Northern Catholic History

No. 41 2000

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.

OFFICERS 1999/2000

CHAIRMAN	Rev. D. Milburn, D.S.H., 2 Millgate Cottages, Esh, Durham, DH7 9RF Tel: 0191 373 6239
VICE-CHAIRMAN	Mr G. Thornton, 302 Wingrove Road North, Fenham, Newcastle, NE4 9ED Tel: 0191 274 5128
GENERAL SECRETARY	Miss J. McCabe, 47 Langley Terrace, Jarrow, NE32 5DX Tel: 0191 422 0780
PROGRAMME SECRETARY	Mr R. Murphy, Fenham Hall Drive, Newcastle, NE4 9UT Tel/Fax: 0191 273 3698 E-mail: robertamurphy@compuserve.com
TREASURER and MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Mr and Mrs G.Wills, 18 Tanfield Rd, Denton Burn, Newcastle, NE15 7DT Tel: 0191 241 1017
OUTINGS SECRETARY	Position vacant at present
EDITOR	R.M. Gard, 21 Larchwood Avenue, Wideopen, Newcastle, NE13 6PY. Tel: 0191 236 6043
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	Officers (as above), Miss J. O'Callaghan, Miss E. Swallow.
Annual Subscription	£6.00 or £10.00 (Joint), with *Northern Catholic History*

NORTHERN CATHOLIC HISTORY

Published yearly (in May) £5.00 (U.K.), £5.50 (Overseas), incl. postage.

Copies of Nos. 10-40 available from Mr Gard (above) at reduced rates.

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Articles and enquiries welcomed by the Editor.

ISSN 0307—4455

Society internet web-site: www. catholic-history. org.uk/nechs

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NORTH EAST CATHOLIC HISTORY SOCIETY

It is gratifying to note that on entering the 21st century and after twenty-six years the Society retains the support of well over one hundred members and, hopefully, the Society's internet web-site, maintained by Bob and Cecily Murphy, will enlist new members and widen the circulation of Northern Catholic History.

The 1999/2000 Season began with the annual Mass for deceased members at St Andrew's on 1st September, followed by the AGM at which Fr David Milburn, our chairman, reported on the previous year's activities and thanked the officers for their devoted work. There were two changes of officers: to ensure continuity in the chair, should bad weather or other reasons prevent Fr Milburn from attending meetings, George Thornton was elected vice-chairman, and the resignation of Anne Welsh left a vacancy of Outings Secretary, which is still to be filled.

The September outing to Newminster Abbey and Longhorsley (described herein) and the three pre-Christmas lectures, by Dr Leo Gooch on John Lumley, Fr Denis Cleary on Luigi Gentili, and by George Thornton on Celts, Columba and Iona, given at the Irish Centre, were well attended, and perhaps the intriguingly entitled talks in February and March, by Robin Gard on Virginia Crawford and by Fr Peter Phillips on Biblemongers, will be likewise popular. The Season then ends with the two Summer outings, to York in May and to Hesleyside and Bellingham in June.

The authors of the articles in this edition are all, except one, regular and faithful contributors and their subjects span the centuries and cover much of the North, reflecting the editorial objectives of the periodical. The outings enable our chairman and vice-chairman to discourse on aspects of medieval history. Then Dr Leo Gooch and Fr Geoffrey Holt present biographies of two very contrasting recusants of the penal years, the Elizabethan gentleman conspirator and collector, John Lumley, and the plebeian martyr priest, Blessed Ralph Corby. The later 17th century is represented by a description of Catholic life in Newcastle in the reign of James II by the eminent 19th century local historian, Richard Welford, and by Abbot Geoffrey Scott's illuminating biography of the Tynedale Catholic apologist, Thomas Ward. A talk to the Society some years ago by the honorary editor on Fr Ignatius Spencer then supplies substantial 19th century ballast to the booklet, and is followed by Dr James Hagerty's outline history of St Bede's Grammar School, Bradford, which concentrates on the early 20th century and also fulfils our wider northern coverage.

All these contributors are warmly thanked and it is hoped that their example will inspire others to research the lives and times of our forebears who preserved the Faith for us today, articles on medieval and on 20th century topics being especially welcomed. One or two articles are promised but, otherwise, the cupboard is bare at the moment! This is, however, the usual situation in January, but the Good Lord always provides, for which, and for the devoted work of our printers, the sisters of Darlington Carmel, and for the loyal support of all members, a heartfelt Deo gratias.

Robin Gard Editor

NORTH-WEST PASSAGE: RUTHWELL AND SWEETHEART ABBEY, 15TH MAY 1999

The Rev. David Milburn, D.S.H.

The day appointed for our excursion into Scotland brought with it a feeling that the weather for once would be on our side. So it proved to be, and we made such good progress along the A69 that we decided, after initial hesitation, to call in at Ruthwell on our way to Dumfries. The reason for the hesitation was practical: we were not quite sure whether the 53 seater coach would be able to negotiate the narrow lanes which lead south from the main A 74/5 Carlisle to Dumfries road. From Gretna more by chance than by design we found ourselves in the B721 road to Annan. The coach driver needed coaxing to continue along it, but after all it turned out to be the easiest approach, with only a matter of a quarter of a mile, flat at that, to walk from the highway to Ruthwell church, now a small insignificant 17th structure situated in open fields away from the tiny village of the same name. In a semicircular annexe stands what has been described recently as 'a great contemplative monument of European and universal significance.'

THE RUTHWELL CROSS

Much progress has been made in the study of Anglo-Sculpture since the days of W.G. Collingwood's *Northumbrian Crosses of the Pre-Norman Age* and books like Kendrick's *Anglo-Saxon Art*. Of the many contributions to our understanding not least is the work of Professor Rosemary Cramp. Nevertheless, at the popular level there is still not much information available, and, in the unavoidable absence of Mr George Thornton, our appointed guide (there was and is not an official guide available at Ruthwell) was hard pressed to do justice to what has been claimed to be the greatest of all Anglo-Saxon crosses. One can now say that it was not just (if ever) some kind of boundary marker, an assertion of Northumbrian power in a land lately conquered by them. One can, without too much difficulty, guess the scenes carved on its north and south faces in deep relief, the figures rigid and heavily draped in the Roman manner, admire the intricacy of vinescroll and interlacing work reminiscent of Jarrow, make a reasonable effort to translate the Latin scriptural and descriptive inscriptions, but, if unprepared, be left baffled and bewildered by the half magical runes which line its narrow east and west sides. The guide

thankfully had at hand an excellent commentary on this,written for *The Tablet* in 1996 by the Berry Professor of English Literature at the University of St Andrews, and was able to provide a translation of the text, which quotes some lines from the moving Anglo-Saxon poem, the *Dream of the Rood*, in which the Cross tells the tale of his warrior (Christ) ready to die for the sake of his Lord:

Then the young hero who was God almighty
Got ready, resolute and strong of heart.
He climbed unto the lofty gallows tree.
Bold in the sight of many watching men,
When he intended to redeem mankind.
I trembled as the warrior embraced me.
But still I dared not bend down to the earth.

Since our visit, a great deal more information about Ruthwell is now happily available in *Northumbria's Golden Age,* edited by Jane Hawkes and Susan Mills, 1999. Sadly for us, the latter has just resigned from her post as Curator of the Bede World Museum. The price of £35 reflects the fact that the book is highly specialiscd: a series of essays in which leading scholars present new insights based on the latest documentary research and archaeological discoveries. Professor Bailey of Newcastle University (also, I believe, moving away) declares that 'No-one working within this period will be able to carry the subject forward without reference to this collection.'

Two essays are specifically devoted to its study : ' The Necessary Distance: *Imitatio Romae* and the Ruthwell Cross' by Eamonn O Carragain of the University of Cork, and 'Northumbrian Sculpture (the Ruthwell and Bewcastle Monuments)' by Fred Orton of Leeds University, but it is mentioned elsewhere in the book. Ruthwell clearly poses many problems, some of them probably unsurmountable, given the passage of time since it was fashioned way back in the eighth century. The sandstone from which it is constructed is found locally at Hoddom, and so gives lie to the fanciful idea that it was brought to Ruthwell from a distance. But we are not even sure that it was meant to be a cross at all. After its despoliation in 1642 on the orders of the General Assembly of Scotland which dedared it an idolatrous monument (they were perhaps right about it being a monument) the fragments were unearthed and put together by the Revd Henry Duncan between 1802 and 1823 He himself was aware of its peculiarities. It is

formed of two different kinds of sandstone; the inscriptions on the upper and lower stones are laid out and cut differently; there are differences in the arrangement of the figures, in both representation and carving. Because of these anomalies Duncan referred to the lower stone as a column or pillar and the upper as a cross(shaft). Together he called them a monument. (Orton, 216). The first written reference to it, by Reginald Bainbrigg between the years 1599 and 1601 in a note for inclusion in a future edition of Camden's *Britannia,* seems to support Duncan's approach

> unexpectedly I encountered a cross of wonderful height which is in the church at Ruthwell. It has on it beautiful images telling the story of Christ. It is wonderfully decorated with vines and animals, and on two sides, ascending from base to the top, and then opposite descending from the top to the base,it is incised with strange and unknown letters . . .(Orton, 218)

That description does not correspond to what we now see: it refers only to the shaft, and Orton concludes that what Bainbrigg saw was a column, though he referred to it as a cross. As we generally link Ruthwell with Bewcastle , in passing it is of interest to note that in regard to the latter Orton takes the same view, contradicting Cramp and Bailey's classification of it as a cross- shaft and base. At one time, then, the Bewcastle and Ruthwell *monuments* would have been similar 'yet seen and understood as different kinds of column,' (Orton, 220) Bewcastle, where it stands outside the church, being a political statement, a memorial to a set of English aristocrats now unknown, and Ruthwell, likely to have stood inside a church, of predominantly religious significance, not so much for the instruction of an illiterate laity but rather for contemplation by a community of monks divorced from the world in the true Gregorian tradition, men who would readily appreciate the deep theological significance of the figures and be able to read the text from the *Dream of the Rood.*

Ruthwell Cross, east face, showing plant and animal forms.

This liturgical aspect of the Ruthwell monument is excitingly explored by Professor O Carragain. According to his thesis, the sculptured panels make more sense in the context of the old Roman chants for the Good Friday liturgy before they were superceded by those from Carolingian Europe (p.195). He adds that the Ruthwell sculptures are also evidence that the community where it was housed celebrated the Marian feasts which had gradually come into the Roman liturgy from the East in the second half of the seventh century (p.196). This does not mean, however, that the monument was a piece of blatant Roman propaganda. Far from it. Other scholars have drawn attcntion to important Irish, non Roman elements, and for this author it 'is remarkably eirenic, and forms the classic example of friendly contact between Roman and Irish liturgical traditions' (p.202), a point made already in 1995 by Professor Cramp when she wrote that Ruthwell was possibly a monument to the reconciliation of the British and Irish churches with the Anglo-Saxon.

What an extraordinarily rich treasure we have virtually on our doorstep, so 'European and universal' in its scope, one which requires all the skills of the scholars to fathom, 'drawing new treasures from old.'

> Their monument suggests that ecclesiastical controversy at Rome and secular power-politics in Northumbria were of little account to them, compared with the patterns of their communal sacramental worship, of which they provided such a memorable synthesis (O Carragain, p.203).

Of European and universal significance, the Ruthwell monument would surely have proved a suitable logo for the Church in this Millenium Year.

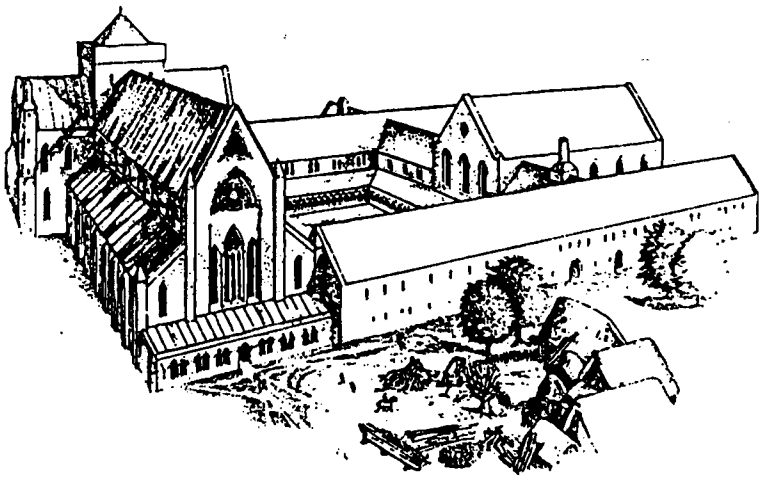
SWEETHEART ABBEY

After a lunch break in Dumfries where a chill wind prevented us enjoying the sunshine we took the A710 south to New Abbey, less than a half hour's ride. Tht Cistercians, the 'white monks' as they were more generally known from the colour of their undyed woollen habit, settled first in Scotland at Melrose (1136), due to an initiative of monks from Rievaulx. To St Aelred of Rievaulx we owe this description of the uncompromising kind of life these Cistercian monks led when they adhered to their rule in all its simplicity:

> Our food is scanty, our garments rough; our drink is from the stream and our sleep often upon our book. Under our tired limbs there is but a hard mat; when sleep is sweetest, we must rise at bell's bidding....
>
> Self will has no place; there is no moment for idleness or dissipation...

Everywhere peace, everywhere serenity, and a marvellous freedom from the tumult of the world.

In 1142 a Cistercian house was founded at Dundrennan in Galloway, likely as not by King David I (1124-1153) with the support of Fergus, Lord of Galloway. There is no direct evidence that its first monks came from Rievaulx, though the similarity in architectural style combined with the fact that the abbot of Rievaulx came to Galloway in 1164 strongly supports the claim. In addition, the first abbot of Dundrennan, Sylvanus, became abbot of Rievaulx in 1167. Once established, Dundrennan became the mother house for two more Cistercian abbeys in Galloway, Glenluce (Vallis Lucis) near Stranraer (1191) and Dulce Cor, Sweetheart Abbey, founded by Devorgilla, Lady of Galloway, in 1273, in memory of her husband, John Balliol. Sweetheart was in fact the last of the twelve monasteries which the Cistercians set up in Scotland. The monks themselves chose the name



Sweetheart Abbey as it might have looked in 1350.

Sweetheart for their foundation when their foundress died in 1289 and the casket containing the heart of her beloved husband 'her sweet, silent companion for twenty years' was buried with her. Locally it was known as New Abbey to distinguish it from the Old Abbey eighteen miles away at Dundrennan.

A great niece of the Scottish king, Lady Devorgilla was known for her generosity. She founded two other religious houses in Scotland, one in Dundee, the other in Wigton, as well, as two chaplaincies in Glasgow cathedral. Particularly noteworthy from an English point of view was her confirmation in 1282 of the foundation and the endowment of Balliol College at Oxford which had been established by her husband as an act of penance prior to his death in 1269. His immediate forebears were lords of Barnard Castle. It is well known to the Scots, but not so much south of the border, that his son John by virtue of his mother's royal connection claimed the throne of Scotland in 1292. His downfall four years later at the hands of Edward I of England heralded fifty years of prolonged and violent conflict between the two countries. Sweetheart Abbey, with its extensive lands in Galloway and too close a connection with the Balliols, suffered severely. King David II of Scotland (son of Robert the Bruce) on his return in 1352 from a lengthy captivity in England restored its fortunes by appointing his close friend Archibald Douglas, the new Lord of Galloway, as the new patron of the abbey.

The New Abbey complex of thirty acres was contained within a wall, much of which still remains. Entry into the precinct was by two main gateways, one west, the other south. (In passing, it is worth mentioning that archeologists have very recently discovered the existence of a hitherto unsuspected second gateway into Egglestone Abbey on the Tees just south of Barnard Castle). Within the precinct, church (Anglo-French style) and cloister were placed conveniently close to the west gate through a courtyard around which were grouped the usual stores and offices. Near the gate-house the almonry provided charity for the poor. To the east of the cloister lay the infirmary. The abbot's house may also have been situated here. I wonder whether Sweetheart, like most but not all Cistercian foundations, admitted numbers of peasants as lay brothers on a scale hitherto unknown. Usually they vastly outnumbered the choir monks. This illiterate but skilled workforce gave the white monks a head start on all other landlords in the management and improvement of land, farming methods, and so on, creating great wealth.

Of this once small though thriving monastery there remain only part of the church, the lower walls of the east range, and an outline of the cloister. Such was the devastation effected at the Reformation. Yet that upheaval came to Sweetheart later than elsewhere. For this we have to

thank the local Maxwell family, Lords of Galloway. When in 1560 the then Lord was ordered to destroy the buildings at Sweetheart, he flatly refused, declaring that he was attached to the place 'quhair he was maist part brocht up in his youth.' Thus the last abbot of Sweetheart, Gilbert Broun, who steadfastly rejected the reformed religion, was able, to remain , on and off, at the abbey until 1608, despite severe harrassment . During that year, on the orders of the archbishop of Glasgow, his rooms were ransacked, and 'a great number of popish books, copes, chalices, pictures, images and such other popish trash' taken (with the exception of the books) to be publicly burned on a market day in the high street of Dumfries. Exiled, Abbot Gilbert died in France in 1612. By chance much of the church he served still stands, thanks to the initiative of local subscribers in 1779 who thought the remains worth preserving as a local 'ornament.' That private initiative continued until 1928 when the government took charge of the site.

At the end of our very enjoyable visit to Sweetheart it was generally agreed that the long haul from Newcastle had been well worth the effort and the success of the day will no doubt encourage us to continue to be ambitious in our planning. For myself I reaped an unexpected bonus in that the excursion helped me to fill in a detail in the life of Monsignor Thomas Witham, about whom I wrote in the 1998 edition (No 39) of *Northern Catholic History*. Occasionally he went off to stay with Maxwell-Witham relatives in Scotland. The nave of the abbey church at Sweetheart is littered with grave covers bearing the names of the Maxwell and Maxwell-Witham families, all of Kirkconnell. Two miles to the east of the abbey stands Kirkconnell House, still owned by the Maxwell-Withams. A long way to go to corroborate a detail, you may think!

Note

This information about Sweetheart Abbey comes in the main from the *Historical Scotland* guides to Sweetheart and Dundrennan.

JOHN, LORD LUMLEY: AN ELIZABETHAN CONSPIRATOR AND COLLECTOR

Leo Gooch

John, Lord Lumley (c. 1534-1609) lived through all the religious upheavals of the late 16th century: he was born around the time of the trial and execution of Sir Thomas More and he died a few years after the Gunpowder Plot. He and his family adhered to the old faith and were involved in many of the Catholic intrigues of the period. Though he is now largely forgotten, Lumley was a substantial political figure in a pivotal historical period, but he was also a bibliophile and an important art-patron and collector. His biography is therefore worth recalling.

Lumley traced his ancestry to an Anglo-Saxon who held the manor of Great Lumley in County Durham but it is with his grandfather John, the fourth baron, and his father, George, that we reach the Reformation period with which we are primarily concerned. The fourth Baron Lumley fought at Flodden and was present at the Field of the Cloth of Gold. He was among those who signed the petition in 1530 asking Pope Clement VII to grant the king's divorce but he changed sides in October 1536 and joined the rising called by its participants 'our pilgrimage of grace for the commonwealth' which attempted to reverse the change of religion and to restore the socio-economic system destroyed in the dissolution of the monasteries. Like most of the gentry, Lumley and his son George were initially reluctant to take to arms and thought to avoid trouble by retiring to Newcastle but, finding the town sympathetic to the rising, they returned home. When they (like the Earl of Westmorland at Brancepeth) were told that their property would be at risk from the rebels if they opposed the rising, they accepted captaincies in the rebel force and, under the Banner of St Cuthbert, Lumley led the Durham host to Pontefract and Doncaster. He negotiated the truce with the Duke of Norfolk and was pardoned, but, now out of favour, he retired from public life. His son George took to arms in the second phase of the pilgrimage for which he was attainted of high treason and executed at Tyburn in 1537.

George Lumley's son John was born in Chester le Street about 1534 and in due time was sent to Henry VIII's court to be tutored with Prince Edward and a small group of nobles which may have included the Princess Elizabeth who was almost the same age as Lumley. Lord Lumley died in

1547 having settled the family property on his grandson. Three years later John Lumley successfully petitioned Edward VI for the removal of the attainder, the revival of the barony and the restoration of his father's forfeited estates. But neither that conciliatory gesture of the Protestant king, his former fellow-pupil, or the misfortunes of his paternal family persuaded him to abandon his ancestral faith. In any event, his own Catholic antecedents had been reinforced by an association with the powerful Fitzalan and Howard families.

Henry Fitzalan, (c. 1511-80), was a successful soldier; he was also a shrewd man of the world with a keen eye for the main chance. He was appointed Lord Chamberlain, an office he retained under Edward VI but his Catholicism brought him many political enemies and he was falsely charged with treasonable activities on at least two occasions. He conspired to prevent the succession to the throne of Lady Jane Grey and he was chiefly responsible for bringing Mary Tudor to the throne in 1553, the first queen regnant of England and Ireland; she made him her Lord High Steward. Fitzalan married Katharine Grey, by whom he had three children: Jane (?1537-77), Henry (1538-56) and Mary (1541-57). He succeeded as twelfth earl of Arundel in 1544. Lumley, aged about fifteen, matriculated as a fellow-commoner of Queen's College, Cambridge, at Easter 1549 together with Arundel's eleven-year-old son, Henry Fitzalan, Lord Maltravers. Lumley and Maltravers became classmates and close friends; as was common among noblemen at that time both left without taking their degrees. In 1552 Lumley married Jane Fitzalan; three years later Maltravers married the widow Anne Rich, and in 1555 Mary Fitzalan became the first wife of Thomas Howard (1538-72), who would succeed as fourth duke of Norfolk. Howard's sister Jane married the Earl of Westmorland, joint leader of the Rising of the Northern Earls. Thus was formed the nucleus of a young, noble, Catholic cousinage. The Arundels, Norfolks and Lumleys were prominent figures in the ceremonies associated with Queen Mary's coronation and her marriage to Philip of Spain; they became devoted courtiers and doubtless expected to be at the centre of government for many years.

Lumley took his seat in the House of Lords when he came of age and he was a diligent member of the house from Mary's second parliament which met in April 1554. His father-in-law Arundel, as Lord High Steward and a member of the Privy Council, was in a powerful position at the centre

of affairs and at the height of his fortune; he was, moreover, about to acquire one the grandest houses in the land: the royal palace of Nonesuch, near Cheam in Surrey at the foot of the North Downs, conceived by Henry VIII as a rival to the great French palace at Chambord. Nonesuch incorporated all the latest artistic theories of the Renaissance. England's finest craftsmen were employed on it and Henry brought in French, Italian and Dutch painters and decorators. The palace was incomplete at Henry's death in 1547 and no further work was done on it under Edward VI. This was partly because of the collapse of the royal finances but it was also due to the change in religion at which the arts fell victim to Protestant suspicions that they were somehow idolatrous and likely to lead to popery. Contact with Catholic Europe was terminated and allegorical or religious paintings were no longer essayed. That the arts survived at all is due almost entirely to the private patronage of a few English noblemen, chief among them Arundel and Lumley. Arundel persuaded Queen Mary to let him have Nonesuch so that he could finish her father's work and she sold it to him. (The quadrangle was laid with stone brought in from Newcastle.)

In contrast to his public success, Arundel was much less fortunate in his private life. His first wife and the mother of his three children, died in 1542 and three years later he took as his second wife Mary, daughter of Sir John Arundell of Lanherne. Arundel's son Henry Maltravers died aged eighteen in Brussels in 1556 while on a diplomatic mission and his daughter Mary died in August 1557 two months after giving birth to a son Philip. Within two months, Mary, the earl's second countess also died. Both women were given a Catholic burial at St Clement Dane's in the Strand by Edmund Bonner, Bishop of London. Thus within fifteen years Arundel lost two wives, his only son and his youngest daughter; Lady Jane Lumley was left his sole heiress. The Lumleys had three children all of whom had died in infancy and so there was nothing to stop them moving to Nonesuch in 1557 to care for her disconsolate father. Lady Lumley became chatelaine of the palace and Lord Lumley became Arundel's closest associate and, we may take it, a substitute for the son Arundel had lost. Both men had already begun to form their own art-collections and libraries and Lumley brought many of his pictures and books to Nonesuch and merged them with Arundel's. The combined collections would become the most important in Elizabethan England.

To add to the distress of Arundel's personal bereavement, Queen Mary died in November 1558 and was succeeded by Elizabeth. Arundel was plunged once more into political and dynastic intrigue, for both he and Lumley were strong supporters of the Scottish queen's claim to the English throne. Indeed, most Catholic peers were at one time or another associated with Mary Stuart and contemporary observers could count only fifteen undoubted Protestants among the sixty-five temporal peers in the House of Lords, so Elizabeth's grip on the throne was initially precarious. Arundel expected to be dismissed as Lord High Steward but Elizabeth kept him on, largely, of course, because his influence as a leader of the old Catholic nobility meant that he could not be excluded safely. Furthermore, in December 1558 an expatriate Spaniard reported to his king that Arundel was to marry Elizabeth, despite his age and religious disqualification. It was politically expedient for her to allow Arundel to press his suit, which he did by showering gifts on her and entertaining her with sumptuous banquets, masques and music; her visit to Nonesuch in 1559 cost him £950.

Throughout the early years of Elizabeth's reign Arundel and Lumley were more or less permanently engaged in the Catholic conspiracies which led ultimately to the Rising of the Northern Earls in 1569 and the Ridolfi Plot in 1570/1. The basic strategy was to restore Catholicism and place Mary, Queen of Scots, on the English throne but married to Thomas, fourth duke of Norfolk, Arundel's son-in-law. As with all conspiracies it is impossible to be precise about the part individuals played, though it is quite clear that Arundel and Lumley were ringleaders. King Philip was told that they had spent such large sums in promoting Mary's claims that they had fallen into debt: Lumley Park and other properties in Durham had to be rented out. Arundel's and Lumley's increasingly precarious finances led them to apply for a Spanish subsidy but Philip had to be persuaded that they would convert Norfolk (he had been tutored by John Foxe and was nominally an Anglican) before he would send any money to promote the intended rising. Lumley's credentials as a devout and zealous Catholic and a worthy gentleman were conveyed to Philip and it was agreed that Lumley would act as the contact between Mary and her English supporters, partly because he had a northern fiefdom. He would also negotiate on Norfolk's behalf with the Bishop of Ross over the marriage. Lumley never went into Scotland, however, because his Catholic zeal frightened Norfolk's party, for a successful outcome of the conspiracy depended on Mary being perceived as a moderate which was, of course, why the marriage to Norfolk had been proposed.

Arundel kept up his courtship of Elizabeth but when some five years had passed without his having anything to show for it, he gave up and resigned his office. The affronted queen ordered that he be confined to Nonesuch for a year but she relented and allowed him his freedom after a month and he went abroad early in 1566; shortly before he left, he made over all his possessions to Lumley. Arundel returned to England within the year. Mary Stuart's flight to England in May 1568 and her subsequent imprisonment precipitated the English Catholics into action but their plan for a rising in the north in 1569 was discovered and a wave of arrests took place: Norfolk was committed to the Tower, Arundel was confined firstly in Arundel House and then at Nonesuch with Lumley 'so none could have access to them for conference touching their affairs'. Hence Lumley did not rise with the northern earls in November during which Mass was again said in Durham Cathedral. The rising was mercilessly suppressed: Westmorland escaped abroad but Thomas Percy, Earl of Northumberland, was beheaded and many of the rank and file were hanged.

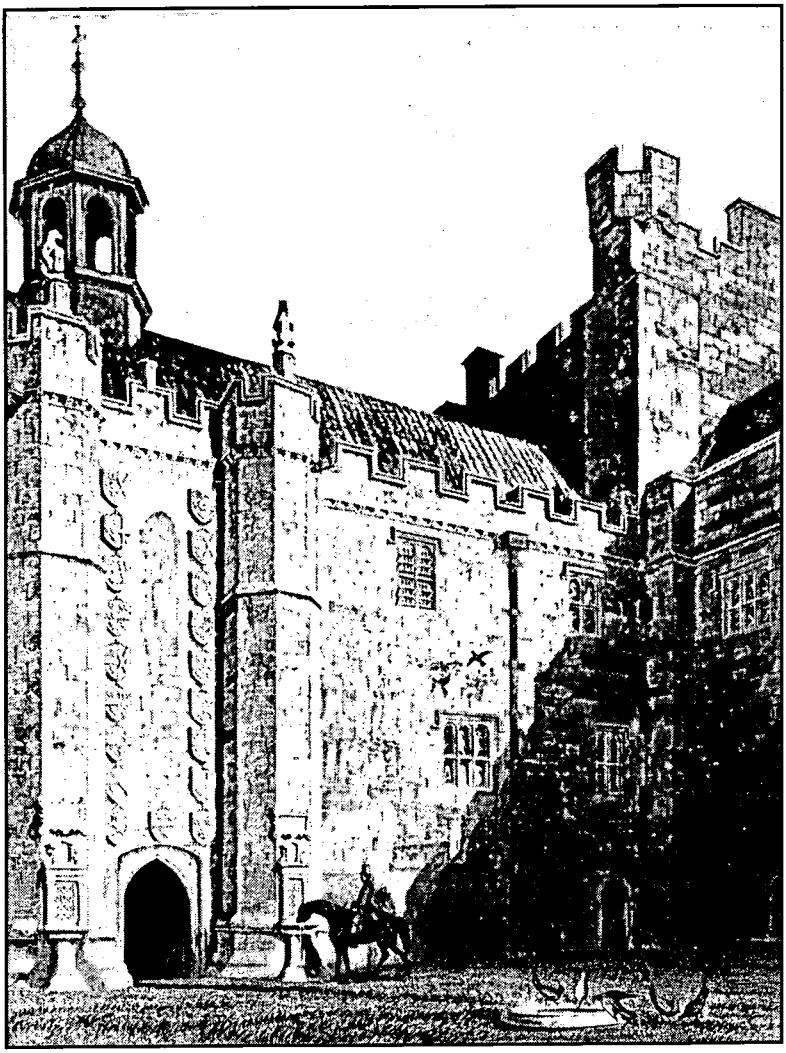
Arundel and Lumley returned to court when things quietened down but they and other Catholics had to withdraw again when the papal bull *Regnans in Excelsis,* excommunicating the queen, was published in May 1570. She sent to ask after them with affection in an attempt to keep them on her side but they maintained communications with the Spanish Ambassador and continued to conspire for Mary Stuart. In April 1571 a plan to convey Mary 'to a castle of my Lord Lumley's' was under discussion. In September Lumley was again put under house-arrest at the discovery of the Ridolfi Plot which envisaged a general uprising supported by a Spanish invading army. But Norfolk's execution in June 1572 put paid to the marital ambitions of the Queen of Scots and brought the plot to an end. The involvement of Arundel and Lumley in politics also came to an end and their intention to devote themselves to art and scholarship allowed Elizabeth to let them alone. Arundel and Lumley, however, were peers entitled to sit in parliament and in 1575 they returned to the House of Lords and they would attend every session during the rest of their lives, though neither took a prominent role. Arundel had been appointed High Steward of the University of Oxford in 1555 and in January 1559, as a mark of her favour, Elizabeth had elevated him to the place of the recently deceased Reginald, Cardinal Pole as Chancellor of the University; Arundel resigned in June, unable to make any headway in 'that Protestant and unregenerated' institution, and Lumley succeeded him; he would hold the post for the

unprecedented period of fifty years. Arundel and Lumley also became members of the Elizabethan Society of Antiquaries and in 1583 Lumley, who cultivated a particular interest in medicine, instituted the Lumleian Lectures on anatomy at the Royal College of Physicians. The principal concern of both men, however, was to maintain Nonesuch and to build up their combined collections.

Lady Lumley died in March 1577 and Arundel went to his grave in 1580. Arundel appointed Lumley his sole executor and residuary legatee, and reiterated the bequest to him of Nonesuch and its contents already given to him in 1566. Lumley, however, was also left to discharge Arundel's debts, which were considerable due partly to their expenditure on the Scottish queen's behalf but also to the outlay on their properties. At any rate, Arundel left an estate worth £1,900 a year but it was so encumbered that Lumley was left with only £400 a year from it and he had to petition the queen to remit his rents until his finances recovered; he also sold his Yorkshire estate at Thwing to Sir Thomas Heneage in 1579. A cynic might connect his indebtedness to his marriage, in 1582, when aged about forty-seven, to Elizabeth, daughter of John, Lord D'Arcy of Chiche, Essex. Three years later a report that 'his state is repayred' circulated; and in 1586 he bought the manor of Hart and the borough of Hartlepool for £5,350. He built a pier at Hartlepool for £2,000 as an outlet for the coal produced on his Durham estates.

In Catholic circles Lumley was still thought of as a likely participant in their intrigues but in December 1585 Thomas Morgan told Mary Stuart that his approach to Lumley on her behalf was to no avail. In October the following year Morgan again reported that he had written to Lumley 'verye earnestlye' but had not 'receaved answer from him and others to whom. I wrote...' Camden described Lumley at this time as 'a person of entire virtue, integrity and innocence, and now in his old age a complete pattern of nobility'. Mary's execution in 1587 provoked the Spanish but Lumley was not moved to break his truce with Elizabeth. He had himself painted in armour in Armada year, but that was probably more to demonstrate his loyalty to her rather than to signal his potential for further rebellion.

Lumley started to refurbish and improve Lumley Castle which he intended to make into an artistic treasure-house and a monument to his genealogy. His pedigree was emphasised to visitors with increasing force from their first sight in the courtyard of a series of marble heraldic shields showing the family's arms as they had quartered over the generations by



Lumley Castle
from an old print

matrimonial alliances. In the same way around 1594 Lumley took over the north aisle of the church at Chester le Street for fourteen recumbent effigies purporting to be his ancestors. In fact, as Camden observed, they were 'either gotten together out of monasteries that were subverted or caused to be made anew'; two of them (sculpted in Frosterley marble) were taken from the precincts of Durham Cathedral. In the hall of the castle Lumley hung a series of fifteen paintings of his ancestors 'lyneally descending from the Conquest' commissioned from Sir William Segar. The theme was continued in other rooms where several portraits of his immediate and extended family hung. Lumley's obsession with his ancestry could have an oppressive effect on the visitor: James I visited the castle and, having been given an exhaustive treatment of Lumley's ancestry, remarked: 'Oh mon, gang nae further. I maun digest the knowledge I hae gained this day, for I didna ken Adam's other name was Lumley'. As it happened, Lumley had pictures of Adam and Eve, as well as Old Father Time, hanging in the house.

Lumley, however, soon found himself unable to maintain Nonesuch as well as Lumley, nor could he pay his debts to the queen. He therefore ceded the palace to her, though he remained custodian for which he received a quarterly allowance. But he removed his furniture, pictures, sculptures and garden ornaments up to Lumley Castle. This was the immediate occasion on which an inventory was compiled of Lumley's possessions at his three residences: Lumley Castle, his London house, and Nonesuch Palace. This inventory is the single most important document for the study of the cultural history of the Elizabethan age for it was a catalogue of the most extensive art-collection in the country which contained 253 pictures. By far the largest category in the collection was portraiture, in sculpture and on canvas or panel, and included depictions of English and continental royal and noble families, mythical figures, classical Romans, famous writers, explorers and contemporary churchmen. There were a substantial number of religious paintings including biblical subjects from both the Old and New Testaments and he had sixty-six 'Pictures in small of Christ, our Ladie and his Saints, wrought upon brass, and adorned with marbles and marble Pillars' by which is presumably meant line-engravings on copper-plate subsequently embellished. The paintings had a Flemish bias and it is probable that the etchings had a similar origin, conceivably from the studio of the Wierix family of engravers in Antwerp who specialised in portraits and Catholic religious subjects.

Many of Lumley's pictures are by unknown artists but a significant proportion are by named continental painters and represent a collection of the best painting of the day. Lumley owned the 'great booke of Pictures doone by Haunce Holbyne', comprising a series of studies, of which the best known in Catholic circles are those of Sir Thomas More and Bishop John Fisher. Soon after Queen Mary's accession the Antwerp-trained Hans Eworth became royal portraitist and almost all of his identifiable sitters were in Mary's Catholic circle: Arundel, his daughter Mary, Duchess of Norfolk, and Lumley among others. Lumley also possessed the portrait of Queen Mary by Gerlach Flicke which is now in the Durham Cathedral Treasury. Lumley became the patron of Steven van der Muelen, another Antwerp-trained portraitist, who was the principal artist working in London during the 1560s; Lumley and his wife sat to him in 1563. Meulen was patronised by Arundel and Norfolk, probably at Lumley's suggestion. Other notable pictures owned by Lumley included: 'A Speciall picture of Christ cast in mould by Raphael de Urbino, brought into England from Rome by Cardynall Pole'. Lumley also acquired portraits of the recently deceased Ignatius Loyola (d. 1556), founder of the Jesuits, and Francis Xavier (d. 1552), the famous Jesuit missionary; their inclusion in this collection indicates how quickly and widely their *cultus* spread, for they were not beatified until 1609 the year of Lumley's death. An erstwhile conspirator having these portraits on display at a time when the very word Jesuit was synonymous with traitor was courageous, to say the least.

Lumley was also well known for his love of books. The nucleus of his library was Arundel's collection of some four hundred volumes which included many military, classical and historical works. Arundel had no taste for theological controversy but, shortly after Queen Mary's accession, Archbishop Cranmer was executed and she confiscated his library and gave it to Arundel. Cranmer's collection comprised some five hundred volumes, and around one hundred manuscripts he acquired at the Dissolution which were added to the fifty Arundel acquired in the same way when 'manuscripts flew about like butterflies'. Cranmer's books did not interest Arundel, but they had considerable historical significance and Arundel accepted them out of devotion to the queen. In Arundel's day the library at Nonesuch was described as 'right worthye of remembrance', and it would become the greatest library of the age. Ultimately there were some three thousand volumes and 'there was no library in England better equipped than Lumley's for the study of any of the sciences'. At Lumley's

death in 1609 the library passed into royal ownership and whole sections were immediately removed and it ceased to be the Lumley Library. In due course what was left of it was given by George III to the British Museum.

Music was the other cultural pursuit which Lumley much enjoyed and since it was associated closely with his religion, it is appropriate to deal with his recusancy at the same time. John Robinson has remarked that after the Ridolfi episode, Lumley 'was left more or less in peace at Nonesuch to practise his faith with all the pomp of the tridentine liturgy, even down to such details as six candles on the altar of his private chapel and with a choir to sing Masses specially written by Byrd...' Evidence of Lumley's faith appears in the State Papers from time to time. In 1586 Lumley had five Catholic household servants. In 1594 the wife of a convicted recusant in London told the authorities that 'all books, copes, vestments, cross, chalices and all the rest' of the church-stuff found in her husband's possession were actually Lumley's. A spy in the Fleet prison reported that 'Stamp, lately released out of Wisbeach, and another seminary [priest] lay in my Lord Lum.'s house [on Tower Hill]'. This was Thomas Stamp who had ministered for some years in London and was closely associated with the Vaux and Tresham families before his imprisonment in London and Wisbech. Arundel's relations were also important Catholic connections; Anne Arundell gave Robert Southwell refuge in Arundel House and she supported him when he was imprisoned in 1592. (These Jesuit connections help to explain Lumley's acquisition around that time of the portraits of Ignatius Loyola and Francis Xavier.) In 1602 Burghley wrote to Cecil from York that he was much troubled by the seminary priest Trollop, 'an obstinate and perilous fellow', who, to Burghley's dismay, was to be sent to London and was likely 'to save his life, at [the] suit of Lord Lumley, whose servant is Trollop's brother'. As expected, Trollop was banished, but he was back on the mission in County Durham by 1610. In 1608 Lumley wrote as one of 'so manie beggars of Recusants' asking Salisbury to allow George Smith, his servant of many years, to make a reasonable composition for his recusancy rather than have him imprisoned because Smith was so important to Lumley in his old age.

From around 1573 William Byrd (c. 1542-1623), the recusant composer, began to associate openly with leading Catholics despite his official position in the Chapel Royal (which he did not resign until 1591). Sir John Arundell and his wife often appear with Byrd as recusants in the Middlesex gaol delivery rolls of the 1580s. Byrd received an annuity from Lord Paget who 'kept his own choir for liturgical purposes'; his *Liber primus sacrarum*

cantionum (1589) was dedicated to the Earl of Worcester and his *Liber secundus* (1591) to Lumley. Byrd dedicated the first volume of *Gradualia* (1606) to the Earl of Northampton and the second (1607) to Lord Petre. Byrd became acquainted with Arundel and Lumley at Nonesuch. As perhaps might be expected of the residence of the Lord High Steward, the musical establishment of the palace was a substantial one; in fact, with a collection of instruments large enough to provide an orchestra of one hundred and twenty-seven players and a 'solemn Choir', it surpassed that of the Chapel Royal. Moreover, Nonesuch was the scene of an intense and historically significant musical life for, at a time when polyphony was held to be reactionary and popish, it was one of the very few places where the latest continental music could be heard. The library at Nonesuch contained forty-five musical scores and included every kind of contemporary secular and sacred music, the earliest of which was a collection of Josquin masses printed in Italy in 1516. The presence of a 'songe of fortie partes, made by Mr Tallys' may be the earliest reference to that famous work. The grand scale of musical life at Nonesuch probably came to an end with Arundel's death but Byrd maintained his friendship with Lumley who retained the instruments and the scores. In his dedication of the *Liber secundus* Byrd mentioned Lumley's willingness to share his library and his 'most intense' love of the arts and sciences. Byrd also thanked Lumley for advice that was 'hardly mediocre in matters concerning music' and concluded: 'Whatever Harmony has up to now suggested to my spirit or pen I have considered ought rightly to be imputed to your influence'. The only music listed in the Lumley catalogue dated after 1580 consists of masses and motets by Byrd and Palestrina.

Lumley died on 11 April 1609 at his London house aged seventy-five. His transformation of Lumley Castle into a pantheon of his ancestry was particularly poignant since he had no direct heir and his peerage became extinct. He was buried at Cheam by night, a sure sign of his Catholicism. Lumley had survived the momentous political and religious changes of his times despite being on the wrong side for most of them and in an age when noble heads rolled for lesser conspiracies than his. His longevity, physical constitution apart, testifies to a capacity to realise when a cause was no longer realisable. Doubtless he would have persisted in trying to reverse the religious changes introduced by Edward and Elizabeth had there been the slightest chance of success but the failure of the Northern Rising and the Ridolfi Plot followed by the execution of his kinsman the Duke of Norfolk in 1572 persuaded him of the futility of further conspiracy. He

seems to have recovered a personal loyalty to Queen Elizabeth: they had, after all, been childhood friends; she forgave him his duplicity and probably extracted from him a promise to steer clear of like engagements.

Lumley's collecting has been described as one of 'naive and unsophisticated accumulation' and his art-collection certainly betrays an indiscriminate passion for collecting likenesses of celebrities regardless of artistic quality. But he only acquired what there was to be had and this, of course, was bound to include naive, unsophisticated portraits: historical portraiture was in its infancy in his day. Lumley has also been said to have pursued 'Recondite Learning as much as any man of his Honourable rank in those times' and that is surely more accurate. He was the patron of the most eminent contemporary painters, and his musicality and bookmanship, his building restoration, and his preservation of the Arundel collections, argues a more sophisticated than naive outlook. Many pictures in his collection are unique and are now regarded as of museum quality and they hang in leading art-institutions around the world. Lumley was the first, perhaps even the prototype, of the wealthy and well-educated Catholic gentleman who, excluded from public life, attended to his estates, who enjoyed art for its own sake, who became a dilettante or connoisseur, and who became expert in history, science, mathematics or some other branch of scholarship. Such would be found throughout the recusant period.

Note. This paper represents the preliminary stage of a fullscale biography of Lumley which is presently being researched in detail. The principal sources used here include:

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BLESSED RALPH CORBY (1598-1644), MISSIONARY AND MARTYR

The Rev. Geoffrey Holt, S.J.

It was said soon after the death of the martyr Ralph Corby that 'he was in his paradise when he was with the poore Catholics at Durham and in the villages'[1] and another account of about the same date recorded that 'where he lived were many Catholics of narrow means and obscure station who could neither maintain priests at their houses by reason of their poverty nor go to them elsewhere on account of the dangers they would incur'.[2] Such was Ralph Corby's apostolate for two years in Yorkshire (the Jesuit 'Residence' of St Michael) and then for ten in the 'Residence'of St John the baptist, of which Durham was a part.

Ralph's ancestors were of Durham yeoman stock. His father, Gerard, had married Isabella Richardson, a convert. They were Catholics of 'the middle sort' who suffered much for their faith.[3] Eventually, they avoided the penal laws by crossing over to Ireland and they settled down at Maynooth where, we are told, Gerard became house steward to the Countess of Kildare. Of the family of four boys, three – Robert, Ralph (born c.1598) and Richard – were born in Ireland, the fourth, Ambrose, after their return to England. So too Mary, the elder girl, was born in Ireland and Catherine in England. Back in England, Gerard and Isabella were convicted of recusancy in 1607. In 1613 the family moved over to Flanders, to St Omer.[4] All four sons were at school at St Omers College (Richard died there), Ralph arriving there in 1613 and staying six years. Little has come down to us about his schooldays except that he worked hard at his studies and the acquiring of virtue.[5] Wishing to become a priest he travelled in 1619 to the seminary at Seville in Spain but after about a year as his health was poor (and he had trouble with his eyes) he moved in 1621 to the English College at Valladolid, where he was ordained priest about 1624.

Having made the decision to join the Society of Jesus, he entered the novitiate at Watten in Flanders in 1625. Then followed the completion of his theological studies at Liege and two years of further spiritual preparation at Ghent. In 1652 he was sent on the English mission.[6]

Ralph Corby has been called 'the apotheosis of the average man and so little distinguished for anything, even brains' that his superior wrote of him privately when he came on the English mission

> His abilities are utterly mediocre and both judgement and prudence are wanting in him. He has had little experience and made small progress in his studies.How he gets on in his dealings with the neighbour time will tell, as he is by nature slow and of a pensive cast of mind. In other respects, too, he appears to be little fitted for most of our ministerial duties.

That superior's judgment, however thoughtfully and apparently confidently made, did not prove entirely accurate.[7]

From all that has come down to us it is clear that Ralph worked hard and fruitfully on the mission for twelve years. After his death his brother Ambrose wrote of him

> These (Catholics of narrow means and obscure status) Ralph always thought it his special province to console, help in every way, provide with the Sacraments and visit at their homes in the villages. He was quite indefatigable at this work, going about it not only during the daytime but towards dusk or late at night in the heats of summer and the cold and rain of winter . . . That he might more freely visit the cottages of the poor without arousing suspicion he used to go in a very humble guise, . . . so he might be taken for a common servant, or farm-hand or letter- carrier. His lodging, too, and meals were such as poor people are accustomed to . . .[8]

And a rather younger Jesuit, who also came from the north-east, recorded that 'he was commonly called by the poor people 'Ye Apostle of ye country'[9].

When he was in prison Ralph wrote, on the instruction of his superior, a few lines about his missionary life

> Since I came into England . . . I have, thanks be to God, been helping and comforting people according to my vocation and ability, in administering the Sacraments and instructing privately, for preaching in public I could never do, which hathe sometimes caused in me great grief but always kept me in humility, so I lived in a mean state, going ordinarily on foot from place to place . . .

He went on to explain that his health was no longer good and that he had been eventually 'forced to use a horse'.[10] It is probable that he lived at times, perhaps usually in the city of Durham when not on his missionary travels but there is evidence that he stayed at Harbour House, near Durham, when Francis Forcer of the family that owned the house was his superior.[11]

It was in 1644, after the decisive battle of Marston Moor and the subsequent occupation of Durham by the Parliamentary army, that Ralph

Corby and his companion in martyrdom, John Duckett, were captured early in July. Ralph was saying Mass or about to do so at Hamsterley, probably Hamsterley Hall, Lintz Green, county Durham, near Gateshead, 'a solitary House in a wood', when a party of soldiers burst in and seized him before he had time to reach a hiding-place. Taken to Sunderland to appear before a Committee for Religion, set up by Parliament, he admitted he was a priest and a Jesuit. He was sent to London by sea – a journey of about two weeks – and found to his joy that John Duckett, who had been arrested a few days before was his fellow-prisoner on board. On arrival in London they were committed to Newgate.[12] Apart from the charge of being priests they also had to face the rumour that they were fugitives from the Royalist army in the north and had been priests in popish regiments. Ralph described his examination

> Landing at London I was garded to the examiners where showing me my writing I acknowledged it so as they examined me little, as where I was borne. I told them in Ireland my father being fled thither for his conscience. Some other frivolous questions as whither I knew Dr Cosin or were in ye king's army or noe to wch I answered negatively although they have put it heere positively: and so they comitted me to Newgate.[13]

While awaiting trial Ralph Corby and John Duckett were cared for as far as possible by fellow-prisoners, Ralph's cousin John Horsley (the son of his father's sister, Jane) and Cuthbert Prescott, an English Jesuit laybrother who had for many years been assistant to the province treasurer in London and had made the travel arrangements for boys leaving England to go to St Omers College, and who was to die in chains in Newgate in 1647. Horsley, who had already been a prisoner in Newgate for three years, wrote to Ambrose Corby, and after praising the constancy and piety of the two priests continued

> My good cosen's accommodation after he came to us was according to his owne liking having all things fitted for him dayly in all kinds whatsoever . . . wherein I performed my dayly and willing service. And in all other things he was continually fitted by the industry and care of Mr Cuthb(ert) Prescott . . . and long-time prisoner here with me who saw all things performed with great care and conveniency unto the very last.[14]

Efforts made by friends to save Ralph on the grounds that he was born in Ireland proved unsuccessful. There was also an attempt to arrange an exchange of Ralph for a Scottish colonel who was a prisoner in Germany. Ralph declined the offer and asked that it might be made to John Duckett.

Ralph, having been born in Ireland, thought he did not need such aid but that John Duckett did. Also, John was strong and young and gifted and could do good service for a long time, whereas he was of advanced years, in weak health and exhausted. Each wished the other to take advantage of the offer which, it would appear, came to nothing. As a paper entitled 'A Relation concerning Mr Duckett' put it

> Mr Corby never ceased until he had procured (it) to be conferred upon Mr Duckett, but nothing els could have effected it, had he not served himself of his having been borne in Ireland & thererore not believed to be lyable to the law of death for priesthood, for unto all the rest Mr Duckett found ready answers retorting with like humility fervour and charity Mr Corby's allegations for his enjoying that benefit . . . [15]

Ralph wrote letters about his imprisonment and trial. To his sisters in the Benedictine convent at Brussels he wrote

> As you have heard of my imprisonment so I make no doubt but that you esteem it (as I hope it is) a great favour and benefit of God Allm bestowed upon me . . . confessing myself to be a preist I was committed the 22 of July being St Mary Mag(dalen's) day to Newgate, where thanks be to God, I with five others are very well and merye as ever I have been. What will be done with me will be known about the beginning of September and then you shall heere more at large. In the mean time I desire you to pray for me as I God willing shall not be unmindfull of you . . . this 20 of August .
>
> Your loving Brother, Ralph Corbye.[16]

In another letter he described his trial which began on 4th September. His claim that he was born in Ireland and not in England as alledged in his indictment was dismissed; the statute, he was told, extended to all Queen Elizabeth's dominions. The jury found him guilty on 5th September, and he and John Duckett were sentenced to death.[17] While in Newgate awaiting execution, the two priests were visited by ambassadors of Catholic states – among them the French ambassador, the Marquis de Sabran (whose son Lewis was to become a member of the English Jesuit province), to whom Ralph gave a blessed medal for the Queen Mother of France. He wrote to a friend to ask that someone should comfort his mother and sisters and send them and his brother Ambrose some token. Some of his friends and 'a great number of other Catholics' were able to be present at his last Mass.[18]

Ralph Corby and John Duckett were taken together to Tyburn for execution on 7th September (OS). Ralph proclaimed that religion alone was

their crime: 'Mr Sheriffe. We dye for our Saviour, and as our Saviour dyed willingly for us. So doe not think Mr Sheriffe that we are afrayed of death but that we dye willingly'.[19] And John Duckett said to the minister who wanted to argue with him: 'Sir, I came not hither to be taught my faith but to die for the profession of it'.[20]

Ralph Corby and John Duckett were beatified in 1929.

The story of the remarkable family of Gerard and Isabella and their sons and daughters must not be left unfinished. After their children were settled in life, their parents agreed to separate. In 1628 Gerard became a Jesuit laybrother, and about 1630 Isabella joined the Benedictine nuns at Brussels, where her daughters Mary and Catherine were already members of the community, and later at Ghent. Of Ralph's three brothers, Ambrose and Robert became Jesuits, and Richard died while preparing to enter the novitiate.[21] And Ambrose stated in a letter about the family that there was another daughter, the eldest child, who died shortly after baptism.[22]

NOTES

1. Stonyhurst Mss Anglia A V, 18 (a group of papers concerning Ralph Corby), letter of Thomas Whitfield. Ralph, who was known by the *alias* Corbington or Flower, usually spelt his name Corbye.
2. From the *Certamen Triplex* (the lives of Thomas Holland, Ralph Corby and Henry Morse, martyrs) by Ambrose Corby (Antwerp, 1645). An English translation *The Threefold Conflict* was published in London in 1858.

   References in this article are to the English version but under the original title of the work, p.33.
3. C.R.S. 30/140.
4. *Certamen Triplex*, 27-28; Anstruther, G, *The Seminary Priests*, II, 72.
5. C.R.S. 69/73-4; *Florus Anglo-Bavaricus Serenissimo Principi Maximiliano Emmanueli Duci Bavariae . . .* by *Collegii Vestri Leodiensis Alumni* (Liège, 1685), p.80.
6. C.R.S. 30/129n, 140; C.R.S. 75/61, 105; C.R.S. 74/146.
7. The report is in the catalogue of the English Jesuit province for 1652 (a copy of which is in the Jesuit province archives). The report was quoted in *Blessed Ralph Corby S.J.*, by James Brodrick (Manresa Press, Roehampton, 1933), p.1.
8. *Certamen Triplex*, p.33 (a new translation).
9. This note by Robert White is in Anglia A V. 18. The date is uncertain.
10. *Certamen Triplex*, p.31 (a new translation). The province catalogues from 1638 indicate that his health was poor.
11. Anglia A V. 18, in a letter from Ambrose Whitfield to Ambrose Corby; *Northern Catholic History*, No.14, p.12; Foley, *Records*, III, p.93.

12. Copy of a letter from Ralph Corby of 2 August 1644 in Anglia A V.18; *Certamen Triplex*, pp.34-37.

13. Ralph's letter of 2 August 1644. The 'writing' was a statement he made in Sunderland admitting that he was a priest and a Jesuit. John Cosin, then dean of Peterborough and canon of Durham and friend of Archbishop Laud, was much opposed by the Puritans. He became Bishop of Durham in 1660.

14. Horsley's letter to 'cosen Ambrose', dated apparently 24 December 1644, is in Anglia A V. 18; *Northern Catholic History*, No. 14, p.13. For Prescott, see C.R.S. 75/303 and Foley, *Records*, VII, p.630.

15. *Certamen Triplex*, p.41; Foley, *Records*, III, pp.76-7; Anglia A V. 18, 'Relation concerning Mr Duckett'. Ralph's age was about 46.

16. A copy of the letter is in Anglia A V. 18, and in Foley, *Records*, III, p.93.

17. *Certamen Triplex*, pp.43-5; see Foley, *Records*, III, pp.77-8. This letter is said to have been dated 15 September 1644, i.e. New Style. But the copy in Anglia A V. 18, entitled 'His Arraignment and Condemnation' is not clearly dated.

18. *Certamen Triplex*, pp.48-50; Anglia A V. 18, 'Some further particulars' . Foley, *Records*, III, pp.79-80. For Lewis Sabran, see C.R.S. 62/ix.

19. 'The substance of what was said by Mr Ralph Corbye at his execution' is in Anglia A V. 18.

20. Challoner, *Memoirs of Missionary Priests* (London, 1924), p.461.

21. The story of the family may be found in e.g. *Northern Catholic History*, No.14, p.10; C.R.S. 19/54; C.R.S. 30/129n; D.N.B. vol.12, p.209, and Foley, *Records*, VII, p.167.

22. Anglia A V. 18.

In Foley's *Records*, vol. VII there is a photograph 'from the original portrait at Lanherne Convent'.

A SKETCH OF NEWCASTLE DURING THE REIGN OF JAMES II

Richard Welford

(Reprinted from *The Northern Catholic Calendar*, 1894)

Perhaps in no part of the kingdom was the accession to the throne of James, Duke of York, as King James II., more warmly welcomed than in the North of England. The duke had kept a hunting box at Shipley, in the County Palatine, he had travelled frequently through the Northern Counties, had made himself agreeable to the great Catholic families between the Humber and the Tweed, had even conferred with Puritans, and although an avowed Catholic himself it was believed among Protestants that, for the sake of his own religion he would prove a tolerant and a liberal minded king. Under his wise and prudent guidance, English Catholics were to realise once more the bright days of old, and to see the dawn of freedom after the long night of darkness and persecution. Such at least was the dream of many of our forefathers in the early days of February, 1685, when all that was mortal of Charles II had been laid to rest in the royal vaults at Westminster.

The new monarch had several faithful friends and adherents in Newcastle. One of them, Sir William Creagh, had come to the Tyne a few years earlier to seek fortune, and to find it in a wife. The lady of his choice was Mary, daughter and co-heiress with her sister Sarah (wife of the Hon. Charles Montague) of John Rogers, a Newcastle merchant. Sir William occupied the stately mansion of the old Catholic family of Riddell at Gateshead – home and shelter beforetime of many a hunted priest, 'and doomed to destruction in aftertime because it was the home of another of the Church's devoted servants. The Riddells had fallen upon evil days; their property was in the hands of trustees, and Sir William Creagh, on the 24th March, 1681-82, became lessee of the house, together with the colliery adjoining, covenanting that for seven years he would work the pit, sell the coals, and after deducting expenses, interest, and reasonable remuneration hand over to the trustees the balance of profit.

Another of King James's devoted friends in Newcastle was Henry Brabant, a merchant adventurer, who, having suffered for his opinions during the Civil War, had received at the Restoration a lucrative appointment as Collector of Customs, Subsidies, etc., in the Tyne, had passed through the offices of Sheriff and Mayor, and now, in celebration of the king's accession had received the honour of knighthood.

Encouraged by the favourable turn of events, and the king's example, the Catholics of the district had ventured to exercise their religion in the face of day. They fitted up a chapel for public worship in a court leading out of the Flesh Market, known in after years as the White Hart Yard and there, openly and boldly, none daring to make them afraid, they publicly assembled for mass. In that humble chapel, under the pastoral care of a secular priest, the Rev. Augustine Jenison, of the Elswick and Walworth family, they enjoyed a freedom which had not been known to them and their co-religionists since the days of Philip and Mary. The Puritans, too, who had been crushed by the Restoration, began to raise their heads again and for a time made common cause with the, Catholics, the king having given them an assurance that he would be tolerant to all oppressed subjects who were loyal to his throne and mindful of his prerogatives.

For a time all went well. At the first mayor-choosing, after King James's accession, namely at Michaelmas, 1685, Alderman Sir Henry Brabant was for the second time raised to the highest position which the municipality of Newcastle could bestow. Things were so well managed that the mayor succeeded in inducing the Council (though there was some opposition at first) to order that an equestrian statue of the new king should be set up on the Sandhill. Subsequent proceedings of his, and of Sir William Creagh's in connection with the governing body wore not so successful in winning general approbation, but into these we need not enter. The climax of toleration was reached when his majesty proclaimed liberty of conscience to all his subjects, and not only suspended the penal laws and tests, but even proposed to dispense with the oaths of allegiance and supremacy. Here was a change indeed!

In the 'Memoirs of Ambrose Barnes,' a famous Puritan alderman of Newcastle, this remarkable stroke of policy was attributed in a great measure to the influence which Barnes exercised in the royal councils. And certainly there is confirmation of that theory in the curious list of nominations which shortly afterwards came down to the municipal body direct from his majesty. For the king displaced the Mayor, Sheriff, and Recorder, six of the Aldermen, and fifteen of the Common Council, and ordered the electors to appoint others, among whom were the following:-

Mayor – Sir William Creagh (Catholic).

Sheriff – Samuel Gill (Dissenter).

Aldermen – Edward Widdrington and John Errington (Catholics);

Ambrose Barnes, and his brother-in-law William Hutchinson, William Johnson, and Thomas Partis (Dissenters).

Recorder – Joseph, son of Ambrose Barnes (Dissenter).

And thus, as the quaint old biographer of Ambrose Barnes remarks, 'the Magistracy was mixed with Papists and Protestant; Conformists and Non-Conformists. Men were at a loss to see how suddenly the world was changed; the cap, the mace and the sword one day carried to the Church, another day to the Mass house, another day to the dissenting Meeting house, and those of the best penetration concluded so portentous a phenomenon must needs end in some strange revolution."

At the turn of the year 1687-83 the news was spread all over England that Her Majesty the Queen was likely to present the nation with an heir to the throne. It seems to have been assumed everywhere that the royal offspring would be a prince, and, as such an event would settle the succession, and exclude the pretentions of both the Prince of Orange, who had married the king's daughter Mary, and Prince George of Denmark, who was united to her sister Anne, there were great rejoicings throughout the Catholic and High Church communities. Story, a Quaker diarist, being at Carlisle when the news arrived, and seeing bonfires in the Market Place, and health-drinking everywhere, took oocasion to ask how they knew the child would be a prince; might it not happen to be a princess? 'No' he was answered, 'that can not be, for this child comes by the prayers of the Church. The Church has prayed for a prince, and it can be no otherwise.' In Newcastle the Mayor, Sir Wm. Creagh, and his friends proceeded to the little chapel down the White Hart Yard, and heard a sermon preached by the Rev. Phil. Metcalf, a Jesuit father, and one of the king's chaplains. This sermon was printed, and a copy of it is to be found in the Public library of Newcastle. It is entitled 'A Sermon preached before the Right Worshipful the Mayor of the Town and County of Newcastle-upon-Tyne on the 29th of January, 1688, being the day of Thanksgiving at the Catholick Chappell, by Phil. Metcalfe, P. of the Society of Jesus, with Allowance.' The dedication is to 'the R. W. Sir William Creagh, Mayor of the town and county of Newcastle-upon-Tyne;' printer's name, 'H. Hills, London.' The bells of the parish churches at the same time rang merry peals, at least some of them did, for we read in the books of St Andrew's that the churchwardens 'paid for ringing for the queen's conception, 1s. 4d.' The rejoicings in anticipation of a prince were justified by the course of events. Her Majesty did give birth

to a prince. And then, sofar as Newcastle was concerned, came the crowning glory of all; the royal statue, a noble effigy of brass, bestriding a rearing charger of the same metal, was set upon the marble pedestal in front of the Town's Chamber on the Sandhill.

Alas for the vanity of earthly aims and enterprises! All these remarkable experiments in personal government, all these curious efforts to combine arbitrary rule with religious freedom were doomed to failure. Lingard, Maziere Brady, and other historians declare that the Pope and Howard saw clearly the fatal tendency of the royal policy, and opposed as strongly as they dared the headstrong course which the king pursued. But His Majesty, strong in his opinions, confident in his hereditary ability to govern, disregarded their warnings, and lost both his people and his throne. It was some time in July, 1688, that the royal statue first glittered in the eyes of the merchants on the Sandhill; and only a few weeks afterwards Sir William Creagh, fresh from Whitehall, pranced gaily under its shadow, amid pealing bells and thundering cannon, and through crowds of cheering townsmen, to celebrate in Guildhall, with appropriate toast and sentiment, the arrival of the Town's Charter, once more altered by the royal hand. Yet within a couple of months the king and his advisers discovered that their interference with borough charters was wrong; and they ordered the removal from their offices of all Mayors, Sheriffs, Aldermen, etc., appointed contrary to the original charters, those of Newcastle among the rest. It was too late. The Revolution had begun and before the year ended, king, queen, and baby prince were fugitives from the kingdom. On Saturday, the 11th May, 1689, a month after the coronation of William and Mary, King James' statue was torn down from its pedestal, and thrown into the River Tyne.

Fortunately the freedom of public worship enjoyed by Catholics in Newcastle during the brief reign of James II. was not abridged by his successors. The chapel in the White Hart Yard continued to be the resort of the faithful even under Dutch William. Thither came, shortly after the Revolution, in succession to Mr. Jenison, the Rev. Thomas Witham, who in addition to the charge of the secular mission, had also been appointed by Bishop Smith, Vicar-General of the Diocese.

THOMAS WARD (1652-1708) AND HEXHAMSHIRE. CATHOLIC APOLOGETICS IN THE TYNE VALLEY

Dom Geoffrey Scott, O.S.B.

While drafting an article on Thomas Ward, (1652-1708), the well-known Catholic apologist and controversialist, for the *New Dictionary of National Biography,* I realised that he had been active for some years at the end of the seventeenth century in Hexhamshire, and that, given his literary prominence, this fact deserved some notice. The early details of Ward's life are shadowy, and we know little of his later movements. Being a convert, a married layman, a traveller, and a foreign mercenary, he does not figure in the usual lists of English recusants and Catholics, even though his literary output was remarkable. Most of the salient facts for his life derive from *The Life of the Author*, an anonymous biography attached to early nineteenth-century editions of his works, notably those published in Manchester.

Ward was the eldest son of a farmer, and was born at Danby Castle near Guisborough, Yorkshire, a noted centre of recusancy, on 13 April 1652. By 1666, he was being educated at Pickering school, where he became proficient in arithmetic, geometry and astronomy. He declined his father's advice to enter one of the professions: there were, he felt, too many temptations to dishonesty in the law, physics was repugnant to his delicacy of feeling, and as a clergyman, he feared he would contribute more to the destruction than the salvation of his fellow-men. Afterwards he became tutor to the children of a gentleman of fortune and became interested in religious controversy, church history, the fathers and scripture, as well as in poetry and the classics. His 'lively eccentric fancy strongly inclined him' to a love of burlesque poetry.[1] He had been brought up as a presbyterian or Calvinist, but his studies in theological controversy induced him to join the Catholic church, against the wishes of his father who therefore cut him out of his will. This conversion, nevertheless, produced in him a sweetness of temper and 'security of competence', and he lived for some years in the domestic peace of his family, having married a Catholic wife soon after his conversion. After his father's death, he brought about the conversion of his mother and the rest of his family.

Subsequently becoming tired of books, but with his wife's and mother's consent, he travelled in France and Italy. At Rome he accepted a

commission in the pope's guards, and he remained in the service for five or six years, during which time he served in the maritime war against the Turks, and by joining piety to bravery, became 'the model of a Christian soldier'. According to Dodd, he had earlier 'rode in the king's guards', and according to Lingard, he had earlier served as 'a trooper in the horse-guards'. He spent his leisure time in Rome in reading and in frequenting the churches, public buildings, and libraries, especially that of the Vatican, in which he researched and copied key documents relating to religious controversy and to the history of England. It was this respect for the value of original documents which seems to have brought his works to the notice of John Lingard in the early nineteenth-century.

In 1685 Ward returned to England following the demands of his wife and family. It was during the reign of the Catholic king, James II, that Ward made the acquaintance of those north-eastern notables who were attached to the Stuarts and later became ardent Jacobites. Thus, among his patrons, he counted James Radcliffe, the third Earl of Derwentwater and his uncle, Colonel Thomas Radcliffe, as well as Derwentwater's school contemporary, John Thornton of Netherwitton Hall, and Lord Richard Lumley of Lumley Castle, [called Lumney in the *Life*], a Catholic who was to apostatise in 1687. These, and others, were impressed by Ward's learning and wit, and became his patrons. These acquaintances suggest that Ward was living in Hexhamshire between 1685 and 1687.

Presumably when he was in Northumberland, Ward began work on his *Errata to the Protestant Bible,* which was published in 1688, 'little known for want of publication in a country to which it was obnoxious', but this famous book showed him to be 'a man of genius, judgment, and erudition'.[2] This work is based on the *Discoverie of the manifold corruptions of the Holy Scriptures by the heretiques of our daies*, [Rheims, 1582] by the Douai secular priest and translator of the Douai Bible, Gregory Martin. Ward proved that the errors found in Protestant translations of the scriptures were quite deliberate. There were to be many subsequent editions of the *Errata,* usually producing a Protestant riposte; the editions of John Lingard in 1810 and 1841 being noteworthy. The work was to become well-known in the north-east. On 23 March 1789, for instance, the priest Robert Banister wrote a letter from Lancashire to his nephew, Henry Rutter, then at Minsteracres, which gives the flavour of Ward's *Errata:* 'It was a singular providence, as Ward takes notice, that suffered not the first pseudo- reformers to change the words Catholic Church in the ninth article

although they everywhere changed it into General Congregation in their translations of the Scriptures. It remains unchanged in the creed to bear witness that as often as they say it, they lie to their Maker'.[3]

From 1687, Ward was in the thick of controversy as Protestant opposition to the king, thought to be under the control of Jesuit advisers, grew. Numbers of distinguished Protestant theologians tried hard to answer Ward's mordant criticisms, which were to provide useful ammunition for later generations of English Catholic apologists. His translation of the convert dean of Derry, Peter Manby's, *Some Queries To the Protestants,* [1687] was answered by Dr William Clagett, and his posthumous *The Controversy of Ordination truly stated,* [1719], an attack on Gilbert Burnet's *Vindication* [1677], was responded to by David Williams and Thomas Elrington.

His local involvement in denominational controversy is seen best in a posthumous work, *An interesting Controversy with Mr Ritschel, vicar of Hexham,* [1819]. This book was published at Manchester by the Catholic publisher J. Robinson from a manuscript apparently in the publisher's possession and dated 1 August 1700, on the subject of a conference with the Reverend George Ritschel, vicar of Hexham, and was dedicated 'To those in Hexamshire who are concerned in this Controversie'. Ward's language was strong and vitriolic in his reply. Ritschel was the elder son of the better-known George Ritschel [1616-1683], also vicar of Hexham, of Bohemian stock, who had also defended the Church of England from papist attacks, and this led Ward to describe his son as coming 'from the veins of an unknown alien'.[4] Following a meeting between the two men – their first conference had taken place as far back as Easter 1688[5] – letters were exchanged. The second letter of Ritschel [dated 2 May 1698, the first was 4 May 1697], which incorporated 'two epistles', must have been a weighty document since it compromised over 160 pages, and Ward called it 'a book'. Ward's reply to this letter is the substance of the book of 1819, which is divided into three parts. The debates between the two protagonists centred on the question 'Whether the protestant church of England is the catholic church?' Ward returned to arguments employed in his earlier books, before moving onto controversial issues such as papal supremacy, the Real Presence, Limbo, and invocation to the saints. The original conference had taken place 'at John Wade's house' in Hexhamshire. Wade seems to have been an ally of Ritschel, and the latter's two chaplains 'Dr Jones and Dr Bawick' were brought into the controversy, as well as his neighbour, the

parson, Mr Rudderford whose radical opinions included his belief 'that a priest may ordain in the absence of the bishop'.[6] Ritschel's mother also figured in the debate. About her, Ward poked fun at her frequent recourse to the legend of Pope Joan to embarrass Catholics,[7] and he commented sarcastically about her influence on her son: 'I wonder, Sir, where you found those nonsensical sentences, or what foolish sophist put them into your head. But, what encreases my wonder is, that the learned Vicaress dowager, that critical and sagacious lady your mother, should never discover the absurdity, when she revised and examined your writings, as she assured me she did, and affirmed she thought them very clear, substantial and to the purpose'.[8]

During James II's reign Ward composed his 'ingenious' broadsheet, *Speculum Ecclesiasticum,* [1687], which was designed as an epitome of church history following 'an exact chronology'. Ward's broadsheet, 'The Tree of Life, or, The Church of Christ represented' [1688], which he sent a copy of to Mr Ritschel, and which Gillow suggests was re-published in Manchester in 1809[9] is described in identical terms to the *Speculum,* and is probably, therefore, another title for the same work. Ward invited Ritschel to put his 'The Tree of Life' alongside the 'protestant chronological tables printed at Cambridge in the year 1685'[10]. The *Speculum* was the latest in a series of Catholic broadsheet apologias which went back as far as Richard Verstegan's *Typus Ecclesiae Catholicae* [1585]. Ward's *Roman Catholick souldier's letter to Dr Tho. Tenison* [1688] is another example of his use of a polemical broadsheet to popularise his opinions. He defended the argument of the *Speculum* in his *Monomachia,* 'Or a Duel between Dr Tho.Tenison . . . and a Roman Catholick Souldier' [1687], though Tenison believed 'the soldier' was really a Jesuit in disguise, and Henry Wharton assured the public that this soldier was originally a Cambridge scholar who had exchanged his black coat for a red one.

Ward's most famous work, however, popular among both Catholics and Protestants, was *England's Reformation [from the time K Henry VIII to the end of Oates's 'Plot],* [1710, supposedly published in Hamburg, but actually at the English College Press in Saint-Omer, and many later editions] which, beneath the humour, demonstrated his knowledge of the major Catholic and Protestant historians. He chose to compose the poem, imitating Samuel Butler's *Hudibras* as a burlesque, 'that ludicrous channel for conveying the history of the Reformation to the public, because he saw it most adapted to the state of the times, and most agreeable to common

conception'. Although he concluded the poem with the Rye House Plot [1682-83], he had written another canto at the time of his death, taking the narrative down to the Revolution. He allowed his original text to be severely edited, which 'considerably diminished the gaiety of the design' *[Life,* p. xxvi]. The later editions of *England 's Reformation* which contain engravings [i.e. from the 1747 edition which contains engravings by B. Cole] are a unique example of graphic political satire in a published work from an English Catholic author of this time. His heavily documented 'History of England', which he thought his 'best production' was not published on account of his fleeing to France [Dodd says Flanders] during the Revolution.

Ward had one son and three daughters. His son was the secular priest, Lawrence Ward, *alias* Green [1677-1741], ordained at Douai, and later becoming prefect-general and procurator there, before going to Paris as confessor to the Austin canonesses. One of his daughters became a nun in Brussels [perhaps this was Sister Mary Agatha Ward, an English Dominican lay-sister at Spellekens, Brussels, professed 1702, aged 26]. Ward himself died in France in 1708, and was buried at St Germain's, 'where his obsequies were performed with a solemnity becoming so pious and learned a man' *[Life,* p. xxvi]. There is, however, no reference to his burial in the parish registers of Saint-German-en- Laye. In the year of his death, John Ward, Senior, presumably a relation, was still living in Danby Castle. Ward 'was of a comprehensive and versatile genius that embraced and cultivated studies of an almost opposite nature. He possessed a deep fund of ancient and modern learning. He knew the Hebrew, Greek and Latin languages, and was well skilled in French and Italian. He was one of the best controversists of his time',[11] and was maliciously confused by his enemies with the contemporary humorist, Edward Ward [1667-1731]. 'His disposition was generous and mild, though not incapable of being provoked to resentment; he even fought two duels in his youth . . . He was, in fine, a valiant soldier, a penetrating naturalist, an accurate writer, an agreeable companion, and a charitable Christian'.[12]

Ward's career was as complex as his writings. His importance for the north-east lies in his contribution to theological debate in the region. Thanks to the excellent work of Dr Leo Gooch and others, we now have a clear picture of Catholic Jacobite involvement in Northumbria, and the ill-starred Derwentwaters still retain a fascination among romantics. Ward's

involvement with local Catholics and Protestants in Hexhamshire encourages us to move on from tales of clandestine meetings of local Jacobite gentry and armed rebellion towards an appreciation of the theological and ideological under-pinning of Northumbrian Catholic and Jacobite activity at the end of the seventeenth century.

NOTES

1. *Life of Author*, 1815, p.xxiv.
2. *ibid*, p.xxvii.
3. Gooch, ed., *The Catholic Revival in England*, Wigan, 1995, p.137.
4. *Controversy*, p.17.
5. *ibid*, p.10.
6. *ibid*, p.128.
7. *ibid*, pp.172-3.
8. *ibid*. p.16.
9. J. Gillow, *Dictionary*, iii, p.217.
10. *Controversy*, p.17.
11. *Life of Author*, p.xxvi.
12. *ibid*, p.xxvii.

FATHER IGNATIUS SPENCER, PASSIONIST (1799-1864)

Robin Gard

On the morning of 1st October 1864, just before noon, a man was found dead in the driveway of Mr Monteith's house at Carstairs, near Glasgow. The man was Father Ignatius Spencer, Passionist Priest, Servant of God. 'How beautiful it would be', he had once said, 'to die in a ditch unseen and unknown'. His saintliness had long been recognised by his friends and contemporaries so that materials for a biography were collected immediately and within two years an account of his remarkable life was published.[1] Even so, it was only in 1992 that the cause for his beatification was formally introduced but until the formal process is completed he is declared Venerable. The purpose of this article is to outline his life, to describe the contribution he made to the conversion of England in the middle of the nineteenth century, and to detail his visits to the North East.

EARLY LIFE

Father Ignatius was the Honourable George Spencer, the youngest son of the 2nd Earl Spencer of Althorp (1758-1834). He was born in 1799 when his father was First Lord of the Admiralty. He was brought up in the privileged state of the aristocracy and educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge. He went on the Grand Tour, as was customary, and for a while led the life of a young man about town. Even so, he had his serious side. High-minded tutors nurtured his spiritual inclinations and as a younger son a career in the Established Church was a natural destiny.

Long before the beginning of the Oxford Movement, Cambridge had produced at least three notable converts to Rome: Kenelm Digby in 1823, Ambrose Phillipps de Lisle in 1825, and George Spencer himself in 1830. Digby popularised the virtues of medieval chivalry, identifying them with the Catholic Faith – he is said to have been the first to refer to the Middle Ages as the 'Ages of Faith'. Ambrose Phillipps at a tender age developed an interest in theology and liturgy, possibly from a French emigré priest, and after instruction from the priest at Loughborough (now a Passionist parish), he was received into the Church at the age of 16 years. He devoted his life (1809-1878) to the evangelization of England: he was responsible for the introduction of the Cistercians, the Rosminians and, to an extent, the Passionists into the country, he established St Bernard's, the first monas-

tery (*pace* the short-lived community at Lulworth), co-operated with Spencer in his great Crusade of Prayer for the Conversion of England, and was an advocate for the corporate union of the Christian Churches, although the Association for the Promotion of the Unity of Christendom (APUC), which he founded in 1857, was later condemned by Rome, despite which disappointment he remained convinced that 'God's Design is a fusion of Churches, not a mere picking up of a few men, one by one'. He had once hoped that the Oxford Movement would lead to such a union, or re-conversion. In the Catholic revival of the mid-nineteenth century, Digby appeared only in the wings, Phillipps often held the centre stage, but Spencer was always in the front line.

George Spencer was duly ordained into the Anglican ministry in 1822, and from 1823 to 1830 was rector of the family living of Brington in Northamptonshire. In the natural course of events, given his family background, he would have been assured rapid promotion in ecclesiastical preferment, with probable elevation to the episcopal bench. However, during his years at Brington, he passed through more than one phase of religious experience, and through his pastoral work with the poor he discovered in himself a desire to lead an austere and selfless life. One who knew him from childhood wrote: 'His great charity to the poor and wandering beggars was unbounded. At times he gave them all the money he had, and stripped himself of his clothes to give them to the distressed; and when he had nothing to give, he would thank God that he had only his holy truth to impart, and would speak of the love of God so fervently, that he would call forth tears from the poor objects of misery who had come many miles to beg money or clothes from him.'

CONVERSION, 1830

Once, on the departure of some family friends, Spencer wrote: 'Thank God, I have heretofore found happiness in my solitude, and shall do so again I trust. His word and the way of his Commandments, *they* are my joy. May I grow in the Knowledge of them and I desire no more for this World.' During his ministry at Brington, he had come to know Father Foley, the missioner at Northampton, but he owed his conversion to the enthusiasm of Ambrose Phillipps de Lisle, who engaged him in theological and doctrinal discussions. It is perhaps imprudent to simplify what must have been an intense debate both with others and within his own mind and conscience – he later wrote an account of his conversion – but possibly the critical point

was his recognition of the teaching authority of Rome: 'One thing I have learnt in the course of these enquiries is that the Scriptures of the New Testament are not, as I formerly used to regard them, the formal canon of the Christian Faith'. Phillipps introduced him to Father Caestryck, the Dominican priest at Leicester, by whom he was received into the Church on 30th January 1830. His conversion stunned his family but did not embitter them, as he was much loved by them. 'My dear poor brother', his sister wrote, 'What shall I say of him? I mean George, who is become a Catholic – one fears a Catholic priest'. He remained on good terms with his family, his father helping his now indigent son at times, but George's prayers for their conversion, were not answered, at least not directly.

Having resigned his living and prospects, he placed himself at the disposal of Bishop Walsh, the Vicar Apostolic of the Midland District, who sent him to Rome to study for the priesthood at the English College. Here he met Wiseman, then its rector and, for the first time, Dominic Barberi, with whom he became closely associated later in life. The meeting with Barberi was arranged by Letitia Trelawney, daughter of Sir Harry Trelawney, then a widower, who was likewise training for the priesthood, although in his 70s. Barberi had been asked to teach Trelawney the liturgy of the Mass – it seems strange that no one could be found in the College for this duty and that an Italian with little English was enrolled, but such are the mysterious workings of Providence! Miss Trelawney thought to introduce Spencer to Barberi at this time: 'It was Miss Trelawney', Spencer wrote in his *Account of My Conversion*, published in 1831, 'who discovered the heavenly flame of charity for our people, which had been for more than seventeen years consuming his heart' – he was referring to Barberi, of course. It was at this time, too, that Spencer's own passion for the conversion of England developed, prompted by his own pastoral experience, Ambrose Phillipps' infectious enthusiam, and by Dominic Barberi's zeal for the same cause, which St Paul of the Cross, the founder of the Passionists had been inspired to pray for long before, in 1720.

Wiseman was impressed by Spencer: 'I have never met anyone whose mind and heart so unreservedly exhibit themselves in every action and word as in his case. He is candour and openness itself. I have no doubt but that Divine Providence has brought him to the truth, not only for his own sake, but for the salvation of others . . .' Wiseman experienced Spencer's candour, however, when Spencer told him bluntly 'that he should apply his

mind to something more practical than Syrian manuscripts, or treatises in geology, and that he would rather see him take up what suited a priest on the English mission as it then was', advice which Wiseman took to heart.

PRIEST IN THE MIDLANDS, 1832-1839

Spencer was ordained in Rome in 1832 and returned to England to serve as assistant priest to Fr Martyn of Walsall, whose mission covered Wednesbury, Darlaston, Stourbridge, and West Bromwich. Spencer was largely responsible for building the church of St Michael and All Angels in West Bromwich, which was opened in November 1832, and witnin a year he had opened three schools in West Bromwich, one in a former pork-shop, where he also lectured twice a week to a mixed audience. He extended his work to Dudley, where he converted a warehouse into a chapel, and eventually built a church, consecrated by Wiseman in 1842. He worked unceasingly among the poor with transparent humility and poverty of spirit. Anti-Popery was still rife, on occasions he had to endure assaults and insults on his rounds. 'He used to leave home every morning', it is recorded in a letter, 'and fill his pockets with wine and food for the poor sick, and return home about six in the evening without taking refreshment all day, though he may have walked twenty miles in the heat of the summer.'

THE CATHOLIC POPULATION IN THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY

Since much of Fr Spencer's ministry was to the labouring poor in the rapidly expanding industrial towns of the Midlands and the North, both in his years as a secular priest and later as a Passionist, it is perhaps useful to review the Catholic population of England and Wales in the mid-nineteenth century. In 1767 the Catholic population has been estimated at around 70,000, possibly 80,000. By 1840, according to the Bishops' reports to Rome, the number was some 452,000. The Religious Census of 1851 recorded a Sunday Mass attendance of 252,000, but the actual Catholic population in that year has been estimated (Hughes) at nearly 680,000.

Catholic historians of the period distinguish three main components in the Catholic population. There were to so-called 'old Catholics', comprising the aristocratic and landed families, and their tenants, farmers, as well as tradesmen and other workmen, all living mostly in areas of traditional Catholic sympathy, many of whom had kept the faith alive throughout the penal years. They had developed a peculiarly English attitude, devout but undemonstrative in religious observance, and discreet and unobtrusive in public life. They were suspicious of the innovations of the 'Roman party',

unsure of the reliability of the converts, and sadly indifferent at times to the missionary efforts of those who sought the conversion of England. The number of this English Catholic stock was around 250,000 in 1851.

Another constituent of the Catholic population was that of the converts, who, though relatively small in numbers, exerted an influence on the course of the Church in various ways. Brought up, mostly at least, in a tradition of culture and freedom unfamiliar to the 'old Catholics', they were inclined to adopt the customs, mode of life, and religious outlook of those whose example had first attracted them to the faith. They came, as it were, singly and without reference to others who were making the same spiritual journey, and were absorbed singly. In all generations, converts, because of their intellectual abilities, enthusiasm and commitment, have always enriched the Church far beyond their numbers, and there is still much to be learnt, of present as well as of historical value, from the study of their lives, both in the local and national contexts.

Then there were the Irish, or the 'poor Irish' as they were generally called. The 1851 Census indentified those of Irish birth as nearly 520,000, and calculated that there had been an increase during the 1841-51 decade of some 227,000. From these figures it seems that there was, as early as 1841, and well before the years of the Irish famine (1845-7), an Irish-born population of approaching 300,000, although they were by no means all Catholics, or practising Catholics. And it would appear, from the Bishops' estimate of 452,000 Catholics in 1840, that in the 1830s and 1840s more than half the Catholics in England and Wales were of Irish origin. By 1851, after the severe famine years, Irish-born Catholics considerably outnumbered those of English and Welsh stock.

The 'poor Irish' settled wherever unskilled labouring work could be found, mainly in the industrial towns. Manning wrote in 1882, albeit referring to the years after the Irish famine: 'I remember saying that "I had given up working for the people of England to work for the Irish occupation in Enland"'. And this was true, if to a lesser extent, considering the number of Irish already settled in the country, for the missioners of the 1830s and 1840s. However, the Irish brought with them a simple, strong faith, and the practice of their religion was not complicated by the national traditions and social customs of the England. Bernard Ward in his *Sequel to Catholic Emancipation, 1830-1850* (1915) remarked that the influx of the Irish 'affected the future of Catholicism in this country even more than the Oxford Movement.' (p.130)

Without undervaluing the tremendous contributions of numerous zealous, generous and totally committed patrons among the aristocracy and landed class to the Catholic revival in early Victorian times, it remains broadly true that the churches, schools and institutions of Catholic life in Britain in the period were built with the pennies of the poor. Fr Spencer spent much of his spare time when touring the country as a Passionist missioner 'begging'.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR AT OSCOTT

Fr Spencer remained at West Bromwich until 1839 when he was appointed as Spiritual Director at Oscott College, and thus had the opportunity of inspiring many young men with his zeal and high ideals, and at the same time came into direct contact with most of the leaders of the Church and the converts of the Oxford Movement who went there, including Newman and Faber. 'When Father Spencer was a Superior at Oscott', wrote Dr Amherst, Bishop of Northampton (1858-80), 'I had the good fortune to be under him. He frequently visited me and several of my companions in our rooms, when he would speak with the greatest earnestness of the conversion of England, of the sanctification of the priesthood, and of the entire devotion which should characterize a priest'. Not only did he influence his students in their spiritual lives, but he also engaged in many of their sports, and proved an able coach, notably in cricket and shooting, while he did not neglect to visit the sick in the neighbourhood, preach sermons, and welcome and advise all who sought him out.

GEORGE SPENCER AND DOMINIC BARBERI

However, at the end of 1846, Fr Spencer's career took a dramatic turn when he joined the Passionist Order, and in January 1847 received the habit from Dominic Barberi, becoming a simple novice, taking the name of Ignatius of St Paul. This was clearly no sudden decision and is explained, partly at least, by his desire to lead a more austere life, but also by his growing association with Barberi and the Passionist mission to England, and by the 'one increasing purpose' in his life, 'to pray, to labour, to suffer, and, if need be, to die for the conversion of England'. To understand better Spencer's new vocation as a Passionist it is necessary to trace the life of Dominic Barberi and the fulfilment of his ambition to establish the Passionist mission in England.

Dominic Barberi was born in 1792, the youngest of eight children in a peasant family. He was orphaned at an early age and brought up by an

uncle. He joined the Passionists in 1814 and was ordained in 1818. He was a man of natural intellectual ability with the remarkable talent for mastering any subject with relatively little study. For much of his early religious life he was thus employed by his Order in teaching, administration, giving retreats, and other work in the different houses, or Retreats as they were called, of the Order in Italy. However, as early as 1824 he had cherished a desire to spend his life for the conversion of England, and sought every opportunity to go on the English Mission, an ambition constantly frustrated by his superiors who wished to reserve his talents for the benefit of the Order in Italy.

Barberi's zeal for the conversion of England was fuelled by the like-minded enthusiasm of Phillipps and Spencer when they met for the first time in Rome in 1830, and both Englishmen continued to correspond with him thereafter, encouraging him with glowing reports of conversions and the prospects of fruitful missionary work. In 1836 Phillipps half offered to provide a house and wrote: 'I am convinced that the extraordinary progress of the Catholic religion during the last five years is owing entirely to your prayers and those of your holy Order of Passionists'. Barberi replied, though his letter was witheld by his superiors, 'Every hour seems a thousand years till I see dear England and shed my blood, or at least be spent in my labours for it . . . .Do not think that so much is required to prepare a house for a few poor Passionists. I should be content to live in a house fit for a peasant, built in some open field, or in a wood, nay, I shall be happy in a cabin made of straw, or a cave dug out of a rock'.

On the strength of Spencer's favourable opinion and another offer of a house from Phillipps, Barberi persuaded his general chapter in 1839 to agree 'on paper' to a foundation in England. The opinions of Lords Shrewsbury and Clifford, and a Fr Glover, were sought, but their advice was negative. Clifford and Glover considered the scheme impractical, Glover saying: 'You will never get an Englishman into that Order, so what good can you do with them. They (Fr Dominic and another) came to me to ask if I knew anything about the matter, as they were ready to go and take possession of the house you were so good to offer them. I said they could not eat the house, and I did not know who was to feed them. They replied they trusted in Providence. Father Dominic spoke only a little broken English, but could not understand a word of what I said to him. You will only bring yourself and others into trouble with these good people and do no good'. Lord Shrewsbury, however, argued for a 'new race of zealous missionaries,

such as are now bringing up at Oscott, under the good bishop and Pugin', and saw the value of 'perambulating preachers' but thought that the work ought to be concentrated where Catholics were already established. Phillipps thought otherwise: 'We shall never produce a great effect on the public mind', he wrote, 'unless we have some pious and moveable missionaries to go about from place to place, preaching even where there is no public chapel. If the word of God is not to be preached to our unfortunate countrymen, excepting where we can afford to build chapels, we may wait for hundreds of years before we shall see England Catholick'.

THE PASSIONIST MISSION

In the event, the Passionists first established a house in Belgium, and Barberi first came to England in 1840, visiting Wiseman and Spencer at Oscott. Wiseman found a house for them at Aston Hall, near Stone, and it was here that the first Passionist Retreat in England was founded in February 1842. While it is not within the scope of this article to expand on the heroic apostolic work of Barberi in England, nor indeed either of that of Luigi Gentili of the Institute of Charity, who Phillipps had brought also to work in the Midlands, because of Barberi's central place in Spencer's life, a further note on Barberi at this time is not inappropriate. Barberi did not have Gentili's commanding presence or his gift for dominating a crowd, and his ungainly figure and poor delivery in broken English provoked ridicule and even violence in the streets, and there was a time when he fell very low in spirit. 'Although I have been preparing myself for missionary trials for 28 years', he wrote to a friend, 'I find that I was not half well enough prepared for the dire reality . . . It seems to me that if I had ever foreseen all that awaited me I should not have had the courage to step on board ship. Such sufferings and of every kind would be too much for a giant. Last Sunday I broke down and wept. I can do no more. The Cross is too heavy'. But he persevered and by July 1843 he had received 75 converts with 30 under instruction. A local manufacturer gave him land for a chapel, and the little chapel-cum-school at Stone, designed by Pugin, which still stands, was opened in 1844.

The main work of the Passionists was to give spiritual retreats and what would now be termed parish missions, and the details of these are recorded in the Passionist archives. In 1844, Barberi led 15 of the 21 retreats given, and 36 were given in the following year. Two of these were in Oxfordshire, from one of which Barberi went to Littlemore to spend a

short time with Newman and his friends. 'A little more grace is needed', he said, with a touch of humour. The Prioress of the Colwich nuns said of him: 'The first time he came and preached, no one could understand him. But all agreed that his look alone, so modest and mortified, was more than a sermon'. The story of Newman's reception into the Church by Barberi is well known, and Newman must surely have had Barberi in mind when he said: 'If they want to convert England, let them go barefoot into out manufacturing towns, let them preach to the people like St Francis Xavier, let them be pelted and trampled on, and I will own that they can do what we cannot. I will confess they are our betters, far'. Such was the man and his mission which inspired Spencer to leave Oscott at the end of 1846 to join the Passionists.

Spencer kept a journal all his life, certainly from 1818. It survives for the years from 1818 to 1828, shortly before his conversion, and from 1846 until his death in 1864. The daily record of early rising, Mass, visits, journeys, missions and retreats, meetings, and the comings and goings of his fellow Passionists, and his begging, constitute a seemingly unbroken sequence of labour in the service of God and for the salvation of souls. What little leisure time he had was given to writing, his two principal works being a translation of *Meditations on the Passion* by Fra Gaetano da Bergamo, a Capuchin, which was published in 1850-4, and the *Life of Blessed Paul of the Cross*, published in 1860. St Paul of the Cross, the founder of the Passionists was beatified in 1853 and canonized in 1867. Spencer's journal thus covers his seventeen years as a Passionist priest, and some entries may be quoted to give an indication of the information it contains.

Aston

Friday Jan 1 1847. I woke at 11.45 (i.e. on 31 December!). happily, & so entered the new year, praying for the graces of my vocation & for my brother's conversion &c. I sang Mass, without ministers, at 10½. Fr Constantine preached. Fr Dominic came home about 5 from London.

Sunday Jan 3. . . after Complin, I received the habit in the Chapel from Fr Dominic, who made me a beautiful address on imitating the infant Jesus in my noviciate.

Thursday, 21 Jan. I had a letter from Ld Arundell & Surrey with £100. for our wants, promising more for the Church hereafter. This filled us with joy. After dinner, I started thro' the deep snow lying & falling, with Fr Gaudentius to Stone, to see Mrs Vitta, dangerously ill, who would have an English Priest. called at Mr Beech's and Mr Harper's about my chilblains.

Friday Jan 29. S. Francis of Sales. I was busy these days translating a sermon for Fr Vincent to preach on Sunday . . . I wrote to Phillipps this morning being the anniversary, 17 years ago, of my conversion, & falling this year on the same day of the week, my mind was much occupied in recollecting the great events of these few days: a joyful remembrance.

Discipline is mentioned in these days of Ignatius' noviciate, as the life of a Passionist novice was particularly severe, and Ignatius, despite his age, background and experience, was not spared such menial jobs as cleaning floors and washing down the stairs. He suffered much from chilblains and leg ulcers all through his life, and occasionally became so exhausted as to need rest for general recuperation.

Feb 3 (1847). This was the first morning for some weeks I have been able to stand up all through matins, on account of my chilblains.

He referred again to his sore feet on 17 February 1849, adding 'I have been barefoot since Jan 6th'. [Ignatius was professed on 6 January 1846.]

Thursday, Jan 6. The Epiphany: End of my noviciate. I was deacon at High Mass by Fr Vincent. He had solemn Vespers sung in chapel with very good effect and Benediction. Fr Dominic sang them. Mr Fitzherbert, his two brothers, Sir Thomas and Mr & Mrs Gage came with Mr Harkness to Vespers. We had them after for a visit. At 5 Compline: then my profession. Fr Dominic seemed detained on purpose for it. He made a beautiful address to me. I made my vows in the Sacristy privately.

Almost immediately, he was sent out on a begging tour in aid of the new church at Aston:

CRUSADE FOR THE CONVERSION OF ENGLAND

Spencer's consuming desire for the conversion of England continued to the end of his days. It had been in November 1838 that with Phillipps he had launched his Association for the Conversion of England. This had been adopted initially in France and took the form of a weekly Mass and regular prayers. The English bishops were generally encouraging, as was Wiseman, whose own prayers for the conversion of England, still familiar to older Catholics today, date from this time. Bishop Baines of the Western District, however, cautioned his flock against entertaining too high hopes for any widespread conversions, and issued a pastoral letter prohibiting the weekly Mass and prayers – this was the letter for which he was carpetted in Rome and obliged to issue a declaration of explanation. In subsequent years, Spencer, or Ignatius as he should now be called, travelled the length and breadth of Europe promoting his great crusade, or 'preaching England' as he noted it in his journal.

He toured Germany six times, and had wider tours in 1844, 1851 and 1856. His family background assured his admission to the courts of emperors and kings, princes, bishops and everyone who might have influence and be able to promote the cause. Twice he had an audience with the Emperor Francis Joseph and his nephew Duke Maximilian, saw Empress Eugenie, and had a rare audience with Napoleon III, who gave him money. The King of Prussia was not interested, however. The crusade excited some misgivings within the Passionist Order and it was agreed that it should be referred to Rome for approval. Thus, Ignatius went to Rome in 1852 and spent five months seeking papal recognition. Pius IX was at first

reluctant to give special favour to England: 'I must not be represented as caring exclusively for England, as I am Father to all', he said. Eventually, in November 1852, Ignatius obtained a letter of recommendation from the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda addressed to all Bishops, Vicars Apostolic, and Superiors of Missions throughout the world, desiring them to receive him favourably, and to assist him to the utmost of their power. Even so, Ignatius was not wholly satisfied and later obtained a special letter to the Prelates of Ireland, as well. Ignatius visited Ireland several times and succeeded, contrary to everyone's expectations, in persuading the Irish to pray for the conversion of England.

In 1850 Ignatius had made an assault on the high and mighty in England itself, and his visits to Lord John Russell, then Prime Minister, and to Lord Palmerston, the Foreign Secretary, neither of whom were at all sympathetic to Catholics, and to others, make interesting reading. At this time, too, Ignatius wore the Passionist habit and sandals in public (this practice was prescribed in 1852), and one supposes that many of his reluctant hosts did not know quite what to make of him, or how to deal with him. His sister, Lady Lyttleton, who was something at court and clearly fond of him, begged him not to call at the Palace if dressed in his habit. In a letter dated 25 February 1850, she described Ignatius at this time. 'Caroline may have told you I had a visit from my brother Ignatius on Sunday. Such a figure! I was indeed glad he called, not *here* (Buckingham Palace), but at No. 8., where, in spite of the secluded corner, two or three people assembled to look at him. The dress, however, being of fine black broad cloth, very long and full, with an immense cape, and a white enbroidery representing emblems of the Passion, is rather handsome. He wore gouty (?) shoes and an inordinate hat, like those in pictures of Spanish Friars . . . he looks better and happier than for years. And his manner, if possible, more strikingly gentlemanlike and calm than ever. His business is to induce everyone to pray for 'unity in the truth'. I represented that I disagreed with him both as to the sense of the word 'unity' and of the word 'truth'. He said that did not matter. I was to pray as he asked and the prayer will be heard as pleases God.'

APOSTLE OF ECUMENISM

Ignatius is also regarded as an apostle of ecumenism.[4] He seems always to have had very good relations with churchmen of all denominations and had supported Phillipps de Lisle's campaign for corporate re-union, although he was careful not to become involved with the

Association for the Promotion of the Unity of Christendom, which de Lisle founded in 1857 and which was later c mned in Rome. He did, however, make positive approaches to individual nonconformist ministers and once, after meeting Baptist and other Free Church leaders in London, he was subjected to a serious assault. He had also been attacked and injured once before, in Liverpool.

PROVINCIAL OF THE ORDER, 1849

Ignatius was abroad when Dominic Barberi died suddenly in August 1849, and he returned to find himself appointed pro-Provincial of the Order in England until a formal election could be made at the next chapter meeting in 1851. But he was not a very practical man and was a poor administrator, and sensibly left much of the running of affairs to others. Even so, a Retreat was founded at Woodchester, near Stroud, and a London Retreat at Hendon in 1849, and in the same year the church at Aston was opened and the first stone laid for St Anne's Retreat, Sutton, St Helen's, the present provincial house of the Passionists, and where both Blessed Dominic Barberi and Ignatius are buried.

ELIZABETH PROWT AND THE SISTERS OF THE CROSS AND PASSION, 1850-1864

Also buried at Sutton is Elizabeth Prowt (1820-64), in religious life Sister Mary Joseph, the first superior of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion.[2] They were founded in 1850 by Fr Gaudentius Rossi, one of Barberi's fellow Passionist missionaries. They were under the patronage of Bishop Turner of Salford, and were known at first as the Sisters of the Holy Family. Ignatius had a special affection for these Passionist Sisters and became their main father, friend and guide during their early years. In 1854 he described the origin and work of the Sisters in a letter to his cousin, Mrs Canning. Writing from St Joseph's Convent, Newtown House, Manchester, he said: 'Your letter has found me here today in the course of giving a retreat to a little Community of Nuns, in a strangely out of the way place three miles from Manchester; and so, whilst giving, also enjoying, a thorough retreat myself.' These nuns are entitled the 'Catholic Sisters of the Holy Family'. What brings me to them is because they are a new Institute founded by Father Gaudentius and Mr Croskell, a priest of Manchester and Vicar General of Salford Diocese. They are but ten in number, and are not yet fully 'approved'. It is quite a new kind of community. The distinctive feature of it is, that they are intended to support themselves by their industry; taking in needlework, dressmaking

and all such employment, besides teaching schools out of doors. The end which Father Gaudentius had in mind in forming it was to open a way for many young women to become Religious who for want of money cannot go where fortunes are required: if they can work or teach they will be received. The Bishop of Salford patronizes them and I think they will get on and spread widely, but they have just now to get through the struggles of infancy.' Ignatius was involved in drawing up rules for the Institute which was canonically erected in 1864, when Sister Mary Joseph, already dying of consumption, was elected Superior at the first chapter – she died in January 1864. The Institute, now known as the Sisters of the Cross and Passion, first received papal approval in 1876 and was finally recognised as a Religious Order in 1887.

MISSIONS AND RETREATS

Ignatius' first Passionist mission after his profession was at West Bromwich from 10 to 27 February 1848. In every Passionist Retreat house a record is kept of all mission and retreat work by members of the community, and a record of this mission is recorded in the Aston chronicles:

> On Thursday evening, February 10, 1848, Rev. F. Gaudentius and Fr Ignatius opened a retreat at W. Bromwich. This was the place where F. Ignatius commenced to, work as a secular priest, he having been 7 years pastor of the congregation here from the time when the church was opened in 1832.
>
> The retreat lasted till Sunday, 27th Feb. Fr. Gaudentius gave the instructions at 3½ every day and preached at 7½ in the evening every day, except Saturdays when, to give time for confessions, these exercises were omitted. Fr Ignatius gave the Meditations on the Passion every morning at 7½, and preached at one of the three services on each Sunday. During the first ten days . . . the missionaries went with the Rev. Mr Bent, the pastor, several walks to visit the people in their houses and invite them to the retreat. During the last week the numbers at confession greatly increased.
>
> There were, in this week, many Holy Communions every morning, and on Sunday, the 27th, Holy Communion was administered after Mass by Fr Gaudentius to about 330 people. Altogether the communicants were reckoned to about 350, of whom a large number were brought back to their duties after an absence of several years.
>
> On Thursday, February 24, 14 Protestants made a public Profession of Faith and received Conditional Baptism before Benediction, which was given on the last two Sundays and on Tuesday and Thursday in the last week. Three Protestants were received at other times. The missionaries returned to Aston on Monday, Feb.28.'

In 1858 Ignatius developed the 'Little Missions'. The conventional mission of a fortnight or three weeks duration, or even longer, was not always practical, or even desirable. So he devised parish missions of half a week. Two sermons would be given each day and he spent as many hours as possible in the confessional. His routine was always the same. He rose at 5, said Mass, and when not giving sermons heard confessions, said his Office, and took only a scanty meal. Some calculate that he must have spent on occasions up to twelve hours a day in the confessional. Ignatius gave 243 of these little missions from June 1858 to September 1864. There were also clergy and religious retreats, and of course his translations and writing, not forgetting his extensive correspondence in two days, he noted in his journal once, he wrote 78 letters. Ignatius must also have spent much time in travelling, mostly by train, but also by the variety of horse-drawn vehicles in use at the time. One would like to know what he took with him.

RETREATS IN THE NORTH EAST, 1849, 1850

In 1849 he came twice to the North East. On 19 June he visited the Lawsons of Brough and after lunch, in company with the Lawson daughters, begged of the farmers, after which, he wrote from his journal:

> . . . till Miss Lawson who has tried her vocation at St Benedict's took me to the Station & I took the R.W. (railway) at 5.45 (?) to Darlington. Mr Singleton took me to the convent & begging a little. I saw Dr Hogarth & slept at H . . . (inner margin).
>
> Wed. Ju. 20. Mr Singleton served my Mass at 6. Mr Kellatt of Scorton went with me at 7.35 by R.W . . . to Durham. We saw Mr Fletcher. then Mr K. took me to Ushaw. Lunch at 1. dinner at 5½. tea at 9. between the last two Rob(ert) Gradwell took me to Flass to see Mr Leadbitter Smith. He also collected for me at the College. Mr Newsham showed me about.
>
> Thurs. Ju. 21. Mass at 7¼. at 9 ½ walked to Durham: with Messrs. Suffield, Vavasour & Feby(?). They did not enter the town for fear of cholera. we called on the way on the grange. I dined at 1½ with Mr Fletcher & sisters, after seeing the Cathedral & begging a little with a boy of Mr Chapman's the schoolmasters. at 2.5. R.W. to Sunderland. I went to seek Mr Kearney & Bamber the priests at Roker. Both dining with Mr Errington at Hexham. slept at their house after begging well with 2 nice youths, one called Errington.
>
> Fri. Ju. 22. Mass at the Convent of Mercy & preached on (their) prayers. at 8. R.W. to Newcastle. Mr Eyre sent me out begging with old Mr McKenna the sacristan. at 5 dined with Mr Eyre, met Messrs Kearney, Cullen & Betham. at 6.20. R.W. to Hexham. tea & lodging at Mr Charltons. met Mr Kirsopp,

Miss Gibson & Miss Lidderdale. called on Mr Singleton.

Sat. Ju. 23. Mass at 8 in the house. begged with old Kearney. at 11.13 R.W. to Carlisle. lunched with the Priest. at 2.5. R.W. to Carstairs.

He returned from Scotland in July via Corby Castle where he stayed with the Howard family and visited Warwick Bridge.

Wed. July 18. Mass in old Chapel at 6.45. R.W. at 7.55 to Gateshead. at 11 to S. Shields, famous in my old remembrances. went by ferry to N. Shields. called on the 2 Mr Gillows, who sent me begging with R. Corniff. dined with them at 2. The 2nd Mr Gillow took me then begging to S. Shields & showed me a new chapel preparing. at 8 R.W. to Gateshead where I begged away... with Mr Miller (?). to bed at 10½ at 26 Melbourne Str. at Mrs Milburn's lodging.

Thurs. July 19. R.W. 5½ to York .....

In the following year, 1850, Ignatius was again in the North East, this time at Ushaw College, Sunderland, Newcastle and Hartlepool, from 4th to 19th August. Once again, the journal entries best tell the tale.

11 Sun. after Pent. Aug.4. I said Mass at 7. heard high mass at 10 ½. dined at 5½. I wrote letters & a little Da Bergamo.

Mon. Aug. 5. Rain. went on writing. we dined at 5. I opened the retreat at 6½. Dr Hogarth was come & not many Priests.

Tues. Aug. 6. Meditation on the Passion at 6½. I said mass in the room of the retreat at 8. at 1½. Meditation on Mortal Sin in a Priest. at 2½ Consideration on Zeal for souls. at 6½ Meditation on Death.

Wed, Aug. 7. No. of Priests including Bishop 22, 10½ Meditation on Judgement, 2½ Riforma on manner of working for souls, 6½ Hell.

Thurs. Aug. 8. 10½ Mercy of God. 2½ prayer. 6½ Venial Sin in a Priest. I heard confessions of about 10 Priests.

Fri. Aug. 9. 6½ finished the Passion. 2½ Paradise. at 12½ Papal Benediction in the Church. at 1 dinner. at 3 I got a lift in a fly with Messrs. Walker, Cornthwaite & Knight to Durham, where I staid at Mr Fletchers till he took me to the Station at 5 when I started to Sunderland. I here had tea with Mr Bamber & Br Aloysius a Presentation Monk & opened the retreat to the Nuns at 8½.

Sat. Aug. 10. I said Mass for the Nuns at 7½. at 9½ Meditation on the Passion. dined at 12¼. at 1¼ Riforma, then confessions in the noviciate. the time fixed for the Meditation at night was 7½ but I gave it at 5½ on Death & at 7 heard confessions at the Chapel for Mr Kearney, who is absent. It is he who from a legacy made him had built the Church & started the Convent of Mercy & schools and or. (?) works.

12 Sun after Pent. Aug. 11. I gave the Meditation at 7. said Mass in Chapel at 8¼. at the 10½. Mass after the Chapel I preached to the people on the Conversion of England (to the English). at night after Vespers at 6½ to the Irish. Riforma at 1½. 2nd Meditation at 5½ on Judgement.

Mon. Aug. 12. This was a regular day. I do a little Da Bergamo. Meditation at night on Hell. Mr Humble from Newcastle called.

Tues. Aug. 13. Another regular day. Lady Stourton & family called. also the 2 Messrs Gillow of Shields. Meditation at night on the mercy of God. Wrote a very long letter to the . . . General till 2½ at night.

Wed. Aug. 14. Fast. at 4 I went to hear confessions of the Presentation Monks, who are finishing their retreat & gave them a little address on Heaven. Meditation at 5½ on the Happiness of the Just. from 7 till near 12 confessions at the Church.

Thurs. Aug. 15. Meditation at 7. then communion to the Nuns. said Mass at 8¼ in the Chapel. at 10½. preached on the B.V.M. 2nd Meditation to the Nuns at 5¼ on Venial Sin. at 6 took R.W. to Newcastle where after Vespers I preached on England, as a new conquest for Mary. Slept at Mr Humbles. Supper there with Mr Bewick his companion at the New Church & Messrs Cullen & Betham from Pilgrim St.

Fri. Aug. 16. Up at 4½ took R.W. from Gateshead, back to Sunderland, went thro' the day as usual. 2nd Meditation on the Death of the Just at 4½. Mr Kearney came back from Ireland at 10½. I had just before come from Shields where I went at 6 & preached on England to a congregation gathered by notice. Mr Singleton & Mr Kelly of Felling went with me to the Chapel across the Ferry & back.

Sat. Aug. 17. went thro' the confessions Of the Nuns. 2nd Meditation at 7½ on Paradise. went to bed at 10½.

XIII Sun aft Pent. Aug. 18. I got up at 3½. gave my last Meditation on Communion at 4.20 then Mass & Papal Benediction at 6½. took R.W. to Hartlepool. I got there at 9½. Mr Lawrenson met me at the Statn. I preached after Mr Knight's Mass, & again at 6½ on England. in the morng. to the English & at night to the Irish. Mr Knight & I dined at 2 with Ly Stourton, Miss Mary, Appollonia, Mr & Mrs Do. (?) who are there with 5 children.

Mon. Aug. 19. said Mass at 8. we breakfasted at Moor House at 10.20. took R.W. to York, thence to Manchester, thence to St Helen's . . .

Almost all the clergy mentioned in these extracts can be identified. Cornthwaite was Fr Robert Cornthwaite of Stockton; Knight was Fr William Knight of Hartlepool; Mr Fletcher was Fr William Fletcher of St Cuthbert's, Durham, and also Vicar General. The Presentation Brothers

had a school in Sunderland. Kearney and Bamber were Frs Philip Kearney and John Bamber of St Mary's, Sunderland, and the Convent of Mercy and school of course still flourish there. The two Messrs Gillow of Shields were Frs Thomas Gillow and his nephew Richard Gillow, whose mission covered the whole of what is now North Tyneside from their church at North Shields. Mr Humble was the priest in charge of St Mary's, Newcastle, the 'New Church' referred to, and his companion was the recently ordained Fr John William Bewick, later (1882-6) the third bishop of Hexham & Newcastle, who had been posted to St Mary's as his first appointment. Mr Singleton was Fr Richard Singleton, in charge of the new mission of St Bede's, South Shields, and Mr Kelly was Fr John Kelly of St Patrick's, Felling, but not the present church of course. Messrs Cullen and Betham from Pilgrim Street were Frs Joseph Cullen and Frederick Betham of St Andrew's. Fr Betham looked after Gateshead and was the first priest in charge of St Joseph's, opened in 1851. He later joined the Jesuits.

FINAL VISIT TO THE NORTH EAST

Another fourteen years were to pass before Ignatius again toured the North East and it was only a month before he died. After conducting a little mission in Leeds he went to St Clare's Abbey in Darlington to give a retreat. The details of the retreat in 1864 are recorded in his journal.

> Mon. Aug. 29. Missed the train at 8.5. with Talbot. began writing for D. Gariule. took R.W. at 11 to Darlington. dined at St Clare's Abbey at 3.15 & opened at 7.
>
> Tu. Aug. 30. at 6. sin. at 10 Poverty & Chastity. dinner at 1. at 6½ death as Meditn. (?)
>
> Wed. Aug. 31. at 6 The Judgement Partr. & General. 10 Obedience to rules & superiors. 6½ Hell.
>
> Th. Sep. 1. 6. the mercy of God. 10 confession & communion. 6½ Introduction to the Passion.
>
> Fr. Sep.2. At 6 the Agony. 10 conditions for prayer. 6½ Judas & Peter.
>
> Sat. 3. Dolours of B.V.M. 10. acts of prayer (&) thanksgiving. 6½ Caiphas, Pilate, Herod.
>
> XVI Sun. Sep. 4. 6. Scourging & Crowning. 10 Humility (4 opened little retreat to the children (on) The Happiness of Virtue). 6. Carriage of the Cross.
>
> Mon. Sep. 5. 6. 1st 3 last words (9 sin) (erased) 10 Sickness (9 preamble (?) to prepare for comn.) 6½ last 4 words.

Tu. 6. 6. Eucharist example (?) of J.C. 10. Zeal. 6½ Paradise (9 before communion. 4. Humility & Charity).[3]

Wed. Sep. 7. 6½ Papal Benedn. 7½ Mass & Benedn. visited Carmel House at 10 till 12. dined at 12½. car & R.W. at 2 to Fence Houses. opened at 8 at Houghton le Spring to . . . . .

The mission at Houghton le Spring was evidently a standard one as the word, or rather abbreviation, 'Regr.' (regular).is entered in the journal for the following three days. On Sunday, 11th September, Ignatius records that, after saying two Masses, he finished 'brightly', after which he was driven to Washington, where he began a mission at 5 o'clock. This was likewise another little mission and Ignatius noted on Tuesday, 13th, that the 'mission was improving each day'. On Wednesday, 14th September, he went first to Newcastle, where he saw Canon Eyre, and then at 11.45 took the train to Glasgow, and at 5.50 thence to Wood Cottage, Greenock, where he opened a mission at 8 o'clock. The journal ends with just 'Fr. Sep. 16.'

The Greenock mission was the 242nd of his 'Little Missions'. His routine, his zeal and his wholehearted commitment to the service of his Master during this visit were recorded in a tribute by Fr Condon, the priest in charge:

> Every moment of his time was employed either in the mission exercises, or at his Office, or in mental prayer, or in writing letters to arrange his future movements. He never rested. He seemed to have vowed all his time to some duty or other. Wood Cottage, where he stayed, rests on an eminence overlooking the town, harbour, and bay of Greenock, and is at a distance of five to ten minutes' walk from S. Lawrence's Church. I noticed that the zig-zag uphill walk fatigued him, and I offered to provide a conveyance. He would not permit me, saying he could not read his Office so well in the carriage as when walking. As he passed twice or thrice daily, to and from my house and the Church, his massive form and mild mien, his habit half concealed by his cloak, his broad-brimmed hat, and his Breviary in hand, attracted the attention of the old and the curiosity of the young. Even after his frugal refection, Father Ignatius would never rest. Then, too, he must either read his Breviary, say his Rosary, or write letters. During his mission here, he remarked repeatedly that his health was never better, and his mind never clearer. He promised himself yet twenty years to work for the conversion of England, the sanctification of Ireland, and the unity of all in the Faith. Might he not live to see this realized? But, with all this hope of heart and soul, I could, now and then, notice a shade of apprehension passing over his countenance and hear, not without tears, his humble but earnest self-reproaches at his inablility 'to

brighten up'. The manner in which he did this showed me plainly that he had a strong presentiment of his approaching end.'

LAST DAYS, 1864

Ignatius went on from Greenock to Coatbridge where he gave his last mission from 27th September to 1st October. After long hours in the confessional, Fr O'Keefe told him that he was over-fatigued, to which he replied 'No, no, I am not fatigued. There is no use in saying I am tired, for you know I must be at the same work tonight in Leith'. In spite of going to bed half an hour after midnight, he was up at 6 as usual, heard confessions, said Mass at 7, breakfasted at 8.30, and was on the train by 9.15. Stopping at Carstairs Junction at 10.55, he found he had an hour to wait for the Edinburgh train, and decided to make a quick visit to his friend Monteith at his house nearby, and was last seen walking up its drive.

The cause for the beatification of Fr Ignatius is still in progress but high hopes are placed on its success, for he was indeed an apostle of England, a lover of the poor, a zealous pastor, an untiring missioner and preacher of the word of God, an example of unswerving dedication to the salvation of souls, and one who 'walked humbly with his Lord'. Truly, as Kenelm Digby, a friend of his youth, had once called him, he was 'The English Noble and The Christian Saint'. It is fitting, and perhaps not inappropriate for our own age, to conclude with Ignatius' own prayer for the conversion of England:

> O God, have mercy on England: Turn, O Jesus, thy meek eyes upon that people. Let pity drop from thy glorious Wounds, and mercy from thy Heart. In what she is blind, in what she sins, forgive her, for she knows not what she does. Have Mercy on England!

NOTES

1. Fr Pius, *Life of Father Ignatius of St Paul, Passionist*, Dublin, 1666. See also Fr Urban Young, C.P., *Life of Father Ignatius Spencer, C.P.*, London, 1933; J. Vanden Bussche, C.P., *Ignatius (George) Spencer, Passionist, (1799-1864), Crusader of Prayer for England and Pioneer of Ecumenical Prayer*, Louvain 1991.
2. For the life of Elizabeth Prowt, see Edna Hamer, *Elizabeth Prowt, A Religious Life for Industrial England*, Downside, 1994.
3. The entries in parenthesis probably relate to the mission to children during the same retreat.
4. J. Vereb, C.P., *Ignatius Spencer, Passionist, Apostle of Christian Unity*, C .T S., 1992.

A NEW CENTURY, A NEW SCHOOL: ST BEDE'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL, BRADFORD, 1900

James M.Hagerty

In late 1897 the leading Catholic laity of Bradford, a thriving wool textile city in the West Riding of Yorkshire, proposed that they should imitate their co-religionists in Belfast and Glasgow and form an organisation to protect and advance the interests of Catholics in the city. After discussions with Mgr. Motler, the Vicar General and senior priest in Bradford, the proposal was accepted and in May 1898 the Bradford Catholic Union was established under the presidency of the Bishop of Leeds. Leading clergy and laity were its officers and each mission, under the direction of 'the senior priest', elected representatives to sit on the central committee and sent delegates to annual general meetings. The BCU's constitution stated that its duty was to 'do all that may be required . . . for the moral, social and educational benefit of the mission . . .' and to achieve these objectives it lobbied political candidates, scrutinized electoral registers, and canvassed voters. The voting power of the substantial Catholic population in the city meant that the BCU was in a relatively strong position to influence political decisions despite its claim that it was a 'non-political' body.[1]

The development of Catholic secondary education in early twentieth century Bradford stands as the BCU's greatest achievement. In the Diocese of Leeds, which included the vast industrial conurbations of west and south Yorkshire and a massive rural hinterland to the north, there were no Catholic secondary or 'higher' grade schools for boys and so in 1899 the BCU, through voluntary contributions, undertook to provide a Catholic boys' grammar school in Bradford. As the *Bradford Daily Telegraph* recorded on January 20, 1900: 'The Bradford Catholics are agitating for a Higher Grade School of their own.'[2] On February 19, under the chairmanship of Mgr. Motler, the Governors of the new school held their first meeting in the Midland Hotel, Bradford. The minutes record that Houghton House, Drewton Street, had been rented for one year with an option for a further five year lease. It was also recorded 'that Bishop Gordon be asked to appoint Rev. Dr. Hinsley (who was present at the meeting) headmaster.' The Governors agreed to pledge themselves financially to the school for five years, make good any deficit, and solicit subscriptions from the nobility and

gentry. Fees were fixed at six guineas per year and boys were to be admitted over the age of nine. The Board of Education sent an inspector to examine the building and plans for the school and once approval had been given work and fund raising began in earnest.[3] In May the *Yorkshire Observer* reported that the Roman Catholics of Bradford had held a bazaar in aid of the new school with the leading Catholics of the city being present in addition to the school's newly appointed Headmaster.[4]

Throughout May an Executive Committee of the Governors met regularly in order to finalise plans for the ceremonial opening and the reception of students.[5] On June 11 Hinsley and two lay teachers enrolled thirty seven boys and on the following day Bishop William Gordon of Leeds, President of the Board of Governors, officially opened the new school which was to be named St Bede's Grammar School. The brief ceremony was attended by local clergy and prominent Catholic laity and also by Frs Casartelli, Norris and Mann, headmasters respectively of St Bede's, Manchester, St Philip's, Birmingham, and St Cuthbert's, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, all established Catholic boys' grammar schools. The house was blessed by the Bishop and a crucifix was placed in a prominent position 'so that no-one entering the school could fail to see under what standard' boys were enrolled. In his speech Bishop Gordon said that in answer to Pope Leo XIII's appeal that Catholics should make a signal offering to the Sacred Heart, nothing would be more suitable than a grammar school which would afford the chance of a good education to Catholic boys of the district and save them from the evil influences of godless schools. The Bishop therefore presented the school as the Diocesan offering to the Saviour of the World in the Holy Year of Jubilee and dedicated the school to God 'under the patronage of the Venerable Scholar who, in Jarrow's cloister, by prayer and study, became the great Saint and Doctor of Saxon days, and the pioneer of English learning.' Nothing, continued the Bishop, gave him so much pleasure as the opening of the school and he praised the courage and generosity of Bradford's Catholic community who had taken up the challenge of 'this grand work.' The school would be 'a home of learning, and, above all, a home of Catholic teaching and Catholic truth.' He was delighted to be able to appoint Fr Arthur Hinsley as Headmaster 'for his high scholastic attainment and his great enthusiasm fitted him especially for the work' and his selection 'secured its success.' St.Bede's, the Bishop concluded, would be 'the pioneer and model of similar institutions in other towns.'[6]

At the turn of the century most of the established Catholic boys' schools were either under the control of religious orders or part of a junior seminary. Ampleforth and Downside, for example, were located in rural areas and attached to monasteries whilst seminaries such as St Edmund's, Ware, and St Cuthbert's, Ushaw, educated lay and clerical students. Most of the schools were located in the midlands and in the south of England and generally only accepted 'respectable' boys from the middle and upper social classes. Most imitated the great public schools and their classical curriculum although some offered the modern combination of classical and commercial education 'as is given in the leading London schools.' Whatever the underlying philosophy of individual schools, it was becoming increasingly obvious to the laity and clergy in urban areas that large numbers of poorer but able Catholic boys were being denied a Catholic secondary education to the eventual disadvantage of themselves and the Catholic community.

There had been some developments, however, in the provision of urban grammar schools for middle class Catholic boys. The Jesuits had opened St Francis Xavier's School in Liverpool in 1840 and there followed a series of schools opened by religious orders at Manchester (Xaverian, 1854), Clapham and Southwark (De La Salle Brothers, 1855 and 1860), Preston (Society of Jesus 1860), Manchester (Xaverians, 1862), Croydon (Josephites, 1869), and Kensington (Oblates of St Charles, 1863) all of which entered pupils for university, professional, civil service and military examinations These foundations were followed by Salford Catholic Grammar School (1862), St Bede's College, Manchester (1875), St Cuthbert's, Newcastle (1884), St.Bonaventure's, Forest Gate (1884), and St Philip's, Birmingham (1887), and by 1896 with the establishment of St Brendan's College at Bristol another ten schools or colleges, some conducted by secular priests, were offering Catholic boys in urban areas the opportunity of secondary education. Their work and that of the Catholic public schools was co-ordinated through the Conference of Catholic Colleges established in 1896.[7]

Since 1847 the Catholic hierarchy and the Catholic Schools Committee had concentrated their efforts on the provision of urban elementary schools and there had been a similar emphasis in Bradford and in the Diocese of Leeds. Between the Education Act of 1870 and 1900 seven Catholic elementary schools, as opposed to school-chapels, had been opened in Bradford despite intense competition from well resourced Board

Schools. The Catholic school population, centred initially on the missions of St.Mary's and St.Patrick's but by the end of the century located in five missions and their off-shoots, rose from 2,877 to 4,220. However, there was only one higher grade or middle class school at St.Patrick's and this was for girls. Between 1878 (the date of the formation of the Diocese of Leeds) and 1900 the number of Catholics increased from approximately 96,000 to over 104,000 and in the same period the number of Catholic schoolchildren on roll rose from 19,000 to 26,000. In 1878 there were 105 elementary schools, two industrial schools, and seven higher and middle class schools for girls. By 1899 there were 134 elementary schools, eleven higher and middle class schools for girls, and one industrial school. Forty-six schools were run by female religious orders including four girls' boarding schools, and one orphanage, also run by nuns, was described as a Poor Law School. There had been two attempts by laymen late in the century to open Catholic boys' secondary schools - one at Ilkley, conducted by Joseph Skelton, and Wharfedale College at Boston Spa - but both were short-lived ventures and neither appeared to have the Bishop's patronage.[8]

The opening of St Bede's, therefore, was a major educational development within the Diocese of Leeds and was also a significant departure in the wider provision of secondary education for Catholic boys. The aims which the BCU had set out for the school were:

> 1. To promote God's honour by affording to the sons of the middle and upper classes a thorough training in the knowledge and principles of the Catholic faith combined with a secular education equal in every respect to that which is given in the best public schools in England so that whatever line of life be chosen they may be at no disadvantage through lack of educational opportunities.
>
> 2. To afford intelligent Catholic boys of a humbler station in life by means of scholarships an opportunity to equip themselves in the higher branches of knowledge which elementary schools do not provide.
>
> 3. To increase loving devotion to the See of Peter, reverence for Ecclesiastical Superiors, and intelligent interest in public affairs.[9]

It was to be an urban grammar school for boys of all classes, conducted by a secular priest, and dependent upon the financial support of the laity and secular agencies.

The Governors and Hinsley attempted to implement the BCU's aims but shortage of money made their task difficult. From 1900 until 1919 the school was housed in Houghton House, a former cancer hospital, in Drewton Street and whilst the reminscences of the first students were full of fond impressions the Governors had a long and difficult struggle to meet the exacting standards of inspectors and keep the school in existence. Income depended on the number of boys on roll, their success in grant-awarding examinations, modest fees, Governor support, scholarships for poorer boys, and voluntary contributions. Official assistance was limited and inadequate. Bradford School Board dealt only with elementary education but the City Council did make grants to the school as did the Technical Instruction Committee of the West Riding County Council. In 1902 St Bede's was recognised by the Board of Education for the purposes of grant aid but the chronic shortage of funds continued to be the most pressing concern.[10]

The role of Hinsley was a critical factor in the early days of the school. Born at Carlton near Goole in 1865, Hinsley had been educated at Ushaw and the *Venerabile*. As a student he achieved considerable academic success and was ordained in 1893 for the Diocese of Leeds. In the same year he became a professor at Ushaw but according to John Carmel Heenan he was not popular at the college and in 1898 went as curate to St Anne's, Keighley.[11] His short time at St Bede's was to be of the utmost importance for his enthusiasm and intense labours were to lay the foundations for the educational and social development of the school. According to the school's *Annual Reports* it provided 'an efficient secondary education for boys in a thoroughly Catholic atmosphere.' The curriculum consisted of English, religious knowledge, modern languages taught by 'native professors', classics, history, geography, mathematics, natural science, drawing, shorthand, typing, drill and music. Boys were entered for a range of examinations accredited by the legal and medical professions, Oxford University, London University, the College of Preceptors, the Royal Society of Arts, and northern universities. The school was also a student teacher centre. Early reports on the school's performance were variable. In 1902 the Board of Education reported 'that although the school had made a distinct improvement, the general standard of the work was much lower than that of schools of a similar type in Bradford and surrounding districts.' The Governors, anxious to bring the school up to the required standard, were advised by the Board of Education's inspectors to amend the curriculum and offer higher

salaries in order to attract better teachers. In 1904 Lord Herries, in his address at the school's Speech Day, praised the progress being made and in the following year Bradford Education Committee's *Co-ordination Report* congratulated those who founded the school 'on the measure of success it has already attained.'[12] In 1903 Canon Puissant, the Diocesan inspector, had also praised the school's progress but from a very different perspective:

> I examined this year, for the first time, St.Bede's Grammar School, Bradford, so far the only higher grade school for boys in the Diocese. The result of the examination has strengthened my conviction of the importance and religious advantage of such schools. While the boys who had attended the school for a considerable time, gave evidence of a sound knowledge of their religion, those who had entered the school only recently, and had before been attending non-Catholic schools, knew very little about their religion and were even in ignorance of some of the most important prayers. From this fact we must necessarily come to the conclusion that, if they remained in those schools to the end of their course, they would have entered the busy world deficient in the most important and the only absolutely necessary science; a science which, if not acquired in early youth or during school years, is very seldom acquired in after years. I consider it, therefore, strongly advisable to establish similar schools in the large centres of population, wherever a sufficient number of boys, belonging to the better classes, can be brought together. Ample provision, in this respect, is already made in the diocese for girls.[13]

Hinsley would not have agreed with the inspector's reference to boys 'belonging to the better classes' and early registers prove that he was assiduous in enrolling students from diverse backgrounds where the bond was faith not class. By 1904 the roll had risen to eighty and included boys whose fathers were skilled workers, labourers, professionals, soldiers, merchants, commercial travellers and clerks. They came from Bradford and outlying districts; they came from local Catholic and non-Catholic schools and from convent and private schools. At first all the students were day boys but eventually Hinsley persuaded the Governors to provide accommodation for boarders. A room above St.Patrick's Church, rooms in Camden Terrace with the Headmaster, and then Rosemount Villa were all to house the boarders.[14]

Hinsley's educational philosophy was best outlined in a wide-ranging address which he gave at the seventh annual Conference of Catholic Colleges at Ampleforth in May, 1902. There had been, he stated, great progress in building up the seminaries and the schools conducted by

religious orders but there was now a great need for equality of educational opportunity and the 'smoothing over of class distinctions in national education.' Catholics, he continued, could not 'be insensible to the strength of this growing impulse' as 'our brethren in faith call as urgently for educational uplifting as any portion of the community.' Rapid developments in trade and politics made it imperative that the national education system be remodelled and that Catholics should be adequately educated to play a full and active role in all aspects of society and at all levels. Catholic students, he argued, should not by accident of birth and education, be 'kept in a station below that to which they legitimately aspire.' The answer was to provide more Catholic secondary schools, especially in urban areas, to raise standards in elementary schools and facilitate 'organic unity' between them. The curricula of both types of school should complement each other and should be age-related but he recognised that the tendency of Catholic parents to put their children to work was a serious weaknesses in preventing the full completion of a course at either elementary or secondary level. 'We have, too often', he continued, 'the utmost difficulty in inducing even prosperous parents to leave their children at school until the age of fourteen.' The low value placed by some Catholics on any form of education was a continuing problem but Hinsley's did not confine his comments to this and saw this as disappearing with time. Praising the 'sacrifice' of the BCU and acknowledging the funds provided by local and national agencies, he stressed the need for continued lay support but stated that 'we need it still more from the clergy.' The arduous task of extending secondary education could not be achieved without a wider, coherent approach:

> The cause is not to be confined within the narrow limits of parish interests or the circle of a single diocese. It stretches out as broadly and as widely as the British Empire, nay is only bounded by the limits of the Church's mission.The work already done in England has been such that only God's special guidance and aid can account for such results amidst such difficulties. More grammar schools are now needed to complete and perfect what has been accomplished, and when that need is recognised, strenuous efforts must be made to knit the component elements of our system into one organic whole of which all the parts shall be living in helpful sympathy.'

The ensuing discussion supported Hinsley's views. The extension of secondary education, the creation of a Catholic middle class, episcopal support, Catholic participation in politics, and competition from non-

denominational schools were all points raised by delegates but Fr Casartelli of St Bede's, Manchester, stressed that 'The greatest difficulty was parochialism. The clergy as a body do not realise the importance of the question'. It was the function of such conferences to 'form Catholic opinion among laity and clergy.' The final comments, however, were Hinsley's and his mood was one of urgency and action: 'Let us talk over the difficulties afterwards; it is a race for the *kopje*.' And then, as if to re-emphasise the point he had started with:

> Objections have been made on the score of the class of boys introduced into middle schools by scholarships. Were not the grammar schools meant to lift up, even from the lowest, if necessary, those who could profit by education? The mixing of the classes had educational value for all: the higher would not usually be dragged down, but the lower lifted up, and we had thus to *create* a middle class.[15]

In Bradford Hinsley had attempted to do this by word and deed. He was enthusiastic and determined but also abrasive. Despite the support of some parish priests, he inevitably came into conflict with others fighting not only for funds but also for quality and numbers in their own parish elementary schools. He had already confronted Canon Simpson when the latter threatened St Bede's by proposing to open a secondary school in his parish. He also had differences with his governors and in January 1902 he had tendered his resignation over the issue of taking boarders but the Governors had given in to his demands. His continued work as Headmaster, as a teacher, as an administrator, as a recruiter of boys and as a fundraiser began to take its toll and the conflicts with Governors over funds and future developments became more frequent. In his attempt to keep the school going Hinsley wore himself out and in June 1904 he attended his last Governors' meeting. On July 19 the Governors received a letter from Hinsley's brother 'to the effect that owing to the serious illness of the Doctor it was unlikely that he could continue to act as the Headmaster of the school.' Regrettably, the Governors accepted Hinsley's resignation and asked Bishop Gordon to appoint a successor. They also passed a vote of thanks 'testifying most heartily to the great work done by Dr Hinsley in starting the school and to his devoted energy during the years he has been Headmaster.'[16]

Heenan[17] claimed that Hinsley had received 'niggardly support' from the Governors but this is not true and in his later years Hinsley praised those who had supported him and given so much to the school.[18] His

forthright views and direct action may have caused friction with the Governors, many of whom were experienced and successful businessmen, but they supported the school and by 1912 had subscribed over £4,000 towards its on-going costs. Bishop Cowgill wrote:

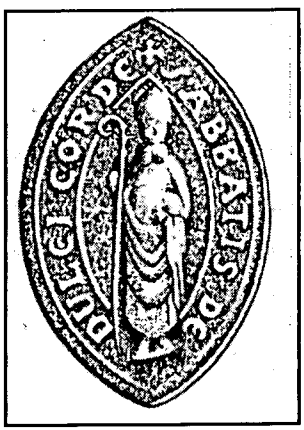
> I feel that you deserve the sympathy and encouragement of clergy and laity alike in your struggle to carry on your magnificent work. I cannot sufficiently emphasise the great importance of such schools as St.Bede's . . . if our Catholic men are to take their place in the social, commercial and professional life of this country. You may well be proud of your undertaking.[19]

Hinsley left the Leeds Diocese and became a priest of the Diocese of Southwark. Between 1917 and 1927 he was Rector of the *Venerabile* and from 1927 until 1934 he was first Apostolic Visitor to Africa and then Apostolic Delegate to East Africa having been created Bishop in 1927 and Archbishop in 1930. In 1935 he succeeded Francis Bourne as Archbishop of Westminster and was created Cardinal in 1938. Throughout his life he maintained his passionate interest in education and was instrumental in formulating the English and Welsh Hierarchy's position on the 1944 Education Act.[20] St Bede's remained at Drewton Street until 1919 when, under the dynamic leadership of another Headteacher, Fr Charles Tindall, it moved to Heaton Hall on the outskirts of Bradford. Hinsley visited the school with Cardinal Bourne in 1925 and was to have opened the new school in September 1939. Sadly, the outbreak of World War 2 prevented him from doing so. (21)

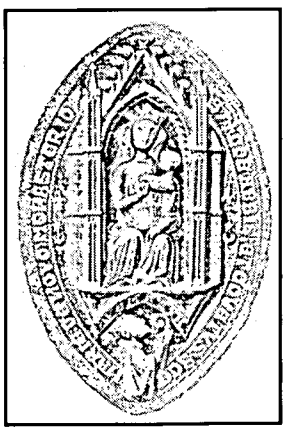
References

1. Canon J. Earnshaw, *The Record and Reminiscences of St Patrick's Church, Bradford* (Bradford, 1903), p.193. There were approximately 19,000 Catholics within the city's population of 280,000.
2. *Bradford Daily Telegraph,* January 20, 1900.
3. Governors of St Bede's Grammar School, *Minute Books.*
4. *Yorkshire Observer,* May 21, 1900.
5. Governors of St Bede's Grammar School, *Minute Books.*
6. Earnshaw, *op.cit.,* pp.194-195.
7. See Rev. W. J. Battersby, 'Secondary Education for Boys', in Bishop G. A. Beck (Ed.), *The English Catholics 1850-1950* (London, 1950), pp.322-336.
8. See *Catholic Directory* (1870 to 1900) and *Educational Statistics of the Diocese of Leeds 1878 - 1900.*
9. St Bede's Grammar School, *Trust Deed.*

10. Governors of St Bede's Grammar School, *Minute Books.*
11. Rev. J. C. Heenan, *Cardinal Hinsley* (London, 1944), p.14.
12. St Bede's Grammar School, *Annual Reports* (1902-1903, 1904-1905); City of Bradford Education Committee *Co-ordination Report* (Bradford, 1905), p.35.
13. *Educational Statistics of the Diocese of Leeds 1903.*
14. St Bede's Grammar School, *Admission Registers*; *Souvenir of the New School* (Bradford, 1939) and *Golden Jubilee 1900-1950* (Bradford,1950).
15. *Report of the Seventh Annual Conference of Catholic Colleges 1902,* pp.21-37.
16. Governors of St Bede's Grammar School, *Minute Books.*
17. Heenan, *op.cit.*, p.28.
18. St Bede's Grammar School, *Souvenir of the New School* (Bradford, 1939).
19. Governors of St Bede's Grammar School, *Minute Books.*
20. See Heenan, *op.cit.*; J. M. Hagerty, 'The Headmaster Who Became A Cardinal', in Mgr. G. T. Bradley (Ed.), *Yorkshire Catholics* (Leeds, 1985).
21. To commemorate the school's centenary the following have been published: T. Larkin, *St Bede's Grammar School, Bradford: Book of Remembrance* (Bradford, 1999); J. M. Hagerty, *St Bede's Grammar School, Bradford: Celebrating 100 Years of Catholic Education* (Bradford, 2000).



Seal from Abbot Sweetheart



Seal of Newminster Abbey

NEWMINSTER ABBEY AND LONGHORSLEY: THE AUTUMN FIELD EXCURSION, 18 SEPTEMBER 1999

George Thornton

Forty-six members and friends set out from Newcastle Central station in good heart and fair weather for a field excursion to Newminster Abbey and Longhorsley. En route to Morpeth we were given a commentary putting the abbey into its historical context.[1]

The abbey of the New Minster and the Blessed Virgin Mary was founded on the feast of the Epiphany 1138 by Robert, as newly elected abbot, on land beside the river Wansbeck granted by Ranulf de Merlay, Norman lord of Morpeth Castle. Robert's earlier life was a mirror image of his Order of White Monks, the Cistercians. Born in Gargrave, north west Yorkshire, in c.1100 of honourable parents, he went on to study for the priesthood at Paris University, where he developed a life-long love of the psalms. He soon became dissatisfied with his first posting to his native Gargrave and moved east to join the Black Monks at Whitby Abbey, thence to join a refugee band of monks from St Mary's, York, who were living in abject poverty and total harmony in rough shelters in woods beside the river Skell. Here, in the humble origins of the future glorious abbey of St Mary of the Fountains, he found the solitude, peace and austere life he was seeking. The same search had brought the founding fathers of the new Order, Robert of Molesme, Alberic, Stephen Harding of Dorset, to found a monastery at Citeaux in the wastes of Burgundy, the mother-house of the Cistercians, who spread like wildfire across Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals, and from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean. Some 360 Cistercian monasteries were founded, chiefly in the mid-12th century, and of this astonishing number 68 were in England and Wales, in secluded dales, where the Rule of St Benedict could be followed more closely and the zeal of the first Christians recaptured. In Yorkshire alone, 12 houses of the White Monks were established, the first at Rievaulx in 1136. Fountains Abbey gave birth to 12 daughter abbeys, the first being Newminster, in a deep, steep-sided, thickly-wooded, river valley, a typical Cistercian site. This was to be the only Cistercian house in our Diocese between the rivers Tees and Tweed.

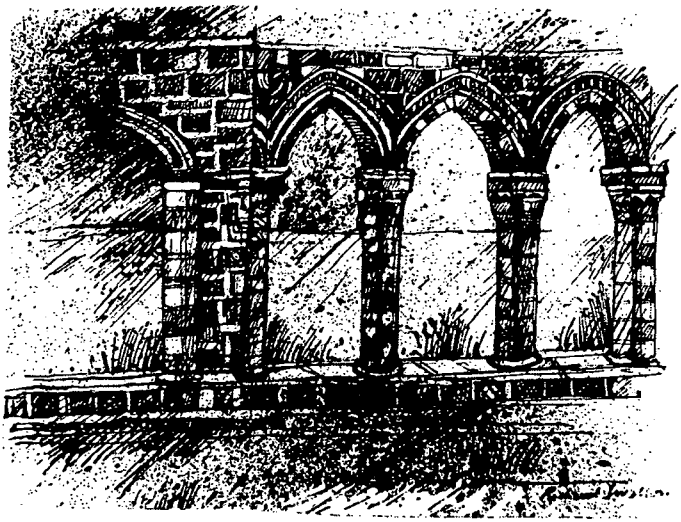
Once assembled on the site of the abbey, we were warmly greeted by the owners, Mr and Mrs Errington. Any travellers on the Morpeth-Mitford road could be excused for failing to realize that they were passing a place where a large community of monks and lay brothers had worked and worshipped for four centuries until the Dissolution in 1536, and where the

abbey church was, in beauty and refinement of detail, the equal of any building in Northumberland. In truth, as we soon realized, the site is now much overgrown with trees and a tangled mass of undergrowth of wild roses, brambles and ivy: as it reverts to Nature, it is becoming a haven for wild life, deer, foxes, birds and breeding frogs in the old fish-ponds. The impressive cloister arcade is, in fact, a reconstruction from the 1920's, albeit an accurate one, as is the arched entrance to the chapter-house, where we gathered. Several bases of columns and open stone tombs are the only original features extant: stone robbers have done a thorough job. The most precious feature of the site lies beneath the turf of the old abbot's chapel, a perfectly preserved medieval tiled floor of many colours and geometric patterns, one of the finest in the land.

We were invited to imagine the sights and sounds of daily life in Robert's time: in the distance cattle lowing and sheep bleating, from the forge the blacksmith's hammer, from the cloister walk novice monks chanting psalms learned by rote, and then the tolling of the bell calling the community to divine office in the cool, simple, austere, yet elegant, interior of the abbey church. Robert ruled as abbot for twenty years, a wise and saintly figure, until his death on Ascension Day, 1158, on which night his close friend Godric of Finchale saw in a vision a soul ascending to heaven in a ball of fire, accompanied by angels.

A measure of Robert' success was the foundation of three daughter abbeys: Pipewell in Northamptonshire in 1147, Roche in South Yorkshire also in 1147, (a classic Cistercian lay-out, splendidly preserved) and at Salley, by the river Ribble and near his native Gargrave, in 1148. It is remarkable that no Cistercian abbey ever failed, even though one in three changed sites.

Neither Newminster nor the Cistercians throughout Europe ever recaptured the spiritual excellence of the early years. Grants and endowments by wealthy nobles meant that more and more time and energy was spent in commercial and administrative activities. In Northumberland, the White Monks changed the face of the rural landscape: they grazed sheep on the hills of Kidland and sold wool, managed numerous farms, granges and mills, panned salt at Hartley, mined coal at Chopwell, fished from Blyth, dug peat and marl, cultivated osier beds – all with the help of the *conversi* (lay-brothers). Royal visits (Edward I, that 'Hammer of the Scots', stayed at the abbey three times) with their large retinue were a constant drain on resources, so that when the Visitors of Henry VIII called in 1536 the monastery and all its assets were valued at only £100 a year.



Resurrected cloister arcades at Newminster

We were given a plan of the monastic lay-out so that we could explore at will. Despite the fragmentary remains and the tangled undergrowth, the place retains an air of sanctity and we sensed that we were treading on holy ground. We thanked our gracious hosts and returned to Morpeth for an hour's break and the cup that cheers.

A short journey northwards took us to the parish church of St Thomas of Canterbury, Longhorsley, a fitting dedication chronologically, considering our visit to Newminster, since Thomas was murdered in 1170, when the Cistercian sun was high in the sky. Seated in the simple and pleasing interior of the church we heard a brief account[2] of the rich Catholic history of this rural area of Mid-Northumberland. The church itself is on land originally given to the Augustinian canons of Brinkburn Priory in c.1386. The Priory, now splendidly restored, was founded in 1135 by William Bertram of Morpeth and lies beside that most beautiful of Northumberland rivers, the Coquet. Several names from penal times, when the Catholic gentry maintained chaplains in secret were mentioned. In 1730 Elizabeth Widdrington left £400 to support a Jesuit priest at Horsley and £20 to her spiritual director, 'Mr Smith'. Both Fr Thomas Clifton from Callaly and Fr Robert Widdrington from Biddlestone served in the area in the mid-18th

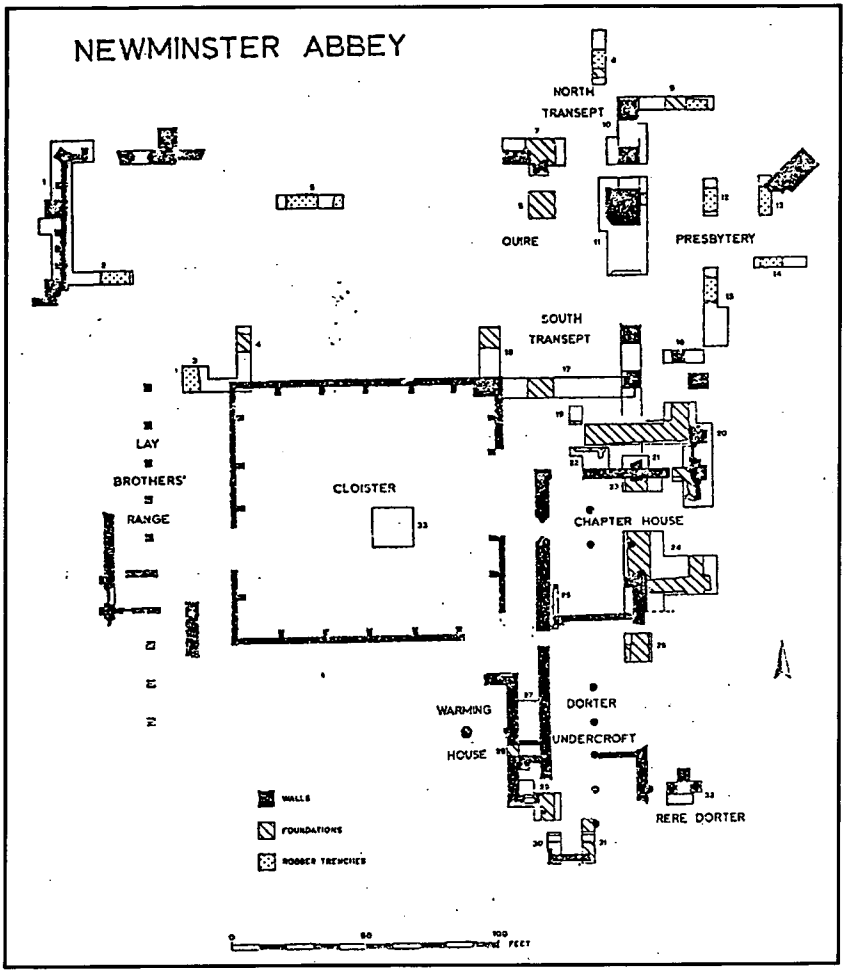
century, as did Fr Joseph Howe, who reported in 1750, in customary Jesuit coded terminology, that he had '125 customers to shop and £30 from the factory' (Jesuit funds). Fr Howe extended his mission to Bullers Green in Morpeth. Longhorsley passed into the hands of the Riddell family who provided Benedictine priests for Felton, Swinburne and Morpeth. The present church of St Thomas dates from 1841 and before that Mass was celebrated in chapel on the upper floor of the adjoining 16th century pele-tower, which has two priest's hiding-holes. Fr Thomas Wilkinson, a Jesuit driven out of Sunderland by a bigoted mob, served in the Longhorsley area before being captured, tried, condemned to death, reprieved, only to be betrayed again, and to die, possibly poisoned, in Morpeth gaol in 1681.

Most surprising were the numbers of Catholics in the area in those times. In 1687, Dr John Leyburn, the Vicar Apostolic, visited Netherwitton and confirmed 243 souls, and in 1706 there were 25 male Papists in that village. In nearby Witton Shields the Thornton family maintained chaplains, a Fr Hankin ministering there for twenty-two years. He was followed by Fr John Cotes, who lived from 1700 to 1794 and served the community for thirty-six years, latterly from a chapel in a tower in use until the 1950's, next to the modern farm. Fr Joseph Lennon, the present parish priest, ordained in 1946, still faithfully serves the parishes of St Thomas of Canterbury at Longhorsley, St Mary's at Felton, and St Joseph's at Widdrington, the latter two with pre-Reformation links and a history of Benedictine chaplains. Fr Lennon is ably supported by a Sister, his own sister, as his housekeeper.

Edified by the rich Catholic history of the area, we entered into the Mass, celebrated by our chairman, Fr David Milburn, providing a fitting climax to the day. As we received Holy Communion from a small 17th century silver chalice we were reminded of the courage and sacrifices needed to keep the Faith alive for us in those dark penal days. We were pleased that Fr Lennon returned from saying Mass at Widdrington in time to wave us farewell as we departed for the short journey back to Newcastle. Our final field excursion of the 20th century had been a great success and we reflected on our good fortune in having such delightful country and so much fascinating history on our doorstep.

NOTES

1. G. B. Thornton, 'St Robert of Newminster, Newminster and the Early Cistercians', *Northern Catholic History*, No.14, Autumn 1981.
2. The source for this information, in Michael Morris's Parish Profile, in *Northern Cross*, January 1984, is gratefully acknowledged.



Newminster Abbey, plan of excavations

PROGRAMME 1999 — 2000

The meeting on the 1st Sept. will be held at St Andrew's, Worswick Street, Newcastle upon Tyne (Mass at 7.00 p.m, A.C.M. at 7.30 p.m.). All other meetings will be held on Wednesdays at the Tyneside Irish Centre, 43 Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne, and will commence at 7.15 p.m.

1st Sept.1999	Mass 7.00 p.m. followed by A.C.M. 7.30 p.m.
6th Oct.1999	Dr Leo Gooch: *John Lumley (1534?-1609): Catholic conspirator and collector*
3rd Nov.1999	Fr Denis Cleary: *Dr Gentili and his Missions in the North*
1st Dec.1999	Mr George Thornton: *Celts, Columba and the Legacy of Iona*
2nd Feb. 2000	Mr Robin Card: *Virginia Crawford (1862-1948): A Victorian mystery and a lost life redeemed*
1st Mar. 2000	Rev Peter Phillips: *Biblemongers: Silvertop or Copperbottom?*

Coach Excursions

18th Sept.1999	Newminster Abbey/Longhorsley
13th May 2000	York, Bar Convent
17th June 2000	Hesleyside/Bellingham

(2000 dates are subject to change)

Printed at Darlington Carmel