NORTHERN CATHOLIC HISTORY

No. 1 Spring, 1975

North East Catholic History Society

NORTH EAST CATHOLIC HISTORY SOCIETY

The Society was founded in July 1974 to foster interest and promote research into the history of the Catholic Church in North East England.

A yearly programme of talks and visits to places of Catholic interest is arranged and NORTHERN CATHOLIC HISTORY, the Society's periodical, is published twice yearly.

PATRON: His Lordship the Bishop

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Annual Subscription: 50 pence

NORTHERN CATHOLIC HISTORY, 45p, twice yearly.
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Articles and enquiries welcomed by either editor.

Cover design by Deborah Arrowsmith.

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CONTENTS

Society and editorial notes		2
An outline history of the Catholic Church in North East England from the sixteenth century. I	ANN M.C.FORSTER	3
Introducing Ushaw	D. MILBURN	10
Ralph Peter Clavering of Callaly [1727-1787]	W.J.NICHOLSON	18
Tracing our Catholic forefathers	W.V.SMITH	25
Location of registers of Durham and Northumberland parishes	W.V.SMITH	31

Illustrations:

Ushaw, 1828 facing p.12
Callaly chapel, 18th century facing p.21

NORTH EAST CATHOLIC HISTORY SOCIETY

When the newly formed Society held its inaugural meeting in September, 1974, we were overwhelmed by the interest of the forty people who came to St. Dominic's Priory Hall to launch this venture. In the six months since then, our membership has more than doubled, and extended in County Durham and beyond; we hope that the periodical will travel even further, and interest a larger number of people both inside and outside the north east area.

We are grateful to many for their help in our efforts so far, just as we rely on them for the success of future activities: the local historians and the members of other Catholic history societies, the speakers and contributors to the periodical, the officers and steering committee, and each individual member. We have all enjoyed the first months of the society's life; we look forward to a second programme as successful and as pleasant as the first.

Amanda J.E. Arrowsmith, Secretary

NORTHERN CATHOLIC HISTORY

The object of the periodical is to publish articles on all aspects of the history of the Church in North East England from the earliest times. The first issues will comprise serial articles, including an outline history of the Church, histories of Catholic missions, families, parishes and diocesan societies, and special articles. There will also be notes on manuscript and printed sources, and extracts from original documents.

The contributors to this first issue need little introduction. Dr. Forster and Fr. Vincent Smith have devoted years to thorough and patient research, only a small portion of which has been published, in Recusant History and elsewhere. Dr. Milburn is the acknowledged historian of Ushaw College and Fr. Nicholson a leading authority on Northumbrian Catholic families.

R.M. Gard, M.B. Joyce, Editors

AN OUTLINE HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN NORTH EAST ENGLAND FROM THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

Ann M. C. Forster

It is generally reckoned that the Reformation in England commenced in the year 1534, when Henry VIII, displeased that the Pope would not favour his matrimonial designs, cast off the yoke of Papal authority and declared himself supreme in matters spiritual in this country. Actually, for a generation or more, heretical books had been creeping in, and heretical opinions influencing men's thoughts. Such indeed was the case in parts of England; but in the north east there was little contact with heresy and heretics, save for John Knox who spent some years in Berwick, and in Newcastle where his preaching was resented by some of the city authorities. (1) Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of Durham from 1530 till 1559, was noted for his gentleness in dealing with heretics, and always preferred to reconcile rather than to execute them.

All the same, things were not altogether well with the Church in England. The bishops, the educated men of the day, were lawyers, statesmen, diplomatists, who held their sees as the reward for service rendered rather than for their fitness in pastoral administration, a situation which resulted in absenteeism and to the rule of dioceses being left to sub-ordinates.

Bishop Tunstall was no exception to this, for he had to be for long periods out of his diocese - in which, it is said, his predecessor, Wolsey, had never even set foot!

Many of the parish clergy were ill equipped for the work. Seminaries for the teaching of theology were non-existent. Only a minority had received a university education. In 1531 Convocation issued a regulation that no one was to be admitted to receive the sub-diaconate unless he could produce a character from his parish priest, countersigned by the archdeacon, testifying that he was "so versed in the epistles and gospels, at least those contained in the missal, as to be able to explain their grammatical meaning to the examiner." Earlier still, it had been urged that he should be able to read Latin readily and accurately. St.Thomas More had much to say with regard to this, his opinion being that too many men were ordained who were unfit for their office and had no chance of preferment. He even stated that some had been accepted and ordained on the production of borrowed testimonials.(2) These and other matters which the Church has since reformed helped to created a state of dissatisfaction which the King's affair sparked off into schism.

In 1534 Henry, having declared himself to be Supreme Head in spiritual as in temporal matters in this country, required all the clergy to take an oath supporting his claim. The bishops accepted and took the oath, although some, headed by Bishop Tunstall, added the proviso "as far as the law of Christ permits". There was only one exception, St.John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, who utterly rejected the oath and was put to death in consequence. Many of the heads of the religious orders took the oath, as did the majority of the clergy.

Foremost among the religious who refused the oath were the Franciscan Observants. In 1534 they were harshly repressed, under a pretext that some of them had encouraged the Nun of Kent, Elizabeth Barton, in her so-called "revelations". At Newcastle upon Tyne they were expelled from their house and replaced by conventual friars of the same order. Two of the former, Robert Barker and William Myrthwate, were imprisoned in conventual friaries and a third, William Sympson, fled to Scotland.

In 1535 the King's Commissioners commenced to take the surrender of the religious houses, beginning with the lesser monasteries, those whose annual income was under £200. The Conventual Franciscans at Newcastle surrendered the friary in January 1539, the deed of surrender being signed by the warden, John Crayforth, and by eight friars, John Hesselden, Thomas Pentland, William Mawer, William Greathead, William Kyrche, Robert Harte, Robert Carter and Thomas Watson, and two novices, John Phyerson and John Byellye.(3) The Franciscan friary at Hartlepool was dissolved before 1538, at which time it had eighteen friars.

The Dominicans (Blackfriars) of Newcastle also surrendered in 1539. Their previous prior, Richard Marshall, having refused to take the oath repudiating the Pope's authority, had fled the country. His successor, Roland Harding, nine priest friars, David Symson, John Sowerby, Charles Newton, Thomas Wyecher, George Borroden, Andrew Marshall, George Tait, Thomas Bowllok and Andrew Rye, and three novices were expelled without pensions, receiving merely gratuities: 6s.6d. for the prior, 5s. for each priest, and 3s.4d. for the novices.(4) Eight years later, when the chantries were dissolved, Charles Newton, "meanly learned, of the age of 72 years, having no other living", was recorded as chaplain to a chantry in St. Nicholas' Newcastle, with a salary of 72s.7d.(5)

The Dominican friary at Bamburgh was dissolved about the same time, but no details are known, save that the bells were sold. In 1560 the site of the friary, then stated to have been formerly in the occupation of Thomas Horsley, and such land as the friary had possessed were bestowed away by Queen Elizabeth.

The eleven Austin friars of Newcastle surrendered their house in January 1539. The house, the "Manor", was reserved for the use of the King and the Council of the North. The friars' names were Andrew Kel, prior, Robert Walker, John Moscrop (chaplain in 1546 to a chantry in All Hallows, Newcastle), Henry Boyes, Robert Bowlok (vicar of Kirknewton,

Northumberland, in 1546, died 1554), John Rutter, William Reed, Thomas Cowper (one of that name was teaching without licence at Berwick in 1578), who were all priests; and three novices, Richard Robson, Thomas Smith and Thomas Dawlton.(6)

The Carmelite friars at Newcastle were suppressed at the same time. They were Gerald Spor, prior, Thomas Furnes, John Barroo, Clement Bell (curate at Ebchester, 1554-1576),William Yoggo, Thomas Hedley (ordained deacon 1535, chantry priest at Widdrington 1548, aged 36, curate successively of Ryton 1555 and 1578, Newburn 1581/2 and Whittonstall 1583, died 1584/5), Thomas Walls, Edward Maxwell (paid 26s.8d. by the Mayor and Corporation of Newcastle in 1566), who were all priests; and two novices, Robert Conere and Bawge Store.(7)

The Carmelite friary at Hulne near Alnwick, one of the earliest settlements of the order in England, was suppressed in January 1539 when there were eleven friars.

The Cistercian Abbey at Newminster, near Morpeth, an old foundation of which St.Robert had been the first abbot in 1138, was suppressed in 1537, when the community numbered seventeen priest monks, three junior monks and four choir boys. The yearly income, later shown to be £265 had been set by the valuers in 1535 at £100, presumably with the object of classing the abbey among the "lesser" monasteries, and thereby hastening its dissolution.

The principal house of the Augustinians (Black Canons) was at Hexham. Here again, the valuation had been falsified by the King's Commissioners in 1535 to bring down the income to under the £200 required to enable the house to be classed as a "lesser" monastery. The following year the Commissioners came to receive the surrender of the abbey. They met with resistance, the canons arming themselves to defend their property. The Abbey was finally suppressed in 1537, and six of the monks are said to have been executed.(8) The Abbey had supported a school and a hospital in Hexham.

A house of the same order at Brinkburn was surrendered by ten canons in 1536.

The Premonstratensians (White Canons) at Alnwick were suppressed in 1536, re-formed, and finally suppressed in 1539. They had a school in Alnwick and the cure of several parishes, and so were able to make provision for some of their members. The last abbot, William Herrison, became vicar of Lesbury. He married, and on that account was deprived under Queen Mary by re-instated in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Strangely enough, the family he reared all appear as recusants a few years later. Blanchland Abbey, also Premonstratensian, was suppressed in 1539.

The great Benedictine priory at Durham ranked among the "greater" monasteries, having an annual income estimated at £1360. It had many dependent houses, including Lindisfarne, Finchale, Jarrow, Monkwearmouth, and Warkworth, and also the hospitals of St.Mary Magdalene at Durham and of Witton Gilbert. There was a school attached to the monastery.

At the time of the dissolution there were about sixty six monks. In 1540 the new Cathedral chapter was formed, with the prior Hugh Whitehead as dean. Twelve of the senior monks, Edward Hyndmers, Roger Watson, Thomas Spark, William Bennet, William Todd, Stephen Marley, Robert Dalton, John Tutyn, Nicholas Marley, Ralph Blakiston, Robert Bennet and William Watson were made canons and prebendaries. The later careers of most of these can be traced: about half of them remained faithful and were deprived, and half conformed and took preferments. Eight or nine had positions in the house as minor canons and seven were students at Oxford. Pensions were granted to the rest.

There was also a Benedictine monastery at Tynemouth, with dependencies at Coquet Island and St.Leonard's hospital, Tynemouth. The prior and eighteen monks surrendered

the house in 1539 when the annual income was £537.

There were Benedictine nuns at St.Bartholomew's priory in Newcastle. The house was preserved in 1536-7 but suppressed in January 1540, when pensions were granted to the prioress, Agnes Lawson (£6), and to ten nuns, Johanna Scott, Johanna Baxter, and Johanna Prior (£2 each), Margaret Pendreth, Johanna Colyer, Johanna Broderigg, Elizabeth Shafto (£1.6s.8d. each) and Cecilia Middleton, Johanna Youngèr, Elizabeth Crawmere, lay sisters (13s.4d. each).(9) The hospital of St.Edmund at Gateshead was dependent upon the priory.

Nesham priory, another Benedictine house, was dissolved in 1539, when eight nuns were pensioned. The prioress was Jane Lawson, sister of the prioress at Newcastle.

Lambley priory was dissolved in 1537, when the six nuns who had formed the community were recorded as having fled.

Holystone was a convent of Augustinian canonesses. At the surrender in 1539 the sub-prioress, Elizabeth Turner, was granted a pension of £5 and six nuns, Elizabeth Rede alias Morpeth, Felicia Rutherford, Elizabeth Rede alias Redesdale, Agnes Rede, Cecily Yoese and Margaret Ditchaunt, £2 each.(10)

The year 1536 saw the Pilgrimage of Grace. This was a Yorkshire movement, supported by men of all ranks, calling for changes in many matters affecting the rights of the individual, usurped by a Parliament wholly subservient to the Sovereign. Their chief concern was to secure the abolition of those changes in religious policy which followed upon the suppression of the monasteries. At its height the movement numbered 35,000 men, 5,000 of them from Durham and 10,000 following Sir Thomas Percy, who was afterwards executed for his part in the rising.

Beguiled by promises made on behalf of the King that their grievances would be considered, the rebels dispersed.

Later, on the pretext that hostilities had been resumed, they were mercilessly dealt with. Many poor men were hanged, including sixteen at Durham. Robert Aske and other leaders were tried in London and executed.

[to be continued]

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(1) *Mackenzie, History of Newcastle, p.279.*
(2) *P.Hughes, History of the Reformation, vol.I pp.85-88.*
(3) *J.Brand, History of Newcastle.*
(4) *Archaeologia Aeliana, xvii, p.322.*
(5) *Surtees Society, 22, App.VII.*
(6) *Brand, loc.cit. p.348.*
(7) *ibid. p.63.*
(8) *J.V.C.Farquhar, Saxon Cathedral & Parish church of Hexham. Other historians hold that none were executed, only deprived.*
(9) *Letters & Papers, Henry VIII, vol.XIV,pt.2,no.772.*
(10) *ibid.no.715.*

INTRODUCING USHAW (1)

D. Milburn

One has occasionally heard passers-by on the road from Durham to Esh ask what goes on in that rather large complex of buildings up on the highest point of the hill, shrouded in mist in winter, gay and colourful in spring and summer. It is, in the words of Durham University Calendar, "a Theological College for the training of candidates for Holy Orders in the Roman Catholic Church", or perhaps as we are dealing with specifically Catholic history we may describe it as a major seminary for the training of priests who will exercise their ministry mainly in the seven northern dioceses.

To such as venture within its walls it is immediately obvious that the college is much larger than the view from the road would suggest. What is not so apparent is the antiquity of its foundation. If our passer-by has any architectural knowledge he might class the central block as Georgian and the flanking buildings as Neo-Gothic, and of course he would not be far wrong, for the college at Ushaw was opened in 1808 and developed rapidly in the 1850's. But there is little if any hint that the college takes the place of one established in 1568 in what is now northern France.

Why was such a foundation overseas necessary? The answer lies in the realm of Reformation history and in the unbecoming controversies of mid-sixteenth century England. Mary Tudor tried to restore Catholicism by fair means and foul, but failed. Her successor, Elizabeth, in an attempt to achieve religious unity, enforced her own settlement of religion which combined elements of Catholicism and Protestantism. This did not work either. Neither strict Catholic nor strict

Protestant was pleased by the Queen's action, and the rest of her long reign saw a great deal of skirmishing over religion. The story of the Puritan reaction is well enough known, but the story of Catholic recusancy has had to wait until our generation to penetrate respected periodicals like the Journal of Ecclesiastical History.

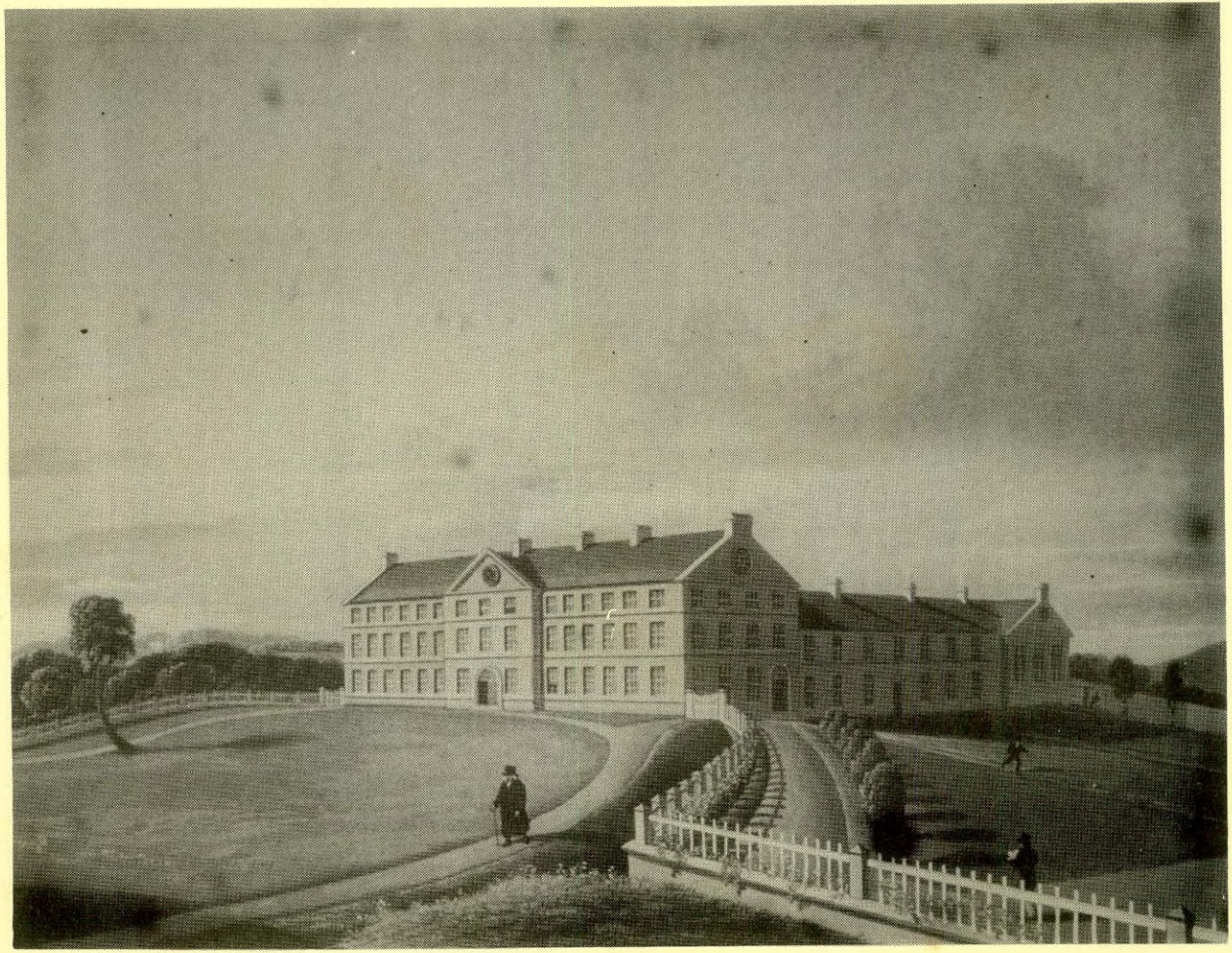
The Catholic bishops had been deposed when they refused to accept Elizabeth's settlement of religion and other prominent office-holders were threatened. Among these was William Allen, Principal of St.Mary's Hall at Oxford (later absorbed into Oriel). He escaped abroad and eventually founded, within the shadow of the theological schools of the University of Douai recently set up by Philip II, a college for English Catholic intellectuals. Allen's action was the counterpart of that of the Protestant exiles during Mary's reign. The intention was certainly much the same: to build up an intellectual elite ready to re-stock the universities, though Allen planned to put Catholics into important positions once Elizabeth had been deposed or had died. However, as Elizabeth was not deposed and lived on, the purpose of the English College changed to the training of priests who would return to England in defiance of the law to keep the Catholic faith alive. Elizabeth, put out by this audacity, allowed her government to take measures against a revival of Catholicism. The severest penalties were enacted in 1581, when it became treasonable for a priest to return to England to say Mass and for anyone to harbour a priest. This law led to nearly two hundred Catholics dying a traitor's death, over half of them connected in some way with the college at Douai. Despite such measures the college continued to send missioners into England, and it is estimated that no less than four hundred and fifty came during Elizabeth's reign alone.

Douai College, as it came to be called, began to prosper. One important development was the decision to take younger students for a course of humanities. It is usually thought that Matthew Kellison, the fourth president, initiated this

move in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, but it is likely that he was reverting to earlier practices. So the college grew. It had its ups and downs, but generally it prospered. New buildings, generally regarded as the finest in the town, were erected in the eighteenth century. Unfortunately they were pulled down in 1926 to widen the road in front of the railway station.

The presidency of William Gibson (1781-1790) was a particularly important one in the history of the college. He followed his brother Matthew as Vicar Apostolic of the Northern District (1790-1821), and was the bishop most closely linked with the foundation of the college at Ushaw. In an effort to attract the sons of gentlemen he initiated a series of structural alterations and internal reforms. Most of these were very sensible in themselves. Unfortunately the college was badly hit by the rapidly spiralling inflation in France just prior to the Revolution and the consequent financial crisis within the college overshadowed every other aspect of William Gibson's work. Thus by the time he became bishop in the Northern District he had earned a not altogether deserved reputation for poor administration and he found himself opposed by his clergy at almost every turn, especially in his efforts to find a new home for Douai College, following the Revolution of 1789. When war was declared between France and England in 1793 British property was immediately confiscated. By this time the number of students in the college had dwindled to under forty, with eight superiors. These, with other British subjects in Douai, were imprisoned, and some of them were not able to return to England until 1795.

Meanwhile the English Vicars Apostolic were urgently looking for a replacement for Douai College back on English soil. Although Flass Hall in the valley below the present college at Ushaw was considered, Bishop Gibson eventually accepted an offer made by the Bishop of the London District to house as many northern students as possible in the small school at Old Hall Green in Hertfordshire. But the accommo-



Ushaw in 1822

dation soon became insufficient and Bishop Gibson settled some of his students at the small school called Tudhoe Academy under the care of John Lingard, the future historian and a former student in Divinity at Douai.

Bishop Gibson kept alive the ideal of having a single home for Douai. He rode all over the north inspecting sites. As time went on, however, it became clear that the southerners were as determined to have a college in the south as he was on having one in the north, so it was inevitable that north and south eventually went their own way. The college in the south stayed at Old Hall Green and became St.Edmund's College and only recently the theologians have been moved into London. In the north, after more searching, a lease was taken of Crook Hall, near Leadgate. Today scarcely anything remains of it. While it was being got ready the students from Tudhoe stayed at Pontop Hall which overlooks the Derwent valley. The hall is now a farmhouse and has been recently restored.

Crook Hall was too small almost from the start and negotiations were soon undertaken for the purchase of a site where a new college could be begun. Several possibilities were explored but, strangely enough, not the most obvious one, Ushaw farm, part of the estates belonging to the Catholic Smythe family of Acton Burnell. Only in 1798 was Ushaw considered, and even then negotiations were protracted, largely because of the bad feeling between the bishop and his clergy and work was not begun on the site until 1804.

When the college was opened in 1808 conditions were not good. Some of the floors were still unflagged, pools of rain water formed in some of the corridors and many of the windows were still unglazed. Of the projected quadrangle only three sides had been completed and these stood bare to the winds. The generally poor condition of the house was blamed for the severe epidemic of typhus which killed five students of the young college. They were buried in ground to the west

of the buildings which became the cemetery where most of the bishops connected with the north-east are buried. It was a hard beginning, but gradually things improved. Despite poverty and hardship, the college clung to its well established academic traditions. It provided not only training in the humanities and theology for church students, but also schooling for lay boys at competitive rates. It even went so far as to provide such boys with higher education in lieu of the university training from which Catholics were then barred. The excellent performance of the Ushaw students (including Nicholas Wiseman) in the Roman Schools from 1820 onwards shows the standard achieved.

In many ways these early years were years of retrenchment and the extent of the buildings at this time is seen in the painting by Ramsay, engraved by Turner, (1828). Nevertheless, if the efforts of the talented Charles Newsham as the fifth president of Ushaw are to be explained adequately these were also years of unobtrusive consolidation. Newsham (1837-63) was certainly the most dynamic of the Ushaw presidents and was one of the leaders of the Catholic Revival in England. The decade, 1848-58, was one of astonishing expansion. First on the list of improvements was a chapel in the Decorated style by Pugin, opened in 1848. The former chapel, which had seen the consecration of three vicars apostolic and the ordination of over a hundred and fifty priests, was then converted into a highly ornate examination room. At the same time a library wing was constructed at the south-east corner of the main block in a style which harmonised with the Pugin chapel at the opposite corner. At its opening in 1851 it housed something like twenty thousand volumes, over half of which had been contributed by "Father" Thomas Wilkinson of Kendal, one of the few surviving Douai priests, whose object was to equip the new college with a library of the quality of that of Douai College before the Revolution. Appropriately, his portrait hangs at the entrance to the upper library.

The 1850's also saw the building of a number of smaller chapels, a teaching museum, a substantial infirmary, new farm buildings (also in the Gothic style), and not least a new junior school, the president's largest single enterprise. Apparently John Gillow, the second president, had contemplated the idea, probably in imitation of the "prep" school which Douai College had at Équerchin. Newsham had considered the project from the very beginning of his presidency, but the decision to build was taken only in the mid-1850's and then despite some opposition from the northern bishops. The junior school was opened in 1859 and designed to be independent of the college. The buildings stand empty at the moment in consequence of the decision of the northern bishops to move the junior seminarians to Upholland College.

Newsham's intention in launching such a spectacular building programme was not self glorification nor even the glorification of the college. Throughout his presidency he believed that Catholicism had reached the point where it must burst its constricting bands and he planned accordingly. His great care was to integrate Catholic with national education. As the strongly Anglican principles of the new University of Durham precluded any approach by Ushaw, Newsham turned to the undenominational University of London, to which affiliation was granted in 1840. The president entered two students for the examinations at three months' notice and not only were they declared the equal of the other examinees, but in many ways superior. The college had at last triumphed publicly and in the middle years of the century Ushaw can be regarded as the Catholic Athens of the north.

What then has been Ushaw's contribution to the Catholic history of the region? As its purpose has been to train priests and laymen its contribution must be assessed largely by the work of the thousands trained at the college. No one as yet has undertaken a systematic investigation of their work, though the spiritual ministry of its priests cannot adequately be measured in material terms. In terms of material achieve-

ment the evidence points to a very substantial contribution. Ralph Platt, for instance, the subject of a recent enquiry, came to Ushaw at the age of twelve in 1824. Immediately after ordination he was given the work of teaching philosophy in the college and also acted as Prefect of Studies. when the curriculum was extended to meet the requirements of London University examinations. Platt's re-organisation led partly to the famous Ushaw "revolt" of 1842, and he left the college to become assistant missioner at Kendal. Thereafter he was missioner at Stella (1847-1857), during which time he was nominated Vicar General of the diocese and Provost of the Cathedral Chapter. He moved to Durham in 1857 where he built St.Godric's church and the schools. He ended his days at Dodding Green. Nearly every parish in these northern counties can furnish comparable details.

Most of the buildings at Ushaw in the Neo-Gothic style belong to the period of Mgr. Newsham. The present chapel is the largest single exception. Unhappily, the Pugin structure of 1847 became too unstable because of mining subsidence and also too small. It was replaced by the present Dunn and Hansom chapel (1883-5) which incorporates much of the original Pugin work.

Recent proposals for the restructuring of training for the diocesan priesthood include the merging of the two major seminaries in the north, Upholland and Ushaw, at Ushaw, and the forming of a single junior seminary at Upholland. The merger of the major seminaries is expected to take place in September 1975. Ushaw will then return to its original purpose. Douai College was founded within the theological schools of the new university of Douai. It was in its origins a university college. Ushaw, for the immediate future at any rate, is linked with the University of Durham, of which it has been a licensed Hall of Residence since 1968. Ushaw's concentration on higher studies in the shadow of Durham University brings the college closer to Allen's ideal than at

any other time in the last four hundred years.

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(1) A revised version of the illustrated inaugural lecture given to the North East Catholic History Society, 2 October 1974.

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" " Here's to the House, in The Ushaw Magazine LXXXV (1974), pp.2-8.

RALPH PETER CLAVERING OF CALLALY [1727-1787]

W. J. Nicholson

In the religious history of England the eighteenth century marks a long and gradual change in the climate of public opinion towards Catholics. The more severe penal laws were felt to be barbarous and fell into disuse. There remained much legal discrimination against papists: the double land tax which Catholic land-owners had to pay was enforced throughout the century and well into the nineteenth. Anti-papist feeling could be aroused even to mob violence. But the first modest concessions were made in the Catholic Relief Acts of 1778 and 1791. How this new climate of toleration affected the survivors of the old penal laws can be studied in the life of the Catholic squire of Callaly Castle in the second half of the eighteenth century.

Ralph Peter Clavering was born on 29th June 1727, the eldest surviving son of Ralph Clavering of Callaly.(1) In September 1741, he was admitted to the English College of Douai where his younger brother, Nicholas, had already begun his studies for the priesthood. Since the penal laws forbade Catholics to study abroad, both brothers took an alias, Stapleton, their mother's name.

Ralph Peter was only seventeen years of age, and still at Douai during the 1745 Jacobite Rising. His father's name appears in "the list of Papists reputed Papists and Non-Jurors within the North Division of Coquetdale Ward summoned .... to appear at the Session Hall at Alnwick this 21st day of Sept. (1745) to take the oaths and make repeat and subscribe the Declaration by Law required", but like all the others named he failed to appear.(2) His father's sister, who had married Francis Maire of Hardwick Hall, co Durham, had to flee when a

mob attacked and plundered the Hall.(3) His father's second cousin, Edward Clavering of Berrington, was the only Clavering to be actively involved in the Rising. On the retreat from Derby, Edward was captured and was one of the eleven rebels executed at York. The gruesome details are reported in the Newcastle Courant on 8th November 1746: "When they had hung for ten minutes, the executioner cut them down, laid their bodies on a stage, and Captain Hamilton was the first whose heart was taken out, which the executioner threw into the fire crying out 'Gentlemen, behold the heart of a traitor', upon which the spectators gave a loud huzza."

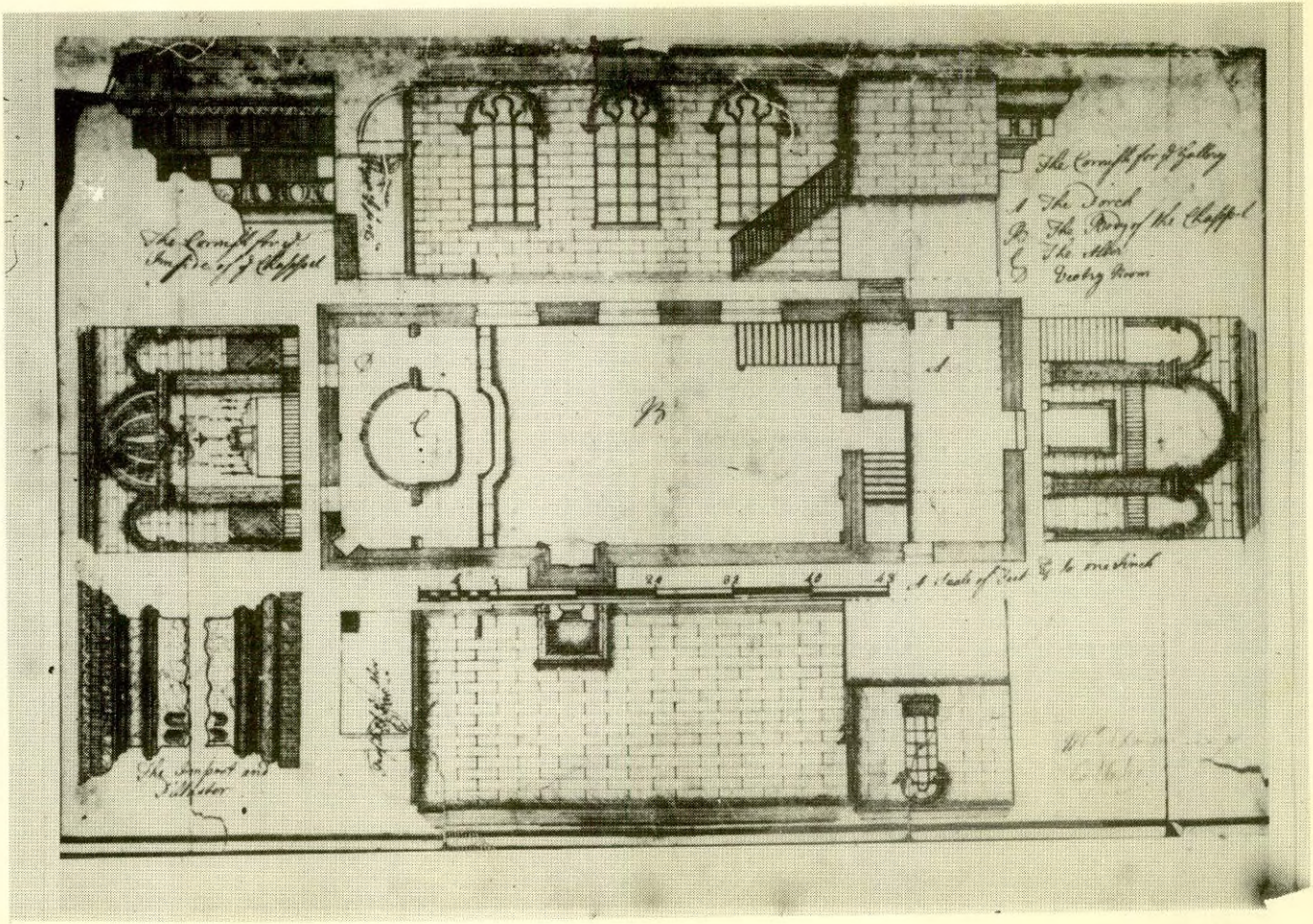
Ralph Peter Clavering left Douai in July 1747 and was only twenty when, on the death of his father on 14th April 1748, he succeeded to the Callaly estate and registered its extent according to law as a papist on 20th May 1749.(4) One of his first tasks was to replace the old chapel inside the Castle with a domestic chapel built in its grounds. The foundation stone can still be seen with its inscription: AN SAL MDCCL/RODOL CLAVERING/POSUIT. This new chapel served the Callaly mission until the estate was sold, Mass being said there for the last time by the Rev. Thomas Ord on April 26th 1878. 1750 was a Jubilee Year and the chaplain was the Rev. John Darrell S.J. who came to Callaly about 1742 and left on 3rd August 1752 to become rector of the Jesuit College of St Omer. He says in his report: "I declare that all my customers seem to take the affair of the Jubilee so much to heart ... I am both surprised and edified to see my people so serious at their duties ... My salary from this place is £10.10. The number of my customers, including all ages about 280; of my own gaining about half a dozen". (5)

Ralph Peter was also involved in the setting up of Alnwick as an independent mission during the 1750's. Earlier in the eighteenth century Mass was said at regular intervals in a house (which still exists today) in Bondgate Without, next to the old Plough Inn.(6) This old mass house was registered by John Clavering of Callaly in 1717 as "messuages in Alnwick

let to Winifred Cotes".(7) The site of the present St Mary's church in Bailiffgate was sold by Bryan Burrell of Broom Park to Ralph Peter Clavering of Callaly on 15th December 1757 for £156. Clavering declared on 4th October 1758 that the property was held in trust for John Walsh and John Parker. These were both Jesuits: Fr Walsh was the Superior of the Durham District; Fr Parker was the priest residing in Alnwick from 1756 to 1770.

The early 1750's was the period when the first Duke began rebuilding Alnwick Castle and this clearly entailed great change in the town of Alnwick and in the surrounding countryside. This is reflected in the increase of Catholics in Alnwick during the eighteenth century. In 1705 there were only eight.(8) In the list of 1767 there are seventy names.(9) This list begins with "Mr George Parker aged 49 Priest and reputed Jesuit resident 11 years", followed by "Francis Clavering aged 36 Gentleman resident 12 years", a younger brother of Ralph Peter. The list also contains other Callaly names: Thomas Brown, Wm Moody, James Allison, all masons; John Peary, brickmaker: Francis Hunter, thatcher. Increasing tolerance now made it possible, though it was still against the law, to build a Catholic chapel and to keep a resident priest in the town.

"It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife", wrote Jane Austen in Pride and Prejudice. On 19th July 1757 Ralph Peter married Elizabeth, daughter of James Egan, at St George's chapel, Hanover Square, London. The coat of arms of the newly-weds are displayed in the drawing room at Callaly which was reconstructed and decorated in the Chippendale manner at this time. But the marriage ended tragically. She became ill and in 1761 the family went to Bath, taking their chaplain with them, and they remained away from Callaly for almost a year until she died on 7th May 1762. During the chaplain's absence, the priest at Biddlestone took his place: "1761 June 5 Mr Harrison left Biddlestone to supply at Callaly till the family's return from Bath. 1762 April 1. Mr Harrison left Callaly for Lancashire and had for his viaticum £2.2."(10)



Callaly Castle chapel, 18th century
By courtesy of R.J.R.Arundell Esq.

After a year's mourning, Ralph Peter left Callaly for Paris. The account book containing the expenses of this French tour and of the following year is extant and has been published.(11) He arrived at the seminary of the English clergy in Paris on 13th December 1763, then stayed for some months in the convent of the English Benedictine nuns of Pontoise, just outside Paris, where his sister had been professed and became its last abbess. He naturally took part in the social life of the English community in Paris. On the 29th February 1764 there is the entry:"To my share of the expense of a Ball given by Sir Thomas Tancred, Howard, Talbot, Ravenscroft, Langdale, and others, 27 livres". Here he met the lady who was to become his second wife, Frances, daughter of James Lynch of Bordeaux. On 17th July he entered in the account book:"To the French comedy in company with ma chère and Mrs d'Arcy". The two were married in Paris on 1st August 1764. The event is entered: "To the curate on our marriage, 72 livres. To the town drums on my marriage, 12 livres". And a few days later he entered the douceur de noces: "Aug 4. to 16½ ells of Red and white sattain, a present to ye woman I love most Tenderly".

Ralph Peter and his bride left France soon after the wedding on 23rd August on their way home to Callaly. The birth of a son and heir took place at Callaly on 22nd July 1765. The family were sent for: "To brother Francis and sister Catherine from Alnwickm 9s. To cards, 3s". A few days later there are the entries: "To Mr Twentyman curate (of Whittingham) for registering ye birth of my son John Aloysius and yt of our marriage, £2.2.0. To Mr Plessington (the Jesuit chaplain at Callaly) a present on Christening my son, £1.1.0". The birth was followed by some rejoicing in the village: "To the poor, 8s. To ye fiddler, 4s". For the mother, however, the birth had been difficult, and within a month Ralph Peter was once more on the road to Bath with an ailing wife and accompanied by their chaplain. But they did not stay long at Bath. The chaplain returned to Callaly, his travelling expenses being £5.5.0., and the squire and his lady continued their journey to France. They crossed the Channel but only got as far as

Douai where Frances died on 22nd November 1765.

Ralph Peter was now almost forty years old, a widower with one child(John Aloysius, who succeeded him at Callaly but died without issue in 1826.) He married for the third time eighteen months after the death of his second wife. His new bride Mary, was the daughter of Edward Walsh. She was twenty-three when they were married at St James, London on 20th June 1767, and she survived her husband many years, dying at Hampstead in 1809 aged sixty-five. It is probable that she was the sister of the Rev. Edward Walsh, who was born in France of Irish parents and served in Durham City for many years. There were nine children of this marriage. John Edward, the only surviving son, succeeded his half-brother in 1826 and was the father of Edward John, the last Clavering of Callaly.

The ill-fortune of Ralph Peter pursued him to the end. In 1784 the estate became so encumbered with debt that he had to flee the country. He spent the last three years of his life at St Omer where he died, aged sixty, on 4th October 1787.

The Rev Nicholas Clavering, his younger brother, had the task of saving as much as he could from the debacle. As trustee he had to make some settlement for the creditors while looking after the interests of his nephew who was still a minor, as well as safeguarding as best he could the family trusts. To add to the confusion, there was also the church property which Ralph Peter had held in trust. Nicholas left his mission in Durham City (he last signed the register there on 27th August 1785) and remained at Callaly until 1792, and some time later left the North for London. In a Callaly deed of 24th December 1794 he is described "as now of Hammersmith."

Further tribulation in the family had forced him to leave Callaly for another rescue operation. His sister, lady Anne, abbess of Pontoise, had been forced by money difficulties to dissolve the community of Pontoise and to amalgamate with the Benedictines of Dunkirk. Then, three years later, they were

overwhelmed by the storm of the French Revolution. They were evicted from their convent and, along with the Poor Clares of Dunkirk, were imprisoned for eighteen months in the convent of the Poor Clares of Gravelines. They were only freed to go to England after the fall of Robespierre. All three communities arrived safely in London on 3rd May 1795 and five days later the Benedictine nuns took a large house in Hammersmith where they were to remain for seventy years. Six months after their arrival, on 8th November, Anne Clavering died after forty-four years of profession. The next day the Bishop consecrated part of the garden as a burial ground and she was buried there on 10th November.(12)

It is said that the Rev. Nicholas Clavering, after leaving Callaly, was confessor to the Benedictine nuns of Pontoise and accompanied them to England.(13) He could not have been at Pontoise, but it does seem that he helped to negotiate their return to England and to find them a refuge after their ordeal. He himself remained at Hammersmith until his death, aged seventy-seven, on 18th October 1805.(14)

In 1828 there were 100 Catholics in Whittingham which Archdeacon Singleton described as "this their stronghold".(15) This was no longer quite true by this date, but it certainly had been during the lifetime of Ralph Peter Clavering. (In July 1773 Bishop William Walton had given confirmation to as many as 201 persons in the Castle chapel). The mission of Callaly had survived many stresses, from within and without, but finally, like all our old missions, its history was completely changed by events beyond our shores.

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(5) Foley,op.cit., pp.667,668.

(6) A. Chadwick, St. Mary's Church, Alnwick (1936).

(7) Hodgson, op.cit., p.37.

(8) Return of papists, 1705. House of Lords Record Office. Transcript by A.M.C.Forster.

(9) Return of papists, 1767. House of Lords Record Office. Transcript by A.M.C.Forster.

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(11) R. Trapps-Lomax, Account book of Ralph Clavering (C.R.S.,13),p.190 seq.

(12) B. Wheland O.S.B.,Historic English Convents (1936), pp.130, 178, 181.

(13) Foley, op.cit., V, p.649.

(14) Douai Obituaries (C.R.S.,12), p.93.

(15) Archdeacon Singleton's Visitation, 1826-8. Northumberland Record Office, ZAN M.15/A.72.

TRACING OUR CATHOLIC FOREFATHERS

W. V. Smith

Catholics in England should surely have a pride in the way their forebears preserved the Faith through the long years of persecution and handed it down to our own times. Tracing the family descent and history of Catholics is a difficult but rewarding occupation. The first thing is to know something of the sources available and it is hoped that these notes will provide an introduction to them and will encourage a greater interest in Catholic genealogy.

After the Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Act of 1836 the question of the religious allegiance of one's ancestors has no bearing on the task of discovering their identity and descent. The searcher, armed with all the information he can glean from his family records and knowledge, can visit the General Register Office at Somerset House, London to search indexes and obtain certificates, and if he knows the precise dates or other details he can obtain certificates from the duplicate copies kept in the principal local registration offices. Even before 1837 there are a number of common sources, such as wills and administrations (those for Northumberland and Durham are kept at the Durham University Department of Palaeography), which contain genealogical information without ostensibly distinguishing the person's religious allegiance. Catholic genealogists, especially those who are familiar with the generally very carefully kept Church of England parish registers of baptisms, marriages and burials, many surviving from the 16th and 17th centuries, are dismayed to discover that the Catholic parish registers of baptisms and marriages usually do not start before the late 18th century, although earlier registers of some missions and chapels are extant. There are good reasons for the absence of Catholic

registers, but even without them there are other sources in which useful information may be found.

Among the Acts passed during the first hundred years of the penal days to make people conform to the New Religion was an Act of 1605 concerning baptisms and marriages. The penalty for the clandestine (i.e. not performed in the parish church) reception of these sacraments was £100 for each baptism and marriage and possibly death for the priest who had administered them. The sacraments were therefore administered as secretly as possible and consequently it would have been dangerous to keep any records of them. While for various reasons the law concerning marriages was more strictly enforced, and some priests were in trouble even in the 18th century for performing them, the law about baptism was not enforced after the Restoration of 1660. Even so the law was not repealed until the Catholic Relief Act of 1778 and until then the clergy were doubtless afraid to keep registers.

There were other difficulties as well. Baptisms were performed in private houses even until the 19th century because of the lack of chapels and even much later because of the high rate of infant mortality and the impossibility of poor Catholic parents travelling long distances on foot to their nearest chapel. The fear of infant death is shown by the frequent record of babies being baptised on or soon after the day of birth. In the Minsteracres register members of the Silvertop family sometimes appear as the sponsors of children while their butler is recorded as godfather ten times in eight years. While on occasions the family of the baby would no doubt have conveyed the priest, such cases as these suggest that the priest had to rely on his patrons for transport. As to recording the details in his register, sometimes the priest would trust his memory or, if he wrote them down on some paper or in some book he had with him, he might not enter them in the register when he got home.

Another difficulty in finding these baptismal records is

that the priests often considered the registers to be their personal property and took the records with them when they moved. The Rev. Thomas Penswick, for instance, began a baptismal register in Hardwick in 1744 and used the same book at Warwick Bridge in Cumberland, and again at Wycliffe in Yorkshire, where he died in 1791. Thus, the oldest Wycliffe register contains baptism at Hardwick, 1743-47, Warwick Bridge, 1747-64, and Wycliffe, 1764-91. This difficulty will only be resolved when all extant registers have been traced and centrally indexed. Another problem is that over the years a few of the registers have been lost or mislaid, but it is impossible to know how many, though fortunately modern copies exist of some of those now missing.

A more important event occurred in 1836 when the General Register Office was established at Somerset House, The Registrar wrote to all the non-conformist clergy, including the Catholics, asking for all their registers to be placed in his care. The Vicars Apostolic refused this request. A few priests did send in their registers but about 1840 Bishop Briggs of the Northern District changed his mind. At that time he lived in Yorkshire and all the registers of that county, except one, were sent to Somerset House. Lancashire still refused to part with theirs and only one was sent. All the Durham County registers were sent, the priests in the Durham City, Sunderland and elsewhere making copies beforehand, and about three quarters of the Northumberland registers were sent. A complete list of all extant registers for these counties, with a note of where they are kept, is given at the end of this article.

As well as baptisms, marriages and deaths, the registers contain other useful genealogical details, such as the names of those confirmed by the Bishop on his pastoral tours. Also, especially in the early 19th century, the priest often kept a record of all communicants at Easter and other great feasts, and occasionally recorded a census of his flock. Such lists may be in surviving registers or in special books kept for that purpose. The writer's great, great grandfather, a cottage

weaver in Barnard Castle, was married in Netherwitton in Northumberland in 1806, and one can speculate why and how the couple met. The name of the bride does not occur in the expected register, but it was found with some of her presumed family in the 1806 Easter Communion list at nearby Thropton.

Outside these parochial records there are few specifically Catholic sources. There are, however, some notable records such as that of the Confirmation tour of Bishop John Leyburn, V.A. Starting in 1687, he first went up the eastern side of England to Northumberland, then crossed to the west, and returned to London through Lancashire and the other counties. He kept lists of all the people he confirmed during the whole tour, including:- 640 at Cliffe on the south bank of the Tees, 1083 in Durham City, 359 in Newcastle and 1285 in five places in Northumberland. The Cliffe and Newcastle lists are known to contain some people from places in County Durham near to those centres. Admittedly the evidence is indirect, but when there is very little else, such clues are useful.

If the Catholic sources are thin, more information about priests and people is to be found in state and local official records made during the years of persecution. The Recusant Rolls from 1592 to 1689 in the Public Record Office contain the most complete lists of Catholics, while locally, the Quarter Sessions records of Durham and Northumberland contain lists or names from the 17th century. Although the Durham records have been little examined for this purpose, those of Northumberland have been carefully studied.

Nor should the Church of England parish registers be ignored. In 1695 Parliament passed an Act ordering the incumbent to register the birth as well as the baptism of every child born in his parish. At first the Act seems to have been ignored but it was re-enacted in 1706. Even then some parochial clergy seem to have neglected the order, but where it was obeyed much essential information can be found. For example, in the registers of Whittingham in Northumberland will

be found the births and parentage of all dissenters from c.1707 to 1776. The rector of St. Oswald's in Durham kept two registers, one of births and the other of baptisms. When the editor of these registers found discrepancies between the two, he suggested it was because of the death of babies without baptism, whereas those for which there is no baptismal entry were probably baptized by priests and other dissenting clergy, and may well have lived a full life. Even before the Act was passed, some vicars had recorded the births and baptisms of Catholics. Thus the vicar of Whittingham entered three baptisms, adding in Greek 'kata roman', 'according to the Roman rite', while the vicar of Whorlton in county Durham registered the baptisms of most of the children of the Catholic landowner between 1682 and 1696, adding in English or Latin 'as the father told me'. Since the parish registers were the only legal proof of descent in property and other things, it was necessary for Catholic parents to have their children entered in the parish register in one way or another.

The question of marriage was even more important. Leaving aside the theological question of what was at that time required by the Catholic Church for a valid marriage, the Hardwick Act of 1754 made it necessary for a marriage to be valid in civil law, and therefore for the legitimacy of the children, that the ceremony be performed by the parson of the bride in her proper parochial church though the Archbishops could grant a licence for the marriage to take place in another parish church. After that date until the Registration Acts of 1836, and even sometimes before it, most Catholics were married first in an Anglican parish church and afterwards in their own chapel. One consequence of this practice was that priests neglected to enter these in their own registers, since proof of the marriage could be found in the parish register.

It was not until about the middle of the 19th century that Catholics had their own cemeteries or indeed that public ones were maintained. Up to that time the burials took place in the parish churchyards, the ceremony being performed by the Angli-

can clergyman. In the late 17th century and 18th century the entry in the burial register is often completed by the words 'papist' or 'roman'. Such additions are a help in identifying the family to which the person belonged.

Finally, a very important source is the three returns of papists ordered by the House of Lords in the 18th century. Each incumbent was required to send in a complete list of Catholics in his parish, together with details of their age, occupation and status. The first return was in 1705 and is very incomplete for the diocese of Durham. That of 1767, however, is complete, the names being recorded in families. This return gives the names of parents and children, their ages varying between 110 years to a few months, their occupations and the length of time they had resided in the parish. It is a most useful guide, especially as it is just about the time that the extant catholic registers usually start. The third return of 1780 merely gives the numbers of Catholics in each parish.

There is therefore a considerable amount of source material available to Catholics who are anxious to trace their forefathers. While these notes refer mostly to Durham and Northumberland, similar sources will be found in the other parts of England and Wales.

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LOCATION OF REGISTERS OF DURHAM AND NORTHUMBERLAND PARISHES

W. V. Smith

The registers deposited in Somerset House in c.1837-40 are now kept at the Public Record Office and these are identified on the list below by the reference R.G., followed by the individual index number. Microfilms of the County Durham parish registers at the P.R.O. are available at the Durham Record Office. Later registers may be found in the presbyteries of the named parishes. The single date given is that of the start of the registers, except in the case of old chaplaincies where the second date is that of closure. Registers printed by the Catholic Record Society are indicated by the C.R.S. volume number in parenthesis.

Alnwick,	1794	R.G./3911, 1572.
Beaufort Castle,	1774-96	St. Mary's, Hexham.
Bellingham (Hesleyside),	1794	R.G.4/2481 [C.R.S.,2]
Berrington,	1793-1816	R.G.4/2482.
Berwick on Tweed,	1804	R.G.4/1402.Copy,1817-38, at Our Lady & St. Cuthbert's, Berwick.
Biddleston,	1767	R.G.4/1573,2480[C.R.S.,14]
Birtley, (once Chester-le-Street),	1745	Presbytery.
Brooms (Pontop Hall),	1778	R.G.4/1,2284.Presbytery.
Callaly Castle (Whittingham),	1796	Register missing. [C.R.S.,7].
Capheaton Hall,	1760-85	[C.R.S.,14].
Cheeseburn Grange,	1775	R.G.4/3191
Cowpen,	1811-20;1839	Presbytery.
Croxdale,	1801	R.G.4/475. Copy in Presbytery.
Darlington,	1783	R.G.4/472.
Durham, Secular Mission,	1739	R.G.4/46,474,3450.
Jesuit Mission,	1768-1827	R.G.4/1759. Copies (poor) in St. Cuthbert's Presbytery.

Ellingham,	1781	R.G.4/2483,2915. Copy,1781-1823, in Presbytery.
Esh Laude (once Newhouse),	1795	R.G.4/2280,2281.
Felton,	1792	R.G.4/3768.
Haggerston Castle (now Lowick),	1786	R.G.4/1802. Register of deaths from 1791 in Presbytery.
Hartlepool,	1834	R.G.4/2282.
Hexham & Stonecroft,		
Dominican Mission,	1715-1826) & 1737-1818)	All three registers in Presbytery. [C.R.S.,26].
Secular Mission,	1753)	
Houghton le Spring,	1830	R.G.4/2283.
Hutton House (once Hardwick Hall),	1743-47	R.G.4/4466. (This Wycliffe register was re-opened and used at Hardwick Hall).
" "	1819	R.G.4/478.
Longhorsley,		Early registers lost. Copies,1810-38, in Presbytery.
"	1833-45	Library, Ushaw College.
" (Witton Shields),	1789-1803	Register lost. Copy in Society of Genealogists, London.
" "	1803 onwards,	see Thropton register.
Minsteracres,	1766	Presbytery.
"	1795-1840	R.G.4/1403.
Morpeth,	1780	Presbytery.
Newcastle on Tyne,	1765	St. Andrew's Presbytery.(1765-1825 in C.R. S.,35)
North Shields & South Shields,	1807-09	Presbytery.
	1821	R.G.4/3751.
Brooms register,	1784-90	
Sunderland register,	1809-21	and Newcastle registers.
Stella,	1775	R.G.4/352.
Stockton on Tees,	1783	R.G.4/483.
Sunderland	1809	R.G.4/1494. Copy in St. Mary's Presbytery.
Swinburne Castle,	1828	Presbytery.
Thropton,	1769	R.G.4/1779.
Wooler,	1819-29	Seahouses Presbytery. For entries before 1816, see Callaly Castle; after 1816, see Ellingham & Berwick.

PROGRAMME 1974/5

2 October 1974	Inaugural meeting, St.Dominic's Priory Hall, Newcastle
	Very Rev.D.Milburn,D.S.H.: The contribution of Ushaw College to the Catholic history of the North East.
13 October 1974	Visit to Callaly Castle, by courtesy of Major A.S.C.Browne,D.L., and talk in St. Mary's Church, Whittingham.
	Ann M.C.Forster: The early days of recusancy in Northumberland.
13 November 1974	Durham University chaplaincy.
	Rev.W.V.Smith: 'Mrs. Durham' and the suppression of the Jesuits.
5 February 1975	Newcastle University chaplaincy.
	M.B.Joyce B.A.: The education of the Catholic recusants of Northumberland.
14 March 1975	Durham University chaplaincy.
	Sr.M.Cecily: Recusancy in the North Yorkshire Moors, with special reference to Ven.Nicholas Postgate.
4 May 1975	Visit to Dodding Green, Cumberland.
15 June 1975	Visit to Brinkburn Priory, Northumberland.

Darlington
Carmel