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## Dimensions

### History and Historiography

The early history of the inns of court was already obscure by the end of the sixteenth century. In a paper delivered to the Elizabethan Society of Antiquaries around 1600, Francis Thynne confessed that ‘it is hard to know . . . the original of those inns of lawyers which we now have’. Because the inns are voluntary, unincorporate associations, without known founders and ‘unhampered by charters or statutes’, no formal documents exist from which their first establishment might be dated.<sup>1</sup> The earliest surviving records, the Black Books of Lincoln’s Inn, commence in 1422. The first Black Book (1422–71) is devoted mainly to the financial transactions of the house, although it also contains a scattering of administrative and educational entries. These become much more prominent in the next two volumes, which cover the period 1471 to 1530, when the Black Books began to function as minutes of the society’s governing body, the masters of the bench. The minutes of the Inner and Middle Temple parliaments do not commence until 1505 and 1501, respectively, and the first twenty years’ entries are sparse and cryptic, while there is a complete break in the Middle Temple records from 1525 to 1551. The bench minutes of Gray’s Inn survive only from 1569, although a few fragments of an earlier volume are preserved in seventeenth-century sources.

The first general account of the inns was the work of Sir John Fortescue, a member of Lincoln’s Inn, who rose to be chief justice of the King’s Bench before his attainder and flight to France in 1463. Fortescue wrote his treatise *De Laudibus Legum Angliae* (In praise of the laws of England) (c. 1470) for the Lancastrian Prince Edward, son of Margaret of Anjou, seeking to persuade the prince that English laws and government were totally superior to those of France. Only a few pages are

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Hearne, *A Collection of Curious Discourses* (Oxford, 1720), 110; *Selected Historical Essays of F. W. Maitland*, ed. H. M. Cam (Cambridge, 1957), 108.

devoted to the inns of court, but Fortescue depicted their virtues in glowing colours. He began by claiming that, since the common law required a knowledge of French and Latin, it could not be taught at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, where Latin was the only medium of instruction. Hence, legal training was provided in London, at the 'academy of the laws of England', comprising four greater inns of court and ten lesser inns of chancery, which served as preparatory schools for the inns of court. Students at the inns of court were virtually all noblemen's sons, since *pauperes et vulgares* [poor and common people] could not afford the expense of residence. Tuition in dancing, music and other courtly arts was available, so many great men enrolled their sons there, 'although they do not desire them to be trained in the science of law, or to live by its practice, but only by their patrimonies'. The internal organisation and structure of the societies was not discussed, but their communal life was said to be exceptionally peaceful, despite admitting as many students 'of mature age' as any French law school, Paris only excepted. Nor did Fortescue outline the methods of legal instruction, merely assuring the prince that they were 'pleasant, and in every way suited to the study of law, and also worthy of every regard'.<sup>2</sup>

Tottel, the law publisher, brought out the first English translation of *De Laudibus Legum Angliae* in 1567; this was followed by eight more English editions before the Civil War. Fortescue's didactic treatise enjoyed great popularity as an encomium of the common law, while his account of the inns was naturally regarded as the leading authority on the subject. John Stow and Sir George Buc, whose part-historical, part-contemporary descriptions of the inns were published in 1598 and 1615, respectively, both accepted Fortescue's claims for the high academic and social standing of the societies; indeed, they tended to assume that the inns were still much as they had been when Fortescue described them more than a century before.<sup>3</sup>

This essentially ahistorical attitude was fully shared by Sir William Dugdale, whose lengthy and immensely influential compilation *Origines*

<sup>2</sup> *DLA*, 117–21; see now also Sir John Fortescue, *On the Laws and Governance of England*, ed. Shelley Lockwood (Cambridge, 1997), i–xxxiii (esp. xxv), 66–70.

<sup>3</sup> Hearne, *Collection*, 2, 130; Caroline Skeel, 'The influence of the writings of Sir John Fortescue', *TRHS*, 3rd ser., 10 (1916), 77–114; John Stow, *A Survey of London*, ed. C. L. Kingsford (1908), i. 76–9; George Buc, *The Third Universitie of England. Or, a Treatise of the foundations of all the colledges, ancient schools of priviledge, and of houses of learning, and liberall arts, within and about the most famous cittie of London*, printed as appendix to Stow's *Annales*, ed. E. Howes (1615), 958–69.

*Juridiciales* first appeared in 1666, with further editions in 1671 and 1680. The second half of Dugdale's *Origines* consists of a series of extracts from the original records of the inns, arranged under subject headings and strung together with a minimum of explanatory comment. Most of the sources Dugdale used still survive but were available only in manuscript until the end of the nineteenth century, when the societies began to publish calendars of their admissions registers and bench minutes. Unfortunately, few later writers felt a need to go beyond the extracts Dugdale had so conveniently transcribed and arranged. They therefore confined themselves to the domestic annals of the inns, making little attempt to connect these with the outside world. The highly favourable view of the inns that Dugdale took over from Fortescue went unquestioned, as did his assumption that benchers' orders and rules could be taken as statements of practice, rather than mere normative precepts.<sup>4</sup>

By attempting to relate the history of the inns of court to the historical development of the legal profession and the common law itself, Frederic William Maitland and Sir William Holdsworth significantly enlarged the scissors-and-paste genre that until recently drew a thin sustenance from the pages of *Origines Juridiciales*. But the two founders of modern English legal history did not break completely with the Fortescue-Dugdale tradition, for both still envisaged the societies as emerging from medieval obscurity in substantially their final forms.<sup>5</sup> The decline and fall of the oral educational system of 'learning exercises' during the seventeenth century was seen as the first major break in their history, and even this did not much affect their constitution and internal organisation, which had been effectively settled from the time the inns first became distinct corporate bodies. Believing that the medieval societies were merely primitive replicas of the Tudor inns, Holdsworth felt no qualms about using the copious evidence of the sixteenth century to depict the state of the societies *ab initio*, complete with oligarchical government by the masters of the

<sup>4</sup> D. S. Bland, *A Bibliography of the Inns, of Court and Chancery* (Selden Society, Supp. ser. 3, 1965), sections B–F, has a comprehensive listing of antiquarian histories. Cf. William Herbert, *Antiquities of the Inns of Court and Chancery* (1804), vii: 'To give the substance of that expensive and interesting work [Dugdale] with the additional advantage of views of the places described, was the primary, and in fact, the only object here aimed at.'

<sup>5</sup> F. W. Maitland, *English Law and the Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1901); F. W. Maitland (ed.), *Year Books of Edward II, Volume I, 1 & 2 Edward II, A.D. 1307–1309* (Selden Society, 17, 1903), xviii, lxxx–lxxxii; W. S. Holdsworth, *Some Makers of English Law* (Cambridge, 1938), 46–9; and *HEL*, ii. 493–512.

bench, hierarchical grades of membership, a collegiate way of life and a complex system of legal instruction by oral learning exercises.

This view survived unchallenged until 1959, when a new interpretation, emphasising change rather than continuity, was advanced by Professor S. E. Thorne.<sup>6</sup> Thorne's study of the fifteenth-century inns convinced him that there, 'just as at Oxford and Cambridge, teaching duties were only slowly grafted on to older institutions in which they had originally played no part'. The origins of the inns were not to be found, as Holdsworth thought, 'in a body of masters of the faculty of law, giving lectures and instructing their pupils'. The prototype inn of court rather emerged when a group of practising lawyers, whose business brought them regularly to London each term, clubbed together in order 'to rent a house, hire a cook and manciple, engage a servant or two and be assured of a bed and a reasonable dinner'. So, like the halls of the medieval universities, the inns began, sometime in the fourteenth century, not as schools or colleges but as clubs, offices and lodging houses, providing their small bands of members with food, shelter and companionship in an inhospitable urban environment.

Yet unlike the halls of Oxford and Cambridge, with which they had otherwise much in common, the societies also came to function as teaching institutions. Precisely how and when this momentous development occurred remains a matter for speculation. Thorne thought it likely that legal education was not provided at the inns of court and chancery much before 1400. But evidence has now emerged that legal instruction in the form of case-argument exercises and lectures or 'readings' was being undertaken as early as the 1340s, around the time the 'men of court' seem to have finally settled in the sites off Holborn, Fleet Street and Chancery Lane, which their successors have occupied down to the present day.<sup>7</sup> As something more than lodging houses, they also began to acquire a corporate spirit, a sense of mutual pride and purpose, which finds its first expression in Fortescue's *De Laudibus Legum Angliae*.

<sup>6</sup> S. E. Thorne, 'The early history of the inns of court with special reference to Gray's Inn', *Graya*, 50 (1959), 79–96, reprinted in S. E. Thorne, *Essays in English Legal History* (1985). Cf. Ronald Roxburgh, *The Origins of Lincoln's Inn* (Cambridge, 1963), 31–3; and more recently J. H. Baker, *Legal Education in London 1250–1830* (2007), where it is suggested (8–9) that Thorne's interpretation was inspired by the historical appendix of C. P. Snow's 1951 novel, *The Masters*.

<sup>7</sup> S. E. Thorne and J. H. Baker (ed.), *Readings and Moots at the Inns of Court in the Fifteenth Century. Volume II: Moots and Readers' Cases* (Selden Society, 105, 1989), xxi–xxx; J. H. Baker, 'The Third University of England', *CPELH*, i, 143–67; P. Brand, 'Courtroom and schoolroom: the education of English lawyers prior to 1400', *BIHR*, 60 (1987), 147–60.

Thorne's thesis, modified by the research of Baker and Brand, has three great virtues. Instead of treating the inns as entities quite isolated from society at large, it places them firmly within a historical context, relating their development to late medieval movements in educational thought and practice that fostered the rise of collegiate teaching institutions throughout western Europe. It is based on examination of the surviving evidence, rather than merely projecting back from the status that the inns had achieved by the later sixteenth century. Above all, it insists that the inns have a history, not just a past, that they must be seen as dynamic organisms changing through time, not static entities essentially unaltered (or at most, corrupted) by the passing centuries.

Our conception of the origins and early history of the inns necessarily conditions our understanding of their later history. The orthodox assumption of essential continuity not only gave a false picture of the medieval societies but also a foreshortening of perspective, a telescoped view of their later development. Above all, it neglected or paid insufficient attention to the transformation of the inns from small, inward-looking professional fraternities to large, complex, quasi-collegiate public institutions, between the end of the Wars of the Roses and the eve of the English Revolution. The main agent of this momentous change was their numerical expansion, to which we may now turn.

### Membership and Residence

As with population growth and price inflation, the expansion of education in Elizabethan and early Stuart England was part of a general secular movement throughout early modern Europe. Yet like the price revolution and the demographic upswing, its causes, scale and timing at both national and international levels are by no means firmly established. The wave seems to have begun in Quattrocento Italy, spread to the Low Countries and to Spain in the later fifteenth century, to France in the early sixteenth century, and to England by the 1550s, where the growth in numbers and size of educational institutions was the subject of a classic paper by Stone.<sup>8</sup> His dating of the English 'Educational Revolution' to the period 1560–1640 depended largely upon statistical evidence for a huge

<sup>8</sup> J. H. Hexter, 'The Education of the Aristocracy in the Renaissance', in *Reappraisals in History* (1961), 45–70; Richard Kagan, *Students and Society in Early Modern Spain* (Baltimore, 1974); Lawrence Stone, 'The educational revolution in England, 1560–1640', *P & P*, 28 (1964), 41–80.

increase in the numbers of entrants to higher education during the later sixteenth century. Unfortunately, the admissions registers of the universities and inns of court are fragmentary before the mid-sixteenth century, although relatively abundant and complete thereafter. So it is possible that the undoubted boom in the Elizabethan period was not a really new development but rather the culmination of an existing long-term trend.<sup>9</sup>

The problem hinges around our ignorance of the numbers of entrants to higher education before 1560. In the absence of complete records, it can only be overcome by extrapolation from those that do exist. Assuming that the surviving early records are reliable and that each house admitted the same proportion of the total number of entrants before as after 1550, a conjectural reconstruction of the missing inns of court data can be made.<sup>10</sup> The results of this obviously speculative venture are set out in Figure 1.1.

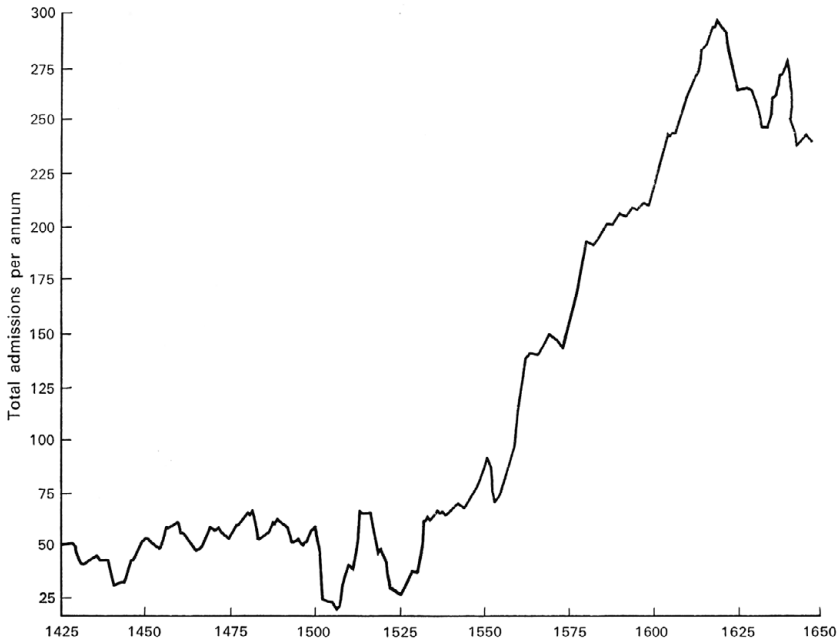
The fifteenth century appears as a period of stability, if not stagnation, with admissions rarely rising above sixty a year, followed by a brief phase of sharp fluctuations in the early 1500s. Around 1530, a gradual but sustained upward movement begins, becoming a spectacular rise from about the middle of the century; by the 1550s, admissions are nudging the century mark and by 1600, they have more than doubled, to an average of over 250 per annum. Although the upward trend peaks about the middle of James I's reign, there is a rally in the 1630s and very little weakening before the outbreak of the Civil War. Thus so far as the inns of court were concerned, the 'educational revolution' was clearly an Elizabethan and early Stuart phenomenon; but its Henrician antecedents are equally apparent, even if the post-1550 expansion was of a different order of magnitude to anything that had come before.<sup>11</sup>

If the rate of annual admissions to the inns quadrupled between 1500 and 1600, it may seem self-evident that their residential population must also have increased fourfold over the same period. But the relationship between numbers admitted to membership and numbers resident was by no means straightforward. According to Fortescue, each inn of

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Elizabeth Russell, 'The influx of commoners into the University of Oxford before 1581: an optical illusion?', *EHR*, 92 (1977), 721–45.

<sup>10</sup> Peter Praetz, Economics Department, University of Adelaide, gave expert assistance with this undertaking.

<sup>11</sup> The raw admissions data from which the statistics represented in Figure 1.1 were calculated appear in Appendix 1 below, pp. 295–99.



**Figure 1.1** Reconstructed total admissions to the inns of court 1427–1643 (fifteen-year moving averages)

court had at least 200 members. This figure is generally taken at face value, but it is difficult to reconcile with the few contemporary estimates available after 1550. For although admissions seem to have remained more or less stable through the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, before increasing very substantially after *c.* 1530, a survey undertaken for the privy council in 1574 credits Gray's Inn with 220 members, the two Temples just under 200 each and Lincoln's Inn only 160.<sup>12</sup> One explanation for this anomaly might be that Fortescue's figures were absurdly exaggerated. But a better solution is suggested by the barrister James Whitelocke's comment in another paper read to the Society of Antiquaries:

For the inns of court there are not at this time [*c.* 1600] any more in commons amongst us, when there are most, than 200, or 10 or 11 score, which is very seldome, and I suppose Fortescue meaneth only those that at that time were as residents and students in those houses *at some times or others*.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> DLLA, 118–19; SP 12/95/91 (printed *ITR*, i. 468–9).

<sup>13</sup> Hearne, *Collection*, 130 (my italics).

The distinction made here is apparently between the total number of members on the books who might use the inns over a given period, as against the number actually present at any point within that period. Given a high turnover of short-term residents, the former group would obviously be much larger and the domestic arrangements of the societies were designed to cater for just such a situation.<sup>14</sup>

Returning to Fortescue, we find that the early records of his own house include several lists of members, the last of which, dated 1454–5, names no less than 245 individuals. Yet a levy imposed only twelve years later was clearly based on the assumption that a maximum of 140 residents would be available to contribute, and the sum actually raised indicates that payments were secured from perhaps only half that number. The Elizabethan antiquary and lawyer Sir John Ferne claimed to have sighted a list of members of one of the houses compiled during the last year of Henry V's reign, which included 'scarcely threescore' names. When the admissions statistics of fifteenth-century Lincoln's Inn are compared with those for the later sixteenth century, this seems a more likely estimate of the normal population of each late-medieval inn than the figures usually cited from Fortescue.<sup>15</sup> The same essential distinction between numbers resident at a particular point and total resident over a given period helps to clarify an apparent discrepancy between the 1574 figures cited above and those given by another official census carried out in 1586. The 1574 statistics probably represent the actual numbers resident on a specific day during term; the same would seem to be the case with the 1586 figures, except those for Gray's Inn. Here a total of 356 members during term was claimed, as against only 200 at the other three houses. Gray's Inn certainly did not admit sufficient entrants between 1574 and 1586 to produce a 75 per cent increase in its population over this twelve-year period; but some working lists from which the final totals were calculated have survived, and they show that the Gray's Inn figure was based on a count taken in Hilary term 1586 of 'the gentlemen fellows of this inn as generally happen to be in residence during term and vacation'. So the total of 356 clearly represents the maximum number of potential Gray's Inn residents, any of whom might be sighted at some point or other in the course of a year but hardly all at

<sup>14</sup> See below, pp.33–4. *OJ*, 142–3.

<sup>15</sup> *BB*, i. 45–6, 52; John Ferne, *The Blazon of Gentry* (1586), 95. See also *CPELH*, i. 38–43; J. H. Baker (ed.), *Men of Court 1440–1550* (Selden Society, Supp. ser. 18, 2012), i. 3–5.



the same time. Another paper in the same group of manuscripts puts the number of members in commons at Gray's Inn during Michaelmas term 1585 and Hilary term 1586 at 274 and 256 respectively.<sup>16</sup> These figures were probably compiled on much the same basis as those for the other houses, and the margin of numerical predominance that they give Gray's Inn is entirely within the bounds of probability.

Whitelocke's own estimate, which dates from about 1600, is slightly lower than that given by Sir Edward Coke, who put the size of each house in 1602 at between 240 and 260 members; it is not clear whether Coke meant actual average attendance or total individual attendance – probably the former.<sup>17</sup> Similar problems are encountered when one tries to make sense of the few scattered figures that can be extracted from the records of the inns themselves. In 1521, nearly 160 members of the Inner Temple were said to have accompanied the newly called serjeants of the house in procession to Westminster Hall; but in 1547, only 105 members of Lincoln's Inn contributed towards the expenses of a stand at the coronation of Edward VI. The Lincoln's Inn benchers claimed in 1605 that there were usually 140 persons 'and above' in commons every term. However, in 1610, arrangements made for paying the chaplain's salary by compulsory levy presupposed that at least 200 members would be present over the course of each term. And in November 1641, when the political situation had already begun to depress attendance, the benchers complained that, whereas there were usually 220 to 260 members in commons every week during term time, numbers had now dropped off to 140 or 160 per week at the most.<sup>18</sup> The only other information from our period relates to the two Temples; in 1609, the Middle Temple bench stated that there had been 260 members 'or nearly' in commons in the middle of Easter term, while in 1613, no less than 353 individuals paid levies towards the cost of a masque produced at the beginning of that year. But this latter figure, like the assessment of nearly 300 Inner Templars for the 'barriers' staged at the investiture of Prince Charles in 1616, almost certainly includes contributions collected over the course of several terms.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Lansdowne 106, fos. 92–7 (printed *BB*, i. 456–8); Lansdowne 47, fos. 113–22.

<sup>17</sup> *Le tierce part des reportes del Edward Coke* (1602), sig. Div<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> *ITR*, i. 63; *BB*, i. 284, ii. 88, 134, 361.

<sup>19</sup> *MTR*, ii. 509; *MT/7/MAA/13*, 'A note taken . . . upon the first roles for the Maske'; *IT FIN/1/1*, Treasurer's Account Book, 1606–48, fo. 117.

These fragments of data are hardly comprehensive, nor can they easily be checked against other forms of evidence. The admissions registers themselves provide little help. Because membership of an inn of court was a ‘character indelebile’, retained for life, each member was a potential resident from the day of admission until his death.<sup>20</sup> But it cannot be assumed that all entrants listed in the registers automatically came into residence immediately after joining the societies, nor indeed that they ever came into residence at all. While the usual age at admission seems to have been between sixteen and twenty years, it was not uncommon for youths to be enrolled at the inns before going to university, especially if they were destined for a career at the bar and so likely to benefit from two or three years’ seniority gained before coming into residence.<sup>21</sup> A few even earlier admissions have been noted; for example, Christopher Yelverton entered Gray’s Inn in 1607 at the tender age of five, while Anthony Wroth(e) of Blunden Hall, Boxley, Kent, must have been a babe in arms when he was formally admitted to the Inner Temple together with his infant elder brother John in 1630.<sup>22</sup>

These cases were probably exceptional, but the number of such premature admissions during our period is unknown, since the registers list neither ages of entrants, nor the dates when they first came into residence. We have a slightly better idea of the proportion of honorific admissions, although these are not formally identified as such, and some so admitted did subsequently come into residence or take part in the activities of their house. Most honorific admissions were made at the Lent and August readings, as a mark of respect to a man’s office, rank or person. Middle-aged dignitaries – aldermen, ambassadors, clergy, courtiers, merchants, peers, physicians and politicians – admitted on these occasions may generally be assumed to have had no more than nominal further connections with the inn they joined. But this was not

<sup>20</sup> Brerewood, 27. Membership could only be lost by expulsion, or, exceptionally, voluntary ‘disadmittance’: cf. *ITR*, ii, 109, 167.

<sup>21</sup> *The Nicholas Papers*, ed. G. F. Warner (CS, 1866, n.s. 40), xii–xiv; *Wentworth Papers 1597–1628*, ed. J. P. Cooper (CS, 4th ser., 12, 1973), 21; below, p. 174; cf. E. Leedham-Green, *A Concise History of the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1996), 63.

<sup>22</sup> M. F. Keeler, *The Long Parliament 1640–1641* (Philadelphia, 1954), 403; <https://archives.innertemple.org.uk/names/8d0b5db7-3b54-41c2-9191-8615333bd4fe>. There were also mature-aged entrants, including Richard Pudsey, born 1562, who joined the MT in 1595, after taking his Cambridge MA: T. Lockwood, ‘“At Mr Marston’s request”: Edward Pudsey and the inns of court’, *N & Q*, 53 (2016), 450–3; cf. R. C. Black, *The Younger John Winthrop* (New York, 1966), 4.

necessarily so in the case of their sons and servants or office-holders in the legal bureaucracy and civil lawyers.

The crux of the matter is that the inns kept no residence records as such. So unless independent biographical evidence survives, it is usually impossible to discover if or when a member came into residence, how long he stayed and when, if ever, he returned. The admissions registers can therefore give only a rough indication of the number of potential residents admitted over a given period and their distribution between the four houses. Nearly 13,000 admissions are recorded between 1590 and 1639, but over 6 per cent of these may be discounted as purely honorific. Dual admissions and migrations from one inn to another, which might misleadingly inflate the total, were commonplace after the Restoration but still prohibited in theory and apparently rare in practice before the Civil War.<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, a few cases of *bona fide* members who escaped the admissions registers altogether have come to light and there was also a small number of entrants whose admissions were possibly, but not certainly, honorific.<sup>24</sup> These anomalies may have cancelled each other out; we can only proceed on the assumption that they did, which leaves a final net total of 12,163 non-honorific entrants and potential residents admitted during the fifty years before the Long Parliament, or an average annual intake of just over 240 entrants to the four houses.

This latter figure is somewhat artificial, since enrolments fluctuated widely from year to year and were by no means evenly distributed; as Table 1.1 shows, Gray's Inn admitted nearly twice as many entrants than any other house over the period and actually increased its share of non-honorific admissions from 34 to 41 per cent between 1590 and 1639. The Middle Temple, with only 23 per cent overall, was a poor second and its share decreased markedly after 1610. The Inner Temple and Lincoln's Inn came close behind, with about a fifth of the total intake each; neither showed much gain or loss during the period as a whole.

These statistics do not provide an infallible guide to the relative size of the inns, or their comparative rates of growth, since turnover, or average

<sup>23</sup> Dual or multiple admissions: Sir Robert Crane (IT and LI), Fulke Greville (GI and MT), Sir Dudley North (GI and IT), Sir William Pennyman (IT and GI) and John Winthrop (LI and IT).

<sup>24</sup> Unrecorded entrants: Sir John Resesby and William Strachey (GI), Edward Borlase and William Dryden (MT): cf. *Memoirs of Sir John Resesby*, ed. A. Browning, 2nd ed. (1991), 3; S. G. Culliford, *William Strachey 1571-1621* (Charlottesville, VA, 1965), 31-2; *MTR*, ii. 615; cf. also Egerton 2981 (Heath and Verney papers, iv), fos. 24-24<sup>v</sup>, re unrecorded post-1660 IT entrants.

Table 1.1. *Non-honoric admissions, 1590–1639: Decennial totals and percentages*

Decade	Gray's Inn Number	%	Inner Temple Number	%	Lincoln's Inn Number	%	Middle Temple Number	%	Total
1590–99	684	34.1	432	21.5	397	19.8	495	24.7	2,008
1600–09	780	34.2	411	18.0	431	18.9	661	29.0	2,283
1610–19	1,068	38.9	492	17.9	577	21.0	612	22.7	2,749
1620–29	1,158	46.3	421	16.8	441	17.6	483	19.3	2,503
1630–39	1,079	41.2	473	18.1	539	20.6	529	20.2	2,620
Total									
1590–1639	4,769	39.2	2,229	18.3	2,385	19.6	2,780	22.9	12,163

length of residence, was not necessarily constant throughout our period or the same at each inn. Entrants who had no ambitions for a legal career were unlikely to remain in residence as long as would-be barristers. The (admittedly scanty) biographical data indicates that about two years was the typical period of residence for the 'non-professional' student, and the judges' orders of 1574 suggest three years as the outside maximum.<sup>25</sup> Of course individual exceptions abounded, and in any case we do not know the ratio of 'professional' to non-professional entrants during our period. But the proportion of the latter certainly increased with the admissions boom in the second half of the sixteenth century, and Gray's Inn may have attracted a disproportionate share of non-professional entrants, thanks to its aristocratic image and reputation. So while Gray's Inn was indeed larger than the other houses, the discrepancy would not have been quite so marked as the figures tabulated above might suggest.

But even the term 'residence' presents some difficulties. That word itself was rarely used by the inns; their residential requirements were usually expressed as an obligation to 'continue in commons' for so many weeks of term or vacation or months of the year. While being in commons was the main criterion of residence, some members nevertheless preferred to 'frequent inns and victualling houses or live privately in chambers', despite the benchers' best efforts to chivvy them into commons.<sup>26</sup> The inns' ruling bodies saw attendance at commons as basic to the societies' very existence. In 1640, the Middle Temple benchers claimed that without 'the holding together in commons [of] the companie of this fellowship in their publique hall . . . a companie so voluntarily gathered together to live under government could hardly bee termed a society'. But the proliferation and repetition of exhortations and orders in the same vein seems sufficient evidence of their ineffectiveness.<sup>27</sup> At the same time, the fact that commons were provided on a weekly basis, with half-commons for those spending only a few days in town and 'repasts'

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Black, *Younger John Winthrop*, 23, 27; R. C. Bald, *John Donne* (Oxford, 1970), 54–8; Essex R.O., D/DP A17 (John Petre's account book, 1567–70); *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby*, 3–6; *The Memoirs of Sir Hugh Cholmley* (1787), 38; *OJ*, 312. The courtier John Harington, admitted to LI in Nov. 1581, had left by mid-1583: N. E. McLure, *The Letters and Epigrams of Sir John Harington* (Philadelphia, 1930), 11. See also below, pp. 300–1.

<sup>26</sup> *BB*, ii. 251. LI MS, Vacation Commons 1629–35, seems to contain the only surviving lists of commoners for our period, other than MT/21/2/5/DB, a single sheet naming fifty-four students in commons on 8 April 1630.

<sup>27</sup> MT /1/MPA/4 (Minutes of Parliament B), fo. 236; cf. *BB*, ii. 89, 207; *GIPB*, i. 105, 190, 256–7; *ITR*, ii. 26, 122; *MTR*, i. 377, ii. 668.

Table 1.2. *Recorded admission to house and/or chambers of non-honorific entrants, 1620–9*

Inner Temple		Lincoln's Inn		Middle Temple	
House	Chambers	House	Chambers	House	Chambers
421	183	441	208	483	229

for members requiring no more than a couple of meals, points to a rapid turnover of temporary residents, most of them probably country lawyers making a short business trip to London during term.

The other hallmark of residence was the possession of a chamber (or rather, a part-chamber, except for benchers). But newly admitted members were not always able or willing to obtain a chamber in their house. The official records of chamber transactions at Lincoln's Inn and the two Temples during the 1620s (when pressure on the available accommodation was relatively slack), suggest that well over half the entrants in that decade never formally acquired a house chamber at all (Table 1.2).<sup>28</sup>

Most chambers were held on a lease of one or more lives; leases could be assigned to another member during the lessee's lifetime for a purchase price negotiated between the two parties and an entry fine of between £1 and £5 paid to the house. When the lease expired through the death of the lessee or the last of the lives under which it was originally granted, the chamber reverted to the inn. A new lease was then arranged, and the incoming lessee paid to the house both the entry fine and the purchase price, which varied according to the amenities, condition and size of the chamber. At Gray's Inn, leases were sometimes granted for a period of years and thus not necessarily voided by the lessee's death; both there and at the Inner Temple lessees often paid an annual rent as well as an entry fine, rather than making an outright purchase of the lease.

Students sometimes temporarily occupied a room during vacations or at other times when its owner was absent; such ad hoc arrangements were not formally registered because the house received no financial benefit. Private sales and transfers made without paying an entry fine to the house were naturally forbidden but occurred nevertheless. Thus

<sup>28</sup> Cf. D'Ewes, *Autobiography*, ii. 82; *BB*, ii. 125, 257; *GIPB*, i. 324–5; *ITR*, ii. 151. No comparable records survive for *GI*.

the official records of chamber transactions are not entirely comprehensive. Yet it is clear that a sizeable proportion of students and barristers did not find accommodation within the four societies.

Londoners, who comprised about ten per cent of the members admitted during our period, could always live at home, while others might have friends or relatives in town who would be willing to put them up. The rest constituted a floating population, housed in neighbouring lodgings and tenements. Some of these were recognised annexes, like Fulwood's and Bentley's Rents near Gray's Inn; others, like Lincoln's Inn Grange, had no such semi-official status, being 'a receptacle for all sorts of strangers whatsoever'. Nearby inns, such as the Antelope in Holborn, the Red Lion, Grey's Inn Lane, and the Black Spread Eagle in Fleet Street, also provided accommodation, and many students simply took lodgings in a private house; one of the arguments advanced during the Protectorate against levying a general subsidy on the two Temples was that 'diverse gentlemen of those societies have chambers abroad in the city and suburbs'.<sup>29</sup>

Although the rulers of the inns disapproved of members living out, 'as forraignors rather than as fellowes associated together', no effort was made to enforce the judges' orders of 1574, 1584 and 1591 prohibiting the admission of more entrants than could be housed within the societies. As a result, the demand for chambers in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth century far exceeded the supply. In 1583, the Inner Temple benchers were told of two students who had allegedly 'continued there by the space of foure yeres and could never as yett gett any chamber in the house by reason of the scarcitie of them'. The situation was not much better when Lewis Bagot was admitted to the Inner Temple twenty years later. Bagot was obliged to entreat his fellow countryman from Staffordshire, Sir Walter Aston, 'to helpe mee to a chamber, whose answer was hee knew of none that were voide' but promised that Lewis might use his own when he 'went into the cuntry'.<sup>30</sup>

The position may have eased slightly during the next decade; yet George Radcliffe, who was admitted to Gray's Inn in February

<sup>29</sup> W. D. Christie, *Memoirs, Letters and Speeches of Anthony Ashley Cooper* (1859), 32; Black, *Younger John Winthrop*, 24–5; HMC, *Various Collections*, [iii. 89]; TNA, Req 2/199/2, and 2/203/30; M. E. Finch, *The Wealth of Five Northamptonshire Families 1540–1640* (1956), 26n; GIPB, i. 118–19; BB, ii. 2; ITR, ii. 372.

<sup>30</sup> MT1/MPA/5, fo. 204; BB, ii. 257; GIPB, i. 324–5; OJ, 312, 316; GIPB, i. 62; IT MS, Miscellaneous 30, Letters to Treasurers and Benchers, 7; Folger Shakespeare Library, MS L.a. 63–4; cf. *Letters of Philip Gawdy . . . 1570–1616*, ed. I. H. Jeayes (1906), 2–3.

1611 and came into commons at the end of that year, lodged at 'an honest ould widdowes house' in Holborn until the Easter vacation of 1613, which he spent in the chamber of a kinsman at Gray's Inn, 'now in his absence'. After this experience, Radcliffe told his mother that he found 'lying abroad . . . both chargeable and inconvenient' and suggested that for £20 'together with what my good friends will lende me' he could buy 'a faire chamber'. The next month, he wrote again on the same subject: 'I am now about a chamber: it is a faire chamber, butt will coste me much. Sende me worde when I shall have money towards it.'<sup>31</sup>

Radcliffe was not alone in finding 'house rent pretty smart in the citty', but a chamber at an inn of court was unlikely to be cheap. Besides the bare purchase price, which might run to nearly £200 by the end of our period, there was the entry fine to the house and the cost of furnishings; Justinian Pagitt compiled a list of *necessaria* for his new chamber at the Middle Temple in 1634 that included chairs, tables, bedstead, curtains, closestool, cupboards, desk, 'a wheele for bookes' and a pair of globes. So even when chambers became more readily available, as they apparently did in the 1620s, the capital outlay necessary to acquire one must have deterred many students, especially those who had no intention of remaining at the inns for more than a year or so.<sup>32</sup>

Even after a member was formally admitted to a chamber, there was no guarantee that he would occupy it. All those below the bench who possessed house chambers were supposed to be in commons for at least eight weeks each year, on pain of forfeiting their lease. In practice, little notice was taken of less than a year's absence, and even longer periods of discontinuance were frequently overlooked. Much depended on the demand for chambers at the time and the status of the individual concerned; in 1617, a member of the Middle Temple was dispossessed because he had not been in commons for the past sixteen years; but in 1621, the benchers allowed an absentee of thirty years to keep his room.

<sup>31</sup> *The Life and Original Correspondence of Sir George Radcliffe*, ed. T. D. Whitaker (1810), 65, 67, 76–7, 87, 92–3.

<sup>32</sup> Anon., *The Way to be Rich, According to the Practice of the Great Audley* (1661), 16; HMC, *Buccluch*, iii. 370; IT CHA/1/2, fo. 288; MTR, ii. 823; *Calendar of the Proceedings of the Committee for Compounding, 1643–1660*, ed. M. A. E. Green (1889–92), 1200; Harleian 1026, fos. 91–91<sup>v</sup>. A survey of 1574 (ITR, i. 468–9) suggests that about 20 per cent of the inns' resident members were then without chambers; this proportion probably continued to rise until at least c. 1610.



Table 1.3. *Special admissions, number and percentage of total, 1590–1639*

Decade	Inner Temple		Lincoln's Inn		Middle Temple	
	Special	% Total	Special	% Total	Special	% Total
1590–99	63	14.6	42	10.6	252	50.9
1600–09	85	20.7	50	11.6	413	62.5
1610–19	135	27.4	41	7.1	492	80.4
1620–29	137	32.5	51	11.6	433	91.7
1630–39	122	25.8	40	8.9	449	84.9
Total	542	24.3	224	9.4	2039	73.3

Dispensations were also readily granted for foreign travel, sickness, absence on business of state and so forth.<sup>33</sup>

The only other residential obligations were based on the need to ensure that sufficient members would be at hand for the readings and other learning exercises in Lent and August vacations. At Lincoln's Inn and the two Temples all entrants were supposed to be in attendance during each learning vacation, for at least two years immediately after they first came into commons, or pay a twenty-shilling fine for each missed vacation. But this requirement could be avoided by acquiring a special admission. The proportion of new entrants with special admissions varied widely and inexplicably from one inn to another; by the 1630s, more than 90 per cent of members joining the Middle Temple were specially admitted, as against only a quarter of the Inner Temple entrants and less than a tenth of those at Lincoln's Inn (Table 1.3).<sup>34</sup>

It cannot be assumed that all students with special admissions avoided learning vacations, while those generally admitted invariably fulfilled their formal obligations. Lists of members attending vacations at Lincoln's Inn between 1589 and 1596 and again from 1609 to 1611 suggest that the rate of absenteeism among generally admitted students was between 30 to 50 per cent, although some recorded as absentees may

<sup>33</sup> See Appendix 2; and *GIPB*, i. 154; *BB*, ii. 95, 104, 141, 243; *ITR*, i. 149; *MTR*, i. 166, ii. 530, 600, 638, 663.

<sup>34</sup> Differences in fees charged for various types of admission do not completely account for the wide variation in the recorded proportion of special admissions at the three houses concerned. The fines payable by absentees from vacations were the same at Lincoln's Inn and the Middle Temple; the penalty at the Inner Temple is unknown; *LI MS*, Black Books V, fos. 466<sup>v</sup> *et seq.*; *MTR*, i. 150, ii. 812.

actually have missed only part of their vacations.<sup>35</sup> The residential obligations of candidates for the bar and newly called benchers and barristers, which varied a little from house to house, were slightly more expensive to evade than those of the freshman student, but, on the other hand, they affected less than 20 per cent of entrants admitted during our period.

It should also be noted that the four terms of Michaelmas (approximately seven weeks), Hilary, Easter and Trinity (about three weeks each), plus the Lent and August learning vacations, took up less than six months of each year; the rest was *mesne* (mean) vacation, when numbers in residence dropped sharply, 'none but students for the most part keeping commons'.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, the inns always harboured a population of non-members: domestic staff, personal servants, lawyer's clerks, seminary priests, 'bankrupts and debtors, which make here their subterfuges from arrests' and sundry 'gentlemen of the country . . . forriners and discontinuers', whose presence threatened to turn the houses from '*hospitia* to *diversoria*' (inns to lodging houses), according to the judges' orders of 1614.<sup>37</sup>

It should now be clear why the size of the societies as residential institutions during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries cannot be precisely determined. The inns of court were not organised on the lines of a modern university, with annual enrolments, a more or less uniform pattern of attendance during the academic year and predictable annual turnover of students. They operated more like residential clubs or hotels, catering for a fluid, heterogeneous population of semi-permanent guests and short-term transients. The lack of hard evidence, the problems of definition and the instability of their residential population defy all attempts at precise measurement. About the most one can say, following two well-informed contemporary estimates, is that the four societies probably accommodated around 1,000 members during term time by the beginning of the seventeenth century, although the total number resident and passing through in the course of a single term may have been up to a third or perhaps half as many more.

<sup>35</sup> LI MS, Black Books V, fos. 501–3<sup>v</sup>, 519–21; VI, fos. 473–7<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. *A Handbook of Dates for Students of British History*, ed. C. R. Cheney and Michael Jones (Cambridge, 2000), 98–9, 103, 112–41; D'Ewes, *Autobiography*, i. 218; *BB*, i. 460–2.

<sup>37</sup> IT MS, Records of the Inner Temple, vol. 31, p. 24; Thomas Powell, *The Art of Thriving* (1636), 177, 180–5; *GIPB*, i. 70, 213; *ITR*, ii. 228; *MTR*, ii. 788; *OJ*, 317.

This certainly represented a vast increase since Fortescue's day, even if by comparison with a modern university or industrial corporation the early Stuart inns of court seem tiny institutions. Indeed, it is clear that the contemporary universities easily outstripped them, both in annual admissions and total enrolment. As early as 1577, William Harrison put the joint student enrolment of Oxford and Cambridge at 3,000, and Stone's statistics show that admissions to the four inns never reached more than two-thirds of the yearly intake at either English university.<sup>38</sup> On the other hand, the four individual houses of court were each as big as any but the very largest university college. In 1621, only five of the sixteen Cambridge colleges claimed more than 200 members, including dons and servants. In a world where personal and social life still largely centred around the family, functional human groups of this size presented unusual problems of adjustment for their members and of management for their rulers.<sup>39</sup>

### Architecture and Topography

While the expansion of the inns affected practically every aspect of their activities and organisation, its most immediate and striking impact was on their physical appearance. When Elizabeth came to the throne in 1558, all four societies had been settled on their modern sites for at least a century. But their outward form and shape had changed hardly at all since the lawyers first took up residence, in buildings seemingly inherited from previous tenants. Most of these (except the halls, chapels and the Temple Church) were of timber construction, two or three storeys high, with large rooms running across each floor, divided by wainscot partitions into bedchambers and studies. Ditches or mud walls marked the boundaries of each house; the buildings within, grouped loosely round a central courtyard, were surrounded by fields and orchards. From Gray's Inn north to Highgate village was open country, and rabbits could still be caught in the coney garth at the back of Lincoln's Inn. Even the two Temples, hemmed in on three sides by houses and shops, looked out across green fields to the Thames and the clear expanse of Southwark marshes beyond.

<sup>38</sup> Stone, 'Educational revolution', Table III.

<sup>39</sup> William Harrison, *The Description of England*, ed. G. Edelen (Ithaca, 1968), 70; David Masson, *The Life of John Milton* (1881–1894), i. 113–14. At Oxford in 1634 the equivalent ratio was even lower (four out of twenty-five colleges and halls): *The History of the University of Oxford: iv. Seventeenth-Century Oxford*, ed. Nicholas Tyacke (Oxford, 1997), 39–41.

The first major building erected by the lawyers was the Old Hall of Lincoln's Inn, completed in 1492. The red brick gatehouse of Lincoln's Inn on Chancery Lane was finished about 1520; while at the Inner Temple, a series of timber buildings, erected in the 1530s and '40s, completed the quadrangle formed by the Temple Church, the cloisters and the hall. The Middle Temple gatehouse to Fleet Street, which Dugdale identified in 1666 as the oldest building of the house, was begun about 1520, and in 1528 a river wall was built along the southern boundary of both Temples.<sup>40</sup>

The pace of construction quickened after 1550 and hardly slackened for the next ninety years. The extension and rebuilding of the inns soon alarmed Elizabeth's government, anxious to contain London's sprawl and particularly concerned by catholic proselytising among the junior members of the societies. In 1574, they were ordered to cease constructing new sets of chambers and to admit no more students than could be accommodated in the existing buildings.<sup>41</sup> But since most of the inns' revenues came from admission fees and chamber entry fines, while many benchers had a personal financial stake in continued expansion, it is not surprising that these commands were tacitly ignored.

Much of the capital and initiative for the new buildings erected during our period came from private members. Individuals and syndicates were permitted to erect sets of chambers at their own expense; these eventually reverted to the inn but not until the builders and their descendants had enjoyed the right of nominating the occupants for a number of years or lives. With rising admissions there was keen demand for accommodation and private chamber building could be a lucrative business.<sup>42</sup> But from the early 1620s, or slightly before, as the pressure on chambers eased a little, members showed less willingness to venture their capital on

<sup>40</sup> For a convenient summary of building activity, see *OJ*, 146–7, 187–9, 231–6, 272–3. See also H. H. Bellot, *The Inner and Middle Temple* (1902), chs. 2, 12, 13, 16; Francis Cowper, *A Prospect of Gray's Inn, Its History and Associations* (1951, 1985), ch. 1; W. R. Douthwaite, *Gray's Inn, Its History and Associations* (1886), chs. 5–8; W. H. Spilsbury, *Lincoln's Inn* (1850); J. B. Williamson, *History of the Temple, London* (1925), pt. II, *passim*; Richard O. Havery, 'Buildings of the Middle Temple', in Havery, 67–80; Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in London*, vols. ii and iv (1925, 1929).

<sup>41</sup> *OJ*, 312; these orders were re-issued ten years later, and the command against overcrowding repeated again in 1596: *ibid.*, 316; *GIPB*, i. 61.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. George Fulwood's attack on benchers involved in chamber-building, *GIPB*, i. 118. For evidence of speculators attempting to keep up prices by leaving chambers vacant, cf. *ITR*, ii. 106.

speculative chamber building; thereafter, most new accommodation was put up at the expense of the house concerned.

Buildings not promoted by members were financed by a combination of short-term loans, levies and appropriations from general revenue. These sources were tapped both for the construction of new chambers and for major additions and replacements to the existing communal buildings. Between 1555 and 1560, the hall of Gray's Inn was rebuilt with a gallery, a hammer-beam roof and stepped gables in the Flemish style, while in 1624 the chapel was enlarged to accommodate overflow congregations attracted by the sermons of Richard Sibbes. The Inner Templars added 'a great carved skreen' to their hall in 1574 and joined with the Middle in expensive renovations to the Temple Church during the 1630s. At Lincoln's Inn, the kitchens were replaced in 1557, a gallery added to the Old Hall in 1565, and a new chapel costing some £3,500 completed in 1623.<sup>43</sup> The Middle Temple hall, begun about 1562 and finished some twelve years later, was the only structure of comparable expense and size erected during this period. Covering an area of one hundred feet in length and forty in breadth, with a magnificent oak roof executed by a master-carpenter borrowed from Sir John Thynne at Longleat, a large gallery and an ornate screen, it still stands as a monument to the material well-being and social aspirations of the Elizabethan inns of court.<sup>44</sup>

The great rebuilding of the inns between 1550 and 1640 was not merely a matter of expanding accommodation to cope with a steadily growing membership. Many of the structures erected at the inns during this period would have equally graced an Oxford or Cambridge college; indeed, the Middle Temple hall served as a model for the new hall built at Trinity College, Cambridge, in the early seventeenth century.<sup>45</sup> While all the early Tudor work had been executed in roughcast and timber (except at Lincoln's Inn, where bricks for the hall and gatehouse were dug from

<sup>43</sup> The traditional attribution of Lincoln's Inn chapel to Inigo Jones seems to be based on 'a slip made by Dugdale, enlarged into a blunder by Vertue': John Summerson, *Architecture in Britain 1530 to 1830* (1983), 143, 158, 571; cf. *BB*, ii. 209, 211; William Martin, 'Some London topography in stained glass, c. 1623, in the Chapel of Lincoln's Inn', *Proc. Soc. Antiquaries*, 2nd ser., 28 (1916), 140–6; Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England . . . The Cities of London and Westminster* (1962), 294.

<sup>44</sup> John Buxton, *Elizabethan Taste* (1963), 62; Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, *Inventory*, iv. 148–51. Mark Girouard, 'The Halls of the Elizabethan and early Stuart Inns of Court', in *ICWEMIC*, ch. 7.

<sup>45</sup> Summerson, *Architecture*, 178, 185–8.

clay-pits on the site), the Elizabethan and early Stuart buildings were predominantly brick and stone. This change made for greater comfort, durability and uniformity. It also allowed the new chamber buildings to rise to five or six storeys. During the Elizabethan building boom, extra chambers were piled indiscriminately onto existing structures and new courts, each side comprising several separate blocks of chambers, sprang up around the original quadrangles. By Charles I's reign, however, the benchers had begun to show some concern for the overall architectural development of the societies, and with the reduction in private building were better placed to control standards and styles of construction.

As early as 1615, the benchers of the Middle Temple decided that in future they would authorise no new construction projects by members, with all such buildings to be erected at the expense of the society. In 1629, the Inner Temple parliament resolved to demolish a row of sixteen chambers put up some twenty years before by Edward Heyward, because they were of 'weak and unseemlie' construction, as well as blocking the view of the gardens and river. Two years later, the length of a new building at the Inner Temple was deliberately restricted, in order to give 'a better ornament and prospect' to the hall.<sup>46</sup> John Bayliffe, undertreasurer of the Middle Temple, who supervised the erection of a large six-storey chamber-block on Middle Temple Lane between 1637 and 1640, proudly described the finished building as being 'the gracefulest for situation, the best for convenience, the fairest for beautie and unformitie'. And in 1630, determined to prevent further 'disorderly building', the benchers of Gray's Inn resolved to engage 'an able and sufficiente architecte', who was 'to make a module of all this house how the same shall bee hereafter builded'.<sup>47</sup>

Grounds and gardens also came in for a good deal of attention. A 'faire walke under the trees' was made at the back of Lincoln's Inn in 1553; and between 1562 and 1568, the mud wall around the back garden was replaced in brick. While Francis Bacon was master of the walks, the garden of Gray's Inn was fenced and planted with roses, elms, beeches and sycamores, and a mound with a summerhouse, topped by a carved and gilded griffin (the newly adopted emblem of the house) was raised in the centre. The fields of the Inner Temple were enclosed with 'a stronge bricke wall' in 1591 and then transformed into 'large and lovely walkes ... ornyfied with beautiful bankes, curious knotts and bedds of

<sup>46</sup> *MTR*, ii. 592; *ITR*, ii. lxxv–lxxvi.

<sup>47</sup> *MT/2/TAS/5*, 'John Bayliffe the accomptantes answers' (1642), fo. 17; *GIPB*, i. 292.

fragrant flowers, & sweet herbes of sundry s[c]entes and sorts'. Around them stood 'strong and stately rales of timber worke carved', with posts bearing 'the figure of the twelve celestiall signes, verie lively and artificially cutt'.<sup>48</sup>

These architectural and topographical changes were both demanded and allowed by the growth of the inns between 1550 and 1640. The pressure of increasing numbers necessitated additional accommodation and encouraged members to meet that demand by private building; more members meant more revenue for the societies, which permitted increased expenditure on public works. At the same time, the manner in which additional accommodation was provided and existing amenities improved points to a changing view of the functions and status of the inns. The benchers' architectural taste, at least as evinced by the Middle Temple hall and Lincoln's Inn chapel, remained profoundly conservative. But the shift from timber to brick, the growing concern for order, proportion and regularity, the conversion of fields and orchards to formally laid-out gardens, all suggest a conscious attempt to transform the former lawyers' hostels into the semblance of aristocratic, collegiate institutions, 'the nurserie for the greater part of the gentry of the realme'.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>48</sup> D. Jacques, "The chief ornament" of Gray's Inn: the walks from Bacon to Brown', *Garden History*, 17 (1989), 41–50; *BB*, i. 312, 335, 341–2, 350; *IT MS*, Miscellaneous, vol. 32, 'Antiquities of the Inner and Middle Temple', fo. 12<sup>v</sup>; *ITR*, i. 444; B. J. Sokol, 'Manuscript evidence for an earliest date of *Henry VI Part One*', *N & Q*, n.s. 47, no. 1 (2000), 58–60; Paula Henderson, 'The evolution of the early gardens of the inns of court', *ICWEMIC*, 179–98.

<sup>49</sup> Lansdowne 115, fo. 107<sup>v</sup>.