

## All Souls College Archives

By E. F. JACOB

The need for creating new accommodation for the Visiting Fellows has led to the College claiming as studies the two archive rooms built in the 18th century over the ante-room of the Library and fully equipped with presses for the archives. The Bodleian Library kindly undertook to house the evicted collection. The transfer took place in July and August 1966.

The archives transferred to the Bodleian consist of the deeds, rolls and books listed in the Codrington Library's interleaved and up-to-date copy of C. Trice Martin's *The Archives of All Souls College* (1877). They bear press marks corresponding to those in the catalogue and the first step in the transfer was to make an exact xerox copy of Martin's catalogue for use by Bodley.

The College has reserved for its own MSS collections the following: the College Register; the Building Accounts 1438-42; the Vellum Inventory of the Library; the Foundation Charters and documents relating thereto; the bound volume of Appeals and Injunctions; the Acta in Capitulis (17th century); the Hovenden Maps.

This is a revocable deposit: any document may be temporarily withdrawn by the authority of the Librarian of the College. The documents are treated with the same care and on exactly the same footing as Bodleian documents. The transfer involved a most careful checking, by the Bodleian authorities, of the documents in Martin's Catalogue and of the additions to and occasional corrections of that catalogue, made since 1877. The remarkable thing that emerged was the paucity of documents either missing or misdescribed.

From its earliest days the College has been a unit of administration, each department of which has contributed its quota, often a continuous quota, to the total of its records.

From the granting of the Royal Charter in 1438 it took five years to make the College: that is to build it, to collect the estates that were its endowment and to assemble the full number of artist and jurist Fellows. Apart from building, the immediate post-natal stage 1439-43 is marked by accumulation of land by a little group of feoffees whose activities are fully represented in the College deeds. Some of the estates, like the manor of Long Crendon, came directly to the first Warden Richard Andrew by purchase or release;

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and by no means all were directly enjoyed, for existing leases within the separate manors were often prolonged, and, as in the case of Alberbury, Llangenith and St. Clere, annuities were paid for a number of years to prominent persons like duke Humphrey of Gloucester. With the lands came a substantial proportion of the earlier deeds in the shape of conveyances or leases, and in some instances (Edgeware, Kingsbury, Willesden) the court rolls of the manor. The muniments of various estates many of which extend from the 13th into the 19th centuries find illustration in the notable strip maps of the 16th century and the less picturesque but no less useful plans of the 18th and early 19th centuries.

The estates were unified by the administration of a receiver-general who lived at Croydon. He had under him the collectors of rents in each estate whose accounts have in certain cases survived in an extended form. They paid him their monies by Michaelmas each year and he brought the total, together with a summary of his accounts, to the Bursar before All Saints' Day when the College audit took place. He brought with him also a detailed statement of payments received from each bailiff or collector on a roll known as the Rent Roll. Of these records there is a very satisfying series from 1443 until 1868.

The total of the rents and of the sums acquired by leases and sales when they took place is the first entry on the chief financial record of the College, the important *Computus and Expense* Rolls of the artist and jurist bursars. These are, in exchequer language, the Pipe Rolls of the College. After the bursars have entered the forensic or external receipts from the collector-general, they get the receipts from within, total the two, and so state the sum for which they are 'burdened' (i.e. for which they have to account). Then come the expenses. In the Roll of 1450 there are 11 main categories of expenditure and much is to be gleaned from the details of repairs and miscellaneous expenses including those of the Warden and College officials riding on college business.

The College is fortunate to possess the Bursar's Book, beginning with 1450. This is a weekly account for commons, the total of which is shown under the second item in the *Computus* Roll. A note is placed against each Fellow either not drawing, or for some reason docked of, his commons for the week.

The architectural history of the College has not yet been fully written. There are two main sources: the papers concerning the building of the College of which the most important are the original building accounts of John Druell and the long series concerned with the operations of 1728-50; and a manuscript in the possession of the Warden which gives among other items a statement year by year of work done in the 17th and early 18th centuries down in the time of Warden Niblett. The accounts for the original building of the

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College are, next to those of King's College Cambridge (nearly forty years later), probably the outstanding English collection of their kind for the 15th century.

One of the most valuable sources for the intellectual history of the University in the 15th and 16th centuries are the inventories of the College, particularly the Vellum Inventory which lists the books on the lecterns in the Old Library and gives a conspectus of these volumes over a considerable number of years. The Vellum Inventory from the Library angle is shortly to be published by Mr. N. R. Ker.