

THE UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES  
THE UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

# THE FACULTY OF LAW



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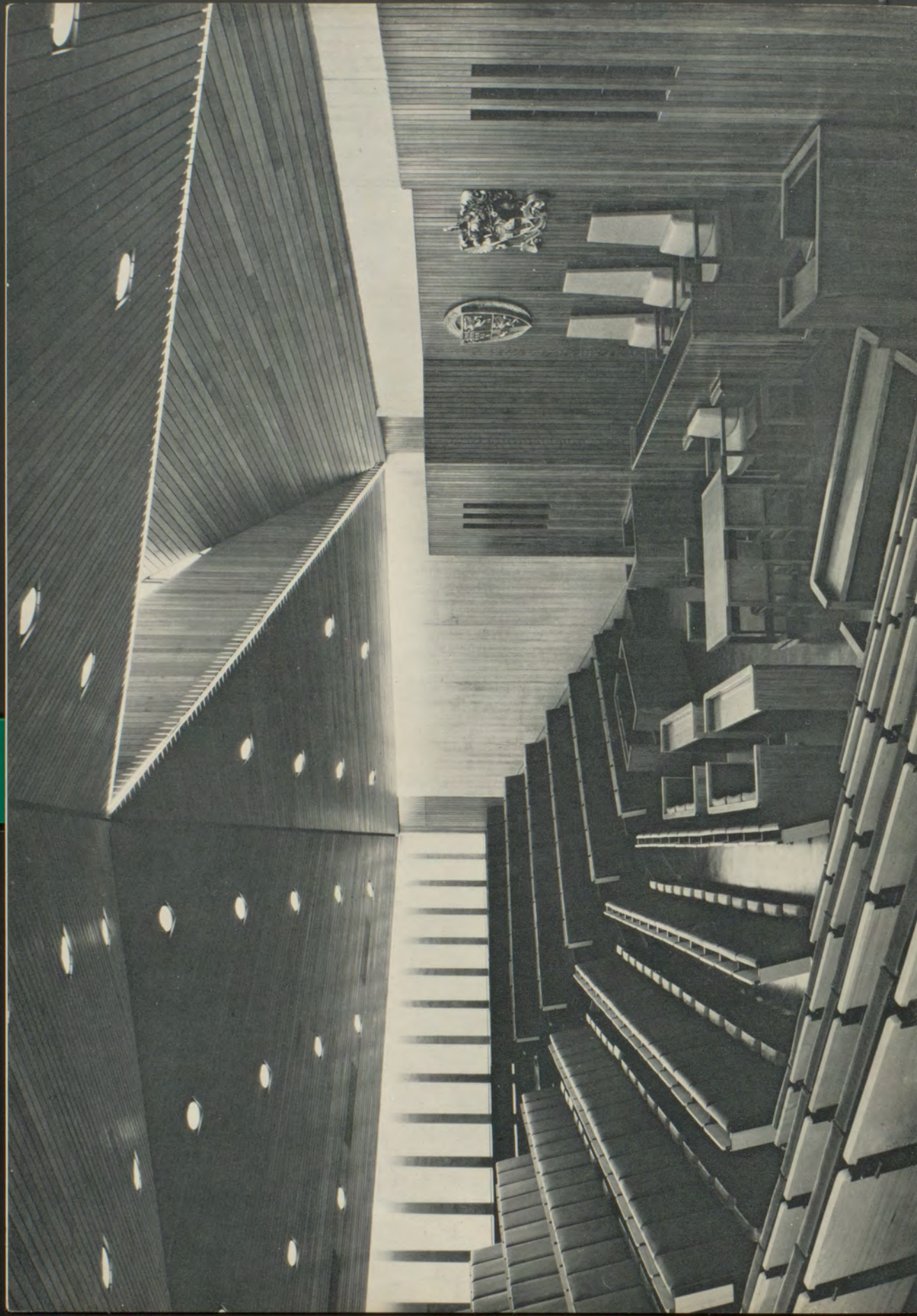
# THE UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL



# THE FACULTY OF LAW

[1966]





## THE FACULTY OF LAW

THE long connection of Liverpool with the diffusion of “the gladsome light of Jurisprudence” awaits its historian. That great projector of law reforms, Francis Bacon, was once its Member of Parliament. If John Howard found melancholy material in this city for his famous work on English prisons, we can take pride in the fact that our prime citizen, William Roscoe, was a lawyer and that despite his other multitudinous interests he showed indefatigable zeal for law reform and corresponded widely on the subject with leading jurists at home and abroad. Liverpool failed to enrol on its scroll of fame another mighty law reformer, Brougham, when it rejected him in 1812. (His fellow Whig candidate, Creevey, recorded that “poor Roscoe made much too sanguine an estimate of our strength!”) No one would call that mighty son of a Liverpool merchant, Baron Parke, Lord Wensleydale of Walton, a law reformer, but Lord Dunedin considered him “the absolute ideal of a judge” and Mr. Fifoot has said that “when he averted his eyes from process he was masterly.” He dominated the English Bench between 1837 and 1852.

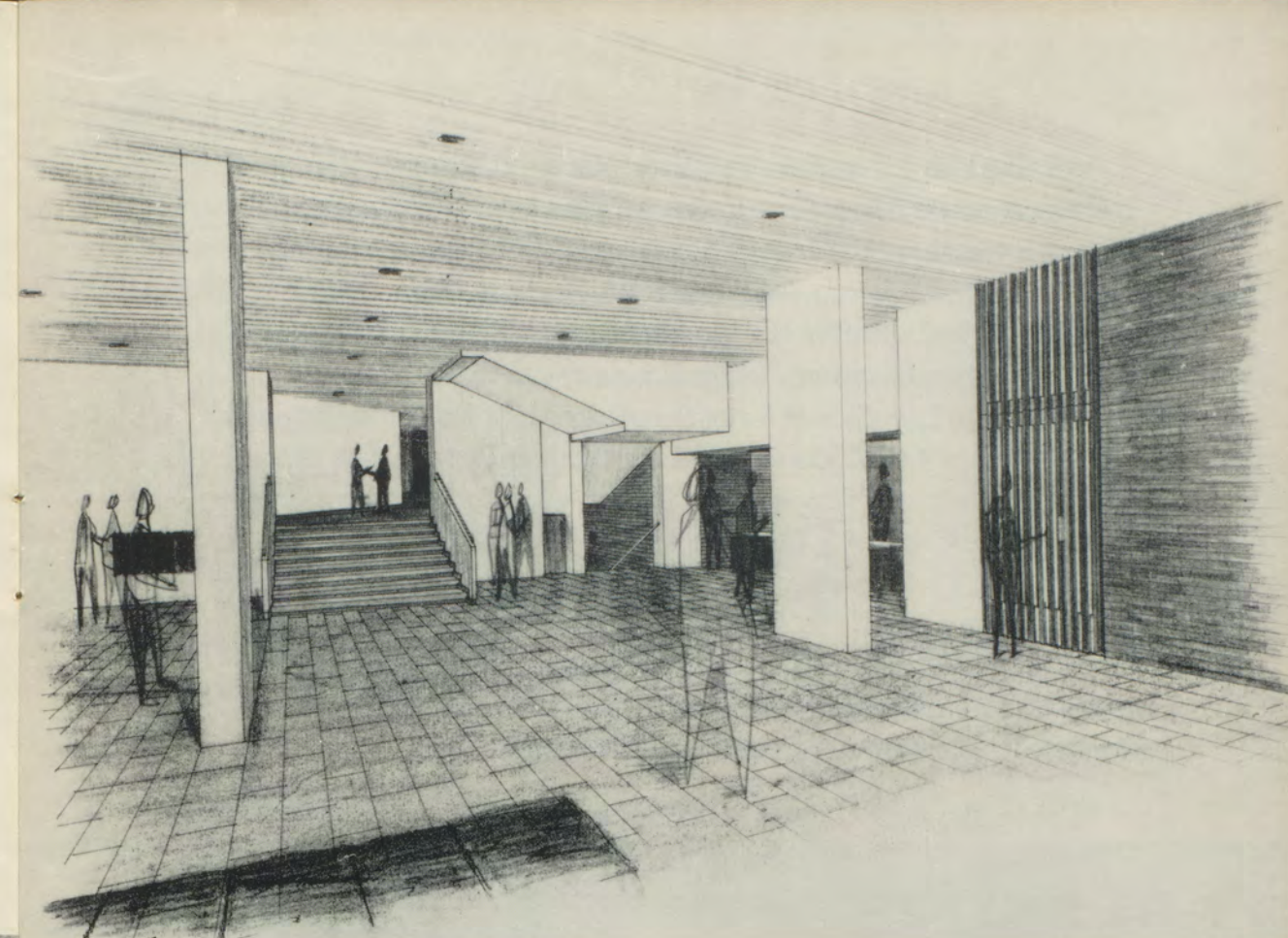
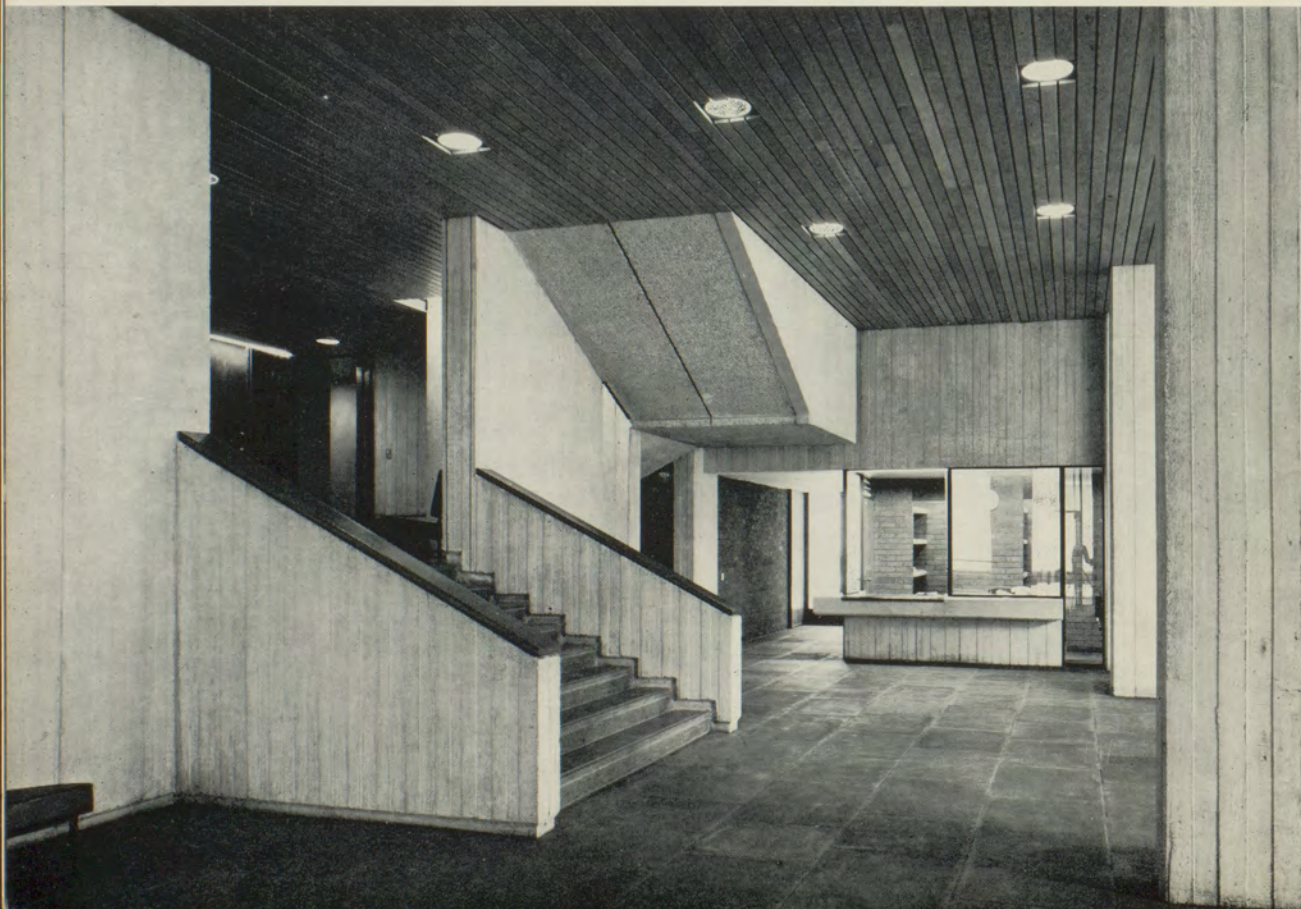
As in the other great provincial cities, the provision of systematic law teaching first came from the profession itself. What it was like in Liverpool exactly a century ago may be gleaned from the autobiography of Augustine Birrell, the Articled Clerk in 1866 of Mr. Alfred Billson of Orange Court, who bought his *Stephen's Blackstone* at the shop of Mr. Henry Young of Castle Street and laid the foundations of his nation-wide fame in the Law Clerks' Debating Society in Cook Street. The names of two of the enlightened Liverpool lawyers of that period who much forwarded the cause of legal education in the City are still commemorated in the Faculty in the Warr Memorial Lectureship and the Alsop Prize. The venerated Town's Meeting of 1878 recognized that a lectureship in Law should be a prime provision in the new University College of Liverpool. By 1882 it had been endowed by the profession by subscription of over £2,000. From that date onwards the College co-operated with the Liverpool Law Society and the Law Students' Association in the provision of lecture courses. In 1886 the three



bodies established a joint Board of Legal Studies, expressing the hope that this would lead to the establishment of a permanent Law School attached to the College as its Faculty of Law. The Board's first efforts were directed to instructing students for the professional examinations, but before the close of the century students were graduating in Laws in the federal Victoria University. Among the first were Edward Carey, later to become notable Registrar of this University, and Walter Greaves Lord, later to be elevated to the High Court Bench.

The Board and its relations with the College were re-arranged in 1892, one of the chief objects being the better provision of facilities for students to graduate in Laws in the Victoria or London University. The first Professor bore a name to this day highly honoured in the Law Faculties of the United Kingdom. Edward Jenks was an outstandingly notable law teacher, the author of famous text-books and the true begetter of the Society of Public Teachers of Law. By a series of

The Entrance Hall



An artist's impression of the Entrance Hall

endowments, his chair in 1894 became the Queen Victoria Professorship, the title which it still carries.

Even before the appointment of Jenks, men of even greater fame had lectured on Law at the College. Mr. Justice Fraser (of *Fraser on Torts*) appears to have been connected with it. It is certain that the great jurist Sir Frederick Pollock gave a course of lectures in the Session 1882-3. Then in the next two Sessions followed a connection of which the University of Liverpool can for ever be supremely proud. The incomparable Frederic William Maitland, *facile princeps* among all scholars of the past century, taught the Law of Personal Property in 1883 and lectured on "The Courts of Law and Equity and their jurisdiction" and conducted a class on Equity in 1884. (In each year it was announced that "a full Syllabus of the Course will be printed for distribution in September"—well before the session was due to start!).



Jenks had on his staff A. T. Carter, Robert Gladstone, Jun., and Gow, an expert on Marine Insurance. Carter later gained considerable repute as a teacher at the Inns of Court and Oxford and as a text-book writer. His *History of English Legal Institutions* ran into four editions in a decade. Jenks left for the Vinerian Readership at Oxford in 1896 and his successor, Professor George Emmott, was to be the very backbone of the Law School for twenty years. He had an unflagging lieutenant in Mr. O. W. Owen (of Messrs. Owen, Dawson and Evans) who, even for a longer period, carried a heavy load of teaching. In the last year of the University College a second chair was established under the title of the Professorship of Commercial Law and it remained under that title to the 1940's. Its first occupant was Dr. A. P. Thomas. Judge Thomas, as he later became, kept the closest connection with the Faculty (as its Professor of Commercial Law, Professor of International Law and Chairman) until his death in 1931.

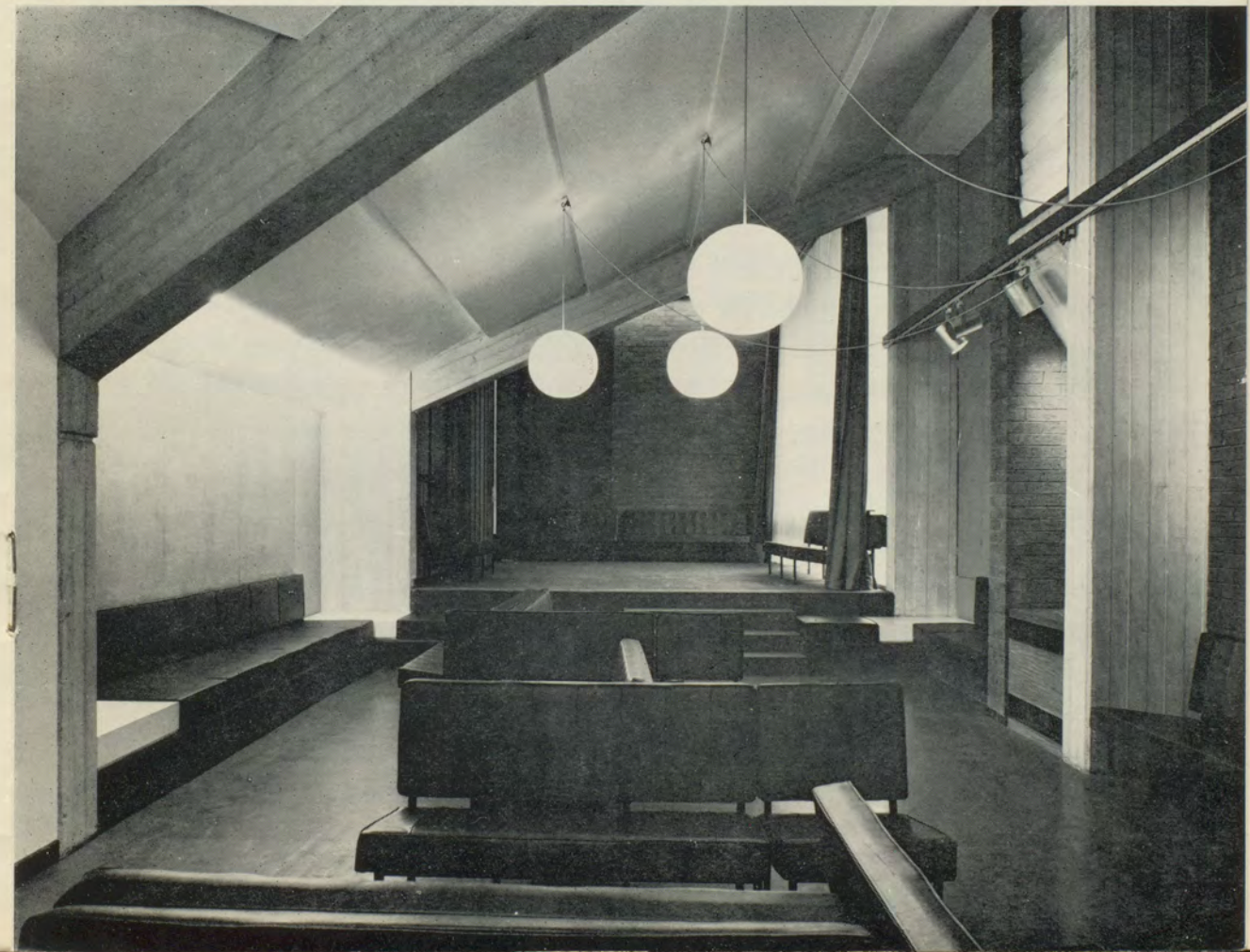
In 1903, the draft Charter and Statutes for the new University of Liverpool compelled re-consideration of the constitutional set-up of the Faculty. An ingenious compromise secured the continued close co-operation between the University and the professional bodies. To this day, the association has remained highly harmonious, to the great benefit of both sides. When post-war stresses arose elsewhere, the happy co-operation in Liverpool was held out as a pattern to all. As long as the Law Society of England and Wales entrusted the education of Articled Clerks to Law Schools approved under the Solicitors' Act, the Faculty faithfully discharged this obligation to the profession. The University still regularly ensures the appointment to the Faculty Board of gentlemen representative of the profession.

The Faculty proudly recalls the fame in wider circles earned by its former lecturers. Lord Justice Greer (later Lord Fairfield) lectured on the Common Law and Lord Justice Leslie Scott on the Law of Agency. Lord Birkenhead, Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain, who for a time was an undergraduate in the Faculty of Arts, lectured in the Faculty of Law for three Sessions, first on the Law of Torts, then on the Law of Contract and lastly on International Law. The long services of Judge Thomas have been mentioned. Judge Dowdall lectured and

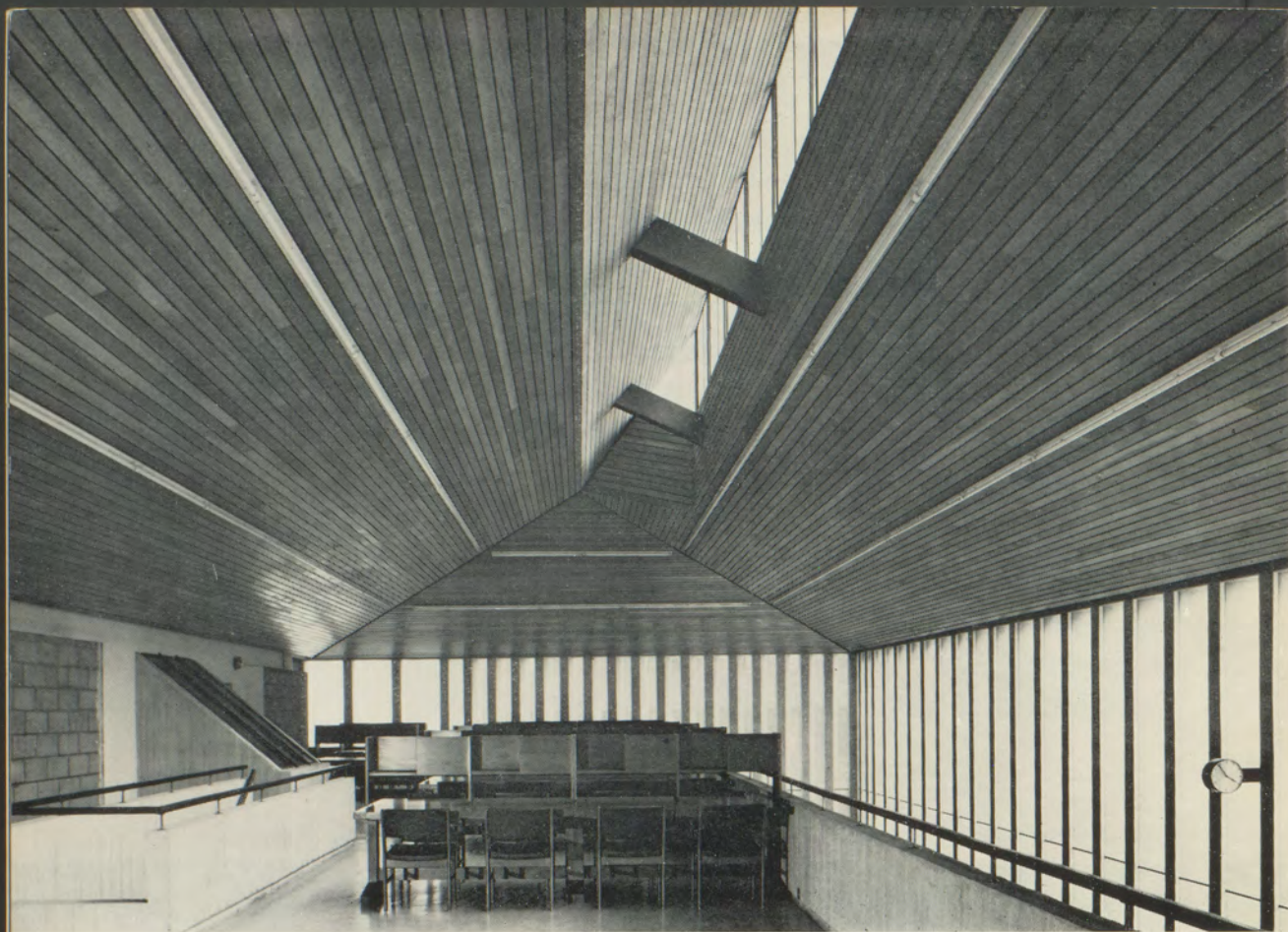
gave other notable services to the Faculty for many years. Judge Harold Brown is still fondly remembered as a pillar of strength for twelve years in the inter-war period. Judge Allister Hamilton lectured on Family Law. A Warr Memorial Lecturer for seven years, now Lord Shawcross, became Attorney-General. In the academic world, to the names of Pollock, Maitland and Jenks must be added that of J. Walter Jones who became a revered don at Oxford and the author of a scholarly work on the History of the Theory of Law.

Of the former Professors of the Faculty all, save one, have joined the great majority. Jenks, Emmott and Thomas have been mentioned. Dr. Sparrow started to lecture in 1901 and held the Chair of Commercial Law from 1908 to 1914. The same day in 1919 saw the appointment of two professors who were destined to become

The Junior Common Room







The upper floor of the Library

outstanding figures in the history of the Faculty. W. Lyon Blease was one of its own graduates and for thirty-eight years he served it with great distinction in the varying capacities of Lecturer, Queen Victoria Professor, Dean and Chairman. He was a brilliant Public Orator of the University, an outstanding public figure in the life of the City and in his later years known to millions of radio listeners for his prodigiously encyclopaedic knowledge. F. Raleigh Batt held the Chair of Commercial Law from 1919 until his elevation to the Bench in 1942 and continued to lecture thereafter for two years. In his long and unbroken tenure of the Deanship from 1925 to 1942, he practically out-Emmotted Emmott. His vigorous teaching, his extensive examinerships, his text-book on the Law of Master and Servant, and his Presidency of the Public Society of Law earned him high repute in the Law Schools of Britain. In 1945, the Chair of Commercial Law held by

Batt was re-named the Professorship of the Common Law of England. It has been held since January, 1946, by Professor Seaborne Davies who, apart from two intermissions of one year each and the period of his Pro-Vice-Chancellorship of the University, has been the Dean for two decades. Professor Joseph Turner held the Queen Victoria Professorship for six years, lectured in the Faculty for some twenty years, and was Dean for two years. His repute as a remarkably effective teacher in the Universities of London, Liverpool and Manchester needs no contemporary tributes. He was followed in 1955 by Professor Denis Browne, the Dean of the Faculty of Law of Sheffield for twenty years, who, in the decade of service to Liverpool before his lamentably sudden death, succeeded remarkably in earning the respect and affection of his colleagues and students alike and gained wide repute as an authority on the Law of Insurance. For four years at Liverpool he relieved his Pro-Vice-Chancellor colleague of his duties as Dean and himself was chosen to be a Pro-Vice-Chancellor. In 1965, a third Chair was established and the first occupant is Professor Odgers, formerly Senior Tutor of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. It is notable that the Faculty has been called upon to contribute an honourable share of the labours involved in the current movements for extensive Law reform. Professor Browne served as member of a sub-committee of the (civil) Law Reform Committee. Professor Odgers is a member of the full Committee and was a member of the Donovan Committee on the Court of Criminal Appeal. Professor Davies, in addition to his services on several other Government committees and many University and public commitments, has served on the Criminal Law Revision Committee from its inception.

Space alone prohibits specific tributes to the many who have served the Faculty as lecturers and tutors, but Mr. W. Geddes, who has been the Warr Memorial Lecturer since 1934, merits special mention for his distinguished devotion to it from his student days onwards.

Nor is it possible to do full justice to the distinction brought to the Faculty by its former students. Outside Oxford and Cambridge, it is unlikely that any other Faculty of Law has ever had four of its graduates High Court Judges and one of its former teachers the



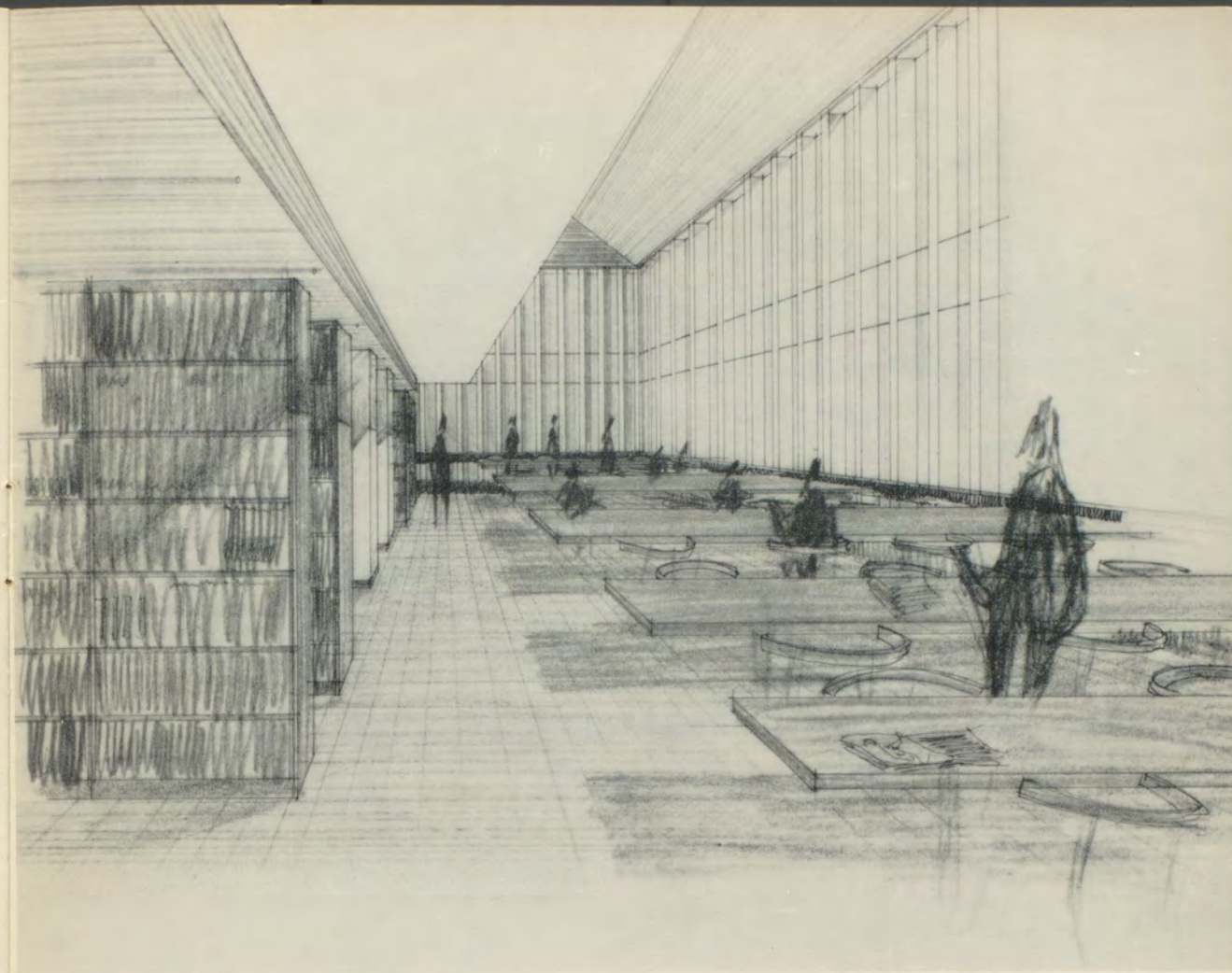
Attorney-General in the one period. They were Mr. Justice Austin Jones, Mr. Justice Lynskey, Mr. Justice (now Lord Justice) Sellers, Mr. Justice Pritchard and Sir Hartley Shawcross. Several graduates are Recorders. Others have brought great credit to it by the distinctions they have earned in the affairs of the Law Society, both nationally and locally, in Local Government, and in Parliament.

It is tempting to dwell on the immense services done to the University and the Faculty by members of the profession in Liverpool. Three friends happily still with us deserve special recognition. Mr. J. W. T. Holland first started to serve on the Faculty Board forty-five years ago. Mr. A. W. Brown notably helped the Faculty in two difficult decades. But the supreme chaplet must rest on the brow of Mr. B. B. B. Benas, the doyen of the local Bar. He graduated in the Faculties of Arts and Law; he was president of the Faculty Legal Society as long ago as 1905; for over sixty years he has given indefatigable service to the University and to the Faculty in a great variety of ways and in a manner most worthy of the son of one of the Founder Fathers of University education in Liverpool.

It is appropriate that the new Faculty building should be opened in the year of the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the students' Legal Society which throughout the years has played such a great part in the life of the Faculty, the Guild of Undergraduates and undergraduate activities generally.

Until 1945, the Faculty was housed 'down-town'. The blitz played havoc with its old home—and destroyed its library. There were some to deplore the removal of the Faculty to the University precinct. In retrospect, there can be nothing but universal commendation of the prescience and wisdom of the distinguished Vice-Chancellor and lawyer who insisted that the Faculty should be fully integrated into the life of the University. To Lord McNair the Faculty will ever owe the deepest debt of gratitude for this and many other services done during the period of his Vice-Chancellorship.

The post-war difficulties and the strong competing claims on scarce resources meant that the Faculty had to 'make do' for twenty



An artist's impression of the Library

years with premises at all times inadequate for its work and seriously prejudicial to its expansion. Staff and students cheerfully suffered the physical limitations and kept the Faculty virile throughout a period when the increasing number of Law Faculties offering places to a static number of applicants in the 1950's might have spelt a disastrous fall in the numbers of law students in Liverpool.

If today the Faculty starts a new period in its history with the provision of a notably worthy home of its own, it is due to those who never allowed its claims to be forgotten and to its many friends on the Development Committee of the University. The Faculty owes particular thanks to the benevolent Chairman of that Committee at the time, Mr. Duncan Norman, and the truly Augustine Vice-Chancellor, Sir James Mountford, for the translation of a dream into a reality.



To all its many friends in the University and the City, and to the Architects, Contractors, Clerk of Works and the many administrative officers of the University who have collaborated with it, the Faculty expresses its sincerest gratitude. It feels especially indebted to Mr. E. W. Driver, the Chairman of the Building Committee, and Lieutenant-Colonel R. Shields for devoted services throughout the planning and building period. Not least it thanks the University Grants Committee from whom most, if not all, blessings flow. It trusts that the provision of the first University Moot Room in the United Kingdom will not spell embarrassing claims from elsewhere. Most appropriately, that very novel room is adorned with the coats of arms of the Council of Legal Education and the Law Society of England and Wales with their very ready and generous permission.

## THE LAW BUILDING

<i>Chairman of the Building Sub-Committee:</i>	E. W. DRIVER, B.Sc., M.I.C.E.
<i>Architects:</i>	B. AND N. WESTWOOD, PIET AND PARTNERS
<i>Partners-in-charge:</i>	BRYAN WESTWOOD, JAN PIET
<i>Quantity Surveyors:</i>	LANGDON AND EVERY
<i>Structural Engineers:</i>	CYRIL BLUMFIELD AND PARTNERS
<i>Service Engineers:</i>	OSCAR FABER AND PARTNERS
<i>General Contractors:</i>	TYSONS (CONTRACTORS) LTD.

Work started in April 1964 and was completed in January 1966.

The superficial area of the building is 25,516 sq. ft.

The contract price of the building was £149,680.



