BUILDING A LIBRARY WITHOUT WALLS: THE EARLY YEARS OF THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY

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CENTRE FOR EDITING LIVES AND LETTERS

BODLEY'S REFOUNDATION OF THE LIBRARY AT OXFORD

IN THIS CHAPTER we examine the early records of the Bodleian Library in order to explore the protean administrative processes employed by Sir Thomas Bodley and Thomas James, his first Librarian. These early records yield a glimpse of how various aspects of the library were shaped, and of the attitudes towards books and donors demonstrated by Bodley and James. Our research data extracted from these records reveal bibliographical patterns and physical behaviours which allow us to interrogate the intellectual processes at work in populating the library shelves. Erected, famously, 'for the publique use of students', we aim to interrogate the tension of the Bodleian's role as a public institution promoting and preserving for posterity the muniments of early English religion while at the same time serving an academic community, the principal constituency of which were students. We aim to confront to material evidence this idea of the library for the 'publique use of students', and dig deeper to find other sources of motivation for the resurrection of the bibliographical monument that was Bodley's vision.

Following his withdrawal from public service in his political role as diplomatic agent in the Netherlands during the conflict with Spain between 1588 and 1596, Bodley directed elsewhere the administrative energy that had defined his career as a legate.[1] His decision to return to Oxford, to refurbish the structure and furnish his newly-constructed presses with books resulted in not only soliciting philanthropic gestures from politically powerful friends and contacts but also a new sort of activity; that of organising a brand new kind of institution. In the early months following his proposal to Convocation to take on the task of refurbishing the Library, Bodley found himself dealing with a range of novel organisational demands, including

setting up the financial endowment for the running costs of the Library building, the staff and accessions; the opening hours; and which members of the university of Oxford would be permitted access to his 'publique library'. In his notes for library government, Bodley summarised under headings the following,

> The forme of y[e] general othe, y[at] is to be taken by all, aswel strangers, as graduats, that ought to be admitted, to studie in the Librarie.[2]

The library admission guidelines set down by Bodley limiting access to Doctors and Masters were relaxed in 1613 to include Bachelors of Arts and other undergraduates, although foreign readers and sons of members of the House of Lords could read in the library prior to this date.[3] After appointing Thomas James as Librarian, Bodley could have delegated some of the quotidian details of library management, but it seems from their correspondence that Bodley was keen to participate in epistolary discussion of the smallest detail. This may be because for the first few years of the refurbishment, between 1598 and the opening of the library in 1602, he was mostly resident in London attending to his concerns there, arranging the purchase of books through the London booksellers, soliciting donations of books and money to fund these purchases, and setting up the solid finances for the library.[4] As a consequence his letters to James (only one side of the correspondence is extant) are scrupulous and extensive in describing Bodley's particular requirements about the development of theoretical practices to which early modern libraries were now turning their attention.[5]

'Building a Library Without Walls': a Library for Public Service

IN THE HISTORICAL scholarship of the Bodleian as an institution, the meticulous observation to detail and generosity of Bodley has been thoroughly and affectionately covered. Attention has recently focused on the programmatic *method* of Bodley, Thomas James and the

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[2] Bodleian MS Wood F.27, fol. 46r, 'Certaine ^general^ headdes of statutes for the gouverm*ent* of y[e] Librarie.'
[3] Philip, Ian. *The Bodleian Library in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.* The Clarendon Press, 1983, p.34; Wheeler, G. ed. *The Earliest Catalogues of the Bodleian Library* . Oxford University Press, 1928, p.12.
[4] Clennell, W. H. 'Bodley, Sir Thomas (1545–1613).' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.* Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2013 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2759. Accessed 15 Jan 2016]. For Bodley's wealth see Philip, *Bodleian Library* (1983), p.7.
[5] G. Wheeler, ed. *Letters of Sir Thomas Bodley to Thomas James, first Keeper of the Bodleian Library.* Clarendon Press, 1926.

Bodleian's seventeenth-century Librarians, and the institution of systems of acquisition, cataloguing and access to the library.[6] Bodley's own Protestant background is well documented.[7] Thomas James' extreme Protestant views were a key contributing factor in seeking the job of Librarian, where he anticipated unlimited access to books and manuscripts which would assist him in his main objective, to marshal the Library's resources to pursue the theological and ecclesiological justification of English Protestantism.[8] Specifically, James considered the English manuscript tradition as holding the key to getting as close as possible to the purity of church doctrine through English exegesis of the church fathers. As Paul Nelles notes, 'put plainly, because born of a pure church English manuscripts provided a more faithful record of the history of the church than any to be found on the continent'.[9] The early collections of the Bodleian offered the ideal place to undertake this research, yet while Bodley endorsed the energetic harnessing of the Library collections in proving the superiority of the Anglican church tradition, he ensured that in the first few months following his appointment, James' time was heavily occupied with administrative matters.

At source, Bodley's plan for the library was to build a place of knowledge which would benefit public service through the provision of access to material in the areas of Theology, Law, Medicine and Arts. His intention upon retiring from diplomatic service was to:

> set up my Staffe at the Library doore in Oxford; being thoroughly perswaded, that ... I could not busy my selfe to better purpose, then by reducing that place (which then part lay ruined and wast) to the publique use of students.[10]

He implies in this well-rehearsed passage that the library is not only a public institution in the sense that the academic community can access it, but principally that that access facilitates and

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[6] See, for example, Clement, Richard W. 'Librarianship and Polemics: the Career of Thomas James (1572-1629).' *Libraries and Cultures,* vol. 26, no. 2 (1991), pp.269-282. Poole, Will. 'Francis Lodwick, Hans Sloane, and the Bodleian Library.' *The Library,* vol. 7, no. 4 (2006), pp.377-396.
[7] Clennell, 'Bodley', *ODNB.*
[8] For an excellent description and biography of Thomas James, especially his use of the Bodleian for his own scholarly purposes see Nelles, Paul. 'The Uses of Orthodoxy and Jacobean Erudition: Thomas James and the Bodleian Library'. *History of Universities,* vol. 22 (2007), pp.21-70.
[9] Nelles, 'Orthodoxy', p.27.
[10] Clennell, William. *The Autobiography of Sir Thomas Bodley.* Bodleian Library, 2006, p.52.

promulgates public service. Elizabeth Leedham-Green and David McKitterick have posited that his construction was 'de facto the British national library'.[11]

Bodley's noble commitment was offset by the fact that the donations were unpredictable. His call to philanthropic arms resulted in a relative deluge of donations in the first decade, of books, manuscripts, money and miscellaneous items including a stuffed crocodile and an armillary sphere.[12] As an accession plan this was financially resourceful, but fundamentally unreliable. Neither Bodley, James, or Convocation drafted a specific list of books required for and by the readers of the library. In order to create their grand vision Bodley and James used the cash donations from benefactors to populate the shelves with books they knew to be absent from the body of donated books, tasking London booksellers to source books from abroad.[13] This suggests that Bodley and James had a conceptual idea of what the Library should contain. In his correspondence, we find Bodley discussing with James the necessary books to include.[14] The choices are not discussed in relation to the university curriculum but in terms of interest, curiosity and good service, in keeping with Bodley's personal programme to refurbish the Library as a bulwark of the Protestant faith in England.

This shaping of the collection by Bodley and James is visible at book level by scrutinising the acquisitions enumerated in the library catalogue. But one can also sense this active shaping by observing Bodley and James' policy of re-binding of various titles together (these groupings are known as *Sammelbände*), and thus assembling a new reading experience.[15] In a similar way, their method and intention for the Library can be revealed by granular analysis of the gifts of various donors on the pages of the *Benefactors' Register* and in the marks of provenance inscribed by the Librarians directly on the title-pages.

This historic moment of philanthropy, acquisition, organisation and cataloguing – much of it precisely documented in the Bodleian's archives – provides an ideal research topic for the

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[11] Leedham-Green, Elizabeth S. and McKitterick, David. 'Ownership: Private and Public Libraries'. *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, vol. IV 1557 – 1695.* Edited by John Barnard and D.F. McKenzie, with Maureen Bell. Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp.323-338, at p.336.

[12] Armillary sphere donated by Sir Josias Bodley in 1601 (BR, p.35), stuffed crocodile donated by Sir John Desborow in 1658, p.391.

[13] Philip, *Bodleian Library* (1983), p.13.

[14] For example, 'My hope was and is that the greatest part of our Protestant writers will be given', July 22 [1601], Wheeler, *Letters* (1926), Letter 9, p.11.

[15] *Sammelbände* are defined as various works printed separately but bound together in a single volume. The importance of the arrangement to ascertain provenance is discussed in Dane, Joseph A. *Abstractions of Evidence in the Study of Manuscripts and Early Printed Books.* Ashgate, 2009.

staff at the research laboratory of the Centre for Editing Lives and Letters at University College London.[16] The archival residue which comprises the activity of Bodley and his Librarians offers a significant body of data and metadata with which we have begun to piece together the granular changes and shifts in architecture, biblio-geography[17] and bibliographical representation at work in the early years of the seventeenth century. This project matched the key criterion of CELL projects: asking a question of archives, in this case '*what can the early records tell us about the process of assimilating donations into the library?*', and marrying this question to a series of digital techniques for information management and retrieval. In 2012, we began developing a project to explore in minute detail the systems of library administration instigated by the Bodleian's own archives; to examine how Bodley and James processed and allocated the donations in the library in the first twenty years following refurbishment. We wanted to see if we could plot these movements of books around the library in the early years, and – through scrutiny of the archives - to get a sense of the programmatic changes made by Bodley and his librarians in situating the books and formalising the geography of the library. Furthermore, by sampling data from the donations listed in the *Benefactor's Register* and associated early records, and by examining the provenance of these books, it has been possible to determine to some extent the prehistory and afterlife of books given by 'private' benefactors to a 'public' institution.[18]

Combined with previous valuable scholarship on the Bodleian's collections and library administration, our granular analysis of the sample yields information relating to the early systems and processes adopted and developed by Bodley and James and their attitudes to the books. In capturing a range of information extracted from both the archives and sampled books in a relational database, we have been able to assemble a partial view of the library as it appeared between 1605 when the first printed catalogue was published and the printed catalogue of 1620.[19] Data is pulled from the records from the Bodleian's own manuscript archive named 'Library Records'.[20] This includes the name of each donor and any supplied biographical information, the contemporary bibliographical description and the historic shelf mark. Other data is captured

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[16] See www.livesandletters.ac.uk/bodleian/bodleian.html.

[17] We are using this term to describe and capture the mutable spatial positioning of books within a physical location.

[18] We are grateful to Professor Sarah Van der Laan for animated conversations on this topic.

[19] Both catalogues were prepared by Thomas James. We have selected the date range of 1605-1620 as the proto-catalogues prior to this date do not give consistent shelf marks in a way which would enable us to plot the geographical location of the books within the library.

[20] See http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/wmss/online/1500-1900/lib-recs/lib-recs.html#d2e24469

from the book itself, including physical provenance markers such as binding, inscription and annotation and bibliographical metadata such as format, issue, and date of publication.[21] By collating this data it is possible to navigate a section of the Library's collection through several different points of entry. For example, inspection of the shelf marks, in particular where they change after 1605, offers a view of how Bodley or James reclassified books, moving position or even shifting between faculties. Or, by scrutinizing the collection of an individual donor and calling up the individual books, the researcher can attempt to ascertain whether their books were retained, quietly de-accessioned, or bound with others coming into the library from different donors or by purchase.

Prototype Finding Aids: Bodley and James' Catalogues and Lists

KEEPING TRACK OF the considerable numbers of books (by 1605, books in the library numbered 8,700),[22] both to record what was already in the library and what remained to be purchased was a formidable task, and occasioned the development of cataloguing and record-keeping specific to the Bodleian. From his house in London, Bodley frequently sent James his 'catalogue' and 'Alphabet' and requested return of James' own; these were both lists and records of books and those books which had been donated or bought that were duplicate.[23] It would seem that for Bodley at this point, 'catalogue' was a fairly elastic term of what was meant by an enumerative list of books.

It was the resulting system of organisation which would come to define the Bodleian and its early collections and which set a precedent for library practice for both public institutions and private libraries for many years to come.[24] The cataloguing process occupied James for years, as he attempted to assimilate the collections into a coherent system of storage and retrieval. These

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[21] In several places there is an error or inconsistency between the date of publication of books listed in the archival records and that which appears in the Library catalogue.

[22] Marr, Alexander. 'Learned Benefaction: Science, Civility and Donations of Books and Instruments to the Bodleian Library before 1605.' *Documenting the Early Modern Book World: Inventories in Manuscript and Print.* Edited by Malcolm Walsby and Natasha Constantinidou. Brill, 2013, at p.27.

[23] Wheeler, *Letters*, for example p.12-13. Bodley's method of double-checking the contents of the Library was to compare and cross-check his own list with James', and then visually verify the shelves in person when visiting the library, p.13.

[24] Bodley was resident in The Hague for many years following the institution of the University of Leiden library in 1575. The publication of the first printed catalogue (*Nomenclator*) in 1595 means he would have been in very close proximity, if not a witness to this bibliographical activity.

iterations of proto-catalogues survive in the Bodleian's archives,[25] and track James' attempts at standardising not only the method of the layout of the shelves but also the method of citation for both internal purposes[26] and for making public institutional finding aids; a difficult task without recourse to formal models and techniques of bibliographical description.[27] Bodley was insistent that he required precise bibliographical description in order to fulfil the annual programme of book-buying, and expended much of his correspondence in describing to James how the names and titles of books should be listed.[28] The first catalogue was arranged by subject category, with the addition of an author index. Prior to and during the development of the printed catalogue, Library readers had been directed to handwritten 'tables'; sheets pinned up at the end of each press describing the arrangements of books. For a while after publication, these 'tables' comprised reset single-sided surrogates of the relevant printed catalogue page.[29]

Even before it was printed, Bodley considered James' 1605 catalogue to be imperfect.[30] Bodley saw catalogues as synecdoches for the entire edifice and deplored his librarian's many mistakes: '*The very first impression, that men shall have had upon the sight of your Catalogue, will be it that shall give credit or discredit to the Library*'. The arrangement of volumes through classifications or via the creation of catalogues introduced a meaningful order into what began as great piles of books.

James' cataloguing project had spatial and physical ramifications. The inclusion of the smaller formats into the library, and therefore the catalogue, required some imaginative and

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[25] *Benefactor's Register* (1600-1688), MS Bod. Library Records b.903. The associated records are *Nomenclatura*, a list of the books (printed and MSS) in the Bodleian Library, made by James in about 1602-4 (MS Bod. Rawlinson Q.e.31); *Catalogus Omnium Exactissimus Librorum* James' manuscript catalogue of the Bodleian Library, c.1613 (MS Bod. Library Records e.273 (vol.1), e.274 (vol.2)); James, Thomas ed. *Catalogus Universalis Librorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana omnium Librorum, Linguarum, & Scientiarum genere refertissima.* Joseph Barnes, 1620, the Bodleian Library's own annotated and interleaved copy (MS Bod. Library Records d.600); James, Thomas ed. *Catalogus Librorum Bibliothecae Publicae quam vir ornatissimus Thomas Bodleius Eques Auratus in Academia Oxoniensi nuper instituit; continent aurem Libros Alphatice dispositos secundum quatuor Facultates.* Oxford, Joseph Barnes, 1605.
[26] Probably checklists, see MS Bodley 510 for a possible example of this.
[27] James may have used Conrad Gesner's *Bibliotheca Universalis* of 1545 for inspiration. For a concise discussion of Gesner, see Eisenstein, Elizabeth. *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change.* Cambridge University Press, 1979, p.96.
[28] For Bodley and James' attempts to decide on the correct Latin declension for authors, see Philip, *Bodleian Library* (1983), p.12.
[29] Philip, *Bodleian Library* (1983), p.14.
[30] See Brooke Palmieri, 'The 1605 Bodleian Library Catalogue: Great News for History and the Market', *Fine Books Blog*, October 7, 2012. Accessed last 25/04/2016.

thrifty handling by James in distributing the titles in the catalogue.[31] The catalogue is essentially an expanded shelf-list and nominally represents the contents of a single shelf. However, where extraneous blank space occurred in the shelf-list James filled the space with quartos and octavos, for example in addition to the three folio books listed on the shelf-list on the eighth shelf of the 'T' section of Theology there are three octavos and three quartos (signified with an asterisk, *), and three books found elsewhere in the library (signified with a pilcrow, ¶).[32] So on any given page in the catalogue, shelved books were listed with other works stored elsewhere in the library or in cupboards or locked closets, and indeed, cross-referenced with works bound with other books found on different shelves. The geography of the books as represented in the catalogue was not consistent with the reader's experience of the Library shelves.

By tracing individual books through the proto-catalogues and archival documents, one can determine when books were allocated new shelf marks, and one can monitor the journeys made by books around the library shelves over the years. It is also possible to see where books have not moved shelf mark since their original allocation 400 years ago.[33] Books of value or special interest were kept in locked cupboards with lattice-work grilles, with application to the Librarian on duty to gain access. The smaller formats of 4°, 8° and 12° were initially kept in the Librarians' studies, but soon after the opening of the Library further shelves were added in a gallery along the wall at the west end of the library.[34] With more books arriving by donation every year, and especially after the agreement with the Stationer's Company in 1610 to supply the Bodleian with all new printed books, the number (or at least the prospect) of incoming volumes swelling the library collection forced the expansion of the Library and the Arts End was completed in 1614. Despite these shifts in the Library's architecture and furniture many of the books retain the same shelf mark as they did when it opened in 1602. It is testament to Bodley and James' careful planning of the shelving system in these early years that the arrangement is still in use today. The 1605 catalogue, however, became outdated: by 1620, the original collections had more than trebled and James decided for an alphabetical catalogue.

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[31] The shelf mark system works thus: for example, C 6.4 Art. refers to the fourth volume on the sixth shelf of books whose authors begin with the letter C among the Arts folios, *Catalogus Librorum Bibliothecae* (1605). facsimile, The Clarendon Press, 1986, p.ix.

[32] *Catalogus Librorum Bibliothecae* (1605), p.146; xi.

[33] While some books have retained the same shelf mark, they may have moved position in the Library, as the geography of the library shelves has been historically fluid.

[34] Barber, *Arks for Learning*, p.10-11.

The donation of a variety of vernacular and scientific texts from the 1640s onwards transformed the collections.[35] The Bodleian had been originally built as a stockroom for learned volumes defending Protestant knowledge to rival the Vatican collections,[36] an intention which transpired through the very layout of the library which gave spatial prominence to the Th. (Theology) shelfmark. By the end of the seventeenth century a balance between Arts and Theological books was almost struck. Yet, subsequent editions of the Bodleian catalogues maintained in part Bodley's and James' original design for the library. Noticeably, in 1635, John Verneuil included a list of the biblical commentaries kept in the library and in 1642 he translated the catalogue into English, thereby progressively deconstructing the universalist message of Bodley and James' Protestantism and conforming to the narrower definition of a national orthodoxy.

Indeed, even in the curation and organisation of the library through the catalogue, the public use of the library by students was guided and restricted by the Librarians even late into the seventeenth-century. In the catalogue, under the entry 'Quaker', one only finds anti-Quaker tracts, including a collection of pamphlets bound by John Wallis.[37] Quaker authors were present in the collections, but access to their texts was complicated by cataloguing choices and by location in the upper gallery in Arts End that required application to a librarian to fetch the book.

Donations Made to the Library: Two Case Studies

OUR RESEARCH HAS led to distinct findings which tell us stories of particular donations and of peculiar and systemic attitudes to readers and research within the Library precinct. The sample data for our project is based around 19 donors, with information taken from the *Benefactors' Register* used as a starting point. We have selected donors who gave books rather than money, as a principal criterion for study is provenance markers and identifying a critical path of ownership prior to donation. The sample comprises donors who gave modest (10< books), small (50<), medium (100<) and large (c.100>) donations from the beginning of Bodley's philanthropic drive until 1605, a cut-off point which marks the publication of the first printed

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[35] The most important donation of books in the vernacular occurs in 1640 with the delayed accession of Robert Burton's donation which constituted a great panorama of Elizabethan literature.
[36] Nelles, 'Orthodoxy', (2007), p.58.
[37] 4° Th A 83.

catalogue and from whence the shelf marks can be accurately plotted. With donors giving books from their own shelves, and with a core group of donors hailing from similar if not interconnected political, ideological and local networks, it was inevitable that there was some overlap between donations, and in many instances Bodley was presented with duplicate copies of books. Bodley initially required that James ask the donors to submit a list of the books they were intending to gift so that Bodley could graciously reject those already present in the library,

> Suche as purpose to give mony, shall neede no Catalogue of my bookes (for that course would be tedious and endles) but if they minde to giue bookes of their owne stoare, or otherwise, if they shall send to yow, or to me, the names of suche as they could spare, I will choose out those, that I doe want.[38]

The donation profile of Sir Michael Dormer offers an interesting example both of how Bodley and James engaged with the material entering the Library, and the utility of our database as a tool for bibliographical investigation and for exploring patterns of provenance. Michael Dormer donated around 63 books in 1603.[39] He may have known Bodley from the continent.[40] Dormer's donation is a diverse collection of smaller format books, in Italian, Spanish, French and Latin. Among others, the subjects comprise natural philosophy, literature, agricultural, military, historical and political studies. Dormer was a minor member of the gentry who was firmly embedded in local politics and enmeshed in the close-knit networks of Oxfordshire and

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[38] Wheeler, *Letters*, p.3.

[39] A couple of items in Dormer's donation are ambiguously listed: *Certe Comedie dell' Ariosto, & Aretino* (8°, Venice), and *Tragedie &c: di percchij autori* (8°, Venice), *Tragedie & Comedie del Dolce & altri* (12mo, Venice) *Benefactor's Register*, p. 73, 74. It is not clear whether these are instances of groups of slim and small format items bound together in a single volume, or whether they are groups of small format books printed in a single place. MS Bodleian Arch. Selden A75 fol.133r lists Dormer's donation as 'in f°. Lib 5 in 4°. 20 et in 8° 36 eod[em] [i.e. 1603]'. As we shall see from a closer inspection of the list of books given and an analysis of his books currently in the library, the number of books listed in the *Benefactors' Register* as donated by Dormer does not tally between archival documents.

[40] Dec. 12 1586. MS Secretaries of State: State Papers Foreign, Holland, c1560-1780 (up to 1603). SP 84/11 f.66. The National Archives of the UK. *State Papers Online*. Web. 15 Jan. 2016. [http://go.galegroup.com/mss/i.do?&id=GALE%7CMC4313080407&v=2.1&u=ucl_ttda&it=r&p=SPOL&sw=w&viewtype=Calendar]; "Officers and Captains in the Low Countries." [1588]. MS Secretaries of State: State Papers Foreign, Holland, c1560-1780 (up to 1603). SP 84/29 f.163. The National Archives of the UK. *State Papers Online*. Accessed last 18 Jan. 2016. [http://go.galegroup.com.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/mss/i.do?&id=GALE%7CMC4313380698&v=2.1&u=ucl_ttda&it=r&p=SPOL&sw=w&viewtype=Calendar]

Buckinghamshire; he was associated with other donors to the Library, including Owen Oglethorpe, William Gent, John Chamberlain, William Borlase and John Croke.[41]

Out of the c.63 titles he donated, 36 have been inscribed on the title page with his name, 'Michaell Dormer'. It is worth pausing on this inscription for a moment. The orthography of his Christian name, which has a digraph 'll' and a distinctive terminal 'epsilon-e' are important, and provide a visual key to confirm if it was Dormer who inscribed the books he donated or whether his name was written by another agent at the point of entry to the library; either Bodley (whose 'epsilon-e's could be very similar) or Thomas James.[42] **[insert fig. 1]** In the early years of accretion of items to the library, the Bodleian had a policy of assertively signifying the path of donation. Not content merely to populate the library with books and manuscripts, Bodley was determined to visibly assign the source of entry to the library to items bought with money from prominent donors. These books and manuscripts bought with funds given by high-status donors were bound upon their entry to the Library and the donor's escutcheon stamped in gilt on the covers. In 1600 Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, the Chancellor of the University of Oxford, gave £100 which Bodley's agents John Bill and John Norton spent on 177 books on one of their first continental purchasing trips. These books were bound as a set and Buckhurst's arms, girded by the motto of the Order of the Garter, were stamped in gilt. The brass stamp was one of several specifically commissioned by the Bodleian for making public named donations from high-profile donors; others include George Carey, 2nd Baron Hunsdon, Sir Robert Sidney, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland.[43] The act of impressing the Bodleian's stamp upon the book purchased with donated funds disrupts and bifurcates its provenance in an interesting way. These were newly purchased books (although not necessarily 'new' books) accessioned by the institution of the Bodleian yet bearing the (artificial) mark of private donation. Bodley was keen to explicitly mark these donations from powerful political figures as an advertisement to visitors to the Library to encourage further donations, by embedding a visible core of noble philanthropy

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[41] John Chamberlain wrote to Dudley Carleton mentioning Dormer and another donor, William Gent, in 1608, Thomas Birch, ed. *The Court and Times of James the First; illustrated by authentic and confidential letters* (London: H Colburn, 1848), p.83. A cousin of Michael, Sir John Dormer had been a ward of Sir John Croke, who later married the widow of Sir John Croke jr., *History of Parliament Online* [http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/dormer-sir-john-1556-1627. Accessed last 21 April 2016.

[42] We are grateful to Meaghan Brown at the Folger Shakespeare Library for reminding us of this terminology of this 'e' on Twitter, 15.01.2016.

[43] Rogers, David. *The Bodleian Library and its Treasures, 1320-1700.* Aidan Ellis, 1991, p.25, 27, 43.

through the library's collections and proclaiming the Library a public monument of benefaction. It pays, therefore, to be cautious when confronted with an inscription such as Michael Dormer's within a book on the Bodleian shelves, and to verify where possible that the inscription was made by the donor and not an agent of the library.[44]

Bodley's – and by extension James' – promotional activity of distorting the visual provenance of the books coming into the library by retrospectively binding purchased books with the donor's arms is at odds with the narrative embodied in the iconic *Benefactor's Register*. Printed by Robert Barker, the King's Printer, the first volume begins as a high quality printed book, with historiated initials commencing each donation and several of the higher profile donors' coats of arms illuminated and gilded. It continues in print until the year 1604 (the year it was published), at which point it resumes in manuscript.[45] Bodley advertised that each donation would be recorded and displayed in this register, no matter how modest or humble. As a foundation document of the library, it was promoted to visitors as an emblem of munificence.[46] Yet Bodley wrote privately to James declaring that modest donations, i.e. a couple of books, were not to be accorded the same honour as larger gifts:

> It is a very poore gifte, which yow signifie of M[r] Tailour, and likewise that of M[r] Hawthorne, which are well worthie thankes, as any booke of any sort, but unless they be bettered, we may not fille vp the Register with such benefactours.[47]

He repeated in a later letter that donors gifting small quantities, or worse, small quantities of *small* books could not expect their largesse to be writ large.[48] Bodley's solution was to record the donors' names within their donated books.[49] Furthermore, upon closer inspection, the

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[44] Dormer's inscription matches his signature found in TNA SP 12/267 fol.95r, Michael Dormer to Dudley Carleton, June 28 1598, *State Papers Online*, Gale, Cengage Learning, 2016 (http://go.galegroup.com/mss/i.do?id=GALE|MC4304500185&v=2.1&u=ucl_ttda&it=r&p=SPOL&sw=w&viewtype=Calendar. Accessed last 22 April 2016

[45] *Benefactor's Register*, p. 91.

[46] Until the nineteenth-century the *Benefactors' Register* was on display (on a reinforced desk) in Duke Humphrey's Library, Macray, *Annals*, (1868), p. 16. Of course, not all donations were made in the spirit of generosity and self-promotion – in 1600 the Earl of Essex donated the books looted from the palace of the Grand Inquisitor Bishop Mascarenhas of Faro on his return from his expedition to Cadiz in 1596, Philip, *Bodleian Library*, p.10.

[47] Wheeler, *Letters* p.42.

[48] Wheeler, *Letters* p.45.

[49] Wheeler, *Letters to the University of Oxford*, p.17.

Benefactor's Register both conceals and warps the reality of what was going on prior to the opening of the library in 1605. While the *Register* is emphatically not a catalogue, to a certain extent it purports to be an authentic record of donation, deriving from the faithful enumeration of each item. So where we find errors and silences in this official and public record, often where duplicates have been silently de-accessioned, it is possible to capture where the 'official' façade of Library administration is disrupted by interior accession and cataloguing activities.

It is clear that Bodley's system of requesting lists of proposed donations was insufficient in avoiding duplicate accessions, as is evidenced from an example in Michael Dormer's donation. Among his other books, Dormer gave a 1589 Brussels edition of Sancho de Londoño's *El discurso sobre la forma de reducir la disceplina militar*, bound with Francisco de Valdes' *Espejo, y deceplina militar*.[50] As a former commander of a cavalry band in the Low Countries conflict at the end of the sixteenth century, this book was appropriate reading material for Dormer, and he may have consulted it on campaign. But, unlike the majority of the books he gave, this book is no longer in the library. Instead, the Bodleian kept George Carey's copy of the same book, which is bound in tan leather with Carey's gilded armorial stamp encircled by the Order of the Garter. [insert fig. 2] Clearly, the collection of George Carey, with his conspicuous political reputation was a more prestigious donation than that of Michael Dormer. But also, and perhaps crucially for pragmatic Library accession policy, Carey's donation was made before Dormer's. Despite Dormer's efforts to fashion his image as gentleman-soldier, which included the construction of an impressive alabaster tomb in his local church of Great Milton, it was Carey's military tract which earned a place on the Bodleian's shelves.

Dormer's donation is an interesting case study in terms of the visual impact of his inscribed name on a cluster of books. It implies a sense of completeness, of a cohesive unit of personal book-reading (or at least book-owning) history within the Bodleian. Yet this sense of unity can mask as much as it conveys. One of the tasks assigned to our researchers during the preparation of our bibliographical database was to search the University of Oxford Union Catalogue (SOLO), which comprises all of the Oxford college libraries, to ascertain whether the books we sought in the Bodleian were extant elsewhere. Part of the reason for this is to establish whether the Bodleian sold off their duplicate copies of books to the local college libraries to raise

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[50] Both were printed in Brussels in 1589 by Rutgerus Velpius, and were often bound together, which might explain the discrepancy between the archival lists of the number of books donated by Dormer.

revenue for their own acquisitions. While searching for Thucydides' *Gli otto libri delle guerre fatte tra popoli della Morea,* we noted that the copy of Thucydides in the Bodleian is not inscribed by Dormer. The Bodleian's copy does not have any significant provenance marks, and has been at the shelf mark 8° T 1 Art. since 1605. However, a copy inscribed on the title page by Michael Dormer is owned by Christ Church College Library.[51] What does this tell us about Dormer's donation? First, it is an example of the necessity of being cautious and vigilant when studying groups of books. Even when detailed provenance is available, with copious documentation and credentials, the inherent portability and fluctuating value of books plays havoc with seemingly intact routes of admission to library shelves. Second, Bodley's attitude to inscribed books was ahead of his time in that by soliciting used books, he implicitly endorsed an institutional collection of books displaying prior ownership. (There is a curious dichotomy here between Bodley's attitude to making provenance known and encouraging the display of books with a noble heritage, and the Bodleian's strict mandate for preserving the books in their care.)[52] As William H Sherman notes, 'the cult of the clean book is strongly associated with the growth of institutional libraries. The efforts of librarians to keep their books in good shape are understandable, and their desire to preserve our textual heritage for those who come after us is admirable'.[53] We assume that, for now unknown reasons, the Bodleian accessioned their extant 'clean' volume of Thucydides and disposed of Dormer's copy.[54]

The idea of the Bodleian as a 'public library' is contradicted not only by the private networks that contributed to the creation and enlargement of its collections, but also by the restriction of access to the rooms and books themselves. Our focus now shifts to an agent within the Library, Dr John Wallis, to examine the tense dichotomy of moving between the public sphere and the restricted-access space of the library. Here, we observe a space where the acquisition of knowledge was carefully regulated by supervisors and agents whose personal histories and agendas were not as clear-cut as Bodley may once have desired. Remarking upon

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[51] Thucydides, *Gli otto libri delle guerre fatte...* Translated by Francesco Strozzi. Venice, Baldessar de Constantini, 1550. Michael Dormer's copy is in Christ Church College Library, SH 9.9.

[52] For the oath taken by readers upon admittance, see Clennell, 'The Bodleian Declaration: a History.' *Bodleian Library Record,* vol. 20 (2007), pp. 47-60.

[53] Sherman, William H, *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England.* University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007, p.157.

[54] Dormer's copy was later owned by David Gregory, Dean of Christ Church in the eighteenth-century. We are aware of little research which focuses on the economy of duplicates sold off by libraries in this period, presumably because the data is voluminous and the survival rate of books bearing provenance markers patchy.

the crucial lack of what we would now call scientific provision in both reading material and teaching, in 1619 Henry Savile founded two lectureships in Astronomy and Geometry, both of which are still in place today.[55] He also donated a large collection of manuscripts and dedicated a study room and library within the gate tower of the Schools Quadrangle, (part of the precinct of the Bodleian), for the advancement of mathematics in England. The statutes of the lectureships demanded that the professors in the chairs augment through their own donations the collections kept in the study. At the Restoration, the two professors holding the chairs were John Wallis (geometry) and Christopher Wren (astronomy), and they both gifted rare manuscripts to be placed within the Savilian study alongside Savile's books and manuscripts. The ensuing collection of mathematical books was not, however, at the disposition of the students as access to the study in question was granted exclusively to the two Savilian Professors. John Wallis, as Jacqueline Stedall summarised: 'knew the [Bodleian] library thoroughly and his annotations are to be found frequently in the books and the manuscripts'.[56] His scientific and linguistic endeavours were directly inspired from the Savilian and Bodleian collections. Throughout his career, Wallis procured, donated and preserved the collections as the University archive-keeper. His donation to the libraries comprised printed books, pamphlets and manuscript books, which included two sets of his deciphered letters which embody in a powerful way how Wallis interacted with the collections.

One, contained letters intercepted from the French crown during the Williamite sieges in Ireland of 1689-1691 which had been deciphered for the benefit of the Royal troops. In a bid to disseminate his expert knowledge of cryptography, Wallis prepared the manuscript for publication, indicating his desire that the printer use red ink and different type to distinguish between plaintext and ciphered text. Wallis also aptly stated that teaching would be the best means of transmission of his knowledge:

> About the year 1699 or 1700, it was thought apt [...] that I should teach the Art to some Young man, should the skill not dy with me: as being a thing which be of service to the publick when I should be dead. [57]

[55] Marr, 'Learned Benefaction'.
[56] Stedall, Jacqueline. *A discourse concerning Algebra, English algebra to 1685.* OUP, 2002, p. 12.
[57] Bodleian MS Eng Misc C 382, Unpaginated preface, ff.6.

By depositing his manuscript in the Savilian study, Wallis put it out of reach of the very students it was intended to educate. If the manifest goal of the volume was to serve as a primer and book of examples to teach later generations how to decipher or how letters were deciphered in the period, why didn't Wallis place it in the custody of the Bodleian collection? Whether the deciphered letters and the act of deciphering were politically too sensitive for exposure, or whether Wallis indeed hoped for his successor to print the volume based on his directions, the donation to the Savilian collection preserved the manuscript out of public sight. Instead of diffusing his knowledge, Wallis isolated it spatially and intellectually from the general Library collection.

Wallis, the University archive-keeper, also knew how to isolate volumes within the collection itself to 'preserve' them from unwanted readers, as is clear with a second volume of letters also donated by Wallis to the Bodleian Library.[58] The shelf mark 'Musaeo' denotes the fact that the volume was shelved by Bodley's Librarian Thomas Barlow (librarian between 1652-1660) in the cupboard in the Librarian's study. After describing the item as a 'collection of letters written in ciphers' the librarian notes that their decipherer, John Wallis, 'reserved himself the right to further amend and add to it'.[59] A manuscript introduction copied from his father's original notebook by Wallis' son, further reveals that the volume contains letters deciphered for Cromwell during the Commonwealth. It had been hidden away in plain sight: it was not catalogued but 'put in the Archives of the Bodleyan Library' and kept on the shelf of the librarian from where it could only be removed by the author himself. Like its fellow, this sensitive volume which illustrates Wallis' reversal of political allegiance, was preserved in the library but removed from public access. Ultimately, it was not until 1884 that the 1180 volumes from the Savilian study were integrated into the Bodleian collections and not until 1728 that the 'Musaeo' MSS were moved from the librarian's study to the general collections.

In many ways the filter of orthodoxy imposed upon the catalogue and restrictions of access to the collections fulfils Bodley's statutes as translated and upheld by Bodley's Librarian Thomas Hearne:

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[58] Bodleian MS e Musaeo 203.
[59] 'Reservatâ sibi in posteru[m] potestate addendi vel emendandi'.

Foreasmuch as Experience hath made it apparent in the course of Men's action, that no publick Institution nor Foundation whatsoever, wherein a Multitude hath interest, and where continuance is required, can produce those good Effects, for which the same was first intended, except the dissolute Demeanours of ill affected Persons be judiciously restrained, by force of Statues and Provisoes to encounter their Disorders; it is thought in that regard a most necessary Care, to prevent by all good means, what hereafter may befall to the abusing, impairing or perhaps (God Forbid) to the utter Subverting of our Store of Books.[60]

In this chapter we have demonstrated that while the Bodleian opened itself to an increasingly larger public attracted by its unparalleled collections, the Librarians and agents within the Library seem to have maintained mistrust toward the very public it welcomed, and held deep misgivings towards the utility of contemporary publications. Now notorious for rejecting what Bodley considered to be 'riffe-raffe' books, such as almanacs, plays and proclamations, Bodley and James' acquisitions privileged books in Classical languages rather than vernacular English publications.[61] Holding themselves as guardians of the store of knowledge in their collections, the Librarians stood sentinel to the sensitive items within their purview, regulating access to an ever-increasing accumulation of material. From the moment of refoundation, Bodley exercised his control on the minutiae of Library administration, from the precise expression of each item enumerated in the catalogues to the official record of philanthropy.

Responding to the diverse and heterogeneous genesis of their collections generated by publically private generosity, and with a Library erected for the public good of the country, for the public use of students and for educated gentlemen who would proceed to be active public servitors, it is clear that even by the late seventeenth-century the Bodleian still hadn't relieved this tension between its different roles. The unique and rich dataset which underpins the *Building a Library Without Walls* project, comprising data generated by a modest sample of books given at the moment of this re-calibration of the Library at Oxford, has begun to map these tensions

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[60] Hearne, Thomas. *Reliquiæ Bodleianæ: or Some genuine remains of sir Thomas Bodley, containing His LIFE, the first Draught of the Statutes of the Publick Library at Oxford (in English) and a collection of letters to Dr. James, published from the Originals in the said Library,* London, f. John Hartley, next Door to the King's Head Tavern, over against Grays-Inn in Holbourn, 1703.

[61] See Heidi Brayman Hackel, *Reading Materials in Early Modern England: Print, Gender and Literacy* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005, p.84. Bodley described these materials as 'riffe raffe' in Wheeler, ed. *Letters* (1926) pp.219, 221-222.

around the organizing principles and access of books and readers to the Library.[62] From plotting substantial numbers of shelf marks across time and space, to examining the provenance marks and physical condition of hundreds of books, this kind of 'boutique' data analysis is one example of how digital projects can answer questions of intention, authority and material evidence.[63]

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[62] By enlarging the sample, we could assemble a more definitive picture of the Library shelves at a specific time - donor by donor, or shelf by shelf - and get a clearer idea of what books were accepted and which were rejected. Further study could illuminate how the local economy of book-selling benefited from the large numbers of books arriving at Oxford by barge from London only to be rejected by Thomas James at the Library door. Did, for example any of these volumes make it into Oxford college libraries?

[63] We use the term 'boutique' about data and projects where the dataset isn't substantially large (in a 'Big Data' sense), but where the methods would be impracticable without digital processing methods.