

# Henry Aldrich, Dean of Christ Church

By E. F. A. SUTTLE

## I

**H**ENRY ALDRICH, the son of Henry Aldrich of Westminster, gentleman, was born in that city in January 1648. At the age of eight his name appears on the books of Westminster School, where, two years later, he was elected a King's Scholar. The school records of this period are meagre, and no further mention of his name is to be found until 1662, when he won a Westminster Scholarship to Christ Church, Oxford.

From the time of Elizabeth there had been a very close connexion between Westminster and Christ Church, and perhaps at no time was this so strong as in the latter half of the 17th century, when Westminster flourished under the stern rule of Dr. Richard Busby. Busby was undoubtedly a successful schoolmaster, though a relentless disciplinarian. It was his proud boast at one period that sixteen bishoprics were occupied by his former pupils—at a time, moreover, when the Church was served by many brilliant men. Anthony Wood describes him as 'a person eminent and exemplary for piety and justice, an encourager of vertuous and forward youth, of great learning and hospitality, and the chief person that educated more youths that were afterwards eminent in the Church and State, than any master of his time.'<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless he was no sparer of the rod, and many famous men were honest enough to attribute a great deal of their success to the birchings they had received from his hand.

Such was the man from whom Aldrich received his education, and from whose care he passed into the University of Oxford. He matriculated on July 19, 1662, when he was fourteen years of age, and though he did not immediately proceed to a Studentship, this distinction was granted him soon after.

Oxford, the King's stronghold during the Civil War, had suffered considerably during the Commonwealth and Protectorate, and during the early years of the Restoration, when Aldrich first took up residence, was still rejoicing in its welcome change of fortune. A vivid description of Oxford at this time is given by Stephen Penton, afterwards Principal of St. Edmund Hall (1675-1683):<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wood, *Athenae*, iv, 418.

<sup>2</sup> Lilian M. Quiller-Couch, *Reminiscences of Oxford by Oxford Men*, O.H.S. xxii (1892), 41 f.

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'For of all places the University being *fast* to the monarchy, suffering most and being most weary of the usurpation; when *Oliver* was dead and *Richard* dismounted, they saw through a maze of changes that in a little time the nation would be fond of that government which twenty years before they hated. The hopes of this made the scholars talk aloud, drink healths, and curse *Merox* in the very streets. Insomuch that when the king came in, nay, when the king was but *voted* in, they were not onely like them that dream, but like them who are out of their wits, mad, stark, staring mad. To study was *fanaticism*, to be moderate was downright *rebellion*, and thus it continued for a twelve-month; and thus it would have continued till this time, if it had not pleased God to raise up some Vice-Chancellours who stemmed the torrent which carried so much filth with it, and . . . reduced the University to that temperament that a man might study and not be thought a *dullard*, might be sober and yet a *conformist*, a scholar and yet a *Church of England-man*.'

A Puritan discipline, however, prevailed in certain circles. When Penton sent his son up to Oxford and talked with the boy's prospective tutor, Penton was asked to impress upon his son the need for the observance of certain standards of conduct. He was to rise every morning to six o'clock prayers, avoid public places and idle company, and attend regularly at St. Mary's church every Sunday. According to usual custom, he was to spend the whole year in Oxford, and was especially recommended not to write home for the first twelve months, lest he should fret for a 'dear sister, who languishes and longs to see him as much almost as she doth for a husband.'<sup>1</sup> Under such rigorous conditions Aldrich, also, passed his early years at Christ Church. In 1666 he graduated B.A., and in 1669 M.A., and was about this time admitted into Holy Orders, becoming a noted tutor of his House.

During the next few years there began that long period of intimate association with Christ Church men which has made his name famous and his memory enduring. The biographer of John Freind in *Biographica Britannica* speaks of Aldrich in generous praise:

'John was elected into Christ Church . . . where he had the signal advantage of being under the eye of the famous Dr. Aldrich, who, for his exemplary vigilance, true zeal for learning, and well-conducted generosity, was universally admired and applauded while living, whose memory will be ever revered in that seat of the Muses, where he made it the business of his life to promote useful and polite literature, and whose praises ought always to accompany those of the great men formed under his care.'

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

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The ability of Aldrich as a composer was recognised already, and at the Encaenia of 1672 he was called upon to set to music certain verses written by Bishop Fell—*In laudem Musices Carmen Sapphicum*. These were spoken from the Music Gallery by one John Penkherst, and partly sung by 'several masters of musick, scholars and choiristers in divers parts.' His talents were again in demand for the Encaenias of 1674 and 1675. A note on Anthony Wood's programme for 1674 says, 'Musick, both Vocall and Instrumentall for above half an houre, of Mr. Aldridge's composition'; and another note the following year, 'The vocall [music] was set by Mr. Aldridg of Christ Church to the latter part of the lord Kilmurrey's verse.'

The excellence of these compositions was evidently recognised by Dr. Huntingdon, the Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, who wrote to Aldrich a few years later asking him to compose music to 'refresh, oblige and even charm the auditors' at an Act ceremony which Trinity College, Dublin proposed to hold in imitation of Oxford. There is no record of Aldrich having acceded to this request, but the incident proves that Aldrich's reputation as a composer at this time was not limited to the narrow circle of his Oxford acquaintances.

During these years Christ Church was called upon to accommodate King Charles and a part of his Court for the Oxford Parliament of 1681. Flags were flown, toasts drunk, and loyal crowds lined the street from Magdalen Bridge to Carfax and called upon the devil to hang up all Roundheads. '... You would have thought that they would have thrown away their verie heads and legges. Here was an arme for joy flung out of joynt and there a legge displaced, but by what art they can find their way back let the R.S. [Royal Society] tell you.'<sup>2</sup> These demonstrations of loyalty, however, were not sufficient to damp the ardour of the Whig element in parliament, which remained so refractory that Charles dissolved it within a few days. Such proceedings, unreasonable as they were, induced many witty comments from the exiled undergraduates. As one of them aptly put it:

' We schollars were expell'd awhile  
To let the senatours in,  
But they behaved themselves so ill  
That we returned agen.'<sup>3</sup>

Meanwhile Aldrich 'distinguished himself by his great proficiency in various branches of divine and human learning,' and, on the death of Mr. Sam Speed, was appointed to succeed him as a Canon of Christ Church, in which capacity he was installed a fortnight later, February 15, 1682. He forthwith took

<sup>1</sup> Wood, *Life and Times*, II (O.H.S. XXI), 248.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 526.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 534.

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up residence in the lodging assigned to the occupant of the Second Canon's stall, a house which previously had sheltered successively the Prior of St. Frideswide's and the Dean of Cardinal College. On March 2 he accumulated the degrees of B.D. and D.D.

There is a dearth of biographical detail in the records of these years. In a sea of political unrest and alleged papist plots, in which he was subjected to many conflicting currents of political and religious thought, Aldrich threw in his lot with the High Church Tories. There is a record of a sermon preached in St. Mary's Church in June 1682 in which he denounced a recent publication by the Whig minister, Samuel Johnson, called *The Life of Julian the Apostate*. Wood describes how Aldrich 'toke two of Julian's most specious arguments to pieces and repell'd them very clearly.'<sup>1</sup> It was in the same spirit that, four years later, he headed the campaign against the adherents of Massey, when the religious ambitions of James II caused him to appoint Roman Catholics to various university offices. Since the events of the Oxford Parliament in 1681, political opinion in Oxford had at first swung back in favour of the Tories, until in 1683, on the day of Lord Russell's execution, Convocation had censured a long list of Whig doctrines, and Charles's policy of hereditary succession had at last found favour in Oxford minds. Even the accession of James in 1685 was received with satisfaction and sympathy, and when Monmouth landed at Lyme Regis and the drums beat in Oxford for volunteers, Convocation sanctioned the formation of a defensive regiment of scholars. But the rebels never advanced beyond Bridgwater, and when the news of their defeat reached Oxford it was celebrated by a great bonfire in Tom Quad, and the regiment was disbanded.

This pro-monarchical feeling, however, was not destined to last. In 1686 the judges decided that the king could, in particular cases, dispense with the penal laws and admit Catholics to offices of Church and State notwithstanding the Test Act. As a consequence there sprang up a considerable Romanist faction having complete immunity from fine or other punishment. Several Fellows and Demys of Magdalen College were expelled because they refused to accept the nomination of a papist President, and this ancient foundation was turned into what was virtually a Roman Catholic seminary. Obadiah Walker, the Catholic Master of University College, obtained a dispensation to profess his religion openly, and fitted up a special chapel in his college, gathering round him a set of men of sympathetic opinions, the chief of whom were Massey and Woodhead. The influence of Walker had already obtained for the former the office of Dean of Christ Church upon the death of Bishop Fell. Massey was installed by Aldrich, now Sub-Dean, in a ceremony which, if Wood's account is true, must have been unconventional to a remarkable degree. The

<sup>1</sup> Wood, *Life and Times*, III (O.H.S. XXVI), 19.

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new Dean walked to the 'dore' of his seat, and there read the king's dispensation from coming to prayers, receiving the Sacrament, taking his oaths, and executing other duties which belonged to him as Dean. 'Many yong scholars were there laughing and gurning [*sic*] and making a May-game of the matter.'<sup>1</sup>

Such sweeping measures could only reverse once more the trend of political opinion, and Oxford was plunged into a swirl of controversy. Dean Massey was ignored and the Christ Church Students turned to support Aldrich in his lead against Roman Catholicism. The whole-hearted approval of the less distinguished members of that House was shown by equally zealous though less scholarly conduct—such as the despatch by some 'young Waggs' of old Job (a 'poor Naturall' who washed the college dishes) with a verse to sing at Mr. Walker's door:

O old Obadiah  
Sings Ave Maria  
But so will not I-a  
For Why-a  
I had rather be a Fool than a Knave-a.

During Massey's period of office several of Walker's tracts were printed at the University Press, including one by Woodhead called *Two Discourses Concerning the Adoration* (January, 1687), a discussion of the question of Transubstantiation. A prompt rejoinder was forthcoming from Wake a month later. Headed by Aldrich, the Christ Church men had set themselves to reply on behalf of the University to the popish literature of Obadiah Walker. To this end they bribed or otherwise influenced Lichfield, the printer, to supply them with proof-sheets before Walker's pamphlet could be published. Walker discovered their device and 'perceiving that he had been falsely dealt with by the printer in permitting his book to go away sheet by sheet, as 'twas printed, he set up cases of letters and a press in the back part of his lodgings. . . .'<sup>2</sup>

A second reply to Woodhead was published by Dr. Aldrich<sup>3</sup> in May 1687. 'I was vain enough to think it might fall to my lott to Answer,' he wrote in the preface, 'For I fancy'd so trivial a pamphlet was below the regard of other men who do God and the Church better service in another station: and presumed that while they offer'd Sacrifice, a mean man might serve to drive away the Flyes.' This modest attitude, however, does not prevent him from attacking his opponent with a degree of vigour which is quite up to the standards of the time. He admits that the only reason he has for answering the pamphlet is the fear lest its contents should be considered as representative of Oxford

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, 201.

<sup>2</sup> Wood, *Athenae*, III, 1161. (Life of Woodhead).

<sup>3</sup> *A Reply to Two Discourses . . . by Henry Aldrich, Canon of Xt. Church, lest Satan should get advantage of us.* . . .



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judgment and intellect ; he accuses his adversaries of quitting the principles of both Anglican and Roman churches, and introducing ' new notions ' of their own ; he deplores Woodhead's inability to reason properly, showing that ' his talent in Logic is as singular as his judgement in Religion.' He ends on a note of caustic irony : ' And now . . . Hitherto of this Controversy . . . because a scholar should be answered ; but a Jugler need only be detected.'

Aldrich was undoubtedly a strong supporter of the Anglican tradition at a time when in Oxford it was seriously challenged. Oxford has always produced influential and convincing preachers, and in the 17th century was famous for the encouragement of religious disputation and the genesis of Church doctrine. Had the University resigned itself to the changes brought about by the king's policy, or had the Anglican church lacked such champions as Aldrich and his friends, there might have been a real danger of a general surrender to James's religious ambitions, and of the foundation of a strong Romanist party in the very heart of the church. Aldrich, moreover, was by no means safe from the possibility of suffering injury from his enemies. The late proceedings at Magdalen had shown that the danger of expulsion from his college was a very real one. Yet from 1686 to 1688 Aldrich worked indefatigably to provide a lively resistance to the encroachments of the Roman Catholics, and it is because of his labours and those of his associates, in no small measure, that the Romanist movement failed to take root in Oxford.

It was during these early years at Christ Church that Aldrich seems to have acquired a considerable reputation as a mathematician. As early as 1675 a letter<sup>1</sup> written by Sir Philip Percival to Sir Robert Southwell describes Aldrich as ' a great mathematician of our house.' Aldrich was certainly a pioneer in the foundation of the Philosophical Society in 1683, a body which afterwards became the London ' Royal Society.' He is mentioned by Wood as having been present at the first meetings, and his name is linked with that of Dr. John Wallis, the ' chiefe.' No direct trace of Aldrich's work in this field is to be found during the next ten years, but the preface of Dr. Gregory's *Euclid* in 1703 throws considerable light on the relations which had existed in the meantime between Aldrich and this professor of mathematics. Mathematics, says Gregory, was the art which Aldrich pursued most industriously :

' Inter Artes vero universas quas & Ipse colis, & ad quas alios accendis, nulla fere est quae curas Tuas magis exercuit quam Mathesis :'  
moreover :

' Inter viros quamplurimos, quorum industriam provocasti, me certe devinctiorem habes neminem . . . meque deinde & studia mea, ultra quam mihi fas erat sperare, Tuo frequentius colloquio, hortatu, consilio adjuvisti.'

<sup>1</sup> *Reports of the Historical MSS. Commission, MSS. of the Earl of Egmont*, II, 38.

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The author recalls his frequent conversations with Aldrich, who freely imparted his views as to the purpose and profit of mathematics and how it should be taught, and was always advocating a return from the novel and concise methods of modern exponents to the more perfect writings of the ancients :

‘ atque Euclides imprimis (quam Te uno, Vir Clarissime, nemo aut penitius inspexit, aut saepius revolvit, aut distinctius animo infixit) paulo quam antehac elegantior perfectiorque, sed sua lingua, suo simplex cultu atque apparatu prodiret.’

A piece of more direct evidence is to be found in a letter written by Aldrich to Gregory in 1694,<sup>1</sup> in which Aldrich asks the professor's opinion on a certain mathematical problem, and in his own work *Institutionis Geometricae*,<sup>2</sup> which was in the press at the time of his death. Unfortunately there is a singular lack of specific evidence concerning this branch of Aldrich's culture. There can be no doubt, however, of his having possessed very considerable mathematical knowledge, and it speaks much for his versatility that this student of music, architecture, theology and the classics, should also be able to cooperate with a university professor in a subject as specialised as mathematics.

The religious differences of the reign of James II reached their climax in 1688, when the king took flight. At the same time the Catholic party in Oxford suffered collapse, and Dean Massey fled to France. In the following year Aldrich was installed Dean of Christ Church.

## II

As the head of Christ Church Aldrich gained a reputation which justly eclipsed that of all his contemporaries. His own scholarship was so comprehensive and varied that his writings included editions of Greek and Latin texts, ecclesiastical pamphlets, and books on Logic, Mathematics, Architecture, Heraldry and Music. He was consulted upon such varied subjects as ancient memorials and remains, ancient musical notation, architectural schemes, and books of all kinds (on which, says Hearne, he was an authority); and he also encouraged to the utmost of his power any evidences of ability in undergraduates and Students of his House, as the long list of his new-year's presentations sufficiently bears witness. Yet scholarship and the promotion of scholarship were not his only concerns. His generosity knew no bounds, his wit was the constant delight of his friends; as a judge of character his keen understanding was of rare quality; and with all his accomplishments he was 'humble and

<sup>1</sup> Bodleian MSS. Tanner xxv, 185 (autograph).

<sup>2</sup> A copy of this (1709) exists in Christ Church library.

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modest even to a fault.' In the words of Thomas Hearne, 'considered . . . as a Christian, a Scholar or a Gentleman, he was one of the most eminent men in England.'<sup>1</sup>

In 1692 Aldrich<sup>1</sup> was nominated Vice-Chancellor and was installed on October 4, promising 'severely to look after the discipline of the University, disputations in Austins, wall-lectures, examinations, and Lent exercises.' The first disciplinary complaint with which Aldrich had to deal came from Ben-jamine Browne, of Brasenose College, junior proctor, a month after the installation ceremony. His proctorial rounds brought him one night at ten o'clock to the Mitre Inn in the High Street, where several scholars were heard drinking to the health of four troopers. On his attempt to bring the miscreants to justice, the troopers intervened. The scholars escaped, but not the junior proctor, who, despite the success of his bodyguard in bringing four 'with staves' to rescue him, was detained until midnight and made to pay the reckoning.

Incidents of a political nature came before his notice. There was still a large party in Oxford in favour of the restoration of James II and with this Aldrich had to contend. He had to deal with the scattering of James's handbills in Oxford, in which the king made various promises in return for his reinstatement. There was also the case of William Wyatt, Principal of St. Mary Hall, an ardent Jacobite who preached a sermon in the University Church, deploring the perfidy of the Scots for their part in the Bloodless Revolution—and this before a Campbell, a son of the Marquis of Argyll. Campbell's patriotism was offended, and he stormed at the preacher before the congregation, calling him a 'red-faced sot.' But his valour seems to have been mixed with some discretion, for when he was sent for by Dr. Aldrich he was nowhere to be found.

More drastic action was required of the Vice-Chancellor in the Magdalen Hall affair, when the Fellows of Magdalen College attempted to override the will of the Chancellor by installing Dr. Hammond as Principal of the Hall instead of Dr. Adams, the Chancellor's nominee. On March 3, 1694, in his second year of office, Aldrich proceeded with Dr. Adams to Magdalen Hall to perform the installation ceremony. They arrived at the gates that morning, only to find them locked. Thereupon they proceeded, says Wood, to 'break open the dore by chopping it to pieces.' Whilst engaged in this vigorous exercise they were interrupted by some members of Magdalen College, who had arrived to inform them that the Hall had been leased to Hammond, their Principal-elect, and that they would find the Principal's apartments closed. Undaunted, however, Aldrich conducted Dr. Adams to the refectory, and there conferred the headship upon him. At the conclusion of this formality Dr. Adams 'made a little speech, and entertained the Vice-Chancellor and Aularians with a glass of wine.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hearne, *Collections*, III (O.H.S. XIII), 89.

<sup>2</sup> Wood, *Life and Times*, III (O.H.S. XXVI), 446.



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It was the duty of Aldrich as Vice-Chancellor to preside over the court which condemned Wood for his libel of Clarendon. Wood had been accused by Henry Hyde, the former Chancellor's son, of printing in the *Athenæ* a statement which accused Clarendon of selling offices at the Restoration. It was Aldrich, too, who revived the ancient Act, which the policy of his predecessors had caused to be suspended for eight or nine years. The Act dated back to the mediaeval University, and Aldrich revived it in all its detail—the lectures, disputations of Doctors and Inceptors, the procession of academics from St. Mary's Church to the Schools, the *Vesperiae*, *Comitia*, and all the other ritual and ceremony belonging to this ancient custom.

In April 1694 Aldrich was present at the consecration by Dr. Hough, Bishop of Oxford, of the new chapel of Trinity College, in the designing of which he appears to have taken some part; and in the following October he was nominated Vice-Chancellor for the third year, complaining in his inaugural speech 'against hatts turned up on one side.'

It was about this time that Aldrich was involved in the dispute between the Hon. Charles Boyle, Student of Christ Church, and Richard Bentley, the erudite librarian of the King's collections at St. James's, who afterwards became Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. This dispute aroused the interest of the whole literary world, and is of particular interest to a biographer of Aldrich, because it brings to light the opinions of his enemies, and that side of his character which has become obscured by the constant application of respectful epithets—the most ingenious Dr. Aldrich—the famous Dean of Christ Church—our worthy Vice-Chancellor—and so on.

The dispute originated with a work published in 1692 by the statesman Sir William Temple, who was living at that time in literary retirement, and was enjoying considerable popularity as a writer. The work was called *An Essay upon Ancient and Modern Learning*, and in it the author asserts the superiority of ancient wit and learning over modern, and cites as instances the excellence of the Fables of Aesop and the Epistles of Phalaris, which together he considered to be the most ancient prose works extant. Temple's high opinion of its literary merits encouraged Aldrich to produce a new edition of Phalaris, reserving it for his next new-year publication.

This practice, by which the Dean selected annually some classical work to be edited by a chosen scholar and presented it as a new-year gift to all his Students, had been instituted by Dr. Fell, and was carried on by Aldrich from the year of his appointment as Dean to the end of his life.<sup>1</sup> Although this honour was an

<sup>1</sup> F. Madan, *Oxford Books*, III, 233, where we read that in the preface to *Romanus Clemens*, edited by John Fell, 1669, Fell 'explains the whole cause and theory of his New Year Books. He was ashamed that the young Academics of Christ Church should greet him on the 1st of January with good wishes and congratulations, and he make no return or acknowledgement: so he provides . . . a book every year. . . . This is the first statement that I have seen of the *raison d'être* of Fell's New Year Books.'

object of ambition among the Christ Church Students, the system had its disadvantages, for it concentrated the scholar's attention upon too narrow a field, and moreover exposed to open criticism his inexperienced and premature efforts.

In 1693, however, Boyle was set to edit the Epistles of Phalaris. The quarrel with Bentley began when the latter delayed sending a copy of the Epistles which Boyle required for purposes of collation, as a result of which only 40 of the 148 Epistles were examined. When the publication appeared, this incident was alluded to in the preface and Bentley took offence. He retaliated by writing an appendix to the second edition of Wootton's *Reflections on Ancient and Modern Learning*. In it he tried to prove the spurious nature of the Epistles and of Aesop's Fables, and criticised the new Christ Church edition, in which, he said, Boyle had displayed deplorable ignorance. Boyle had the advantage of the active cooperation of the Christ Church men, Atterbury, Robert and John Freind, Anthony Alsop, and Aldrich. Bentley was assisted by his own stupendous learning, which was more profound than that of any other man of his time. Aldrich fanned the flames by choosing a selection of Aesop's Fables to be edited by Alsop for the new-year 1698. A lengthy pamphlet published in Boyle's name (but, thought Hearne, written chiefly by Atterbury) found the challenging of Bentley's scholarship a precarious task, and instead ridiculed his conduct and disparaged his honesty, employing to that end such a brilliance of wit and satire, that the book became a popular triumph, and was considered at the time to have brought about Bentley's absolute defeat. Bentley was, indeed, the laughing-stock of London.

We cannot tell specifically how much Aldrich had to do with this book, but one thing seems clear—that it was he who fostered the spirit which caused it to be written. One of the few supporters of Bentley was Thomas Rymer, who, in a pamphlet printed in 1698 entitled *An Essay on Curious and Critical Learning*, casts a slight upon the Dean's influence in no compromising terms :

‘ I fancy this book was written (as most Publick Compositions in that College are) by a Select Club. There is such a profusion of Wit all along, and such variety of Points and Rallery, that every Man seems to have thrown in a Repartee or so in his turn, and the most Ingenious Dr. Aldrich no doubt was at the Head of them, and smoaked and punned plentifully on this Occasion. It brings the old Character of Christ-Church very fresh into my Mind ; which you may remember distinguished it self from the rest of the University, not by its Extraordinary Learning, but its abominable Arrogance. . . . The Dean, instead of checking this intolerable Temper, encourages and promotes it by his own worthy Example. It is not long

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since he published a small Compendium of Logick, for the Use of Mr. Boyl, . . . wherein he gives a Specimen of his haughty Dogmatical Humour. . . .

The author complains of the pedantry of Boyle's attack on Bentley, and ascribes it to the influence of the Dean, who displays his own leanings in that direction by his persistent (and unskilful) resuscitations of ancient authors :

' I think Dr. Aldrich is pretty Notorious at present, for imploying his young unexperienced Students this way. He betrayed Mr. Boyl into the Impertinent Controversie he and his Friends are now engaged in ; and he is still involving others in the Quarrel.'

There seems to be special justification for Rymer's allusion to the unfortunate edition by Christ Church, ' with a Pertness peculiar to that College,' of the Fables of Aesop—such a slight ' as the Dean ought to have retrenched upon the score of good Breeding.' And this does not end what he has to say. Rymer goes on to complain that another book published at this time, *Examen Poeticum Duplex*, was written or encouraged by Aldrich :

' . . . He has suffered some of his College to make Sport with him in their Occasional Compositions. Amongst other things, some Body has endeavoured his Character in two Epigrams. . . . I am assured they were made in Christ-Church, and either by the Dean himself, or a Brother Doctor at least.'

Rymer afterwards published a *Vindication* of his former Essay, in which the satirical references to the Dean's publications on Logic, Geometry and other subjects cannot pass unnoticed :

' Those who nowadays set up for universal Scholars, are commonly men but of rambling, Pedantical Learning. They are nicely skill'd in the Mechanical Part and Jargon of the Sciences ; have probably read and got by heart all the General Systems : They are such perfect Masters of the Terms in Logick, that they can immediately form an argument in any Mode and Figure, detect a Sophism at the first Glance, and, which is still more, compile a Compendium of the whole Art, if Occasion be, for the Use of their Friends and Pupils. They understand so much of Mathematicks, as to solve most of the Problems in Euclid ; Nay, perhaps as to draw up a small unintelligible Scheme of the Grounds and Principles of Geometry. They may be so well vers'd in Astronomy too, . . . to furnish out an Almanack every year, (set off and adorned with Curious Italian Sculptures, whereby it becomes not only useful, to find out the Day of the Month, but at the same time serves instead of a Picture in a Closet, and by Consequence is never out of Date). But whether such Men have any Notion of the profound Researches in these and other Sciences, whether they have made

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any useful and sound Reflections upon them or not, remains a doubt, 'till they shall give the World greater Proofs and Evidences than these I have named.'

But Rymer did not entirely disapprove of the Dean :

'Tis true, I have taken notice of his Smoaking and Punning ; but they are two very sociable Qualities, and he has no Reason to be angry at me for it. He is not the only Clergy-man that takes Tobacco, nor the only Academick that puns. I must confess, he is a Punner of the first Rate ; for the Town has been often obliged to him for good Catches, which are the highest flights of that kind of wit.<sup>1</sup>

In the following year, 1699, Bentley recovered his dignity by publishing a new five-hundred-page treatise called *A Dissertation upon the Epistles of Phalaris, with an Answer to the Objections of the Hon. Charles Boyle*. It appears to have silenced for ever the faction at Christ Church, which was utterly unable to compete with such convincing power and eloquence, and gave up the struggle forthwith.

These events throw a new and not altogether favourable light upon the Dean's character and outlook. They reveal an element of superficiality in his disposition which prompted him, in this instance, to support the party whose arguments appealed to the popular intellect because of the brilliance of their delivery, rather than the depth of their meaning ; and to evade the truth rather than admit the common mistake of himself and his pupil. The affair shows clearly this trait of his character : the cherished possession in himself, and the cultivation among his pupils of a brilliant wit and a retentive and ready mind ; and a tendency to set versatility before profundity. It is a trait revealed in the Dean's own works, in which it is difficult to find a real contribution to knowledge, or any evidence of real research. His writings were chiefly editions of classical texts, additions of learned notes to the works of other men, and such books as the *Epitome of Heraldry*<sup>2</sup> and the *Compendium of Logic*. His architecture was very much a scholarly re-creation of an ancient art ; his musical compositions chiefly essays in conventional and ready-made styles. In reproducing and using the knowledge of other men he was undoubtedly an adept, and his ability in this field alone would give him claim to great distinction.

<sup>1</sup> *A Vindication of an Essay on Curious and Critical Learning, by the Author of that Essay.*

<sup>2</sup> This book, if it was ever printed, has apparently not survived. It is mentioned in an autograph letter from Aldrich to his brother Edward, January 28, 1672, kept in the British Museum, Add. MSS. 28104, f. 14 : 'In answer to y<sup>e</sup> remaindr of yr letter, I cannot yet compute what the printing of the Heraldry will Cost nor set about it till Easter, but by that time I hope to find leisure and assistance to print it so that I need not put my mother to much charge in that matter.'

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### III

There are two branches of activity in which the work of Aldrich has proved of more enduring quality—his studies in music, and his essays in architecture.

As a musician Aldrich was supreme in Oxford during an era of remarkable vitality in Oxford music—an era of regular concerts in private houses and colleges, in which music was a feature of all university ceremonies. In this hum of musical life, Christ Church, under the nominal direction of Richard Goodson,<sup>1</sup> its organist, but actually led and encouraged in all its musical work by Dean Aldrich, was conspicuous above all. The precise extent of the Dean's influence over the cathedral music is not absolutely clear. Goodson is an obscure figure—he is seldom, if ever, mentioned by Wood or Hearne—and little is known of him except that a considerable quantity of his music was bequeathed by his son to Christ Church library. It appears, however, that his control over the choir was exercised under the direct supervision of Aldrich. An excellent account of the cathedral routine at this time is given in a book published anonymously in 1753 by a man who had his information from a member of Christ Church. This book was written in answer to *An Essay on Musical Expression* by Charles Avison, and was called *Remarks on Mr. Avison's Essay* :

' Permit me now to mention the Method, which that excellent Man, Dean Aldrich, observed, as it hath been related to me by a Gentleman, who was a Member of his College, at the Time when he was Governor.

' First, He never admitted a Boy Chorister, unless he had been previously instructed, and had given sufficient Proof of his Abilities : by this Means, he had always a complete Set, and a constant Supply : for Parents feeling that such Children who had Merit, were certain of being preferred as Opportunity offered, were very solicitous to get them instructed in Readiness.

' 2dly, In admitting a Singing-Man or Chaplain, he made it a Rule to give the Preference to one who had merited his Favour in a lower Capacity ; provided nevertheless he was properly qualified when he was a Candidate for either of these Places. By a strict Observance of this Method, there was not an useless Member in his Choir ; for Chaplains had then an equal Share of choral Duty with the Singing-Men ; nor was there the least Grumbling or Complaint on that Account ; the Dean himself setting a noble Example to the former, by constantly singing a Part in all the Services and Anthems.

' 3dly, In order to keep the Spirit of Music, and to promote social Harmony, the whole Body attended him duly, on a certain Evening of the

<sup>1</sup> Richard Goodson, senior. He died in 1718 and was succeeded both as organist of Christ Church, and as Professor of Music by his son, Richard Goodson, junior.



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Week, at his Lodgings ; where he not only appointed the Pieces that should be performed, but assisted in the Performances himself : How Glorious an Example was this ! Could any of the Band be remiss or negligent when animated by such a Leader ?

' Lastly : His Method of punishing Delinquents, was equally as singular, as it was effectual. If one of the Choir absented himself, without giving a sufficient Reason for such his Absence, the Punishment was, Exclusion from his Presence the next Meeting also ; and for being tardy or coming late, he was allowed nothing to drink, except Small-Beer. This kind of Treatment had so much better Effect, than the severest Mulct or Reprimand would have had, that very seldom either of the above-mentioned Cases happened. To these Musical Entertainments, a certain number of the Noblemen and Gentlemen-Commoners of his College, were constantly invited : And although it was chiefly mere Matter of Pleasure and Amusement to them (some indeed were Performers) yet they were as cautious in offending by Absence, as a Singing-Man would be ; for their Punishment was the same.'

One gathers from this account that not only choir-practices, but regular performances took place in the Dean's rooms, though Aldrich did not reserve his lodging entirely for the rendering of sacred music, or the holding of polite concerts. He would often repair there in company with his friend Estwick and others of his college, and the whole party would find pleasure in the singing of rounds and catches :

' . . . Who that should hear him in his Musick room,  
Wou'd think the Man of God in Christendome ?  
Jack, thou'rt a Toper, merrily resounds,  
And tick'd for Claret generously abounds.'

It was probably his capacity for writing catches which formed the most considerable part of Aldrich's reputation among his contemporaries, at a time when catch-singing was one of the most popular diversions, especially upon occasions of tavern-visiting, that England had to offer. Rymer had to admit that Aldrich was ' a Punner of the first Rate.' Macaulay also considered that they were the best things that he had bequeathed to posterity. Even the writer of an outrageous pamphlet, *The Town Display'd* (London 1701), referred to Aldrich, among a number of abuses, as ' the divine catchmaker.' In writing these pieces Aldrich did not allow the fact of his clerical calling to prejudice in any way the freedom of his expression. In its aptness for the conditions of performance, the language of his compositions equals that of the most vulgar of Purcell's. Purcell was evidently well enough acquainted with Aldrich to

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write, in answer to the latter's catch on Tobacco, which contained pauses for the singers to puff at their pipes, a drinking catch in which rests were provided for eructations. As the national tastes rose to a state of greater refinement, Aldrich's bacchanalian songs became forgotten. In a volume printed in 1790 called *Apollonian Harmony, a Collection of . . . Glees . . . etc., The Words consistent with Female Delicacy*, it was found possible only to publish *Hark the Bonny Christ Church Bells*. This catch remained famous for many years, and has often appeared in various guises as recently as the last century.

Mr. W. A. Barrett, in his *English Glees and Part Songs* gives an interesting memoir concerning the subject of one of Aldrich's catches—*Tom Jolly's Nose*. Among the Harleian MSS. in the British Museum, he says, there is a letter from John Jenkins mentioning Thomas Brewer, the composer of the earliest-named glee, *Turn, Amaryllis*, in which the following passage occurs :

' Thomas Brewer, through his proneness to good fellowship having attained to a rubicund nose ; being reproved by a friend for his too frequent use of strong drinkes and Sacke as very pernicious to that distemper and inflammation in his nose. " Nay faith," sayes he, " if it will not endure Sacke it is no nose for me." '

Aldrich's catch was regularly chanted at the Hole in the Wall in Baldwin's Gardens, in Holborn, whenever Tom made his appearance among the members of the club. This catch produced a reply from John Blow, the *Answer to Tom Jolly's Nose*, which was published next its original in a 1685 collection.

The recognition which the catches of Aldrich obtained for many years bears out the testimony of contemporary writers that he was a catch-maker of singularly high repute. There is, however, another sphere of secular composition—the provision of music for the Oxford Act—which absorbed the attention of Aldrich and in which he evidently excelled his fellow musicians at Oxford. He was occupied in this task on several occasions, and among the Christ Church manuscripts there are two volumes of Act Songs containing work by Aldrich. They do not represent his entire output, for the Act music which, according to Anthony Wood, he composed for the years 1672, 1674, and 1675 has disappeared, and probably other compositions of this nature have suffered a similar fate. There must have been many other university functions for which Aldrich's talents were in demand ; one such was the visit of the Duke and Duchess of York to the Sheldonian in 1683 on the occasion of the opening of the Ashmolean Museum, when a ' Delicat & smooth pastorall ' composed by Aldrich was played for their reception. Concerning his general musical work in Oxford, one may well quote Dr. Burney :

' Indeed, without neglecting more important concerns, he seems to

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have interested himself in the cultivation and prosperity of the art with as much zeal and diligence, as if his studies and pursuits had been circumscribed to that alone. . . . Music perhaps never flourished so much at Oxford as under his example, guidance and patronage.<sup>1</sup>

Quite apart from this practical acquaintance with music, Aldrich must have been one of the most assiduous collectors of music this country has ever known. Of the eight thousand pieces which he bequeathed to his college library, Burney declared that 'for masses, motets, madrigals and anthems of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the collection is the most complete of any that I have had an opportunity of consulting.' Most of these pieces were from Italian composers, and were collected by the Dean during a visit which he made to Italy.<sup>2</sup> Among the names which appear in this miscellany are those of Carissimi (of whose works the Dean endeavoured to make a complete collection), Palestrina, Vittoria, Stradella, Bassani, Graziani and others. To many of these compositions Aldrich adapted English words, sometimes preserving the original style, but often making drastic alterations and additions. The Latin church music of English composers, particularly Tallis and Byrd, was also revised in this way.

The Dean had a special regard for Tallis. He was often heard to say that should the world be unfortunate enough to lose all the music of the great choral period, except Tallis's *I call and cry*, this alone would be sufficient to convey a just idea of the pure polyphonic style, and would furnish future composers with matter and method enough to excel in it. It was Aldrich who renovated the stone in Greenwich Church which carried the plate displaying the well-known epitaph of Tallis :

'Entered here doth ly a worthy wyght,  
Who for long tyme in Musick bore the bell. . . .'

This stone was unfortunately lost when the church was pulled down about 1720.

In addition to this gigantic collection of anthems and services, the Christ Church collections contain a bundle of papers prepared for a Treatise on Music. Most of them are in the Dean's autograph ; a few are in other hands, and presumably are contributions from specialists in various subjects. Some of the chapters appear to be complete ; others are in a rudimentary stage, and do not give much indication of their intended final form. The whole work deals, broadly speaking, with three branches of music—the ancient history of the art, the application of physics, and the construction of musical instruments. The

<sup>1</sup> Burney, *A General History of Music*, III, 601.

<sup>2</sup> No direct evidence of Aldrich's visit to Italy appears to exist apart from a reference to it in the preface of the Rev. Philip Smith's edition of the *Elementa Architecturae* (1789).

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range of subjects is enormous, and looking through the papers one is overwhelmed by such a stupendous display of knowledge. Perhaps some future scholar of adequate skill will rediscover some of the ground which Aldrich explored, and complete the work which he began. As it is, we have to imagine a man in whom music was but an extra diversion for his scholarly brain; who, by his extensive interests and infinite patience, rendered valuable service to musical learning; and whose devotion to the music of his Cathedral and University must always stand out as unique in Oxford history.

Aldrich was not only a talented musician. He was also a successful architect. Just before his death he was compiling an *Elementa Architecturae*, intended to have been divided into two parts treating respectively Civil and Military Architecture. Each part was to contain three books, but only book 1 and a portion of book 2 were completed. It is a scholarly rather than a practical work, and contains many quotations from Vitruvius and Palladio, the authors whom he accepted as his chief authorities.

His own achievements as an architect are represented by Peckwater Quadrangle at Christ Church, and All Saints Church. The north, east and west sides of the former were built after his design, the laying of the foundation-stones taking place in January 1706. Aldrich also drew a design for the south side. There is a number of alternative designs for this side in Christ Church library, some of which contain notes written in a hand closely resembling the Dean's and may very likely be his work. It was decided later, however, to modify Aldrich's plans,<sup>1</sup> and then to discard them altogether in favour of a design now thought to have been the work of George Clarke. The proportions of the present south side are unfortunately quite inappropriate to the rest of the Quadrangle.

In addition to Peckwater Quadrangle and All Saints Church, Aldrich is known to have had some interest in the plans for Trinity College chapel. Dr. Bathurst wrote to Bishop Stratford on November 6, 1691:<sup>2</sup> 'The worthy Deane of Christ-church, and other able judges in architecture have thought it most advisable to begin our worke wholly upon new foundations. . .'. The similarity of the chapel to All Saints Church has been cited as a reason for attributing its design to Aldrich, but there is no other evidence to support this supposition.

Aldrich is sometimes held to be the architect of the Fellows' Buildings at Corpus. According to Dallaway (1763-1834), 'The garden front of Corpus presents a specimen of his architecture, which for correctness and graceful simplicity is not excelled by any edifice in Oxford'.<sup>3</sup> but this statement is not

<sup>1</sup> Reports of the Historical MSS. Commission, Portland Papers VII, Stratford to Harley, Sept. 20, 1716.

<sup>2</sup> T. Warton, *Life of Dr. Bathurst* (London, 1761).

<sup>3</sup> Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting* (1849 edition), II, 690, footnote.

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corroborated elsewhere. There is also a record<sup>1</sup> of a legacy left by Sir Edward Hannes to provide a lodging for the forty King's Scholars at Westminster School, in which Aldrich and Wren were to have collaborated. The scheme was delayed through lack of funds and disagreement over the proposed site, and Aldrich died before work was begun.

In his day Aldrich was famous for his architectural work. His talents were evidently recognised by Wren and Hawksmoor, and many amateurs such as George Clarke must have been glad of his help and advice at a time when amateur practice of the art was fashionable in cultured circles. Dallaway spoke of him as 'one of the most perfect architects of his time,' and Walpole called him 'a man of true versatile genius, greatly excited and assisted by learning, converse and travel.' Peckwater does in fact hold its own with the work of men like Wren. As the work of a distinguished Dean, for whom architecture was but one of many interests, it is a monument of amazing achievement.

### IV

With the turn of the century Aldrich entered the evening of his days. During these latter years his attention was taken up by many important matters, of which his part in the bitter quarrelling of the Convocation of the Church of England is by no means least. In 1689 Aldrich had been a member of a Commission appointed by William III to consider the possibility of incorporating dissenters within the bounds of the recognised church. Aldrich and Jane, Dean of Gloucester, had opposed the Commission from the outset and soon withdrew from the meetings. When its report was brought before the Lower House of Convocation, the attitude of the latter was made clear when Jane was elected Prolocutor, and Aldrich was chosen to present him to the Upper House, making 'an elegant Latin oration in praise of him and his fitness for that office.' The Convocation was unable, indeed, to agree upon any point, and was dissolved with Parliament the next year. For ten years Convocation ceased to meet, except to be immediately prorogued, until, in response to a storm of pamphlets, it was re-summoned by the king in 1701. The differences of this period resolved themselves largely into a quarrel concerning the authority of the Archbishop to prorogue the Lower House at will. In these disputes Aldrich always stood for the independence of the latter, to such an extent that in October 1702 he was elected Prolocutor. Aldrich held too rigid views for Archbishop Tenison, who wanted a more moderate person:

'[He] had always been a constant Voter for Encroachments upon the Power of the President, and the Upper House. In so much, that instead

<sup>1</sup> Blomfield, *History of Renaissance Architecture in England*, p. 226.



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of healing up former Breaches between the Bishops and the Inferior Clergy, the old Sores broke out with greater Rancour than ever, and the Lower House, instead of consulting the Peace of the Church, and the Honour of that Venerable Assembly, fell into new Disputes about his Grace's Prerogative.'

Aldrich nevertheless retained his office until 1704 when he was succeeded by Dr. Binkes, Dean of Lichfield.<sup>1</sup>

There are many references in Hearne's Collections to the Dean's invaluable and unselfish help which he ever proffered to his friends and college associates, especially in matters of editing, criticising, or reviewing. When Dr. Hudson stood for the office of Bodley's Librarian in 1701, Aldrich rallied most of Christ Church to his cause, and, in company with some of his friends (whose fares, we are told, he paid) himself made the journey from London in order to add more votes to Dr. Hudson's name. Several years later, six months before the Dean died, he offered Hudson a loan of £500 to finance the printing of *Josephus*. He also added notes in *Marmora Oxoniensia* concerning 'some obscure places relating to musick not understood by the publisher, Dr. Prideaux'; he designed 'borders' for Mr. Madox's *History and Antiquities of the Exchequer*, and he offered to finance Dr. Hyde's translation of an Arabic *History of Egypt*, begun but left unfinished by Dr. Pocock.

The book by which Aldrich is best known at the present time is the *Artis Logicae Compendium*. It was first published anonymously in 1691 and remained in general use for nearly two-hundred years. It was the subject of many Criticisms and Vindications: Rymer described it as 'one of the worst, most obscure Epitomes I ever read,' C. H. Pearson called the work, 'an epitome of every possible blunder,' and there was even a *Comic Aldrich* published. Nevertheless its last editor, Dean Mansel, Waynflete Professor of Moral Philosophy, said of it that 'among the Latin Compendia, that of Aldrich has long reigned almost exclusively at Oxford; nor would it be easy to select any rival manual of such decided superiority as to counterbalance the evils necessarily attendant on all vital changes in a long-established system.'

Other tasks of his own at this time included a commission from the Earl of Rochester to edit, jointly with Bishop Spratt, Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*. For this Aldrich wrote the preface to the first volume and the dedications to the Queen in the second and third. For many years this work was the subject of countless rumours concerning its genuineness. The first

<sup>1</sup> For details of the controversies of these years see White Kennett, *A Complete History of England* (1706); Tindal, *Continuation of Thoyras's History of England*; Calamy, *Abridgement of Baxter's History of his Life and Times*; and various contemporary pamphlets.

explicit accusation against it was not until 1730, when Oldmixon, in the preface to his *History of England*, mentioned that a man named Edmund Smith,<sup>1</sup> of Christ Church, had been employed by Aldrich and others to interpolate and alter the original. Smith was said to have made this confession upon his death-bed. Before giving credence to it, one has to recall the circumstances under which Smith left Christ Church, circumstances which would not have endeared him to any of the authorities there, least of all Aldrich. In 1694 he had been publicly reproved for licentious conduct and threatened with expulsion. Six years later the Dean and Chapter declared his place 'void, he having been convicted of riotous behaviour in the House of Mr. Cole, an apothecary.' Five more years passed before he was actually ejected, this event being precipitated by a scandalous lampoon directed against Dean Aldrich.

The accusations of Oldmixon were attacked by Atterbury, who had succeeded Aldrich as Dean, but was now an exile in Montpellier. This, in its turn, gave rise to a series of pamphlets supporting various parties and denouncing others. The battle was still raging in 1744, when Dr. John Burton, of Eton, published a long and convincing argument in support of Aldrich. This pamphlet seems to have closed the controversy once and for all.

It was during the year 1710 that the Dean's health began to decline. His own precarious condition was forcefully brought home to him when his friend, Dr. Breach the physician, died suddenly. He resolved to defer no longer the making of his Will, which he drew up forthwith. Towards the end of November he travelled to London to consult Dr. Radcliffe. But that great man was unable to cure his sickness, and he died in London at about seven o'clock on Thursday evening, December 14, in his sixty-third year. The remarks set down by Hearne in his diary were a fitting comment on the passing of such a character :<sup>2</sup>

'On Thursday last . . . died Dr. Henry Aldrich, Dean of Christ Church, in the 63rd Year of his Age, to the Grief of all that knew anything of his Great Worth. Consider him either as a Christian, a Scholar, or a Gentleman he was one of the most eminent men in England. He constantly receiv'd the Sacrament every Sunday, rose to five a Clock Prayers in the Morning Summer and Winter, visited the chambers of Young Gentlemen on purpose to see that they imploy'd their time in usefull and commendable Studies. He was a severe student himself, yet always free, open and facetious. He treated by turns not only those of good standing in the College, but all the young Gentlemen of any Note in it. He was a Man of admirable Natural Parts, and was vers'd both in Ecclesiastical and

<sup>1</sup> For further information concerning Smith, see J. A. W. Bennett in *Oxoniensia* IV, 149.

<sup>2</sup> Hearne, *Collections*, III (O.H.S. XIII), 89.

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humane Learning almost beyond Compare. He was humble and modest even to a Fault. He had so piercing an Understanding, that he could tell at first Sight the Temper and Disposition of any Person, whether he was good natur'd, ingenious, and addicted to a virtuous and innocent Course of Life. He was always for incourageing Industry, Learning, Integrity and whatever deserves Commendation. He was so generous that he spar'd for no Costs to promote and carry on good designs. His Death is a publick Loss, and those of the College are particularly oblig'd heartily to lament it, and to wish for such another who may advance their Interest and take the same Methods for finishing as this excellent Dean did for beginning Peck-water Building, w<sup>ch</sup> is about half done. . . . He had a most noble Collection of Books and Prints, all of which he has left to the College, leaving it to the Liberty of the Dean and Chapter whether his nephew (Mr. Charles Aldrich) shall have such of them as they had before in the Library ; which is a genteel Compliment, and shows him to have been a very wise, prudent man. If he had liv'd 'till the 15th of next month, he would have been compleatly 63 Years of Age.'

There is not a great deal that can be added to this account of Aldrich's character. Of his versatility there can be no doubt ; more than sufficient evidence exists in the very diversity of his publications and extant works, architectural, musical and otherwise. His library, which he bequeathed to his College, shows that he possessed some of the finest books on antiquities that were available in his day. Many of these he had covered in magnificent bindings. There are in particular some very fine specimens of red morocco bindings with gold tooling, evidently the work of a binder who was a master of his craft. He also bequeathed about a score of large folio volumes containing a huge collection of engravings, representing both past and contemporary work, which are hardly less remarkable than the music collections. For his scrupulous supervision of the members of his House we have the evidence of the host of men whose characters and lives were moulded under the Dean's guidance—John Freind, Robert Fairfax, Charles Aldrich and many others, in whom the Dean recognised unusual ability and on whom he lavished especial attention.

There are many allusions to his geniality and humour in the Oxford writings of the time, and several anecdotes are still told of him. There is the story of the Christ Church undergraduate who wagered a friend that he would find the Dean smoking at ten o'clock in the morning, and who lost his bet because the Dean was only filling his pipe. There is also the case of Henry Sherwin, whose many offices included at once the posts of beadle, barber, butler of Jesus College, Surveyor to the University, and Keeper of the Theatre, and whose

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sources of income were consequently so manifold, that the Dean observed that 'the University would have a Dear Loss in him when he dyed.'

The more candid allusions to the habits of the Dean suggest that what Macaulay called jovialness and hospitality was really an inveterate liking for wine and tobacco. The *Biographia Britannica* entry for John Philips contains a reference to the smoking habit which is worth recording :

'We must not omit to take notice that as the custom of smoaking tobacco was highly in vogue when Mr. Philips came first to college, from the example of the celebrated Dean of it ; so he fell in with the general taste. . . . He has disceded to sing its praises in more than one place, and his *Splendid Shilling* owes some part of its lustre to the happy introduction of a tobacco-pipe.'

It is just possible that the *Splendid Shilling* was intended actually to convey a portrait of the Dean—especially in its allusions to punning and tavern-visiting :

'But with his friends, when nightly mists arise,  
To Juniper's-Magpye, or Town-Hall repairs :  
Where, mindful of the nymph, whose wanton eye  
Transfixed his soul, and kindled amorous flames,  
Chloe, or Phillis ; he each circling glass  
Wished her health, and joy, and equal love.  
Meanwhile, he smoaks, and laughs at merry tale,  
Or pun ambiguous, or conundrum quaint. . . .'

More candid, and more revealing, is the unknown writer of *The Town Display'd*, who declares :

'The Divine Catchmaker has always been,  
A Ranting C - - n, and a Drinking D - - n.

An Anthem now, and now a Song he sets ;  
He's nothing long, and every thing by Fits.  
But whatsoe'er his Whimsical Design,  
We find him still most Constant in his Wine. . . .'

These sundry allusions to his convivial habits, and especially a perusal of such literature as the *Merry Pamphlets*<sup>1</sup> which he bequeathed to Christ Church library, tend to show that Aldrich was, indeed, a true son of the Restoration.

<sup>1</sup> Three volumes of pamphlets bequeathed by Aldrich to Christ Church library. They are so called in a contemporary MS. catalogue : *A Catalogue of Dr. Aldrich's Collections of Sermons and Pamphlets*, which is also in the library.

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His wit has been preserved in the famous five reasons for drinking, which he is said to have translated from the Latin of Jean Sirmond (1589 ?-1649) :

' If all be true that I do think,  
There are five reasons we should drink :  
Good wine, a friend, or being dry,  
Or lest we should be by and by,  
Or any other reason why.

and in his translation of the old song of the soldier and sailor :

' Miles et navigator  
Sartor, et aerator,  
Jamdudum litigabant,  
De pulchra quam amabant,  
Nomen cui est Joanna. . . '

His scholarship has been described by Macaulay, perhaps rightly, as ' polite, though not profound,' and most critics would agree that his books on Logic, Architecture and Mathematics, and his musical compositions and arrangements, are more the results of wide and accurate knowledge, and the thorough application of a versatile and brilliant mind, than of profound thinking or great creative imagination. It is the breadth rather than the depth of his knowledge which makes him so outstanding a figure.

His body was brought to Oxford on Friday, December 22, and was met at his Christ Church lodgings at about four o'clock in the afternoon. After it had rested there for several minutes it was borne into the Cathedral. A few prayers were said, and Aldrich's remains were interred in a grave in the north choir aisle, next his father, and near to Bishop Fell. His will directed that no monument of any kind should mark the place of his burial.

Twenty years later his former friend and colleague, George Clarke, set up a monument above Aldrich's grave bearing an inscription with which we may well end this biographical sketch :

HIC JACET QUOD MORTALE FUIT  
HENRICI ALDRICH S.T.P.  
HUIUS AEDIS DECANI  
DOCTRINAE AC INGENII FAMA IMMORTALIS



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### CORRESPONDENCE

In his will Aldrich directed that all papers found written in his own hand should be burnt.<sup>1</sup> This is the reason for the paucity of his extant correspondence, which seems to comprise only the following items :

#### *British Museum*

- To Dr. Sloane (1704) : Sloane MSS. 4039, f. 399 (Autograph).
- To the Earl of Ossory (1679) : Add. MSS. 28875, f. 71.
- To Mr. John Ellis : Add. MSS. 28875, f. 74.
- To his brother, Edward Aldrich (1674) : Add. MSS. 28104, f. 14 (Autograph).
- To Mr. John Ellis (1693) : Add. MSS. 28878, f. 65.

#### *Christ Church Library*

Phillips MSS. 8591. A volume containing 13 letters between Aldrich and Sir Robert Southwell, Secretary of State, concerning the education and maintenance at Oxford of Sir Robert's cousin, the young Sir Thomas Southwell, a pupil of Aldrich.

#### *Bodleian Library*

- To Mr. Sherwin (1695) : Tanner MSS. 24, f. 35 (Autograph).
- To Dr. Martin Lister : Lister MSS. 36, f. 129.
- To Dr. Gregory (1694) : Tanner MSS. 25, f. 185 (Autograph).
- To Dr. Huntingdon (1684) : Rawlinson MSS. J, f. 2, 16.
- From Nicholas Stratford, Bp. of Chester (1691) : Tanner MSS. 152.

#### *Reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission*

- To Lord Harley (two letters) : Portland MSS., iv, pp. 113 and 203.
- To Sir Walter Bagot (three letters, 1691, 1692, 1696) : House of Lords MSS.
- To the Duke of Ormonde : Ormonde MSS., p. 781.
- From the same : " p. 773.
- To the same (1689) : " p. 805.
- To the same (1707) : " p. 812.
- To the same (1704) : " p. 834.
- To the same (1706) : " p. 834.
- To Robert Southwell (1679) : Ormonde MSS., New Series, v, p. 11.
- To the same (1679) : " " " p. 46.
- To Ormonde (1689) : Ormonde MSS., New Series, viii, p. 26.
- To the same (1706) : " " " p. 300.

### BIOGRAPHICAL TABLE

- 1647 Born in Westminster.
- 1656 Entered Westminster School.
- 1658 Elected King's Scholar.

<sup>1</sup> Hearne, *Collections*, III (O.H.S. XIII), 90. Aldrich probably had good reason for doing this. It may have been to destroy certain evidence which might have served to blacken his memory.

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- 1662 Elected to Westminster Scholarship to Christ Church.
- 1666 B.A.
- 1669 M.A.
- 1669 (?) Entered Holy Orders.
- 1672 (?) *Epitome of Heraldry* completed.
- 1672 } Compositions performed at Encaenia.
- 1674 }
- 1675 }
- 1681 Installed Canon of Christ Church, and accumulated degrees B.D. and D.D.
- 1683 Present at first meetings of Philosophical Society.
- 1685 Five catches published in first edition of *Catch that Catch Can*.
- 1685 Presented consolatory verses to King James on the death of Charles II.
- 1687 Published *A Reply to Two Discourses*. . . .
- 1689 Installed Dean of Christ Church.
- 1689 Appointed a member of William III's Commission to consider problems of Dissenters.
- 1691 Consulted about and began work on (?) the rebuilding of Trinity College chapel.
- 1691 *Artis Logicae Compendium* published.
- 1692 Installed Vice-Chancellor.
- 1693 Boyle's edition of *Phalaris* begun. Beginning of quarrel with Bentley.
- 1694 Trinity College chapel consecrated.
- 1695 Composed and presented consolatory verses to William III on the death of Queen Mary.
- 1695 Relinquished office of Vice-Chancellor.
- 1702-3 Prolocutor of Lower House of Convocation
- 1702-4 Engaged in editing Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*.
- 1706 Began work on rebuilding of Peckwater Quadrangle.
- 1709 First part of *Institutionis Geometricae* printed.
- 1710 *Elementa Architecturae Civilis* printed.
- 1710 Death in London.