

## THE ECCLESIASTICAL LAW SOCIETY'S BOOK COLLECTION AT LAMBETH PALACE LIBRARY

A note by David Harte, Barrister, Lecturer in Law at the  
University of Newcastle upon Tyne

Arrangements have recently been made with Dr. Palmer, Librarian of Lambeth Palace Library, which the General Committee hope will be of long term value for members of the Society and others wishing to research into Ecclesiastical Law. Dr. Palmer has kindly agreed that books collected by the Society may be deposited at Lambeth where they will be available for reference to members of the Society. Members will also be free to refer to the full collection in the Library.

The Lambeth Palace Library was founded in 1610 by Archbishop Bancroft. The Bancroft collection contains many volumes saved from religious houses which had been suppressed at the time of the Reformation. Notably, there are works once housed at Llanthony Priory. Today, the Lambeth library also contains major collections of archives and manuscripts, with over 1500 printed books, from the Guttenberg Bible to the present day, including recent documents such as General Synod reports. The main emphasis of the Library is on Church History. However, there is a significant body of material on Ecclesiastical Law, particularly from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, reflecting then topical issues. These ranged from tithes to ritual controversies and marriage within the forbidden degrees, such as a man's marriage to his deceased wife's sister.

The Ecclesiastical Law Society was founded in 1987, in particular to promote education in Ecclesiastical Law among lawyers and the enlargement of knowledge in the subject among clergy and laity. Thus, a connection with a major ecclesiastical library is particularly to be welcomed. Offers have been made for exchanges of a number of other relevant journals with the Ecclesiastical Law Journal and there has already been a small number of such exchanges. Hopefully, the Society may acquire further books by gift or bequest. Lambeth Palace Library is ideally situated, across the river from Westminster and Church House in the centre of London. The purpose of this note is to encourage members to use the library and to start creating a significant book collection for the Society. The Society's volumes will be catalogued and shelved with the main Lambeth collection. Technically, they will remain the property of the Society, and it is intended to indicate this with an appropriate book plate, which may also be used to record by whom a book was donated. Accessions to the Society's collection will be noted in a special ledger.

The arrangement with the library allows members to visit during normal reading hours, Mondays to Fridays between 10.00 am and 5.00 pm. The Library will have the current list of members of the Ecclesiastical Law Society and some means of identification, such as a driving licence, should be brought for the library staff to check. Access is obtained through a small gate next to the Lollard's Tower. Those who visit the Library from any distance may be wise to telephone first so as to give advance warning (071-928 6222).

The Lambeth Palace Library is exclusively a reference library and therefore any rare and valuable books which the Society may obtain will have maximum protection. If any works are acquired by the Society of which duplicates are already held at Lambeth, one copy may be placed at St. Michael's Library in Cardiff or, if it seems more appropriate, may be offered for sale to members of the Society. The proceeds from any such sale will be used to acquire other books to be kept at Lambeth.

David Harte will act as Librarian for the Society. He will be pleased to deal with any queries as to the exchange of Journals and with any offers of books. His address is: David Harte, Newcastle Law School, 22-24 Windsor Terrace, The University of Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 7RU; Telephone 091 222 6000, ext 7614, or at home 091 281 6355.