

Taborers Symposium, Grantham 2023

Friday 15 September

2:00 to 5:00

The intention is that topics in the Symposium should be 'inspired' by the **Francis Trigge Chained Library**, though this suggestion is open to a very wide interpretation. A note on the Francis Trigge Chained Library is attached below.

The Outline Programme is below. Although we have four proposals at present there is probably scope within the timeframe of three hours to fit in one or two more. All talks should be no more than 20 minutes, to allow time for discussion.

Gaby Bultmann

"Sivli, Garklein, flutefiddle and more – three- and four-hole pipes from the 16th to the 19th century" With live sound examples

Bill Tuck

"How fast should it go?": Problems in determining tempo and rhythm in the 15th century dance repertoire

This talk is sparked by an interest in the Humanism movement that is represented by several of the volumes in the FT library as well as by the idea of a 'public' library itself.

Andy Richards

Taboring fools – (and why they should be kept chained up in the library?)

Mark Perkins

"The Lyrical Pipe and Tabor"

The intention is that topics in the Symposium should be inspired by the **Francis Trigge Chained Library**:

The **Francis Trigge Chained Library** is a [chained library](#) in [Grantham, Lincolnshire](#), England which was founded in 1598. Located in the [parvise](#), over the south porch of [St Wulfram's Church](#), it has been claimed to be "the first [public library](#)" in Britain.

Most of the books were originally [chained](#), the chains made to a standard pattern by a local smith. They were riveted to the fore-edge of the front covers and many of them have been pulled away and lost. The 82 remaining chains run on rings along bars attached to the shelves; these attachments are modern and date from the restoration of the decaying porch room in 1884. Many of the volumes, which at that date were in a poor condition, were repaired locally between 1893 and 1894; but since the Second World War a number have been carefully renovated and rebound by professional conservators.

Canon Hector Nelson, who retired as Principal of the Lincoln Training College (now [Bishop Grosseteste University](#)) and came to live in Grantham until his death in 1896, directed the 1893 restoration.

The original books seem to have been bought in [Cambridge](#), since there are some second-hand volumes whose provenance has been traced to that town and a number whose bindings have

been linked to Cambridge binders of the 16th century.^[3] One of them, Garrett Godfrey, used his initials in the design he often stamped on the leather; another was Thomas Thomas, a binder who later became printer to the university. He probably added two of the books, which have Trigge's signature in a neat italic hand, at the time. Twenty volumes were added to the library from his own books under the terms of his will when he died in 1606.

The books were collected without much discrimination, probably by an agent sent down to Cambridge by carrier's cart. 14th-century legal cases under Roman law decided in central Italy and printed in [Venice](#) before 1500 cannot have been of much use to a provincial vicar in the Soke of Grantham in the early 17th century, although such works are now among some of the rarest items. One, printed in [Naples](#) in 1476, is the only copy recorded in any library. The volumes were probably bought in the first place because they were offered cheaply.^[4]

The theological mix is also indiscriminate. There are [Lutheran](#) propaganda, [Calvinistic](#) preaching, bitter attacks on [papisty](#) and equally bitter refutation of Protestant [heresies](#). What survives is the whole history of the [Reformation](#), set out in the writings of the men who brought it about or set themselves to oppose it. The collection was considered unique for the time period as it reflected the opposing ideas of the Reformation.^[5]

The collection includes:

- Medical works of [Celsus](#), [Galen](#) and others, printed from early manuscripts in 1528.
- The four books of the [Sentences](#) of [Peter Lombard](#) (d. 1160). This was the work that began the systematic attempt to correlate faith and reason in the Middle Ages.
- The *Commentaries on the Sentences*, by [Duns Scotus](#). They were written in Oxford c.1300, and argued the limitations of reason in matters of theology. This copy was printed in Venice in 1497.
- Two multivolume *Histories of the Church*, one from a Lutheran viewpoint and printed in [Basel](#), the other by the Oratorian [Caesar Baronius](#). The second was written expressly to confute the conclusions of the first.^[6]