

residents of St. Martins with the object of applying to the City Council for a hall for the district. The Council replied that they could not see their way clear to build a hall, but, if a site was secured, they would consider building a library. A committee was formed forthwith and, as the result of a canvass, enrolled 161 subscribers. Several members advanced the necessary amount to pay the deposit on the site and on February 5, 1927 the official opening took place. (57) Two years later the residents of Beckenham started a library in an empty shop but, in 1931 the Council obtained a free section from the Government, and let a contract for the erection of a library in brick and reinforced concrete, at a cost of £995. (58) This building was officially opened on September 12, 1931.

Meanwhile, in 1928, about half a dozen people had met in the Bowling Pavilion at Spreydon to discuss the possibility of starting a library. As Strange and Co. were giving up business in the city and were desirous of disposing of their staff library of 1000 books, it was agreed to purchase these, each member lending £5. (59) In 1929 a grant of £120 was received from the City Council to convert the old Spreydon Council Chambers into a library, with the result that it was possible to hold the official opening on June 13, 1930. (60)

In 1936 the City Council made a grant of £250 to the Canterbury Public Library; the first farthing of public money ever to have been expended on that institution. (61) Yet, in 1935, besides subsidies

57. J.E. Jones and F. Holland "St. Martins Public Library", Christchurch Whitecombe & Tombs Ltd., 1948. p.4-5.

58. C.C.C. Officers' Reports, 1932.

59. Personal information from Mr. H.C. Eaton.

60. Minutes of Spreydon Library.

61. vide supra Ch. 3, p.64.