewster, Thomas Bray, Francis Fox, John Skeate, William Gardner, George Smalridge, Richard Hoare, Samuel Clarke and Edward Jennings (CUL, SPCK. MS A8/1)
8. Thomas Bray, manuscript diary letter recounting his voyage to fellow members of the SPCK, quoted in George Smith, op.cit.
9. Ibid.
10. Associates of Dr Bray, *The Life & Designs of the Revd. Thomas Bray DD*, London, F.C.&J. Rivington, 1808, p23.
11. Smith, op. cit.
12. CUL SPCK.MS A8/1, p61.
13. Smith, op.cit.
14. Ker, op. cit., p23.
15. Smith, op. cit.
16. Thomas Bray, *An Essay towards Promoting all Necessary and Useful Knowledge, both Divine and Human, in all the part of His Majesty's Dominions, both at Home and Abroad* (1697), quoted in Smith, op.cit.
17. CUL SPCK. MS A8/1, p17 (minutes) and SPCK.MS 11/1–2, 5.7.1707 (accounts).
18. CUL SPCK.MS A8/1, pp24 and 25.
19. CUL SPCK.MS A8/1, p37.
20. CUL SPCK. MS A8/1, p41 and SPCK. MS 11/1–2, 5.7.1707.
21. CUL SPCK. MS A8/1, p43.
22. Ibid.
23. CUL SPCK.MS 11/1–2, 8.9.1710.
24. CUL SPCK.MS A8/1, p84.
25. Thomas Bray, *Essay*, quoted by Smith, op.cit.
26. John Blatchly, *The Town Library of Ipswich*, Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 1989, p5.
27. Blatchly, op.cit., p53.
28. F.G.Emmison, *Catalogue of Essex Parish Records 1240–1894*, Essex County Council, 1966, pp107 and 128.

29. Ker, op.cit., p19.
30. Ker, op.cit., p17.
31. Ibid.
- 32.. Ker, op.cit., p29.
33. CUL SPCK.MS D5/1.
34. Ibid., 12.6.1725 and 13.7.1725.
35. Sir Thomas Lowther paid the £5 due from the parish (Ker, op. cit., p23). In 1724 he had contributed £100 (out of a total of £200) towards augmenting the curacy of Flookburgh. In the later eighteenth century Flookburgh became a parish in its own right, through the benefaction of Lord George Cavendish who became patron of the living (L.A.S. Butler, Ed., *The Cumbria Parishes 1714-1725 from Bishop Gastrell's Notitia with Additions by Bishop Porteous 1778-79, Cumberland & Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society Records* Vol 12, 1998, pp82 and 177).
36. *Crockford's Clerical Directory*, 1940.
37. *Crockford*, 1965.



1. Parochial library of double case form, supplied to the Parish of Flookburgh, Lancashire (now Cumbria) in 1725





2. Printed label inside the upper door of the Flookburgh Parochial Library, setting out rules and regulations for the use of the collection



3. Open view of the Flookburgh Parochial Library, showing shelf arrangement and back board construction