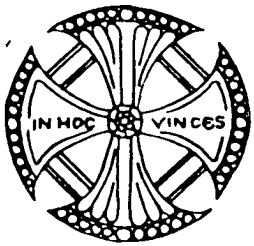
# Northern Catholic History




No. 36 1995

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 yearly, in May.

PATRONS: The Rt Rev. Ambrose Griffiths O.S.B. Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle, and The Rt Rev. Owen Swindlehurst, Auxiliary Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle.

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## NORTH EAST CATHOLIC HISTORY SOCIETY 1994

*Although the Society reached its twentieth year in July 1994, the anniversary passed unnoticed and the events of the year were very much 'business as usual'. Even so, a few will doubtless recall the initial meeting at the Northumberland Record Office in July 1974 and the early years of the Society. It is a time to thank God for enabling the Society to continue its work over the years and to remember in piety our deceased members, especially Fr Bill Nicholson, our founding chairman.*

*The final three talks in the 1993/94 year, by Mr Aidan Harrison on the Countess of Derwentwater on 2 February, by Dr Colin Shrimpton on the post-Reformation , history of Hulne Priory on 2 March, and by Fr David Milburn on 13 April on the end of Douai College and the beginnings of Ushaw at Crook Hall in 1794, were all well attended. Likewise, the two Summer outings, to Durham Cathedral on 21 May, prefaced by a slide talk at Ushaw, and to Fountains Abbey, Studeley House and Ripon Cathedral on 25 June, each attracted full coachloads of members.*

*The 1994/95 also started with an outing, this time north to Norham and Duns on 17 September. The first indoor meeting was the AGM on 5 October, preceded by Mass for deceased members and followed by an historical slide quiz by Mr George Thornton. All the officers were re-elected, but volunteers for Outings and Programme Secretaries , to replace the acting officers, are sought. Mrs Margaret Oates and Mr Aidan Harrison were elected to the Committee, and the retiring members, Mr and Mrs J. Scollen and Mr J.E. Woollaston, thanked for their loyal service.*

*Once again, the 1994/95 talks are provided by distinguished historians (see end cover). In the Fr Nicholson Memorial lecture on 2 November Dr Leo Gooch traced the events leading up to Catholic Emancipation in 1829 in the context of North East politics, and on 7 December Dr Jan Rhodes described, with beautiful slides, the origins of the rosary and its varied forms and practice into the sixteenth century. The remaining two talks, in February and March 1995, will be noted next year, as will the 1995 Summer outings, to Easby and Jervaulx Abbeys on 20 May (not 22 May, as on the card) and to Wooler, Kirk Newton and Yeavering on 24 June.*

*The articles in this edition again scan the centuries. Mr George Thornton pays tribute to St Aelred of Rievaulx, born and bred in Hexham, and Fr Geoffrey Holt tells the remarkable story of Fr Richard Holtby, the Jesuit missioner who worked unscathed for some fifty years in the North in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. Mr Hugh Shankland explores the subject of Italian immigration into Newcastle, Mr David Thomas records the work of the Victorian composer Henri Frederick Hemy and his large family of musicians and painters, Mr Frank McCombie in his tale of two churches reveals some sources for Catholic architectural history, and Fr Milburn completes his account of the Bowes Memorial church, Barnard Castle, the first part of which was published in No.34, 1993. Finally, Mr Jerome Hanratty illustrates the value of the family photograph as a source for social history.*

*On behalf of the Society, the Editor thanks all these contributors and, as ever, solicits articles for future issues.*

*Robin Gard, Editor*

## AELRED OF RIEVAULX (1110-1167): ABBOT OF ENGLAND

**G.B. Thornton**

Our Northumbrian saints have come down to us in different ways; the Roman Paulinus as a pioneering bishop: Aidan from Iona and Cuthbert of the Farnes as missionary bishops in the Celtic tradition, preaching more by example than by words; Wilfrid of Ripon and Hexham, a spiritual giant of his age, a prince bishop in the style of the later Becket; Bede of Jarrow, a model monk-scholar, owing much to his abbots; the well-travelled and book-loving Benet Biscop and his beloved Coelfrith; but the twelfth century Cistercian Aelred of Rievaulx is pre-eminently the Abbot of England'.[1] Though many of Aelred's works are extant and though much has been written on him, including a 'Life'[2] by his friend and fellow monk, Walter Daniel, he remains little known in Northumbria. No church or school in the diocese of Hexham and Newcastle is named in his honour, even though he was a Hexham man.

Aelred came from a line of married priests:[3] his great and his great grandfather were both teachers of music and liturgy in Durham; his father, Eilaf, a priest of Hexham, where 'the finest stone church north of the Alps' in Bede's time was now 'a sorry sight'. The Danish raids had left 'everything deserted, church roofless, walls clogged with grass, no trace of former beauty'. As a young boy Aelred helped his father tile a new roof, lay a new sanctuary floor, and erect an altar for holy relics. He became friendly with an old bearded lay-brother Hugh, who had been cured of a hernia. Eilaf was steeped in Saxon tradition and found adapting to the Norman ways difficult, especially when Augustinian canons took over Hexham Abbey; however, in his last years, he took the monastic vows and Aelred was with him when he died in Durham in 1138, seemingly reconciled. Though lacking formal schooling as a boy, Aelred inherited his family's love of learning and of local saints. In his 'Saints of Hexham', in praise of Wilfrid, Acca and Eata and the miracles wrought by their intercession, he wrote 'I live under the protection of the saints of these hallowed places' He venerated Cuthbert as a fellow Northumbrian and committed his many long journeys to his care. Immensely proud of his heritage yet always aware of changing times, Aelred's Saxon past and Norman present conducted 'an amiable dialogue': Aethelred became Aelred.

Nothing now remains of the royal palace of Roxburgh, which once

stood on the neck of land between the confluence of the rivers Tweed and Teviot. Here Aelred spent his adolescent years as steward to the household of King David, son of the 'exquisite' St Margaret, with his son Henry and step-sons, Simon and Waldef. We do not know how Aelred came to have this post, held to be of such importane in this time that it gave its name to Scotland's best known royal family. We do know that these were crucial, formative years for a bright and sensitive youth in a strange, new, exciting world where Norman ways and the French language were used and where virtues of tact, courtesy and ease in company could be developed. Aelred probably received tutoring from the newly arrived Tironese monks of Kelso Abbey and, like Waldef, future abbot of Melrose, may well have escaped from the royal hunt to hide in a tree with a book.

It seemed an idyllic life, 'the charm of my companions pleased me very much, I gave my whole soul to affection, nothing seemed sweeter than to love'.[5] Yet all was not well, a deep restlessness was stirring, 'those about me seeing what I possessed but ignorant of what was passing within me said "How well it is with him", little knowing how ill it was with me'.[6] Reflecting in later life on this time of turbulent emotions, he wrote, 'I no other am that prodigal son. Selfishly I clung to my inheritance. Serve Thee I would not. I went to the far country, the land of unlikeness, of misery, darkness and want'. These were invaluable learning years; he experienced human weakness at first hand in the worldly life of the royal court and so became sensitive to the doctrine of charity he was soon to find among Cistercian monks.

Returning from York on the King's business, Aelred stayed the night at Helmsley Castle with Walter l'Espec, patron of the nearby Rievaulx Abbey, founded only recently in 1132 directly from Clairvaux. Sighting the wooden buildings from his horse on the road along the ridge above the steep, wooded valley of the river Rye, he felt drawn to investigate; there he found 'everywhere peace and a marvellous freedom from the tumult of the world. . . such unity and concord is there among the brethren that each thing seems to belong to all and all to each'. Deeply impressed, he returned the next day, sought and was granted entry and, having spent the customary first four days in the guesthouse, he began life as a novice of the Cistercian White Monks who, as reformed Benedictines, aimed to recapture the vitality and zeal of the first Christians by living a life according to the original spirit of the Rule of Benedict. From Cîteaux, in Burgundy, 'in

an era of explosive vitality', Cistercian monasteries were springing up from the Baltic land to Sicily and from the Iberian peninsula to the Urals: 'it seemed that the whole world was turning Cistercian', one observer remarked. After Waverley, in Surrey, 'in a corner of England', Rievaulx was the first House of White Monks in England; it rapidly became the most influential. Aelred's description of life in the early years could be applied to any of the Cistercian monasteries across Western Europe: 'Our food is scanty, our garments rough, our drink is from the stream, our sleep often upon the book, under our tired limbs there is but a hard mat; when sleep is sweetest we must rise at a bell's bidding. . . self-will has no scope, there is no moment for idleness or dissipation'.[7]

Such a disciplined daily routine soon taught the young, eager Aelred the three marks of monastic life: 'holy contemplation, sincere prayer and honest toil'. 'With eagerness of spirit greater than bodily strength', Aelred would work on the construction of the new stone buildings to accommodate the great numbers who sought entry. Priority was given to the abbey church, built of sandstone blocks from nearby Pennypiece quarry and ferried downstream on rafts; its axis lay north/south, than the usual east/west because of the steep valley sides.[8] Already finished by 1140, the church on feast days was 'crowded with brethren like bees in a hive compacted into one angelic body', as Walter Daniel graphically puts it.

So Rievaulx raised her white cathedral in the wilderness
Arising in her strength and newness beautiful as Judith.
And spy, between the sunny coppices
The new roof beams and smell the curling bake house smoke
And see the barns and ordered yards
and hear the harmony of their various work.[9]

The magnificent nave, the earliest and largest in the land still impresses today, over seven centuries later; its austere yet graceful lines symbolize the Cistercian way of life wrought in stone.

Aelred's promotion came when he was elected novice-master to replace Simon, founding abbot of Wardon, near Bedford in 1135, Rievaulx's first daughter. We know that at this time he developed the practice of immersing himself in the cold water of a tank beneath a flag-stone in the novice-house 'to quench the heat of every vice'; this was an old Celtic tradition and may well have accelerated the arthritis which crippled him

in later life. But his short spell as novice-master is notable chiefly as the time he wrote the draft of one of his greatest works, 'Speculum Caritatis'[10] 'the Mirror of Charity', at the insistence of his Father Immediate, Bernard of Clairvaux.

The theme of the 'Mirror' is the place of love in man's growing personal relationship with God and his fellow-men; it deals with the nature of love, its joys and rewards, and the hardships of contrary ways. A true Christian is a complete lover whose soul has an infinite capacity for love of friend and foe alike. There are three Sabbaths of charity, love of self, of fellow-men, and of God; charity is the soul's true Sabbath bringing peace and a realization that love is His reason for creating, guiding and planning all things from beginning to end. Love resides in the will and intellect as well as in the emotions - we are free to choose the way of charity, humility and self-denial, leading upwards to God, or the way of love of self, of pride and lust, dragging us down to flesh, earth and ultimate damnation. The 'Mirror' ranks as a spiritual classic where a young monk, not yet an abbot, lays bare his soul and eloquently expresses the very heart of Cistercian thinking on the complex subject of love. The 'Mirror' should be reflected upon from many angles and at length; these words do it scant justice. Bernard's faith in Aelred was amply justified; 'the dispensing of carnal food was committed to you in the royal household that, in due course, you might concoct spiritual things in the household of our King and refresh the eaters with food of the words of God'; prophetic words indeed.

When Rievaulx's third daughter was founded at Revesby, near Lincoln,in 1143, the community of twelve elected Aelred as abbot, their 'Father in Christ' For the next few years 'religious life waxed day by day, his fame spread through the whole countryside', so that it was no real surprise when, following the death of William, the much loved founding abbot, and the resignation of his successor,Maurice, Aelred was chosen by the brethren as the third abbot of Rievaulx, an office he held with distinction for the next twenty years.

The nature of monastic life soon began to bear the imprint of the new abbot whose doctrine of salvation inspired all his words and actions as ruler of a community now numbering as many as 600, some two-thirds being 'conversi', or lay-brothers. Aelred used vivid imagery to illustrate his prime duty of leading back to God fallen men who had chosen life in the cloisters rather than in the world. The exodus theme was especially apt. Egypt was

the land of bondage to pride and cupidity; self-renunciation came with the crossing of the Red Sea; the desert was a place of trial, of suffering and temptation, but also of purification and generous self-giving, here were oases where the Holy Spirit was encountered and where 'wolves became lambs'; the desert was a place to pass through, not to settle in, and in God's appointed time,with Benedict as their Moses, the monks would come to the Jordan, beyond which stretched the lands of silence,solitude and peace, where joy and contemplation reign, 'Be quiet, still, enduring, quietly speaking to God and speaking with Him.[11]

Again, the monks were engaged in spiritual warfare against Satan; it was the struggle between Crusaders and Saracens elevated onto a higher plane. Cîteaux provided 'strong castles where the battlements are our poverty, the moats are charity, silence is our towers. Let each one keep to his place and defend it well... you must know that from the day you entered here and began to serve Christ you entered a battle-ground; stand firm, prepare the soul for temptation. This is the fight, so be strong in battle'.[12] To an audience many of whom would be, like Bernard himself, former soldiers and in a landscape dominated by Norman castles, usually the home of the founding baron, this was indeed powerful imagery. Elsewhere, Aelred compares the hard task of salvation to crossing rough seas: 'The sea that keeps us from God is the world that passes... some drown in this sea, others cross it'; marriage provides only 'a rather fragile vessel but the monastic way of life a fine seaworthy ship'.[13] At times Bernard goes further and seems to say the Cistercian way of life is the only sure, safe ship.

As abbot, Aelred continued the practice he had begun as novice-master of holding frequent, informal dialogues with his monks; twenty or thirty at a time came to talk together of the delights of Holy Scripture. 'No-one said "Away with you", They walked and lay about his bed and talked with him as children chatter with their mother'; they still came even in his last years when he was confined to bed in his cell by the infirmary. 'What more homely and delightful picture of Aelred as father and teacher of his monks could be found?'[14] Yet he saw that each vocation was unique, every one an individual; some, like Simon, made a deep impression; 'The Rule of our Order forbade us to speak, but his face spoke to me, his bearing spoke, his silence talked'. His deep love for the brethren is evident in his 'Pastoral Prayer',[15] 'You know, Lord, my intention is not so much to be their superior as to lovingly help them and humbly serve them, to be at their side, one of

them... may they live at peace, each and all... give me wisdom, Sweet Lord, that I may rule thy people well. . . teach me, Holy Spirit, how to spend myself on their behalf'.

Individual problems were many, varied and very human. One novice found life very difficult; 'I am crushed down by the lengths of the vigils, I often succumb to the manual labour. The food cleaves to my mouth, more bitter than wormwood. The rough clothing cuts through my skin and flesh down to the very bones. . .my will longs for the delights of the world'. Another was worried because before entering the monastery he had often been reduced to tears as when reading the legends of King Arthur but now he felt no such deep emotions. Another is 'sad and awaits comfort from a father's care. . . yet another defeated by depression running round now here, now there, to find some-one to talk and consult'; *acedia*, or general weariness, was a common psychological problem.

As his health failed the Chapter-general allowed Aelred to use his discretion in his duties as abbot. When he retired for spells to his cell by the infirmary, there were mutterings of 'glutton, wine-bibber who gives his body to baths and ointments'.

One disturbed monk was moved to violence, rushing into his cell, he seized Aelred as he sat on an old mat by his hearth rubbing his painful limbs, and threw himself on the cinders of the fire. Those present seized the assailant and would have beaten or expelled him, but Aelred embraced and blessed him, saying 'He is my son and he is ill'.[15] When he told the monks in a homily that, 'I love you all as I love myself and truly as a mother after her sons', he clearly meant it

Not surprisingly, there were times when the responsibilties of ruling such a large and varied community weighed heavily on the ailing abbot. 'All is turned to weariness; everything I see a burden. If someone speaks I scarcely hear, if someone knocks I am hardly aware of it. My heart is like a stone, my eyes dry'. 'It is a great persecution to know the weaknesses, the sorrows and the burdens of many, to suffer for everyone, to be sad with the sad'. At these times he turned to the Scriptures, 'when suddenly thy grace, good Jesu, like Rebecca running up, disperses the darkness with light, breaks my hardness. Sighs give way to tears and heavenly joy comes with tears'. He found strength too in the singing of Divine Office in the great abbey church where 'their praise rises to heaven as one single flame in which we all are united'.

There were times when Aelred's love of the natural beauty of the place and of his brethren touches the sublime; visiting Rievaulx on a fine summer's day, it is none too difficult to walk with him in the imagination: 'when I was going round the cloister site sitting with the brethren in a loving circle, as though amid the delights of paradise, I admired the leaves, the flowers and the fruits of every tree. And in the whole of that throng, I could not find one whom I did not love, and by whom I was not loved, and I was filled with such great joy. . . that I felt my spirit was transfused into them and their affection was flowing back into me, so that I could truly say with the prophet "Behold how good and pleasant it is for the brethren to dwell together in unity".'[17]

All who knew Aelred remark on his compassion; Jocelin of Furness describes him as a 'man of the highest integrity, of great practical wisdom, witty and eloquent, generous and discreet. . . he exceeded all his fellow prelates in patience and tenderness. He was full of sympathy for the infirmities, both physical and moral, of others'. In seventeen years, WalterDaniel knew of no-one who was turned away: 'wanderers in the world to whom no house of religion gave entry came to Rievaulx, "the mother of mercy", and found the gates open. . . all, strong and weak alike find here a haven of peace, a spacious and calm house',[18] a striking contract with the political anarchy outside in King Stephen's reign, when there was civil war and famine.

Throughout Western Europe at this time there was a burgeoning devotion to the Virgin Mary in which the Cistercians played a leading role. All houses of White Monks were dedicated to Mary through whom, according to Bernard, all graces flowed. Aelred shared in this veneration of the Virgin Mary but was ever pragmatic. In an eloquent sermon on the Feast of the Assumption, he advised his brethren that 'you should in no way neglect Martha for Mary or again Mary for Martha. If you neglect Martha who should feed Jesus Christ? If you neglect Mary what use is it for Jesus to come to your home when you taste nothing of his sweetness?'

As well as some sixty sermons and letters which are extant, Aelred maintained a literary output all the more remarkable when we realize that he is no Greek or Roman, writing at his ease on a sunny Mediterranean terrace, but 'an infirm tireless abbot, the ruler of a vast household, the counsellor of bishops and kings, who snatched time between his solitary prayer and the visits of those who needed his help, to add a few sentences

to the roll in his bare cell'.[19] Furthermore, writing was not in the Cistercian tradition, where the day was spent in prayer, study and physical labour.

Along with the 'Mirror' his other major work is 'Spiritual Friendship'.[20] Written in the form of a Socratic dialogue with Aelred in the centre, answering questions from fellow monks, Ivo, Walter and Gratian. The work is original in the sense that, traditionally, monastic friendship was reserved for God alone, as human friendship in a closed community could be divisive and lead to factions, even homosexuality. Aelred took a rather different view. 'If you shut out the sunlight of human friendship... they are no better than beasts who give the name of life to living without friendship, without loving and being loved. . . our friend Gratian I rightly call friendship's child for he spends all his energy in seeking to love and being loved'. Aelred tells us that true friendship is enduring, disinterested, open, sure sign of spiritual health, of a soul growing in genuine Christian love; it touches the sweetness of Christ and is a foretaste of heaven where 'no-one hides his thoughts or disguises his affections... it is easy to pass from Man's friendship to God's for he who abides in friendship abides in God and God in him for God is friendship' He advises that the surest way of learning about the nature of God is to study the divine image in man. In 'Spiritual Friendship', Aelred draws heavily on the 'Confessions of St Augustine', a seminal influence in all his thinking, and on Cicero's 'De Amicitia', which he 'seasons with the salt of Holy Scripture'; in it he reveals the depth of his Christian humanist convictions in his most finished and charming work.

Aelred's writings read 'like a list of debts to God and men paid over the years'. In his 'Saints of Hexham' he displays pride in his spiritual heritage, his 'Life of Ninian' reveals familiarity with Bede, while a 'Life of Edward the Confessor', to commemorate Edward's canonisation and elevation to a new shrine in Westminster Abbey (an occasion where Aelred probably was the preacher invited by Lawrence, the abbot, a kinsman), was a work of reconciliation, for the King was 'the cornerstone joining the English and Norman nations in his royal person'. An account of the Battle of the Standard, near Northallerton, in 1138, where Rievaulx's founding baron, Walter l'Espec, fought against Aelred's much loved Scottish King David, illustrates the conflicting loyalties and constant unrest of those troubled times.

Different altogether from this history and hagiography were Aelred's devotional works. In his 'When Jesus was twelve years old', he skilfully

places the reader in situations in St Luke's Gospel gently leading into a reflection on the person and life of Jesus as a devotional and ideally encouraging compunction, so that 'eventually we all attain to perfect manhood to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ'. His 'Life of Recluses' was a letter written for his sister, an anchoress, full of wise and practical advice on daily routine, diet and dress, and laying stress on her life of prayer. 'Let her sit and hold her peace listening to Christ and speaking with him. . . relieved of all worldly cares, let her find peace of heart and spirit; she is to behold the evil and weep for them, rejoice in the good and in the riches of divine grace; her heart to be a Noah's Ark embracing all' In a mature and loving letter Aelred tempers the austerity of the Rule with a warm and gentle piety and addresses not only his sister but his good friend Godric of Finchale and his anchorite sister Burchwen, Bartholomew on Inner Farne and the other hermits who 'fight with God's help single-handed against the vices of the flesh and mind'. The twelfth century held the eremetical life in high esteem, though it was never for Aelred. Aelred's last work 'De Anima', 'On the Soul', probably unfinished, is his least satisfactory. Aelred was a pragmatist, not a Plato or Augustine; perhaps the philosophical nature of his inquiry was too complex for him as his health failed.

Outside demands made heavy calls of Aelred's time and energy. Renowned throughout the land as thorough and fair-minded, he arbitrated in all manner of disputes, political and ecclesiastical. He was adviser to King Henry II of England and confidant of King David of Scotland. Most time-consuming and tiring, however, were the long overland journeys to the General Chapter in Cîteaux each September and the annual visitations to the daughter houses of Revesby, Wardon, near Bedford, Dundrennan, in Galloway, and to Melrose. His journey north was broken by visits to his good friends Godric, in his hermitage by the Wear at Finchale and to Robert, the saintly abbot of Newminster, in the wooded valley of the Wansbeck between Morpeth and Mitford. Even though he was given permission to use his discretion in these obligations, as late as 1165, while visiting Dundrennan, he celebrates St Cuthbert's Day in the nearby town that bears the saint's name, Kirkcudbright, and just months before his death he is at Melrose with his boyhood friend Waldef, now the influential abbot of Scotland's equivalent of Rievaulx as a powerhouse abbey. For a man racked with the pain of gallstones and crippled with arthritis such arduous journeys on horseback along bumpy roads, through a forested

landscape, where eagles nested and wolves still roamed, represent devotion to duty of an heroic nature.

As with Cuthbert on Inner Farne and Bede of Jarrow, we are fortunate in having a vivid and moving eye-witness account of Aelred's death bed scene. He was now 'a living soul in a withered body'; as his time drew near, he said to the company assembled in his cell: 'Silver and gold have I none, hence I make no will for I possess nothing of my own; whatever I have and myself are yours'. He then distributed his glossed psalter, his 'Confessions of St Augustine', his text of St John's Gospel, a few relics, and a much loved cross, a present from Henry Murdac, Archbishop of York. 'I said to him in a low voice; 'Lord, gaze upon the cross, let your eye be where your heart is'. He replied, 'My Lord, my God and my Saviour, my glory and hope for evermore... hasten for Christ's love'. At the fourth watch of the night before the Ides of January in the year of the Incarnation 1167, in the 57th year of his life, he died; his whole life had been a novitiate for this day, his Sabbath of Sabbaths.[23]

Aelred has been called the 'Bernard of the North'. It is true that both men were zealous monks and gifted abbots in the golden early years of the Cistercians and that both successfully combined the active and contemplative lives to a remarkable degree, yet surely there were marked differences in character. Aelred could be scathing of monks who were indolent, who in their meditations mixed Virgil with the Gospels and Horace with the prophets, or who kept does, fawns, cranes or greyhounds, yet he was a mild disciplinarian, courteous with friends, compassionate to those in need. Bernard, on the other hand, could be 'provocative, violent and uncompromising';[24] he was the fiery preacher of the Second Crusade; his language was, at times, acerbic as when he was describing what he saw as the excesses of the Black Monks of Cluny. Aelred was altogether a gentler person.

Believing that knowledge was sterile unless it lead to love, Aelred's simple, direct, intuitive mind saw that there was wisdom to be found among trees and stones that could not be found in books; he would tell his monks; 'Christ came not to teach grammar or rhetoric but charity, meekness and humility'. He practised what he preached. Proud of his local heritage and aware of the value of ascetic practices and the supreme importance of the Rule, he was full conscious of changing times and spoke directly as a monk to monks with an authentic evangelistic voice. In an age

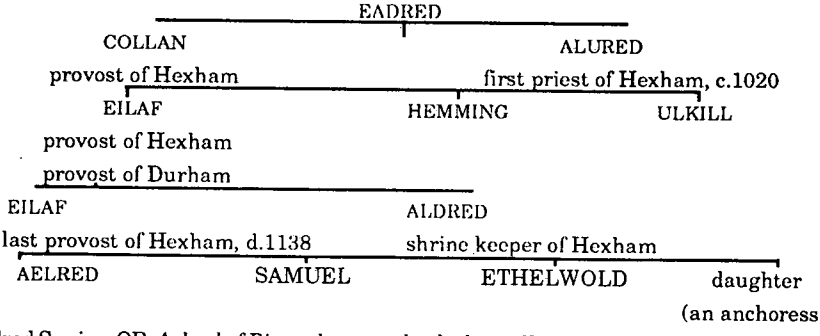
when the concept of love was explored as never before, he became a doctor of spiritual love where his sincere and candid Christian humanism charted the soul's progress from human to divine love, the return of the prodigal. Life for him was all about redemption, recreation and the re-discovery of our divine image. He impresses 'by his sensibility to emotions shared in some degree by all civilised mankind and by reason of a vivid power of self expression'. With his intense love of fellow men, he was a man ahead of his time, 'a harbinger of the Franciscans'.

'Today, his spiritual sons have a deep desire to interpret for their own times the traditions and spirituality which he and his contemporaries in the Order of Cîteaux first lived and then handed on. . . the search for God was the soul of the Office in choir, their reading and their work. . . the call and the mission are the same today as in the Twelfth Century'.[25]

This charming son of Hexham is a man to be studied and emulated by all of us for he speaks as powerfully in this the last decade of the twentieth century as he did in his own time.

NOTES

1. B.Pendrick, *Some Reflections on St. Aelred of Rievaulx*, Buckfast Abbey, Chronicle 14, 1944.
2. Walter Daniel, *The Life of St. Aelred of Rievaulx (Vita)*, trans. M.Powicke, O.U.P., 1978. Typical hagiography, written in exuberant, even fanciful, style, yet the best first-hand account of monastic life in the early Cistercian years.
3. Aelred's family tree. Note how in a time of married priests, the son inherits the father's parish.




4. Aelred Squire, OP, *Aelred of Rievaulx - a study*, the best all round account of his life, SPCK, 1969.
5. Aelred of Rievaulx, *Spiritual Friendship*, Cistercian Series 5, Kalamozoo, 1977.
6. Aelred of Rievaulx, *Mirror of Charity* (Speculum Caritatis), Cistercian Series 17, Kalamozoo, 1990.
7. idem

7. idem
8. Dept. of Environment, *Rievaulx Abbey*, HMSO, 1967. About this time the river Rye was diverted from the east side to the west side of the valley in order to solve a boundary dispute with the nearby Byland Abbey and to give Rievaulx access to watermmeadows, a characteristic Cistercian solution to a problem. The two abbeys were so close that each could hear the other's bells at all hours of the day and night, 'which was not fitting and could not be endured'. Old Byland moved to New Byland, near Coxwold, several miles away and out of earshot.
9. Thomas Merton, *Collected Poems*, Rievaulx - St. Aelred, p.177, Sheldon Press, 1977.
10. *Mirror*. As abbot of Clairvaux, the mother-house of Rievaulx, Bernard was Aelred's Father Immediate and prevailed upon Aelred to write a treatise on love, despite Aelred's protests that he was 'a graduate of the kitchen and skilled only with the hammer and the axe'.
11. Amédée Hallier, *The Monastic Theology of Aelred of Rievaulx*, Cistercian Series 2, Shannon 1969, quoted from *Sermones Inediti*, ed. C.H.Talbot, Rome, 1952.
12, 13, 14, idem.
15. *Pastoral Prayer of St. Aelred of Rievaulx*. Dacre Press, Westminster, 1955.
16. *Vita*. Letter to Maurice, p.80.
17. *Friendship*, p.112.
18. *Vita*, p.37.
19. D. Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, Vol.E, p.262
20. See note 5.
21. Dundrennan was founded by King David in 1142 in Galloway 'in a wild country where the people are altogether barbarous'. When Aelred visited it in 1165 the rain poured in through leaky roofs, except on his bed, which miraculously remained dry. A later guest was Mary, Queen of Scots, who spent her last night on Scottish soil there on 15 May 1568 before sailing across the Solway to Workington to a nineteen-year exile in England and eventual execution: see the name Port Mary on the O.S. map. Dundrennan had one daughter, Sweetheart Abbey, splendidly situated below the mountain of Criffel, some ten miles east. Scottish monasteries were not finally suppressed until the end of the sixteenth century.
22. Melrose was the fruitful mother of four daughters: at Kinloss in Moray, Newbattle in Midlothian, Balmerino in Fife, and Coupar Angus in Perth. Visits to Melrose must have given Aelred special pleasure. As well as enjoying Waldef's company, Aelred would have been impressed, as any visitor still is today, by the grandeur of the abbey buildings and their superb setting by the Tweed, beneath the three volcanic cones of the Eildon Hills. Almost certainly too, he would have made a pilgrimage to the site of St Cuthbert's old Saxon monastery, a couple of miles downstream.
23. *Vita*, p.60.
24. D. Knowles, *Christian Monasticism*, World University Press, 1969, p.79.
25. P.Dienier, *St. Aelred of Rievaulx*, essay in *Benedict's Disciples*, ed. D.H. Farmer, Fowler Wright, 1980.

There is a useful article on Aelred in D. Knowles, *Saints and Scholars*, C.U.P., 1963.

Grateful thanks are due to B.P.Robinson, J.P.White and Fr Hilary, OCSO, of St Bernard's Abbey, Coalville, Leicestershire, for their comments in the drafting of this essay.

## RICHARD HOLTBY, S.J. (1552-1640): MISSIONER IN THE NORTH EAST

**The Rev. Geoffrey Holt, SJ**

Richard Holtby, who was born in Yorkshire in 1552 and lived to be eighty-seven, spent more than half of his long life as a missionary in Yorkshire and Durham. He was born at Fryton, the second son of Lancelot and Ellen (Butler). There were several brothers - George, Anthony, Robert and Oswald are mentioned - but the authorities differ.[1] After attending a local school at Northallerton, he went to Cambridge, first to Christ's College and then to Caius. In 1573 he moved to Hart Hall (now Hertford College), Oxford, where Alexander Briant, the future martyr, was also studying at about the same time and was later tutored by Holtby. Holtby has been said to have left Oxford without a degree but some authorities record that he was awarded his B.A. in March 1576.[2]

In 1577 he abandoned Oxford, crossed to the Continent and in August was received at Douay College, where he was reconciled to the Church. He proceeded to study theology and sacred scripture and must have come under Allen's influence. In April 1578 Holtby moved with the college to Rheims but by that time be had been ordained priest at Cambrai in March. In February 1579 he was sent to England with three other priests - Thomas Stemp, Thomas Stransham, and John Filby. He worked in the north of England up to the Scottish border, 'vastas horridasque regiones', constantly travelling, whether alone or with others, 'a strenuous cultivator of the Christian vineyard'. Not long after his arrival he met Edmund Campion on his journey in 1581, probably early in the year, and was able to provide him with shelter and a retired place where he could finish his work on the *Ten Reasons*.[3]

Holtby made the decision to join the Society of Jesus. In 1582 he travelled to London hoping to see Robert Persons, but Persons was then in France, and his temporary replacement, Jasper Haywood, was out of town, so he crossed to France and went to Paris, where he made the spiritual exercises under the direction of another English Jesuit, Thomas Derbyshire.[4] On 5 October he was admitted into the Society by the French provincial and began his novitiate at Verdun at the beginning of 1583. After that he repeated the study of theology for four years at Pont-à-Mousson and was put in charge of the Scots College there. Plague raged in the town and

Holtby sent most of the Scottish students away; of the thirteen that remained he buried ten with his own hands. After he had recovered his health he was sent news by the French provincial that the general, Fr Claudius Aquaviva, had decided that he was to go to England. This was late in 1588.[5]

The party crossing to England was made up of Holtby, John Curry, who like Holtby had entered the Society as a priest and had also been at Pont-à-Mousson, and two other priests.[6] After they had landed, a very welcome reinforcement for Henry Garnet, the Jesuit superior in England, Holtby wrote from Durham to the general on 1 February 1589 (N.S.). From this letter it seems likely that they had sailed from St Valèry and landed after five days, having escaped all the perils of the sea. On landing, they had to entrust themselves to a stranger who treated them well and put them in touch with some Catholic gentry. They had then separated, John Curry going south and he himself staying in th north. He wrote about the apostolate and the many difficulties they faced and commended their work to the prayers of the general.[7] And Henry Walpole, on the Continent at the time, mentioned in a letter that he had heard from Holtby of his arrival.[8]

During the remaining fifty-one years of his life, Richard Holtby is thought not to have left England more than once. The mission and province catalogues which have not survived for any date before 1593 and give only the scantiest information before 1610, show that he was superior of the Jesuit mission in Yorkshire, c.1621-c.1623, and after that was stationed in the residence of St John (Durham, Cumberland and Northumberland), of which he was superior in 1624-31, until his death in 1640. From July 1606 until March 1609, after the execution of Henry Garnet, he held the office of vice-prefect or superior of the Jesuit mission in England,Fr Robert Persons in Rome being the prefect. During these years in England, he went by a number of aliases - Duckett, Fetherston, Spencer, Robert, or Roger, North.

Remembering, no doubt, the circumstances of his own landing in England, Holtby, together with the secular priest John Mush, extended a system or network of reception committees and safe houses, and provided horses and funds for newly-arrived priests, and thus equip them to begin their ministry.[10] In 1593 a priest confessed to the government that 'on landing. . . in 1590' he and another 'went to the house of one Mr Trollope in Thorneley or Thornton in the Bishopric of Durham, where they met with

Richard Houtbee, a Jesuit, to whom they were specially directed. . . '[11] Another house used as a shelter was Grosmont Priory, near Whitby, of which John Hodgson was the tenant.[12]

Richard Holtby was skilful with his hands. Not only was he a good gardener, but he was also a mason and a carpenter, and even embroidered vestments (and sent one to the general, Mutius Vitelleschi), and he used some of these skills in constructing hiding places.[13] It is believed that the hide at Hardwick Hall, co. Durham, was almost certainly made by him, and that another, at Houghall Farm, near Durham, may have been contrived by him. Henry More stated that no pursuivant ever found a hide of his making.[14]

In the Stonyhurst archives are two manuscripts in Richard Holtby's hand.[15] Both were sent by him to Henry Garnet, his superior. 'On Persecution in the North', with its account of the activities of Henry, earl of Huntingdon, president of the Council of the North, and of the trial and execution of John Boste, John Ingram and George Swallowell in 1594, and his 'Account of the Three Martyrs' (Anthony Page, Joseph Lambton and Edward Waterson) are printed in volume III of John Morris's *The Troubles of our Catholic Forefathers.*

Although Fr Holtby was occasionally elsewhere, in London for example, he was based in Yorkshire and the north-east. It has already been mentioned that in the 1590s he was at Thornley, near Durham, and later at Grosmont, near Whitby[16] in c. 1603 he was at 'Heborne' (Hebburn), near Newcastle,[17] in 1605/6 at Halton, in Northumberland,[18] in 1612 in London,[19] and in the 1620s at St Anthony's, Mrs Dorothy Lawson's house on the north bank of the Tyne, near Newcastle.[20] It is on record that in 1609 he visited Louvain, where Margaret Garnet, Henry Garnet's sister, was a nun in St Monica's convent, and another sister, Helen, at St Ursula's.[21]

The government was very well aware of his existence and informed about his movements. In 1593, as noted above, a priest, Thomas Clark, under interrogation, confessed that 'on landing at the Shields by Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1590 he and Francis Clayton went to the house of one Mr Trollope in Thorneley or Thornton in the Bishopric of Durham where they met with Richard Houtbee, a Jesuit, to whom they were specially directed. . . '[22] Very soon after this the earl of Huntingdon sent a list, dated January 1593, of priests in the north and south of the country to Burghley and in this list Richard Holtby was named along with Henry Garnet, Robert Southwell

and others.[23]

Another report in May 1593 mentioned 'certain priests that are in the north country... Richard Holtby alias Duckett, a Jesuit, was for the most part abiding at Mr Trollope's house at Thorneley and csme over five years past. He is a little man with a reddish beard about the age of forty-three years and was born in Yorkshire'.[24] Not surprisingly, with this information at its disposal the government began a search in the north in 1593. In Richard Holtby's words 'Myself and my brother escaped very narrowly'. He had another escape the following year when Mr Trollope's house was raided and he had to hide in the woods for two days and nights.[25] In 1603 Holtby's presence at Hebburn was reported to the earl of Salisbury[26] and that he was at Halton was revealed a year or two later.[27] In 1612 Archbishop Abbot wrote that he was in London.[28] Yet, in his fifty years in England Richard Holtby was never caught.

When Henry Garnet was in prison he appointed Holtby with two others to be in charge of the younger priests at their meetings which were held every six months[29] and after Garnet's execution in May 1606 Richard Holtby was named by the general to succeed him as superior or vice-prefect of the Jesuit mission in England, numbering more than forty men.[30] One of the problems with which he had to deal as superior was that of the oath of allegiance which Catholics could be required to take under the threat of heavy penalties for refusal.[31] Some Catholics believed that they could with a good conscience take this oath. Holtby was prudently cautious. He forbade the English Jesuits to write or preach against the oath but told them they could advise individuals; thus they would do nothing to encourage divisions on the matter.[32] His letters to Robert Persons in Rome are much about this subject: he wrote of the sufferings of those who had refused the oath and of the miserable state of those who had agreed to take it.[33] In 1607 he sent a report to Rome in the form of an Annual Letter which dealt at length with the oath of allegiance and with the government's efforts to enforce it and the courage shown by those who refused. It was in this letter that he wrote admiringly of the books by Robert Persons - they had won for him 'a foremost place among English writers'.[34] Paul V forbade English Catholics to take the oath, issuing two Briefs in 1606 and 1607 which also condemned the view that Catholics might attend Protestant services and sermons, another matter that had been causing divisions.[35] In 1611 among those arrested for refusing to take the oath of allegiance was Robert Holtby,

Richard's brother.

In 1606, probably soon after he became the Jesuit superior, Holtby was visited in London by Mary Ward and her father. They had come down from Yorkshire to see Fr Holtby because Mr Ward hoped that he would cure his daughter of what he considered day dreams. To Mary's distress, Holtby now said that he thought she should not leave England nor become a religious and that she would do God greater service by marrying. But, after offering Mass, he totally changed his advice - he would not hinder her and would do all he could to help her.[37]

In 1609 Holtby petitioned the general, Fr Claudius Aquaviva, for leave to retire from the office of superior and hand over to another. This request was granted, Fr Robert Jones being appointed to succeed him.[38] Holtby returned to the north-east to Yorkshire and then to the residence of St John, in both of which he was (as mentioned earlier) for a number of years superior - and in the latter he died at the age of eighty-seven on May 15/25 1640.[39]

'A little man with a reddish beard' is how Holtby was described in 1593 in a report to the government. The Jesuit mission and province catalogues tell only a little more: learned, prudent, strong and fit for any work (1610); in 1622 his health was described as 'middling'; in 1625, 1628 and 1633, it was thought to be good for his age; in 1636 he was considered infirm and in 1639 to be in a state of decline. Henry More, who was provincial during the last years of Holtby's life described him as a shrewd and tireless worker and wrote of his many and varied skills. He also wrote of his personal practice of poverty while he was generous to others, especially to those in prison and to priests who had recently arrived in the country.[40] 'In his lifetime and for many years after his death his name was legendary between the Humber and the Tweed. . . by training or by talent he possessed all the qualities required of a leader'.[41]

Dr Jessop wrote of him:

> Of no other English Jesuit can it be said that he exercised his vocation in England for upwards of fifty years and that, too, with extraordinary effect and ceaseless activity without once being thrown into jail or once falling into the hands of the pursuivants, and quietly died in his bed in extreme old age. Holtby must have had some very powerful friends in Yorkshire to escape molestation for so long.[42]

NOTES

1. There are accounts of Holtby's life in the *Dictionary of National Biography*; Foley, *Records*, III and VII; Gillow, *Bibliographical Dictionary*, III; Henry More's *Historia Provinciae Anglicanae Societatis Jesu* (Audomari 1660); J. Morris, *The Troubles of Our Catholic Forefathers*, III (London 1877).
2. Venn, J. & J.A, *Alumni Cantabrigiensis* (Cambridge 1922), Part I, vol. II J. Foster, *Alumni Oxoniensis*, vol. II (Early Series) (Oxford 1891).
3. For details of his life at Douay and the first mission to England, see the First and Second Douay Diaries, ed. Knox, Anstruther, *The Seminary Priests*, I, and More *Historia Provincia Anglicanae*, p.349: also Morris, *Troubles*, III.
4. Morris, *Troubles*, III, pp.111-12.
5. Morris *Troubles* , III, pp.112-13; More, Historia, pp.349-50.
6. Foley, *Records*, I, p.396n;T.M. McCoog, *Monumenta Angliae* (Rome 1992), II, p.282.
7. Archivum Romanum S.J., Fonde Ges. 651, f.77.
8. Stonyburst MSS Anglia A, I, no.15.
9. Mission and Province catalogues; McCoog, *Monumenta Angliae*, II, p.358
10. More, p.350; *Recusant History*, 19, p.215, *The Elizabethan Priests, their Harbourers and Helpers*; P. Caraman, *Henry Garnet 1555-1606 and the Gunpowder Plot* (London 1964) pp. 97-8.
11. CSP, Dom. Eliz. 1591-4, vol. 244, no.5; *Troubles*, III, p.113.
12. *Recusant History*, 16, p.201; M. Hodgetts, *A Topographical Index of Hiding Places.*
13. More, p.350; *Troubles*, III, p.116.
14. *Recusant History*, 16, pp.158-9.
15. Stonyhurst MSS, Anglia, A, II, 12, and I, 74.
16. Hodgetts, *Secret Hiding Places* (Dublin 1989), pp. 120, 125.
17. *Troubles*, III, p. 117.
18. Foley, *Records*, III, 7; CSP. Dom. Jac. I, vol.20, n.45.
19. *Troubles*, III, p.117; CSP. Dom. Jac. I, 1611-18, vol. 70, no.33.
20. P. Caraman, *Henry Morse, Priest of the Plague* (London 1957), pp.32 ff,
21. *Troubles*, III; A.Hamilton, *The Chronicle of the English Augustinian Canonesses of the Lateran at St Monica's, Louvain* (Edinburgh 1904), pp.17 ff.
22. *Troubles*, III, p.113; CSP Dom. Eliz. 1591-4, vol.244, no.5.
23. *Troubles*, III, p.113: CSP. Dom. Eliz. Addenda, vol.32, no.64. The full list is in Foley, *Records* , VI, pp.742-4.
24. *Troubles*, III, D.113; CSP. Dom. Eliz. vol. 245, no.24.
25. *Troubles*, III, pp.114, 221.
26. *Troubles*, III, p.117; CSP. Dom. Jac. I, 1603-10, vol.7,no.50.
27. Foley, *Records*, III, p.7: CSP. Dom. Jac. I, 1603-10, vol.20. no. 45.
28. *Troubles*, III, p.117; CSP. Dom. Jac. I, 1611-18, vol. 70, no.33.

Notes 29-42 are on p.68

# ITALIANS IN NEWCASTLE, 1800-1900: THE RECORDS OF ST ANDREW'S R.C. CHURCH

**Hugh Shankland**

Anyone looking through the neat handwritten indices to the older registers held at St Andrew's Catholic Church, Worswick Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, might well be surprised at the frequency of Italian surnames and wonder why so many came from so far. The Irish greatly outnumber all other 'foreign' surnames, but next in order must come the Italians. By my reckoning, 462 separate individuals with Italian names are recorded in the registers of baptisms and marriages during the period 1795-1915.

A transcript of the two earliest registers of baptisms accounting for the years 1765-1825 was published by the Catholic Record Society (Miscellanea IX, 1914), otherwise all records have to be consulted at the presbytery. I must at once thank Father Haydon and Brother Jack, and other members of the Community of the Blessed Sacrament at St Andrew's, for the kindness and patience which they showed myself and my wife, Lotte, on our many visits to comb through the records. The present church dates from 1875 but stands on the site of an earlier St Andrew's, a small chapel founded in 1798 on the initiative of Fr James Worswick. Until the building of St Mary's Cathedral (1844) it was the first and only purpose-built post-Reformation Catholic place of worship in the city. From the recorded addresses in the St Andrew's registers, the evidence from the available census returns (1841 to 1891) it is clear that most of the Italians in nineteenth century Newcastle lodged in one of the poorest quarters of town, in the crowded streets and alleys between the Quayside and Carliol Square. St Andrew's stands at the edge of old Carliol Square and was by long tradition the church most favoured by the Italians.

The register of baptisms, the oldest of the registers, was opened in 1765 when a room in Newgate Street served as a chapel for the small congregation which after 1782 became Fr Worswick's responsibilty. No Italian names occur in the register for the first thirty years. This does not mean that no Italians resided in the city before the last years of the eighteenth century, but their number must have been negligible and I have as yet found no record of any. The first Italian names in the register appear in connection with the baptism in December 1795 of a son born to Mary Jones and Lorenzo Berti, at which a certain Pochini was the godfather. In

all likelihood this was Giovanni Pochini who figures in the register's second 'Italian' entry. He was married to Joan Denton, and at their daughter's baptism in 1798 the godparents were Bartolomeo Lipe and Mary Bunell. Between them these four earliest-mentioned Italians establish a pattern that remains nearly unbroken for the next seventy years: the Italian names in the registers are almost all male and when married they have British (or Irish) partners. From 1795 to 1869 only thirteen out of the 110 Italian names are female, and of the sixty-two married Italians only five have Italian spouses. Italian migration was evidently predominantly male, a situation which remained unchanged until the 1880s. These men presumably left Italy as young bachelors and as time went on felt remote enough from their place of origin to choose local women for life partners. What brought them to Tyneside and from where in Italy did they come?

By noting the names of godparents at baptisms and the names of witnesses at marriages, it is possible to reconstruct an approximate picture of the various family and friendship networks which operated within this small foreign Catholic community in the first half of the nineteenth century. Taken with information from the census returns and local trade directories, all points to the conclusion that a proportion of the early Italian arrivals in Newcastle originated from the neighbourhood of Lake Como, in the region of Lombardy near the Italian-Swiss border. For instance, the census enumerators normally recorded an Italian's place of origin as 'Italy', or at best 'Lombardy', but in 1861 Vittorio Mastaglio of 4 Carliol Square, 'toy merchant employing 12 assistants', aged 50, insisted that 'Dorso Liro' be set down, his home village at the head of Lake Como. Back in his thirties he had headed the firm of Mastaglio, Fornelli and Molteni, 'barometer, thermometer and looking glass manufacturers' in Grainger Street (1838 trade directory for Newcastle and Gateshead). The manufacture of precision instruments, such as barometers and thermometers,is known to have been the preserve of craftsmen who took their skills all over Europe from their home villages round Lake Como. Tiny hard-working colonies of them existed in all major British cities by about 1820. From London they spread out over the country with the strongest settlements in Manchester and Liverpool, Glasgow and Edinburgh. The best-known of these small family firms was to be Negretti and Zambra (London), whose Newcastle branch closed only in the 1970s. The earliest identifiable Comasque in the St Andrew's registers are Guiseppe Falla (1817) and Francesco Bernasconi (1821).

Further confirmation of the strength of the Newcastle connection with Como is an inscription on one of the few headstones standing in what is left of the old churchyard of St Nicholas' Cathedral. Its blackened and weather-beaten surface still very clearly reads: 'LUIGI GRASSI Native of St. Giorgio near Como Italy.[1] The 1833-4 directory shows that the partnership of Grassi, Bergna & Origoni ran a 'jewellery and toy warehouse' in Dean Street, and the St Andrew's records prove that, like Mastaglio, all three Italians had close links with the original Newcastle circle of barometer makers from Como. When an enterprise began to prosper more assistants were 'imported' from the same area through family and trade contacts, or found their way to Newcastle through the extensive Comasque network in Britain. Without exception, all these men whose family destinies I have been able to trace through the church registers and the decennial census returns married British women, and several were already naturalised British subjects by the time of the 1851 census. The process of assimilation into the local community was well advanced by then. Many of the Como Italians have descendants on Tyneside: Bergna, Bernasconi, Falla, Mastaglio, Molteni, Tacchi, Tarelli are found in the early St Andrew's registers and in the local telephone directories today.[2]

Bianchi and Lazzari are probably the most common surnames surviving on Tyneside from the very early nineteenth century. Carlo Bianchi, born in Italy in 1791, was an artificial flower maker and vendor (and later umbrella maker) who found his way to Newcastle around 1815, probably in the company of Giuseppe Giobbi (or 'Jobey' as he and his Newcastle descendants soon came to be known locally). The St Andrew's records show that the 'Bianchi' dynasty got off to a very fertile start with the dozen or so children of Carlo's two marriages, first to Margaret Calvert and then Isabel Callender. The origins of the Lazzari (sometimes anglicised also as 'Ladzrie') go back to Paolo and Angelo Lazzari, possibly brothers, who make regular appearances in the St Andrew's registers from as early as 1807. The number of times that they or their English wives were invited to be godparents to the children of other local Italians, including the Bianchi, indicates that they played a leading role in the community. In fact Paolo Lazzari was headmaster of St Andrew's school, another of Fr Worswick's initiatives on behalf of the Catholic community in Newcastle. His school had 250 pupils in 1827.

Aside from the series of Italian-born vice-consuls appointed to Newcastle in the wake of the unification of Italy in 1860, very few Italians in

Newcastle could aspire to membership of the 'professional classes'. Some earned their living as interpreters or 'professors of languages' (I have noted Giovanni Basina and Giovanni Calasca), and another few worked on Tyneside as shipping brokers and agents. I have traced a number of the latter through the directories of the time, but only one figures in the St Andrew's registers. He is Luigi De Scalzo, a native of Genoa (the main Italian port for trade from North-East England), who also married an Englishwoman and acted as interpreter and commissioner for the skippers of Italian vessels. Count Filippo De Mancini, the first Italian vice-consul in Newcastle (1863-66), from whose official correspondence I gleaned this information,[3] singled out De Scalzo as one of the few honest men among local Italians in the maritime line of business. The Count was given a hard time by a group of Italian shipping agents based in North Shields whom he suspected of tempting Italian sailors to jump ship with 'empty promises' of better pay in order to be 'so to speak sold off' to foreign captains whose crews had been depleted by similar inducements. The harbour police, he had reason to think, were in on the game as well.

Antonio Leone Bulletti is an interesting character in the St Andrew's registers of the 1860s. He was a Florentine woodcarver who was employed for almost ten years by the Duke of Northumberland in the refurbishment of Alnwick Castle in the lavish style of a Renaissance palace. The registers prove Bulletti's pride in his noble patron and his prosperous years in England: he christened his first daughter Eleonora after the Duke's wife (1863), his son Algernon after the Duke himself (1865), and his second daughter after Queen Victoria (1868). Bulletti, the inspirer of the 'Alnwick School' of carvers, possessed a studio and showroom in Grey Street.

My computation of each Italian name on its first appearance in the St Andrew's registers shows that the pace of arrival of Italians in Newcastle sped up considerably during the course of the nineteenth century. Only thirty-one Italians appear in the baptism and marriage registers between 1795 and 1839, which produces the following meagre figures when broken down into 15 year intervals:

1795-1809: 8

1810-1824: 10

1825-1839: 13

Most of these were members of the Como circle, which slightly expanded over the period. However after 1840 comes a steady increase

which rises steeply in the 1880s toward a great crescendo in the early years of the new century (there are eighty newcomers to the registers in 1900-04). Again, the figures below are for fifteen year periods. As they are solely derived from the St Andrew's records, they should not be taken as representing anything like the actual numbers of Italians on Tyneside, but are a reliable indication of a general trend:

1840-1854: 30
1855-1869: 49
1870-1884: 67
1885-1899: 104
1900-1915: 181

The first official account that we have of the Italian community in Newcastle was written in March 1892 by the Italian Vice-Consul, R. Rizzetto, for his superiors in Rome[4]. He is not too complimentary about the bulk of his compatriots:

> *The Italians of social standing can be numbered almost on the fingers of one hand: two run coal companies; two have restaurants, three have fancy goods shops, one a food and wine store; in North Shields there are two ship's agents; in Sunderland three Italians own a jeweller's and fancy goods shop. From these Italians, who form the aristocracy of the colony, we descend straight, to the humblest class of Italians, the street musicians who in certain seasons of the year pedal ice cream. There are between 30 and 40 street musicians in Newcastle; perhaps 10 between North and South Shields, 5 in Sunderland.*
>
> *However piteous may be the reasons which compel these itinerant musicians to come to England, it has to be said they do little honour to our nation; it is clear in what consideration such a class of people must be held in a country where there is a cult of work; they wander through the streets with their barrel-organs, sometimes they have monkeys with them, and they live on whatever coins are thrown their way; some have settled in a single city or locality, others band together in groups to tour the whole United Kingdom; even when long resident in England they do not merge with the English; they keep their national dress and customs, they live together and all are known to each other; not always, in these circles, is the level of morality high; here in Newcastle the majority are from the South of Italy.*[5]

Rizzetto, it scarcely needs saying, was not a southern Italian. 'The great majority of the colony comes from southern Italy', repeats V. A. Montaldi, the Italian Vice-Consul in Newcastle in 1902.[6] 'Our countrymen are for the most part ice cream vendors, statuette makers (from the

province of Lucca), and itinerant barrel-organ players.' In the intervening ten years Montaldi found the numbers of Italians had more than doubled. Dismissing the official British census figure of 332 Italians in Northumberland (it had been 126 in Rizzetto's time), he put the figure at around 500 (chiefly in Newcastle and Shields), with an additional 'approximately 305' children of Italian parentage. In the south of his constituency, on Wearside and Teesside, he estimated a further 200 Italians. Montaldi, who had offices on the Quay and was one of the Italian coal exporters mentioned by Rizzetto, could count only himself and one other Italian in commerce in the entire region. And yet twenty years earlier, he reports, there had been a score of Italian firms operating as shipping agents and brokers between Newcastle and Shields. 'Some have vanished along with the sailing ships, the others took English wives and in abandoning their offspring to the mother's influence have themselves suffered the same consequence, and now all they possess of Italian is their name, having forgotten even the language!'

But now for the humbler categories of Italians, the 'statuette makers' from the province of Lucca, and the 'barrel-organ players' with their seasonal sideline in ice cream. The trade of statuette maker (*figurinaio*, in Italian) was indeed a speciality of men from the province of Lucca, in particular from villages and farmsteads in the vicinity of Barga in the Tuscan Apennines. In bands of five or six or more, on expeditions lasting two or three years, they wandered the length and breadth of Europe making and hawking their wares. The master or *padrone* could be a craftsman of some skill, able to manipulate the moulds necessary for the serial production of a variety of gilded or coloured plaster of Paris statuettes: holy images, Christmas crib figures, busts of heroes and heads of state, classical gods and goddesses. The rest of the team (the *garzoni*) would double as apprentices and street pedlars of the statuettes or 'images', and they were often as young as twelve. These bands of Tuscans began to attract notice on the streets of England soon after the Napoleonic wars. The earliest I have noted in our region is 'Joseph' Brucciani 'figure maker and plaster of Paris manufacturer' of Shakespeare Street, Newcastle, (1838 directory), first recorded in the St Andrew's registers in 1828. No doubt many others tramped the streets of Newcastle before Brucciani, and it is simply the itinerant pattern of their progress that explains why records are lacking of their presence. It is probably not wrong to assume that some of them figure amongst the earliest Italian names in the St Andrew's registers.

The later register entries certainly show there was no lack of Tuscans (and hence probably statuette traders) in Newcastle from the middle of the century. Federico Rinaldi of Lucca ('civitatis lucchensis in ducato Tuscaniae') married a local girl in 1849, as did Domenico Cardosi ('Residence: Tuscany') in 1854. Federico Lundi, a 'figure maker' living in New Bridge Street, and his English wife had their son baptised at St Andrew's in 1849. I have so far found six 'figure and mould makers' in the city with their families in the 1871 census, one of them having spent at least six years in Scotland. The 'figure maker', Pancrazio Stacchini, and the 'statuette caster' Daniele Stacchini, presumably brothers or cousins, were living in Pandon Dean with their English-born wives and children at the time of the 1861 census. The St Andrew's records of godparentage show that Daniele and his South Shields wife Alice came to acquire high status among the local Italian community long before the 'new' Italians came streaming into the city in the 1880s. Probably the foundation for this was sealed by the friendship between the Stacchini family and Angelo Carpena, from the province of Parma, one of the leading *padrone* among the earlier generation of Italian organ-grinders in Newcastle. He chose Alice Stacchini for a witness at his marriage to Elizabeth Child (of Pandon) in 1864, and later she was godmother to one of their sons.

The Italian street entertainers[7] and street musicians in Britain came from two distinct areas of Italy: until about 1880 they were almost exclusively from the high reaches of the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines (province of Parma), while the majority of those who poured in after 1880 were from South Italy, in particular Apennine villages in the neighbourhood of Cassino (provinces of Frosinone and Caserta), about midway between Rome and Naples. There were fiddlers and bagpipers and accordion players and street singers among them, but most needed no more musicianship than it took to crank the handle of a barrel-organ or mechanical hurdy-gurdy. I have quoted Vice-Consul Rizzetto's snooty opinions of their lives and livelihood. In his 1902 report Vice-Consul Montaldi shows more humanity, without hiding his exasperation at his dealings with some of them:

> *About twenty... are the so-called padroni, men of some affluence, all the others are their apprentices (garzoni) or servants (*servi*) whom they have persuaded to expatriate with all manner of inducements and promises which in effect come down to no more than board and lodging and a miserable recompense of fifteen or twenty liras a month which is frequently unpaid due to the absence of a proper contract!*

*I continue to do what I can to restrain the greed of some padroni, and in several instances have found permanent work in local firms for various nationals but unfortunately, with rare exceptions, as soon as they have saved a little money they quit their job in order to resume the occupation of itinerant musician, now in their own right, some of them outdoing their former bosses in the tyranny they exercise over their newly-arrived fellow-countrymen recruited by them directly or indirectly from Italy. . . In most cases the sort of written contract made in Italy prior to departure remains in the padrone's keeping as warrant for the work expected of the emigrant, and so if a dispute arises this single wretched document is declared lost or stolen! I have fairly often had cause to complain of such occurences. Apart from these misdemeanours, common to other colonies of Italians dispersed among the larger cities of the United Kingdom, the personal conduct of our nationals is generally speaking good, and gives no cause for complaint.*

Angelo Carpena, the Stacchini's near-neighbour in Pandon, ran a household made up of eight 'servants' or 'musical instrument players' in 1861 (census record). All were unmarried males aged between 20 and 36. His presence as principal witness at five Italian weddings between 1864 and 1869 at St Andrew's proves his prestige among the ever-changing community of street musicians. Some were undoubtedly his *servi*. By 1870, though, Angelo bowed out of the business, taking up a quieter life as corporation lamp-lighter, although his house was still open to passing Italian street musicians in need of lodgings. Younger men were moving in.

Back in 1861 a large organ-grinders' enterprise had already been competing with Carpena for Geordie farthings, under a 26-year-old *padrone* called Giambattista Lertoria. In their house in Matsford's Entry he and his Italian wife Antonia raised an ever-expanding family together with another 15 Italian boarders, all of them classed as 'musical instrument players' by the census enumerator. The St Andrew's registers cite the couple as sponsors at eight Italian christenings outside their family circle. Twenty years later we find them lodging with seven of their many children at 15 Trafalgar Street, and presiding over no less than twenty-one other Italians at the same address. This time the enumerator records Giambattista's occupation as 'ice cream seller and lodging housekeeper', while the other adult males - there were three other families with another seven children in that household, a married couple, and four unattached men - are variously occupied as 'street musician' or 'ice cream seller.' This confirms Rizzetto's observation in his 1891 report about the organ-grinders switching to street-selling ice cream in the warmer season. In 1885 in his

vivid account of *Newcastle Town* R.J. Charleton starts his evocation of the Sunday fair on the Sandhill corner of the Quayside by describing the 'stalls with gaily covered awnings, mostly owned by Italian vendors of ice cream. The thirsty ones from the crowded Sandhill flock hither for their cold refreshment, which they diversify with ginger beer, lemonade, nuts, oranges, and mussels.' A photograph of around 1915 shows a busy 'Lertoria' Sunday ice cream stall on the Quayside.[8] The earliest reference I have so far found to this occupation is in the 1871 census, which records that Giulio and Teodoro Reggi of n. 2 Back Pandon Street were 'ice cream manufacturers'. The tradition of Italian supremacy in the ice cream trade in Newcastle evidently reaches back at least 120 years.

*Padroni* like Carpena and Lertoria were from central Italy, as was Daniele Stacchini. But in the 1880s, driven from their homes by economic necessity in the midst of a long-term agricultural depression, came the great influx of southern Italian peasants, of whom Vice-Consul Rizzetto found not one nice thing to say. From now on the St Andrew's registers record almost exclusively southern surnames, and English spouses are rare among them. The Lertorias, with their commanding position in the local organ-grinding community in the '60s and '70s, may have been deservedly proud of being godparents to the children of at least eight grateful Italian families who passed through their hands or eventually settled in Newcastle, but this pales beside the twenty-one godparenthoods notched up by the southern *padrone* Nicola Di Preta and his sister-in-law (later wife), Nicolina, between 1882 and 1902. There is no way of knowing whether Nicola Di Preta was one of the tyrannical *padroni* which Vice-Consul Montaldi had in mind, but there is no doubt that he was foremost of all the southern bosses in the last two decades of the century. What we can imagine of his lifestyle from the census evidence and the St Andrew's records certainly confirms Rizzetto's observations that the southern Italians banded closely together, living apart from the English. However, this was true of the Lertoria company as well, and they were not southerners.

In 1891, recently widowed at the age of 39, Nicola Di Preta resided at 20 Carliol Square at the head of a company of thirty-four Italians, all crowded into the same address. Apart from twelve assorted children, everyone in the ten families, including Nicola's elderly parents-in-law and the ten-year-old Teresina Latte, was working the streets of Newcastle as a barrel-organ grinder. Nicola's status as supreme *padrone* or affluent

business manager for whole companies of Italian organ-grinders in the city is clear from the fact that he and Nicolina between them easily hold the record number of godparent entries in the St. Andrew's registers. A surprising number of the families they sponsored put down roots in the North-East. But that takes us into the twentieth century and is another story.

NOTES

Besides all at the St Andrew's community, I must thank Lucio Sponza, Barry Redfern, Bernadette Reddicliffe (the Stacchini family), and Father David Milburn (a Lertoria descendant) for supplying valuable information. Indispensable for my research, exemplary for its detailed and sympathetic presentation of the early Italian presence in this country, is Lucio Sponza's *Italian Immigrants in Nineteenth Century Britain: Realities and Images* (Leicester University Press, 1988).

1. Records show that the full inscription (now submerged) said that Luigi Grassi died April 16th 1835 aged 32, and Clement Grassi, also 'Native of Como Italy', who died July 31st 1848 aged 38 years, was interred in the same plot.
2. A number of the Como families moved into the toy trade, as importers and retailers not as manufacturers, with a virtual monopoly within the city by the mid-century, and further outlets in Sunderland and Durham. Other skills shared by the 'barometer' circle were: optician, jeweller, clock-maker, cabinet maker, looking-glass maker, picture frame maker.
3. De Mancini correspondence in the Archivio storico diplomatico, Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome.
4. Ministero degli Affari Esteri: Emigrazione e Colonie. Rapporti dei RR. agenti diplomatici e consolari (Roma, 1893).
5. The Vice-Consul's strictures closely reflect the 1888-89 Select Committee enquiry on foreign immigrants. This stigmatized the Italians as 'immoral, illiterate, vicious, and low, and as being a depraved class, which must cause undesirable results among the surrounding population.' Lucio Sponza (cit.) has successfully exploded these xenophobic prejudices. The Rizzetto report continues: 'Not all street musicians in England are Italian, however. Some are Germans, but they are not as numerous as the Italians and are not as conspicuous as ours, both because in physical type and dress they merge easily with the English, and because they do not possess barrel-organs or monkeys but form bands with brass instruments or play the violin.' An interesting hint of some community of interest between these two different ethnic categories of street musician is the fact that Daniele Stacchini had eight German bandsmen lodging with him at the time of the 1891 census.
6. Bollettino degli Affari Esteri, gennaio 1903. Rapporto del car. V.A. Montaldi: 'Agricoltura, industria e commercio delle Contee di Northumberland e Durham.'
7. Giuseppe Sidoli, from Parma, 'came to Newcastle a few days ago with other musicians and exhibitors of dancing bears' (*Newcastle Courant*, 23rd February 1833, reporting a fatal stabbing by Sidoli). The 1881 census records Mario Rigari, 67 and blind, 'formerly traveller with peep-show', living in Matford's Yard with his English wife and son.
8. See 'Shops and Shopping' booklet published by Newcastle upon Tyne City Libraries & Arts, 1992.

## HENRI FREDERICK HEMY (1818-1888) AND HIS DESCENDANTS

**Doreen Oates, Richard A.Hemy, and David H.Thomas**

*'I am clean forgotten, as a dead man out of mind'* (Psalm 31, v.14)

'Forty years ago, the deceased was one of the best known of our citizens'. So runs the obituary of Henri Frederick Hemy in the *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* of 10 June 1888. Throughout the land his name was familiar to church musicians, pianoforte students and bandmasters. At his funeral the mourners' carriages stretched solid over a mile from St Andrew's Cemetery along the Great North Road to the city centre. Today, he is all but unknown, yet many of his religious compositions live on, for example, there will be few Irish Catholics, anywhere in the world, unacquainted with his setting of 'Hail, Glorious St Patrick'.[1]

Henri Frederick Hemy was a musician who composed hymn tunes and other religious music as well as dance music for Grand Balls, and who also taught music and wrote teaching manuals. But neither his name nor those of his musical descendants appear in the current edition of *Groves Dictionary of Music*. Henri Frederick's grandfather was Johannis Hemmi, a landowner born in 1740 in Saxe Coburg, and possibly of Dutch origin. His son, Henry (Henri), born in 1780, migrated to Scotland in 1805 and adopted the anglicised version of the family name of Hemmi (sometimes spelled with a dash over the 'm'). He married a member of the Napier family and moved to Newcastle upon Tyne.

By 1826 he was well established in Newcastle, as in that year he advertised in the *Newcastle Courant* to the effect that he was removing his business as a piano tuner, piano salesman, and professor of music to Forsyth Court, Pilgrim Street, Newcastle. He also played in theatres. Henry Hemy appears to have become well known, as a letter addressed to him simply as 'Henry Hemy Esq, Prof. of Music, Newcastle upon Tyne' reached him. It was a tender for a church organ, quite probably for St Mary's Church (now the Cathedral). He also conducted a choir in Gateshead in 1829 which, however, did not last long.[2] He died in 1850 and is buried in St Andrew's Cemetery, Newcastle upon Tyne. The *Newcastle Courant* announcing his death on 24 June referred to him as 'one of the oldest members of the musical profession in the town'.

His son Henri Frederick Hemy, whose musical activities were wide and form the main subject of this article, was born in 1818 and died in 1888[3]

- he is listed in P. Boasc's *Modern English Biography,* Vol.1,p.1422. Henri Frederick was of a roving disposition and was fascinated by the sea, and when a lad became a sailor, but left after a trial voyage or two, and a shipwreck, before enrolling as a military musician in Lord Buccleuch's regiment. He later returned to Newcastle where he played the violin in the theatre orchestra alongside his father playing the clarinet in turn, at both the old and the new building - the latter being the present Theatre Royal.[4] From 1838 to 1841 he shared teaching premises with his father at 12 Brunswick Place - Henri Frederick is noted in the directory as an organist. In 1840 he married in St Paul's, Jarrow, Margaret Macdonald, the daughter of the owner of Macdonald's Boot snd Shoe Manufactory, near the Quayside, which was progressive enough to be, in 1820, the first gas-lit shop in the city.

He and his wife were converted to Catholicism - according to some accounts in 1849-50 - but one parent may have been converted earlier, as their first child, Charles Napier, was christened nearly two years after his birth, at the same ceremony as his sister Eleanor, in 1842.[5] The family migrated to Australia in 1850. He conducted a season of twice-weekly concerts in Melbourne during the autumn of 1851 and the early part of 1852, but apparently found it difficult to succeed in 'the struggle for colonial success which needed to be fought in a country where capital was scanty and commerce but little developed'.[6] One account was that he took part in a Gold Rush, to an unknown extent, and, after a farewell concert on 23 February 1852, the family set sail, returning to Newcastle, where he resumed his previous activities. To support a growing family he was a teacher, theatre musician, and organist in various churches, first in the parish church in Ovingham, then at the Catholic Chapel in Pilgrim Street, which was vacated when St Andrew's in Worswick Street was built, and at St Cuthbert's and St Bede's in North and South Shields respectively.

Another activity was organising and conducting concerts and Grand Balls with his own band and in some cases with a Mr Watson. In June 1859 'Hemy and Watson's Unrivalled Band' had a series of Saturday and Friday concerts in the Victoria Hall, Grey Street,(opposite the Monument). The Town Hall, with a good auditorium, opened in this year - the organ was installed later. This, with municipal support and a City Organist (Wm Rea) produced stiff opposition. They planned another series of concerts at Chester-le-Street and elsewhere, which did not materialise. T.S. Watson

*Henri Frederick Hemy (1818-1888)*

was also a music teacher and salesman in Grainger Street who at this time was selling harmoniums at reduced prices to facilitate alterations in his premises. The Hemy and Watson Band performed at a ball on 31 May 1867 at Alnwick Castle on the attainment of majority of the Duke of Northumberland's grandson, Lord Warkworth. The programme (in the Northumberland Record Office at Melton Park) lists eight compositions by Hemy and two by Watson, whilst others were by Offenbach and D'Albert. (D'Albert was the father of Eugene d'Albert, who chose the small letter d). Henri Frederick Hemy often dedicated his dance tunes to a Mayor's Lady or other patron. He also composed a large number of pieces for church use, mentioned below.

Hemy's best known piece of musical authorship was probably *Hemy's Royal Pianoforte Tutor*, first published in 1854, which ran through some 100 editions. He sold the copyright to the publisher for £500, but it was later sold for £3000, when the printer was wound up. It was revised several times by Hemy, and afterwards by C. Stephen (1898) and S. Ridley (1929), and A.W. Marchant adapted it as a tutor for the harmonium. The British Library of printed music credits him with 117 items. The royal seal of approval was given by Helene, Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein (1844-1900). From time to time he also sold pianos and sheet music when be had a studio in the centre of Newcastle. He was also honoured by being Private Pianist to Lord Ravensworth.

Henri Frederick Hemy fathered thirteen children. His first child, Charles Napier, and two other sons, Bernard Benedict and Thomas Marie Madawaska, became painters of distinction, Charles Napier becoming a Royal Academician. Two of his sons were ordained in the Catholic Church and two of his daughters became nuns. Each of the trio of artists spent some time as sailors before settling down, all three specialising in nautical [8] themes. The unusual third name *Madawaska* given to Thomas Marie was that of the ship in which he was born on the voyage to Australia. Henri's sons Henri Christopher, Oswin Bede, Wilfrid Neot, and Alfred A. became musicians, as described later. Two later descendants were also musicians, Cecelia Constance was a pianist and Henry (1908-1989) taught music and chemistry at St Cuthbert's Boys' Grammar School in Newcastle for 43 years.

So far as is known, Henri Frederick did not have the good fortune to be taught by a musical scholar of standing, or go to a conservatoire - his

father no doubt was his real teacher. Richard Wagner (1818-1883) was a contemporary of Henri, and although largely self-taught he did have individual tuition from a theatre director and others, and also studied at a conservatoire. (William) Vincent Wallace (1812-1885), born in Ireland, was also a near contemporary, and his father was also a bandmaster. Unlike Henri, Wallace studied under various teachers and played the violin, and, strangely enough, he too became a Catholic, and also had a restless nature and travelled widely. Wallace wrote a fair amount of music, but is known mainly for his opera, *Maritana*. By coincidence, his brother S.W.Wallace played the violin at Henri Frederick's farewell concert in Melbourne.[9]

Only some of Henri Frederick's compositions and writing are mentioned in the contemporary advertisement Figure 1. The advertisement also gives his fees, and indicates his confidence in his teaching ability. The dance music probably gave great pleasure. Some dances were dedicated not only to Lady Mayoresses but also to patrons such as the Tyne Rowing Club, and were played by Hemy's Band at Grand Balls, etc., from 1843 to 1875. It is said that his band played in places from 100 to 200 miles away from Tyneside.[7]

In the nineteenth century there was a vast expansion of the Catholic population, and many churches were built, so that Hemy's *Crown of Jesus Music* came at an appropriate time, and made available the music of Mozart, Beethoven and others, as well as his own. For some years his compilations stood alone. With his natural abilities he could well have been a musician of international renown if fate had been kinder. He is recorded as having had a good voice, one account said he was a tenor[9] but another reported him a baritone.[10]

During part of his life, when living at Seaview House, North Shields, or using it as a studio, he took a great interest in the development of the port, and wrote about this under a pseudonym, and stood as a candidate for the local council in 1873, but did not get elected. His manifesto included a re-arrangement of the railway system along the coast.[11] Some four or five years later be moved to Esh in county Durham, and he taught music in Ushaw College. In 1880 an auction notice states that he was leaving the district and disposing of his household effects. The inventory shows that. he lived in considerable comfort, for it listed many valuable antiques and a library. He seems to have remained at Esh for a time, maybe in a smaller

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house or in part of the house when it was divided into two, and in 1887 he settled at 10 Regent Street, West Hartlepool, where he died from pneumonia on 12 June 1888. He was still active when he died, composing and working on a history of the organ, which had been mentioned but not, as far as is known, published. In one obituary notice he is credited with having set a great deal of Tennyson's poetry to music, but no manuscript has survived.

His wife, roughly a year his junior, lived to be eighty-nine and died in 1900 at Falmouth, where her son Charles Napier lived, and was buried there. The three sons who became painters,namely, Charles Napier, Bernard Benedict, and Thomas M.M., all travelled abroad, before concentrating on their art. The family tree of these artists accompanies this article, and there are several accounts of their works. Their descendants include painters and wood carvers, as well as three priests and two nuns.

The musicians of the family will now be described. Unlike the painters, very little has been published about them, and until the age of sound recording the aural artistic output of musicians could not be preserved, unlike paintings which can be more permanent and accessible. The second child of Henri Frederick, Eleanor is recorded as teaching music at the age of eighteen. There is little to be said about Frederick James, the fourth child, he too wandered for a time, and died in the Americas, as did Herbert Standen, whilst we know even less about Vincent Ignatius, and a daughter, Mary Elizabeth, who died young.

Henri Frederick's seventh son, Henri Christopher, born in February 1854, was the first male to take up his father's profession. Like many of the family, Christopher had a period of wandering, about which we know little, but he returned from Canada with a Doctorate of Music from Toronto, and was a teacher in Newcastle and at Ushaw College and, for a long time was organist and choir master at St Dominic's Church in Newcastle.[12] He taught singing and wrote musical criticism, and he found a manuscript of Arne in 1881 in the church music collection, which he edited and published. His entries in the British Library records number six, one as editor of the *Westminster Hymnal*, Part 1. Ill health caused his withdrawal from musical activity not long before he died on 5 February 1934.

Oswin Bede, the eighth son, lived for many years at *The Ferns*, Esh, and later at 13 Milton Street, Hartlepool, and for some time used a studio at 6 Johnson Street, West Hartlepool. He was a musician who also taught music at Ushaw College, and over the years 1880-1890 played at many

concerts in the North East. He was conductor of the local skating rink orchestra for a time, and he is recorded as having conducted it at an organ fund raising concert for St Cuthbert's Church in North Shields. He composed music, wrote some verse, and was an amateur painter. It does appear that Oswin was close in character to his father: he certainly followed him in the variety of his musical activities. The local papers give ample proof of concerts at Langley Park, Newhouse, Crook and Waterhouses, and of a concert at St Dominic's, Newcastle, when both he and his father performed. He also composed a patriotic song for the Boer War and other music, but his British Library count is just eight. His daughter, Cecelia Constance (1884-c.1989) was a pianist and taught music, but her performances were limited to the North East, as at that time lady musicians, unless extremely good, rarely played away from home ground. A grandson of Oswin Bede, William Hemy, taught music at St Cuthbert's Boys' Grammar School in Newcastle for 43 years and was senior science master.

Henri Frederick's ninth son, Wilfrid Neot (1857-c.1033), is something of a mystery, largely because family papers appear to have been destroyed. He may have left Newcastle after a family row, and lived first in London and Wisbech. The youngest son, Alfred, as well as Wilfrid Neot, are mentioned as being 'well known local musicians', but neither was as well known as their elder brothers. Alfred was in the Army during the Zulu War. He married in 1880 and when he left the Army he taught music and painting in Newcastle, and died after an accident at a factory whilst doing War work in 1915. He had six children, one being Ellen, the mother of Doreen Oates, who has collected much material about the family.

Although the strong musical ability waned somewhat, it did last for five or six generations - the Camidge family produced five generations of musicians in the York area. The Hemy family included a number of peoole with many and varied talents of an artistic nature, and many were dedicated to the Catholic Church.

It is perhaps fitting to revert to the psalmist quoted at the start of this article, and mention that on 23 September 1994 a service was held in St Mary's Cathedral to mark the 150th anniversary of its opening in 1844. The event was attended by Cardinal Basil Hume, who was born in Newcastle, who concelebrated Mass with Bishop Ambrose Griffiths and other bishops as well as most of the diocesan clergy. The processional hymn was the thirteenth century *Christus Vincit* and Mozart's glorious *Laudate Dominum*

was also performed. The hymns sung included *Daily, daily, sing to Mary*, the words of which are ascribed to the twelfth century St Bernard of Cluny, and *0 Bread of Heaven*, written by St Alphonsus in the eighteenth century, and both were sung to tunes composed by Henri Frederick Hemy: so he is not forgotten.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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FOOTNOTE

The authors have a great deal of information about more recent members of the Hemy family which was not relevant to this article, but they are willing to give any enquirer the benefit of this evidence, at cost price only. Enquiries should be addressed in the first instance to the editor of this journal at the address given on the inside front cover, and accompanied by two postage stamps.

NOTES

1. *Crown of Jesus Music*, etc., selected, composed and arranged by H.F. Hemy. Thomas Richardson and Sons, London, 1864.
2. Manders, F.W.D., *History of Gateshead*, p.264.
3. *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*, 10 June 1888: *South Durham Herald*, 16 June 1888: *Northern Daily Mail*, 16 June 1888.
4. *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, 24 April 1886, letter to editor.
5. Gordon, W.G.,*Converts to Rome*, 2nd edition, 1910, p.134.
6. *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*, 10 June 1888.
7. *Shields Daily News*, 12 June 1888. Hemy's baritone voice mentioned.
8. Marshall Hall, *Northumbrian Painters*; Johnson & Greutzner, *British Artists, 1880-1940*; *Cassells Magazine*, October 1808; *Pall Mall*, 1902; *North Country Lore and Legend*, Vol.4, p.419.
9. He sang tenor solos in Australia, as listed in concert programme.
10. See 7 above. Hemy's voice is stated as baritone.
11. *Shields Daily News*, 3 September 1872.
12. *North Mail & Newcastle Chronicle*, 5 February 1924. Article by Timbre.
13. *Shields Daily News*, 10 June 1879.

## Henri Frederick Hemy and his descendants who were painters

Johannis Hemmi
b 1740 in Saxe-coburg, landowner.

Henry (Henri) Hemy
b 1780, in England from 1805.
d. 1859. Musician

Henri Frederick Hemy. 1818-1888
Musician, teacher, concert promoter, composer.

- Charles Napier 1841-1917. R.A. *Painter* (1) & (2)
- Eleanor b 1842 Musician.
- Bernard Benedict 1844-1910. (2) *Painter*
- Fred James M. 1845-1883. (3)
- Vincent Ignatius b 1847
- Herbert D Standen (3) 1849-1869
- Thomas M. M 1850-1937 *Painter*. (4)
- Mary Elizabeth b 1852-64
- Henri Christopher 1854-1934 Musician
- Oswin Bede 1856-1916 Musician
- Wilfrid Neot 1857-1932 Musician
- Alfred J.A. Maricourt. 1859-1915 Musician
- Margaret Mary Dominica 1861-1864

- Philip Augustus 1882-1917
- Hilda Mary N. 1883-1960
- Dorothy Mary (5) 1884-1978
- Louis Joseph (6) 1885-1918
- Hubert John Henry 1886
- Marjorie M. Winifred (7). 1888
- Paul Noel Napier (8) 1869-1941
- Cuthbert Alphonse 1894-1938
- Barbara 1895-1957
- Donald Dominic 1896-1953

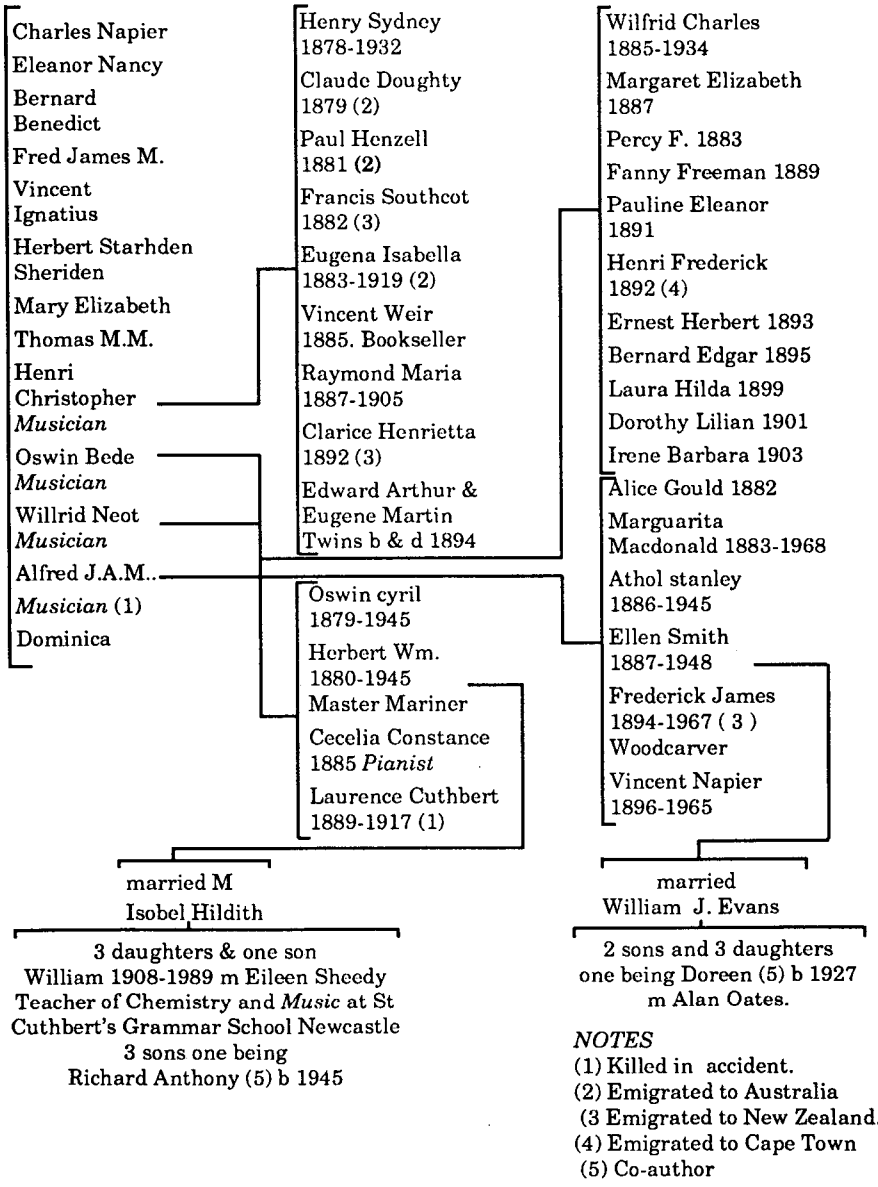
- Mary Elizabeth 1875
- Eleanor b & d 1876
- Eleanor Isobel 1877
- Jane Ann 1879-1960
- Charles Napier 1882-1939
- Bernard Benedict 1884-1861
- Henry Tinwell b & d 1886
- Monica Evaline b & d 1890
- Winifred Mary 1897

- Gwenytth Aileen 1884. Artist (9)
- Margaret Elizabeth 1887
- Percy F.M. 1889
- Pauline Eleanor 1889
- Karen F. 1892
- Ernest Herbert 1894
- Bernard Edgar 1896

NOTES.
1 R.A. awarded 1904.
2 Twice married.
3 Both died in the U.S.A.
4 Wrote a book Deep Sea Days

NOTES (Contd)
5 Became Sister Aimée of Namur
6 Ordained to Priesthood
7 Became a nun.
8 Ordained to Priesthood
9 Mrs Harold de Brath.

## Henri Frederick Hemy and his descendants who were musicians




*NOTES*

(1) Killed in accident.
(2) Emigrated to Australia
(3 Emigrated to New Zealand.
(4) Emigrated to Cape Town
(5) Co-author

## FAIT ACCOMPLI: THE BOWES MEMORIAL CHURCH AT LAST

**The Rev. David Milburn**

In a previous issue of this Journal (No 34, 1993) I examined in some detail the stages by which John Bowes of Bowes Museum fame partially realised the desire of his wife and himself to provide next to their Museum at Barnard Castle a Catholic chapel where their mortal remains could be interred and their names remembered in perpetuity. Although Mrs Bowes, Countess of Montalbo, died at the beginning of February 1874 before the project could be started, Mr Bowes, though staunchly Protestant in his views, did not shirk the task, and the foundation stone of the chapel was laid just over twelve months later on 6 April 1875, at a private ceremony attended by the chosen few.

Bishop Chadwick of Hexham and Newcastle in whose diocese Barnard Castle lay, apparently under the impression that it was to be a private oratory, or at any rate giving Mr Bowes the benefit of any doubt he had about it, initially supported the project. Only some time later, and with the work well advanced, did his solicitors manage to persuade the mild-mannered prelate to protest when it became clear beyond reasonable doubt that Mr Bowes expected his new chapel to be opened to the public and thereby threaten the existence of the Catholic mission chapel in Ware Street. A lengthy controversy ensued during which Mr Bowes was encouraged by his friends to insist on his rights of patronage in civil law, and Bishop Chadwick equally so by his advisers to claim his rights in church law. The impasse led to the suspension of work on the new chapel in the summer of 1877, the gothic structure completed only up to the apex of its windows.

With hindsight one is tempted to speculate that work on the chapel would soon have been suspended anyway, for by 1877 a steep decline in his coal royalties had caused Mr Bowes considerable financial embarrassment. One cannot say this for certain, but Mr Bowes might well have been relieved to have had a legal excuse for calling a halt to the enterprise. When it finally came to be built half a century later, the Bowes Trust Memorial Church was an altogether different structure to that begun by John Bowes, and it occupied a different site. This half of the story concerns the years 1877-1928, and it forms, for the purpose of this article, the second part of the lengthy negotiations involved in the building of the 'Chapel in the Park.'[1]

From 1877 onwards Mr Bowes' financial difficulties undoubtedly increased the physical and mental strain to which he was frequently

subject following a long illness in 1874. His second marriage, in 1877, to Alphonsine, Comtesse de Courten, itself proved to be very stressful. He died on 9 October 1885 with his affairs in great disarray. His personal estate, with a shortfall of something in the region of £100,000, could not meet his several generous bequests. General legacies and annuities took precedence over the bequest to the chapel. (The museum too suffered, for its trustees failed to receive an expected £135,000). Nevertheless, with regard to the chapel things did not remain at a complete standstill. We learn this from a letter which bridges a twenty-three year gap in the records. It is dated 15 September 1900 and addressed to the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle by the solicitors Fooks, Chadwick, Arnold and Chadwick of 60 Carey Street, Lincolns Inn:

> My Dear Lord,
>
> Rather more than twenty years ago the late Bishop Chadwick took a great interest in the Fund which Mr Bowes had intended to create but the subsequent depression in the Coal trade has caused the matter to remain in abeyance for several years. We had from time to time communications with Messrs Western by way of reminder but have not urged the matter until we saw some probability of money coming in.
>
> Owing to the great prosperity of the Coal trade during the past three or four years it seems to us there ought to be something to come in and New Trustees would have to be appointed owing to there being so many vacancies.
>
> If your Lordship or your Coadjutor should desire to have a statement sent to you in regard to the Fund we will draw it up and consider what course had better be taken now for the protection of the rights of the Diocese.[2]

It may be remembered that no. 60 Carey Street was the address of Bishop Chadwick's solicitors in the 1870s. It was therefore fitting that, with money again available, someone at the same address (perhaps Mr Arnold?) was prepared to get things moving again. Whoever the writer, he was clearly under no illusion that the shortage of money alone explained the long delay in reviving the project. His closing remarks about 'the protection of the rights of the Diocese' remind us rather poignantly that twenty-three years had gone by without any resolution of the legal problems besetting John Bowes' spiritual enterprise.

The recipient of the letter was the Rt Rev. Thomas Wilkinson, who ably governed the diocese of Hexham and Newcastle from 1889 to 1909, despite his advanced age. In addition to this demanding work he was also President of Ushaw College, and markedly revived its flagging financial

fortunes. This unexpected proposal from Fooks and Co. evidently appealed to him, for by return of post he contacted the Bowes trustees' solicitor, Mr Joseph Wilson of Long Eaton, who responded with the same degree of alacrity, requesting the bishop to nominate twelve Catholic gentlemen from whom new trustees might be appointed.[3] A memorandum in the bishop's own hand dated 15 November 1900 lists eleven names to which a further seven have been added by someone else. [4]

Mr Wilson accepted four of the bishop's nominees: John Smith J.P. of Barnard Castle, his son Charles, also of Barnard Castle, Thomas Atkinson of Newcastle, agent for the nearby Lartington estates, and Dr James Taylor-Smith of Middleton Tyas, who had previously lived at Wycliffe, a few miles down river from Barnard Castle. Four of the others were chosen: Peter Prior of Darlington, John Thomas Hutchinson also of Darlington, Colonel Edward Leadbitter Smith of Flass hall, Esh (Winning), and Wilfrid Gibson of Hexham.

The eight Catholic gentlemen, together with John McCartan, a solicitor practising in Durham City, were oficially appointed trustees of the Bowes Memorial Church when Messrs Edward Young Western and George Adolphus Western decided to retire. The Western brothers were the last survivors of the Board of Trustees nominated by John Bowes. As his solicitors they had fiercely upheld the view in the 1870s that he should be allowed to do as he pleased with his chapel without being obliged to answer for it to the Catholic bishop. Now, a quarter of a century later, 'concerned with the Bowes' estates on behalf of several beneficiaries whose interests were antagonistic to those of the chapel trustees', they considered it proper for them to give up their trusteeship of the chapel. Their last work for it was to oversee the appointment of the new trustees in 1901, [5] ensuring that in accordance with John Bowes' instructions they were all practising Catholic laymen.[6]

Thus the new Board of Trustees had been in existence for four years by the time the Court of Chancery which administered John Bowes' personal estate for twenty years finally handed over the church legacy on 11 August 1905. £27,000 had been promised by Mr Bowes, but as full payment was not possible, the trustees received £19,430 18s 7p.[7] This reduced sum, they thought, would not provide them with the immediate means of completing the church and presbytery as originally planned: it was better to allow the fund to accumulate for a time. Their view is stated in a printed booklet *Bowes Chapel Trust: Statement and Regulations as to*

*the Management and Control of the Trust* which they issued in 1905.[8]

The exact wording in the booklet reads: 'it would probably be advisable to consider the possibility of accumulating the fund for a limited number of years.' No mention there of any legal problems which might jeopardise their plans. Surely these 'new boys' did not think (as passers-by must have done when they saw the half- finished 'folly') that, like many others before and after him, John Bowes had simply overstretched himself financially? Were they not aware of the long controversy about access to the site? No matter, the museum trustees soon made them aware of it. As far as the latter was concerned, if the church continued on the existing site, the public would have to be allowed access at all times, even after dark. This obviously could not be tolerated as it would jeopardise the security of the museum. In an effort to settle the issue once and for all before the church trustees re-commenced work, the museum authorities quickly took the initiative. They formulated the rather drastic plan to have the existing structure dismantled and moved to another site. To further this they appointed a special committee to negotiate directly with the Catholic trustees 'the sale or otherwise of the existing site and building elsewhere.'[9]

When the new church trustees met together for the first time on 19 December 1905 it was to consider this very proposal. Favourably impressed by the arguments put by the museum committee, they drew up three reasons of their own in support of a change of site. The Trust's Minute Book records them. The first was that the existing site had been chosen for the convenience of Mrs Bowes. As she was now dead, that reason was no longer of any consequence. The second was that it would benefit the Catholics to have their church nearer the centre of town. And the third was that the existing site was frequently affected by the smoke emitted from the chimney of the laundry belonging to the adjoining Barnard Castle School.[10]

It was to be a false dawn. Any hopes of an early settlement were dashed in November 1906 when at their first meeting the church trustees indicated their intention to adhere to the wishes of Mr Bowes after all 'and build the Church on the site given by him.'[11] From this we may possibly deduce that it was a sort of *pietas* which led to say that they 'did not see their way to entertain any proposal to change the site'.[12] Josephine had chosen the site, John Bowes had begun to build the chapel on it. Their wishes could not have been more explicit. The trustees would stand by them, whatever the consequences.

Reverence for the site did not extend to the building however. For at their next meeting a few months later the trustees partly distanced

themselves from Mr Bowes' plans by voting to erect a completely new church. The records do not provide a reason for this change of mind, but in so far as a mere £9,000 was earmarked for the purpose we may guess that it was felt that it would be cheaper to pull down the partially built church and start again from scratch in a smaller way. The trustees aimed high. Heading the list of the architects they approached was Gilbert Scott. Others were Dunn, Hanson and Fenwicke of Newcastle, Charles Walker, Charles Hadfield and Son, and Pugin Powell.[13] We know that the Scott and Walker plans were turned down at the end of the year (1907),[14] and that the search for suitable plans went on for some years. At his own request a Mr B.J. Pattison's name was added to the list of competing architects in 1909.[15] His plans were accepted at the beginning of 1911.[16]

Unhappily, the action taken by the church trustees resurrected the old debate about a right if way through the Park. Again the church trustees insisted on obtaining unrestricted public access to the chapel and presbytery at all times, while the museum flatly refused to 'allow the Park to be left open during the dark hours at the mercy of any passing hooligan.' They demanded the whole area to be fenced in and all gates locked at dusk.[17] The dispute dragged on for several years, during the course of which the museum trustees continued at regular intervals to promote their view that the most sensible way out of the deadlock was for the church trustees to accept an alternative site.[18]

Alarmed by endless delay yet not willing to re-consider their plan to continue on the existing site, [19] the church trustees eventually applied to the Charity Commissioners in June 1913 for consent to take legal proceedings against the museum in respect to the right of way. [20] Having deliberated about the matter for three months, the Commissioners decided not to give a verdict. Instead they offered an opinion. Could the problem not be solved by the surrender of the existing site to the museum and the church take in lieu a larger site to the south-west corner of the park, with a contribution from the museum towards the demolition of the existing building and its re-erection.[21]

The church trustees had expected their view about access to be upheld by the Charity Commissioners. Instead, they had expressed an opinion which on the face of it supported the museum's contention that the way forward was to change the site of the church. Yet they were also putting a new proposal on the table. The recommendation from the Charity Commissioners went beyond anything that the museum had so far proposed. They

were suggesting a definite site, one which featured both unimpeded access and proximity to the town. Its acceptance might even have some material advantage. Despite their initial disappointment, it seemed altogether too good a proposition for the church trustees to ignore. The opinion of the Commissioners, communicated on 4 September 1913, led to what appears to have been a specially convened meeting of the church trust a week later, before which, in accordance with its regulations, the bishop's permission in his capacity as 'Visitor' had been obtained. At this meeting the trustees declared themselves prepared to accept the Commissioners' suggestions with the proviso that the entire cost of rebuilding, including the necessary approach roads and boundary fences, should be borne by the museum. Two voted against the proposal: Messrs Hutchinson and Prior.[22] Legal complexities in inevitable war-time difficulties caused some further delay, but the two parties ultimately reached agreement at the end of 1919 or early in 1920. The agreement was approved by the Commissioners on 10 February 1920.[23]

By this time death and retirement had reduced the number of church trustees to three, John Smith, John McCartan and Wilfrid Gibson. New trustees were appointed early in 1922: Dr Harold Wangle Clark of Barnard Castle, Bernard Smith (son of Charles) also of Barnard Castle, Matthew Barrass of Thornley, Co Durham, Joseph Pickering of Durham, Godfrey Louis Paul Dix of Newcastle upon Tyne, and Oswin John Charlton also of Newcastle.[24] On 26 October they made a full inspection of the sites and resolved to put the agreement reached between themselves and the museum into operation at once.[25]

The museum authorities, to save themselves the task of seeing to the demolition of the existing church, wisely offered to the church trustees a lump sum in lieu[26] which they magnanimously increased from £5,000 to £6,500 after negotiation (the church had asked for £6,000).[27] With the matter settled, the church trustees, perhaps in their haste to get things moving, quite overlooked the fact that Mr Pattison's submission had been formally accepted thirteen years before, and engaged Mr Ellison Fenwicke of the firm Dunn, Hansom and Fenwicke of Newcastle to produce new plans for a 'suitable church to accommodate not less than 350 people, and also for a priest's house with four bedrooms and other suitable accommodation' within a budget of £20,000 for the church and £2,000 for the house.[28] A combination of two plans incorporating suggestions from the trustees themselves was approved on 27 November 1924[29] and accepted by Barnard Castle Urban District Council subject to the surrender of an 8ft strip of land

to allow the widening of Barrack (now Birch) Road, and 40 sq. yds to the south-west in order to round off the corner more satisfactorily.[30] Of the five tenders received, that of Messrs A. Pringle was accepted, the lowest which quoted for the Stainton quarry stone thought to be most in keeping with the character of the museum.[31] It came to £24, 491, nearly £5,000 more than the upper limit which the trustees had set. Nevertheless they reluctantly accepted it when the architect explained to them that there was no way in which the cost could be reduced.[32]

There followed a site meeting on 20 February at which the chairman and secretary of the trust were joined by the new bishop of the diocese, Joseph Thorman, and his advisers, together with Fr Darley, the priest resident at the Ware Street chapel.[33] Obviously time had healed old antagonisms. At the meeting Bishop Thorman limited himself to trying to restore some details left out of the original plan in a cost cutting exercise.[34] For example, 'that with a view to giving better light to the house, it should be built a little further to the north and connected to the church by a corridor.' The suggestions were politely heard but turned down.[35]

At their meeting on 17 July 1926, the first of several to be held at the Bowes Museum, (which reflects another step in the peace process), the architect informed the trustees that he thought it would be possible to have the foundation stone of the new church laid towards the end of September. Accordingly, the secretary wrote to the bishop to ascertain a suitable date.[36] At the same time the bishop's solicitor and his link with the church trustees, pointed out that the occasion should not incur any great expense.[37] To preside at the ceremony on 30 October Bishop Thorman was driven by a car from Gainford where he had stayed overnight with his sister, Mrs E. Wainford. Several priests from the neighbourhood assisted and three of the diocesan Chapter of Canons were present.[38] Yet it was a private occasion which even the Barnard Castle *Teesdale Mercury* failed to report. The chairman and the secretary of the trust seem to have provided the text for the dedication. It reads:

HUIUS ECCLESIAE
BEATAE MARIAE VIRGINIS
MUNIFICENTIA JOANNIS BOWES
ET JOSEPHINAE COMITISSAE
DE MONTALBO UXORIS SUAE
AEDIFICANDAE ET DEDICANDAE
PRIMUM LAPIDEM RITE POSUIT
JOSEPHUS EPISCOPUS

HAGULSTAD. ET NOVOCASTR.
DIE XXX MENSIS OCT. MCMXXVI

The Bishop gave his approval.[39]

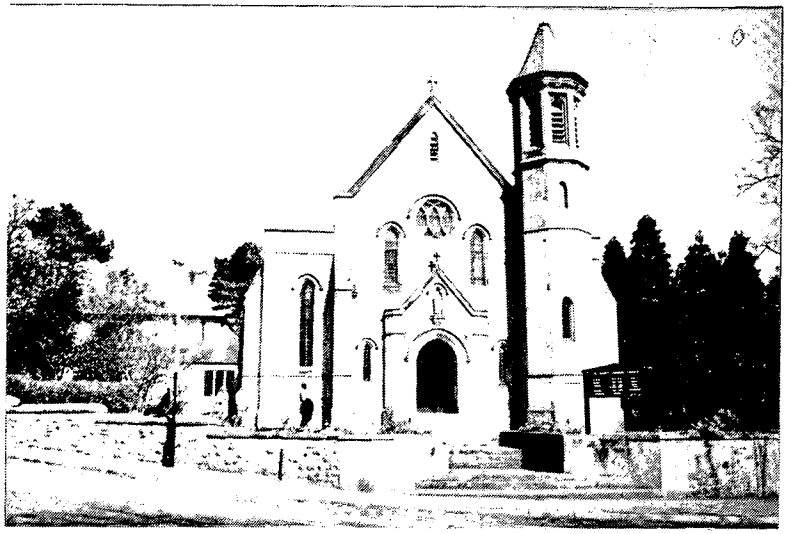
Further economies had to be made as the building work progressed, for it cost an extra £1300 to secure the foundations which needed to go down 15ft in several places.[40] Despite this unexpected turn of events, work progressed so satisfactorily during the course of 1927 that the consecration of the new church was able to be fixed for Saturday 29 September 1928, to be followed by the official opening on Thursday, 4 October.[41]

As the completion date drew near, decisions had to be taken about the furnishings in the Ware Street chapel. A later parish priest of St Mary's, Barnard Castle, who was living close by at Gainford at the time recalls what was brought to the Bowes church and what was left behind. [42] At the head of the list (and the most troublesome to move) was the high altar carved out of solid stone. This found a home in what was at first known as the Sacred Heart chapel in the new church, later rededicated to the English Martyrs. The Lady altar made of oak, a memorial to Fr Darnley who died in 1870 and designed by Mr E.J. Hansom, went into the Lady chapel and was later re-gilded, as was the statue of the Virgin and Child cast by Meyer of Munich. All the sacred vessels, vestments and candlesticks were brought along. The organ, the gift of a former chairman of the Bowes Trust, John Smith, J.P., was taken there too, but re-assembled without urgently necessary repairs being made. It was soon replaced.[43] The benches were considered to be too dilapidated to bother about. They remained at Ware Street until 1931 when they were offered to the new church at Murton, as was the stained glass depicting the crucifixion in the apse window, which trustees and architect declined to use in the memorial church.

There does not seem to have been any particular problem in appointing the first priest to the church, despite past arguments between trustees and the bishop. Perhaps it was to head off any controversy that the bishop's solicitor let it be known that as Fr Bernard Darley was already de facto parish priest in Barnard Castle, in his opinion the trustees of the new church were not required to do anything further.[44] Since they do not seem to have discussed the matter among themselves, we are left to presume that they took the matter no further.

Saturday, 29 September 1928 came along and with it the consecration ceremony. A full report was carried by *The Teesdale Mercury* in its next

edition. 'Beautiful in its simplicity, albeit a lengthy service requiring close attention so that not in the least detail could it lack the least of its emblematic significance.' It was indeed a lengthy service. It began at 9.25a.m., and ended at 12.25p.m., followed immediately by a Low Mass which lasted half an hour. [45] The official opening was a much grander (and hopefully shorter) affair, with ninety priests in attendance in addition to several local worthies and the trustees both of the church and the museum.



*The Bowes Memorial Trust Church and Presbytery occupy a prominent site to the south-west of the Museum which lies behind the trees on the right*

Fr Hugh Pope OP preached an eloquent sermon 'sed parvum quidem ad rem', as one of the visitors remarked.[46] Afterwards, at dinner in the King's Head, as was customary the bishop congratulated all concerned with the building of the new church and presbytery, though rather pointedly he described the church as highly satisfactory but not perfect.[47] Fr Darley humorously described the defects of the design of the presbytery (which were after recognised).[48] Nevertheless he thought he would continue to enjoy life in Barnard Castle. With the younger clergy in mind he announced: 'Barnard Castle is a nice healthy place, with plenty of fresh air, and there is no telling how long I shall last yet.' He died just over a year later.[49]

At last, then, after more than fifty years the Bowes' dream of a Memorial Church had become a reality, an elegant structure which matched the generosity of its founders; a chantry where their names could be remembered as the creators of a cultural oasis in the vast rural area of Teesdale which for centuries had been closely associated with the name of Bowes. Here John and Josephine Bowes were to have their final resting place. With the consent of the Home Office, the Ministry of Health, and Lord Strathmore, the bodies of Mr and Mrs Bowes were removed from Gibside and re-interred in great secrecy outside the back wall of the apse of the church in the early hours of Saturday, 14 July 1928. Present were the Trust's secretary, the architect of the church, and Mr G.E. Hopper, sanitary inspector at Whickham, representing the Ministry of Health. The trustees themselves chose the grey Glencoe granite for the vault and the covering stones.[50] The inscriptions are of the simplest, yet sadly reflecting even in death the differing faiths of the couple:

JOHN BOWES
OF STREATLAM CASTLE
DIED 9 OCTOBER 1885

JOSEPHINE COUNTESS OF
MONTALBO
WIFE OF JOHN BOWES
DIED 9 FEBRUARY 1874
R.I.P.

REMOVED FROM GIBSIDE JULY 1928

In all these negotiations it seems to have been taken for granted that the pair would be re-interred not within the church but outside it.[51]

With the official opening of the church behind them the Board proceeded to tie up a number of loose ends. From the outset they worked closely with Fr Darley, consulting him first of all about what he required for the new presbytery.[52] Now they turned their attention to the terms on which they could best support him. In the light of their discussions with the bishop on the day of the consecration they agreed at their meeting on 4 November that:

> for the present £300 per annum be paid quarterly to the priest. . . intended to cover the personal expenses and maintenance of the priest and his indoor staff as well as rates and upkeep and repairs, decoration etc. to the interior of the Presbytery, its furniture etc. A further sum of £50 to be paid to the priest by similar quarterly payment for altar purposes. The cleaning, heating and lighting of the Church, repairs to it and to the outside of the Presbytery and the keeping of the grounds to be paid for by the trustees out of the balance of the income.[53]

In the friendly atmosphere which now prevailed the trustees were able to approach Mr Dalgano, head gardener at the museum, with a view to getting an estimate for the landscaping of the church grounds. It amounted to £10 10s 6d and was tabled at their meeting on 20 December.[54] The grounds were put in order, but whether Mr Dalgano was responsible for the work the records do not tell us.

Of all the tying together of loose ends in the days following the opening of the church none was more important than the formulation of a procedure for the presentation and appointment of future priests to the parish. The trustees, as I have already observed, seemed to be prepared to accept Fr Darley as the de facto parish priest in 1928. This ad hoc arrangement also suited Bishop Thorman, but he needed to provide for the future. Within a month he wrote directly to the chairman of the trust asking whether any kind of agreement had been reached on the matter. A letter of the 9 November 1928 from his solicitor tells us as much:

> I was under the impression that copies of the enclosed letters had been sent to you, but I understand from Mr Smith that, though he provided them, you have not had them. I don't know that they help very much to solve the doubt as to whether Dr Chadwick knew and approved of Mr Bowes' regulations about the RC church, but I think at any rate, you ought to see them. [55]

When the bishop read the letters in question some days later, he agreed with Mr Charlton that they were 'inconclusive'. The contents did not resolve his doubt about Bishop Chadwick's knowledge of and consent to Mr Bowes' regulations.[56] That, to say the least, is rather surprising, for the surviving official correspondence of the years 1874-5 (which I examined in detail in my previous article) makes it perfectly plain that Bishop Chadwick was somewhat tardily given sight of the trust deed, the terms of which, affecting the presentation and appointment of the priest, he could not in conscience accept. Are we to conclude from this that the letters sent to Bishop Thorman by the chairman of the trust were different to those at present in the episcopal archives? If so, they do not seem to have survived.

With the conflicting requirements of civil and church law still to be reconciled, the bishop's solicitor produced a formula which he thought might help for the future:

> I am sure that the present trustees, at any rate, would be only too glad to think that they would have no responsibility as the appointment of a parish priest. As all the trustees must be Catholics, it is a little difficult to imagine that any future trustees would attempt to exercise any right that the Civil Law might

give them under the will and it seems to me that, even if they did, such an attempt would be bound to be futile, as by another clause, the Bishop's veto can nullify any appointment.[57]

We know that the presentation and appointment of priests to Barnard Castle since the death of Fr Darley in 1929 has proceeded smoothly, despite the contradictory demands of canon and civil law. No doubt this has been due largely to the excellent understanding between successive trustees and bishops. Nevertheless, in recent years at least, the bishop of the diocese has always written to the trustees prior to the appointment of a new priest to the Bowes Memorial Church in order to prevent any misunderstandings. As an illustration, I offer Bishop Lindsay's comments to the chairman of the Trust in 1986 when he wished to send Fr Anthony Barker to succeed Mgr Kevin Nichols to Barnard Castle:

> You and the other Trustees of the Bowes Memorial Church Trust... have the right in civil law to appoint the parish priest. However, you also have the duty of presenting your candidate for approval to me and I have the right in civil law to make void your appointment.
>
> The law of the Church is quite different. For over seventy years now, (since the introduction of the Code of Canon Law in 1918?) the most that patrons like your Trust could do was to present a candidate for the Bishop's appointment.
>
> There have been further developments since the II Vatican Council. The Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, 28 October 1965, stated that 'in order to allot the sacred ministries more suitably among the priests, the Bishop must have the requisite liberty of making appointments to ministries and benefices. All rights and privileges which in any way restrict that liberty should accordingly be abrogated.'
>
> Pope Paul VI provided for this on 6 August 1966 in Motu Proprio Ecclesiae Sanctae, and this new understanding is contained in the 1983 revised Code of Canon Law.

After referring to the retirement of Fr Ernest Plowman in 1981 the bishop continues:

> I did then what I propose to do now: I wrote to each of the Trustees to say whom I had in mind to appoint. I hoped in this way to avoid any misunderstandings and enable the Trustees to fulfill their duties in Civil Law.[58]

There are other Trust Churches and Chapels elsewhere in the country, as for example Weld Chapel in Dorset. But the Bowes Memorial Trust Church is, as far as I know, unique in the diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. Its history needs to be better known and appreciated.[59]

APPENDIX 1: BOWES MEMORIAL CHURCH TRUST

*Chairmen*
1905-1918 John Smith
1918-1946 Charles James Smith
1946-1963 Bernard Smith
1963-1985 Sir William Howard Lawson
1985-1988 Wilfrid Humble Gibson
1988- Dominic Scarre Rutter

*Secretaries*
1905 -1923 Wilfrid Gibson
1923-1941 Oswin John Charlton
1941-1946 Wilfrid Humble Gibson
1946-1985 John Cuthbert Widdrington Riddell
1985-1988 Robert Henry Morton
1988-1990 Bryan Crossling
1990- Kevin Joseph O'Neill

*Treasurers*
1905-1930 Wilfrid Gibson
1930-1985 Willrid Humble Gibson
1985- Anthony Gair Gibson

APPENDIX 2: PRIESTS AT BARNARD CASTLE ( FROM RSM)

1845-1870 William Allen
1870-1873 Robert Franklin
1870-1877 William Gillow
1877 James Farrell (did not take up appointment)
1877-1878 Edmund Barnett
1878-1904 James Shea
1904-1929 Bernard Darley
1929-1948 Thomas H. Knuckey
1949-1981 Ernest Plowman
1981-1986 Kevin Nichols
1986- Anthony Barker

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| HNDA | Archive of the diocese of Hexham and Newcastle |
| TMB | Minute Book of meetings of the Bowes Memorial Church Trust |
| RSM | Records of St Mary's, Barnard Castle. (1926-67) |

NOTES

1. *Northern Catholic History* no. 34 (1993) pp. 46-57 In compiling this present article I need to acknowledge the assistance of Mr Robin Gard, the diocesan archivist, Mr Dominic Rutter, chairman of the Trust, Mr Tony Gibson its treasurer, and Fr Anthony Barker, priest at Barnard Castle.
2. HNDA Old Filing Series, 118 no. 7a
3. Ibid. no. 7b, 21 September 1900
4. Ibid no. 7c. The other names suggested by the bishop were Mr Boddy, Mr Benjamin, Geo Ullathorne Esq. all of Barnard Castle, T Blenkinsop Esq. of Smallways near Newsham, Yorks, W. Robinson Esq. of Hutton Caldwell, Major Chichester Constable of Burton Constable (who owned estates in North Yorks including Wycliffe), and Geo Webster Esq. a solicitor in Darlington. Additional names in the other hand were John Liddell of Prudhoe Hall, George Plant of Coniscliffe, and the Hon Bernard Constable Maxwell.
5. Printed Regulations, p.2. William Smith, John's father (1812-1897) founded an important engineering firm in the town which still exists. Cf. Norma L. Smith, *William Smith and Sons, Barnard Castle, A Family Business*, The Teesdale Mercury Ltd, 1991.
6. Ibid. p.7 no. 23: 'No person shall hereafter be appointed a Trustee, unless at the time of his appointment, he shall profess the Roman Catholic religion, and he shall be a layman.'
7. By his will dated 1 June 1878 John Bowes bequeathed the trustees £35,000, but having already spent £8,000 on the partial building of the chapel up to 1877 he understandably reduced the sum to £27,000 in the May of 1881. (Printed Regulations, 1905, p.1).
8. Ibid.p.3.
9. TMB p.9.
10. Ibid. p.12.
11. Ibid. p.14.
12. A message evidently passed to the museum trustees, cf. C.E. Hardy, *John Bowes and the Bowes Museum*,4th printing, 1989, p.274.
13. TMB pp. 16-1?
14. Ibid. p. 23, 12 December 1907.
15. Ibid. p. 29, 26 August 1909.
16. Ibid. p.33, 26 January 1911.
17. Hardy, op. cit. p.273
18. E.g. their letter of 29 October 1907 quoted in TMB p.24.
19. At two meetings in 1907, one in 1909, one in 1911, two in 1912 and one in 1913.
20. TMB p.39.
21. Ibid. p.41.

22. Ibid. Two months later the treasurer of the Trust, Wilfrid Gibson, still seemed to be worried about the possibility of violating Mrs Bowes wishes. 'She intended to live in what is now the museum and desired to have the church close to her dwelling for her own convenience.' Letter to Bishop Collins, 22 November, 1913. HNDA Old Filing Series 118 no. 9.

23. Ibid. p. 64, indicated at meeting of 26 October 1922.

24. Ibid. p.62. Of the trustees appointed in 1901 Thomas Atkinson retired in October 1912 before he emigrated to Australia, Edward Leadbitter Smith died in February 1917, John Smith at the end of August 1918, Peter Prior at the beginning of 1919, James Taylor Smith in April 1920 and John Thomas Hutchinson in March 1921.

25. TMB p.65.

26. Ibid. p.71, 12 March 1924.

27. Ibid. p. 79, 11 September 1924.

28. Ibid. p.82. In 1925 Mr Pattison claimed payment for his plans when they were put aside in favour of others. The trustees rejected his claim on the grounds that they had not commissioned them. TMB, p.90.

29. Ibid. p.85.

30. Ibid. p. 88, 27 may 1925 and p.110, 29 October 1927.

31. Ibid. pp. 89-90.

32. Ibid. p. 95, 4 September 1925.

33. Reported at meeting of 27 May 1936. TMB p.90.

34. Ibid. p. 95, 4 September 1925.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid. p.97.

37. HNDA Old Filing Series 118 no. 10a.

38. TMB pp. 101 and 104; RSM p.4.

39. Ibid. pp.97 and 100.

40. Ibid. p. 105, 11 February 1927. The Trust's treasurer, Wilfrid Gibson of Hexham, wrote to the bishop a week later saying that it was impossible for the Trust to provide extra room in the house. 'We have had to cut out a good many things we contemplated doing.' HNDA Old Filing Series 118 no. 10b.

    One of the economies in the church was the replacement of Mr Gilbertson's design for an altar costing £800 by Fenwicke's own design at £500. TMB p. 114.

    About Fenwicke, Rev William Smith of Sunderland wrote to the bishop: '(He) seems to be running the show on his own.' HNDA Old Filing Series 118 no. 10c.

    The means of lighting in the church was a problem. Electricity had not yet reached Barnard Castle. Gas was therefore installed (TMB p. 110) but replaced by electricity in 1932 at a cost of £190 (Ibid. p.158).

41. TMB p. 119, 1 September 1928.

42. RSM pp. 3, 10-12, 18. Though not mentioned, the sanctuary lamp may also have been

brought to the new St Mary's. It is mentioned in Rev William Smith's letter (fn 40)

43. Ibid. pp. 19-20
44. TMB p. 128
45. *Teesdale Mercury*, Wednesday 10 October; RSM pp. 6-10.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid. pp. 8-10.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid. He had been at Barnard Castle since 1904.
50. TMB pp. 114-19. Also Hardy, op. cit. pp. 274-5.
51. This corrects the view which I expressed at the close of my previous article.
52. TMB p. 122, 27 September 1928. His successor Fr Knuckey was also asked about his needs. Ibid. 133, 22 March 1929. The priests did not always get what they requested!
53. Ibid. pp. 124-5 and p. 122. The £50 or the altar purposes was soon reduced to £25.
54. Ibid. p. 128.
55. HNDA Old Filing Series 1198 no. 10h. He may have already told the bishop that there was little chance of being able to produce proof of Bishop Chadwick's consent. Ibid. no. 10g (undated).
56. Charlton's letter of 9 November (previous footnote) has been annotated by the bishop; 'If not agreed, cannot now. . . If then agreed, must ask Rome.'
57. Ibid. no. 10i, letter of Mr Charlton dated 17 November. This final reference to Mr Charlton gives us the chance to recognise Mr Charlton's 'gratuitous' work for the new church. He signally failed to get any recognition at the celebratory dinner following its opening. Ibid. no. 10f, a letter to the bishop 5 October 1928.
58. Bowes Chapel Trust, loose papers.
59. At the end of this long investigation I am left wondering whether Trust churches might not be a way of solving some of our present difficulties. There is a growing shortage of priests. Would the laity's legal control of the temporalities of a church not let them exercise their 'rights', leaving the clergy time to concentrate on their priorities? We all know that the Church has fought long and hard against *eigenkirchen* and the rights of lay patronage. But these articles must have made it abundantly clear that Trust churches are an altogether different species, and they can work very well if they are properly endowed. It is a tribute to the lay trustees of the Bowes Memorial Church that they have done so much with so little funding. It is only recently that they have felt it necessary to appeal for donations, gifts, covenants and legacies. We wish them success in their quest.

## A TALE OF TWO CHURCHES

**Frank McCombie**

The Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church at the west end of New Bridge Street, Newcastle, was a phenomenon lasting some fifty years in the nineteenth century. One of John Dobson's town churches, it was a handsome building, with an interesting if brief history. Its two spires were imposing features, and it is about the fate of those spires and of the rest of the church that we shall be concerned in what follows: for most of it was not demolished, but dismantled, and went into the making of another church, in Byker.[1]

There has long circulated a rumour which it would be as well to dispose of at once. This rumour states that the spires of St Charles' Roman Catholic Church in Gosforth came from a Nonconformist church in New Bridge Street. Parishioners of St Charles', as late as the 1970s, were being told that the twin spires of the church had originally adorned the Church of Divine Unity, which never had spires, and which stood exactly as it was originally built until it was demolished in 1939.

As recently as 1985, John Airey's notes to *Gosforth 1913*, in the series of old Ordnance Survey maps published as 'The Godfrey Edition', spoke of 'the newly-completed Roman Catholic Church, resplendent with the twin spires removed from the Presbyterian Chapel in New Bridge Street, Newcastle.' Airey was at least correct about which of the New Bridge Street churches had twin spires, but was otherwise incorrect.

The new Roman Catholic Church which was opened on 3 December 1911 was designed by Charles J. Menart, a Belgian architect practising in West George Street, Glasgow, in the early decades of the century. He designed at least two notable Glasgow churches in the Roman High Renaissance style popular in the city in the 1900s, especially with Roman Catholics.[2] His drawings for St Charles', Gosforth, are dated 29 March 1910.[3] Its towers and spires are as seen on the present structure, and have very little in common with those of the Trinity Church in New Bridge Street. The towers, like the rest of the church, are built of rock-faced snecked sandstone, a style popular from the late nineteenth century, but in the third stage are of coursed squared sandstone: the Trinity Church was built of coursed sandstone throughout. The third stage of the towers of St Charles' are square in plan, where this level of the Trinity Church towers

is octagonal. The spires are octagonal in both, but those of St Charles' are much more slender, and relieved with gabled lucarnes. The incidental similarities seem too trivial to account for the rumour which, in its scarcely more tenable form, suggests that the material of the Trinity towers may have been re-constructed by W.C. Fleck and Co., the contractors, having somehow been preserved for the purpose for some fourteen years. In fact, we can now put this rumour entirely to one side, for those who find the evidence thus far adduced still unconvincing have to take the provenance of St Lawrence's Roman Catholic Church, Byker, into account.

In 1895, Fr Benedick A. Tickell, O.P., Prior of St Dominic's, sought some way of providing a permanent church in Byker, to replace the school-cum-chapel that had served the Dominican mission there since 1884. From Sir John Lawson of Brough he secured a site in Bamborough Street, comprising 666 square yards. The cost was £221.12s.3d; this sum represented a reduction of £114.5s.6d on the going rate because the site was to be used for the building of a church. The Lawson estate forbore to recoup the interest, of £31.0s.6d, on the amount paid to the Corporation for road-making;[4] and Sir John also allowed the cost to stand as a mortgage at 4%. The English Province of the Dominican Order undertook to pay this interest on 2 October 1895, and the site was possessed on 21 October. It lay at the east end of Felton Street, between the south side of the street and its back lane (allowing a breadth of no more than 5Oft), with a frontage on Bamborough Street. Fr Tickell then began to look about for materials to build the new church, or for some abandoned church which could be dismantled and re-erected on the new site. There was a remarkably skilled team of parishioners who, under professional direction, were able to assist with the work.[5]

Two possibilities, successively, suggested themselves. In 1893, the 'Old' John Knox Church in West Clayton Street had been abandoned. This had been the successor to the Groat Market Church (actually behind Pudding Chare), the Meeting House of the oldest surviving Presbyterian congregation in Newcastle. What was then the 'New' John Knox Church, another of John Dobson's designs, was opened by Dr Bonar of Kelso in 1858,[6] with its entrance in Bewick Street and its western wall on the relatively new West Clayton Street. It had a tower at the corner of the two streets, but the spire that was intended to surmount it was never built, for lack of funds.[7] In 1893, when the minister was the saintly Alexander Phimister, 'the congregation deemed it advisable to move westward', and

since the site was sold to Joseph Cowen, proprietor and editor of the *Newcastle Chronicle*, for £10,000, the congregation was able to purchase a new site in Elswick, where building was 'immediately commenced'. The foundation stone of this latest 'New' John Knox Church was laid on 29 November 1894.[8] Joseph Cowen wished to develop the old site at once, and engaged the firm of Oliver and Leeson, architects, of 30 Mosley Street: things did not go smoothly, however, and the proposals of February 1894 were rejected by the Council; those of April 1894 somehow fell into abeyance. Meanwhile, the old church stood empty, and presumably Fr Tickell approached the architects to see what chance there might be of purchasing the building for re-erection in Byker, for there is a letter from Oliver and Leeson in the Dominican archive, dated 21 January 1896, replying 'with reference to the John Knox Church'. It is suggested that an offer of £250 for 'the whole of the old material would be accepted', and that 'you could then proceed at once to take the Church down, and remove them [*sic*] to Byker forthwith. I am not exactly sure, but I think the matter to a certain extent out of Mr. Cowen's hands now.' Cowen's plans had come to nothing; perhaps he was ill besides (he died in 1900), but in any case the site was by this time on the point of being sold to W. and J. Suttie, of Neville Street, who had Oliver and Leeson draw up plans for the Clarendon Hotel. Clearly, the 'Old' John Knox Church was still standing at the beginning of 1896, but Fr Tickell was over-sanguine about its adaptability to the Bamborough Street site. Only with radical alterations could this church be re-erected at Byker: in length it was rather short at 70ft 10ins (21.59m), while its width was excessive at 56ft 10ins (17.32m).[9] The architect engaged by Fr Tickell was W. Lister Newcombe, of 89 Pilgrim Street, and presumably it was on his advice that this particular project was abandoned, probably because his attention had been drawn to a more feasible alternative.

The Holy Trinity Church was another work of John Dobson. One of a series of unfortunate disagreements among members of the several Presbyterian congregations in nineteenth-century Newcastle had led to the resignation of the Rev. William Blackwood, minister of the Caledonian Church in Argyll Street. He was a very fine man and a highly effective preacher, and he was urged by 390 of his congregation not to accept any of the ministries which were immediately offered to him, but instead to set up a separate congregation. This he did, and for a short time these Memorialists, as they were called, worshipped in the Long Room in the Arcade, and then for some years in the Music Hall in Nelson Street.[10] However, they had

money, enough to purchase the New Bridge Street site, even at the record rate of £1 per square yard. On 11 November 1846, the Rt. Hon. Fox Maule (later Lord Panmure) laid the foundation stone of the new church: it was officially opened on 8 October 1847.[11] From the first, the church thrived, being very fortunate in the ministers who succeeded the Rev. Blackwood, who went to the United States in 1850. By 1894, when the minister was Dr Nathanael A. Ross, the Trinity Church had a larger congregation than any of the eight other Presbyterian churches in the city, and raised larger collections.[12] The church, however, was too small, and the congregation felt that they could afford something bigger and perhaps better. A site was bought in Northumberland Road, and the New Trinity Church was opened on 24 May 1886.[13] It is now the Trinity Building of the University of Northumbria at Newcastle.

There is not much pictorial evidence of the Old Trinity Church surviving. There is a distant photograph of the west end of New Bridge Street taken from a point near the old Lying-In Hospital; it gives a fair impression of the towers and spires, and a faint impression of the rest of the south end: the church was oriented north-south so as to have the entrance front on New Bridge Street. There is an even less helpful photograph taken from Blackett Street, which does little more than confirm the fact that the church had spires and stood at the east end of the present Pearl Assurance development.[14]

There are also two artistic impressions of the church, one of them an unsigned lithograph in the Laing Art Gallery's collection. This is really more concerned to show Dobson's Church of Divine Unity (1853), but it shows about three-quarters of the south end of the Trinity Church, not in total accuracy.[15] The other, of about 1850, is an etching by J. Christie after a painting by John Storey, showing the whole of the Trinity Church from the south-west. (See *Figure 1.*)[16] Between them artist and engraver have contrived to narrow the entrance front and to over-elaborate the spires; the transept we can see has been reduced in height and given the wrong lights. (See *Figure 2.*) This is revealed by the drawings made by William Hope, architect, of 40 Westgate Road, for Messrs. William Pritchard and Co., the new owners of the site, and dated 12 September 1896. These show two long lancet windows in the same style as those in the nave, and above them two smaller windows lighting the gallery. These drawings also show that the north end of the church was lit by three lancet windows set side by side in the middle of the north wall.[17]

*Figure 1.* Christie's engraving, after John Storey (c.1850).

The church, in a familiar Presbyterian style, had galleries round three sides, with the organ loft probably in the shallow space beyond the transepts at the north end. The vestibule was considerable, the nave relatively short. The dimensions relevant in this article were as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Length in feet: | |
| overall | 80 |
| of nave through crossing | 56 |
| to transepts from front | 50.4 |
| to transepts from vestibule | 36.8 |
| Depth of vestibule | 13.6 |
| Width: | |
| of entrance front | 49.4 |
| of nave | 44.4 |
| at transepts | 60 |
| Height: | |
| of nave | 46.6 |
| of transepts | 44.4 |

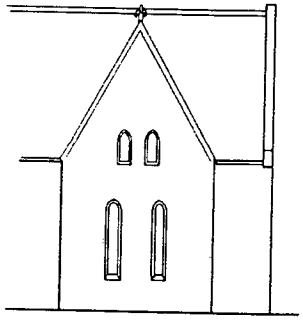


*Figure 2.* The transept lights as recorded by Hope's drawings.

So, although the Trinity Church was not too long for the Bamborough Street site in Byker, at the transepts it was ten feet too broad. Pritchard and Co. were, however, projecting a new building on the New Bridge Street site which, at that stage, was to include several shops and a restaurant; the transepts and northern end of the church, it was thought, would provide useful warehouse space, split into four storeys and the basement.[18] It seems very probable that this part of the building was not offered to Fr Tickell, and in fact what he bought was the nave, the vestibule, and the towers. The Trinity Church was dismantled in February 1897,[19] and re-erected in Byker; but for some reason which now seems entirely mysterious, he took only one of the spires, the other being 'secured for St. Anthony's Walker',[20] where if it were ever received, it certainly was never erected. The Parish Diary of St Anthony's, which may have recorded what actually was done with the other spire, has unfortunately not survived.

W. Lister Newcombe had to make some adjustments when the church was re-cast as St Lawrence's, but by and large he remained commendably faithful to the original Dobson conception. Re-erecting precisely a building that had been constructed of coursed masonry could not be thought an economical project even if there were no alterations to make. By 1897, the vogue was in any case for snecked rock-faced masonry, with ashlar dressings. The coursed and smooth facings can now be seen only in the blind lancets over the entrance and in the third stage of the one remaining tower. There were twelve houses on the block in Felton Street, and the church was oriented west-east so that the faithfully preserved entrance frontage stood on Bamborough Street. The loss of part of the south tower was made good with a minimum of fuss. Newcombe extended the nave by nearly 10ft, to 48. 8ft, and in doing so he added an extra buttress and an extra window on each side, exactly in the style of the rest; in fact, the weathering of the hood moulds of these windows suggests that they were originally two of the three in the north wall of the Trinity Church, a suggestion supported by the fact that Hope's amended drawings of October 1896 show that the intention was to remove these windows in converting the remains of the church into a multi-storey warehouse.

Newcombe's extension of the nave did not altogether compensate for the loss of accommodation at the crossing, but the design of a Roman Catholic church called for a chancel, which is not required in the Presbyterian tradition. Newcombe designed a simple sanctuary, with a much lower roof, and with twin cross-gabled vestries, the whole extending to fill

the 50ft of breadth available. The sanctuary, which is lit by a single trefoil window set high enough to clear the building which originally adjoined it, is just over 20ft deep, and the overall length of the church is 82.8ft. (See *Figure 3.*)

Between the end of the chancel and the last of the houses there was space in which to build a small school: it later became the Catholic Social Club.[21] The west end of St Lawrence's, as it is now seen, terminates in rubble walls, that of the sanctuary having been a party wall with the school: the placing of two interconnecting doors can still be identified. If, however, the west end of the church has rather a makeshift look, Dobson's entrance and nave are preserved in most of their elegance. There was clearly some difficulty with the door, and with the internal pillars supporting the gallery, but in the main the transfer was a success. The outside, despite the loss of one spire, and despite its slightly lop-sided appearance, is still impressive, and the inside still preserves much of the original Presbyterian character.

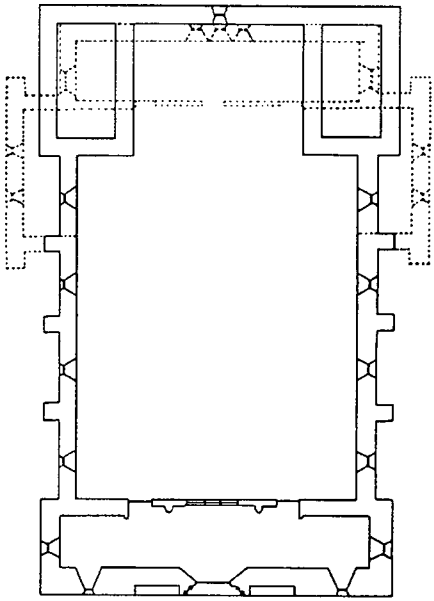


***Figure 3.*** **The ground plan of St Lawrence's Church, showing its relationship to that of the Old Trinity Church**

The surviving spire is demonstrably one of those belonging to the original church in New Bridge Street, and no one at St Lawrence's has ever had any doubt of it. The rumour about the provenance of St Charles' spires seems never to have reached as far as Byker, but to have confined itself to other areas of the city. St Lawrence's Church, formerly the Holy Trinity Church, now lies just within the Byker Wall, into which the new presbytery is built. It is an experience of considerable aesthetic pleasure to walk

through the archway at the eastern end of the Wall and to come upon this still handsome church, looking as comfortable in its modern environs as it could have done during its fifty years in New Bridge Street.[22]

NOTES

1. I have to thank the staff of Tyne and Wear Archives and the staff of Newcastle City Libraries for their helpful co-operation in the researching of this article.
2. Elizabeth Williamson, Anne Riches, and Malcolm Higgs, *Glasgow*, 'The Buildings of Scotland' (1990); p.61 *et passim.*
3. Tyne and Wear Archives: accession no. UD/GO/82/1599.
4. From a letter to Fr Benedict Tickell from W. Lister Newcombe, dated 21 June 1895. I am grateful to Fr Bede Bailey, O.P., for these and other details.
5. Antony Archer, O.P., *St. Dominic's Parish, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1873-1973: A History from the point of view of the Parishioners* (n.d.); p.14.
6. Richard Simpson Robson, *Presbytery in Newcastle-on-Tyne: From the Reformation till the Revolution [and] From the Revolution to the Present Day* (n.d.); p.147. [The book is an amalgam without benefit of consistent pagination, but its interest is considerable.]
7. There is a photograph of this church in Geoff Phillips, *Newcastle Past and Present* (1990); p.18.
8. Report of the Presbyterian Synod of Newcastle, 1895 [a collection of newspaper and other clippings, bound in a volume held in the Local Studies Collection of Newcastle City Libraries]. Presumably, there had been some delay in securing the site.
9. Tyne and Wear Archives: accession no. T.186/16052.
10. John Black, 'Notes on Presbyterian Churches in Northumberland and Durham: transcribed from the John Black manuscripts and other sources' (1975); p.109. [This is a typescript of great usefulness but uneven in quality.]
11. Robson, p.128; Black, p.109.
12. Report of the Synod of 1895.
13. *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, 13 February 1897.
14. Both photographs are included by Phillips; pp.72 and 70.
15. This illustration may be seen in Tom Faulkner and Andrew Greg, *John Dobson, Newcastle Architect, 1787-1865* (1987); p.59.
16. I am grateful to Mr Charles Fleming for making this illustration available to me from his private collection.
17. Tyne and Wear Archives: accession no. T.186/17142.
18. *Ibid.*.
19. *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, 13 February 1897.
20. Archer, p.14.
21. 2nd ed. O.S. *Tyneside*, Sheet 12: surveyed 1858, rev. 1894-1895 (1898); [and] re. of 1913, *Northumberland*, Sheet (new series) NXCV (1916).
22. My final thanks go to Fr Ted Featherstone for giving me a guided tour of St Lawrence's Church, and for submitting himself to a barrage of questions; and to my wife, whose expertise has been invaluable to me, and whose patience has been exemplary. Any errors remaining are entirely mine.

## A VICTORIAN FAMILY

### Jerome Hanratty

The facing photograph taken at North Shields in 1891, shows the extended family of Patrick and Frances Kelly. Their history is one example of the positive assimilation of immigrants into the North East in the nineteenth century.

In 1847, when just a youth of 17, Patrick Kelly came over from Roscommon to settle in North Shields as part of the fall-out of the potato famine in Ireland. Here he served his time as a boot and shoe maker before marrying a local girl, Frances Davies, in 1850. Frances, also born in 1830, was a native of Church Way, North Shields. Her father, John, was a seaman and her mother, Lucy, a member of the Purves family, fisherfolk of Eyemouth in Berwickshire. John Davies had been an early union activist, spending six weeks in prison for, picketing, during a strike on the Tyne against ships sailing with blackleg crews. Later, he spent some time on whaling ships in the Arctic, and was drowned in 1881 when his Shields brig foundered in the Moray Firth. Frances's grandmother, also called Frances Davies, had acted as sacristan for Fr James Worswick when he celebrated Mass for the first time in North Shields, in an upper room at the corner of West Percy Street and Bedford Street. She later became his housekeeper at St Andrew's, Newcastle.

After a short spell in the United States, Patrick Kelly set up house in 40 Nelson Street, proceeded to father fourteen children (ten of whom appear in the photograph) and opened a boot and shoe shop in Bell Street. Over the years his retailing ventures expanded and at his peak he owned six shops and employed ten men in making sea boots and deck boots. A pillar of the local church (he was president of the Brotherhood of St Vincent de Paul), he retired from business in 1887 and died on St Patrick's Day, 1893, aged 63.

Today, a block of offices, a Catholic Social Club, and the car park of a doctors' surgery occupy what used to be Nelson Street. Around, however, are the neat pilastered lines of early Victorian terraces that Patrick Kelly would have known; and across the road is the new parish church of St Cuthbert, replacing the old St Cuthbert's in Bedford Street, itself the successor of the 'upper room', and the site now of a cut price store.

*Back-row* : W. Cunningham, J. Scarr, Jim Kelly, Harry Kelly, Nelly English, Paul Kelly, J. Short, J. Daly, M. Brennan.
*Sitting* : Mary Jane Cunningham, Margaret Scarr, E. Kelly, Patrick Kelly, Frances Kelly, Lucy Short, Alice Daly, Sally Brennan.
*Front-row*: Winifred Kelly, Fanny Short (the two older children), Edie Cunningham, Nelly English (baby), and Cissie Brennan (baby).
*Family members absent*:
Jack Kelly (at sea), A. English (at sea), Frances Kelly (Sr Catherine), Teresa Kelly, and Tom Kelly (dec'd).

And what of the descendants of all those who faced the camera in 1891? Many are spread all over the country and abroad and, true to tradition, the family has supplied many priests and nuns, including Fr Godfrey Bryce of St Michael's, Esh Laude, Fr Raymond McMullen, for many years a missioner in the Philippines, and Fr Joseph Scarr, former parish priest of St Edward's, Whitley Bay. Michael Campbell, the last Leader of the now-defunct Tyne and Wear County Council, is married into a Jarrow branch of the family, and Francis Williams, of the Williams motor racing firm, is a grandson of Lucy, the eldest daughter (seated of her mother's left).

But there is better known scion. Does the face of the lady third from the left have a familiar look? She married the eldest son, James, who stands behind her. They had forty-two grandchildren, the youngest of whom was also called James, and whose face has appeared regularly on our TV screens over many years, and so in this photograph we see the North Shields origins of Sir Jimmy Saville, O.B.E.

Notes cont'd from p.20

29. Caraman, *Henry Garnet*, p.423.
30. *Troubles*, III, p.116; Epist. Gen. Angl., 8 July 1606.
31. G. Davies, *The Early Stuarts* (Oxford, 2nd edn. 1959), p.207.
32. *Troubles*, III, p.116.
33. Stonyhurst MSS. Anglia, A, III, no.71. Part of this (with commentary) is translated in (Tierney) Dodd, IV, App. cxxxvii; Archivum Romanurn S.J. Angl. 37, ff.309, 313, 330, 331.
34. Foley, *Records*, VII, 2, pp.978ff.
35. More, 345, 348; *Troubles*, III, p.116.
36. CSP. Dom. Jac. I, 1611-18, vol.65, no.11.
37. M.Chambers, *The Life of Mary Ward* (ed. Coleridge, London 1882), I, pp.91-3.
38. Epist. Gen. Angl. 28 March 1609.
39. According to Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigiensis*, he died in Yorkshire.
40. More, p.350.
41. Caraman, *Henry Garnet*, p.96.
42. A.Jessopp, *One Generation of a Norfolk House* (3rd edn. London 1913), p.267.

## PROGRAMME 1994 — 1995

*All lectures will be given in St Mary's Cathedral Centre*
*Clayton Street West, Newcastle upon Tyne, on Wednesdays, at 7.00 p.m.*

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|---|---|
| 5 October 1994 | Mass followed by AGM and Quiz. |
| 2 November 1994 | The Annual Fr Nicholson Memorial Lecture.<br>Dr Leo Gooch: *Catholic Emancipation in Northumberland.* |
| 7 December 1994 | Dr Jan Rhodes: *'A manifest badge or token of the Romaine Religion': the Rosary in the 16th Century.* Illustrated. |
| 1 February 1995 | Hugh Shankland, Esq: *The Story of the Italians in North East England.* |
| 1 March 1995 | Frances Dickinson: *The Radcliffes of Dilston and the 1715 Rising.* |

**Coach Excursions**

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|---|---|
| 17 September 1994 | Norham and Duns. |
| 20 May 1995 | Easby Abbey and Jervaulx Abbey. |
| 24 June 1995 | Wooler, Kirk Newton and Yeavering. |

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