

Though Erasmus offered a number of his writings to English patrons in the period, the physical dedication copies are rare; notes from the author rarer still. Two volumes bestowed on Henry VIII are now at Cambridge and Charlecote⁶ Park. The two volume New College edition of those are inscribed by their author. That New College should have the Jerome edition however is no great surprise. Warham had been a fellow of the college from 1475 to 1488 and was a great benefactor of the library. These and others arrived in at least four instalments in 1508, 1523 and 1532 though the exact details of these gifts are sometimes frustratingly vague. Moreover, that it was a gift to the college is clear from the fact that the books were made its way to New College.

It is not the gift itself but the mechanics of giving that are the focus of this Note. Thanks to the New College edition of Jerome came to England and the European network of printers, couriers, booksellers, binders and friends required to present a volume at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Such processes are often hidden from view shed light on the early book trade and the practice of giving more generally. In turn, an understanding of these processes can help us to understand how the books may have originally been presented and how they arrived at New College.

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Strictly speaking, Warham received the dedication edition of Jerome in two instalments the first in June 1516 and the second sometime after November 1516. 1516 was a busy year for Erasmus.

before sending them to Warham. This later edition, the scholar boasted was not only printed
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 The whereabouts of this second Jerome gift are unknown and Erasmus himself was uncertain as
 to whether they had been delivered. It would have been a prized object in England since it was
 only at the end of the 1510s that English humanists began to impress their patrons with such gilt
 bindings.²³ 7 K H F R X O W I D E R S E X P E R I M E N T W I T H T H E T E C H N I Q U E I N T H E F O L L O W I N G D E C A D E
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