NORTHERN CATHOLIC HISTORY

No. 2 Autumn, 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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Jubilee Pit, Coxlodge, by T.H. Hair, 1838
One of the Victorian pits offering work to Irish immigrants.

Pilgrimage to Holy Island, 1887.

NORTH EAST CATHOLIC HISTORY SOCIETY

The Society is now one year old. We celebrated our first birthday in Brinkburn Priory, where the Chairman said Mass and the Vice-President of Ushaw gave the sermon, in the presence of about one hundred and fifty people. This first Mass at Brinkburn since the Reformation made a splendid culmination to our first year.

Our membership is now well over one hundred people, although we were sad to hear during the year of the death of one of our first members, Mr.J.McKuen, and of Fr. Edward Harriott, who had given us generous advice and help since the Society's formation. We hold our first A.G.M. on 30 September, by which time this second issue of Northern Catholic History will have appeared, and the programme for the second year will be found inside the back cover of this magazine. The steering committee hopes to welcome many new members during the coming months, particularly schools and young people; and, once again, we are grateful to all those who have helped us or participated in any way in the last year.

Amanda J.E. Arrowsmith, Secretary

NORTHERN CATHOLIC HISTORY

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

In this second issue, Dr. Forster contributes the second of her four 'outline history' articles, and Mr.M.B.Joyce and Mr. R.J.Cooter summarise aspects of their recently completed research. Some members are keen to commence local research into Irish immigration but more volunteers are needed. A priest's will of 1800 is the first of our intended transcripts of original documents. Old photographs and engravings suitable for illustrations will be welcomed.

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

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

Ann M. C. Forster

Henry VIII died in 1547 and was succeeded by his son, Edward VI, a boy nine years old. The government of the kingdom and church was now in the hands of the executors, under whom the spoiling of the churches and the attacks on traditional piety, in particular the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist, were steadily advanced. The bishops, one by one, were deprived and imprisoned. Tunstall, bishop of Durham, was committed to the Tower in October, 1552, on a trumped-up charge of perjury and misprision of treason.

Edward VI died in July 1553, and was succeeded by his half-sister Mary, a zealous Catholic. Tunstall, together with the other bishops Gardiner, Bonner, Heath and Day, were released and reinstated in their sees. All anti-Catholic legislation was repealed.

With the accession of Elizabeth in 1558, the position was again reversed. In June 1559 a Royal Commission was set up to conduct a visitation of the Church throughout the country,(1) and to require all clergy to subscribe their names to the following declaration:

"We the clergy .... whose names are subscribed do humbly confess and acknowledge the restoring again of the ancient jurisdiction over the State ecclesiastical and spiritual of the Crown of this Realm and the abolishing of all foreign power repugnant to the same according to an Act thereof made in the late Parliament

begun at Westminster the xxiij day of January in the first year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth ... We confess also and acknowledge the administration of the sacraments, the use and order of Divine service in manner and form as it is set forth in the book commonly called the Book of Common Prayer established also by the same Act and the orders and rules contained in the Injunctions given by the Queen's Majesty and exhibited unto us in this present visitation to be according to the true word of God and agreeable to the doctrine and use of the primitive church. In witness whereof and that the premises be true we have unfeignedly hereunto subscribed our names."

The commissioners came to Durham and sat first at Bishop Auckland the 21 September. Thomas Sidgwick, regius professor of divinity at Cambridge, vicar of Gainford and rector of Stanhope, "obstinately refused" to sign the declaration. He was then put on bail to appear when summoned. In Durham Cathedral four days later he was bound over in £300 to appear when required and sentenced to be deprived of all his benefices and emoluments. He died in prison at York in 1573.

Robert Dalton, S.T.B., ex-monk and now canon and prebendary of Durham and vicar of Billingham, also refused, saying that "he believeth that he who sitteth in the seat of Rome hath and ought to have the jurisdiction ecclesiastical over all Christian realms". He was bound over to appear and meanwhile all his emoluments were forfeited. He seems to have conformed eventually, holding the position of archdeacon of Durham and rector of Easington in 1570.

William Bennet, S.T.P., also ex-monk and canon of the Chapter, similarly refused to sign. His goods were sequestered and he was bound over, but not deprived. He died vicar of Aycliffe in 1585, leaving a wife and family.

William Whitehead, nephew of prior Hugh Whitehead and vicar of Heighington, after three refusals, submitted. He had been among those prosecuted after the suppression of the 1569 rising having been cited for having "publicly in his parish church recited certain psalms in the Roman tongue". On 23 September the commissioners moved on to Durham Cathedral.

Thomas Robertson, S.T.D., dean of the Chapter, refused to sign, saying that "the Bishop of Rome ought to have the jurisdiction ecclesiastical of this realm". He was bound over in £50 to appear in London.

Roger Watson, S.T.P., ex-monk, prebendary and canon and rector of Rothbury, signed "voluntarie et ex animo (ceteris expendentibus)". A month later he was co-opted on to the Commission. He died in 1561.

James (John) Crayforth, S.T.B., also canon and prebendary, had been warden of the Franciscans at Newcastle at the time of their dissolution in 1539. He had been spiritual chancellor to bishop Tunstall in 1540 and one of four vicars general appointed to administer the diocese between 1559 and 1561. He died about 1562.

Stephen Marley, S.T.B., ex-monk, prebendary and canon, refused to sign. He was referred to London, his emoluments sequestered, and deprived in 1572.

John Tutyn, ex-monk, prebendary and canon in 1541, vicar of Edlingham in 1556, refused to sign and was deprived in 1560.

Nicholas Marley, S.T.B., ex-monk, prebendary and canon, vicar of Pittington, "would not answer directly to the article of Supremacy but says that the Bishop of Rome had some jurisdiction in the realm". After a second refusal he was referred to London and his emoluments sequestered. He was deprived of his prebend and cure and "restricted to the bishopric of Durham but not to go within eight miles of Durham city". He was later recommended for a pension from the King of Spain.

Anthony Salvin, S.T.B., prebendary and canon, master of University College, Oxford, 1557-8, rector of Sedgfield, 1558, master of Sherburn Hospital, refused to sign, was sequestrated and deprived. He was described as "meanly learned, but of estimation in his own country", and restricted to "Kirkby Moorside in Yorks. or elsewhere in that county, the city of York excepted, so that he does not go 5 miles north of Kirkby Moorside". He

He was living in 1571.

Thomas Sparke, S.T.B., prebendary, appeared by proxy. He had been prior of Lindisfarne in 1536, suffragan bishop of Durham 1537, and rector of Wolsingham in 1547. He was bound over to appear when summoned but not deprived. He died in 1572.

William Todd, ex-monk and prebendary, vicar of Northallerton and archdeacon of Bedford, refused to sign and was sequestrated. Between 1561 and 1564 he was being prosecuted by the Court of High Commission at York, under house confinement and ordered "henceforth not to administer the service now used in the Church of England and not to wear apparel other than other ministers wear". He was deprived in 1567.

Eight of the minor canons of Durham refused the declaration, and after a second refusal were referred to London. These were: William Smythe I, John Brown, John Byndley, William Smythe II, Thomas Pentland, Roland Blenkinsopp, John Pereson and William Hall. Several of these will appear again in connection with the Rising of the Earls in 1569-70. William Thewles, master of the grammar school, also refused.

At the church of St. Nicholas in Newcastle, William Carter, archdeacon of Northumberland, refused to sign the declaration. He was deprived of his office and all his emoluments sequestered. His movements were restricted to the neighbourhood of Thirsk, but in 1571 he was staying at the English College at Douai. He died at Mechlin in 1576.

Several clerics who had been ejected in Queen Mary's time, chiefly for having married, were now re-instated. Many of the parish churches were found to be in a state of neglect. Those at Esh, Lancaster, Chester-le-Street, Gateshead, Stanhope, Winston and All Hallows, Newcastle, were ruinous or in need of repair. At Stainton, Long Newton and Cockfield "all the books that they had in King Edward's time were burned". The parish clergy were all summoned to appear and sign the declaration. Thirty-six absented themselves, six of whom were said to be non-resident.

As on a previous occasion, popular discontent manifested itself in several parts of the country, in the north east culmin-

ating in the "Rising of the Earls" in November 1569. Enthusiastic crowds flocked into Durham City, and in the presence of a vast congregation the Holy Mass was celebrated once more. Many were formally absolved and reconciled by William Holmes "the Pope's Patriarch". Similar scenes were witnessed in other parts. The insurgents, after some initial success, lost heart, retreated and disbanded. The Earl of Westmorland escaped abroad. Thomas Percy, Earl of Northumberland, fled to Scotland, was betrayed and sold to the English government and executed in 1572. There were hangings in many villages throughout the North. Those who survived were pardoned on condition of their taking the Oath of Supremacy and paying a fine.(2) Thus many were driven into conformity who had no heart for it, and in many cases their children later appear as recusants.

Many of the clergy were cited before the Court of High Commission at Durham to account for the part they had played during the rising.(3) Thomas Pentland, ex-Franciscan of Newcastle and now vicar of St. Oswald's, Durham, was charged with having failed to hold service in his parish church on the previous Easter Sunday, and was warned to be there on the following Sunday. He died in Durham in 1575. Roland Blenkinsopp, aged 69, confessed that he "was at three Masses and helped to sing at them ... came into the church when Holmes was preaching, with his surplice on; went into the choir and sat in the stall there, and heard nothing. Is heartily sorry ... was forced by the commandment of my Lord of Northumberland to come to the church and do all that he did." He died in 1571. William Smythe, aged 54, confessed "he was at four Masses in the Cathedral ... once did minister and serve at the altar ... went (with others,) to Staindrop ... to William Holmes who was heartily moved upon their submission, to reconcile them from the schism, every man acknowledging his state of life for 11 years last last and privately and secretly promised that he would not turn off the same. He is heartily sorry ... submitting himself to the correction of his Ordinary. At that time he was content ... being a simple man and easy to be seduced". John Pereson during the rising had given lodging to William Holmes in his chambers on Palace Green and persuaded others to be reconciled. He was indicted for rebellion and died, ten years later, in Durham gaol.

John Brown, minor canon of Durham and curate of Witton Gilbert, was one of those reconciled by William Holmes at Staindrop. From the pulpit of his own church he addressed his congregation: "I have these eleven years past taught you the wrong way, in such learning as is against my own soul's and yours both, and I am sorry and ask God mercy therefore, and yours my parishioners; and do here renounce my living before you all; and wheresoever you meet me in town or field, take me as a stranger and none of your curate". He was indicted at Durham for rebellion(4) and is thought to have been deprived.

Among the laymen a certain number were selected to be indicted and attainted, but not executed. Immediately after the Rising had been quelled, Cecil wrote to Sadler (in charge of operations): "It were pity but some of those rascals be hanged by martial law, but for the richer, would be but taken and attainted, for otherwise it is doubtful how the Queen's majesty shall have any forfeiture of their lands or goods".(5)

So ended the last concerted attempt of the people of the north east to return to the religion of their fathers. As the years passed, the "old" priests who had kept the Faith began to die out, and it looked as though, very soon, Catholicism would be altogether extinguished in this country. That it was not, was due largely to the efforts of one man - William Allen.

(to be continued)

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CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN SIXTEENTH CENTURY NORTHUMBERLAND.

M. B. Joyce

The overall effects of the Reformation on Catholic life in Northumberland have been admirably described elsewhere.(1) The particular effects on Catholic education are more difficult to discern, not least because there is a paucity of documentary material for the period up to the accession of James I in 1603. Further, while it has often been supposed that the Reformation arrested a vigorous education movement, the evidence available does not bear out this supposition. Rather it would appear that there was not a great deal of general schooling in this remote and sparsely populated county in the sixteenth century.

On the eve of the Reformation the majority of the clergy, who were educated in local schools and monasteries, lacked spiritual and intellectual distinction, a fault More and Colet laid at the door of the bishops. Paid little and leading lives not very different from those of their parishioners six days a week, the lower clergy were scarcely in a position to convey anything but the rudiments of learning to those entrusted to their care.

Nor was the contribution of the religious orders very significant. Whereas nineteenth century scholars supposed that the monasteries afforded the sole opportunities for education, today that view carries little credence. Of the schools connected with monasteries, there were usually two types: the almonry school belonging to the house, possibly with facilities for boarding lay choristers and clerks, and outside schools whose endowments

were held on trust. With regard to the education of girls, this was the role of perhaps the majority of English nunneries. The children, however, would have been both upper class and numerically few. In fact the main work of educating the young was carried out by the colleges of canons and chantry priests. A local study appears to bear out the assertion that monastery schools, where they existed, were chiefly for monks or those aspiring to be monks.(2) References are sparse: none at all exists for the great Cistercian abbey of Newminster founded in 1139. The sole reference for Tynemouth is that the monastery was paying £6.8s.0d. for scholars at Oxford at the time of the Dissolution.(3) There is no evidence of monasteries employing lay schoolmasters, as was the case at St. Mary's, York. The one striking example of educational endeavour in pre-Reformation Northumberland was the school of the Augustinian Canons at Hexham which contained two hundred boys when it was burned by the Scots in 1296.(4)

Recent research has not brought to light a great deal of evidence of teaching in the chantries. Alnwick and Morpeth are, however, exceptions. It has been suggested that the north side of the nave at Bywell, St. Peter's, had always been used as a chantry school. There is mention of one at Norham in the fourteenth century, and while there is no reference to one at Woodburn before the Reformation, there was a school there in 1577. If, on the other hand, we are to think of the situation in Northumberland as similar to the national one (and there is no reason not to), then we may presume that there was more educational activity in the chantries than we are presently able to document.

Attempts to trace the education of members of Northumbrian families, particularly those of Haggerston, Widdrington, Carnaby and Fenwick, who were to emerge as recusants later in the sixteenth century, have been unsuccessful. We may surmise, therefore, that the more fortunate would have boarded in either monasteries or great households, while others would have attended either chantry or guild schools where available. Others would have had to rely on their parents to provide what small tuition they could.

In 1536 and 1539 the religious houses were dissolved. Only

at Hexham did the King's commissioners meet opposition and nowhere is there any record of religious opposing the closure to the point of martyrdom. The 1547 Act dissolving the chantries had more serious effects on education. Out of a maximum number of chantry priests, twenty-three in Newcastle and twenty-four in Northumberland, as far as we know only two continued as teachers. These were Thomas Thompson, master of the Singing School at Alnwick and Thomas Housband, master of the Grammar School at Morpeth.(5) The school attached to the chantry of the Blessed Virgin at Alnwick was to become the town grammar school; that at All Saints', Morpeth, continued to be the town grammar school.

To suppose that because there were forty-seven chantry priests, there were forty-seven schoolmasters in the region would be presumptuous; the exact figure we shall probably never know and, besides, teaching was not the only role of the chantry priests. Following the dissolution of the chantries, many grammar schools throughout the country were re-endowed, though quite obviously they could no longer be used by Catholics.

Of the dispossessed monks, friars and chantry priests we know little. Some would have obtained pensions or gratuities, while others would be accommodated within the framework of the established church; as for the remainder, to become a hedge-priest was not the most attractive of callings, especially to men of advanced years. On the other hand there would be openings for some as chaplains, tutors or clerks in great households.(6)

In 1563 the Oath of Supremacy was extended to include public and private teachers of religion. It was no longer sufficient to hold the licence to teach, and all concerned with education were required by law to take the oath.

The correspondence and returns of James Pilkington who succeeded Cuthbert Tunstall as bishop of Durham show that the established church had far from mastered the situation by 1564. In a letter to the Privy Council he complained of "the great number of scholars born hereabout now lying at Louvain without licence and sending in books and letters which cause many times evil rumours

to be spread, and disquiet the people. They be maintained by the hospitals of the Newcastle and the wealthiest of that town and this shire and be their next cousins."(7) He also commented on the shortage of clergy and the need to employ Scottish priests. Indeed, the overall picture he painted suggests that there was considerable scope for priest and schoolmaster to cautiously exercise their respective ministries.

It was undoubtedly such reports of the exodus of scholars to Louvain and the foundation of Allen's college at Douai that led the government to pass the statute of 1570, forbidding Englishmen to travel abroad without licence and penalising offenders who did not return within six months of warning with forfeiture of all fortune and property.

In 1578 Bishop Barnes of Durham ordered a visitation to be made of all the parishes within his diocese. In the previous October he had issued "Certain Monitions and Injunctions" in which he stated that he would not permit "any to teach school, either publicly or privately, in any house within their parishes, only they shall bring licence from us under our hand and aforesaid seal."(8) His concern was such that he commanded all the clergy to take the children and young people for an hour's catechism every Sunday and instructed all those who did not have licence to preach to teach reading and writing in their parishes and to see that the brighter pupils went on to "schools and learning of the good and liberal sciences".

The Northumberland returns, which included Alston, then part of the diocese of Durham, show that there were at this time twenty-one schoolmasters, eleven of them in Newcastle. Ten, of whom only one was in Newcastle, were cited as teaching without licence. Where the sympathy of the unlicensed teachers lay, it is difficult to discern, though it is unlikely they were practising openly as Catholic schoolmasters at this time. Their not possessing a licence to teach may well have been due to not having paid the fee, or failure to pass the scriptural test. On the other hand, scrutiny of earlier clergy lists enable us to specify one or two teachers who were formerly in orders. John

Nicholson of Alston in Cumberland was almost certainly the John Nicholson who was ordained in 1547 and who was curate at Heighington in 1570 when brought before the ecclesiastical court for having conducted a service in Latin. Thomas Cowper of Berwick was the last priest to be ordained in the Austin Friars house at Newcastle.(9) The only other instance where we have additional information is that of Humphrey Gray, son of Robert Gray, of the parish of St. Nicholas, Newcastle. It was noted in the Chamberlain's Accounts in 1577, "paid to the master of the high school and his son, Humphrey, for their quarterage, 50s." It is possible Robert was also the father of Robert Gray of Newcastle who was ordained priest in 1586 and later became schoolmaster to William Basset of Blore, Staffs.(10) Robert may have had another son, John, which would explain an entry in 1581, "Henry Gray, son of John Gray, late schoolmaster, a malicious papist" who had fled to Louvain and was later reported living in Paris without licence.(11)

Just as we are in doubt as to the theology of these schoolmasters and of their loyalty to the established church, we are similarly uncertain whether they provided a grammar school education or simply taught writing and reading. Nor can we be certain of their role in the teaching of religion, for it did not follow that catechism in the parish school was always taught by the schoolmaster. The task was frequently undertaken by a curate or parish clerk. Besides, the formal responsibility for teaching catechism in Elizabethan times lay not with the schoolmaster, but with the heads of households.

Extant records to the end of the reign are principally concerned with religion in general rather than with education in particular. By 1585 there was established a highly efficient smuggling operation, headed by George Errington and Mrs. Ursula Taylor, whereby youths were escorted to the colleges abroad and returning priests welcomed in some degree of safety.(12)

In 1596 Dean James of Durham wrote to Secretary of State Cecil about the difficulties facing the Anglican Church in this part of the country: "the youth are for the most part trained up by such as profess Papistry; no examination is had of schools and

schoolmasters. The proclamation for the apprehension of seminaries, Jesuits and other mass priests, and for calling home children from parts beyond the seas, is not executed".(13) Twelve months later the same writer complained that many recusants were being married outside church and that their children's education was not being entrusted to "common or good schools".(14)

A direct reference to the education of a recusant child occurs in the will of Launcelot Thirlwall of Newbiggin, near Hexham, in 1582. There he notes that he owes the priest at Alwinton 12d for "William's schoolhire".(15) Another occurs in the will of Thomas Collingwood of Eslington in 1597 when he left a sum of money to his brother-in-law, John Swinburne, towards the education of his children.(16)

According to the Benedictine Thomas Preston, Roger Widdrington of Cartington studied at Cambridge, but was prevented from taking his degree there on account of being a Catholic.(17) His name does not appear on any records there, possibly on that account. What is certain is that he was a man of some education, possessed a considerable library and was much interested in science; all of which would be rather remarkable for a man raised in rural Northumberland.

The absence of records leaves a vague picture of the local scene up to the end of the reign of Elizabeth. We still have to surmize as to how and where local Catholics were educated and to what extent they were able, even partly, to bypass legislation.

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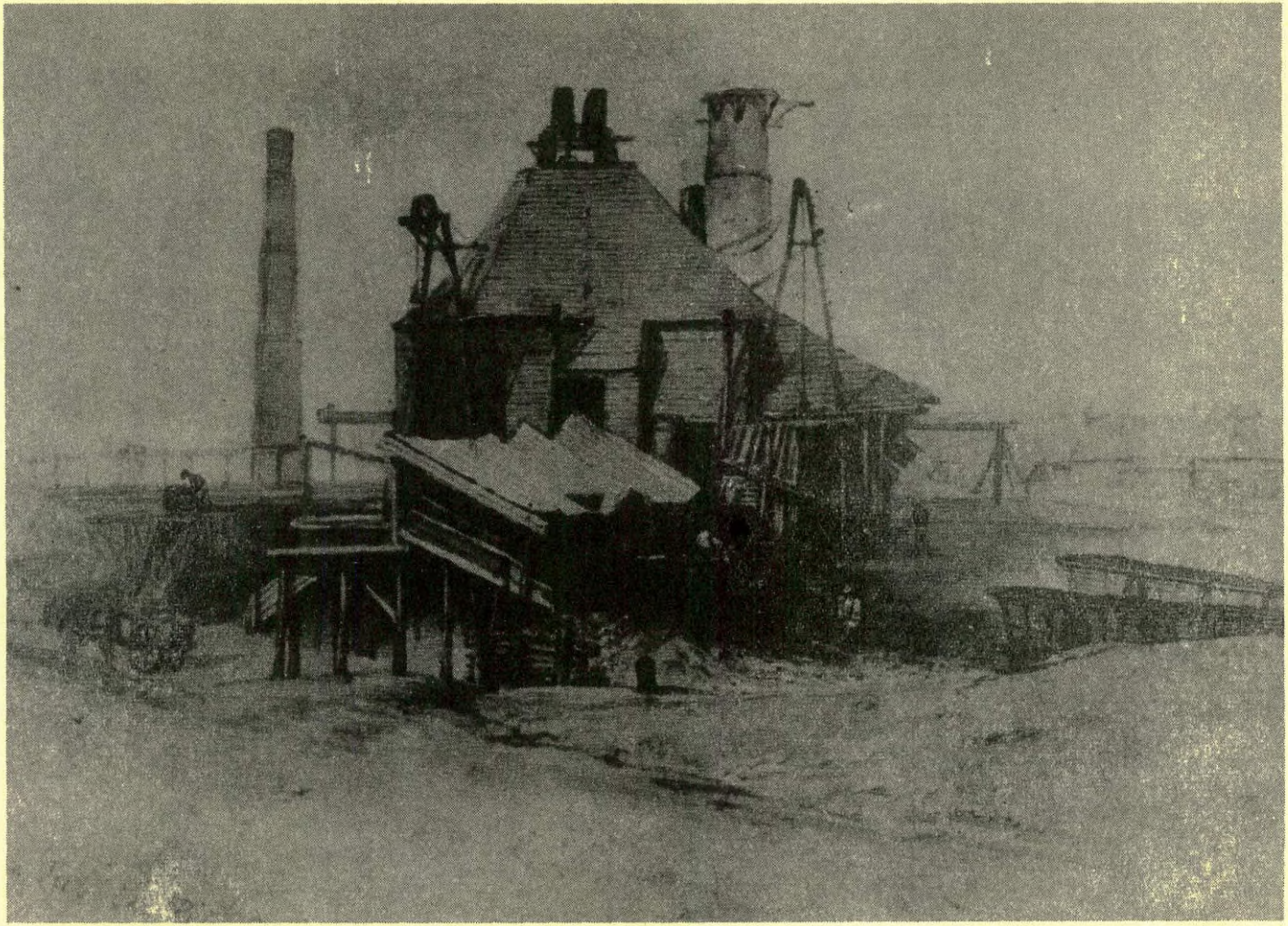
Pilgrimage to Holy Island, 1887.



Jubilee Pit, Coxlodge, by T.H.Hair, 1838.
One of the Victorian pits offering work to Irish immigrants.

ON CALCULATING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY IRISH CATHOLIC POPULATION OF DURHAM AND NEWCASTLE.

R. J. Cooter

If recent hagiographers of St. Cuthbert have cast some doubt on the ancient roots of Irish Catholicism in the North East, the modern history of Irish Catholicism in the region presents no such uncertainty. From as early as 1800 there is evidence of migrant Irish agricultural labourers coming into the region to help with harvests and there is little doubt that some of these Irish became permanent residents. With the failure of the Irish potato crop in 1821-22 the number of these agricultural workers seeking employment is likely to have increased the local Irish population. But there is little evidence to substantiate that the Irish were a numerous body in the region until the late 1830s. Before this time the immigrants to England, Scotland and Wales largely stayed west of an imaginary line running from Glasgow to London. Since the demand for cheap labour was not extensive in the North East prior to the 1840s, relatively few Irish made the eastward journey. In 1836 a government commission produced a lengthy "Report on the State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain" and it is significant that the commissioners made no reference to the North East.(1) The situation was radically altered, however, with the outset of the severe famine conditions in Ireland in the late 1830s coinciding with the start of the North East's industrial boom. Subsequently the trickle of itinerant Irish labourers to the region increased to such an extent that by 1861 the North East had the fourth highest ratio of Irish to English in all England and Wales.(2)

For the demographic historian this later arrival of the Irish

to the North East is propitious. It means that the statistics on Irish immigrants - provided for the first time in the Population Census of 1841 - come close to giving the actual extent of the total Irish population in the area. Unlike Glasgow or Liverpool, second, third and fourth generation Irish (who are not separately recorded in the Census) were numerically so insignificant in the North East in 1841 that no substantial revision to the figures given in the Census is required in order to arrive at the size of the whole Irish population. The base figure for 1841 is thus not only a more reliable guide to the actual extent of the Irish community than it is for other regions, but it is consequently a better figure upon which to estimate the subsequent growth of the Irish population.

Initially this growth may be plotted from the printed census returns after 1841 which recorded the Irish-born populations of each Poor Law District of each county. County Durham was divided into thirteen of these Districts and the decennial increase or decrease of Irish immigrants in any one of them can be found. Table 1 is extracted from the Censuses of 1851 and 1861 and shows the distribution and increase of Irish immigrants

Table 1: Distribution of Irish in Co. Durham and Newcastle, 1851-1861[3]

Poor Law District	1851			1861		
	Total Pop.	Irish-born	%	Total Pop.	Irish-born	%
Darlington	21,618	534	2.5	26,122	975	3.8
Stockton	36,866	1,868	3.5	57,099	3,478	6.1
Auckland	30,083	1,222	4.1	50,491	3,196	6.3
Teesdale	19,813	228	1.2	20,880	272	1.3
Weardale	14,567	292	1.9	16,418	314	1.9
Durham	55,951	3,920	7.0	70,274	5,746	8.2
Easington	21,795	506	2.8	27,293	1,328	4.8
Houghton-le-Sp.	19,564	1,052	5.2	21,713	1,119	5.2
Chester-le-St.	20,907	584	2.8	27,660	1,172	4.2
Sunderland	70,576	4,103	5.8	90,704	4,933	5.5
South Shields	35,790	1,164	3.3	44,849	1,943	4.3
Gateshead	48,081	3,028	6.3	59,409	4,306	7.2
Hartlepool	16,068	with Stockton		29,153	1,184	3.7
Newcastle	89,156	7,152	7.9	110,968	7,518	6.7

in County Durham and Newcastle between those dates. Table 2 is an abstract of the Poor Law Districts' figures showing the dec-

Table 2: Irish-born Population in Co. Durham and Newcastle, 1841-1881[4]

	Co. Durham			Newcastle*			Total Nos.	%
	Total Pop.	Irish-born	%	Total Pop.	Irish-born	%	Irish-born	Total Pop
1841	324,284	5,407	1.6	49,860	2,857	5.7	8,264	2.2
1851	411,679	18,501	4.5	89,156	7,152	7.9	25,653	5.1
1861	508,666	27,719	5.4	110,968	7,518	6.7	35,237	5.6
1871	685,089	37,515	5.5	128,443	6,894	5.6	44,409	5.5
1881	875,166	36,764	4.2	150,252	5,495	3.0	42,259	4.1

* The figures for 1841 and 1851 are those of the District of Newcastle; for 1861 and 1871, the Municipal and Parliamentary Borough; for 1881, the Urban Sanitary District.

ennial expansion of the Irish population in the area from 1841 to 1881. The noticeable decrease in the figures and percentages for 1881 reminds us that the censuses recorded only Irish immigrants and not the English-born children of these immigrants. To estimate the actual size of the whole Irish population these English progeny must be taken into account, for the operation of social, religious and economic forces - both from within and from outside the Irish community - served to cohere the Irish and their descendants into distinct "ghettos", many of which survived well into the twentieth century. Though many second and third generation Irish Catholics abandoned their faith, few of them cut themselves off completely from the social and cultural milieu of the Irish community. They continued to be regarded by the host community as "Irish" in spite of their actual birthplaces.

To properly calculate the size of any Irish community it is necessary to know, *inter alia*, the natural birth-rate within the Irish community. Since this figure is unavailable at either the national or the regional level, I have used in Table 3 the percentage natural increase figures for the whole of the North East over the decades 1841-1871 as calculated from J.W.House's useful study of the population of the North East since the early nineteenth century.[5] With House's figures and the census information I have approximated the growth of the Irish population of County Durham and Newcastle as follows:

Table 3: Approximate Growth of Irish Population in County Durham and Newcastle 1841-1871[6]

	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
	Increase of Irish born	% Natural Increase	Pop. Available for Increase	Natural Increase	Growth	Total Irish Pop.	Total Pop. of Co. Durham & Newcastle
1841		9.0	8,264	744	744	9,000	374,144
1851	17,389	14.7	26,397	3,880	21,269	30,227	500,835
1861	9,584	15.0	39,811	5,972	15,556	45,783	619,634
1871	9,172	15.0	54,955	8,243	17,415	63,198	813,532

This type of calculation may be applied to the study of Irish communities on a scale smaller than that of Poor Law Districts. But for this one must turn to the original Census enumerators' books in the manuscript form (available on microfilm in the Durham and Northumberland County Record Offices and in the Newcastle Public Library) from which the printed censuses were compiled. The enumerators went from house to house throughout the streets and alleyways of every parish recording the name, age, occupation and place of birth of each of the occupants. The manuscripts therefore offer a great many interesting and useful details unavailable in the printed censuses. If one wishes to find out if a particular locality, street, close or single house was ever occupied by Irish, or if one wishes to know the major occupations of the Irish in any given location, it is in the enumerators' books that the information will be found. Other vital information may also be computed. For example, a house-to-house count of the Irish on Wall Knoll and St. Mary Streets in Newcastle (the area known as Sandgate) between 1841 and 1871 reveals that on the average there were 2.7 children per set of Irish parents with children and that this average increased over the decennial periods from 2.2 children in 1841 to 2.7 in 1851 to 2.8 in 1861 to 3.1 in 1871. This particular piece of information is revealing in more ways than one: it provides, albeit on a small scale, a factual contradiction to popular notions about the size of Irish families in the nineteenth century and gives us essential data

for plotting more precise population growth curves. If this Sandgate sample is representative of other Irish communities in the North East, then the percentage natural increase figures borrowed from J.W. House are too high for our purposes. However, until more such samples become available, it would be dangerous to generalize.

When calculating the total size of an Irish community one should bear in mind not only the life-expectancy and death-rate figures but also that the Irish commonly moved from one community to another in accord with changing employment opportunities and the general vicissitudes of trade. Especially in the early stages of the immigrant's English life, these migrations were frequent. The advantage of localized investigations from the enumerators' books is that records of names can be kept and the recurrence or non-recurrence of these names will provide valuable clues to the extent of Irish migration over the decennial periods, as well as giving information on occupational mobility, birth rates, family sizes, etc. Social and occupational evidence of an impressionistic kind suggests that Irish emigration from Newcastle and Durham as a whole was not extensive before 1881, but it would be surprising if what the commissioners in 1836 called the "roaming and restless habits" of the Irish were not found to be fully operative within the region.

Irish-Catholic Statistics

One of the clearest indications of the general expansion of the Irish community in the North East after 1840 is the rapid growth of the Catholic churches, chapels and missions. In 1846, 18 such places of worship can be located in Durham and Newcastle; by 1876 the number had risen to 57.(7) Similarly with the Catholic Poor Schools: there were none in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle in the early 1840s but 77 were in operation by 1876.(8) Detailed statistics of actual Catholic communicants are more difficult to come by and less reliable than the statistics on Irish as given in the censuses. Historians of the North East must be grateful, however, for the efforts of Rev.J. Lenders who in 1931 transcribed the extant *Status Ani-*

marum of the Diocese for the period 1847-1912.(9) Though blank spots occur in the statistics that Rev. Lenders transcribed, and unfortunately these cannot always be filled by the Annual Reports of the Catholic Poor School Committee (1848-1860), nevertheless the statistics offer invaluable assistance for our present enquiry.

The statistics were originally compiled by the priests of each mission, sometimes after door-to-door census enumeration but most often on the basis of the priest's personal knowledge of his flock, including those members who were neglectful in their worship. The estimates are thus a better guide to the size of the Catholic population (nominal and otherwise) than the records of Easter Communicants, which are often as much as 60 and 70 per cent lower. It is of course a great advantage when studying individual parishes to have access to any available records of baptisms from which names can be cross-referenced with those found in the Census enumerators' books. Table 4 is a summary of the priests' estimates as given in the *Status Animarum* for Durham and Newcastle only.

Table 4: Estimated Catholic Population of Durham and Newcastle, 1847-1882

	Population		Population
1847-49	23,250	1874	86,397
1852	38,636	1875	92,031
1855	45,684	1882	106,564
1861	56,688		

It will be seen that the pattern of growth is closely identifiable with the proportionate growth of the Irish population as shown in Table 3. It will also be observed that the Catholic figures consistently exceed those of the estimated Irish population. The first thing one needs to know in order to calculate the Irish Catholic population, therefore, is the size of the Catholic population before the Irish influx. While this information is available for some parishes and can be fairly accurately ascertained for others,(10) at the regional level it is only possible at present to make an educated guess.

From piecemeal evidence it seems unlikely that the Catholic population of Durham and Newcastle could have been in excess of 10,000 before the late 1830s. Subtract this figure from the Catholic figure for 1847-49 and we are left with approximately 13,000 Irish Catholics or about 50 per cent of the estimated Irish population at that time. The percentage is low, but not surprisingly so. The shortage of priests and missions and the initial dislocation of the pauper Irish in the foreign environment imposed severe restrictions on regular religious observance.

Note how the Catholic statistics nearly doubled in the brief period between 1849 and 1855 after these initial handicaps had been partially overcome. This is further reflected in the rise of Easter Communicants: only 34.1 per cent of the estimated adult Catholic population of Durham and Newcastle (for which statistics survive) attended to their Easter Duties between 1847-49; by 1855 this figure had risen to 60 per cent, by 1861 to 74.4 per cent.(11) Much of this increase can be attributed to the growing population of first-generation Irish which would mean that the "leakage" of Irish from the faith must have remained statistically significant. Rural isolation from priests and chapels, migrations in search of employment, the workhouse, mixed marriages, Protestant proselytism, alcoholism, extreme poverty, the lack of gaelic-speaking priests: all contributed to increase the numbers of Irish non-Catholics. Irish Protestants, it should be noted, were not numerous in the North East as the lack of Orange Lodges and the lack of local reports of Battle of the Boyne Day celebrations tend to confirm. But any detailed examination of an Irish community is bound to reveal a substantial percentage of non-practising Irish Catholics.

There are thus a great many variables involved in attempting to calculate Irish Catholicism at a regional level and the precise data for work with these variables is still wanting. Since the exact size of the indigenous English Catholic population is not accurately known and the English Catholic birthrate is unspecified, calculations based upon Table 4 would be reckless at this time. Nor is it possible to remedy or in any

way improve our statistics by turning to the only "official" statistics on religious worship in the nineteenth century, the Religious Census of 1851.(12) This Census was voluntary and the figures it provides are based on the number of churches and their available seating accommodation. But the Irish inundation in the North East created a vast shortage of Catholic churches which was not remedied until well after 1851. When the Census was carried out, Durham and Newcastle had only 26 places of Catholic worship.

It is therefore possible only to speculate on the actual size of the nominally Irish-Catholic population at any point in the nineteenth century. Of the 100,000 Catholics estimated to be in Durham and Newcastle in 1882 it seems probable that from 60,000 to 75,000 were Irish or of Irish descent. But the very fact that we can only conjecture on the total size of the Irish Catholic population in the North East should make it abundantly plain that a great deal more information on local Irish populations is needed before reliable regional statistics can be assembled. In this brief survey I have pointed to some of the many sources and methods of analysis that are available for such studies, and I have indicated those areas where caution should be exercised and those where elucidation is most required. Hopefully I have given, as well, some encouragement for the work by pointing to the rewarding advantages of local over regional investigations. The regional estimates tabled here should provide some guidance and give a basis for comparison with the trends found in intra-regional studies. Only when this very localized research has been carried out will it be possible to make qualified assertions about the Irish in the North East or to draw those comparisons which will indicate the similarity or uniqueness of the area's Irish population relative to the material and spiritual lives of the Irish elsewhere in Great Britain.

REFERENCES:

1. *Report of the Poor Inquiry (Ireland) Commission*, Appendix G, "Report of the State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain," *Parliamentary Papers* [hereafter *P.P.*], 1836, XXXIV.

2. For useful maps on the distribution on the Irish-born in England and Wales in 1841 and 1861 see R.Lawton, "Irish Immigration to England and Wales in the Mid-Nineteenth Century," *Irish Geography*, IV (1959-1963), pp.42-47. See also, John A.Jackson, *The Irish in Britain* (London, 1963), map, p.12.

3. *Population Census*: Abstracts on Place of Birth, *P.P.*, 1852-3, LXXXVIII, Pt.II, pp.804-5; 1861, *P.P.*, 1863, LIII, Pt.II, pp.798-800.

4. *Population Census*: Abstracts on Place of Birth, 1841: *P.P.*, 1843, XXII, pp.223, 88. 1851: (above note 3), p.303. 1861: (above note 3), p.485. 1871: *P.P.*, 1873, LXXI, Pt.I, p.541. 1881: *P.P.*, 1883, LXXX, p.454.

5. J.W.House, *North Eastern England Population Movements and the Landscape since the early 19th century* (Newcastle, 1954,) Table 1, p.56.

6. Column A: derived from Table 2.
   Column B: calculated from House, *op.cit*, p.56.
   Column C: F of previous line plus A. The figures are based on the assumption that "the typical age of [Irish] emigrants at all periods was 20-25 years of age." Jackson, *op.cit.*, p.19. Hence the majority of those immigrants who were capable of reproduction in 1841 (assuming that they had not long been resident) would have been incapable, if not dead, by 1871. The figure given for 1871 takes this into account.
   Column D: B multiplied by C.
   Column E: A plus D.
   Column F: E plus F of previous decade.
   Column G: from Table 2.

7. *The location of these places of worship is given in my, The Irish in County Durham and Newcastle c.1840-1880, M.A. thesis, (Durham 1972), maps 5 and 6,pp.71-72; a list of the churches and missions and their dates of origin is given in Appendix I. The thesis may be consulted in Newcastle Public Library or in the University Library, Palace Green.*

8. *Northern Catholic Calendar, 1876, pp.43-44.*

9. *Status Animarum, etc. for the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle, vol.I, 1886-1902, vol.II,1847-1912. Transcribed and compiled by Rev.J.Lenders, January-March, 1931. Catholic Diocesan Archives, Newcastle.*

10. *Some idea of the size of the Catholic population nearly a decade before the Irish influx can be gathered from the 1829 Quarter Session Returns of chapels and congregations available in the Durham and Northumberland County Record Offices. The Returns of Papists made to the House of Lords, 1780, which lists the numbers of Catholics in each parish may also be consulted.*

11. *Cooter, op.cit., (note 8), Table 7, p.86.*

12. *Census of Great Britain: Religious Worship: England and Wales, 1851, P.P., 1852-3, LXXXIX. Pages 418-421 provide the figures on the places of worship and seating accommodation in Durham and Newcastle; these are quoted in Cooter, op.cit.,(note 8), Table 8,p.142.*

WILL OF FR. JAMES MATHER-FLINT OF STELLA, 1800[1]

In the Name of the Father the Son and the Holy Ghost

I James Mather-Flint Priest of the holy Roman catholick Church; most earnestly beg of John Silvertop Esqr. to follow excute and fulfill, after my Death this my last Will and desire ———————

1st. that Mr. John Sivertop Esqr Will grant me the favour to accept my Violet ornament trimmed with Silver lace, stole, manipule and as also the violet Girdle for the use of his Chapel at Minster-acres, I also give and bequeath him for the use of the say'd chapel, my Cambrick Alb with a Bruxels lace at the bottom of the say'd alb and a white Girdle trimm'd with Gold lace, these being the most precious Effects I have to present to John Silvertop Esqr. for his kindness and charity to me, all I desire is one Mass say'd in his chapel on my anniversary if convenient to the family ———————————————

2ly. I give and bequeathe to Mr. Marquand french Priest living at Stella, my black coat, my black Silk Westcoat, tow pr. of black cotton breeches, my tow black cassocks, all my wosted Stockings only, all my Shoes, all my french & Latin Books All these Effects I give to Mr. Marquand only in case he is still living in England on the Day of my Deathe, I recomend my Soul to His prayers ad libitum ———————————————

3 dly. I give, devise and bequeath to Miss Hannah Todd all my other Cloaths, Linnen, my Gold repeating

Watch, my Silver Spoon and fork all my little Silver tea Spoons with the tea chest, my Golden Seal with the arms of my Priory upon it, my large chester dawers standing in my Room all the Effects and pictures I bought for the chapel at Stella house with all that is in it, linnen alter and tabernacle which I bought four candlesticks plated tow great ones and tow little ones, as to what regards the other ornaments they belong more to Miss Todd than to me they being made of her own Silk Gounds.

I also give and bequeath to Miss Hannah Todd all the money or bills I may have, after my debts are pay'd as also all the money I may receive which is in Mr. Butler's hands at London, on Lord Caryll's or Mr. Francis Plowden's Effects. She deserves much more for all her tender and Paticular Care both in heath & in Sickness recommending my poor Soul to her Prayers as witness my hand Signing and Seal This fourth of february one thousand eight hundred

James Mather-Flint Priest

SEAL

(1) Transcript of original will, Cookson (Minsteracres) MSS., ref. ZCO. III/5, in Northumberland Record Office. This private will is accompanied by a civil will, dated 24 February 1800, in which the testator leaves all his estate to John Silvertop, appointing him executor. The civil will is witnessed by Matts. Dunn, Wm. Hull cl. and Jno. Oliver. The private will is not witnessed. Both wills are contained in an original wrapper, endorsed: *to be given to John Silvertop Esqr. at Minsteracres after my Death.* This transcript exactly reproduces the spelling and punctuation of the original. Transcribed by R.M.G., A.J.E.A.

THE PILGRIMAGE TO HOLY ISLAND, 1887.[1]

Far away in the Northern Sea lies the island of Lindisfarne, or Holy Island. A few fishermen dwell there, and an occasional visitor in the summer visits the island. There are few beside to break the loneliness of the spot, which has been truly called the birthplace of Christianity in ancient Northumbria.

The ruins of the Abbey Church and Monastery are the only points of attraction. Here reposed the remains of many saints, numbering St. Aidan, St. Oswald, St. Cuthbert, etc., till the incursions of the Danes forced the monks to fly, carrying with them the relics of their saints.

And so, on August 11th, 1887, the year of the 12th centenary of St. Cuthbert, the dream of bishop and prelate was realised, and more than realised. They had looked forward to a procession of some hundreds of pilgrims; but here were thousands. They came from all parts; some by road, some by boat, and the greater part by rail. It was a sight never to be forgotten. From the island could be descried a dark stream coming from the mainland across the three miles of sands, as though to empty itself into the sea; but onwards it came, and banners began to appear streaming in the breeze, and the sight of white surplices, and a procession numbering thousands, began to unfold itself before the astonished gaze of the inhabitants. Barefoot, with rosary in hands, and responding audibly to the prayers of the clergy, each band, headed by cross-bearer, approached and halted under the shadow of the sand hills, then, chanting the Litany of the Saints, and the hymn, "Faith of our Fathers," the mass of people moved forwards, the clergy leading the way.

The old pile re-echoed back the voice of priest, and monk, and nun, and the sunshine danced upon the waters, which had now cut Lindisfarne off from the mainland, and the tears streamed down the faces of the pilgrims as the High Mass proceeded. The Gloria, and Credo, and Te Deum had not been heard within these walls since the Reformation, and now the past had returned, and, as if the tombs

of the Abbey had given up their dead, priest and monk and nun appeared on the scene. But two were absent - who were present in spirit - whose names were on every lip, and whose presence alone was wanting to complete the scene. Many a "Requiem aeternam" was breathed for Bishop Bewick and Provost Consitt; they had sown what we had reaped on that glorious autumnal day.

On the very spot whence Cuthbert had often spoken to his brethren, Bishop Patterson addressed the densely packed congregation before him - strangers mostly to each other, but one in faith. "Put off the shoes from thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground," was the text of a very impressive sermon; but sight of sights and sound of sounds when the bell rung and the host and chalice were elevated, and the Lamb without stain was once more, after so long a blank, offered up within these ruins! The multitude were so tightly packed together that kneeling was impossible, but wet was the eye and moved the heart of the believer. Not a few on that day, who came to scoff, remained to pray. The Vicar-Capitular, at the end of the Mass, intoned the Te Deum, and the Ambrosian hymn was taken up by the clergy and people with heart and soul, and resounded back from wall to wall, from crag and peak. While the Holy Sacrifice was being offered up within, the vast crowds encircled the outside walls, and many prayers were said out of sight and sound of the altar. Under the north wall a Benedictine Monk stood up and addressed the surging masses. He told them of the old days when monks peopled the cloisters, and taught the young, and tended the sick, and ministered to the dying, while the sound of the praises of God was kept up night and day, in the Abbey Church, in the good old days of old.

And back the multitude moved, after all was over; and the three miles of sand and water was again crossed by pilgrim feet. As pilgrims they came, and as pilgrims the thousands went back - their conduct above all praise - bearing on their breasts the badge of St. Cuthbert's cross; and each one who bore a share in that day's pilgrimage will remember to his dying day how gloriously and how piously we kept the 12th centenary of our great patron, St. Cuthbert.

1. From The Northern Catholic Calendar, 1888.

PROGRAMME 1975/6

27 September 1975	Lunch at Hardwick Hall.
30 September 1975	A.G.M. St. Dominic's Priory Hall, Newcastle, 7.30 p.m. Mrs. J. Cashman: George Errington and the Catholic underground movement.
28 October 1975	Durham University Chaplaincy, 8.00 p.m. Dr. A. Williams: Recusant beneficiaries of the dissolution of the monasteries.
21 November 1975	St. Dominic's Priory Hall, Newcastle, 8.00 p.m. Rev. A. Archer O.P.: The early history of St. Dominic's parish.
19 February 1976	Durham University Chaplaincy, 8.00 p.m. D. Crane Esq.: Four Catholic poets: Southwell, Crashaw, Dryden, Pope.
10 March 1976	Durham University Chaplaincy, 8.00 p.m. Joint meeting with Historical Association (Durham Branch). Rev. Godfrey Anstruther O.P.: Regnans in excelsis: an examination of the bull of excommunication of Elizabeth I.
Summer 1976	Two excursions (to be arranged), one likely to be to Lanercost Priory.

Darlington