'The King's Library of Manuscripts': the State Paper Office as Archive and Library

On 25 July 1614 King James I appointed Thomas Wilson and Ambrose Randolph to be 'Keepers and Registers of our Papers and Recordes concerning matter of State and Counsell latelie reduced into a sett forme of library'.[1] Almost two centuries later, on 25 April 1811, the then Keeper observed that 'the State Paper Office has always been held to be His Majesty's Private Library of Manuscripts'.[2] The State Papers are now part of the National Archives and, as this would imply, are considered today as archival material. Yet, in the years of its independent existence before the State Paper Office was subsumed into the Public Record Office in 1854, it was referred to as a Library far more frequently than as an Archive.

This paper will observe the State Paper Office over two and a half centuries before 1854, using it as a case study to consider whether there is any real difference between an archive and a library in the period before modern archival theory developed in Britain in the early twentieth century.[3] In part, it will compare the Office to contemporary library practice, but it will also be deliberately anachronistic in comparing it with present functions and features of libraries and archives to see if these terms have the same meanings in this period. In short, it will consider whether, before the twentieth century, archives and libraries might, in fact, be synonymous.

But we should begin with an overview of the State Papers themselves. The King's Secretary is first found in the reign of Richard II as keeper of the signet, the least, after the Great Seal and the Privy Seal, of the instruments used to authorize warrants that served as the chief executive instruments of medieval government in England.[4] The signet was used chiefly in diplomacy, and so by the reign of Henry VIII, the Secretary was the central clearing office for correspondence between the central government and its ambassadors and agents abroad. When, in the 1530s, Thomas Cromwell needed an executive position in which to propagate and police the Reformation, he appointed himself Principal Secretary, adding domestic matters to the role and making it the spider in the centre of the web of government.[5] Throughout the early modern period, the Secretaries of State were sometimes (like William Cecil, Lord Burghley, or Henry Bennet, Lord Arlington) a great minister, sometimes (like Sir William Petre or Sir Joseph Williamsom) essentially civil servants, yet always the link between monarch, Privy Council and the realm. They continue to exist today, in the form adopted in 1782, as Home Secretary and Foreign Secretary.

The State Papers were essentially their papers. They were the principal executive instruments of the early modern English state and concerned all matters, foreign and domestic, though the foreign papers always dominated. They were also at the heart of the state intelligence

system and this is one reason why they were always considered to the monarch's private papers, kept and managed by the Secretaries as his personal representatives. In this, they were carefully distinguished from the Public Records which were kept mostly in the Tower of London, Westminster Abbey and the Rolls Chapel, to be merged together into the Public Record Office in 1838. These were considered public because they were the records of the courts: not just the Law Courts, including Chancery, but also the Exchequer and even the Household, which had long since lost any judicial functions. These could be searched by members of the public for a fee; but the State Papers – the private property of the monarch – were for government use only. Ensuring this was one of the duties of the Keeper of the State Paper Office.[6]

It is often said – indeed, far too often said – that the State Paper Office[7] dates back to 1578.[8] There is no evidence to support this, and though it has been suggested that it could date back to the reign of Henry VIII, it is most likely to have been an Elizabethan innovation, probably developing *de facto* out of the Signet Office. But it is not until Sir Thomas Wilson (not to be confused with his uncle Dr Thomas Wilson who was probably the first Keeper) was appointed in 1610 that enough evidence survives to study the State Paper Office in detail. And in fact, it was at just this time that the Office gained a new prominence, when on 23 June 1612 a warrant was issued for the papers of Robert Cecil, earl of Salisbury, who had been successively Secretary of State and Lord Treasurer (as his father, William Cecil, Lord Burghley had been before him) into the hands of 'Leuinas Munck and Thomas Wilson clerks of his Matyes papers and records att Whitehale'.[9]

This brings us to what we might consider as the first difference between an archive and a library, namely collections policy. There certainly are archives which collect manuscripts and records relating to a particular subject, but in the official or government tradition, archives tend to be organic. In other words, they aim to represent historically the institution that they serve, and the archive consists solely of accruals of that institutions own records. A library, however, is artificial. It actively seeks out external materials relating to particular subjects. Moreover, it aims to be complete – that is, to contain everything that is worth having on those subjects.

This was no different in the seventeenth century. The French librarian Gabriel Naudé, writing in 1627, and given here in John Evelyn's translation of 1661, stated that 'there is nothing which renders a Library more recommendable, then when every man finds in it that which he is in search of, and could no where else encounter', and that 'the prime Rule which one ought to observe, is, in the first place to furnish a Library with all the chief and principal Authors'.[10] The title of Naudé's book, as translated by Evelyn, *Instructions Concerning Erecting of a Library*, is appropriate, for

libraries are built or erected. An official archive, however, is better described as being developed or matured.

So what did the State Paper Office contain? The Tudor material that Sir Thomas Wilson received on becoming Keeper in 1610 seems to have been mostly diplomatic in character, but with a few items relating to treason and security, and to the military. We have noted that in 1612 the Office received the papers of the Earl of Salisbury, and Wilson also went on to receive the papers of three more successive Secretaries: Sir Thomas Lake, Sir Robert Naunton and Sir George Calvert, Lord Baltimore. Later in the century the Office took in the papers of Sir Joseph Williamson and Sir Leoline Jenkins, both Secretaries under Charles II.

These are exactly the sort of accruals one would expect in an official archive. But did the Keepers seek out other material? Indeed, they did. In a letter to the King, which probably dates to the early 1620s, Wilson notes that 'there is yett a great defect' in the Office, one which he might remedy if 'there were gotten into this Office copies of all the treaties ... betwixt all the Princes & States yo^{r} Neighbours'.[11] Likewise, half a century later on 5 March 1669 Charles II issued a warrant to all the officers of state to allow Sir Joseph Williamson, then Keeper, 'to peruse all such records & memorialls as now are in your custody, & from them to make Transcripts of whatsoever Treatyes, Leagues, Commissions conduceing therto, & publicke Grants which he ... shall deeme fit for Our service'.[12]

However, this seems very different from what was being done in contemporary France, where Louis XIV's chief minister, Jean-Baptiste Colbert was sending agents throughout France and Europe to find and make copies of all manuscripts that reflected in some way on the king's estate or government. Colbert was making a state archive on the same basis as a library in trying to create a complete and artificial collection on everything relating to the state.[13] But what Wilson sought and Williamson got was not an attempt to widen the Office's collections, but a way of plugging the gaps in the collection which had come about by ineffective transmissions of papers.

One might see the same intention in the will of the former diplomat Sir Henry Wotton made on 1 October 1637 in which he declared that

> I leave his said Maiestie all the Papers and Negotiations of Sir Nicholas Throcmorton knight dureing his famous Imployment vnder Queene Elizabeth in Scotland, & in France which Conteyne divers secrets of State, that perchance his Maiestie will thinke fitt to bee preserved in his Paper office ... They were Committed to my disposall by Sir Arthur Throckmorton his sonne, to whose worthy memorie I Cannot better discharg my faith, then by assigning them to the highest place of trust.[14]

Again, on one hand this can be seen as evidence that at least one person regarded the State Paper Office as a kind of library that should be complete on foreign relations. On the other, one might regard these papers as properly belonging anyway to the Office. The same difficultly can be seen with the various 'seizures' that were made on behalf of the Office in the seventeenth century. Some, like the papers taken from Sir Edward Coke and Sir Walter Raleigh might seem to be out of the scope of the office, while others, such as Dudley Carleton, Viscount Dorchester and Sir John Coke, both Secretaries of State, should have delivered their papers anyway.[15]

Indeed, a great problem throughout the early modern period, and one by no means confined to England, was the tendency of statesmen to regard their papers as their private property, kept in their own possession when they left office.[16] As early as 1617 Wilson was able to make a three page list of the papers that he should have, but had not, received, and he wrote the following year to the king's favourite, the earl of Buckingham, that he had 'made often instance to ye late Mr Secretary Winwood to have the older papers deliuered me according to his Majestys orders whereof I had continuall promisses but he dyed before it was done'.[17] Matters did not improve over the century. In 1705 the House of Lords established a committee 'to consider of the method of keeping Records and Publique Papers in Offices and how they are kept and to consider of Ways to remedy what shall be found to be amisse'. On examining the State Paper Office they found that amongst the papers 'are only those, of Mr Secretary Nicholas, Earl of Arlington and Mr Secretary Williamson, there are none of Mr Secretary Morice's, Mr Secretary Coventry's, nor any other Secretary of State, since the Beginning of King Charles the Second's Reign'.[18] Their solution was to create a new officer called the Collector and Transmitter of Papers, whose job was to be to supervise the transfer of papers from the Secretaries' office to the State Paper Office. Little evidence exists for how this post operated, but in effect this created three separate offices: the oldest papers remained in the Holbein Gate at Whitehall, which was soon forgotten, the seventeenth century papers moved with the Keeper to the Middle Treasury Gallery, and the eighteenth century papers were kept by the Collector in offices at the Board of Trade.

Another problem that had been noted by Williamson was that some papers had been 'imbessled'. He stated that early in the seventeenth century, some had been taken by Francis Bacon and by Lord Herbert of Cherbury while compiling their histories of Henry VII and Henry VIII, and by John Bradshaw and John Thurloe during the Interregnum.[19] Another he might have mentioned was Sir Robert Cotton who had borrowed various papers relating to Elizabeth I's Scottish policy while assisting Jacques-Auguste de Thou in writing the history of Scotland that James I had commissioned

from him, and this no doubt explains why many of William Cecil's papers on Scotland are still to be found in the Cotton collection in the British Library.[20]

In fact, Cotton and his library make an interesting point of comparison with the State Paper Office. Cotton was actively developing – or, perhaps, building – his library, working much like his contemporary, Naudé, to ensure that he had as complete a collection as possible. When he could not acquire a manuscript for his library, he often had a transcript made. In this he was doing much the same in a private capacity as, half a century later, Colbert would do for the French state. Yet Cotton's library was not entirely private. Long before he officially bequeathed it to the nation he allowed it to be used as a semi-public library, accessible to scholars and statesmen alike. Indeed, Cotton even searched through his manuscript collection for precedents at the request of the Secretaries of State and other government officials in just the same way that his friend and rival, Wilson, was doing in the State Paper Office.[21] Thus, in terms of their collections and their collecting policy, the State Paper Office was certainly the King's office of 'Papers and Recordes concerning matter of State and Counsell', but Cotton's library had a better claim to be the 'King's Library of Manuscripts', for the State Paper Office was restricted to papers officially produced and received, while Cotton aimed to collect together all those manuscripts and papers which related to the state and the nation and, until he grew disillusioned by the personal rule of Charles I, placed them at the service of monarch and government. In modern terms, Cotton's collections policy was that of a library; the State Paper Office was that of an official archive.

The second area to consider is in the arrangement and description of the records. Modern archival theory and practice has as its first principle that of *respect des fonds*, which states that the fonds should remain discrete and should not be broken up; nor should groups and series within the fonds, thus preserving the contextual bond between records. Related to this is the concept of original order which insists that wherever possible the records be kept in their administrative arrangement and that this should reflect either their provenance or the functions of the institution that created them.[22] Modern libraries, however, tend to create a catalogue structure that treats every item as itself discrete and in which the only context is the taxonomies of the various subjects under which they are classified.

The tree of knowledge, in which the various branches represented fields of study, often based on the university curricula, and smaller branches represented sub-fields, was already a cliché by the seventeenth century and during the century an increasing number of libraries were catalogued according to subject classifications.[23] We might take as an example, a scheme that John Evelyn, fresh from translating Naudé's treatise, drew up for the Royal Society. One section covered

books of natural philosophy and was sub-divided into 'Physici', itself divided into 'Men', 'Birds', 'Beasts', 'Insects', and so on, and 'Medici' which had as sub-divisions 'Anatiomie', 'Chirurgerie', 'Botanie', and so on. The next section was 'Bookes of Arts Liberall' which was divided into 'Arithmetick', 'Geometry', 'Opticks', and 'Musick', some of which also had sub-divisions.[24] We will now see how the State Paper Office compares.

The earliest evidence, if not of an official State Paper Office, at least of the records of the Secretaries of State, dates to the last years of Henry VIII. Several lists of documents 'in the study at Westminster' are simply that: lists. There is no evidence of any arrangement and these are best seen as box lists.[25] The first evidence we have of an attempt to put them into order is a scheme by Sir Thomas Wilson dated 1618.[26] This divides the papers under twelve heads. The first is titled 'Britannia Australis' and essentially contains all the domestic papers. The next nine heads are for different countries including 'Britannia Septentrionalis', i.e. Scotland and 'Hibernia', i.e. Ireland. To some extent this reflects the 'ideal topographical' system used in Savoy and Switzerland,[27] except that the English system does not seem to be reflecting the supposed hierarchies of Europe, but perhaps this is to be expected from a Protestant country that considered itself to be an empire. The system does, however, put together countries that can be considered as unified or allied administrative units, so that Flanders is joined with Spain; and Germany, Denmark and the Hanse towns are together. The penultimate heading, 'Tractatus Principum' contains all the treaties and then finally there is a category called 'Mixta' which seems to have contained all the papers from before 1590 and which were arranged separately by date.

The section of 'Britannia Australis' was broken down further by 'Regalia', which included royal letters and customs and revenues; 'Legalia' which contained acts of Parliament and proclamations; 'Ecclesiastica' and 'Militia' which speak for themselves; 'Politica' which contained the Council books as well as oaths and instructions of officials; 'Criminalia' which mostly concerned treason; and 'Mechanica' which covered trade. It is tempting to interpret these as being functional, as representing the functions expected of an early modern state, but it is probably more realistic to see this as a subject based system, with more in common with Evelyn's scheme. Wilson states that within the 'Ecclesiastica' heading, for example, 'are conteined divers bookes and papers concerning Bishopricks Deaneries Colledges Parsonnages Hospitalls and all other Ecclesiasticall liveings with the vallues thereof with divers particular suites and businesses concerning the same'. These have the feeling of a range of subjects rather than processes.

The same is true of the next cataloguing scheme we have – one described by Sir Joseph Williamson in 1682.[28] This system again has headings for all the different countries, but as well as an

'Anglia' heading which has been 'all sorted into ye very yeares' and an 'Anglia Vetera' which has everything before 1560, there are also headings for 'Militia', 'Ecclesia', 'Criminalia', and 'Parliament' at the same level as 'Anglia' and the other countries. There are also, in the inner room, in addition to 'Anglia Vetera', papers from his own time as Secretary of State, which are filed under headings like 'Household', 'Offices', and even 'Mines' and 'Mints', as well papers from the 'Usurpation'. This feels very much like a subject classification and, what's more, one that was no longer fit for purpose. For example, under the heading for the Netherlands, Williamson notes that 'The King & Queen of Bohemias Papers & Bussinesse are generally placed here, sometimes in Germany etc.', and under 'Germania' itself, 'all since 1559 with ye Emperor are generally if not universally here'. One can sympathise with Williamson's successor, John Tucker, when he wrote that 'the papers were in such Confusion and Disorder, that it was very difficult to find any paper that was wanted.'[29]

Tucker obviously thought long and hard about how to remedy the situation as there are a dozen or so papers on which he has scribbled thoughts about different arrangements, most of them quite unintelligible to us now.[30] However, one is quite extraordinary.[31] He divides the papers into two sections – foreign and domestic. The foreign is further divided into 'Negociations' which is sub-divided into 'Instructions', 'Letters' and 'Memorialls & Declarations', and then 'Treaties' which are arranged by country. The domestic are divided into 'Ecclesiastical', 'Civill' and 'Military'. The first is sub-divided into 'Houses of Convocation', 'Visitations', 'Ecclesiastical Commissions', 'Ecclesiastical Courts' and 'Accounts of Benefices & Ecclesiastical Promotion'. 'Civill' is further divded by 'Parliament', 'Privy Councill', 'Secretarys Office, 'Orders of ye Household', and so on. The sub-headings for 'Military' include 'Ordnance', 'Land Forces' and 'Forts & Garrisons'. This is something of a mix. The top level headings are certainly all functional, and most of the sub-headings, such as 'Parliament' or 'Privy Councill' are based on provenance, though there are a few subject based ones like 'Trade and Plantations'. Nevertheless, this is a far more sophisticated scheme than anything that had come before and, arguably, a better arrangement than exists today. Sadly, though, it seems likely that Tucker spent too much time considering it, for there is no evidence that it was ever put into practice. Certainly the Commissioners of the late eighteenth century, to whom we shall shortly come, believed that Wilson's system was still then in operation.[32]

Tucker was succeeded as Keeper by Hugh Howard in 1714 and the office seems for almost eighty years to have become a sinecure. Meanwhile, in 1763 one of the Under-Secretaries of State, John Pownall was searching for a paper from the reign of Charles I. An elderly clerk, remembering a report from his youth, suggested that he try the Holbein gate. Pownall

immediately climbed up the rotten staircase, and finding the door of the room fastened by a lock, which had not been opened for many years, and to which there was no key to be found, procured a smith to break it open with a sledge-hammer; which being done, he was covered with a cloud of Dust, raised by a flock of pigeons, who had long made that room (the windows being broken) their dwelling place.[33]

Clearly something must be done, and the Prime Minister, George Grenville, ordered the papers, probably the oldest of the State Papers, to be moved. He then created a Royal Commission to 'methodize and digest' the State Papers.[34]

The Commissioners, three of the leading antiquaries of the day,[35] quickly came to the conclusion that the papers should 'be digested in Order of time and divided under proper Heads, according to the Country Subject Matter or Person to which they Immediately Relate'.[36] They created separate catalogues for the older and newer papers, which were now kept in different offices. In both they separated the treaties from the other papers and listed them by country, and for the more modern papers they also separated the foreign (again arranged by country) from the domestic. were arranged by subject with headings such as 'Law Papers', 'Criminal Affairs', 'Heraldry', 'America and West Indies', and even the splendidly titled 'Projects, Counter Projects'. There seems to be no systematic arrangement of these headings. In the old office, however, a rather interesting arrangement was put to use. The domestic, arranged by subject, and the foreign, by country, were mixed together and then arranged alphabetically. Thus we have 'Admiralty and Navy', 'Ambassadors', 'Army and Military Affairs', 'Bohemia and the Palatinate', 'Correspondences' and so on.[37] Of all the catalogues of State Papers this one, clearly influenced by the great dictionaries and encyclopaedias of the mid-eighteenth century, is the one that looks most obviously like a library catalogue.

The Commission of the methodizers lasted until 1800 when Pitt the Younger ended it after an unseemly fight at cabinet level for nearly a decade. The State Paper Office was then reorganized and for the first time in almost a century all the State Papers were once more in the hands of an active Keeper. But before we turn to the reforms of John Bruce, we must consider our last theme – the extent to which the papers were considered to be related records, held together by contextual bonds, or discrete containers of information like books. To do so, we must discuss binding.

Thomas Raymond, who had been Keeper during the Protectorate, on handing the office to Sir Joseph Williamson in 1663 noted that 'When Doctor Wilson ... had the Custody of these papers of state about 1580 they were kept in Boxes, And about 1605 Sir Thomas Wilson nephew to ye Doctor obtaining his place, the papers were reduced into a sett forme of Liberary ... & placed noe more in Boxes, but in Presses'.[38] Certainly, the younger Wilson himself stated in about 1620 that during the

last eight years he had 'bound the most part vp into bookes according to ther subiecte heads & yeares'.[39] John Tucker's list of 'Things to be spoken to if there be room given for it' while attending the House of Lords committee had as its priority 'To get an Allowance from the Government for the binding up into Volumes, the Papers in the Office'. The Committee agreed, expressing the wish 'That those papers that are of no use, nor serve for Curiosity should be laid aside, and the rest to be made useful, should be Bound up in Volumes with proper Indexes'.[40] The Commissioners too thought that the papers 'for their better Preservation be bound up in Volumes.'[41]

Nevertheless, certainly as late as the early eighteenth century many of the earlier papers were still in bundles, for John Strype, while searching for materials on the history of the English Reformation, asked for the papers he wanted to see according to the bundles, mostly arranged chronologically, in which they were kept.[42] Even those that were bound up still seem to have been preserved in their original order. For example, in the Commissioner's catalogue of the older papers, under Spanish correspondence there are three separate entries for 'Seven volumes of Original Letters between England and Spain', 1558-1620, 'Sixty four Bundles of Original Letters bet England and Spain', 1558-1623 and 'Letters etc Between England Spain & Portugal 49 Bundles', 1575-1650.[43] Given their overlapping dates, it seems likely that these had been preserved together, in bundles or volumes, ever since they entered the office. But Bruce's binding policy would change this forever.

Having inherited the catalogues of his former enemies, it was probably inevitable that Bruce would object to them. He found that of the older office to be 'chronological only of Volumes and Bundles, and not of Subjects, the alone principle, under which records can be arranged, for actual business', while those for the new office were 'General Calendars, only, of Volumes and Bundles, with reference to Dates and Numbers, but did not specify the Contents of one single Volume or Bundle'.[44] Bruce set about transforming the arrangement of the papers by reference to the primary regulation of the new rules he had drawn up for the Office, that the papers 'be arranged in the order of Chronology, for the successive Reigns of the Kings of England, and to be divided into Departments'.[45] A report of 1818 shows how he had set about this: there were now 75 volumes of royal letters dating from Henry VIII to George III, 20 volumes of Law Papers from the reign of Charles II, 62 volumes of papers relating to Trade, Fisheries and Foreign Plantations, from 1542 to 1761, and so on.[46] What was new was that within each of these 'departments' he broke up the existing bundles and volumes and bound up all the papers in strict chronological order. The same was done for all the foreign correspondence, divided by reign and then by country, and each running in one long chronological sequence over several volumes.

Similar arrangements were continued after Bruce's death in 1826. In 1832 a scheme was devised for dealing with much of the older domestic records. It was based on 22 headings, most of which had been used by the methodizers half a century earlier, including 'Criminal', 'Ecclesiastical', 'Heraldry', and 'Revenue'.[47] Like the methodizers' catalogue the headings were arranged alphabetically, though with 'Miscellaneous' tacked to the end. In 1840 it was found that many 'of the smaller of these heads could not be retained without materially interfering with the complete arrangement of the larger heads' and the headings were reduced, with twelve of them (including those above) being placed into 'Domestic', and 'Tracts and Pamphlets' – probably rightly – subsumed into 'Miscellaneous'.[48] At some point in the next dozen years the headings were reduced again to create the system that still exists today in which the domestic papers are one series, divided only by monarchs' reigns, and the foreign by country and by reign, and all the papers within these sequences bound up in great chronological runs.[49] This is when the State Paper Office works most like a library. These great manuscript volumes and their numerous catalogues and calendars might not look much like a library catalogue, but the thinking behind them is the same. Bruce and his successors regarded each paper as a separate and discrete item, much like each individual book in a library, and they then fitted them into their preordained classification sequence without any thought for their provenance or their contextual relationship to other records in the collection.

So, is the State Paper Office an archive or a library? The answer, of course, is that is both. In its collecting policy it looks more like a modern archive than a modern library. But in the way its contents were organized it owes much to the subject classification systems that were in use in libraries from the sixteenth century. Moreover, the nineteenth century Keepers, in treating each paper as discrete and self-contained, were thinking more like modern librarians than modern archivists. So we must conclude that in the centuries before the publication of the *Dutch Manual*, there was a difference between an archive and a library, but it was not as profound as we might first think.

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[1] The National Archives [TNA] SP 45/20 f.36r

[2] TNA SP 45/25 f.66r

[3] Arguably, modern archival theory was born in 1898 with the publication of S Muller, JA Feith and R Fruin, *Handleiding voor het ordenen en beschrijven van archieven* (Groningen: Erven B van der Kamp, 1898), known to English speaking archivists as 'The Dutch Manual'.

[4] LB Dibben, "Secretaries in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries", *English Historical Review* 25 (1910): 437-8; AJ Otway-Ruthven, *The King's Secretary and the Signet Office in the XV Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939), 60-1

[5] The classic, though not undisputed, account is GR Elton, *The Tudor Revolution in Government* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953)

[6] The best history of the State Paper Office remains Hubert Hall, *Studies in English Official Historical Documents* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1908). More accessible, but briefer, is Elizabeth Hallam, "Problems

with record keeping in early eighteenth century London: some pictorial representations of the State Paper Office, 1705-1706", *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 6:4 (1979), 219-26

[7] Though 'Paper Office' had been in use since the seventeenth century, the 'State Paper Office', a nineteenth century name, will be used here throughout for ease of reference.

[8] This date is based on the misreading of a letter (TNA SP 45/20 f.102r) in which Sir Thomas Wilson states that 'it is 45 yeares since I knewe it an office then established' and the date 1578 is derived from subtracting 45 years from 1623, the supposed date of the letter. But it is clear that Wilson states it to be 45 years since he was personally acquainted with the State Paper Office rather than when it was created.

[9] TNA SP 45/20 f.26r

[10] Gabriel Naudeus, *Instructions Concerning Erecting of a Library*, trans. John Evelyn (London: G. Bedle, T Collins and J. Crook, 1661), 20, 23

[11] TNA SP 45/20 f.91r

[12] TNA SP 45/21 f.5r

[13] Jacob Soll, *The Information Master* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009), 120-30

[14] TNA SP 45/20 ff.211r-212r

[15] TNA SP 14/103 ff.107r-v; SP 45/20 ff.93r-94v, 198r-206r, 210r, 221r-v; 45/21 f.106r

[16] Peter Burke, *A Social History of Knowledge: From Gutenberg to Diderot* (Cambridge: Polity, 2000), 139-41

[17] TNA SP 45/20 ff. 54r-55v, 58r

[18] TNA SP 45/21 ff. 120r, 162r-v

[19] TNA SP 45/21 f.109r

[20] TNA SP 45/20 ff.133r-134v; Kevin Sharpe, *Sir Robert Cotton 1586-1631* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 92

[21] *Ibid*., 78-80, 143-4, 146-9

[22] Though archival theory has continued to evolve, the classic English language account remains Hilary Jenkinson, *A Manual of Archival Administration* (2nd ed., London: P Lund, Humphries & co., 1937)

[23] Burke, *Social History*, 86, 92-3

[24] "John Evelyn's Plan for a Library", *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, 7:2 (1950), 193-4

[25] TNA SP 45/20 ff.1r-20r

[26] Copies exist in British Library, Additional Manuscript 48008 (Yelverton MS 8) ff.3r-6r and TNA SP 45/20 ff.62r-66r; neither is in Wilson's own hand. The scheme is summarized in Hall, *Studies*, 132-3

[27] Randolph Head, "Knowing Like a State: the Transformation of Political Knowledge in Swiss Archives, 1450-1770", *The Journal of Modern History* 75:4 (2003), 753-68

[28] TNA SP 45/21 ff.95r-96v; The scheme is summarized and rearranged in Hall, *Studies*, 133

[29] TNA SP 45/21 f.123r

[30] TNA SP 45/21 ff.142r-158v; they are discussed in more detail in Hallam, 'Problems with record keeping', 224-5

[31] TNA SP 45/21 f.149r

[32] TNA SP 45/21 f.210r

[33] [W Knox], *Extra Official State Papers* (London: J. Debrett, 1789), 12

[34] Sainsbury, W. N., 'Calendar of Documents relating to the History of the State Paper Office to the Year 1800', *Annual Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records* (London, 1869), no. 308

[35] The original commissioners were Sir Joseph Ayloffe, Dr Andrew Coltee Ducarel, and Thomas Astle. Ayloffe was later replaced by John Topham, and Ducarel by Thomas Astle Junior.

[36] TNA SP 45/21 f.211r

[37] The catalogues are TNA SP 130/1-2. A summary of all the headings is in House of Commons, *Reports from the select committee, appointed to inquire into the state of the public records of the kingdom* (London, 1800), 68-74, and more briefly in Hall, *Studies*, 134-5

[38] TNA SP 45/20 f.273r

[39] TNA SP 45/20 f.33r

[40] TNA SP 45/21 ff.129r, 161v

[41] TNA SP 45/21 f.212r

[42] TNA SP 45/21 ff.196r-v

[43] TNA SP 130/1 ff.65-8

[44] TNA SP 45/23, f.254r, 45/36 p.57

[45] TNA SP 45/24 f.231r

[46] TNA SP 45/25 ff.195r-201v
[47] TNA SP 45/39 pp.26-9
[48] TNA SP 45/40 pp.325-6
[49] TNA OBS 1/886/12. The scheme is summarized in Hall, *Studies*, 135-6