

The theme of the rest of the day can be summarised as an exploration of the work of Sir Christopher Wren as architect and Austin as joiner and designer, through a sequence of Colleges. After a look around the Kings Chapel Library (oak classes by Cornelius Austin, 1680, and a variety of furniture) we went on to Wren's library in Trinity College, where the oak classes (bookcases) support Grinling Gibbon's breathtaking limewood carvings, and the furniture (library tables, desks, benches and stools) was designed by Wren and made by Austin. We saw Wren's office drawings (fig. 4), showing the joint stools with vertical legs, but the practical Austin splayed them for greater stability. Likewise, the cleated ends to the library tables were a departure from the drawings which Austin no doubt introduced in his wisdom. Here too we first saw the profusion of the "Norway Oak" (wainscot) which was such a feature of the day. A member, turning up a stool, said, "if I saw this in a salesroom, I would say it was Victorian!".

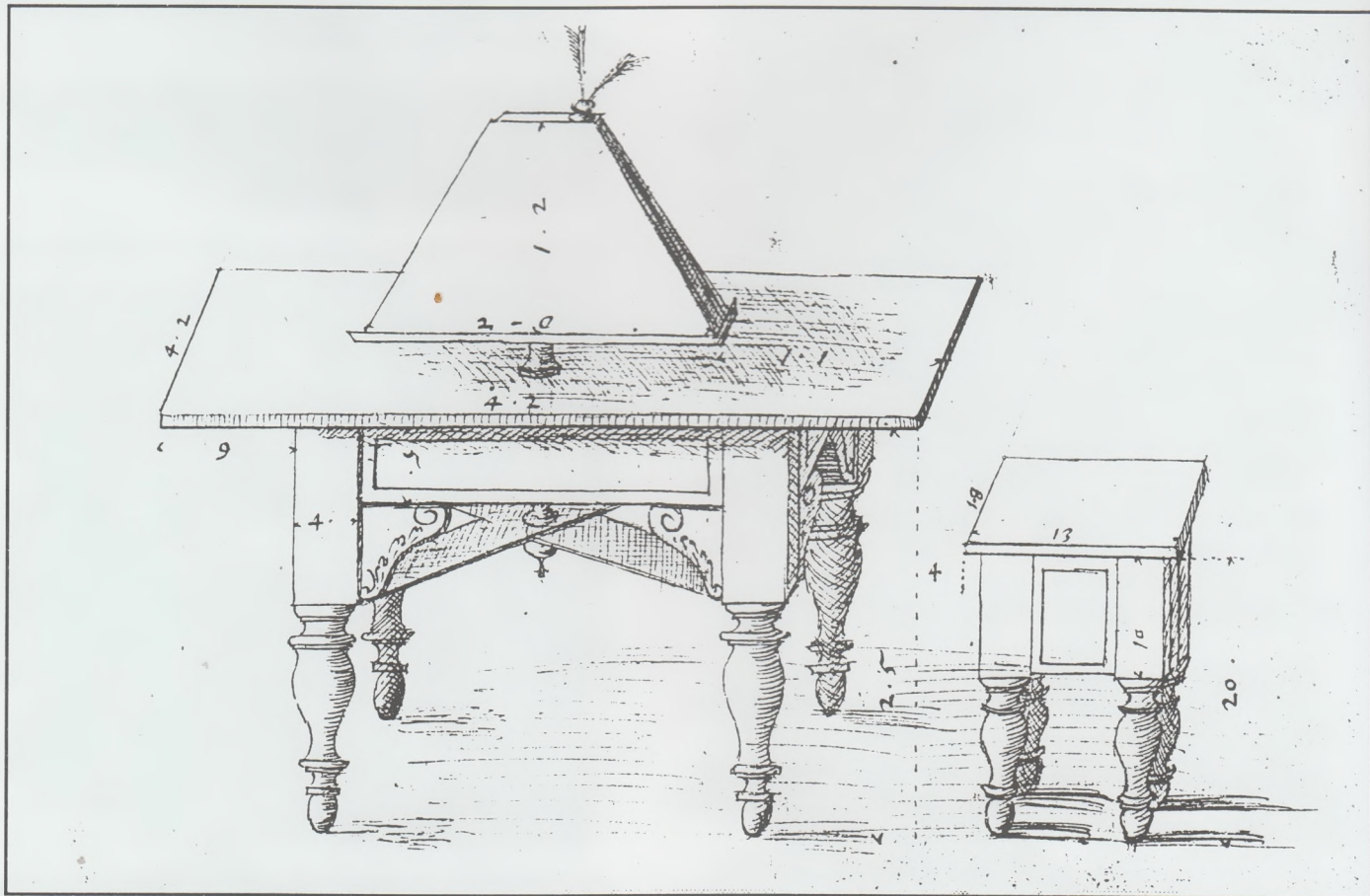


Fig. 4 Table and stool for Trinity library.