

Introduction

The Country House Library as a changing concept between the seventeenth and the twentieth centuries

*'The more significant the books and the more quickly the shelves had been filled by an enthusiastic nineteenth-century collector, the more likely it was that they would eventually be removed and sold.'*¹

Mark Purcell, *The Country House Library*



Fig 1: Isaac Cruikshank's satirical print on the reading habits of the C18th and C19th

Our books, as so much more than physical manifestations of our reading tastes, provide an accurate but sometimes distorted mirror to reflect our lives: they are a projection of both what we are and what we would like- or feel we ought - to be. Although the scale, in every sense, may be different, the same concept applies to the country house library.

From the very beginning of printing in the mid fifteenth century, book production entered a glacially slow but similarly unstoppable decline in terms of material quality to arrive at the modern paperback. This ubiquitous, familiar and in some ways iconic object is the vehicle for modern texts of all genres and intellectual weights, the ultimate end point for the democratisation of access to the written word. Today we see a further erosion of the physical and material text in digital library content: a further leap forward for the democratisation of access to knowledge but a severe blow for tactile culture.

It is easy to link the explosion of printing and accelerated production of reading matter with a corresponding increase in literacy³. This was not across the social board but, before the age of public lending libraries accessible to all, was confined to a fortunate minority well into the C19th. This combination of restricted access, both physically and intellectually, gave books and book ownership a premium status in between the C17th and C19th, with the country house library at its purest and most visible heart.

¹ *The Country House Library*; Purcell, Mark; Yale University Press, New Haven and London; 2017; p10

² Isaac Cruikshank, 1756–1810, British; *The Lending Library*, between 1800 and 1811; watercolour, black ink and brown ink on medium, lightly textured, beige wove paper; B1975.4.867; Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection

³ *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*; Eisenstein, Elizabeth; Cambridge University Press, 2005



Fig 2. Hall's Library Margate, an early lending library

The development of such a visible literary and intellectual foundation to a family in the form of a specifically accommodated domestic library could be seen as a means of power and influence. It was a form of trickle down of intellectual capital, with the C17th and C18th Enlightenment values of reason, the order of nature and individual knowledge - influencing society from the top down. As book production methods cheapened the active collection of books of quality and rarity as a means of showing status found its apotheosis in a late C18th/early C19th movement which was coined bibliomania⁵ in 1809. This desire to collect certain categories of book material sets out a stall for a very outward and profile-driven display of status to peers and wider society alike: not only were the bibliomaniacs able to understand a wide and eclectic range of subject matter, they also had the leisure and the disposable wealth to commit to such collection.

The movement seems to have been very personality based: the collections amassed by notable bibliomaniacs such as John Ker, 3rd Duke of Roxburghe (1740 – 1804), George Spencer, 2nd Earl Spencer (1758 – 1834) and William Cavendish, 6th Duke of Devonshire (1790 – 1858) did not necessarily survive intact once an individual's passion for books and book collecting was spent. In this, the movement was also somewhat cannibalistic. The famous sale of the 3rd Duke of Roxburghe's expansive collection of over 10,000 items by the 4th Duke in 1812 increased the library holdings of Spencer at Althorp and Cavendish at Chatsworth considerably and notably in terms of the individual high profile catalogue items that were carved up between the pair at that time⁶ – as well as increasing the burden of debt on their estates. In keeping with this constant reflection of wider social trends through the mirror of book collecting and library stewardship, the ultimate conclusion of the story of the library at Althorp demonstrates what was happening in the world beyond the doors to the country house library. It is somewhat ironic that a significant proportion of the Althorp library was bought by philanthropist Enriqueta Augustina Rylands (1843 – 1908) in 1892 in memory of her industrialist husband John Rylands, as a foundation collection for the John Rylands Library, University of Manchester. The C19th social and economic control shift from country to town and from land to industry and the bringing of the tools of knowledge and therefore power into the public domain can be seen in this remarkable act of generosity and inclusivity.

⁴ Hall's Library Margate, engraved print/aquatint on paper; The Trustees of the British Library

⁵ Bibliomania: Book Collecting, Cultural Politics, and the Rise of Literary Heritage in Romantic Britain; Connell, Philip; Representations, Summer, 2000, No. 71 pp24-47; University of California Press; <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2902924>

⁶ The Althorp Library of the second Earl Spencer, now in the John Rylands Library of Manchester: its formation and growth; Lister, Antony; Bulletin of the John Rylands Library. 1989;71(2):67-86; John Rylands University Library, Manchester

It is clear, therefore, that on a micro-level, country house libraries and their changing status within a family were an accurate barometer of changing fortunes and priorities: as the quote at the start of the introduction so adroitly points out, they were often one of the first pieces of metaphorical family silver to be disposed of as the economy and society of Britain changed through the relative instability of the early C20th. From the evidence provided by an available inventory of the library collection, St Albans Court, in the small village of Nonington in Kent, contained one such country house library, and its changing physical contents and status provide a sound exemplar of type.

St Alban's Court was the home of the Hammond Family between the early C16th and 1938 when the house and its contents were sold by the last residing Hammond family member⁷. In this time, the house went through at least four physical incarnations, with major improvements in 1556, 1665 and 1790 before a complete rebuild in 1876⁸. Typical of the dearth of direct archive evidence for book ownership⁹, the wills of Hammond family members give tantalising clues and hints at potential evidence for reading and books possibly to have been present from the earliest days of St Alban's Court. This evidence poses a series of intriguing lines of questioning. The 1569 will of the second family incumbent of St Alban's Court, Thomas Hammond, states that his wife, Alice [Alyse], shall have

'during suche tymes as she remayneth [a] Wydow...the lyttle Chamber within the Chamber over the sayd Parler under the Garret there and the Closet.'¹⁰

The concept of a closet has changed over time. Danielle Bobker, in her paper *The Literature and Culture of the Closet in the Eighteenth Century*, sets out the C16th meaning of the closet very well:

'In the houses of people of quality and, increasingly, those of the middling sort, private rooms served as prayer closets, cabinets of curiosity,...libraries, art galleries'¹¹

Susie West¹² goes further and links the concept of the early modern library as being a private, almost hidden room within another private room, often accessible via the owner's bedchamber – the 'lyttle chamber within the chamber' of the will? Could it be that the Hammonds had already started to accumulate some of the most significant aspects of their collection even at such an early date? There are earlier inventories, including a 1612 inventory¹³, but as is common with this type of archival record it does not provide any direct evidence of book ownership. As Susie West states

'Even then, rooms full of books could often be omitted from the main inventory or, where only partial inventories survive, taken for a widow's reserved goods but not for the entire contents.'¹⁴

⁷ The Hammond family will be explored in chapter 1.

⁸ Old St Albans Court, Nonington; Hobbs, Peter; *Archaeologia Cantiana* 125:273-290; 2005 pp. 278 - 9

⁹ An Architectural Typology for the Early Modern Country House Library, 1660–172; West, Susie; *The Library: The Transactions of the Bibliographical Society*, Volume 14, Number 4, December 2013, pp. 441-464

¹⁰ Hobbs, op cit., p.278

¹¹ *The Literature and Culture of the Closet in the Eighteenth Century*; Danielle Bobker; *Digital Defoe: Studies in Defoe & His Contemporaries* 6, no.1; fall2014; University of Illinois; p.70

¹² An Architectural Typology for the Early Modern Country House Library, 1660–172; West, Susie; *The Library: The Transactions of the Bibliographical Society*, Volume 14, Number 4, December 2013

¹³ Handwritten note in 1903 Inventory, p1

¹⁴ Op.cit, West, Susie; 2013

Commented [EA1]: Check with PH: he says 1936, the inventory says the library (and the house?) were sold in 1938. Maybe the house earlier and the library later? If so, where did the books go 1936 – 38?

However, as a family on the fringes of court, they seem to have been keen to display an air of culture from an early time, with a series of portraits commissioned by Cornelius Jansen [Johnson] (1593 – 1661)¹⁵, a painter of choice for the emerging and aspirational English gentry in the C17th¹⁶. For a family who were ambitious and keen to show intellectual and social legitimacy, would a book collection not have been a prerequisite?

In 1716, there is another tantalising clue to the possible use of rooms in St Albans Court as places to house library collections. A lease of that year lists that there was a

'long study and the room going through to it.'¹⁷

The long gallery of so many properties was used – often retrofitted – as a library space: extant examples include the magnificent library at Blickling Hall, Norfolk, the Hurd Library at Hartlebury, Worcestershire and Eastnor Castle, Herefordshire. Could it be that the 'long study' at St Albans Court was such a space? As Susie West neatly points out in her exploration of the changing fortunes of country house libraries between 1660 and 1720

'The result of the last three centuries of the loss and destruction of private library environments means that our sense of the seventeenth-century space for books is lacking in visual evidence.'¹⁸

The rebuilt 1876 house was designed by renowned country house architect George Devey. Ever in touch with the zeitgeist, the significance of this choice by the Hammond family may go beyond Devey's being a leading society architect of his day. Devey was one of the architects commissioned by another, more famous banking family, the de Rothschilds, and he also had a connection with work on the Althorp estate for the 2nd Earl Spencer. It is possible to see this as a sign of the social aspiration of the Hammonds, where connections and physical associations with the trappings of the right society were key to social acceptance and mobility? It may also be an indication of a more direct link to book collecting, both of which were interests of successive de Rothschilds and as has been shown, the 2nd Earl Spencer. It would be interesting to determine if there was a connection through personal interests or whether this was just coincidence.

It is clear from an available floorplan of the 1876 St Albans Court that Devey had been instructed to make the library a focus, being one of only four ground floor public-facing spaces in the house. It occupies one of the most prominent positions in the building, facing south west for good light and looking out over the formal gardens of the Court.

¹⁵ Hobbs, 2005, op.cit.

¹⁶ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornelius_Johnson_\(artist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornelius_Johnson_(artist)); accessed 1 May 2021

¹⁷ Confirm ref with Peter

¹⁸ Op.cit, West, Susie; 2013



Fig.3 Floor plan of the ground floor of St Alban's Court, 1907

The prominence of this space shows the importance placed by the then head of the family, William Oxenden Hammond (1817 – 1903), on the library collection, and by association also shows that, in terms of size, it was sufficiently numerous to in 1876 to require such a spacious room.

Some of the answers to these questions and suppositions lie in the *Inventory of the Articles at St Alban's Court*. This comprehensive assessment and quantification of the library and chattel collections was drawn up on the death of William Oxenden Hammond in 1903 and forms a snapshot in time of all the portable property accumulated by successive members of the family. Neatly scribed and tidily bound, the inventory is divided into plate, jewellery, statues, objects of vertu [sic.], pictures, miniatures, prints and books. It also shows the distribution of the collection across the house, not just confining the book collection to the library but providing additional locations through later pencil annotations, again possibly indicating the importance of books and reading to the daily lives of the family.

The inventory forms the primary source upon which this research project is based, providing an overview on the content of a country house library and a catalogue of at least 200 years of book collecting, prior to dispersal. Like the Spencer and Roxburghe heirs before them, William Oxenden Hammond's successors seem to have viewed the library not purely as a source of recreation and enjoyment but as a liability that they could no longer afford, or at the very least an asset to be liquidised.

It is to the story of the collectors of this intellectual asset that we now turn.

¹⁹ Ground plan of St. Albans Court, Kent; *Architectural Review*, Vol. 21, 1907, p. 298

Chapter 1: People, Place and Time **INCOMPLETE**

'[A] gallery-like space for books, its varied contents of portraits, cabinets and objects of virtue, and the significance of themes of personal memory and English identity. It is an interpretation of the room, as assembled over the owner's lifetime, rather than an investigation of his intellectual range.'

Susie West, *An Architectural Typology for the Early Modern Country House Library, 1660–1720*²⁰

A case of seeing now through a glass, darkly, the inventory partially reflects what we know about the interests and personalities of several members of the Hammond family through the physical record of their library collections. Patterns of book ownership, some more personally meaningful than others, and possible social signifiers emerge from the record and may provide some insights into the people behind titles. The picture that emerges over the C17th and C18th is a family whose focus was on social mobility and expansion: new political directions, new cultural explorations, new domestic settings and new business interests. Through research into the lives of several key family members²¹, intergenerational commonalities become apparent: a predominantly conservative outlook, a keenness for classical knowledge, art and culture, a passion for travel and a sustained and sometimes immersive interest in religion.

To illustrate this, four Hammond generational groups have been selected for further research as possible driving forces behind the development of the library collections, either actually or in terms of their outlook and attitude-legacy. Their interests form a basis for the growth of the family's cultural interests, the most visible sign being their library holdings. These may be linked with the physical place and the development and growth of St Albans Court itself: an embodiment of stability, wealth and home that lends itself to the existence of an extensive personal family library.

From the beginning of the C17th, the Hammond dynasty is rooted in a fertile mixture of culture and religion, with links to the establishment from the first generations of the family. Sir William Hammond (1579 – 1615), knighted by James I in 1608²² was married to Elizabeth Archer, the granddaughter of Edwin Sandys, most notably the Archbishop of York and one of the authors of the translation of the Bible known as the Bishops' Bible, and a strong advocate for education²³. Elizabeth was also a niece of the poet and adventurer George Sandys, the seventh son of Edwin²⁴. This background encapsulates the early generations of the Hammond family perfectly: church, state and culture finely blended. These two generations of Hammonds are of also of particular note in the wider political scene, both with a lasting physical legacy in their cultural record. Two of Sir William's brothers, Francis (b. 1584) and Robert (b.1587), were adventurers and soldiers, excelling in combat and both visible members of a political and social class that can only have helped with the upward mobility and aspirations of the family at St Albans Court. They sailed with Raleigh to south America in search of treasure and fought on the side of crown in the Civil

²⁰ An Architectural Typology for the Early Modern Country House Library, 1660–172; West, Susie; The Library: The Transactions of the Bibliographical Society, Volume 14, Number 4, December 2013, pp. 441-464

²¹ Research from original documents is limited due to lockdown restrictions on travel and opening of the Kent History Centre. The histories of the family have been gained from discussions with Peter Hobbs, Burkes Peerage and Dictionary of National Biography entries. These will be substantiated when access to primary sources can be gained.

²² The Hammonds of St. Alban's Court; *Nonington: a Small Place in History* website; <https://www.nonington.org.uk/eswalt-later-st-albans-court-nonington/the-hammonds-at-st-albans-court/>; accessed 29 April 2021

²³ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edwin_Sandys_\(bishop\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edwin_Sandys_(bishop)); accessed 29 April 2021

²⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Sandys; accessed 29 April 2021

War²⁵. As physical reminders of their significance in perpetuity, it is these two brothers whose portraits were taken by leading society artist Cornelius Johnson²⁶ and that now hang in The Beany in Canterbury²⁷.

Sir William was succeeded by his eldest son Anthony Hammond (1608 – 1661) when Anthony was a minor. What is also interesting is that his brother and Sir William's third son, also William Hammond (b.1614, died c.1665²⁸), was a published poet²⁹, linking this generation with the legacy of his mother's family and indicating that education and learning were as much a feature of the early family as warring and adventuring. He published 55 poems in his lifetime, and his poetic legacy was revived by Sir Samuel Egerton Brydges (1762 – 1837)³⁰, a bibliographer and cousin by marriage of William Hammond (1752 – 1821); the possible significance of this link will be explored in due course. The connection to poetry did not end there: Anthony Hammond's grandson, also Anthony Hammond (1668 – 1738)³¹ and his son, Anthony's great grandson, James Hammond (1710 – 1742), were also poets³². This is clearly a family who not only had the time for such leisured pursuits but also the resources and the education. Looking back through the genealogical records of the family of St Alban's Court, it is clear that the Hammond sons were expected to follow a well worn path to either Oxford or Cambridge Colleges.

The family's spirit of adventure did not die with Sir William's brothers Francis and Robert, something that can also be detected in the library holdings according to the inventory of 1901. As early as 1655, William Hammond (1635 – 1685) had set off on a cultural journey for what can only be described as a Grand Tour through France, Italy and Germany³³. Ostensibly with the purpose of studying European medicine, William relayed his journey to his parents in Kent through a series of 37 letters which seemed to have little reference to academic study and more focus on satisfying his 'gadding humour'³⁴. This (possibly misleading) outward appearance of academic rigour is reflected elsewhere in his life: although it is likely he

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ See introduction

²⁷ <https://canterburymuseums.co.uk/cornelius-johnson-charles-is-forgotten-painter/>; accessed 8 May 2021

²⁸ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Hammond_\(died_1685\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Hammond_(died_1685)); accessed 29 April 2021

²⁹ Dictionary of National Biography online;

<https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-12163?print=pdf>; accessed 8 May 2021

³⁰ <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-12163?print=pdf>;

Brydges may be significant to the story of the library at St Alban's Court as a near neighbour and a founding member of the Roxburgh Club, the seat of bibliomania. Brydges had a connection with the area both as his place of birth and as MP for Maidstone. He is related to the Hammonds by marriage, with his grandfather being William Egerton, Prebendary of Canterbury (1682 – 1757) and whose eldest daughter Charlotte Jemima married William Hammond (1721- 1773). The family links with the Hammonds explain the later naming of the last two family members to possess St Albans Court Egerton.

³¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthony_Hammond , accessed 29 April 2021

³² <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-12158?rskey=wnW7oT&result=1>; accessed 8 May 2021

³³ The Origins of the Grand Tour: The Travels of Robert Montagu, Lord Mandeville (1649-1654), William Hammond (1655-1658), and Banaster Maynard (1660-1663); Brennan, G, ed.; The Hakluyt Society series III vol 14; 2004

³⁴ Stymeist, D. (2006); review of Brennan, Ibid.; Renaissance Quarterly, 59(1), 250-251

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/renaissance-quarterly/article/michael-brennan-ed-the-origins-of-the-grand-tour-the-travels-of-robert-montagu-lord-mandeville-16491654-william-hammond-16551658-banaster-maynard-16601663-the-hakluyt-society-third-series-14-london-the-hakluyt-society-2004-xviii-331-pp-index-illus-bibl-9995-isbn-0904180859/1CCAEO25B250A11E2E4CBDEF142DE5F6> accessed 29 April 2021

was a founding fellow of the Royal Society, established in 1660 to promote excellence in scientific study, Society records from 1661 seem to indicate a level of disconnect, listing him as 'barely active'.³⁵

Working notes/areas still to cover

William Hammond 1721 – 1773, studied classics at Pembroke Cambridge³⁶

William Hammond 1752 – 1821 – cousin of Samuel Egerton Brydges Started the family history record and possibly the Hammond Bank. Extended the manor house in 1790 – did these extensions inc a library???

William Osmund Hammond 1790 – 1863; Poor Law expert; aesthetic/religious

William Oxenden Hammond 1817 – 1903; naturalist, painter; religious tract writer

Religion: various clerics in family throughout

³⁵ The Social Basis and Changing Fortunes of an Early Scientific Institution: An Analysis of the Membership of the Royal Society, 1660-1685; Hunter, Michael; Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London, Jul., 1976, Vol. 31, No. 1 (Jul., 1976), pp. 9-114; Royal Society, London; Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/531552>; accessed 29 April 2021

³⁶ <https://www.ebooksread.com/authors-eng/university-of-cambridge/alumni-cantabrigienses-a-biographical-list-of-all-known-students-graduates-and-ala-899/page-104-alumni-cantabrigienses-a-biographical-list-of-all-known-students-graduates-and-ala-899.shtml>

Chapter 2

The library at St Alban's Court as seen through the Inventory of 1903

'..a greater esteem for Aldus and Elzevier than for Virgil and Horace...'³⁷

The Anatomy of Bibliomania, Holbrook Jackson

1903 can be seen as the beginning of the end of the Hammond family at St Alban's Court and all that this signified in material terms. The most visible sign of the beginning of this period of closure was the quantifying of successive Hammonds' accumulated worldly goods in the form of the *Inventory of the Articles at St Alban's Court*, compiled in order to prove the will of William Oxenden Hammond (1817 – 1903).

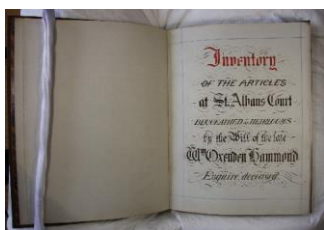


Fig 1: the title page of the 1903 inventory

Inclusion in this document is reserved for those articles in the Hammond family collections that are significant: the title page states that the inventory contains the 'articles....bequeathed as heirlooms', showing their relative value both in monetary and possibly emotional terms specifically to William Oxenden Hammond. By implication, the inventory states there are more articles, but that these are the most prized.

The inventory is also a clear indication of the significance of specifically the library holdings in Oxenden Hammond's material legacy, being the largest section of physical property to be distributed under the terms of his will. The library listing is 77 pages long, each page containing approximately 25 entries, making the overall holdings around 2,000 individual titles, not including the many examples of multiple volumes of the same title. This represents a considerable personal collection for a country library; by comparison, the lots for the famous sale of the bibliomaniacal Duke of Roxburghe's library in 1812 numbered 9353.³⁸

³⁷ *The Anatomy of Bibliomania*; Jackson, Holbrook; University of Illinois Press 2001

³⁸ *A catalogue of the library of the late John Duke of Roxburghe*; Roxburghe, John Ker, Duke of; Nicol, G. (George); Nicol, William; Evans, R. H. (Robert Harding); London : W. Bulmer, 1812

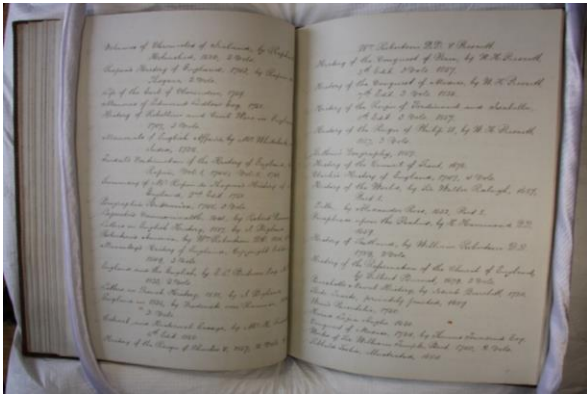


Fig 2a: page 94, a typical page of the inventory

Key	Conservation/condition/construction notes	Illustrate	Materialia check	General of note or to				
Page	Title	Author	number	Date	Edition	Notes in inventory	Notes general	Copy N
1284	94 Volumes of Chronicles of Iceland	Holinshed, Raphael	2 vols	1586				
1285	Rapin's [sic] History of England	Thoyras, Rapin de	2 vols	1743				
1287	Life of the Earl of Clarendon			1759				
1288	Memoirs of Edmund Ludlow Esq			1751				
1289	History of Rebellion and the Civil Wars in England		3 vols	1707				
1290	Memorials of English Affairs	Whitelock, Mr		1732		With index		
1291	Tindal's Continuation of the History of England	Rapin	Vol 1	1744			One entry for both vols	
1292	Tindal's Continuation of the History of England	Rapin	Vol 2	1751				
1293	Summary of Mr Rapin de Thoyras History of England			1751, 2nd edition				
1294	Biographia Britannica		3 vols	1748				
1295	Lycenster's Commonwealth	Parsons, Robert		1641				
1296	Letters on English History	Bigland, J		1817				
1297	Robertson's America	Robertson, Wm DD	4 vols	1824				

Fig 2b: page 94 transcribed

It is written in a professional hand, possibly a fair copy give its neatness and order, and is comprehensive, yet inconsistent, in its recording style. The scribe lists title, usually followed by at least the author and the date of publication; volume number and edition are added frequently but are no means guaranteed. Sometimes considerable detail is included, with a great deal of punctiliousness in the fullness of the record, at other times the scribe records only title and date. The reasons for this can only be supposed as there does not seem to be patterns or any overriding rationale to what is included and what is omitted from the record, or at what stage of the inventory.

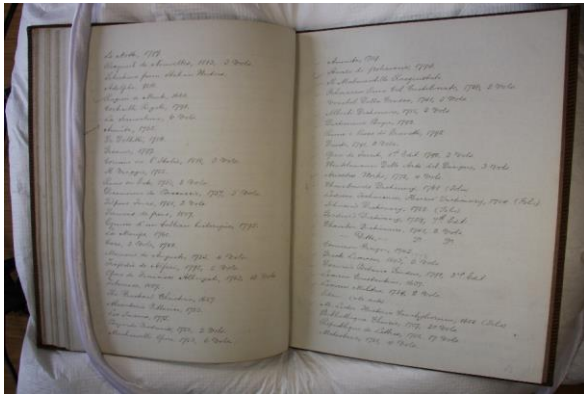


Fig 3a: page 62: title and date, the briefest of entries

Page	Title	Author	Number	Date	Edition	Notes in inventory	Notes general	Copy
488	Theatres de Gries		6 vols	1763				
490	Metastasio		2 vols	1806				
491	Italian Tracts			1752				
492								
493	62 Le Notti			1797				
494	Requiel de Nouvelles		3 vols	1813				
495	Selections from Italian Writers							
496	Adolphe			1816				
497	Taglia e Mento			1860				
498	Coricelli Rigole			1791				
499	La Jerusalem		6 vols					
500	Aminta			1765		Marked as missing in pen		
501	De Delfiti			1786				
502	Gessner			1797				
503	Corinne on l'Italie		3 vols	1818				
504	Il Viaggio			1785				
505	Rain on Este		2 vols	1750				
506	Decamerone de Boccaccio		5 vols	1757				
507	Gilpin's Tours		2 vols	1788				
508	Sermons de pons			1807			Catholic text?	
509	Equise d'un tableau historique			1795				

Fig 3b: page 62 transcription

The spelling throughout the inventory is accurate and informed, but there are some indications in the text that there may have been at least two people involved in its compilation, possibly one writing the record, rough or fair, and the other calling out the information. For example, on page 81, GPR James's *Life of Richard Coeur de Lion* is spelled 'Leon' and, also on the same page, the title *Memoirs of Louis XVI* is written as 'Lewis XVI'— both anomalies in an otherwise accurate recording of information, including complex Latin titles, and seeming to indicate someone writing what they have heard rather than transcribing the information from sight.

Knowledge profit and knowledge loss in an Enlightened House: the library collection of the Hammonds of St Alban's Court, Kent

Page	Title	Author	Vol number	Date	Edition	Notes in Inventory	Notes general	Copy No
966	Memoirs of Lewis 16th	Anthiertrand de Moleville	3 vols	1797			Possibly compiled by one person reading out names, one person writing - the Lewis rather than Louis?	

Fig 4: page 81: possible spelling mistake from listening rather than seeing?

Additionally, the spelling of 'color' on page 77 is curious: why the American spelling, and what could this indicate beyond a simple typographical error? As the book title is rather jumbled and colloquial rather than accurate it is difficult to determine the exact book to which this record refers.

Page	Title	Author	Vol number	Date	Edition	Notes in Inventory	Notes general	Copy No
883	Paintings of Birds (Water Color) and their Surroundings with Descriptive Book	W.O.H					Spelling of the word colour curious	

Fig 5: page 77 transcribed

Format is recorded, but rarely. For example, on page 45 the library's copy of *Gerard's Herbal* is listed as the 'folio edit'. Then, on page 63 and 67, we have a sudden rash of format information, with ten books being listed with their size.

Knowledge profit and knowledge loss in an Enlightened House: the library collection of the Hammonds of St Alban's Court, Kent

Page	Title	Author	Vol number	Date	Edition	Notes in Inventory	Notes general	Copy No
114	The Law of Nature and Nations	Puffendor, Baron		1713 -				
115	The History of Japan	Scheuchzer, JG FRB		1728	3rd edition	(Latin); translated into English by Basil Kennet DD	Author is Baron Samuel von Pufendorf	
116	The Philosophy of Natural History	Smellie, William		1790				
117	The Antiquities of England and Wales	Grofe, Francis FRB		1773 - 1776	4 (annual) volumes:			
118	The History of Dover Castle	Darell, William Rev.		1786				
119	45 Thomaes Dempsteri	Scoto, A Murek	Volume 2	1723				
120	Thomaes Dempsteri de Etnaria Regali, Libri VII		Volume 3	1723				
121	Demariae Herbaria					John edit.		
122	Folio of 30 Pictures of Country Estates							
123	Figures of most beautiful useful uncommon Plants	Miller, Philip FRB	Volume 2	1760				
124	The Chronology and History of the World	Blair, John, Rev LLD	Vols 1 and 2	1790				
125	Plantarum Rariorum Horti Ethamensis	Alter, Thomas						

Fig 6: page 45: format information

Page	Title	Author	Vol number	Date	Edition	Notes in Inventory	Notes general	Copy No
528	Rime e Prose di Granetti			1792				
529	Dante		2 vols	1791				
530	Opera di Tassito		3 vols	1790	1st edition			
531	Winkelmann Delle Arto del Disegno		3 vols					
532	Aloistes Works		4 vols	1772				
533	Chamberlain Dictionary			1783		(Folio)		
534	Lexicon Technicum, Harris' Dictionary			1704		(Folio)		
535	Johnson's Dictionary			1785		(Folio)		
536	Gardner's Dictionary			1759	7th edition			
537	Chamber Dictionaire		2 vols	1741				
538	Ditto			D ⁿ				
539	Common Prayer			1705				
540	Greek Lexicon		2 vols	1803		& 1778 in pencil		
541	Darwin's Botanic Garden			1791	3rd			
542	Lexicon Constantini			1687				
543	Lexicon Miltas		2 vols	1724				
544	Eden					(No date)		
545	M. Linnæi Historia Conchyliorum			1688		(Folio)		
546	Bibliothèque Choise		20 vols	1707				
547	Republique de Lettres		17 vols	1701				
548	Martianasio		4 vols	1781				

Fig 7: page 63: format information

Page	Title	Author	Vol	number	Date	Edition	Notes in Inventory	Notes general	Copy No
630	Le Temple de Guide				1772				
632	87 Histoire de Grand Chemin		2 vols		1736				
633	Maitland's History of London		2 vols		1769	3rd edition (Folio)			
634	Horsley's Britannia Romana				1732				
635	Staley's British Antiquities				1724		(Small folio)		
636	Platts History of Staffordshire				1686				
637	Salmon's History of Hertfordshire				1728				
638	Old Halls of Lancashire	Leffroy of Chambray							
639	Stables's Knowledge Cut				1741	2nd edition	(Small folio)	(Cut and rebound)	
641	Villare Cantuarum	Philpott			1659				
642	Newses Middlesex and Hertfordshire				1723				
643	Topographical Miscellanies				1792				
644	Dugdale's St Paul				1658			Cut	
645	Berlesse History of Cornwall		2 vols		1758				
646	Thornton's Motttinghamshire				1677				
647	Dugdale's Origines Juridiciale				1680	3rd edition			
648	Sloane's Jamaica		2 vols		1707				
649	Hasle's History of Kent		Vol 1, 2 and 3		1778				

Fig 8: page 67 format information

Format is also given loose and arbitrary descriptions, such as the three volumes of *Natural History* on page 69 being described as 'small', as opposed to *Paintings of Birds* on page 77 being designated as a 'big book'. The record for this entry is tantalising: the mind is immediately brought, hopefully, to this being a copy of Audubon's *Birds of America*, one of the largest format natural history books and one of the cornerstones of any book collector's library.

The information on page 67 includes two of only three references to repair activity or interventions relating to condition to allow access to the text in the inventory, with Parkinson's 1629 work, *Paradise in Sole*, being described as 'cut and rebound' and Dugdale's St Paul's marked as simply as 'cut'. The third reference to repair comes on page 87, where a copy of the *Book of Common Prayer* is described as being 'rebound'.

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Page	Title	Author	number	Date	Edition	Notes in Inventory	Notes general	Copy No
639	Paradise in Sole	Parkinson	2	1741	2nd edition	(Cut and rebound)		

Fig 9 page 67 transcription: intervention and repair

In terms of condition, there is frustratingly little evidence in the inventory record. On page 41 the scribe notes that the copy of *Dr Leighton on St Peter* was damaged, its 'back [that is, its spine] off'. On page 38, the first page of the library inventory, Drayton's Polyobliion [Poly-Oblion, published in 1612] is listed simply as 'old'.

Page	Title	Author	number	Date	Edition	Notes in Inventory	Notes general	Copy No
61	Dr Leighton on St Peter	Dr Leighton	1 vol	1623			'back off'	

Fig 10 page 41: damage evidence in the inventory

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Page	Title	Author	Vol number	Date	Edition	Notes in Inventory	Notes general	Copy No
10	Muret's [Greek] Thesaurus	Stewart, Dingald	1 vol	1792				
11	Pictures from Sicily	Bartlett, WH	1 vol	1853		Subtitle: by the author of 40 Days in the Desert		
12	Nolan's History of the Russian War		8 vols					
13	Gill's Pomeliana	Gill, William	2 vols	1837				
14	Norway and Its Glaciers	Forbes, James D	1 vol	1857 -				
15	Florist and Fruitist		5 vols	1881				
16	Forty Days in the Desert	Bartlett, WH	1 vol	1850				
17	Pictorial Greece	Wordsworth, C	1 vol	1844				
18	Geographical System of Hierodotus	Renzell, James	1 vol	1800				
19	38 Pictorial System of Hierodotus	Renzell, James	2 vols	1800			https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poly_Dibon	
20	Gordon's Sallust	Strayton, William	1 vol	1744				
21	Antiquities of Rome	Lummsden, Andrew	1 vol	1797				
22	Museum Pemb.	Pembroke, Thomas and Gomeri, Montis,	2 vols	1746				
23	Staley's Medalic History	Comes	1 vol	1757		Reprinted by the Society of Antiquaries		

Fig 11 page 39: condition evidence in the inventory

On page 60, we have the first of a handful of references to materiality, with eight volumes of a book being listed as bound in 'vellum'.

Page	Title	Author	Vol number	Date	Edition	Notes in Inventory	Notes general	Copy No
433	Keyler's Travels	Keyler, Joseph	Vol 4	1758				
434	Religion of the Fashionable World			1791				
435	Wald's Towns			1798	3rd edition			
436	History and Adventures of Gil Bias			1737	4th edition			
437	Peirage of Great Britain and Ireland			1752				
438	Rembrandt Catalogue							
439	80 Nouvelles de la République des Lettres	Bernard, Jacques	8 volumes	1699		Vellum before date	Marginalia at top of page Library? Check	
441	Code Royal			1775				
442	Almanac del Muses			1775				
443	Histoire Macaronique		Vol 1 (2 vols)	1606				
444	Quinres de Sal Grosner		Vol 1 (3 vols)	1792				
445	Della Casa Ojpep		1 vol	1759			Looks like essnor or etsnor written over Grosner	
446	Menagiana, Les Bon Mots		Vols 1, 2, 3 and 4	1716				
447	Lettres d'une Peruvienne			1751				
448	Le Diable Boiteaux			1729				
449	Phaedrie Fabulaz			1729				
450	Tomassi de Texamir			1670				

Fig 12 page 60: rare material evidence in the inventory

Indications of volumes being bought at different times are also present. On page 81, the inventory lists three volumes of Mrs Douglas's *Life of Pro. Gelert* as 'bound differently'.

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Page	Title	Author	Vol number	Date	Edition	Notes in inventory	Notes general	Copy No
962	Clery's Journal				1798	translated Dallas		
963	81 Life of Dr Robertson				1801			
964	Lady Russell's Letters				1801	6th edition		
965	Matthieson's Letters, translated by M Plumptre				1799			
966	Butler's Remains				1759			
967	Memoirs of Lewis 16th	Arthbertrand de			1797		Possibly compiled by one person reading out names, one person writing - the Lewis rather than Louis?	
968	Life of Phs. Gallert	Douglas, Mrs	3 vols		1805			
969	Thao Ditton					Bound differently		
971	Memoirs of Mirabeau, by himself				1825			
972	Memoirs of Gen. Miller	Miller, John	2 vols		1828			
973	Memoirs of Gen. Rapp, by himself				1823			
974	Life of Dr John Tillotson	Birch, Thomas			1752			
975	Statesmen in the time of George III				1847	3rd edit		
976	Life of Wallenstein	Lord Brough			1837			
977	Soldiers of Victorian Age	Lowe, Rathbone	2 vols		1880			
978	Flory's Letters				1751	2nd edit		
979	Life of Napoleon III	Gerrold, Branehard	4 vols		1874			
980	Life of Richard Cour de Leon	James, GPR	3 vols		1842		Again, sp. evidence of 2 participants, one reading one writing?	

Fig 13 page 81: obscure clue to materiality

There are some indications in the marginalia, likely inserted at a later date, that the library was not the only location for book storage in St Alban's Court. On page 53, volumes one and two of the 1817 edition of *Debrett's Peerage* were listed as being shelved in the 'library in bedroom'. It is unclear if this was a formal arrangement as a library or a bookcase of regularly consulted and favourite titles, suitable for late night reading.

Title	Author	Vol number	Date	Edition	Notes in inventory	Notes general	Copy Notes
279	The Crescent and the Cross	Warburk, Eliot		2nd edition			
280	The Man at Arms	James, GPR		1840			Annotation (at point of sale?) in a different hand/ink missing
281	Journey from London to Genoa	Baretti, Joseph	Vol 1, 2, 3	1770			
282	Manners and Customs in Italy	Baretti, Joseph	Vol 1 and 2	1768			
283	Pauls Letters to his Kinsfolk			1810	2nd edition		
284	Pauls Letters to his Kinsfolk			1810	3rd edition		Title marked as Ditto
285	Debrett's Peerage		Vol 1 and 2	1817		Annotation: 'library in bedroom'	
286	Grammar of Writing	Perry, J		1821	4th edition		
287	Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry, 2nd series		Vol 1, 2, 3 and 4	1834			
288	Improvement of the Mind	Watts, Isaac, DD		1803			
289	Arabian Nights	Galland, M	Vol 5	1745	9th edition		
290	Handbook of Switzerland						
291	The Sorrows of Werter		Vol 1 and 2	1779			
292	Emile on de l'Education	Rousseau, JJ	3rd vol	1773			
293	Dinarbas		Vol 1 and 2	1800	4th edition		
294	Common Life		Vol 1 and 2	1804			
295	The Ideal Father		Vol 1, 2 and	1802			
296	Elegant Extracts in Prose		2 vols	1797			
297	Cabinet Cyclopaedia	Lardner, Rev D		1839			

Fig 14 page 53 transcription

Other notable marginalia on book use may be found on page 96, where the family Bible, a *Wright's Bible* (1790), is listed as containing 'entries of names of children of W O[smund] Hammond 1816 to 1829'. This is one of several direct references to the links the family at St Alban's Court had with book use, book creation and book ownership.

Page	Title	Author	Vol number	Date	Edition	Notes in inventory	Notes general	Copy #
1324	96 Magna Charta	Blackstone, William		1759				
1325	Works of Samuel Clarke DD		4 vols	1738				
1327	Plates of English Coins	Folkes		1763		Published by the Society of Antiquaries		
1328	Novum Testam Graecum			1550				
	Legacy of WO Hammond from Francis Hayles							
1329	Wollaston							
1330	Robertson's History of Scotland		Vol 2	1729		Missing		
1331	Bishop's Bible			1773			Contributor was Edwin Sandys - relative	
1332	Novi Testamenti Libri Historici			1652				
1333	Wright's Bible	Wright DD, Paul				Containing entries of names of children of W O[smund] Hammond 1816 to 1829		
1334	New History of the Holy Bible	Thomas	2 vols	1742	2nd edition			
1335	Annotations upon the Holy Bible	Poel, Matthew	2 vols	1688				
1336	Holy Bible			1566				
1337	Holy Bible and Common Prayer		2 vols	1738				
1338	Sternes Works		8 vols	1795				
1339	History of Tom Jones	Fielding, Henry	4 vols	1782				
1340	Adventures of Joseph Andrews	Fielding, Henry	2 vols					
1341	Adventures of Gil Blas		4 vols	1782	5th edition			

Fig 15 page 96: indications of the use of the books in the library through the Family Bible

The inventory also gives insights into a more active interaction with books and learning through the records of Hammond family members as authors and book creators. The inventory lists many titles written by successive Hammonds, including on page 99 and 102 three volumes of poems, likely written by William Hammond (1614 – c.1665).

Page	Title	Author	Vol number	Date	Edition	Notes in inventory	Notes general	Copy N
1400								
1401	99 Gray's Works				1775 2nd edition			
1402	Specimen's of Ancient Welsh Poetry				1764			
1403	Campbell's Gertrude				1809			
1404	Lucas's Poems				1779			
1405	Four Plays	Earle of Orrery			1677	Missing		
1406	Hayley's Plays				1784			
1407	Occasional Poems	Hammond			1816			
1408	Railway Horace				1862		https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-12163?print=pdf	GC Oxe
1409	Poems	Hammond, W			1655			
1410	Spencer's fairy Queen				1747			
1411	Poems	Sotheby, W			1790			
1412	Merrick's Palms				1745			
1413	Churchill's Poems				1763			
1414	Lay of the Last Minstrel	Scott, W			1805			
1415	Milton's Works		3 vols		1770	33 in pencil in margin		
1416	Plays and Masques of Ben Johnson [sic]				1640			
1417	Pleasure of Hope	Campbell, Thomas			1703 7th edition			
1418	Works of Geoffrey Chaucer				1687			
1419	Works of Geoffrey Chaucer				No date			

Fig 16 page 99: Hammond family members as authors

This is one of the first glimpses of a link between Sir Samuel Egerton Brydges (1762 – 1837) and the library at St Alban's Court³⁹. Brydges, a bibliophile, bibliographer and cousin by marriage of one of the key collectors of the library holdings, William Hammond (1752 – 1821), was responsible for reviving the poetry of his distant C17th relative by reissuing his work to what can only be supposed a fairly lukewarm audience⁴⁰. More excitingly, the inventory lists on page 82 that one of the books was printed by the Lee Priory Press, Brydges's short excursion into private press printing⁴¹.

³⁹ <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-12163?print=pdf>; Brydges may be significant to the story of the library at St Alban's Court as a near neighbour and a founding member of the Roxburge Club, the seat of bibliomania. Brydges had a connection with the area both as his place of birth and as MP for Maidstone. He is related to the Hammonds by marriage, with his grandfather being William Egerton, Prebendary of Canterbury (1682 – 1757) and whose eldest daughter Charlotte Jemima married William Hammond (1721- 1773). The family links with the Hammonds explain the later naming of the last two family members to possess St Alban's Court Egerton.

⁴⁰ <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-12163>

⁴¹ <https://www.presscom.co.uk/leepriory1.html>; accessed 17 May 2021

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Page	Title	Author	number	Date	Edition	Notes in inventory	Notes general	Copy N
980	Life of Richard Cour de Leon	James, GPR	3 vols	1842			Again, sp. evidence of 2 participants, one reading one writing?	
981	Johnson's Correspondence	Lynch, Wester	2 vols	1788				
982	Autobiography of Earl Bridges		2 vols	1834				
983	Irish Protestants under James II					published by Robert Clavell		
984	Letters of Col. Robert Hammond, re. Charles I			1764				
985	Henry Lockinge's History of Naseby			1830				
986	Letters MJJ?	BR	1 vol			1 vol of ABP Wake & B; on p 82 1 vol	Miscellanea	
987								
988	82. The Sylvan Wanderer	Bridges, Egerton				printed at Lee Priory, Lord Brooks		
989	Life of Selwyn		2 vols	1816		printed at Lee Priory, Lord Brooks	Link with SEB: he had a printing press at Lee Priory. CONNECTION!	
990	Hart's Life of Gustavus Adolphus		2 vols	1759				
991	Lorenzo de Medici	Roscoe, William	2 vols	1796	2nd edit			
992	Life of Philip of Macedon	Liland, Thomas	2 vols	1758				
993	Fenn's Original Letters		2 vols	1786				
994	Moore's Life of Lord Byron		2 vols	1830				
995	Granger's Biographical History		4 vols	1769				
996	Boswell's Life of James Johnson		2 vols	1791				
997	Life of Cardinal Pole	Phillips, Thomas		1764				
998	Memoirs of Lord Bolingbroke			1752		Printed by Baldwin? Unclear, in margin		
999	Lady Russell's Letters			1808	7th edit			

Fig 17 page 82: a direct link with bibliophile Samuel Egerton Brydges

Other insights into the Hammonds and their extended family as book creators as well as collectors across four centuries include the *Paraphrase upon the Psalms* by H Hammond DD in 1659, a published book of letters by Col. Robert Hammond to Charles I in 1764, an 1833 pamphlet by W O Hammond – likely William Osmund Hammond – and GC Oxenden’s *A Railway Horace* of 1862.

The groupings of books in the inventory are also clues to the possible order of the library, presuming that those compiling the inventory went along the shelves in linear or vertical order. There is clearly some effort to shelve similar books together, possibly for convenience of retrieval, but little sign of direct categorisation or librarianship. The various genre types are mixed across the inventory, and can be presumed to be mixed across the library also.

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Page	Title	Author	number	Date	Edition	Notes in inventory	Notes general	Copy N
1400								
1401	99 Gray's Works				1775 2nd edition			
1402	Specimen's of Ancient Welsh Poetry				1764			
1403	Campbell's Gertrude				1809			
1404	Lucas's Poems				1779			
1405	Four Plays	Earle of Orrery			1677	Missing		
1406	Hayley's Plays				1784			
1407	Occasional Poems	Hammond			1816			
1408	Railway Horace				1862			
1409	Poems	Hammond, W			1655			
1410	Specimen's fairy Queen				1747			
1411	Poems	Sotheby, W			1790			
1412	Merrick's Psalms				1745			
1413	Churchill's Poems				1763			
1414	Lay of the Last Minstrel				1805			
1415	Milton's Works	Scott, W	3 vols		1770	33 in pencil in margin		
1416	Plays and Masques of Ben Johnson [sic]				1640			
1417	Pleasure of Hope	Campbell, Thomas			1703 7th edition			
1418	Works of Geoffrey Chaucer				1687			
1419	Works of Geoffrey Chaucer					No date		

Fig 18 page 99: a group of poetry books shelved together as recorded in the inventory

Page	Title	Author	number	Date	Edition	Notes in inventory	Notes general	Copy N
1328	Novum Testam Graecam				1550			
1329	Legacy of WD Hammond from Francis Hayles							
1330	Wollaston							
1330	Robertson's History of Scotland		Vol 2		1729	Missing		
1331	Bishop's Bible				1773		Contributor was Edwin Sandys - relative	
1332	Novi Testamenti Libri Historici				1652			
1333	Wright's Bible	Wright DID, Paul					Containing entries of names of children of W D[amund] Hammond 1816 to 1829	
1334	New History of the Holy Bible	Thomas	2 vols		1742 2nd edition			
1335	Annotations upon the Holy Bible	Pool, Matthew	2 vols		1688			
1336	Holy Bible				1566			
1337	Holy Bible and Common Prayer		2 vols		1738			
1338	Sternes Works		8 vols		1795			
1339	History of Tom Jones	Fielding, Henry	4 vols		1782			
1340	Adventures of Joseph Andrews	Fielding, Henry	2 vols		1742			
1341	Adventures of Gil Blas		4 vols		1782 5th edition			
1342	Emmeline Orphan of the Castle		4 vols		1789 3rd edition			
1343	Evelina		3 vols		1781 New edition			
1344	Ethelinde	Smith, Charlotte	5 vols		1790 2nd edition			
1345	Cecilia		5 vols		1790			

Fig 19 page 96: a much more eclectic mix of titles: religion, fiction, history and family interest

One group of books of particular note is the large number of Aldine Press books in the inventory. These are predominantly grouped together on pages 75 – 77, and form a substantial representative body of the Press's output.

The significance of this is heightened when we look at the library at St Alban's Court in the context of family relations. It will be interesting to explore the influence of known bibliophile Samuel Egerton Brydges on his cousin, William Hammond (1752 – 1821), and see from archival sources whether links can be formed in the collection of such bibliomaniacal cornerstones.



⁴⁹ The Aldine Press mark, a dolphin and anchor