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Mr GRAY, President, in the Chair.

ON THE WORK DONE TO THE LIBRARY OF EXETER
CATHEDRAL IN 1412 AND 1413.

BY J. W. CLARK, M.A.

Items of work done by masons and carpenters in medieval libraries are by no means rare in fabric-rolls and account-books generally; and the officer who records them occasionally sets down also repairs done to the manuscripts under his care. But it is rare to find a separate account devoted to the fitting up of a library in its widest sense—I mean one which starts with the work of carpenters and ends with that of binders. I think therefore that the document preserved among the muniments of Exeter Cathedral, which I have been allowed to copy, will be found interesting. It does not, I admit, give us much information that is absolutely new, but it is so complete in itself, and supplies such a vivid picture of the way in which an important medieval library was dealt with, when it was moved into new quarters, and the books were thoroughly repaired, that I have thought it worth while not merely to print the original document, but to translate it for the benefit of those readers who are not familiar with medieval Latin.

Before I proceed further let me thank the Dean and Chapter of Exeter Cathedral for their kindness in allowing me free access to their muniments, and for giving me leave not only to copy, but to print, this particular document. I am also much beholden to the Rev. W. J. Edmonds, canon of the Cathedral, and Chancellor, for valuable assistance most generously given.

I have shewn in *The Care of Books* that the establishment of a library near the room or building in which Christian communities held their services, may be traced back to very early times¹; and I have suggested that such collections of books were the parents of the extensive libraries which, in subsequent ages, were connected with monasteries and cathedrals. The decree of Charlemagne, issued in 781, for the establishment of schools under the supervision of capitular and monastic bodies²,

¹ *The Care of Books*, ed. 2, pp. 51—54.

² Labbe, *Concilia*, xviii. 81.

may have given an impulse to the acquisition of certain works; but, so far as England is concerned, imperial intervention need not be invoked. Her cathedrals, as well as her monasteries, were rich in libraries of native growth, the beginnings of which date from a remote antiquity¹.

The library of Exeter Cathedral was begun by Leofric, first bishop, who died 10 February 1072. He gave to his cathedral nearly sixty volumes, twenty-eight of which were in English. This remarkable collection, a list of which has been preserved², though I am not aware that it has been examined and edited as it deserves to be, was no doubt a centre of attraction, for when we reach our next landmark, in 1327, we find a large and well-selected library. In that year a catalogue was drawn up by Richard of Brailey, sub-dean³, which contains about 230 titles, without taking account of service-books; and as several of the works were in two, or even three, volumes, the number of books was of course greatly in excess of the number of titles. In this catalogue the books are at first sorted under the names of their authors: viz. Augustine (22); Gregory (10); Jerome (10); Ambrose (9); Bede (6); Isidore (9); Fathers (6); Anselm (3); then under subjects, as Histories (11); Civil and Canon Law (20); The Bible (9); and, lastly, under the names of donors, as Books given by Bishop William (11); Gifts of various donors (104).

We do not know where these books were housed, nor to what number they had increased by 1412. Probably, as in other places, they had by that time become so numerous that it was necessary to provide a special room to contain them.

I will next print the account for completing this, and for repairing the books to be placed in it, with my translation; and I will then make a few observations on it. These will be extremely brief, as the account virtually explains itself. In order to save space, and avoid needless repetition, I have summarized the account for wages after the first two weeks. The account for them is printed *in extenso* as a specimen.

¹ *The Care of Books*, ut supra, pp. 110—124.

² *Mon. Angl.* ii. 527, 528.

³ Printed in *Lives of the Bishops of Exeter and a History of the Cathedral*: by Rev. Geo. Oliver, D.D. 8vo. Exeter, 1861, p. 301.

THE LIBRARY ACCOUNT.

Compotus Ricardi Skyunner clerici operis ecclesie Exonie de omnibus receiptis et expensis circa librariam eiusdem ecclesie factis anno domini millesimo quadringentesimo duodecimo; et anno Regni Regis Ricardi [Henrici] quarti terciodecimo.

Memorandum. Idem recepit de xvij. li. vj. s. vij. d. ob. receiptis de residencia magistri Johannis Lydeford Archidiaconi Totton et Canonici Exonie post mortem eius de terra de Loueneterra¹. Et de xvj. li. xvij. s. ix. d. receiptis de senescallo scaccarii per Indenturam.

Summa totalis receipt' xxxv. li. iiiij. s. iiiij. d. ob.

Inde computat de grosso meremio et paruo empto xxxix. s. iiiij. d. Item in alio meremio vocato Rosterys² vij. s. vj. d. Item in lj tabulis de Regel³ emptis precio tabule .xiiiij. d. lix. s. vj. d. Item in xiiij tabulis de Regel precio tabule .xij. d. xiiij. s. Item in iiiij^{or} tabulis de Regel et in tabulis de Wanscote emptis de Waltero Hows de Crediton cum cariagio versus Exoniam vj. s. viij. d. Item iiiij^{or} tabulis de Regel emptis precio tabule xiiij. d. iiiij. s. viij. d.

Summa vj. li. xj. s. viij. d.

Item in .xlix. tabulis quercinis pro plonchyn⁴ emptis precio tabule iiij. d. ob. xiiij. s. iiij. d. ob. Item in v. tabulis quercinis pro formulis⁵ .v. s. Item in ij. libris de glew .xij. d. Item in iiij. c. et di de Bordnayl emptis vij. d. ij. s. ob.

Summa xxiij. s. iiiij. d.

Item in potu dato Carpentariis ex precepto senescallorum viij. d.

Summa viij. d.

Summa expensarum vij. li. xiiij. s. viij. d.

¹ I have not been able to identify this place.

² I suggest that this word means "roof-timbers." See Skeat s.v. *roost*, where he compares the Norwegian *rost*, "roofing", with the Scotch *roost*, the inner roof of a cottage.

³ This word is usually spelt *Rigal*, and occurs in lists of building-materials as *Rigalbord*. It denotes the timber largely imported from Riga in Russia. See *The Builder*, iv. 365, on "Riga and Dutch Wainscot for Building Purposes."

⁴ *Plancher* denotes a floor: i.e. the whole structure of joists and boards which separates one storey of a house from another; and I need hardly say that *planche* is the same as the English "plank." Boards for *plonchyng* or planking are those to be used for the floor.

⁵ The word *forma*, and its diminutive *formula*, are shewn by Ducange, s.v., to mean the whole of a church stall, including the seat and desk; but occasionally the same word is used for a part only; e.g. *prosternere &c. super formas* (the desks); and, *complicantur formæ* (the part of the stall commonly called a *misericorde*).

THE LIBRARY ACCOUNT.

The account of Richard Skinner, clerk of the works in the church at Exeter, of all his receipts and expenses regarding the library of the said church, drawn up in the year of our Lord one thousand four hundred and twelve, and in the year of the reign of King Richard [Henry] the Fourth the thirteenth. [30 Sept. 1411—29 Sept. 1412.]

[Receipts]

He acknowledges to have received £18. 6s. 7½*d.* out of the residence-money of Mr John Lydeford Archdeacon of Totness and Canon of Exeter after his death from the land at Loveneter; and £16. 17s. 9*d.* from the steward of the chancery by indenture

	£	s.	d.
Total receipts	35	4	4½

[Expenses]

In the next place he brings to account the following sums:

Large and small timber bought	...	...	...	1	19	4
Other timber called Rosterys	...	...	...	7	6	6
51 Regel boards at 14 ^d a board	...	...	...	2	19	6
14 Regel boards at 12 ^d	...	...	...	14	0	0
4 Regel boards and wainscot do. bought of Walter Hows of						
Crediton with carriage to Exeter	...	...	...	6	8	8
4 Regel boards at 14 ^d a board	...	...	...	4	8	8
Total				6	11	8
49 oak-boards bought for flooring, at 3½ ^d a board	...	...	...	14	3½	14
5 oak-boards for desks and seats	...	...	...	5	0	0
2 lb. of glue	...	...	...	1	0	0
350 board nails at 7 ^d a hundred	...	...	...	2	0½	2
				1	2	4
In drink given to the carpenters by the stewards order	...				8	8
Total expenses: [as above	...	...	...	6	11	8
"	...	...	...	1	2	4
"	...	...	...	8]		
				7	14	8

[This is succeeded by the account for wages]

in crastino	Hamundo Jakyl Carpentario operanti ibidem circa	
trinitatis	lectrinum in claustro per .v. dies capienti ...	ij. ^s vi. ^d
Ebdomada	Henrico Attewat' [Attewater] Carpentario operanti	
prima	ibidem per idem tempus capienti	ij. ^s j. ^d

Summa iiij.^s vij.^d

Ebdomada	Hamundo Jakel (<i>sic</i>) carpentario operanti ibidem	
secunda	per .v. dies capienti	ij. ^s vj. ^d
	Henrico Attewater carpentario operanti ibidem	
	per idem tempus capientibus	ij. ^s j. ^d
	Noyl Luddere et Dauid Alyn sarratariis operantibus	
	ibidem per idem tempus capientibus	iiiij. ^s ij. ^d

Summa viij.^s ix.^d

				£	s.	d.
			1 st week	4	7	
			2 ^d "	8	9	
Third week.	Jakyl 3/0, Attewater 2/6			5	6	
Fourth	do			5	6	
Fifth	do			5	6	
Sixth	do			5	6	
Seventh	do			5	6	
Eighth	[2/6 each]			5	0	
Ninth	do + 2 sawyers for 2½ days			6	10	
Tenth	[Jakyl 4 days, Attewater 5 days]			4	6	
Eleventh	[as in week I]			4	7	
Twelfth	[Jakyl 5 days, Attewater 5½ days]			4	9½	
Thirteenth	[each 2 days only]			1	10	
Fourteenth	[as in week III]			5	6	
Fifteenth	[each 3 days only]			2	9	

Hic accidebat festum omnium sanctorum

Sixteenth week.	Jakyl 2/6, Attewater 2/1	4	7
Seventeenth	do do	4	7
Eighteenth	do do [1 sawyer for 6 days added]	6	0½
Nineteenth	do [5 days each]	3	9
Twentieth	do [6 days each]	4	7
Twenty-first	Jakyl 2/6, Attewater 2/1	4	7
Twenty-second	do do	4	7
Twenty-third	do [one day each]		9
Twenty-fourth	Jakyl, 5 days at /6d.; Attewater 4 days at /5d.	4	2

Weeks	[Account for wages.]		
I.	To Hamund Jakyl, carpenter, working there at the reading-room in the cloister for five days ...	2	6
[30 May] <i>The morrow of Trinity Sunday.</i>	To Henry Atwater, carpenter, at the same work for the same time ...	2	1
	Total		4 7
II.	Jakyl and Atwater, as before ...	4	7
	To Noyl Ludder and David Allen, sawyers, at the same work for the same time	4	2
	Total		8 9
III.	Jakyl, six days ...	3	0
	Atwater ,, ...	2	6
			5 6
IV—VII.	4 weeks at 5/6 ...	...	1 2 0
VIII.	Jakyl and Atwater each 2/6 ...	...	5 0
IX.	Jakyl and Atwater ...	5	6
	2 sawyers for 2½ days ...	1	4
			6 10
X.	Jakyl 4 days ...	2	0
	Atwater 5 days ...	2	6
			4 6
XI.	Jakyl 5 days ...	2	6
	Atwater ,, ...	2	1
			4 7
XII.	Jakyl 5 days ...	2	6
	Atwater 5½ days ...	2	3½
			4 9½
XIII.	each 2 days ...	...	1 10
XIV.	[as in week III] ...	...	5 6
XV.	each 3 days ...	...	2 9
<i>Here fell All Saints' Day.</i>			
XVI, XVII.	Jakyl and Atwater, 2 weeks at 4/7 ...	...	9 2
XVIII.	The same, with a sawyer for 6 days ...	...	6 0½
XIX.	Jakyl 5 days ...	2	6
	Atwater do. at 3 ^d a day ...	1	3
			3 9
XX—XXII.	Jakyl and Atwater, 3 weeks at 4/7 ...	...	13 9
XXIII.	Jakyl 6 ^d , Atwater 3 ^d ...	...	9
XXIV.	Jakyl 6 days ...	2	6
	Atwater 4 ,, ...	1	8
			4 2

Twenty-fifth		[as in week I]	...	...	...	4	7
Twenty-sixth	do		...	...	...	4	7
Twenty-seventh	do		...	...	...	4	7
Twenty-eighth	do		...	...	...	4	7
Twenty-ninth		[Jakyl 6 days = 3/0, Attewater 5d. = 2/1]	...			5	1
• Hic accidebat festum Purificationis beate Marie die dominica							
Thirtieth		[as in week III]	...	...	...	5	6
Thirty-first	do		...	...	...	5	6
Thirty-second	do		...	...	...	5	6
Thirty-third	do	[Attewater only for 3 days]...				1	3
Thirty-fourth		[Jakyl 5 days, Attewater 6 days]...				5	0
Thirty-fifth		[as in week III]	...	...	...	5	6
Thirty-sixth	do	do	...	...	...	5	6
Thirty-seventh		[as in week I]	...	...	...	4	7
Thirty-eighth		[Jakyl only for 6 days]	...			3	0
Thirty-ninth		[do for 3 days]	...	...	...	1	6
Fortieth	do	[do for 6 days]	...	...	...	3	0
						£9	3 6

Summa omnium septimanarum ix. li. iij. s. vj. d.

In expensis factis in ligacione librorum et in aliis vt patet sequenter.

^{xx}	In iij xj coreis vitulinis emptis precio pellis iij. ^d	...	...	xxx. ^s iij. ^d
^{xx}	In iij ij pellibus ouium emptis precio pellis iij. ^d	...	...	xx. ^s vj. ^d
	In xij pellibus rubeis emptis precio pellis vj. ^d	...	...	vj. ^s
	In vj duodenis de velym emptis pro custod' librorum precio duodene ij. ^s x. ^d	...	...	xvij. ^s ij. ^d
	In ix pellibus pygameni (<i>sic</i>) emptis ad idem	...	...	xij. ^d ob.
	In duabus duodenis de velym emptis ad idem precio duodene ij. ^s x. ^d	...	...	v. ^s viij. ^d
	In tribus zonis rubiis (<i>sic</i>) de coreo emptis pro claspys ij. ^s iij. ^d			} x. ^s xj. ^d
	In glew empto ij. ^s vj. ^d In filis rubiis blodius et diuersorum colorum xiiij. ^d In latyn et wyr empt' pro claspys v. ^s	...	...
	In coreo equino empto iij. ^d ob. In acubus emptis pro libris suendis ij. ^d In cordulis emptis iij. ^d In farena emptia pro past vj. ^d In encausto empto ij. ^d In j. olla et ij patellis eremptis factis de terra iij. ^d In sirpis pro domo sua emptis ij. ^d In sarcina focalium emptia ij. ^d ob. In stramine empto pro lecto suo iijij. ^d	...	...
	In lxvij libris suendis precio operis libri jd. ob. plus in toto xij. ^d	...	...	ix. ^s v. ^d ob

	£	s.	d.
XXV—XXVIII. 4 weeks at 4/7	18	4	
XXIX. Jakyl 6 days	3	0	
Atwater 5 days	2	1	
			5 1

Here fell the festival of the Purification of Blessed Mary on Sunday.

XXX—XXXII. 3 weeks at 5/6	16	6	
XXXIII. Atwater only for 3 days	1	3	
XXXIV. Jakyl and Atwater	5	0	
XXXV—XXXVI. 2 weeks at 5/6	11	0	
XXXVII. Jakyl and Atwater	4	7	
XXXVIII. Jakyl only for 6 days	3	0	
XXXIX. " " 3 "	1	6	
XL. " " 6 "	3	0	

Total

9 3 6

Of expenses incurred in binding books and in other matters, as is set forth below.

91 calfskins at 4 ^d a skin	1	10	4
82 sheepskins at 3 ^d a skin	1	0	6
12 red skins at 6 ^d a skin	6	0	
6 dozen velym for book-guards at 2 ^s 10 ^d a dozen	17	2	
9 skins of parchment for the same purpose	1	1 ³	
2 dozen velym for the same at 2 ^s 10 ^d a dozen	5	8	
3 red straps of leather for clasps	2	3	
Glue	2	6	
Red and blue string, and string of various colours	1	2	
Latyn and wire bought for clasps	5	0	
			10 11
Horse-skin	3 ¹		
Needles to stitch books	2		
Short cords	3		
Flour to make paste	6		
Ink	2		
One pot and two saucers of earthenware	3		
Rushes for his own house	2		
A bundle of firewood	2 ¹		
Straw for his own bed	4		
			2 4
Stitching 67 books at 1 ¹ / ₂ ^d a book, with 13 ^d in addition	9	5 ¹	

In expensis factis apud Aysberton super libros vt patet per vnam cedulam.	
In auricalco empto iiij. ^d In .j. zona empta' ij. ^d In vj pellibus pargameni emptis xvj. ^d In velym empto ij. ^s In iij pellibus ouium emptis v. ^d In vj pellibus vitulinis emptis precio pellis iiij. ^d ij. ^s In filo colorato empto j. ^d In ij tabulis de Wenscote emptis x. ^d In cooperturis lij librorum suendis pro quolibet j. d. iiij. ^s iiij. ^d ...	xj. ^s vj. ^d
In x pellibus vitulinis emptis precio pellis iiij. ^d ob. iiij. ^s ix. ^d In xij pellibus ouium emptis precio pellis ij. ^d ij. ^s In xiiij. libris suendis pro quolibet libro j. ^d xiiij. ^d In filo empto j. ^d	vij. ^s
In ij tabulis de novo emptis ij. ^s iiij. ^d In ij tabulis de antiquo emptis xvj. ^d	iiij. ^s viij. ^d
Item domino Willelmo Hayforde pro suo labore et pro re-wardo operantis circa predictos libros	vj li.
Item Ricardo famulo suo operanti cum illo circa predictos libros	xxxvj. ^s viij. ^d
^{xx} In iiij catenis emptis pro libris pendendis in libraria ...	liij. ^s iiij. ^d
In xl catenis emptis pro libris pendendis in libraria precio cathene viij. ^d	xxvj. ^s viij. ^d
Item in ix boltys ferreis factis ponderantibus cv. libras precio libre j. ^d ob	xiiij. ^s j.d ob.

Summa xvij.li. xv.s. v.d. ob.

Summa expensarum in tabulis meremiis et aliis, vt patet in paruo computo vij li. xiiij.^s viij.^d
 Summa septimanarum in carpentariis ix li. iiij.^s vj.^d
 Summa omnium expensarum xxxv. li. xiiij.^s vij.^d ob.; et sic excedit in in ix.^s iiij.^d quos recepit xj die Aprilis anno regni regis H. quinti et æq.

Expenses incurred at Ashburton about books, as appears by a schedule.

Gold	4	
A strap	2	
6 skins of parchment	1 4	
Velym	2 0	
3 sheepskins	5	
6 calfskins at 4 ^d a skin	2 0	
Coloured thread	1	
2 wainscot boards	10	
For stitching the covers of 52 books at 1 ^d piece	4 4	
	—	11 6
10 calfskins at 4½ ^d	3 9	
12 sheepskins at 2 ^d	2 0	
For stitching 14 books at 1 ^d a piece	1 2	
String	1	
	—	7 0
2 boards recently bought	2 4	
2 boards bought some time since	1 4	
	—	3 8
To Mr William Hayford for his pains, and in consideration of the work he did to the aforesaid books	6 0 0	
To Richard his servant when he worked with him as aforesaid	1 16 8	
80 chains for hanging books in the library	2 13 4	
40 do. at 8 ^d a chain	1 6 8	
For making 9 iron bars weighing 105 lb. at 1½ ^d a pound	13 1½	
Total		18 15 5½
Spent on boards, timber, and other things, as set forth in the small account		
		7 14 8
Wages of carpenters		
		9 3 6
Total of the whole expenses	£35 13 7½	
Total receipts, as above	35 4 4½	
Excess of expenses over receipts	£0 9 3	

This sum the accountant received 11 April in the year of the reign of King Henry V, and so his account balanced.

The shell of the building had evidently been completed before our account begins, for no bricklayers or masons are mentioned in it, only carpenters and sawyers.

The account is divided into three parts. The first is occupied with the purchase of timber; the second with wages; and the third with the repair of books. In the first division it is specially mentioned that the oak boards bought are for the floor, and for benches and desks—if my interpretation of the word *formula* be accepted. The benches would be for readers, while the books, which were chained, lay upon the desks. In other words, the library was fitted up on what I have called elsewhere the lectern-system¹.

The library is known to have been over the east cloister—subsequently for the most part destroyed; but the unusual word lectern (*lectrinum*) employed to denote it deserves attention. This word usually means a church-desk or lectern; and in the oldest catalogue of the library at Peterhouse, dated 1418, it is used to denote a desk for books. Certain MSS are described as chained “to the sixth desk (*lectrino*) on the west side².” In our account the part is clearly used for the whole, and I have translated the word “reading-room.”

The work began on the Monday after Trinity Sunday (30 May) 1412; and occupied two carpenters, with occasional assistance from two sawyers, for forty weeks. It is evident, however, that it was interrupted, for we are told incidentally that All Saints Day (1 November) fell in the fifteenth week. Now the fifteenth week, counting the week beginning with Monday 30 May as the first, would be the second week in September, instead of the last week in October. The amount paid in each week shews that, after the fashion of workmen in all ages and all countries, there was no hurry to get the job done. After All Saints Day, 1412, work went forward with greater regularity, and the 29th week falls correctly with regard to the Purification of Our Lady, if the note stating that the festival fell on a Sunday means that it was kept on Sunday,

¹ *The Care of Books*, Chap. iv.

² *A descriptive catalogue of the MSS. in the library of Peterhouse*. By M. R. James, Litt.D. 8vo. Camb. 1899, p. 3.

5 February, 1413. On the assumption that this regularity was maintained, the last week would be Easter week, 1413 (Easter Day in that year being 23 April). It is, however, hardly likely that work would go forward as usual either in that week or in Holy Week; so that in all probability the room was not completely finished until some date in May 1413—that is, nearly a year from the beginning.

Of the two carpenters, Hamund Jakyl, and Henry Atwater, the former received sixpence a day, and the latter fivepence.

The payments recorded in the third division of the account deal for the most part with the purchase of the materials required for the binding of books, all of which were bought by the clerk of the works, down to needles, glue, and flour to make paste. The work was done in Exeter, with the exception of 52 books, which were repaired at Ashburton. Lastly, a Mr William Hayford, about whom we are told nothing except that he had “done work upon the aforesaid books,” is paid £6, equal I suppose to £72 at least of our money, while Richard his servant receives £1. 16s. 8d.

When the room was ready for the books, and the books for the room, we find, at the close of the account, a charge for the purchase of 120 chains, and 9 iron bars. The total cost of the work thus brought to account had reached nearly £36, or £432 at the present value of money.

The roll of general expenses for the same year contains a further charge for 43 chairs and 3 iron bars to carry them¹; and in the year following 28 more are bought, so that the total reaches 191. This large quantity probably indicates that before the new library was built a number of books were unprotected.

This library, or “place to read in” was, as I have said, in the cloister. So much is told us in the accounts which I have just analysed. But a catalogue made in 1506, and printed by Dr Oliver, enables us to determine its position there with

¹ *Expens. necess.* (1412—1413). In xliij cathenis emptis de Johanne Hamelyn, precio cathene, viij^d. xxxviij^s. viij^d. Item predicto Johanni pro iij boltis ferreis pro cathenis portandis in libraria ponderantibus xxxij^{lib}. precio libre j^d. ob. iijj^s. vj^d.

tolerable accuracy. The compiler enumerates the contents of each desk (*descus*) beginning with the first desk on the east side. He then goes round the room, and enumerates eleven desks. Unfortunately he does not tell us at which desk the opposite side of the room begins; but as we learn incidentally that there was a door on the west side, I think it probable that there were six desks on the east side and five on the west side, the sixth bay being occupied by the door, which, we may conjecture, was approached from an external stair or 'vice.' If this view be correct the library occupied the east part of the cloister, south of the chapter-house. No data whatever are given in this catalogue for even a conjecture as to the form of the desks.

A few words on the after-history of this library will not be out of place; but it is a sad story of alienation and ruin.

In 1566 the Dean and Chapter ceded to Archbishop Parker a manuscript which Leofric had given to his cathedral, a copy of the Anglo-Saxon Gospels now in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge; and in 1602 they ceded to Sir Thomas Bodley 81 latin MSS. Mr Macray records that "they nearly all bear more or less sign of having been exposed to great damp¹."

In 1656 "the civil incorporation" of Exeter, called 'the chamber,' purchased the cloisters from the person who had got possession of them after the Dean and Chapter had been turned out of the Cathedral, pulled them down, and in the following year removed the serge-market into them. The Library, or what was left of it, was taken into the Lady Chapel, where it remained until 1820. It seems to have been fairly well cared for during its sojourn in that inconvenient locality, which was prolonged until 1820, when it was transferred to the Chapter House. In 1887 a new library was begun on the site where the original one is believed to have stood, from the design of Mr J. L. Pearson.

¹ *Annals of the Bodleian Library*, ed. ii. p. 28.

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