

Lincoln Cathedral Library.

WHAT is now the vestibule to the present library was really the ancient library. Its date can be fixed with tolerable certainty. A glance at the roof inside, and at the outside wall as seen in ascending the staircase, will show that the structure is of the 15th century, and in confirmation I need only quote the writing on a flyleaf of a MS. marked A. 3.18 in the catalogue, "*Istum Librum legavit et assignavit Magister Thomas Duffield nuper Cancellarius ecclesiæ Cathedralis Lincoln. novæ Librariæ enisæ. An. Dom. MCCCCXXII.*"

A sketch of this library before modern alterations were made has been preserved, and from it we learn that it extended rather nearer to the Chapter House, with which it communicated by a spiral stone staircase still partly existing. In other respects it is much as it was. The present mean and unsightly wooden staircase, leading up to the modern door, is probably of the last century.

Small as this vestibule is it must have been quite large enough to hold the original library. When it was built there were nothing but MSS. Whether they were kept in chests or on shelves we have no means of knowing, but from a 12th century catalogue preserved in the great Bible given by Nicholas, Canon and Archdeacon of Lincoln, circa 1105, we learn that when Haimo was appointed Chancellor, circa 1150, and the care of the books committed to him, "*hos in armario invenit libros.*" Possibly this arrangement was maintained in the *nova libraria* to which Duffield gave his MS. We have still remaining three very fine bookstands of the 15th century, to which the largest and most valuable books were chained, and which undoubtedly must have stood in the *nova libraria*; a similar arrangement may still be seen in Hereford Cathedral Library.

The 12th century catalogue to which I have referred has been printed in the edition of Giraldus Cambrensis (vol. 7, p. 165), published by the Master of the Rolls; with prefaces by the late

Mr. Dimock and Professor Freeman. The latter remarks on the singular absence of English books, or books at all bearing on English history, with the exception of Giraldus' gift of some of his own writings, and possibly the "*Septem volumina magistri Radulfi Nigri*." Certainly the great bulk of the library consists of ecclesiastical literature, psalters with glosses—glosses on the Bible, &c. The service books, missals, graduals, and the like, have all, with possibly one exception, disappeared. They were considered as "monuments of superstition" at the time of the Reformation, and shared the fate of the vestments and other paraphernalia of the mediæval church.

Still, by a happy chance, the larger portion of the Cathedral Library survived, and at the present day it is possible to identify a considerable number of the MSS., some of which Haimo found on his appointment in 1150, and some of which were added afterwards by beneficent Bishops and Canons.

The process of identification is not difficult. In the first place the character of the writing and illumination will of course determine, with some degree of precision, the date. Taking therefore a MS. *Haimo super epistolas Pauli*, which in the 12th century catalogue is said to have been the gift of Jordan the Treasurer, whose date is circa 1180, we can see at once the clearest evidence of it being the identical MS.; and in the next place we are fortunate in possessing a second catalogue, of the 15th century, found by Canon Wickenden in the Muniment Room, which not only gives the names of all the MSS., but also the catch-words on the second page of each MS. Thus in the case we are considering the catch-word given to this MS. is "*te impositum*," and if anyone opens *Haimo super epistolas Pauli* at the second leaf, he will find those words.

This second catalogue therefore adds certainty to what before was only strong probability.

By its aid I have been able to identify 77 MSS., many of them belonging to the 12th and 13th centuries.

It is needless to do more than refer to a few. The great Bible given by Nicholas, Canon and Archdeacon, which contains the 12th century catalogue, is mentioned as "*in duobus voluminibus*." Unfortunately the second volume is missing, and has been so since 1696, for in a Catalogue of that date after the word "*voluminibus*" follows "*quorum unum deest*." It was still entire in the 15th century.

One MS. in the earliest catalogue I had hoped to identify as

the *Psalterium cum magna glossatura*, given by Bishop St. Hugh 1180-1200; for there is a psalter, with a disproportionately large gloss, of about the date 1200, which answers to the description and is the only one which does among the many glossed psalters remaining. If only the catch-word had been given in the early catalogue we could have been quite certain. In the 15th century catalogue this MS. is entitled *Cassiodorus super psalterium*, Cassiodorus being, by the way, only one of the many commentators quoted in the great gloss, and the catch-word is *virtutibus*. This agrees with our MS. On the whole it seems very probable that the *donum Hugonis Episcopi* of the earliest catalogue, and the MS. we possess, are identical. One would prefer in this case absolute certainty.

Of the "*septem volumina magistri Radulfi Nigri*" we have his *Chronicon a principio mundi usque ad captionem Regis Ricardi I.*, and his *Philippicus* with a *prologus*. The oldest of all our MSS. is a copy of the *Homilies* of the Venerable Bede. It was found in the *armarium* by Chancellor Haimo. To show that literary "Doctors disagree" I will add that the late Mr. Coxe, Bodley's Librarian, assigned it to the latter half of the 10th century, while the late Mr. Bradshaw, the librarian of the University of Cambridge, assigned it to the first half of the 11th century, and another gentleman, of great experience in such matters, considered it anterior to the earlier of these dates! I must not linger unduly on this theme, so I will hasten to say that we possess a rich treasure of early English literature in the *Thornton Romances*, collected by Robert Thornton, Archdeacon of Bedford, in the 15th century, much of which has been published by the Early English Text Society; also a beautiful little vulgate written on "abortion—vellum," A.D. 1310—20; nor must I pass over our solitary Missal, which I wish I could believe was among those eight missals recorded in the 12th century catalogue, and which are said to have been "in the Church under the custody of the Treasurer." Unfortunately it is not mentioned in the 15th century catalogue, and from a rubric in which the Abbot is alluded to, it is evidently a monastic missal. Much of it is in 12th century or early 13th century writing. It contains the office of St. Gilbert of Semperingham, a Lincolnshire saint, and may have belonged to a Gilbertine house in this county.

But in addition to the rich heritage of mediæval MSS. which have been in the Cathedral Library since the 12th

century, I must not forget to mention a large number that were given by Dean Honeywood, part of the fruit of his labours as a book-collector during his enforced exile on the continent during the Commonwealth. I regret that no separate catalogue of Honeywood's MSS. is to be found, for although his monogram is written in most of the books and MSS. he gave to the Library, there are unfortunately a good many exceptions. We are certainly indebted to him for a Dutch Psalter, Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and a very fine copy of Peter Lombard's *Consensus in Psalmos*, preserved in a glass case in the library. He may also have been the donor of our solitary Missal.

Turning from MSS. to printed books, it will naturally be asked whether any of those survive which must have been in the ancient library from 1450 to 1660. Unhappily no catalogue is extant of the contents of the library between the dates I have specified, and it would scarcely be safe to jump to the conclusion that every book, which has not Honeywood's monogram in it, was necessarily an inhabitant of the ancient library. One book, however, St. Augustine's *Sermons*, I have good reason to think belonged to Bishop Longland, the last pre-reformation Bishop, who died in 1547. Each volume has his name written in it, in a hand strikingly resembling his own. But the exceedingly rare and valuable Primers of Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Mary, were undoubtedly given by Honeywood; as also were the Printed Missals of the Uses of Sarum and York. The choice collection of Bibles, I believe, was also his gift. I cannot speak with any certainty of the Caxton of which we were ruthlessly despoiled by Dibdin, who afterwards exposed the ignorance of the Chapter, as well as his own impudence, in what he was pleased to term, "The Lincoln Nosegay," which has been reprinted by Botfield in his *Notes on Cathedral Libraries*. Briefly, Dibdin persuaded the Chapter, through Sub-Dean Bayley, who happened to be in residence, when he visited the library in 1816, to let him purchase the Caxtons for a very inadequate price, and to buy modern and "more useful" books with the money. He was allowed to carry off *The Game of Chess*, *Reynard the Fox*, *Cato*, &c., which now repose in the Althorp library. I blush to speak of the equivalent. It comprised *The Beauties of England and Wales*, Collins' *Peerage*, and such like works.

I will now turn to the present library, the history of which has partly been anticipated. It runs along what was the north side of the cloister, but which was ruined by Dean

Mackworth, who built a stable for his horses thereon, according to the charge made against him at Bishop Alnwick's Visitation of the Cathedral in 1436-7. Dean Honeywood, who was appointed Dean at the Restoration, 1660, found this side of the cloister an unsightly ruin, and employed Sir Christopher Wren to build the present library. It is 104 feet long, and an admirable room for the purpose for which it was built, viz., to hold the Dean's noble collection of books which he had formed abroad. Unfortunately, he did not contemplate large additions, and the room is only lighted on one side, the south, and at one end, the west. Hence, when a steady accretion of books began to take place, beginning with nearly 800 volumes given by Dean Jeremie in recent times, it became necessary to place book-cases between the windows, with the result that on dark days the titles of the books can hardly be discerned.

In this room there are two of the fine mediæval desks or book-stands, to which I have alluded; one remaining in the vestibule. At the west end are two glass-cases; one containing patens and chalices, with some episcopal rings, taken out of the tombs which were unhappily rifled and swept away when the Cathedral was re-paved in 1784. The paten and chalice and ring of Bishop Oliver Sutton were added only a few years ago, his stone coffin having been accidentally broken into by workmen employed in re-laying the adjacent pavement. One may notice also the licence of Edward I. to the Dean and Chapter to erect the Close-Wall in 1285, for the protection of the Canons and Vicars who were exposed to robbery and murder at night.

In another case is a contemporary copy of *Magna Charta*, endorsed "For Lincoln," and Peter Lombard's *Commentary on the Psalms*, already mentioned, open at the CX. Psalm, where there is a fine illumination of God the Father crowning God the Son, who holds a Church in His hand, while the Dragon lies beneath His feet. This is, alas! one of the few good illuminations left to us. As a rule, the best have been cut out by the despoiler's hand in days when ladies collected such things for their albums, and the library door was unlocked. Of the rich store of books collected by Dean Honeywood, it would take too long to write exhaustively. Among other treasures is a collection of tracts, sermons, pamphlets, &c., dating from 1550 to 1680. In one of the volumes is *Lycidas* in its original form, as it came out at Cambridge, in company with several other poems,

written by friends of Mr. Edward King. Another very valuable item in the library is a collection of Italian Madrigals, dating from 1549 to 1640, mostly printed at Venice. Some of these are absolutely unique, as I am assured by an eminent German scholar, who for years past has been searching the libraries of Europe for these things. Perhaps the Liturgical books bought by the Dean may be reckoned as some of our chief treasures. Not to mention the printed Missals of Sarum and York Use, already alluded to, we have a printed book of Hours of the B. V. M. of the Use of York, unhappily imperfect, but so far as it goes, almost unique, no copy existing in the British Museum.

The collection of Bibles is very valuable, and includes Tyndall's, Coverdale's, Matthew's, &c. The "Sealed Prayer-book," with the seal of England attached, the last form of prayer, in which alteration was made by public authority, is another of our treasures; and the first editions of *Don Quixote* and *Paradise Lost*.

In more recent times some valuable additions have been made to our Library. Dean Jeremie indeed did not give of his best, although about 800 vols. found their way from his shelves to ours, but he gave a copy of Caxton's *Lives of the Saints*, which, although insignificant in comparison with what we have lost and wanting in the title page, is still worth a good deal of money. I may mention also that Sub-Dean Manners-Sutton gave a very fine copy of Jerome's *Epistles*, printed at Rome in 1468, and that Archdeacon Bonney provided us with a copy, made by his own hands, of the drawings of the tombs and brasses, etc., in the Cathedral made by Dugdale in 1641.

Still, in spite of many kind gifts from various donors of late years, it must be confessed that the stream of benefactions almost ceased with Dean Honeywood's death. Some books were indeed given by Bishop Fuller, but during the eighteenth century, "the age of folios," hardly anything was given to the library. I can scarcely point to a single offering except the "Legenda Aurea" of Aquinas, which was the gift of a Registrar called John Bradley, about 1770.

With the 19th century came the act of spoliation I have described, when the choicest treasures were parted with for a miserable consideration.

Unfortunately the library is absolutely unendowed, and although it has been the practice of the Dean and Chapter to set aside yearly a certain sum of money for the purchase of

books, yet this must depend upon circumstances. During the last thirty years some useful additions have been made—Dugdale's *Monasticon* in eight folio vols. is one, The Publications of the Surtees Society, Camden Society, Oxford Historical Society, Lincoln Architectural Society, are all taken in. Many small local histories have been acquired.

The problem how to render the library useful and available for the public has not yet been solved. A glance at it would show that it is not a place in which many can study at the same time. Neither are its contents for the most part calculated to attract the ordinary reader, whether lay or clerical. Undoubtedly a scholar or student of bibliography might while away many an hour among the "incunabula" and other rare books, but the clergyman who wishes to consult modern authors must go elsewhere. Whether the library can ever become a "circulating" one, I am not competent to say. At present it is open to readers on Tuesdays and Fridays from 11 to 1, but the number who avail themselves of the privilege is ridiculously small. The proposal to move it, and to enlarge it so as to accommodate a greater number of readers, has yet to be fully weighed and considered. One thing however is clear, that before it can become useful to the general mass of reading laymen or clerics, a very large addition must be made to its contents. In spite of modern benefactions, it is still, to all intents and purposes, Dean Honeywood's Library.

A. R. MADDISON, M.A., LIBRARIAN.

