

## CHAPTER I

## ISAAC NEWTON: USER OF BOOKS

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If the level of a man's reputation and importance in the scientific and intellectual thought of his time were reflected in the size of his library, then the total of 2100 volumes which Isaac Newton owned when he died is a lower total than might have been anticipated. But Newton acquired his books, insofar as they were not gifts and presentations, in order to read them, not just to own them. The delights of mere collecting did not appeal to him. His library was a set of working books most of which he came to know well and in some cases use extensively: the well-thumbed books are evidence of this. For Newton everything had its place in a regulated state of apparent disorder and so presumably he saw no advantage in making extensive book-lists or catalogues – nor in asking anyone else to compile them for him. Among the vast amount of manuscript material left behind by Newton only two short book-lists of any significance in his hand have come to light.<sup>1</sup>

John Dee, Samuel Pepys, John Evelyn, John Locke, or other 'professional' book-collectors may have regarded their personal libraries partially as show-pieces: Newton did not. Misleading references have been made elsewhere by booksellers and others to Newton's shelf-marks. None of the books from his library which I have examined so far carries a shelf-mark in Newton's writing, nor one written in the book by anyone else during Newton's lifetime.<sup>2</sup> If he wished to consult a book he knew just where to lay his hands on it. Problems of shelf-space or book-storage leave no mark in his papers. If he had any difficulty in finding room for his books, either in Trinity College, Cambridge or later in London he apparently did not consider that it called for any written comment. In his correspondence Newton wrote about individual authors and their works, sometimes generous in his appreciation, and sometimes expressing his gratitude for presentation copies. In a long letter to Henry Oldenburg dated 23 June 1673 Newton described his copy of Huygens's *Horologium oscillatorium*, 1673 (no. 820 in the catalogue below)

<sup>1</sup> Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS New College 361 (Ekins Papers), Vol. II, fol. 47 (see p. 9 below), and Babson MS 418 (see pp. 41–2 below).

<sup>2</sup> For the shelf-marks in Newton's books see pp. 38–41 below.

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as ‘M. Hugens kind present. . . full of very subtile and useful speculations very worthy of ye Author’,<sup>1</sup> and on 17 September of the same year he wrote to John Collins, thanking him ‘for ye little but ingenious tract of P. Pardies’,<sup>2</sup> showing his judgement of *La statique*. . . 1673 (no. 1245). Such expressions of opinion, however, refer to individual authors or books, and not to their relationship with other works in his library.

Most young people are anxious to demonstrate their ownership of a book by writing their names inside the front cover at the earliest opportunity, and many of these inscriptions tend to be fuller and sometimes more pompous than those used later in life. So it was with Newton. His 1653 Greek Testament (no. 199), now in Trinity College, Cambridge, bears the inscription of the serious-minded eighteen-year-old ‘Isaac Newton hujus libri verus est possessor. Pretium – 0<sup>l</sup>–3<sup>s</sup>–0<sup>d</sup>. Aprilis 3 die An<sup>o</sup> Dni 1661’. There are two candidates for the claim to bear the earliest known Newton signature on a printed book. His copy of Sabinus’s *P. Ovidii Metamorphosis*. . . 1593 (no. 1224), now in the Newton Collection at Babson College, Massachusetts, carries the legend ‘Isaci Newtoni liber Octobris 15 1659. prætium –0–1–6’, while his 1560 Pindar (no. 1317), now in King’s College, Cambridge, has on the verso of the title-page ‘Isaacus Newton hunc librum possidet. Pret. 8<sup>d</sup>. 1659’. Whether the Pindar inscription preceded the Ovid one in time can only be conjecture, but both certainly came from the pen of a sixteen-year-old proud of the ownership of his books.

When Newton wished to indicate his ownership of a book he would usually, though not invariably, write his name in the book, sometimes adding the price he paid (or a donor’s name), occasionally also the date of acquisition – early habits of which he soon tired, as the summary below shows. The Newton books in Trinity (862 volumes) and elsewhere, together with others not so far located but described in detail by Heinrich Zeitlinger in his Sotheran catalogues,<sup>3</sup> altogether 953 of the overall total of 2100, show the following:

	Total
Newton’s signature with price and date	8
(Dates: 1659, 15 October 1659, 29 March 1661, 3 April 1661, 1680, 1682 (three separate works). See respectively nos. 1317, 1224, 1264, 199, 552, 1102, 1515, 1579.)	

<sup>1</sup> Isaac Newton, *Correspondence*, ed. H. W. Turnbull, J. F. Scott, A. R. Hall and L. Tilling (vols. 1–7, Cambridge, 1959–77), I, 290. (Later references to this edition read: Newton, *Correspondence*, followed by the editor(s) of the volume cited.)

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 307. See also Isaac Newton, *Mathematical papers*, ed. D. T. Whiteside (vols. 1– , Cambridge, 1967– ), III, 391. (Later references to this work read: Newton, *Math. papers*.)

<sup>3</sup> Henry Sotheran & Co., *Bibliotheca chemico-mathematica*, ed. H. Zeitlinger and H. C. Sotheran (2 vols. and Suppl. 1–2, London, 1921–37). (Later references to this work read: Sotheran, *Bibl.*)

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Newton's signature and date (All eight books have the same inscription: 'Isaac Newton. Trin: Coll: Cant: 1661'. See nos. 181, 335, 609, 629, 793, 1442, 1559, 1640.)	8
Newton's signature with price (See nos. 55, 76, 337, 347, 377, 557, 589, 770, 839, 1489, 1561, 1562, 1687, 1714, 1763. Details of the prices are given at these entries.)	15
Newton's signature showing the book to have been a gift (The catalogue nos. and donors are 1688 (Étienne Baluze), 122 (Isaac Barrow), 261, 266, 271, 273 (all from Robert Boyle), 315 (Thomas Burnet), 678 (John Collins), 605 (Oliver Doyley), 822 (Christiaan Huygens), 314 (Richard Mead), 49, 485, 1115, 1116 (all from Henry More), 1705 (William Walker). The inscriptions are reproduced in full at the catalogue entries.)	16
Newton's signature only <sup>1</sup> (See nos. 75, 112, 322, 584, 869, 1006, 1106, 1156, 1362, 1574.)	10
Price-note and date in Newton's hand but without his signature (See nos. 764, 1401. The prices and dates are 14s. 6d., 1680 and 6s. 6d., 1682 respectively.)	2
Price-note only (See nos. 230, 476, 546, 704, 1076, 1206, 1209, 1210. The prices paid range from 7s. for no. 1210 to £2. 15s. 0d. for the 7-volume set of no. 546.)	8

A survey of the style Newton adopted for his signature on these books may help to clear up some of the confusion now spread by a possible early-nineteenth-century forger.<sup>2</sup> At least four institutional libraries have books which Newton might well have owned – they were published in 1642, 1668, 1678, and 1686 respectively – and they all carry an inscription in the same hand reading 'I. Newton. A.M.' In addition to the fact that the handwriting does not resemble Newton's and that none of the titles appears in the book-list

<sup>1</sup> One further work (no. 869) was described in the catalogue as being 'With the Autograph of Isaac Newton' in the Thame Park sale, 13–15 January 1920 – when possibly as many as 1000 books from Newton's library were sold. The present whereabouts of this book is not known, nor is it traceable in the Sotheran catalogues, and it is not therefore included in the above count. For the Thame Park sale see pp. 48–50 below.

<sup>2</sup> The mathematician and historian of science Augustus De Morgan, writing in 1852–3, reported that 'books are about the world with Newton's signature, known to have been in them before the time at which forgeries commenced'; see his posthumously published *Newton: his friend and his niece* (London, 1885; facs. repr. 1968), p. 153.

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and catalogue discussed below, the mere presence of 'A.M.' after his name virtually rules out their being Newton's copies. None of his autograph inscriptions on the books which I have examined show any degree after his name, or an 'R.S.S.' [Regiæ Societatis Socius]. Newton's signature has often, I may add, been confused with that of his distant kinsman Sir John Newton who, when Newton submitted a pedigree to the College of Arms in 1705, made an affidavit in its support.<sup>1</sup> I know of three books<sup>2</sup> bearing John's signature which have been attributed with some confidence to Isaac. Comparison of photocopies of these with that in an autograph letter of Sir John Newton written to Isaac Newton on 13 April 1714<sup>3</sup> clearly demonstrates their common authorship. The use of a personal bookplate had not become a widespread practice among private book-collectors of Newton's time. Pepys had one designed and printed for insertion in his books, but Locke did not. It will not be surprising that Newton, plain man that he was, did not concern himself with such fripperies. In the fifty-seven signatures written by Newton in his books as listed above, 'Isaac' is used twenty-six times, 'Isaacus' twice, 'Isaaco' (as part of an inscription indicating a presentation) once, 'Isaci [Newtoni liber]' once, 'Is.' twenty-five times, 'Is<sup>o</sup>' (part of a note on a presentation) once, and 'I' once. The surname 'Newton' is only Latinized once, in the case shown immediately above.

There are few regular purchasers of second-hand books who do not derive much satisfaction from the thought that occasionally they pick up a bargain. Newton was no exception. While most of the books referred to above as listing the prices he paid have that price recorded by him without further comment, in the case of two works Newton was sufficiently pleased with the purchase to add a comment upon it. In his copy of Richer, *Historia Conciliorum generalium*. . . 1680 (no. 1401) Newton wrote '1682. pret. 6<sup>s</sup> 6<sup>d</sup>, valet 10<sup>s</sup>', while in Elmacinus, *Historia Saracenicæ*. . . 1625 (no. 552) he added 'E libris Is. Newton 1680, Pret 9<sup>s</sup>, valet 25<sup>s</sup>' – an even greater bargain. On the title-page, this latter work has scored through 'Trin: Coll. Cant. A<sup>o</sup> Dni 1668. Ex dono Mgr̄i Thomæ Gale huius Collegij Socij'. John Laughton, Librarian of Trinity 1679–83, and subsequently University Librarian, was willing to sell this particular book to a Fellow of the College because the library had

<sup>1</sup> C. W. Foster, 'Sir Isaac Newton's family', *Reports and papers of the Architectural Societies of the County of Lincoln, County of York* [etc.], xxxix (1928), 10, 62. In an earlier letter of April 1707 to Sir John, Isaac styled himself 'Your affectionate Kinsman and most humble Servant' (Newton, *Correspondence*, ed. J. F. Scott, iv (1967), 488–9). For further information on the Newton family see Newton, *Correspondence*, ed. A. R. Hall and L. Tilling, vii (1977), 485–8; Appendix II, 'Newton's genealogy'.

<sup>2</sup> I gratefully acknowledge the kindness and courtesy of the librarians at the Babson College, Columbia University, and Pierpont Morgan Libraries in providing me with Xerox copies of the title-pages which carry these signatures.

<sup>3</sup> Cambridge University Library, MS.Add.3968(41), fol. 113/14, printed in Newton, *Correspondence*, ed. A. R. Hall and L. Tilling, vi (1976), 100.

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received another copy in 1679.<sup>1</sup> Newton took a close interest in the library at Trinity. In 1675, 1679, and 1681 he presented it with *Sancti Irenæi Adversus Valentini . . . libri V. . . Cum scholiis & annotationibus J. Billii* [etc.], 1675, Huet's *Demonstratio Evangelica*, 1679, and Grew's *Museum Regalis Societatis*, 1681, as well as a copy of his *Principia* in 1687.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, in 1676 he subscribed £40 towards the new College Library and loaned a further £100 four years later. It is not surprising then, even if these were all the gifts Newton made to it, that the Librarian was prepared to sell the Elmacinus at a favourably cheap price.

In his schooldays Newton had books available for him to read. There was the library of his late stepfather Barnabas Smith with '2 or 300 books in it, chiefly of divinity and old editions of the fathers. . . These books Sir Isaac gave to his relation Dr. Newton of Grantham, who gave some of them to me [William Stukeley], when I went to live there.'<sup>3</sup> Such other boyhood books as Newton had he also gave away in later life. While he was a pupil at the King's School at Grantham, Newton lodged with an apothecary named Clark and here he had the opportunity of reading the books that were in the house as well as pursuing his interests in making mechanical models.<sup>4</sup> In addition he might also, while at school, have climbed the narrow stairs up to the chained library at St Wulfram's Church in the cramped little room over its south porch to escape the rush and noise of the country town around and to read in comparative quiet. This, Grantham's original public library (established in 1598 and one of the first in England), was accessible to all burgesses and residents of the town. Since the church is only a hundred yards or so from the grammar school, Newton would have passed it every time he went to school and home again to his lodgings next to the George Inn. Of the library's early holdings there still exist some three hundred volumes (almost all, predictably, on theological subjects).<sup>5</sup>

The size of Newton's own library while he was at Trinity College from 1661 to 1696 is not known, and although only a rough guess can be made

<sup>1</sup> The Trinity Catalogue of 1667 (Add. MS. a. 101) does not contain a copy of no. 552. The copy which Newton acquired is in the shelf-list of the 1670–90 Catalogue (Add. MS. a. 104) at B. a. 17: the '17' is deleted and the entry annotated 'Vid. Dup:'. The second copy, still in Trinity Library (W. 17.45<sup>b</sup>), was bequeathed to the College by James Duport, who died in 1679.

<sup>2</sup> Trinity College Add. MS. a. 106, fol. 13v. See also J. Edleston (ed.), *Correspondence of Sir Isaac Newton and Professor Cotes* . . . (London, 1850), pp. xxvi–xxix *passim*.

<sup>3</sup> W. Stukeley, *Memoirs of Sir Isaac Newton's life* . . . ed. A. Hastings White (London, 1936), p. 16.

<sup>4</sup> For an account of Newton's opportunities for reading as a schoolboy and of his early years in Trinity see D. T. Whiteside, 'Isaac Newton: birth of a mathematician', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, xix (1964), 53–62, esp. 54–5.

<sup>5</sup> Of the volumes still in the library, 85 are yet secured with their original chains, and 153 others bear traces of having once been so fastened, but the rest have been rebound over recent years, so losing all signs of their earlier chaining. See A. A. Markham, *The story of Grantham and its church*, 18th ed. (Gloucester, 1973), pp. 19–20.

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there is good reason to think that a very modestly sized personal library might well have satisfied his requirements. He had immediate access to Trinity Library, which over the period of Newton's residence there comprised 3000–4000 volumes.<sup>1</sup> Evidence that Newton used the books in his College Library is to be seen in his Common Place Book now in the Keynes Collection in King's College, Cambridge (K.MS.2). Folio 1 of the manuscript consists mainly of a list of historical authors and their works, and at the side of the entry for five of these writers Newton has added 'Trin. Coll.' and by another, 'Tr. C.' In the case of two of these works Trinity shelf-marks are also given, and these marks are still present in the books. Another entry reads 'Trin. Coll. Bib. S.[ub] P.[relo]', showing that the item was not yet catalogued and so had no press-mark at the time. The book in question is known to have been bequeathed to Trinity by James Duport, Regius Professor of Greek at Cambridge 1639–54, and later Dean of Peterborough, who died in July 1679, and Newton may have consulted the book before it was catalogued.

Though we do not know exactly where Newton lived before he moved into his rooms north of the Great Gate of Trinity in 1678, it is unlikely that his residence was ever more than a few hundred yards from the Public Library of the University of Cambridge. In the second half of the seventeenth century it had between 10,000 and 12,000 volumes, all of which Newton had the right to consult. In addition, there were other Cambridge colleges whose libraries contained valuable collections. Together these covered virtually the whole range of what scholarly material was then in print.

Even more immediate and important to Newton was his free access to Isaac Barrow's considerable private library. On 27 September 1670, Newton wrote to John Collins, 'I have hitherto deferred writing to you, waiting for Dr Barrows returne from London that I might consult his Library about what you propounded.'<sup>2</sup> Though Barrow and Newton may not have been the close personal friends which tradition has it, they were certainly professional colleagues with a common interest in mathematics and other branches of science, and in theology. The ready use Newton was evidently allowed to make of Barrow's library made it the less necessary for him to build up a library of his own until after the latter's death in May 1677. The contents of Barrow's library are set out in the Bodleian MS.Rawl.D.878, fols. 39–59: 'A Catalogue of the bookes of Dr Isaac Barrow sent to S. S.'<sup>3</sup> by Mr Isaac Newton, Fellow of Trin: Coll: Cambs. July 14. 1677. Obiit Dr Barrow, Maii 4. 1677'.<sup>4</sup> This lists 992 separate titles (1099 volumes), at least 151 of which

<sup>1</sup> P. Gaskell and R. Robson, *The library of Trinity College, Cambridge: a short history* (Cambridge, 1971).

<sup>2</sup> Newton, *Correspondence*, ed. H. W. Turnbull, I (1959), 16.

<sup>3</sup> 'S. S.' may be one or other of the London Stationers Samuell Sprint or Samuel Smith; see Newton, *Math. papers*, III (1969), xiv n. 12.

<sup>4</sup> The catalogue is written in four different hands, none of which is Newton's. Only two of the compilers give place and date of publication of the works.

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are mathematical and 24 on astronomy, but otherwise including numerous classical, theological, philosophical, and scientific works, and it provides a clear guide to many of the books which were accessible to Newton until the middle 1670s. Where, therefore, the absence from Newton's library of works by a particular author or on a certain subject has hitherto aroused comment or speculation, the reason for the gap may well be that when, up till 1677, Newton had needed a book Barrow's copy was available for him to consult.

As an undergraduate Newton was by no means a struggling, impoverished scholar. A notebook of his, now in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, which contains his accounts for the period May 1665 to April 1669, has an entry dated 12 February 1667/8: 'Received of my Mother. 30.0.0.', and another later, undated: 'Received from my Mother. 11.0.0.' An earlier entry dated 22 April 1667 reading 'Received 10.0.0.' may indicate money from the same source. Life for Newton was not wholly devoid of pleasures: thus the Notebook records, also on 22 April 1667: 'At y<sup>e</sup> Taverne severall other times &c. 1.0.0.', and later, probably also in 1667: 'At y<sup>e</sup> Taverne twice. 0.3.6.', and again: 'Lost at cards at twice [?] 0.15.0.' Newton had, then, enough money at his disposal even in his twenties to be able to lend not inconsiderable amounts to his more needy young contemporaries.<sup>1</sup>

A pocket-book now in Trinity College, Cambridge,<sup>2</sup> which is inscribed on the fly-leaf 'Isaac Newton, Martij, 1659', contains the record of his accounts in his first years at Trinity, from 1661 on. This lists a few minor extravagances, though no drinking or gambling, and it also shows that he lent amounts ranging from a shilling to a pound to fifteen different people. There was money enough available, also, to buy books. In the Trinity Notebook Newton records that he bought 'Sleidan's 4 Monarchies' for a shilling (though only a later, 1686, edition (no. 1521) was in his final library) and 'Schrevelius his lexicon' (no. 1472) for five shillings and fourpence. The Fitzwilliam Notebook has an entry on 22 April 1667 recording the purchase of 'Ye Hystory of y<sup>e</sup> Royall Soc.' (by T. Sprat, no. 1549) for which Newton paid seven shillings, followed by 'Gunters book & sector &c' (no. 728), which cost him five shillings from 'Dr [Francis] Fox'. In February 1667/8 Newton recorded 'Bacon's Miscelanys' bought for one shilling and sixpence, but this book too was not listed in his library. Other purchases known to have been made by Newton at this period were recorded in an 'account' of his expenses in 1664 which seemingly no longer exists.<sup>3</sup> When Newton became a Fellow of Trinity

<sup>1</sup> The Fitzwilliam Notebook shows that over the period 1667 to 1669 Newton lent sums varying from a single shilling to one pound six shillings to six named individuals.

<sup>2</sup> Trinity College MS.R.4.48<sup>c</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> In Cambridge University Library MS.Add.4000, fol. 14v Newton wrote on 4 July 1699 that 'By consulting an account of my expenses at Cambridge in the years 1663 & 1664 I find that in y<sup>e</sup> year 1664 a little before Christmas I being then senior Sophister [i.e. a third-year undergraduate], I bought Schooten's Miscellanies (no. 1471) & Cartes's Geometry' (no. 506 or 507).

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College in 1667 he had a deal of income of his own to add to that received through his mother.

One of Newton's favourite and active areas of study from his early years at Trinity and continuing throughout his residence there was the field of chemistry and alchemy. Newton himself provides direct evidence of this interest in the late 1660s. The Fitzwilliam Notebook records the purchase by him of chemical materials and equipment in April 1669, together with Lazarus Zetzner's *Theatrum chemicum* (no. 1608) for one pound eight shillings. Newton's copy of this very important six-volume work (Strasburg, 1659–61) was sold for fifty pounds by Sotheran of London in 1926, when it was described by Zeitlinger as being copiously annotated by Newton.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately for Newton scholars, and in particular those researching in his alchemical interests and ideas, the present whereabouts of this set is not known. The list of Barrow's library shows that he had collected very few books on this subject; hence Newton would either have had to look elsewhere in Cambridge, or buy such books himself. The indications are strong that he followed the latter course. This would certainly account for the unusually high number of chemical and alchemical books in Newton's final library – 169 or 9.5 per cent of a total of 1752 known titles on all subjects. Of these titles 99 are in that section of Newton's library now housed in the Wren Library at Trinity College. Some of them carry the names and annotations of their earlier owners, and their general appearance, together with the early date of publication of many of them, suggests that Newton acquired them second-hand. Several of his alchemical books in Trinity, and elsewhere, have notes by Newton in them, and the presence of such notes is indicated in the individual catalogue entries below.

Among the mass of Newton manuscript material still surviving there is very little directly indicative of his book-buying activities.<sup>2</sup> Reference has already been made to comments on individual books and authors in Newton's correspondence and in the Trinity and Fitzwilliam account books. The Stanford University Newton manuscript, headed 'De scriptoribus chemicis',<sup>3</sup> consists of five closely written pages of authors and titles of alchemical works, sometimes with details of the contents of the volumes. The majority of these works were published in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, and only a few of them were apparently in Newton's library. This manuscript

<sup>1</sup> See Sotheran, *Bibl.* (1937), Suppl. 2, 1, 757 (Catalogue 800 (1926) 12098); see also *Library of Sir Isaac Newton: presentation by the Pilgrim Trust to Trinity College Cambridge 30 October 1943. With Appendix: Newton's library and its discovery*, by H. Zeitlinger (Cambridge, 1944), pp. 16, 17, 19 *passim*. (Later references to the Appendix by Zeitlinger read: Zeitlinger, *Newton's library*.)

<sup>2</sup> Unlike his friend John Locke, who carefully saved many of the lists of his purchases at book auctions together with his bookseller's bills, which can be examined in the Bodleian Library MS Locke.b.2.

<sup>3</sup> Stanford University Library, MS, Container 2, Folder 13.



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appears to be either a collection of notes for an alchemical bibliography or a detailed reading-list for Newton's own use at some time after 1692 – the latest publication date of the works included. On the other hand, the Babson MS 418, Newton's 'Lib. Chem' list, which is discussed further on pages 41–2 below, is a document showing books which Newton owned in late 1696 or in 1697. But neither the Stanford nor the Babson manuscript throws any direct light on Newton's actual book-buying activities.

There exists one document, however, bound up with a wide variety of miscellaneous material, mainly in Newton's hand, in Bodleian Library MS New College 361 (Ekins Papers), vol. II, fol. 78, headed 'Books for M<sup>r</sup> Newton'. We may readily suspect that this list was kept by Newton not so much for the details of what he paid for the sixteen works tabled there (bought at a cost of altogether three pounds and seventeen shillings) as because he wished to preserve the notes on Trojan history which he subsequently wrote on the back of the bill. There is no clue to the bookseller's identity, no date on the bill, no endorsement on it by Newton, and no indication as to when it was paid. Booksellers' accounts then, as now, carried tantalizingly short and sketchy entries, but it is possible to identify all sixteen books listed there by title with certainty, and all but two were present in Newton's final library.<sup>1</sup> Fourteen works were in French, two in Latin; twelve of them were on alchemical subjects. Their publication dates range from 1626 to 1701, and as the bill is headed 'Books for M<sup>r</sup> Newton' (it would presumably have been 'Sir Isaac' after 1705), its probable date is 1702 to mid-1705. Twelve of these books are in the Trinity collection today.

The same Bodleian manuscript contains on its folio 47 a book-list written on both sides of the leaf in Newton's hand. It is difficult to know how significant this is, and there is no heading or other clue to the particular purpose for which it was compiled. The list sets out thirty-four separate works, comprising thirty-seven volumes, and gives for each item author, title, and place and date of publication. Their titles are individually grouped by size: 'Folio' (twelve works), 'Quarto' (ten), and 'Octavo' (twelve), with the earliest date of publication, 1477, correctly given. The works concern mainly classical literature, history, and mythology. A dash is present at the left of each of twenty-six of the entries, but this does not necessarily mean that Newton acquired the books so distinguished, for only seventeen of the total of thirty-four are traceable in Newton's library, and three of these have no such line alongside. This book-list can be dated only as after 1697 – the latest date of publication recorded.

<sup>1</sup> The catalogue numbers, with prices paid for each book are: 237 (5s. 0d.), 511 (1s. 6d.), 531 (2s. 6d.), 539 (5s. 0d.), 540 (3s. 6d.), 619 (3s. 0d.), 635 (1s. 6d.), 1242 (£1. 5s. 0d.), 1263 (2s. 6d.), 1316 (3s. 0d.), 1372 (5s. 0d.), 1397 (4s. 0d.), 1607 (2s. 6d.), 1675 (3s. 6d.). The two works missing from the final library were: *La physique des anciens*. [By D.R.] 12°, Paris, 1701 (3s. 6d.) and *Traité de perspective*. [By B. Lamy.] 8°, Paris, 1701 (6s. 0d.).

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Newton's scientific eminence and his reputation and influence particularly in his own country were recognized, among other things, by his having a number of authors dedicate their books to him.<sup>1</sup> There were many more who for varying motives considered him a worthy recipient of their books. How frequently such presentations were made we can but guess. A few such are documented in his correspondence, though even here in some cases it is not wholly clear whether the book mentioned was a gift or had merely been bought for Newton. In some instances Newton himself specified in the book so donated that it was a gift; in others the donor himself, usually the author, entered an inscription therein which makes this clear. But who can tell whether Newton bothered to keep all the books that were given to him? He may have glanced at the donation, perhaps read a bit of it, and scoffed at it before quickly discarding it. I have examined just over nine hundred volumes, 44 per cent of the total number of volumes in the catalogue below: twenty-nine of these are clearly marked as gifts, and my firm impression is that the number of such gifts is a deal lower than might reasonably be expected.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, since, as outlined above, Newton hardly ever bothered in his later years to indicate his ownership of a book purchased by him by entering his signature in it, it could well be that he then took correspondingly less trouble to record the fact when a book was given to him. Some of the books in Trinity, particularly a few in an especially handsome binding, have all the appearance of being presentation copies; many of the early-eighteenth-century mathematical and scientific tracts also now there doubtless came likewise to Newton directly as gifts from their authors.

Fifteen inscriptions of the sixteen so far seen in which he added that the book so endorsed was a gift were made before Newton left Cambridge. The lone exception is a presentation copy of Thomas Burnet's *De statu mortuorum*. . . 1720 (no. 314) which the donor, Dr Richard Mead, physician and Fellow of the Royal Society, had had privately printed in a limited edition. Newton endorsed his beautifully bound copy with the legend 'Is. Newton Ex dono Dr<sup>is</sup> Ri. Meade'. On the fly-leaf of his copy of Isaac Barrow's *Lectiones XVIII*. . . 1669(-1670) (no. 122) Newton's note reveals that his Trinity colleague gave him the book on 7 July 1670.<sup>3</sup> Barrow formally presented Newton with none of his other publications. Newton had, indeed, an 'author's copy' of Barrow's 1675 epitome of the works of Archimedes and Apollonius (no. 76), but its inscription shows that Barrow had given it to Edmund

<sup>1</sup> For example John Freind (no. 637), Willem Jacob's Gravesande (no. 689), Colin Maclaurin (no. 1012), Abraham de Moivre (no. 1094), William Whiston (no. 1726), John Woodward (no. 1751).

<sup>2</sup> John Locke, far more concerned than Newton with registration and arrangement of his books, also appears to have had a surprisingly small number of books given to him. J. Harrison and P. Laslett, *The library of John Locke* (Oxford, 1965; 2nd ed. 1971).

<sup>3</sup> Presentation inscriptions, etc. are given in full at the entry for the individual works in the catalogue below.