

# Derry & Raphoe Diocesan Library Project

## Historic Libraries in Context CONFERENCE



### A New York Yankee in William King's Park

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A few small parts of the following were printed in the introduction to my catalog of Abp. William King's library – *A Large Private Park* (Cambridge: LP Publications, 2003). They appear here with the permission of the publisher. I am also indebted to Ken Bergin, who took my place in June at the Derry/Raphoe Conference.

First let me say how much I regret not being able to attend this event and therefore having to miss the rare opportunity of talking with others who share some of the same interests in Irish diocesan libraries and the collections of old Irish bishops. I also want to thank Ken Bergin for standing in as my spokesman and at the same time express special appreciation for the interest he and the University of Limerick have taken in the health and welfare of the Bolton Library in Cashel. It holds a remarkable collection of books that have given me a life I never could have imagined.

What I have in mind here is a brief, informal talk consisting roughly of three parts – first a bit about how I became involved in the study of Abp. King's library; second, some notes about King's library catalogs and a probable connection with books in the Derry Library; and third, a few words about King's intentions as a collector or the uses of his library. Throughout, I hope that Ken will omit, change, edit, or add as he sees fit.

My adventure in King's "park" began innocently enough in 1971 with a letter to a professor at the University of Virginia – Irvin Ehrenpreis. My first sabbatical leave was coming up, and in Professor Ehrenpreis's critical biography of Swift I had found a reference to the Dublin Philosophical Society, noting its importance and the fact that no one had written much about its activities. This seemed like something to pursue, so, encouraged by a colleague, I wrote Professor Ehrenpreis a letter, seeking his advice.

His reply was most cordial. He told me that Theo Hoppen had just completed a book on the Dublin Society and that the University of Virginia was about to publish it – *The Common*

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*Scientist in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century*. But he added that if I was interested in semi-historical material, I might want to consider editing some of the letters of William King – a man then known to me only in connection with ideas about the origin of evil expressed in Pope's *Essay on Man*. Ehrenpreis told me that there were several unpublished King letters at Trinity College, Dublin, and that he had used this correspondence extensively in his own work.

Mr. Ehrenpreis's letter prompted my first trip to Ireland in the summer of 1971. I went more or less with my hat in hand to speak to the Keeper of Manuscripts at Trinity College, Dublin, and to try to identify a research project that I could reasonably undertake in a semester. I'll never forget my first meeting with Billy O'Sullivan, the Keeper – dressed in his baggy salt-and-pepper suit, his fingers pressed together. Peering intently at me, he said, "Yes, Mr. Matteson, we *do* have letters written by and to Archbishop King – about *TEN THOUSAND* of them – but what are you interested in, *precisely*?" I honestly had to say that I wasn't sure, that I thought I could become interested in almost anything. And could he help me or give me some suggestions?

Billy was awfully kind. After all, here was this silly American fellow who seemed rather lost, and Billy could have quite rightly suggested that I go away and contemplate the state of nature. But he didn't. He sat there, more than a little astonished I'm sure, and in desperation he said, "Are you interested in libraries, *OLD* libraries?" And when I replied, "Yes, I suppose so," he jumped up and disappeared into his strongroom.

When he returned, he showed me a small manuscript catalog of a library thought to have been associated in some way with William King or possibly Ezekiel Hopkins. He said that I might try to establish the correct association, and he also mentioned that I should visit the Diocesan Library in Cashel (now, of course, the Bolton). He had heard rumors that some of King's books were supposed to be there and suggested that I might find something.

So, in good New England fashion, way led on to way. After a few days in Dublin (Billy provided me with a microfilm copy of the catalog) I visited Cashel and met Charles Wolfe, the Dean of Cashel who was responsible for the books, as well as Jean Miller, whom the Dean had employed as an attendant and cataloguer. Both of them seemed to think it "proper" if I were to come back to Cashel the following year, but after that first summer meeting I had the feeling that none of us knew exactly what was going on.

In the spring of the following year (1972) I returned to Ireland on sabbatical leave and spent the first month in Dublin checking my transcription of the catalog Billy had shown me. I also read through some of the Archbishop's letters as well as his account books, noting information about books he bought and general references to his interest in libraries. In the correspondence and other sources, for example, I learned something that many of you know very well – that King was responsible for establishing the Derry Library, having purchased the collection of his predecessor, Ezekiel Hopkins, who in a hasty exit from Ireland in 1688 had left his books behind. I also quickly discovered that King was a committed bibliomaniac for whom the acquisition of books was a favorite form of recreation. While he was traveling in England in 1710, he wrote gleefully to John Stearne, the Dean of St. Patrick's: "I impoverish myself with buying books, but over shoes over boots my head is in and an auction on foot

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who can stop his hand?"<sup>1</sup> King's book-buying habits also upset his steward Henry Green, who wrote to Robert King (the Archbishop's lawyer), "we live as frugally as we can, & get books &c. His Grace carries off many, tho' I endeavour to hinder that expence as much as I can with good manners."<sup>2</sup>

And then, of course, in the letters there were notes about particular books – some familiar, like Pope's translation of Homer; but many then largely unfamiliar, at least to me – authors with asthmatic names like Amesius; treatises in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew; books of history and science and travel; encyclopedic works of the Church Fathers; sermons and dissertations by Henry Dodwell and Edward Stillingfleet, and so forth – all together suggesting an extended binge of book-buying in London, at Bath (where King went to "take the waters") and in Dublin shops. I felt as if I were lost in a bog, but over shoes over boots my head was in.

After six weeks of this activity I went "down" to Cashel, found a memorable place to live in the servants' quarters of the Deanery, and began walking daily to the Bolton Library nearby. This was (and is) a small building in the courtyard of the Cathedral of St. John, a two-story Georgian structure with most of the books shelved on the second floor. Ten years before, Dean Wolfe found the library in disarray – the roof leaking, the books neglected – and over the years he worked to restore the collection insofar as possible, mending the books and the building, with at least some funds for restoration coming from sales at Sotheby's, to the Folger Shakespeare Library, and to the Huntington Library.

At any rate, on my first day, looking at some of the items on display in glass cases, I noticed in particular a small book (an octavo) printed in London in 1499 by Richard Pynson, a copy of the English statutes. And in a corner of the scrap paper used as part of the binding, I saw the letter and number "M2 438" – a shelfmark exactly matching that given an entry for "Bridgment of old Stauets" [*sic*] in the manuscript catalog Billy had shown me. This was my first nugget, and as I looked at other books on the shelves, two things became obvious: that more than a few volumes listed in the small catalog were at Cashel, and that the catalog was in fact one of Archbishop King's early library.

In the course of two weeks I found 180 books with their early catalog shelf-numbers intact. Some were signed "Will: King" on the title-page, and others contained marginalia in his handwriting. Also by using these books as well as early catalog entries and some of the letters I had read in Dublin, I was able to piece together a picture of King's earliest acquisitions. For example, a number of books were signed by Robert Ince, a man whom King succeeded early in his career (1676) as Provost of the Cathedral Church of Tuam. King very probably acquired some books from Ince's estate. Others were signed by Thomas Seele (d. 1675), who was Provost of Trinity College Dublin when King was there as a student. King may have purchased some of Seele's books, or perhaps they came to him as gifts. And so the puzzle – very much a puzzle at this stage – began to take shape.

<sup>1</sup> TCD MS. 2531, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup> C. S. King, *A Great Archbishop of Dublin* (New York), p. 109. Hereafter C. S. King.

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In many books there was also another feature that I noticed, but at first it did not impress me in any particular way. In some instances I found the early catalog shelf numbers on the underside of the front pastedown, as if someone had tried to hide or erase the past. And often in books that could be identified as having belonged to King I found what looked like other catalog numbers, or shelfmarks that were part of another cataloguing system – numbers such as “Bx 2 No. 27” or “Bx 32 No. 517.” I showed all this to Jean Miller, who was a constant help, and she said, “Oh yes, many books here have those marks in them, maybe half the collection, 4-5000 or more.”

Now those of you who have ever searched through the contents of an old attic know that the places most out of the way are often the most enticing. So it was with me. I had easy access to the books on the shelves, and by the end of my first month in Cashel I was sure that the small catalog shown to me by Billy O’Sullivan was an early list of about 650 volumes belonging to Archbishop King. But there were other places in the building I had not explored; so to break the daily routine, I began opening locked cabinets, shuffling through the contents of a walk-in safe, peering here and there. And about all I can say is that a tidy, manageable research project suddenly became much more complicated.

On shelves in the Chapter Room on the first floor I found a manuscript catalog consisting of fifteen large volumes, and in this elaborate catalog I found entries assigned “Bx” (or box) numbers matching those in the books I had seen. In a manila folder I found three alphabetized manuscript lists of books – about 5000 of them; and in an old trunk, buried under some legal papers, I found further manuscript lists of books divided according to general subjects – Bibles, ecclesiastical history, civil and canon law, and so forth – and priced apparently for sale. These are the basic records of the Archbishop’s complete library and have fueled my research for the past forty years.

All of these manuscripts (together with correspondence and account books) tell the story of King’s collection – his early library catalogued in 1686 when King was minister of St. Werburgh’s in Dublin (and perhaps concerned about his property), his complete library assembled during a lifetime of buying, and finally the dispersal of his books together with a sale of the remaining collection around 1734-38 to Theophilus Bolton, then an ambitious Archbishop of Cashel. Each manuscript record is of course valuable in its own way, but here I want to concentrate on the multi-volume large catalog because at least one of its features suggests a link with some of the books in the Derry Library.

The large catalog, put together in Dublin in the 1720s, is the culmination of a process begun in Derry in the 1690s when a rearrangement and recataloging of King’s library was undertaken. His books were first placed in boxes stacked together to make up shelves, and then the books were numbered sequentially in two separate series – with one series for folios, and a second series for the smaller books. A practical outcome of this arrangement was the creation of box and book numbers (or Bx numbers) serving as shelfmarks, and this numbering system, retained in all the subsequent cataloging efforts, is a noteworthy feature of the surviving large catalog at Cashel.

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At first there may have been some slight deliberate arranging of books in boxes – the Bx series for folios gives pride of place to Brian Walton's polyglot Bible (Bx 1 Nos. 1-6) and the series for smaller books begins with a tiny copy (24mo) of the Hebrew psalms (Bx 1 No. 1) – but for the most part the books were at first placed randomly in boxes and thereafter numbered as they arrived or largely in their order of purchase. In other words there was no consistent effort to arrange books according to subjects or authors, probably (I would guess) because there were so many books involved. I would also guess that King was pressing his librarians to get the job done quickly, with his library set up for use. He said that he intended his diocese to be a precedent for others, and a working library was part of what he had in mind.

What is the most likely date for this first recataloging effort in Derry? Evidence from several sources focuses attention on the years 1697-98, or just about the time King began work on *De Origine Mali*. In the early 1690s King's life in Derry was somewhat unsettled. During his first two years as Bishop he lodged with Captain Warham Jemmett.<sup>3</sup> For at least part of 1693-94 he apparently lived in a house belonging to a Mrs. Norman. And because of repairs being made, he did not occupy his episcopal residence (the "Bigg house") until April 1695.<sup>4</sup> Space for a private library thus took some time to become available and to be prepared. Also during the years just prior to 1697-98 the need for a new catalog must have become acute as King continued to acquire books, doing business with "Mr Clavel Bookseller"; buying books from Francis LeJau, a Huguenot book salesman in Dublin; and, in 1696, purchasing a substantial number of volumes from the estate of Samuel Foley, Bp. of Down and Connor.<sup>5</sup> The Foley purchase is especially significant because identifiable smaller books from that estate (some of which survive at Cashel) were assigned relatively low shelf numbers, with a significant few as low as Bx 1 No. 19 and Bx 2 No. 22. Although the recataloging process in 1697-98 was probably not a steady march from one end of King's collection to the other, such low new shelfmarks strongly suggest that the new catalog began to be compiled shortly after Foley's books arrived.

Lastly, there are some tempting entries in King's account books for the years 1697-98 -- namely "for a Catalogue book" in April 1697, "to a Catalogue book for the Library" in September 1697, "Paid Mr Ellis for doing the Library & boxes as [per] acct" in March 1698, and "Paid James Ellis for work don at ye Library" in September 1698.<sup>6</sup> James Ellis appears to have been a builder and carpenter, not a cataloguer. But "the Library" as an identifiable space now existed (this is the first time it is mentioned in King's accounts), a catalog book (two catalog books, in fact) had been acquired, and substantial work was taking place. The payments to Mr. Ellis total thirty-four pounds, thirteen shillings, and three pence, a sum approximating the annual salary of a contemporary curate. Also of interest here is that in April, May, and

<sup>3</sup> C. S. King, p. 31 n.

<sup>4</sup> TCD MS. 751/1.

<sup>5</sup> TCD MS. 750/1, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> TCD MS. 751/1.



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November of 1696 King made three payments totaling two-hundred twenty pounds to Lieut. Samuel Hopkins “on acct of the Books,” which I take to be the library of Ezekiel Hopkins.<sup>7</sup> Samuel was Ezekiel’s son, and with King’s formal acquisition of the Hopkins collection there was plenty of library-related work to be done, at least part of which was, I believe, a catalog of Ezekiel Hopkins’ library.

In a round-about way I first became interested in the possibility of a Hopkins catalog when Billy O’Sullivan told me about a Vulgate Bible at the Boston Public Library, an Anglo-Irish manuscript supposedly associated with William King. The King connection prompted me to look for myself, and what I saw at the top of the first leaf was “Bx 38 No. 601 Derry” – apparently a unique King shelfmark, but different with “Derry” added, and a shelf number that did not match an entry in King’s large catalog. This experience led to some correspondence with people in Derry and further discoveries. Thinking that King may have left some of his own books behind in Derry, I inquired about that possibility and received a letter stating, “There are no books in the library which can be attributed to Bishop King. None with the signature (Will: King or Will: Derry) or with any shelf mark as you have illustrated” – namely a Bx number. Somewhat later in 1994, however, a friend who knew of my interest in Archbishop King visited the Derry Library (or at least part of it) for a day and found about sixty books bearing Bx numbers of the variant sort with “Derry” added. Appearing often on a front pastedown or endleaf (occasionally on a title-page), such shelfmarks are commonly bracketed with “Derry” written after the bracket, and at least some such books bear signs of Ezekiel Hopkins’ ownership – as is the case, for example, in a Derry copy of Bp. John Jewel’s *A replie vnto M. Hardinges answere:...* (London, 1565), which bears “No. 80 Bx 10” bracketed “Derry” on its title-page and “Ezek: Hopkins Derrensis 1682” on an endleaf; or a Derry copy of Ephraim Pagitt’s *Christianography,...* (London, 1640), which bears “Bx 48 No 730” bracketed “Derry” and a marginal inscription “Liber Johannis Hopkins ex dono D. Ephraim Pagit Authoris.” John Hopkins was probably a relative and may have been Ezekiel’s father.

When King’s librarians began to draw up a new catalog of his collection in 1697-98, they also – perhaps even simultaneously – created a catalog of the Hopkins library, using the same shelfmarking system. None of the Bx numbered books at Derry match entries in King’s catalog. No Derry collector other than Hopkins could easily be associated with such books. And that a record of the Hopkins collection was put together when King was Bishop of Derry is made clear in a letter to Robert Dent on November 8, 1707, in which King says, “I am inclined to give an 100 [pounds] towards preparing a place for the books I left for the use of [the] Diocess of Lderry... I entreat you to call for the Catalogue of the books and compare them with it and see in what condition they are and none be missing.”<sup>8</sup> In 1697-98 having paid for the Hopkins books, King would characteristically have wanted a clear record of his

<sup>7</sup> TCD MS. 751/1.

<sup>8</sup> TCD MS. 750/3, p. 159. On the same day King also wrote to John Bolton, the Dean of Derry, and made the same request. If the Hopkins catalog has not survived (as I have been led to believe), it could be recreated using the “Bx Derry” numbers. The systematic numbering of the books would reveal their original arrangement as well as the probable size of the collection. The shelfmarks could also be used to identify books now gone from Derry – like the ms. Vulgate Bible purchased by the Boston Public Library from the Maggses in 1964.

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purchase. It also looks as though he wanted to keep the two collections permanently apart, with Hopkins on one side and his own library on the other, perhaps because he was already thinking of the Hopkins library as a gift. I believe it also quite probable that in 1697-98 King had in mind a career path that, despite disclaimers, did not include a permanent stop in Derry. When not crippled by gout, he was an active and engaged church politician, and, as Philip O'Regan makes clear in his excellent biography, when the archbishopric of Dublin became vacant with the elevation of Narcissus Marsh to the primacy, King worked hard to obtain his promotion and was delighted when he was appointed Archbishop in 1703.

Now, if I may, I'm going to skip merrily past more talk of catalogs – an interleaved version of 1703, a “new catalog” drawn up in 1708-10, the final version created in the 1720s – and say a few words about the uses of King's library or its rationale. Mindful as he was about what he judged to be the poor state of learning in Ireland, including the availability of texts and professional competence, King always intended to support scholarship at home, and to that end he assembled his library as a potential resource for others, even at one time considering the establishment of a university in Derry that would function mainly as a seminary for the Church of Ireland.<sup>9</sup> Concerned about bishops who seemed especially “deficient...in the knowledge of the Civil and Canon Laws,” he bought several books on the subject and encouraged his associates to “[take] in so much of the Common Law as is contained in Cook's Institutions and the Acts of parliament” in order to better “discharge their office of Bishops both in church and state.”<sup>10</sup> To Hans Sloane, King wrote that he had furnished himself “with a good quantity of Books” on the “Study of nature and the history thereof” and “endeavoured to put [his] friends on the Study of the Natural History of Ireland.”<sup>11</sup> Unable to read Hebrew, King nevertheless bought a substantial number of books in this language from Aron Moses in 1713 and in a letter to St. George Ashe explained his purchase as follows: “I consider that there's no such collection of books of this kind in Ireland, and that I have a Cosen that is pretty well versed in that sort of Learning and p[er]haps may not have such another opportunity to compass them.”<sup>12</sup> And to Mark Baggot, King wrote when acquiring Kersey's *The Elements of...Algebra*, “Mathematicians are so few that there is no encouragement for printing such books. I would willingly encourage any I see inclined, and finding some here, desire to help them if possible to books.”<sup>13</sup>

In each case King had in mind the promotion of scholarship and learning by assembling and sometimes providing the necessary resources not easily obtainable in Ireland at the time. Also suggesting that his intentions were followed by action is a payment in March 1711 to one

<sup>9</sup> Philip O'Regan, *Archbishop William King of Dublin (1650-1729) and the Constitution in Church and State* (Dublin, 2000), p. 72 n. Hereafter O'Regan.

<sup>10</sup> TCD MS. 2531, p. 109.

<sup>11</sup> TCD MS. 750/8, pp. 56-57.

<sup>12</sup> TCD MS. 2532, p. 92.

<sup>13</sup> TCD MS. 750/2, p. 38.

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of his librarians, Mr. Ince, to buy a “new book to enter the names of Lent books.”<sup>14</sup> I’ve found no evidence to suggest that this lending of books was frequent or constant, nor was King’s private library in St. Sepulchre’s intended as a magnet for scholars. Still I think it fair to say that if someone in Dublin had an acceptable or suitable idea he wanted to study or develop, King would have been inclined to help in whatever way he could. One such person may have been William Nevill, whose manuscript at Cashel on the squaring of the circle is dated 1712 and dedicated to “William, Archbishop of Dublin.”<sup>15</sup>

King’s library also, of course, served his own needs as a professional churchman, and it’s no surprise to find his boxes loaded with Bibles of all kinds, commentaries on the Bible, works of the Church Fathers, church history, liturgies, sermons, and books of law both canon and civil as well as books of devotion and doctrinal controversy that poured from the press during King’s lifetime. Nearly half of King’s collection consisted of books of this kind, their use supported by a large number of reference works, namely grammars, dictionaries, and books about books. The library was also designed at least in part as a resource enabling scholarly research, and King himself used his books for this purpose. As Philip O’Regan has noted, when preparing to write *De Origine Mali*, King “read extensively, consulting a wide range of theological works, as well as the writings of Hobbes, Stillingfleet, Herbert, Bayle and Locke,” all of which King owned.<sup>16</sup> Also as Christopher Fauske has noted, the argument put forward in the opening chapter of King’s *The state of the Protestants of Ireland* is “built almost entirely on Hugo Grotius’ observation in *De Jure Belli et Pacis* that ‘If a King be carried with a malicious design to the destruction of a whole Nation, he loses his Kingdom ... therefore he who professes himself an Enemy to a whole People, doth in that very Act abdicate his Kingdom.’”<sup>17</sup> The passage from Grotius is quoted in full on p. 2 of *The state of the Protestants* (London, 1691), and King goes on to say that even “Doctor Hammond,” a great supporter of passive resistance, approved this passage, as noted in the first volume of his collected works. Both Grotius’ *De Jure* and Henry Hammond’s *Works* were in King’s early library.<sup>18</sup>

Aside from the professional demands of his office and resources for research as rationales for the choices King made in assembling his library, perhaps the most obvious factor governing his collection was his own wide range of interests, his desire to be widely grounded or informed as well as up to date. I see these qualities reflected in the breadth of his library as a whole, with its holdings in history and government (especially English/Irish, but also European), several sciences, medicine, biography, travel, philosophy, and a large number of pamphlets

<sup>14</sup> TCD MS. 751/2. Ince was a salaried employee and appears in King’s account books as one most often associated with library activities. He may have been related to Robert Ince, the man King replaced as Provost at Tuam in October 1676.

<sup>15</sup> *Catalogue of the Cashel Diocesan Library* (Boston, 1973), p. 618.

<sup>16</sup> O’Regan, p. 131.

<sup>17</sup> “The angel of St Patrick’s is now the guardian of the kingdom”, in Christopher J. Fauske (ed.), *Archbishop William King and the Anglican Irish Context, 1688-1729* (Dublin, 2004), p. 18.

<sup>18</sup> In *The State of the Protestants* King also makes use of a number of other works he owned. A small sample would include George Hickes’ *Jovian*, William Falkner’s *Christian Loyalty*, Robert Sanderson’s *De obligatione conscientiae*, George Walker’s *A true account of the siege of London-derry*, and Sir John Temple’s *The Irish rebellion*.



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from the 1640s through the early 1720s – from especially noteworthy pamphlets about the English Civil War and Irish Rebellion to pamphlets about such contemporary matters as inoculation for smallpox and finding the longitude.

King's impressive level of intellectual curiosity is also reflected in his reading, which was constant and varied. While traveling in 1688, as noted in his autobiography, he read about the fortification of towns and became, he says, "well enough versed in what belonged to that subject as far as could be learned from books."<sup>19</sup> In 1713 he read John Woodward's account of Roman urns unearthed near Bishopsgate and wrote to the author, "I receive and read everything that comes from your hand with pleasure."<sup>20</sup> In 1724 he read Robert Steell's *A treatise of conic sections* and wrote to Samuel Molyneux, "it seem'd to me one of the most compendious demonstrations of the chief propositions in Conicks, that I have seen, only, that he taketh some things forgranted that ought to be proved."<sup>21</sup> And in 1725, in a letter to Hans Sloane thanking him for his gift of the "Naturall History of Jamaica," King wrote, "I have read over your introduction and learned more new things in it relateing to the History of Nature... [than] in any book I have perused for many years."<sup>22</sup>

Some niceties of appreciation may be at play here, but there's no doubt that King was a voracious reader. While others in their leisure hours might attend a lecture or a concert or a dramatic production, King characteristically did nothing of the sort. Rather, he picked up a book to read and is pictured that way in his most often reproduced portraits. He seems to have been particularly energized when he was visiting book shops or attending book auctions. And his passion for acquiring books was life-long, beginning with the works on religion he collected as a college student while being advised by his tutor, John Christian, and ending shortly after the purchase of several volumes at the Amsterdam auction of Cardinal Dubois's massive library in 1725. In a letter to John Stearne, King once wrote, "self-deprecatingly, that they were 'book-worms'" – a term needing careful definition even if it was not meant to be taken seriously.<sup>23</sup> To dismiss King as bookish or to suggest that he always had his nose in a book and was unconcerned about what was happening on the other side of his palace walls would be wildly inaccurate. But he did enjoy life in and around books, and there's no doubt that the acquisition of books in part fed an addiction. As early as 1713 King's library had become so large that even in his palace of St. Sepulchre's (now a police barracks) there was insufficient room for all of the books to be housed. In October of that year he asked for permission "to deposit some of his own books in the lower room of the tower," a structure that

<sup>19</sup> C. S. King, p. 21. In *The State of the Protestants* a passage about the siege of Derry begins (p. 173) with a description in which King draws on what he had learned: "The City is neither well scituated, nor well fortified; it has no Mote about it, nor Counterscarp, and the Bastions are so small, that they are not capable of so many men as are requisite to defend the Curtains against a vigorous Attack, and so ill placed that their guns do hardly clear it."

<sup>20</sup> TCD MS. 2532, p. 206.

<sup>21</sup> TCD MS. 2537, p. 189.

<sup>22</sup> TCD MS. 750/8, pp. 35-36.

<sup>23</sup> Toby Barnard, "Bishop Stearne's collection of books and manuscripts," in Muriel McCarthy and Ann Simmons (eds.), *Marsh's Library – A Mirror on the World* (Dublin, 2009), p. 201.

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originally joined the palace with Marsh's Library and was used as an observatory.<sup>24</sup> When he died in 1729, with his librarians still working to complete the large catalog, his collection held approximately 8500 books and pamphlets in 7160 volumes placed in 559 boxes that must have filled every room of his residence.

What might a visitor have found among the stacked boxes if allowed a few minutes of browsing? A handful of selected titles will have to suffice: <sup>25</sup>

- \*\* Hartmann Schedel's Nuremberg *Chronicle* (1493) – the last major history of the world that failed to account for the discovery of the New World.
- \*\* Isaac Newton's *Principia mathematica* – generally regarded as the greatest work in the history of science .... King owned both the first and second editions.
- \*\* Capt. John Smith's famous *Generall historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles* (1632).
- \*\* Robert Hooke's *Micrographia* (1665) – Hooke did more than anyone else to change the Royal Society from a club of virtuosos to a professional body. This is a first edition of his most famous work and “one of the masterpieces of seventeenth-century science.”
- \*\* Matthew Smith's *The memoirs of secret service* (1699) – the first book in English completely devoted to intelligence operations.
- \*\* Georg Agricola's *De re metallica* (1561) – For nearly two centuries “the text-book and guide of students and experts in mining and metallurgy,” it was translated into English by Pres. Herbert Hoover and his wife Lou.
- \*\* Fynes Moryson's *An Itinerary* (1617) – “one of the most authoritative works of travel writing printed during the Jacobean period” – a book in which the words “Merry” and “Christmas” appear in print together for the first time.
- \*\* George Hickes' *Thesaurus* (1705) – “a cardinal work not only on Old English philology but also on Old English history” – of “magisterial importance” marking “the climax of the work of the Oxford school of ‘Saxonists’” – Hickes sent King two copies.
- \*\* William Gilbert's *De magnetē* (1600) – an “enormously influential” publication – It is with this work that the “modern development of electricity and magnetism really starts.” Here comes Facebook?

<sup>24</sup> King's request is recorded in Marsh's Library Visitation Book for the 6<sup>th</sup> Visitation on 8 October 1713. It was granted “for three years from this day.”

<sup>25</sup> I have listed publications that are either famous or especially significant in some way; but it's worth noting that King also owned books and pamphlets about such “everyday” matters as forestry and farming, smoking chimneys and sewers, fruit trees and coffee, tides and springs, vipers and embalming, surveying and tanning leather. He bought damask curtains for his palace of St. Sepulchre's, but he also bought rat traps.

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I have read somewhere that “the uniqueness of a library is the joy of discovery. You go in and you find something that will be nowhere else ... You find material that you were never even looking for.” That describes my adventure exactly, and I wish the same joy to others who come here to work in the Derry/Raphoe Library. Thank you all ... and thank you, Ken!

**Robert S. Matteson, June 2011**