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978-0-521-78194-7 — The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland

Volume 1: To 1640

Edited by Elisabeth Leedham-Green, Teresa Webber

Frontmatter

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THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF  
LIBRARIES IN BRITAIN  
AND IRELAND

\*  
VOLUME I  
To 1640

This volume is the first detailed survey of libraries in Britain and Ireland up to the Civil War. It traces the transition from collections of books without a fixed local habitation to the library, chiefly of printed books, much as we know it today. It examines changing patterns in the formation of book collections in the earlier medieval period, and traces the combined impact of the activities of the mendicant orders and the scholarship of the universities in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and the adoption of the library room and the growth of private book collections in the fourteenth and fifteenth. The volume then focuses upon the dispersal of the monastic libraries in the mid-sixteenth century, the creation of new types of library, and, finally, the steps whereby the collections amassed by antiquaries came to form the bases of the national and institutional libraries of Britain and Ireland.

ELISABETH LEEDHAM-GREEN is a Fellow of Darwin College, Cambridge, and was from 1972 to 1999 Deputy Keeper of Cambridge University Archives. She is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and Vice-President of the Bibliographical Society of London. She is the author of *Books in Cambridge Libraries: Book-lists from the Vice-Chancellor's Court Probate Inventories in the Tudor and Stuart Periods* (1986), and of *A Concise History of the University of Cambridge* (1996), and is co-editor of the series *Private Libraries in Renaissance England* (1992–).

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THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF  
LIBRARIES IN BRITAIN  
AND IRELAND

General Editor  
PETER HOARE

Libraries pervade the culture of all literate societies. Their history illuminates that culture and many of its facets – the spread of literacy, the growth of scholarship, changes in educational practices – as well as reflecting changing social and political philosophies and practices. As a result, they have often developed in ways which could not have been foreseen by their founders.

The fundamental principle, of collecting for immediate and future use and enjoyment, has usually been combined with a social aim, the sharing of books and information among a wider group, which has become one of the characteristics of libraries today. This is one reason why libraries cannot simply be seen as a discrete phenomenon: throughout their history they must be considered part of the society they serve. This context includes the whole reading environment, the vital connection of libraries with social or cultural development, and the political framework which has become increasingly important in the past hundred years; economic and commercial aspects have also become more significant, as they have for the history of the book. The profession of librarianship has matured, especially in the last century, and has in turn affected the development of libraries: indeed it is the interaction of librarians and users that has provided much of the dynamic for that development. Changing methodologies of scholarship and the vicissitudes of private reading, too, affect the way libraries have developed.

Libraries vary enormously in form, in size and in purpose, and their nature has inevitably changed over the fifteen centuries encompassed in these volumes. In consequence the three volumes have different emphases and reflect different approaches to the historical record, but they share a common theme. This has inspired the project since its first inception on the initiative of Professor Robin Alston (whose library history database has been invaluable to many contributors), and under the aegis of the then Library History Group of the Library Association and its former Honorary Secretary Graham Jefcoate. Notwithstanding these differences in approach, the history of libraries is a continuum, and the divisions between the three volumes of what is essentially a single work are less precise than the volume titles may indicate. Developments for some years around the mid-seventeenth century may be treated in both Volume I and Volume II, though often in different contexts; and a similar overlap for the mid-nineteenth century exists between Volume II and Volume III. Readers concerned with these periods should be sure to consult both volumes.

*The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland* does not set out to be an exhaustive history of individual libraries, it is, rather, a general history charting the various trends and patterns of development, which studies different types of libraries and individual libraries as part of that broader view. In this way it aims to illuminate not only libraries and their users but also the wider history of the British Isles. Only in understanding their purpose and their context can the role of libraries be properly comprehended.

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Elisabeth Leedham-Green

Teresa Webber

## Abbreviations

ANTS	Anglo-Norman Text Society
ASE	<i>Anglo-Saxon England</i>
Bale, <i>Index</i>	J. Bale, <i>Index Britanniae scriptorum</i> , ed. R. L. Poole and M. Bateson (Oxford, 1902); reissued with a new introduction by C. Brett and J. Carley (Woodbridge and Rochester, NY, 1990)
BAV	Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
BC	<i>Book Collector</i>
BCI	E. S. Leedham-Green, <i>Books in Cambridge inventories: book-lists from Vice-Chancellor's Court Probate inventories in the Tudor and Stuart periods</i> , 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1987)
BJRL	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands (University) Library</i>
BL	British Library, London
BLJ	<i>British Library Journal</i>
BLR	<i>Bodleian Library Record</i>
BMC	<i>Catalogue of books printed in the XVth century now in the British Museum</i> (London, 1908–)
BN	Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris
Bodleian	Bodleian Library, Oxford
<i>Books, collectors and libraries</i>	N. R. Ker, <i>Books, collectors and libraries: studies in the medieval heritage</i> , ed. A. G. Watson (London and Ronceverte, 1985)
BPPB	J. Griffiths and D. A. Pearsall (eds.), <i>Book production and publishing in Britain, 1375–1475</i> (Cambridge, 1989)
BQR	<i>Bodleian Quarterly Review</i>
BRECP	J. Greatrex, <i>Biographical register of the English cathedral priories of the province of Canterbury, c. 1066–1540</i> (Oxford, 1998)
BRUC	A. B. Emden, <i>A biographical register of the University of Cambridge to 1500</i> (Cambridge, 1963)
BRUO	A. B. Emden, <i>A biographical register of the University of Oxford to AD 1500</i> , 3 vols. (Oxford, 1957–9)
BRUO 1501–1540	A. B. Emden, <i>A biographical register of the University of Oxford, AD 1501 to 1540</i> (Oxford, 1974)

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Carley and Tite, <i>Books and collectors</i>	J. P. Carley and C. G. C. Tite (eds.), <i>Books and collectors, 1200–1700: essays presented to Andrew Watson</i> (London, 1997)
CBMLC	Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues (London), i. K. W. Humphreys (ed.), <i>The Friars' libraries</i> (1990); ii. R. A. B. Mynors, R. H. Rouse and M. A. Rouse (eds.), <i>Registrum Anglie de libris doctorum et auctorum ueterum</i> (1991); iii. D. N. Bell (ed.), <i>The libraries of the Cistercians, Gilbertines and Premonstratensians</i> (1992); iv. R. Sharpe et al. (eds.), <i>English Benedictine libraries: the shorter catalogues</i> (1996); v. W. P. Stoneman (ed.), <i>Dover Priory</i> (1999); vi. T. Webber and A. G. Watson (eds.), <i>The libraries of the Augustinian canons</i> (1998); vii. J. P. Carley (ed.), <i>The libraries of King Henry VIII</i> (2000); viii. K. Friis-Jensen and J. M. W. Willoughby (eds.), <i>Peterborough Abbey</i> (2001); ix. V. Gillespie (ed.), <i>Syon Abbey</i> , with A. I. Doyle (ed.), <i>The libraries of the Carthusians</i> (2001); x. P. D. Clarke (ed.) (with introduction by R. Lovatt), <i>The university and college libraries of Cambridge</i> (2002); xi. Henry of Kirkestede, <i>Catalogus de libris authenticis et apocryphis</i> , ed. R. H. Rouse and M. A. Rouse (2004)
CCCC	Corpus Christi College, Cambridge
CCCM	<i>Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Medievalis</i>
CCSL	<i>Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina</i>
CHBB I–IV	<i>The Cambridge history of the book in Britain</i> (Cambridge), i. R. Gameson (ed.), <i>The Anglo-Saxon period, c. 600–1100</i> (forthcoming); ii. N. Morgan and R. M. Thomson (eds.), <i>The manuscript book, c. 1100–1400</i> (forthcoming); iii. L. Hellinga and J. B. Trapp (eds.), <i>1400–1557</i> (1999); iv. J. Barnard and D. F. McKenzie (eds.), <i>1557–1695</i> (2002)
CIBN	BN, <i>Catalogue des incunables</i> (Paris, 1981–)
Clark, <i>Care of books</i>	J. W. Clark, <i>The care of books</i> (Cambridge, 1901)
CLC	M. S. G. McLeod et al., <i>The cathedral libraries catalogue, books printed before 1701 in the libraries of the Anglican cathedrals of England and Wales, I (Books printed in the British Isles and British America and English books printed elsewhere)</i> , ed. and completed by K. I. James and D. J. Shaw (London, 1984); D. J. Shaw et al., <i>II (Books printed on the continent of Europe)</i> (London, 1998)
CLibR	<i>Calendar of the Liberate Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office</i> (London, 1916–)
CMA	[E. Barnard], <i>Catalogi manuscritorum Angliae et Hiberniae</i> (Oxford, 1697)
Coll.	College
CSEL	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i>
CUL	Cambridge University Library

*List of abbreviations*

DNB	<i>Dictionary of national biography</i> ; see also ODNB
Durkan and Ross	J. Durkan and A. Ross, <i>Early Scottish libraries</i> (Glasgow, 1961)
EETS (ES/OS/SS)	Early English Text Society (Extra Series/Original Series/Supplementary Series)
EHR	<i>The English Historical Review</i>
ELM	J. H. Baker, <i>English legal manuscripts</i> , 2 vols. (Zug, 1975–8)
ELM/CUL	J. H. Baker with J. S. Ringrose, <i>Catalogue of English legal manuscripts in Cambridge University Library</i> (Woodbridge, 1996)
ELM/USA	J. H. Baker, <i>English legal manuscripts in the United States of America</i> , Part 1, <i>Medieval and Renaissance</i> (London, 1985)
EMS	<i>English Manuscript Studies</i> 1100–1700
Goff	F. R. Goff, <i>Incunabula in American libraries: a third census</i> , repr. with compiler's annotations (Millwood, NY, 1973)
Hbf	<i>Histoires des bibliothèques françaises</i> (Paris), I. A. Vernet (ed.), <i>Les bibliothèques médiévales, du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle à 1530</i> (1989); II. C. Jolly (ed.), <i>Les bibliothèques sous l'Ancien Régime, 1530–1789</i> (1988)
HBS	Henry Bradshaw Society
HLQ	<i>Huntington Library Quarterly</i>
Huntington	Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, CA
HUO	<i>The history of the University of Oxford</i> (Oxford), I. J. I. Catto (ed.), <i>The early Oxford schools</i> (1984); II. J. I. Catto and T. A. R. Evans (eds.), <i>Late medieval Oxford</i> (1992); III. J. K. McConica (ed.), <i>The collegiate university</i> (1986)
Irwin, <i>English library</i>	R. Irwin, <i>The English library: sources and history</i> (London, 1966)
Irwin, <i>Heritage</i>	R. Irwin, <i>The heritage of the English library</i> (London, 1964)
ISTC	<i>Incunabula short-title catalogue</i> (database in progress)
James, <i>ALCD</i>	M. R. James, <i>The ancient libraries of Canterbury and Dover</i> (Cambridge, 1903)
Jayne	S. Jayne, <i>Library catalogues of the English Renaissance</i> (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1956; reissued with new preface and notes, Godalming, 1983)
JEH	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
JLH	<i>Journal of Library History</i>
JRUL	John Rylands University Library, Manchester
JWCI	<i>Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes</i>
Ker, <i>Cat. AS</i>	N. R. Ker, <i>Catalogue of manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon</i> (Oxford, 1957; reissued with supplement, 1990)
Ker, <i>English MSS</i>	N. R. Ker, <i>English manuscripts in the century after the Norman Conquest</i> (Oxford, 1960)
Lambeth	Lambeth Palace Library, London
Lapidge, 'Booklists'	M. Lapidge, 'Surviving booklists from Anglo-Saxon England', in M. Lapidge and H. Gneuss (eds.), <i>Learning and literature in Anglo-Saxon England: studies presented to Peter Clemoes on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday</i> (Cambridge, 1985), 33–89

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Leland, <i>Collectanea</i>	J. Leland, <i>De rebus Britannicis collectanea</i> , ed. T. Hearne, 2nd edn, 6 vols. (Oxford, 1774)
<i>Library</i>	<i>The Library. Transactions of the Bibliographical Society</i>
<i>LP</i>	J. S. Brewer and others (eds.), <i>Letters and papers, foreign and domestic, of the reign of Henry VIII</i> , 21 vols. in 33 and addenda (London, 1862–1932)
Macray	W. D. Macray, <i>Annals of the Bodleian Library</i> , 2nd edn (Oxford, 1890)
<i>MÆ</i>	<i>Medium Ævum</i>
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
MLGB	N. R. Ker, <i>Medieval libraries of Great Britain</i> , rev. edn (London, 1964); <i>Supplement</i> , ed. A. G. Watson (London, 1987)
MLR	<i>Modern Language Review</i>
MMBL	N. R. Ker, <i>Medieval manuscripts in British libraries</i> , 5 vols. (Oxford, 1969–2002)
<i>MSS at Oxford</i>	A. C. de la Mare and B. C. Barker-Benfield (eds.), <i>Manuscripts at Oxford: an exhibition in memory of Richard William Hunt</i> (Oxford, 1980)
Mynors and Thomson	R. A. B. Mynors and R. M. Thomson, <i>Catalogue of the manuscripts of Hereford Cathedral Library</i> (Woodbridge, 1993)
NLS	National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh
NLW	National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
Oates, <i>CUL</i>	J. C. T. Oates, <i>Cambridge University Library, a history: vol. 1, from the beginnings to the Copyright Act of Queen Anne</i> (Cambridge, 1986)
OBS	Oxford Bibliographical Society
ODNB	<i>The Oxford dictionary of national biography</i> (Oxford, 2004)
OHS	Oxford Historical Society
Parkes and Watson, <i>Medieval scribes</i>	M. B. Parkes and A. G. Watson (eds.), <i>Medieval scribes, manuscripts and libraries: essays presented to N. R. Ker</i> (London, 1978)
PBSA	The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America
PCC	<i>Prerogative Court of Canterbury</i>
<i>PL</i>	<i>Patrologia cursus completus, series latina</i>
<i>PLRE</i>	R. J. Fehrenbach and E. S. Leedham-Green (eds.), <i>Private libraries in Renaissance England: a collection and catalogue of Tudor and early Stuart book-lists</i> (Binghampton, NY, and Marlborough, 1992–5; Tempe, Arizona, 1998–)
PML	Pierpont Morgan Library, New York
Proctor, <i>Index</i>	R. Proctor, <i>An index to the early printed books in the British Museum from the invention of printing to the year MD, with notes on those in the Bodleian Library</i> , 2 vols. and 4 supplements (London, 1898–1902)
PSAS	<i>Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland</i>



## List of abbreviations

RB	<i>Revue Bénédictine</i>
Robinson, <i>Dated MSS in Cambridge libraries</i>	P. R. Robinson, <i>Catalogue of dated and datable manuscripts c. 737–1600 in Cambridge libraries</i> , 2 vols. (Woodbridge, 1988)
RS	Rolls Series
SC	F. Madan <i>et al.</i> , <i>Summary catalogue of western manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford</i> , 7 vols. (Oxford, 1895–1953; repr. 1980)
Sharpe, <i>Latin writers</i>	<i>A handlist of the Latin writers of Great Britain and Ireland before 1540</i> (Turnhout, 1997); <i>Additions and corrections</i> (Turnhout, 2001)
STC	<i>A short-title catalogue of books printed in England, Scotland and Ireland, and of English books printed abroad, 1475–1640, first compiled by A. W. Pollard and G. R. Redgrave. Second edition, revised and enlarged, begun by W. A. Jackson and F. S. Ferguson, completed by Katharine F. Pantzer, with a chronological index by Philip R. Rider</i> , 3 vols. (London, 1976–91)
Streeter	B. H. Streeter, <i>The chained library: a survey of four centuries in the evolution of the English library</i> (New York, 1931)
<i>Survey</i>	<i>A survey of illuminated manuscripts in the British Isles</i> , ed. J. J. G. Alexander (London), I. J. J. G. Alexander (ed.), <i>Insular manuscripts 6th to the 9th centuries</i> (1978); II. E. Temple (ed.), <i>Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, 900–1066</i> (1976); III. M. Kaufmann (ed.), <i>Romanesque manuscripts, 1066–1190</i> (1975); IV. N. J. Morgan (ed.), <i>Early Gothic manuscripts</i> , 2 vols. (1982–8); V. L. F. Sandler (ed.), <i>Gothic manuscripts, 1285–1385</i> , 2 vols. (1986); VI. K. Scott (ed.), <i>Later Gothic manuscripts, c. 1390–1490</i> , 2 vols. (1996)
Tanner	T. Tanner, <i>Bibliotheca Britannica-Hibernica</i> (London 1748)
TCBS	<i>Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society</i>
TCD	Trinity College, Dublin
Thomson, <i>Cat. Lincoln</i>	R. M. Thomson, <i>Catalogue of the manuscripts of Lincoln Cathedral Chapter Library</i> (Woodbridge, 1989)
Thomson, <i>Cat. Worcester</i>	R. M. Thomson, <i>A descriptive catalogue of the mediaeval manuscripts in Worcester Cathedral Library</i> (Cambridge, 2001)
Thorndike/Kibre	L. Thorndike, and P. K. Kibre, <i>A catalogue of incipits of mediaeval scientific writings in Latin</i> , 2nd edn (Cambridge, MA, 1963)
TNA	The National Archives
TRHS	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>
V&A	Victoria and Albert Museum, London
VCH	<i>The Victoria History of the Counties of England</i>
Watson, <i>Dated MSS in the BL</i>	A. G. Watson, <i>Catalogue of dated and datable manuscripts c. 700–1600 in the Department of Manuscripts, the British Library</i> , 2 vols. (London, 1979)

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*List of abbreviations*

Watson, <i>Dated MSS in Oxford libraries</i>	A. G. Watson, <i>Catalogue of dated and datable manuscripts c. 435–1600 in Oxford libraries</i> , 2 vols. (London, 1984)
Willis and Clark	R. Willis, <i>The architectural history of the University of Cambridge</i> , ed. J. W. Clark, 4 vols. (Cambridge, 1886)
Wing	D. G. Wing, <i>Short-title catalogue of books printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and British America, and of English books printed in other countries, 1641–1700</i> , 3 vols. (New York, 1945–51; 2nd edn, revised and enlarged, New York, 1972–98)
Wormald and Wright, <i>English library</i>	F. Wormald and C. E. Wright, <i>The English library before 1700: studies in its history</i> (London, 1958)