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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.

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NORTHERN CATHOLIC HISTORY

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CONTENTS

Editorial Notes		2
Tunstal, The Survivor	A. I.DOYLE	3
Miles Pinkney, alias Thomas Carre, (1599-1674), Founder of the Augustinian Convent and St Gregory's College, Paris	M. OATES	9
The Desperate Faction: Catholic Coalowners in the Fifteen	E. CLAVERING	18
Thomas Ellerker, S.J., A Theologian from County Durham	G. HOLT	31
Catholic Biblemongers:Silvertop or Copperbottom?	P. PHILLIPS	39
Irish Catholicism in Sunderland in the Nineteenth Century	V. FETHERSTON	47
The Catholic Evidence Guild in Durham and Northumberland, 1925-1970	F. LEONARD	60
A Rural Ride: Autumn Excursion to Swinburn	D. MILBURN	67
Programme 2001-2002		End Cover

Illustrations

Cuthbert Tunstal, Bishop of Durham, 1530-1559	4
Miles Pinkney (1599-1674)	12
Ownership of Coal Deposits, c. 1600	29
Fr Philip Kearney, rector of St Mary's, Sunderland, 1829-1856	50
Notice of Opening of St Mary's Church, 1835	51
St Mary's church, Sunderland, opened 1835	52
St Mary's, Sunderland Visitation return, 1840	54
Ovingham Church, 1888	68
Bywell 'town' and churches, c. 1754	70

NORTH EAST CATHOLIC HISTORY SOCIETY

The 2001-2002 Season began with the annual Mass for deceased members at St Andrew's on 5th September, followed by the AGM, at which Fr Milburn, Chairman, reviewed the previous year's activities and thanked the officers for their loyal work. All were re-elected, with welcome addition of Anne McCormick as Outings Secretary.

At the time of going to press in January, members have enjoyed three excellent talks: by Vivienne Fetherston on the Irish Catholics in Sunderland, 1829-1870, in October; by Dr Leo Gooch on Bishop O'Callaghan's short episcopate, 1888-9, in November; and by Michael Cullen who took us on a sedentary tour of Catholic Newcastle in January. Thus, the talks by Matthew Festing on Catholic artefacts in February and by Paul Richardson on early English Catholic periodicals in March are eagerly anticipated.

At the outset of the year, only two articles were in hand or promised, but the Good Lord, ever generous, has inspired several faithful contributors and new authors to provide a rich variety of articles. Dr Ian Doyle has kindly agreed the reprinting of a talk he gave in 1993 on Cuthbert Tunstal, the last Catholic bishop of Durham, Margaret Oates has amplified a short biography of Miles Pinkney, a major figure in Catholic life on the continent in recusant times, previously published in this journal in 1984, and Fr Geoffrey Holt traces the life of another Durham worthy, the 18th century Jesuit theologian Thomas Ellerker. Dr Eric Clavering records the prominent role played by Catholic families in the Newcastle Coal Trade in the 17th century, but effectively eliminated by the 1715 Rising. Fr Peter Phillips then publishes his talk in March 2000 on a pre-Emancipation controversy concerning the publication of Catholic bibles. The 19th century is represented by Vivienne Fetherston's valuable research into the Irish in Sunderland, while the 20th century is covered by Francis Leonard's account of the heroic work of the Catholic Evidence Guild in the North East, extracted from his national history of the Guild. Finally, Fr Milburn accompanies members on their mystery tour last September, which replaced the scheduled trip abandoned because of the foot and mouth outbreak.

All contributors are warmly thanked for their articles, as are the Sisters at Darlington Carmel, and the editor renews his annual appeal for articles for next year's edition.

Robin Gard
January 2002

TUNSTAL, THE SURVIVOR

A.I. Doyle

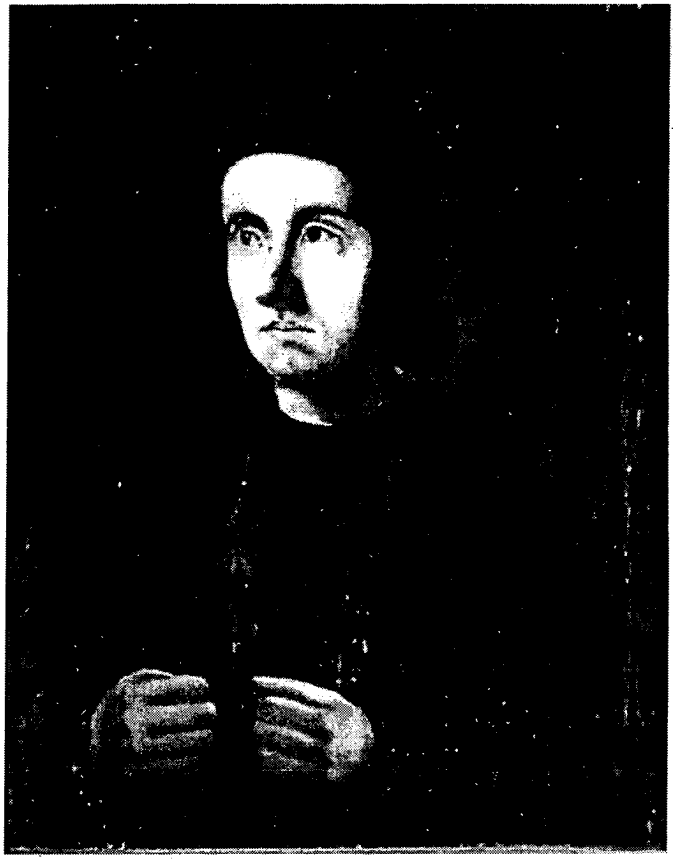
This article was first given in 1993 as an address in a series by various speakers on saints and bishops in the sees of Lindisfarne and Durham, in the Anglican chapel of University College, The Castle, Durham.

I chose to talk about Cuthbert Tunstal as one of the bishops of Durham (1530-59) 1 know most about; because we still have some of his books and buildings here; and because he lived in a period of religious change which had parallels with our own times. I can imagine some of the dilemmas he found himself in. As few of you will know much about the details of his life, I hope I can summarise the story in such a way that it will help to explain some of the problems which affect us today.

Cuthbert Tunstal, as his Christian name suggests, was a northerner, from a Lancashire and Yorkshire family, born in 1474. He spent four or five years at Oxford, which would be for the arts course, and then three at Cambridge, on theology or law, before going in 1499 to Padua, one of the leading European universities, where he spent six years, qualifying for the doctorate in church and civil law, but also learning Greek and possibly Hebrew. There he met fellow-students of later distinction from several countries as well as other Englishmen and Italians, all involved in the excitement of the movement somewhat miscalled humanist, or more broadly the Renaissance, since it was as much concerned with the revival and reform of religion as of the study of the ancient languages, literatures and monuments.

It may have been about this time, in his thirties, that the portrait was painted, of which we have a copy in the Senior Common Room, showing him in his doctoral dress.

Within a couple of years of his return to England he became Chancellor of the diocese of Canterbury, that is chief judge in the courts of Archbishop Warham, and his deputy in much of the diocesan business. Warham was himself King Henry VIII's Chancellor, in those days prime minister, and in 1515 Tunstal's abilities began to be employed in a succession of diplomatic missions, first to the Low Countries, accompanied by Thomas More, where he also got to know well that other great humanist Erasmus, helping him in the revision of the first edition of the New



Testament in Greek which he had published in 1516; in that year Tunstal was made Master of the Rolls, the Lord Chancellor's deputy in the royal courts of law. In 1520 he was sent abroad again to the Low Countries and Germany, and in 1521 he reported from Worms on the widespread support for Luther, recently condemned by the Pope and the Emperor. The same year he was made Dean of Salisbury, in 1522 Bishop of London, and in 1523 Lord Privy Seal, in effect deputy to Thomas Wolsey, now Lord Chancellor.

Shortly after his appointment as Bishop of London he published the first book on Arithmetic printed in England, with a dedication to Thomas More saying how he had been brought back to this school subject by their dealings with money changers a few years before.

In 1525 he was sent on an embassy for nearly a year to Spain, in 1527 to France and in 1529 again to Flanders, in pursuit of (and it seems moderating) the twistings and turnings of Henry VIII's and Wolsey's foreign policy. Meanwhile, as Bishop of London he had to meet a main

stream of importation of Lutheran ideas and books. He had turned down William Tyndale for a post in his household, and when the latter's English translation of the New Testament, printed in Germany in 1525, with its Protestant renderings, began to reach London Tunstal condemned copies to be confiscated and publicly burnt. And in 1529 when in Antwerp he is said to have bought up the stock, only thereby giving Tyndale money for a second edition. In 1528 he commissioned Thomas More, soon to be Lord Chancellor, to write his series of replies to heretical pamphlets in English. Yet in the course of Tunstal's episcopates, both in London and later in Durham, although Lollards and Lutherans were tried by him, and made to recant and do penance, no-one was handed over to the civil authorities to be burnt.

In 1527 Henry VIII launched his campaign to obtain a decree of nullity of his marriage to Katherine of Aragon, which was a question both of canon law and of theology. Tunstal was one of those appointed to advise her and persistently took her side. It may therefore not have been a coincidence that in 1530, at the age of 54, in succession to Cardinal Wolsey, who had held the sees of York and Durham together without ever visiting them, Tunstal was appointed to the latter, and resigned the Privy Seal, becoming instead Lord President of the Council of the North. To hold these posts was promotion in status, income, and responsibility, but they kept him away from a constant share in affairs of state. Nonetheless when in 1531 the King demanded that the Convocations of Canterbury and York should give him the title of Supreme Head of the English Church Tunstal led the northern clergy in opposition, writing also to Henry himself, in vain, to propose the qualification 'in temporal matters'. And in 1533 he resisted the demand for the Convocation to vote in favour of the King against Katherine. Yet after the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, had given his judgement for the nullity of the marriage and the legality of that, in secret, to Anne Boleyn, Tunstal attended her coronation and even later went with the Archbishop of York to Katherine to warn her that if she refused to accept it and to swear to the Act of Succession she might incur the penalty of death. By then his friend Thomas More and John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, who had been Katherine's most vocal supporter, had been sent to the Tower of London for refusing the oath, with all its implications, and Tunstal had been summoned to London while royal commissioners searched Durham and Auckland Castles for evidence

against him, since he had also written to the King against breaking with the Pope. And in 1535, shortly before the execution of Fisher, More and Carthusian and Brigittine monks he must have known, he accepted the Act of Supremacy which they had refused.

Still under pressure, he then threw himself into preaching and writing for it against the Papacy with all the resources of his knowledge of church history and earlier theologians. As he regained the King's confidence and as a member of his Council for the rest of the reign he however argued repeatedly there and in the House of Lords against many of the innovations in religious doctrine and practice that the more Protestant members, led by Thomas Cranmer, pressed for and sometimes achieved, as the King leaned one way or the other.

Though Tunstal was much in London and again was sent to France in 1545, he did spend long periods in the north, on royal business with the borders as well as diocesan and palatine duties, and it was probably in the later 1530s or1540s that he had the gallery from the Great Hall, the clock tower and the western half of this chapel built and provided the present Castle gates.

With the accession of the nine-year old Edward VI in 1547 Cranmer pushed on with further changes and although Tunstal opposed some of them in the Council and Parliament he accepted the English Order of Communion, 1548; he voted however against the first Book of Common Prayer, 1549, and the legalising of the marriage of priests. In 1550 he was summoned to London, at first put under house arrest, charged with concealing a mysterious conspiracy, and over a year later sent to the Tower, while all his possessions were seized. In 1552 he was deprived of the bishopric, out of which it was planned to create a diocese of Newcastle and annex some of its revenues to the Crown. But before this took effect Edward VI died and after the brief intrusion of Jane Grey, Queen Mary succeeded to the throne in August 1553. Tunstal, who had spent some of his three years imprisonment writing a book in Latin defending the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist (in the preface of which he said as a bishop he could no longer keep silent about attacks on it), was released within a few days and soon restored to his see, the Council and Parliament. Latin services were rapidly revived in the diocese of Durham as elsewhere and the old church equipment repaired as well as was possible.

Tunstal was one of the deputation which went to greet Cardinal Pole when he arrived in England to reconcile it to Rome. He took part in examining the married bishops and others who were deprived of their sees, but although he was also a commissioner in some of the heresy trials he escaped following them through to their bitter ends, because he was up in the north for most of the last three years of Mary's reign. In 1557 he was again having to ride to the western border, to negotiate with the Scots, at the age of 84.

For Protestants it must have seemed providential that Queen Mary and Cardinal Pole died on successive days, 17th and 18th November 1558. Tunstal was dissuaded on grounds of his age and the month (December) from taking the Bishop of Durham's traditional place at the coronation of Elizabeth but by the following June he was asking to see the Queen and by the time he reached London Parliament had passed a new act of royal supremacy and another English Prayer Book, and altars and crucifixes were again being removed from churches. Tunstal made clear to the Queen and in writing his opposition. All but two of the other bishops had refused the supremacy oath and were in course of being deprived. As the only surviving bishop consecrated before Henry's break with Rome he was one of those nominated to consecrate Matthew Parker as Archbishop of Canterbury but, with two others, he refused, and on 28th September he was also deprived, and put in house arrest at Lambeth Palace, where Parker tried to persuade him to conform, bringing up what he had said and written under Henry. But he failed and within two months Tunstal was dead, and buried in Lambeth parish church, where he had been consecrated 37 years before.

Tunstal was, like many late medieval bishops, to a very large extent what we might call a dedicated higher civil servant, in an age when state and church were more closely interdependent than today. As he declared to Katherine of Aragon, he was the King's subject and vassal, and much earlier (in 1517, before he was a bishop), with regard to a diplomatic mission:

> 'Whether my opinion be seen good or not good I am ready to follow his ordinance and to conform my mind to his most honourable counsel, which I know well seeth further... than I do. Opinative I never was.

Though not afraid to argue against many policies, even with Henry VIII, he yielded when they were adopted, implemented them so far as we know, and sometimes sought to justify them. There are people today, such as university vice-chancellors, who, though they may not have a personal loyalty like Tunstal's to the government, go along with its impositions because of fear, not perhaps for their own livelihoods, let alone lives, but for what might happen to the institutions and individuals for whom they feel responsible, if they do not toe the line. Tunstal was not the proverbial Vicar of Bray: I have said little about his pastoral vocation but it seems he did not neglect it, he worried about the effects of the religious changes, and he knew at last when to say no.

I should like to finish by reading two prayers of Tunstal composed in Latin in a collection for Queen Mary, translated at the time:

> Lorde God omnipotent, that hast given us a fre wyll to doo wel or evil, geve us soo thy grace, that we may avoyde those thynges, thou defendyng us, whiche are evill, and to do those, thou helpyng us, which are good. Amen.

> Lorde God omnypotente, of whom is al wysedome and provydence, thou doeste knowe what is expedient for us mortall men, as it plesith the, and as it shall be seene beste to thy maiestie of us, soo be it, but yet with mercy. Amen.

NOTE

This article was previously published in *A Christian Heritage: A Collection of Addresses in Honour of the 900th Anniversary of Durham Cathedral,* edited by Charles Yeats (Headstart History, 1993), and is reprinted with the permission of the author and editor.

The fullest and best account of Tunstal is still Charles Sturge's *Cuthbert Tunstal, Churchman, Scholar, Statesman, Administrator (London, 1938).*

MILES PINKNEY, ALIAS THOMAS CARRE, (1599-1674), FOUNDER OF THE AUGUSTINIAN CONVENT AND ST GREGORY'S COLLEGE, PARIS

Margaret Oates

Dom Aidan Bellenger published a short biography of Miles Pinkney in *Northern Catholic History* in 1984 [1] in which he referred to a history of an English convent in Paris published in 1891 as the primary source for the life of Miles Pinkney. This is a book by the Abbé Cédoz[2] which provides more information on Miles Pinkney's character and achievements than Dom Aidan was able to give. This article offers the reader further details of the life of this outstanding Durham-born priest. The history of the convent he founded in Paris also contains much of local interest and may be the subject of a later article.

The Abbé Cédoz says that Miles was 'of an ancient family of Broom Hall' in the bishopric of Durham, and this is repeated in the Catholic Record Society publications,[3] Vol.IX. He *was* of ancient family, for the Pinkneys had descent from the Lords of Picardy whose name was Picquigny, and who came to England with the Normans. Some figured in English history and some were said to have come north (with the Cotesworths)[4] in the train of Warwick the Kingmaker and others of the Nevill family, and to have settled in the area around Middleton-in-Teesdale. But Broom Hall was held by the Batmanson family in the 16th and 17th centuries.[5] Miles was the son of Martin Pinkney of Brandon who married Ann Batmanson, daughter of Thomas, in 1590.[6] Miles may have lived there of course. He was said to have been Protestant until his conversion by witnessing an exorcism performed by a priest of the old religion. This could well have happened among the Broom Hall community for his uncle Christopher Batmanson and his wife were obdurate recusants, frequently in trouble with the Protestant church authorities.[7] Curiously, however, Thomas Batmanson, Miles's grandfather and Christopher's father, left a Will[8] in which he deplored his son's recusancy, suggesting that he, Thomas, had conformed. All his bequests (other than the Hall) were made, however, to Catholic personages and relations, including Miles who received a larger legacy than most. Broom Hall was a copyhold property, held of the Dean and Chapter of Durham. Perhaps

Thomas worded his Will discreetly, because all Wills proved in the bishopric were administered by the Church authorities.

Dom Aidan Bellenger describes Miles Pinkney as 'a man of wide culture who delighted in books, painting, copper engraving and sculpture', with a particular interest in poetry. He was the friend and editor of the poet Richard Crashaw and himself wrote verses. He was also a man of great practical ability; this had been recognised at Douai College where he had been procurator in 1627, when he could have been no older than 28. In 1634, however, when the Convent was being established, he was based at Arras College[9] which was under the direction of its founder, Richard Smith (1567-1655), Bishop of Chalcedon.This college was under the patronage of Cardinal Richelieu, at whose Paris home Richard Smith lived in 1634.[10]

Miles's friendship with Richard Smith was providential since the Convent was to be in Paris. Not only could Smith advise on the feasibility of the plan, but he also had the ear of the most influential churchman in France - Cardinal Richelieu. The location first envisaged by Lady Mary Letice Tredway (who was the Convent's co-founder) had been Douai. It was George Leyburne (later to be President of Douai College) who persuaded her of the superiority of Paris as a base. Pinkney was not similarly enthusiastic for they had resources in Douai while Paris was a large city, virtually unknown to him. The only friend he had there was Richard Smith. Miles saw that he could not change Lady Tredway's mind and was perhaps wrong to persist in the original idea. He decided to consult Smith who, though appreciating the difficulties, admired the courageous project and offered his help.

Lady Tredway thought that there should be a convent for English ladies as there was a seminary and school for English boys at Douai. She herself was a nun at Notre-Dame-de-Beaulieu, a Flemish convent there. Many English girls entered continental convents but she thought there should be one exclusively for English girls who would dedicate their lives to prayer for the re-conversion of England. She thought that there should also be a school which would train English Catholic girls who would either enter the monastic life or return to England to marry and bring up families in the Catholic faith. Miles, who was better known on the continent by his alias Thomas Carre (and will be so-called for the rest of this article), was her enthusiastic colleague in this and the plan was also approved by the English Chapter. There would be many obstacles to overcome before the

convent could be established. These would be better described in a later article devoted to its history; this first essay aims to add something to the story of Thomas who was the convent's first chaplain.

The Abbé Cédoz tells many stories of Thomas Carre: the poverty of the early years, aggravated by the Civil War in England when funds invested there could not be touched; the English royal family in exile (Queen Henrietta Maria and her two sons Charles and James, later to be Charles II and James II of England), and its relationship with the convent and with Carre; the hopes of the English Catholic community at the Restoration and Carre's role in relation to these; Thomas's standing with Séguier,[11] the Chancellor of France, and other notables; his ill-fated journey to England in 1662; the realisation of his long held dream of setting up a seminary in Paris and the narrowly averted catastrophe of its loss; finally, a graphic account of his last days and death.

Funds were scarce when the Convent began. The community depended upon the dowries brought by the first postulants. Thomas Carre played an important part in recruiting these during his visits to England. Business often calling him to England, he sought the advice and approval of members of the English Chapter and other friends on the English Mission and the most actvive of these searched for young girls choosing the life of the cloister. The first two recruits were Bridget and Dorothy Mollyns, aged 18 and 17. After another year and another foray into England, Carre returned with two further postulants. At first there was no school to bring in fees. In setting up the community, Lady Tredway had to fill all the essential posts herself: she was abbess, prioress, *'dépositaire'* (treasurer and practical administrator), and mistress of novices. The small group arrived in Paris on 20th February 1634 when permission for the convent's establishment had been obtained from Louis XIII and the Archbishop of Paris and a house had been found and furnished. The Abbess was inducted on 26th March of that year and the community was established by Christmas. It was existing so frugally that Thomas Carre was recorded as saying: 'I will never forget Christmas Day when I was regaled with a morsel of boiled beef' (or *'bouilli'* from which *bouillon* had been made).'I was not used to such a delicate regimen'.

Nevertheless, by means of Lady Tredway's careful management, the community had paid off its initial debts within two to three years and was able to move to another house in an area which unfortunately proved to be

THE RT REV. MYLES PERKINS (ALIAS THOMAS CHAMBERS) OF THE ORDER OF S. BENEDICT
Secretary Procurator at the English Benedictine College at Douai and subsequently, in conjunction with Lady Mary Percy, Co-founder of the Convent, and first Chaplain of the English Augustinian Nuns at Paris.

insalubrious. Some of the young nuns died there. Better premises were sought and by a contract signed on 20th December 1638, four contiguous houses were bought in a street named Fossés-Saint-Victor and there the convent remained for more than two centuries. As they became vacant, adjacent properties were acquired. *Notre-Dame-de-Sion* was the name of the new Convent, and the community was known at that time as *Les Dames Chanoinesses Anglaises.*

The Civil War in England and the execution of Charles I caused the flight of his widow, Henrietta Maria, her court and her family to Paris where they lived in exile. Cédoz describes how Thomas Carre was well-known to the Queen. Often the 'unfortunate queen' (as she called herself) went with her family to visit the convent and often its chaplain went to see the royal family, be it at the Louvre, or Chaillot or Colombes. Henrietta Maria had great confidence in him and more than once, knowing his wisdom and prudence, she asked his advice. At the Restoration in 1660, the hopes of the English Catholic clergy were high. The Declaration of Breda of that year when Charles II promised a general amnesty and liberty of conscience, gave foundation for their hopes for a relaxation of the barbarous penal laws operating in England. They also cherished hopes for an 'immediate pastor' for their people, (and here Thomas Carre's name was inscribed on the list of those thought capable and worthy of such office). Charles was obliged to rescind his promise in 1661. Another of his attempts to alleviate the lot of Dissenters was a Declaration of Indulgence in 1663 but this was bitterly resented and more repressive laws were passed by a hostile government. Cédoz says that 'the moderate character of the propositions debated in Parliament at this time' (on behalf of the Dissenters) 'was owed, at least in part, to the influence of Carre'.

It happened that Thomas had to visit England in 1660 on clergy business ; it was at the time when Henrietta Maria was to make her return to London. Thomas, who always had to make his visits in disguise, thought of joining the Queen's train in a military disguise, as a member of her bodyguard. When she saw him she called him 'Captain Carre'. During the Queen's ceremonial processional through London, the Duke of York (the future James II), recognised and greeted him while the King, followed by his guard, twice stopped his horse before the 'captain' to give him a mark'of his benevolent attention'.

In Paris Carre had other eminent friends. Lord Walter Montague, 'so

well known, less for his name than for his charity, honoured him with a particular intimacy'. The door of Séguier,[11] the Chancellor of France, was always open to him while greater personages had to wait indefinitely in the antechamber.

On 5th May 1662, Thomas undertook another journey to England but, even before reaching the Channel, he was stricken with illness. The Abbess who was informed, begged him to return but he continued his journey. Once in England, he fell victim to a violent pleurisy and was obliged to stop at Peckham where he had old and valued friends. Their care seemed to cure his illness and he continued on into London where he suffered a dangerous relapse. His confessor, a Doctor Manly, even thought to administer the Last Sacraments. The news sent back to the Convent caused consternation; prayers for him were multiplied with recourse to all the saints for aid. He was cared for by the most able doctors in London and Cédoz says that the most eminent of his confrères crowded around him, passed nights at his bedside and were prodigal with their care and affection.

After five long months he regained a little strength and longed for home. In resolving to go there he showed more courage than wisdom and, had his friends suspected his intentions, they would have done all they could to frustrate them. But he kept his counsel and one fine day he took his hat and cane as if going for a healthful promenade and set off on his return journey, saying farewell to no one. He was received in the Convent with both joy and dismay, for his illness had greatly altered his appearance. Thomas Carre never recovered his vitality though he lived on until his 75th year in 1674. Infirm, he could still write and he left several MSS 'full of solid doctrine and Christian intellect in the Annals of the convent'.

Carre exercised his poetic talent, says Cédoz, notably in 1664 at the celebrations for the Abbess' s jubilee. She had been 50 years a nun and 30 years as Abbess at that date and, as the Restoration of Charles II had helped the Convent by allowing renewed access to its English funds, it was possible to make the occasion festive. There was a solemn Mass and a dinner attended by distinguished guests. The young *pensionnaires* from the school gave a stage representation with dialogues and declamations in praise of the Abbess's achievements and character. The author of these was Thomas Carre. The event is described in the Convent Annals but, sadly, the texts are not extant. The most important piece that he wrote, says Cédoz,

was written for his nuns and the subject was the search for human happiness.

During his last years he did realise a long cherished dream. In 1667, the opportunity occurred of establishing at Paris a branch of Douai college for the pursuit of further theological studies. It was to be a seminary where students would take examinations at the Sorbonne, 'and thus furnish an excellent seedbed of professors and missionary scholars'. Cédoz says that the occasion which made this possible was rather regrettable. There was a quarrel between the London Chapter and George Leyburne, president of Douai College, which caused divisions among members of the college. On 23rd October 1667, three young ecclesiastics who did not want to be caught up in the dissension, came to Paris, to Thomas Carre.[12] They were: Edward Paston, cousin to the Duke of Norfolk, (later to become president of Douai College), John Betham, preacher and chaplain to James II, and Bonaventure Gifford, (later to be Vicar Apostolic of the London District), who died aged 91 in 1734.

Thomas Carre introduced his scheme to them and they agreed to participate. The superiors of the English clergy gave their blessing and the foundation of the college of Saint Gregory was resolved. A location was found and provided at his own expense by Thomas Carre, with linen and all necessaries. This was a small house at the end of the chaplaincy garden of the convent on the corner of the Rue des Boulangers and the Fossés-Saint-Victor. The contract was signed on 13th December 1667. A rule was agreed and Thomas was named Superior. The first three ecclesiastics to come from Douai were soon joined by Edward Lutton (procurator and confessor to the students at Douai), Anthony Meynell, James Smith (who later became Vicar-Apostolic of the Northern District), and George Witham.

Thomas almost had his dream shattered by an unforeseen financial crisis. A Dr Holden,[13] who had helped financially in the setting up of the convent in 1634, made Thomas his heir in 1662. Both he and Dr. Holden were unaware of a French law called 'the right of windfall'. The testator had also left bequests to legatees in England and Thomas had hastened to honour these. Under French law the money was liable to tax because the recipients were not naturalised French. Thomas was suddenly faced with a demand for a sum of money which would have meant the sale of the college property. This threat to his long nurtured plans was a great blow and, like Job and St Teresa in other circumstances, he could not at first

accept the will of God. He tore his hair and prostrated himself in despair upon the ground. Happily, Edward Lutton (who was to be the future chaplain to the Convent) came to the rescue and managed to raise enough money to avert the catastrophe.

This last crisis further enfeebled Thomas's health. During his last years Edward Lutton had been initiated into the work of the chaplaincy and was already handling the administration. Though infirm towards the end, Thomas could still converse sensibly. He was given the Last Sacraments on 29th October 1674 but rallied a little afterwards and was able to receive, says Cédoz, 'the Counts Cardigan and Shrewsbury',[14] old friends who had cooled a little towards the convent of late. Thomas asked for a *tisane* to moisten his lips and then made a plea to them 'so full of logic and clarity, defending so warmly the cause of the convent, that all clouds were lifted'. This effort cost him his strength and he died at 3.00 p.m. on Friday 31st October, the vigil of All Saints, surrounded by Messrs. Lutton, Betham and Gifford. He was buried on All Saints' Day in the convent chapel, near to the tomb of Bishop Richard Smith. An anecdote from the Annals describes how, when the priests had ceased chanting, suddenly, from the depths of the choir came an angelic voice intoning 'May the angels lead thee into Paradise!' It was the voice of a choir nun, Mme. Pulcheria Eyre. The nuns' choir followed with an antiphon.

The funeral service was repeated 40 days later in the Convent chapel. It was here that Edward Lutton, friend and successor, recited Thomas's funeral oration reproduced in Volume IX of the Catholic Record Society's publications. Thomas died in the forty-ninth year of his priesthood, the fortieth of his chaplaincy and little less than a month away from his seventy-fifth birthday. He entered Douai 6th June 1618, made his oath and received the tonsure 13th June 1620, and was ordained hastily 15th June 1625. Cédoz says that scarcely had he begun his theology than affairs at home called him to return. The 'affairs at home' could have been the death of his uncle, Christopher Batmanson, who died in 1625. He left £20 to Miles Pinkney and this was the largest of the personal legacies mentioned in his Will. Broom Hall then passed to Christopher's nephew, Nicholas Briggs, who eventually, in 1635, in the same year as the death of Christopher's wife Ellinor, obtained a 'quietus' on the property. The Abbé Cédoz thinks that Carre probably worked for the English Mission between 1625 and 1627 though there is no trace of his missionary activities and

George Leyburne averred that he had never worked on the English Mission.

NOTES

1. D. Bellenger, 'Miles Pinkney (1599-1674): a Durham priest in Counter Reformation Paris', *Northern Catholic History,* No.19, Spring, 1984, 13-17.
2. Abbe F.-M.-Th. Cédoz, 'Un couvent de réligieuses á Paris de 1634 á1884', London and Paris 1891.
3. Douai College Diaries; ed. by E.H. Burton and T.L. Williams, Vol.10.
4. Lillias E. Cotesworth, 'The Cotesworths of Egglesburn'. Privately printed circa 1928. Newcastle upon Tyne Central Library.
5. Sir Henry Conyers Surtees, The history of the parish of Byers Green, including the townships of Newfield and Binchester (Castle of Brancepeth and Newton Gap). 1922.
6. Ryton Church of England parish registers: 'Martin Pinknaye (married) Anne Beatmason, 4 May 1590'. Transcript in Newcastle upon Tyne Central Library.
7. Pedigree of Batmanson of Durham, St. Oswald (Broom Hall), Dr. Forster's Durham pedigrees; list of convictions. Northumberland Record Office, N.R.O. 1954/27.
8. The Will of Thomas Batmanson, 10 December 1615. Durham University Library Archives, Palace Green, Durham.
9. Arras College, 'wherein qualified theologians could study and reply to theological writings of English Protestants', came to an end in 1635. C.R.S. vol.19.
10. Richard Smith ended his days at the convent of the Augustinian nuns where he had lived for 13 years.
11. Séguier, Chancellor of France under Louis XIV, appears in this story at an earlier date. In the period before the Restoration freed access to the convent's funds invested in England, the nuns were impoverished and had to earn their living 'at the point of a needle'. After a visit to hear the nuns chanting, and hearing of their plight, he helped them from time to time with gifts of money.
12. The Catholic Record Society's account of the setting up of St. Gregory's College (Vol.19) differs from that of Cédoz in that no mention is made of a quarrel involving George Leyburne. See E.H. Burton The register book of St. Gregory's College, Paris 1667-1786' for a history of the College.
13. Dr Holden is mentioned earlier in Cédoz's history as a participant, with Richard Smith in the foundation of the Convent. They both advanced money to help with the scheme.
14. The Counts Cardigan and Shrewsbury: Brudenell of Deene was made Baron in 1628 and Earl of Cardigan in 1661. One of his descendants is famous for his part in the 'Charge of the Light Brigade'. Francis Talbot, 11th Earl of Shrwesbury, married the daughter of Lord Cardigan. Through her scandalous love affair with George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, a duel was fought in which her husband was killed during the reign of Charles II.

THE DESPERATE FACTION: CATHOLIC COALOWNERS IN THE FIFTEEN

Eric Clavering

1 HISTORICAL MYTH

In 1995, in *A Desperate Faction,* by book and by document Dr Leo Gooch exorcised from English history the ghost of 'Catholic impoverishment'. It was time: the self-serving myth had distorted three main English traditions of historical writing, the whig, the radical, and the marxist. From the Catholic Bareacres family of Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* to the historian R H Tawney's famous image of the determined Puritan trudging manfully across an icy landscape, a never-stated assumption lay unexamined behind portrayals of Catholics: whatever their virtues, they were a soft lot who unlike Presbyterians couldn't handle money and were therefore of no account, to be conveniently excluded alike from the histories of English Nonconformism as of Tyne coal. The 17th century bankruptcies of two recusants, William Selby in Winlaton Colliery and William Riddell in Gateshead, seemed to me, when I first came across them, just what was to be expected from such people, a natural order of things.

However Dr Alan Rounding, to whom I owe a great deal of what follows, pointed out that the Stella Tempests' Catholic agent George Dunn brought healthy finances to Widdrington on his succession, and that the recusant lord's own more than competent viewer, Catholic Albert Silvertop, was also the trusted agent of the Whig Sir Edward Blackett. Later we learned that the Derwent iron industry had been the creation of the recusant Blakistons of Gibside[1]. A large number of cases in Chancery showed both the importance of Catholic enterprise and that any history is written by the winners. Nonconformist Protestants have proudly expounded their pioneering of England's early industrialism, nonconforming Catholics have preferred to write of other matters.

So I misunderstood Tyne coal, even when writing in *Northern Catholic History.*[2] The clear fact is that until the 1620s wealthy Catholics had owned perhaps half of Tyne and Wear coal. Under heavy pressure they then began to lose it, but their loss, though it enriched Puritan rivals, was far from reducing them to poverty. Moreover, crucially, the next generation strove successfully to extend its share of the trade, until the onset of

war gave them other concerns. After 1640 the greatest nexus of interlocking Catholic families exploiting coal suffered disaster, and by 1715 such of its children as remained in the trade faced final liquidation[3].

All this was familiar ground for the letter-writer who gave Dr Gooch his striking title. It is not a politician's soundbite but a considered assessment of the Rising's prospects made at its outset by Sir Henry Liddell; he considered that it was motivated by a handful of men financially at their wits' end and would fail. As Whig MP for Newcastle and kingpin of Tyne coal he was of all witnesses by far the best informed. No one knew more than he about northern politics, no one near as much about coal, and the despair of the Catholic coalowner remnant he speaks of was of his making. In his grand design for restructuring the coal industry, launched in the 1690s and at this time in crisis, their elimination was implicit. They were indeed desperate, and had dwindled to a very tiny faction. They were led by Widdrington's uncle, John Clavering of Callaly; Liddell knew his balance sheet by heart. Widdrington was driven by loyalties, not despair, but John had necessities; he knew he was going to lose his colliery anyway. His distress may well have proved decisive for his only nephew.

There was too a second tiny faction to which I shall return, a handful of High Tories trapped by Bishop Crewe's opportunism. Liddell was their cousin; through his agent Francis Baker he was well informed about them. The two factions together were small, but coal and High Toryism gave the Northumberland Rising its leaders; it might perhaps have been avoided, had despair not tipped the balance.

2 CATHOLICS IN TYNE COAL BEFORE 1600

Until the Tudor intervention in religion coal on Tyneside had fallen under three main kinds of ownership, and in roughly equal proportions (see plan).

i Monastic. North of the river most coal manors came under Tynemouth abbey; south of it, half of Gateshead and Whickham lands were under St Bartholomew's; with other houses.

ii Catholic Gentry estates, of the Nevilles (Winlaton), Lumleys (Axwell-cum-Swalwell), Gascoignes (Ravensworth), Hedworths (Saltwellside), Blakistons (East and West Gibside), and the lesser estates

Stella, Hollinside, Farnacres, Redheugh, and Felling;

iii Bishop of Durham's Commons, in the manors of Gateshead and Whickham (conveyed as a whole to Newcastle Council as *The Grand Lease),* Ryton *(Stella Grand Lease),* and Chester.

Between 1600 and the Civil War the Grand Lease became the most productive area, and for half a century the most profitable. Its grant by the Crown allowed a reorganisation in 1600 of the Council, the Grand Lease, and the Hostmen's guild which began the elimination of Catholics. The only notable Catholic Grand Lessee was Sir Nicholas Tempest of Stella, not himself a recusant; future lessees were Protestants, particularly from a closely intermarried Puritan group. The Hostmen now barred recusant apprentices, and as old Catholic Hostmen died off or lapsed it became increasingly difficult for Catholics to qualify for work within the trade. Despite all this between 1603 and 1636 Catholic families, in the broad sense of those marrying and producing recusants, increased their share of Tyne sales from 25% to 40%. Coal belonged to the freeholder of the land above it, and the old faith retained its hold on the gentry.

Land could not be expropriated save for treason, and heads of landowning families took care to avoid that charge. It is of historical importance therefore that while in Elizabeth's reign perhaps half of the workable coal was in Catholic hands, by 1700 political and economic pressures had been able to reduce this to less than a tenth of its original extent. In 1750 less than half of this tenth remained, a tiny fraction of the area by then being mined. The Civil War began and the Fifteen consumated the collapse of traditional Catholic enterprise in coal.

This surprisingly large share in early coal ownership had been owed not only to large gentry estates, but also to privatisations of monastic lands. North of the river, outside Denton sold to the Erringtons, these in the main had benefited Protestant aldermen; south of the river they profited the sitting tenant James Lawson - his sister had been abbess of St Bartholomew's. Most lay in Gateshead; called "Bensham Colliery", their name belies their extent; they formed a cross, from the Town Hall to Kells Lane, from the cemetery to the Team. A Lawson marriage to the Newcastle merchant William Riddell caused Bensham to descend in the Riddell family.

Both Lawson's daughters, the notable coalowner Barbara Scrivener and Elizabeth wife of the 'special recusant' Richard Hodgson, had shares in the undivided Winlaton Colliery. On the eve of his rising to avert expropriation Westmorland transferred Winlaton to a partnership including Hodgson and Scrivener with, as lightning conductor, the Protestant Sir William (I) Selby who negociated the Grand Lease. Winlaton and Bensham were the two biggest collieries after Grand Lease Whickham; their linkage, and that of the Riddell, Hodgson, and Selby families (later Selbys returned to the faith) always dominated Catholic coalowning. Hodgsons and Riddells had intermarried with the Brandlings of Felling; in this nexus lay the roots of the 'desperate faction'. With other Catholic owners, Tempests, Jenisons, Gascoignes, Blakistons, Hedworths, its links both by marriage and in business were weaker.

3 LAND AND THE ECONOMICS OF COAL

Because of the unprecedented capital demands and risks it brought coal saw the first industrial revolution. Unlike ships or woollen mills, collieries, whether leased or owned, were usually designed with a life expectation of 21 years, imposing a strict limit on an amortisation of investment constantly threatened by geology; expensively hewn through stone, drainage adits and shafts could run into sand and have to be abandoned, a seam could end abruptly in a fault, deep collieries could be drowned. Initially most of the capital came from merchant profits in other trades, so that progressively the industry fell more and more into the hands of Newcastle aldermen, in majority Protestant, and out of those of rural landowners, in majority Catholic.

However in a second phase coal profits were reinvested in buying land; on Tyneside there would always be coal beneath it. Collieries demanded great quantities of the products of the land, timber, leather and tallow, horses and men for work, and grain to feed both. As pits became deeper big estates offered waterpower to drive the pumps; as the coalfield moved away from the river land gave free and protected passage for waggonways, while hindering rival owners' efforts to reach the river. But above of all, land served as a sink for capital, releasable by mortgage for new ventures or to cushion disaster.

Selbys, Hodgsons and Jenisons were attracted by land outside the

coal country and the less exposed to takeover attempts, in Northumberland, at Hebburn and at Walworth. Marriage, though constrained by religion and social rise, was the easiest way into this useful collateral; Selbys sought brides in Cumbria, Riddells in Northumberland, making a union with Sir John Clavering of Callaly - his Collingwood mother had brought an unavowed Catholicism into this establishment family. In this way the early 17th century saw the Catholic landed gentry of the four northern counties, never averse to trade, drawn increasingly into the coal industry nexus.

Land too was sought to compensate for losses. The Ravensworth estate, too attractive to be defended from afar, was sold by its Yorkshire Catholic owners the Gascoignes to a relative, the Protestant Newcastle merchant Thomas Liddell I. Another Catholic Yorkshireman, Sir William Wray, had been installed as estate agent; he married a Selby, his son a Brandling, and he worked Ravensworth coal under lease. Liddell made a clean sweep of all tenants, both land and coal, and Wray had to set about acquiring a substitute. For an outsider there was none to be got in the working coalfield, and he fell back on the Beamish estate, too far from the Tyne to be worked profitably. However in alliance with Sir John Clavering, of Bensham and Callaly, at Lemington at the limit of river navigation he did obtain a lease.

He found another at Harraton on the Wear, the most profitable colliery of the 1630s, and the most troublesome. Its owner, the Catholic John Hedworth, unlike Thomas Liddell, stuck to the old custom of sharing his colliery among several lessees; like sharing a railway, it did not make for efficiency. In joining the homogeneous Riddell-Selby-Hodgson-Brandling group of Newcastle merchants the landowning Callaly Claverings and Yorkshire Wrays added to its scope and capital resources but at the same time increased its diversity and risks. The agri-industrial complex which was to end in 'the faction' was now complete, its many interests interlocking but scattered over an eight-mile triangle. Any failure might repercute around the six families, and set the whole group sliding downward. It was to meet three colliery disasters.

4 THE THREE DISASTERS

Already in the 14th century Winlaton's coal had been requisitioned to

burn lime to build Windsor Castle; by the 1600s free-draining coal was exhausted and the Busty seam was being worked. In 1629 in what is now Axwell Park the young William Selby III made a bold attack on lower coal by a new colliery. It was pumped by waterwheels powered by the entire run-off of rainwater from the east face of Winlaton Hill, but this did not give him enough power, and his colliery was drowned. He was then killed in a duel (by a fellow recusant), leaving debts of £ 11000, the cost of his colliery. By using water from a dam and fulling mills the Selbys owned at Winlaton Mill on the Derwent his father Sir William II recovered the working, but in so doing moved the Mill outfall from above the Damhead dam to below it, thus stopping the Axwell cornmill on the dam.

The Axwell-cum-Swalwell estate, transferred by John Lumley on the eve of the 1569 rising to a trustee, had recently fallen to Puritan alderman and Grand Lessee James Clavering, a Callaly younger son and uncle to Catholic Sir John. James' son, Alderman John, promptly sued in Chancery for an injunction against Selby[4]. Earlier, such cases had gone to the Privy Council, a prerogative court open to pleas of *force majeure* and of public interest, whose sensible custom was to order local arbitration by a panel of coalowners. Chancery, blinkered by its rules and ignorant of coal, was happy instead to hand down interim injunctions to restore whatever *status quo* had been altered - and in this case to drown Winlaton coal again. As the law argued the colliery lay idle, large and costly to maintain and its capital bringing no return.

Wills show that Hodgson and Protestant Sir Francis Anderson, also lords of Winlaton, were badly hit, as were Brandling and Protestant Sir Peter Riddell, who must have contributed to the investment; eventually the debt had to be cleared by cutting all Winlaton's timber. The Civil War came; royalist occupation of Newcastle at first gave Selby relief, but then the capture of the town brought sequestration; Winlaton was leased to Hazelrig's lobster officers who proved incapable of running it profitably. The Restoration did not save the last of the coal Selbys; he had to sell out to the newly-risen Blacketts, and to Alderman John's son Sir James Clavering, leaving only three-eighths of the largest of the coal freeholds still in Catholic hands.

The second disaster had begun in 1640 with the Scots army's siege of Newcastle. Bensham was occupied and wrecked - all soldiers seek timber. Five years later the Scots besieged Newcastle again, paying their costs out

of pithead coal stocks. When the colliery was sequestered only a quarter was working. Sir Thomas Riddell, who died a refugee in Antwerp in 1650, had avoided involvement in Winlaton; his debts were half those of Anderson, and less than the value of the colliery, but like Sir Nicholas Tempest of Stella he had been named in the first Treason Act, and to lift sequestration both may have paid half the value of their estates.

At Stella half a century later this enormous price for backing the war's loser had been amortised; by 1675 Riddell's grandson William was bankrupt. He had borrowed at Callaly, in the Wray world, and in the market from the moneylender Milbanke £ 6000 which in 1677 cost him one quarter of Bensham. The other three-quarters went to Clavering for loans, raised by mortgage on Callaly; even so in 1700 £ 11000 was still outstanding. William was an active coalowner who built a waggonway, perhaps two; his debts may have come from ill-judged attempts to revive an aged colliery at a time when post-Restoration low prices reigned. Sir John Clavering's son Ralph, a "learned antiquary" who understood nothing of coal and was himself running into more debt rebuilding Callaly Castle, made a remarkably bad bargain in 1684 by granting a lease, without restrictions on seams or output, for 41 years, double the standard duration. The beneficiary of this blanket agreement, happy to make the most of his luck, was Henry Liddell himself, at that time a younger son striking out on his own.[5]

The third disaster befell Wray's sons. John Hedworth, a terribly weak man with large estates on both Tyne and Wear, was a goose waiting to be plucked, who had already lost Saltwellside to Henry Maddison, Grand Lesee and dominant Puritan owner. In Harraton Hedworth had leased coal to an experienced group of Catholic miners, but also dangerously to a partnership well on its way to a quasi-monopoly of the Wear trade. It had been set up by George Grey and George Lilburn, a redoutable Sunderland Puritan coal firm, and Sir William Lambton, who carefully avoided the recusancy general in his family. To secure the prey Grey's daughter married Hedworth, and when in 1644 the colliery was sequestered a new lease was granted to Grey and Lilburn. Hazelrig however sent cavalry to seize it, as at Winlaton to re-allot it to some of officers. One outcome of this was a coal trade record in costly lawsuits.[6]

The Royalist Wrays, both colonels, by now refugees in Edinburgh, were in dangerous waters, because Hazelrig was motivated more by politics than by greed. In 1648 John Lilburn the Leveller, George's nephew,

was in the north to set up in coal. In defence of Hedworth he published *The Poor Man's Outcry* against Hazelrig, Cromwell seized the occasion to destroy Lilburn, and there was collateral damage all around. The Wrays lost not only Harraton but Beamish too, except for its coal under Tanfield Moor. Unable to work this for lack of rail access, George Wray sold it through the Brandlings to one of the political Pitt family who, once there was transport, made over £ 2500 a year out of it. Charles Brandling, Wray's brother-in-law and debtor, lost Nuns Moor, his holding in the Town Moor, in a similar way. Fined for recusancy and delinquency he could not pay; Newcastle Council seized his land, extracted High Main coal to the value of his fine - and did not return the plot, which still belongs to the town[7].

In the aftermath of the Civil Wars the Catholic stake in coal was rapidly eroded by losses of this kind. The Hodgsons suffered too, having to sell Hebburn Hall to the pivotal Puritan Robert Ellison. Given time there is a great deal of resilience in land and more in coal, but members of the group were not given time. Acts of man followed on the heels of acts of God and of war, with synergistic repercussions. By the end of the century those affected by Winlaton, Protestant Andersons no less than Catholic Riddells, Selbys, Brandlings, and Wrays, were out of coalmining. Catholics were not a special case; seen through the other end of the telescope all this is just the economist's Concentration of Capital, or more fashionably Shake-Out, working in its mysterious, and ruthless, ways.

5 LIDDELL'S RESTRUCTURING OF THE TRADE : THE CREWE EFFECT

The historical importance of Sir Henry Liddell is that he radically restructured the Tyne coal trade, exploiting this thinning of the numbers of active coalowners to bring about a cartel devoted to driving up prices by cutting back output. Cartels always existed in coal, but were ad *hoc*, unstable, of short duration: Liddell did not believe in 'the free market'; he wanted a permanent regulatory body with police powers, like the Hostmen's Company as it had existed in the early 17th century. It had set quotas for two dozen or more members to produce an annual export, sold mostly to London, of the order of 10, 000T (over a quarter of a million tonnes: the *ten* (T), the useful trade unit of the time, was $26^{1/2}$ tons on shipboard). In Liddell's cartel of 1700 twice that quantity was to be shared by just eight

producers. In 1708 his own quota was 2400T out of 16000T; he was outclassed by Charles Montagu's unheard-of 4000T. To accept second place was Henry Liddell's masterstroke, turning to the advantage of the great owners the Crewe factor, the unexpected intrusion into coal of Nathaniel Crewe, maverick Bishop of Durham.

Crewe came, like Cromwell, from what the Court would see as an Eastern oppositional circle but when young gambled, like Pepys, on privileged access to James duke of York, whose coming reign as James II he intended to exploit. His desertion of family tradition and his encouragement of James' expection that he would facilitate the re-Catholicisation of the North brought him the richest see in the country. Once there, seeking local support for his political ambitions, he made a wheeler-dealer alliance with Sir William Bowes of Streatlam, and, through Bowes' friend George Baker, married among the High Tory Forsters of Bamburgh. The Revolution of 1688 ended his political ambition, and any of his nephew Charles Montagu.

In its place Bowes offered a way into coal; he had married Elizabeth Blakiston, last of the line and a Protestant, and she had brought him the great coal estates of the Gibsides, as yet little exploited. East Gibside (Marley Hill) was leased to Charles, against cathedral sinecures for Bowes relatives; he was given the coalowner George Baker for partner and in 1699 their Northbanks Colliery came on line. Henry Liddell did not oppose this invasion: he facilitated it, aiding Charles' expansion till his string of collieries brought the unprecedented quota of 4000T. Montagu, unstable in 1703, incapable in 1709, was only a catspaw, held in leading strings by George Baker and his brother Francis, agent for Northbanks and the Liddell coal empire. By these and other manoeuvres Sir Henry Liddell held in his hands half of Tyne production.

Crewe had seen the cat jump and had understood; wealth lay in coal and not in Stuart politics. Among his Tory cousins the Bakers had done well, George with a third of the Montagu profits, 'cousin Francis' with positively modern ideas about the salaries due to top management. His other Forster relations had not; they were not poor, but missing this highly profitable industrial bus, under the post-1688 regime they had no future. Crewe had escaped, but his early opportunism left his ally Thomas Forster trapped in political isolation. Newcastle Council was Tory, but it was not Jacobite; much of the northern gentry was Jacobite, but it was not

Anglican. Crewe could and would do nothing for Thomas Forster, and he deserted him during the Fifteen. Politically, Thomas Forster was desperate too.

6 LIDDELL ATTEMPTS TO CLOSE THE COALHOUSE DOOR

Using his position of strength and a handful of major owners, the most important the second Sir William Blackett, Liddell set up a formal cartel, *The Coal Office,* which in 1701 cut back production so savagely, from 24 500T to 14 300T, that in 1703 Charles Montagu was making over £4.10.0 per ten - throughout the 17th century the expected profit on each ten sold had been £1. The cartel's action raised expectations to £2. 10.0, but in 1730 actual returns of Liddell associates were again £4. Profits of this order encouraged the Coal Office to impose the ruthless, if need be the strong-arm, restriction of output that its economic ideas demanded.

The Hodgsons, last of James Lawson's descendants in the trade, had long owned Jesmond Colliery, and Philip Hodgson worked one half of it by himself. 'By kind and flattering words' the cartel persuaded him to let them extract 500T for him for a guaranteed percentage. Finding 300T of this held off the market and left rotting at the pit head he attempted to sell it himself. The cartel ordered the Hostmen fitters to boycott him, on pain of forfeiting cartel business, so stopping him transporting or vending his own coal. He sued[8]. We have the deed setting up the illegal cartel; he had not, could prove nothing, and he lost[9].

In Jesmond and Gateshead cartel members were now working new seams at more than 80 metres, beyond the reach of the 17th century's standard pump, a continuous chain of discs hauled through a wooden standpipe limited in length by its weight. Metals had been too poor and too dear for the more efficient 'parish' pump to be used in collieries. By 1704 a revolution in metallurgy made possible in a Blackett colliery in Gateshead the *bobgin,* a rocker beam (a 'bob') raising and lowering of these suction-lift pumps, draining greater depths. Montagu's Elswick induced its introduction to Scotland by 'Bobbing John', the first Whig then Jacobite earl of Mar. With the bobgin Henry Liddell could reach coal in Bensham inaccessible in 1684.

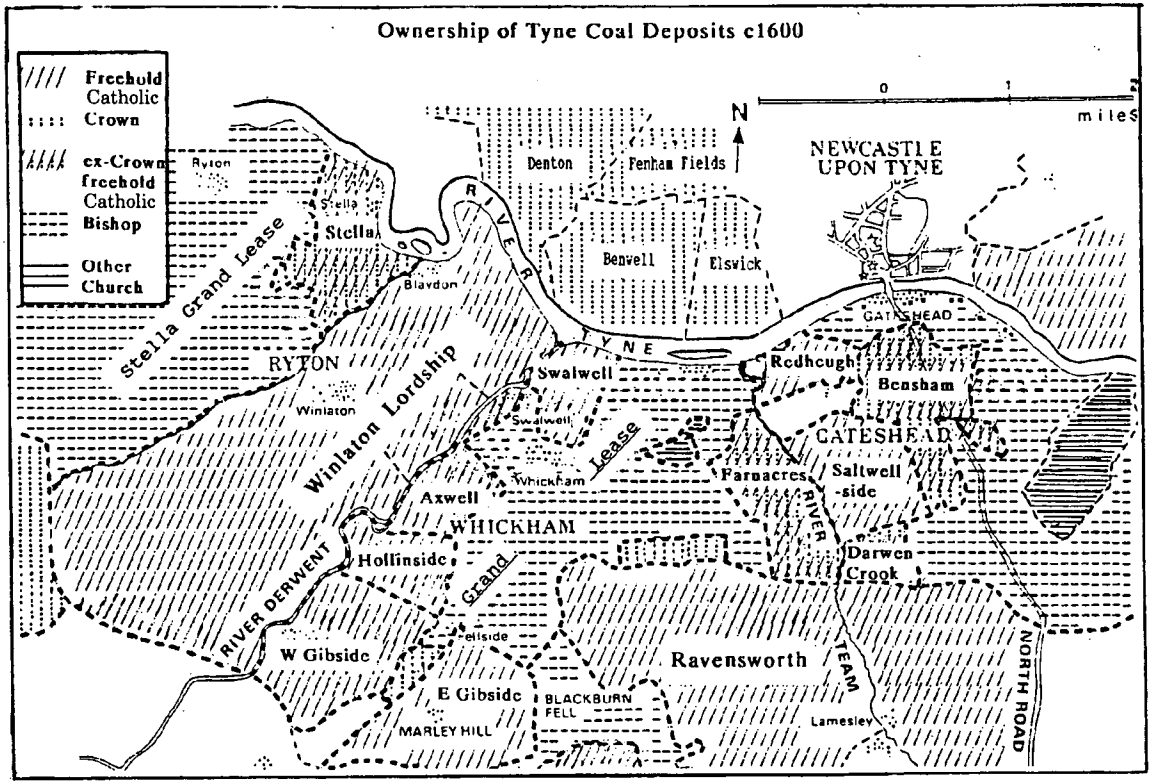
Moreover he could now sell it at a profit then inconceivable. Ralph Clavering's son John claimed Liddell was making £ 6000 a year, against the

£ 400 he himself was getting, though even his father's rash deed should have given him £ 900; the lower sum would not even pay the interest on Callaly mortgages. So Clavering sued, and like Hodgson he lost; the lease, like all Liddell leases, was watertight. The unimaginative strictness of Chancery rulings was a first cause of despair. Both Clavering and Hodgson fought in the Fifteen.

Yet hope still remained, the expectation that the Coal Office would collapse, because of the pressure of Newcastle capital as determined as Catholic coalowners to share the bonanza, or because of the patent illegality of its restraint of trade, or, as all other cartels had collapsed, because of dissension among its members. It was in fact to do the last, but not until two years after the Fifteen. A bill aimed specifically at the cartel was indeed introduced into Parliament, and, with most of its teeth drawn in committee by Sir Henry Liddell, member for the coal trade, passed as the Coal Act of 1711; it was never implemented. Serious pressure from Newcastle freemen too was felt as early as 1708, when instead of its usual four new members the Hostmen's Company gained forty, and the Coal Office, now *The Association,* closed its ranks behind a pitbull terrier secretary, as ambitious as he was aggressive, William Cotesworth.

Two years later Newcastle merchant pressure took the concrete form of a new colliery in Tanfield and a waggonway to it. The cartel gave orders to close both; by 1714 Cotesworth had driven the waggonway owner into an early grave, and, astonishingly, had occupied both colliery and rail link. [10] Cartel control of waggonways bolted the door into the industry; in 1715 any one who had hoped to revive the Catholic interest in coal by re-entry to the trade, or had believed that the occupied Catholic collieries could be freed from the cartel's grip, had very good reason to despair.

After the Fifteen most of what remained of Bensham fell to Cotesworth. In the 1720s when John Clavering's son tried to sell his last colliery of Claxtons, east of the cemetery, Cotesworth wrote to the prospective buyer that as he himself owned all the wayleaves around the colliery it would not be possible to move any coal, which was therefore valueless, except of course to himself. When Widdrington's sequestered estate was put on the market he managed for a time to occupy these collieries too, but he was defeated and driven out by the remarkable resistance of my lord's agents Albert Silvertop and Joseph Dunn, plebeian coalowners who, having no need to despair, had taken no part in the Fifteen, and saw the rebirth of the Catholic interest in coal.


Ownership of Tyne Coal Deposits c1600
Freehold
Catholic
Crown
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NEWCASTLE
UPON TYNE
Ryton
Stella
Blaydon
Denton
Fenham Fields
Benwell
Elswick
RIVER TYNE
GATESHEAD
Stella Grand Lease
RYTON
Winlaton
Winlaton Lordship
Swalwell
Redheugh
Bensham
GATESHEAD
Lease
Farnacres
Saltwell
-side
Axwell
WHICKHAM
RIVER DERWENT
Hollinside
Grand
Darwen
Crook
RIVER TEAM
NORTH ROAD
W Gibside
Ravensworth
E Gibside
BLACKBURN
FELL
MARLEY HILL
Lamesley

SOURCE NOTES

1 'Early Tyne Industrialism', *Archaeologia Aeliana,* Fifth Series, XXIII, E Clavering and A Rounding.

2 Outline of its early history in *A Fighting Trade,* G Bennett, E Clavering and A Rounding, Gateshead, 1990.

3 See 'Catholics and Coal', Durham County Local History Society *Bulletin 51,* pp 3-24.

4 Public Record Office C2 Chas1/C 126/53, C3 482/7, C8 55/178

5 PRO : Bensham: C9 318/63 *Clavering V Liddell,* C9 226/46, C8 641/25, C8 641/26 .

6 PRO : Harraton: Wray and Clavering cases: C2 Chas1/W 121/79, C7 415/66, C8 74/40.

7 PRO : Nuns Moor: Cl0 129/24, C8 75/40 (Brandling debt).

8 PRO: Jesmond : C7 663/10, *Hodshon V White.*

9 Coal Office deed: Northumberland CRO, ZCOIV/47 19.

10 See 'The War of the Waggonways', *A Fighting Trade, supra.*

THOMAS ELLERKER, S.J., A THEOLOGIAN FROM COUNTY DURHAM

The Rev. Geoffrey Holt, S.J.

Father Thomas Ellerker came from Hart, near Hartlepool, in Durham.

The Ellerkers as recusants are found frequently in the records of the East Riding of Yorkshire. Robert of Ellerker, a township in the parish of Brantingham, appears several times in the *Recusancy Rolls* between 1592 and 1596.[1] Pocock gives Alice and Robert at Ellerker, and Lady Ellerker, wife of Sir Ralph, at Risby Hall, near Beverley, also Margery at Burstwick-cum-Skeckling, in 1604.[2] The names of Sir Ralph of Risby and James are in the *Northern Book of Compositions 1629-32*.[3] Margery, wife of William Ellerker of South Park, Storklinge, is named in the *Book of Recusants, 1595-6*.[4] More Ellerkers are to he found listed in *Post Reformation Catholicism in East Yorkshire, 1558-1790* - in 1627 Thomas, Ralph and others in Risby and Rowley and again in 1640, in 1652 Sir Ralph and Ralph, in 1654 John of Stillingfleet and Eleanor, widow of Ralph of Haltemprice, near Cottingham.[5] The *List of Convicted Recusants in the Reign of Charles II* contains, under Cottingham, a few miles from Hull, James a yeoman and his wife Anne, John a yeoman, Anne, Helen and Margaret, spinsters.[6]

In *English Catholic Non-Jurors of 1715* are to be found John Ellerker, gent., of Kingston-upon-Hull, and Thomas, gent., of Haltemprice,[7] and in Payne, *Records of English Catholics of 1715* is the will (1711) of Hannah Ellerker, spinster, of Doncaster, who names her four sisters, Jane and Anne Ellerker, Sarah Short and Elizabeth Wright, her two nieces, two cousins, Catherine and Thomas Ellerker, and two nephews, William and John Ellerker.[8] *Archbishop Blackburn's Visitation of 1735* gives the names of two Ellerkers in the parish of Cottingham, Sarah, gentlewoman and widow, and her bachelor son, Edward.[9] Among the names in the *Dominican Rosary Confraternity List* are Edward, a student at Bornhem (1726), and Grace of Roundhay in Yorkshire.[10] At Brussels in 1737 died Margaret, a Dominican nun, who came from Yorkshire.[11]

Finally, in the *Return of Papists, 1767*, under Hart, near Hartlepool, there appears the family of John, a steward, Susanna his wife and their four children, who 'have come to maturity', Edward, Robert, Elizabeth and

Mary.[12] It has not been established that Thomas Ellerker, the subject of this article, was the kinsman of the Ellerkers mentioned here but it seems very probable that John of Hart in 1767 and his family were relatives and close ones.

Thomas Ellerker was born at Hart in 1738. He was the youngest of three brothers. John, the eldest, was born in 1732. He arrived at St Omers College in 1743, joined the Society of Jesus in 1748, and died when a theological student at Liège, not yet ordained, in 1756. Ralph was at St Omers College in 1741-45, but nothing further has been discovered about him. Thomas entered at the college in 1751 and stayed until 1755.[13] There is no record of his school career, except that Dr Oliver remarks that he was a promising young man and that he was a worthy scholar of such a master as John Thorpe, who in Oliver's words. 'taught Humanities with the highest reputation' and who later lived and worked in Rome for many years.[14]

In September 1755 Thomas Ellerker joined the Society of Jesus at Watten, near St Omers College. After the novitiate he studied philosophy at the English Jesuit college at Liège, and then theology. Probably in 1762, he was ordained priest, and after another year of theology, was appointed to lecture in philosophy at Liège, and theology a year or so later. It was Dr Oliver' s belief that he became one of the best professors of theology that the English Jesuits ever produced.[15]

As lecturer in theology, Fr Ellerker wrote two works that have survived in manuscript, both of which are at Stonyhurst. His ' Tractatus theologicus de Jure et Justitia' of 248 pages was completed in 1767. His 'Tractatus de Incarnatione' of 80 pages (undated) was regarded by Dr Oliver as his *chef d'oeuvre*.[16]

There exists in his handwriting, and probably composed by him, a 'Réfutation d'une Brochure intitulée' Réflexions des Cours des Bourbons sur l'affaire des Jésuites'. The 'Réflexions' were written to complain about the delay of Clement XIV to suppress the Jesuits despite the promise made to Louis XV. The 'Réfutation' quotes a passage from Cicero (*de Officiis*, lib. 1): 'Referri enim decet ad ea quae proposui in principio, fundamenta justitiae: primum ut ne cui noceatur, deinde ut communi utilitati serviatur . . Potest enim accidere promissum aliquod et conventum ut id effici sit inutile, vel ei cui promissum est, vel eis qui promiserit . . . Nec

promissa igitur servanda sunt ea quae sint iis quibus promiseris inutilia; nec si plus tibi noceant quam illi prosint cui promiseris . . . Jam illis promissis standum non esse quis non videt, quae coactus quis metu aut deceptus dolo promiserit .."[17]

In the Réfutation Ellerker criticized at considerable length the writer of the Réflexions and his interpretation of the behaviour of the Bourbon Courts and of the attitude of other Catholic Courts, notably that of Vienna. He wrote of the Réflexions 'une production aussi misérable à laquelle le titre de délires conviendrait mieux que celui de Réflexions'.

Of Ellerker's letters unfortunately only two have survived, it seems, both of them addressed to his contemporary at St Omers and fellow-Jesuit, Charles Plowden, who must have written asking for his opinion. The first, dated 15 February 1792, was about the group of priests known as the Staffordshire Clergy and Joseph Wilks, a matter in which Plowden was much involved. On the Staffordshire Clergy's 'Address to the Catholic Clergy of England' supporting Wilks and declaring that his suspension by Bishop Walmesley for his refusal to submit to the ordinances of the vicars apostolic was invalid, Ellerker argued thus

> It appears to me that their leader and secretary did not understand the nature of the question upon which he writes and that the principle on which he grounds his argument is evidently false. He supposes without attempting to prove it that Bishop Walmesley inflicted an ecclesiastical censure in the strict sense of the word when he deprived Wilkes of his missionary faculties, and his whole reasoning rests on this supposition, but it is, I think, a gross mistake. Mr Wilkes possessed only a delegate jurisdiction with the rest of the missioners, and a substraction or mere privation of it cannot he called a censure in the proper sense of the word and therefore neither the justice nor validity of it depends upon the observance of rules and forms prescribed by the Canon Law. . . It is true that Berrington and Co pretend that in England you have parochial cures and parish priests from which must follow that every missioner (for who can assign a difference betwixt them) is a parish priest and in consequence has ordinary jurisdiction. But this pretension is too ridiculous to deserve a serious refutation. . .. Their opinion cannot favour the cause of Mr Wilkes. Not only Bishop Walmesley but his confrères in episcopacy and the sound part of Catholics, as well clergy as laity, have sufficiently declared that the principles and conduct of Mr Wilkes have rendered him unworthy of the sacred ministry and therefore the sentence of his lawful superior must be considered by every conscientious man as valid, just and canonical until the Staffordshire Club have proved to a degree of

> evidence that those principles contain solid doctrine and that Wilkes conduct founded on those principles was legal, regular and canonical . ..[18]

Such was his opinion. He clearly thought little of the views of those who supported Wilks.

The second letter to Charles Plowden, which was dated 30 August 1792, concerned the writings of Sir John Courtenay Throckmorton, an ally of Wilks on the body known as the Catholic Committee which was intriguing to obtain the appointment of Bishop Charles Berrington to the London Vicariate. Throckmorton had published in 1790 *A Letter addressed to the Catholic Clergy of England and Wales* on the appointment of bishops arguing for the right of the clergy to appoint their own bishops, which was followed in 1791 by a second letter in which the objections raised by John Milner, William Pilling O.S.B., Charles Plowden and Joseph Strickland to his first letter were in his opinion answered. In 1792 appeared his first letter in a second edition . . . to which are added Further Considerations on the same *Subject and on the Conduct of the English Catholics from the reign of Queen Elizabeth to the present Time.* [19]

It was on this last Throckmorton Letter that Plowden consulted Ellerker whose answer was regret that he could he of little help

> You expect some important intelligence from hence concerning Throgmor ton's malevolent publication and I apprehend that I cannot furnish you with any which will be thought satisfactory.

It is clear from this letter that he did not have the historical information he needed to answer Throckmorton's assertions about the conduct of some English Catholics in the past as he explains at some length.[20]

Although we have, it seems, only two letters from Thomas Ellerker, a number addressed to him have survived and they throw some light on the times in which he lived. One of his correspondents between January 1772 and January 1773 was the American John Carroll, who had been with him at St Omers College and then as a Jesuit student at Liège and who was later to be the first bishop and then archbishop of Baltimore in the U.S.A. He was writing from Italy where he was tutor and travelling companion to the young Charles Philip Stourton.[21] He sent Ellerker news of the growing

threat to the Jesuits in the years immediately preceding their suppression in 1773. In one letter from Rome (3 February 1773) he complained

> You Liegeois are sad correspondents. I dare say you are curious to hear news and yet give no encouragement to your friends to write. Yet you have many particularities to communicate to us at this distance which would give some relief to the gloom which oerspreads us here at Rome . .

He had mentioned in an earlier letter that Ellerker had been to England but had not sent any account of his visit. After more news of the rumours prevalent in Rome, he added 'I must sincerely congratulate you and your qood fellow-professor for the ceremony yesterday'. Thomas Ellerker and William Mercer (who also lectured in theology at Liège) and Richard Barrow and John Richardson made their final vows as Jesuits on 2 February 1773, some six months before the Society was suppressed.

With the suppression the situation at Liège changed. The college came under the authority of the prince-bishop and ceased to be a college for the study of theology and philosophy only; it became also a school, a continuation of St Omers and (from 1762) Bruges colleges and was known as the Academy. Thomas Ellerker continued to lecture in theology to students who hoped to be ordained and work in England and Wales or America as members of the secular clergy. One of the problems facing the Academy was the loss at the suppression of the Society of the annual pension granted to the college at Liege in 1626 by Maximilian, duke of Bavaria, and continued ever since.[22] There are letters to Ellerker from Joseph Semmes, an American, who had attended Ellerker's lectures as a student, had entered the Society of Jesus and was now lecturer in philosophy at the Academy. In 1780-82 he was in Munich attempting to secure the resumption of payments of the pension. Despite his hopes, the attempt failed, though at one stage the Elector of Bavaria agreed to continue the payment. While in Munich, Semmes wrote to Ellerker reporting on the negotiations and asking for news of the Academy. How happy he would be, he wrote, to have a few lines 'if you have a moment's leazure'.[23]

Another who wrote was John Thorpe in Rome. He, who had been Ellerker' s master at St Omers College, was now living retired in Rome. He wrote of his interest in the Academy and his hopes in its future. He sent encouraging news from Russia, where the Jesuits survived at the insistence of the Empress Catherine II.[24]

During the years of the Academy's existence Fr Ellerker continued to

teach theology. In 1775 he was appointed to supervise the domestic affairs of the house as minister, as Charles Plowden reported to his brother Robert. Perhaps he was not very successful, because Plowden wrote the following year 'I have a great esteem for Mr Ellerker tho' I have never thought him a proper man for the post he has relinquished'.[25] Later, Ellerker was named Vice-Director of the Academy.[26]

In July 1794 came the move to Stonyhurst as the armies of the French Revolution advanced into the Austrian Netherlands.[27] Fathers Ellerker, Semmes and another priest, Herman Kemper, of the Academy staff, four ecclesiastical students, twelve boys and two servants in one party sailed for Hull and on arrival there went by barge to Selby and on to Skipton by canal. There, leaving the younger members of the party to walk, Ellerker, who was exhausted, and Semmes took a chaise to Stonyhurst, arriving there on 28 August.[28]

Thomas Ellerker, whose health had at times been described as poor, died at Stonyhurst, aged 57, on 1 May 1795. His body was buried in the old Sodality chapel after, as a former Jesuit, Nicholas Sewall, wrote to another, John Dunn, 'they consulted the parson at Mitton who told them there was no difficulty in burying him there'.[29] In 1858 the remains were removed to the burial ground at the south-west side of the church sacristies.[30]

In his will, which was signed on 12 January 1794, Thomas Ellerker left all he possessed to his executor, Father Marmaduke Stone, then the president of the Academy at Liège, but in the next year to be the first rector of Stonyhurst.[31] Fathers Stone, Ellerker and a few others were the link between the English Jesuit houses on the Continent in penal times and Stonyhurst and the new establishment in England.

Learned lecturers in theology may be little known outside their own small world, but their teaching has been critical in the training of priests and thus the transmission of the Faith. Father Thomas Ellerker is one such example and deserves to be remembered.

NOTES

1. Catholic Record Society (C.R.S.), 18, p.53; 57, p.203; 71, p.68: 61, pp.115, 248, 253.
2. *A List of The Roman Catholics in the County of York* (1872), pp. 138, 134, 123.
3. C.R.S., 53, pp.319, 425.
4. C.R.S., 53, p.23.
5. Appendix 1 'The Incidence of Catholic Recusancy', p.62, by Hugh Aveling, East

Yorkshire Local History Society, 1960.

6. C.R.S., 6, p.264.
7. Estcourt and Payne. *English Catholic Non-Jurors of 1715,* pp.89, 301.
8. Payne, *Records of English Catholics of 1715,* p.77.
9. C.R.S., 32, p.233.
10. C.R.S., 14, pp.208, 219.
11. C.R.S., 25, pp.211; 14, p.208n.
12. C.R.S., Mon.2, p.34. It does not say for whom or what estate John was steward - perhaps for the Salvins of Croxdale, who had property in the district in 1715. Estcourt and Payne, pp. 46,54.
13. On the Ellerkers at St Omers College, see C.R.S, 69, p.92.
14. Oliver, C., *Collections towards illustrating the Biography of the Scotch, English and Irish Members S.J.* (1838), p.70: for Thorpe, see C.R.S., 70, p.246.
15. For an outline of Ellerker's life as a Jesuit, see C.R.S., 70, p.86; Oliver, op. cit., pp. 9, 70.
16. Oliver, op. cit., p.70. The Stonyhurst reference numbers are B.V.19 and B.II,1a. I am grateful to Mrs Graffius, the Curator at Stonyhurst, and Mr David Knight, the Librarian/Archivist, for information about these manuscripts. See also Sommervogel, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jesus,* III, cols. 384-5.
17. Jesuit Province Archives, 33/4/3/38. Ellerker's quotation has been a little reduced here. This is Cicero as Ellerker wrote it. The Loeb edition is slightly different. In English: 'Respect must be had to the general rules I laid down as the ground and foundation of all justice - first that no injury be done to another and secondly that we make it our earnest endeavour to promote the good and interest of all mankind . . There may be a contract or promise, for instance, the performance of which would bring great damage either to the person himself that made it or to the other party to whom it was made . . Such promises therefore are not to be kept as will but bring a mischief on him they were made to; no more are those which tend to the damage of the promiser himself . . Farther it is plain to any one's sense that such sort of promises can ever be binding as are made by people overawed by fear, or overreached by deceit . . *Cicero's Offices,* Everyman's Library (1909 1955). Whether Cicero's opinion as given by Ellerker would be generally accepted is another matter.
18. 'English Province Correspondence' (JPA), ff.145-6.
19. *English Catholic Books, 1701-1800,* Blom, Blom, Korsten and Scott, p.293. Milner replied to all three letters (Gillow,V,30).
20. 'English Province Correspondence', ff.147-8.
21. Carroll's letters are in 'Maryland Letters' (JPA), ff.1-8.
22. For the Bavarian pension, see my *English Jesuits in the Age of Reason* (1993), pp.27-33.
23. These letters are in 'letters 1773-1804' (JPA), ff.60, 63-4.
24. 'Thorpe, Miscellaneous Letters' (JPA), ff.331-2, 8 November 1783.
25. 'Letters 1773-1804' (JPA), f.37v. and 'Plowden letters' (JPA), f.120,10 February 1776.

26. H.M.Chadwick, *St Omers to Stonyhurst* (1962), p.369.
27. The French had occupied the city for a short time in 1792.
28. For the journey, see Chadwick, pp.391-2 and 395 ff.
29. 'Stone, Sewall, Connell Letters' (JPA), f.172.
30. Thus a note by George Oliver.
31. His will is in the Stonyhurst mss. C.I.2,124.

ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL: A CORRECTION

On page 36 of the last issue of the Journal it is recorded that Pugin's 'church (of St Mary's, Newcastle) opened in 1844 (minus the clerestory and spire).' Mr Vincent Bartley has written to tell us that the eminent architect never intended anything else but a triple roof, similar to the Parish church in Grantham. He adds that he first heard of the clerestory theory in the 1940's, and suggests that the confusion arose in the early 1900's when Bishop Collins was considering an extension to the sanctuary with a square tower and a clerestory over the whole centre aisle. We are grateful to Mr Bartley for this clarification.

CATHOLIC BIBLEMONGERS: SILVERTOP OR COPPER-BOTTOM?

The Rev. Peter Phillips

In June 1812 Bishop Smith, coadjutor in the Northern District, was writing to Bishop Poynter in London about a curious thing which he had recently noticed in his own Vicariate:

> Your Lordship must have remarked lately in the newspapers the numerous meetings of different parts of the kingdom for the establishment of Bible Societies. What is the meaning of it? There certainly must be something more than meets the eye. I was not a little surprised to see that at a meeting lately at Hexham, of which Mr Silvertop was chairman, it was resolved that another meeting should be held for the purpose of considering the propriety of forming one of these establishments in that neighbourhood. As I conceive that this distribution of Bibles is found upon the avowed principle that each one is to form his Creed from the Scriptures independently of tradition and the authority of the Church. Surely Catholics ought to have nothing to do with it, especially as these Bible have been corrupted and mutilated by the omission of whole books.[1]

Here we see but a singular example of what was becoming something of a national phenomenon emerging within English Catholicism in the first decades of the nineteenth century. The Second Catholic Committee was dissolved afier the passing of the Relief Act of 1791, its work completed. Some of its more militant members, however, formed themselves into a literary and dining group, the Cisalpine Club. Like-minded men, they kept together to keep their cause alive. By 1808, another attempt was made to hurry along the question of Catholic Emancipation with the setting up of the Catholic Board. Edward Jemingham was nominated as secretary; Charles Butler and George Silvertop can be found amongst the first members. Views on the Bible had their part to play in this re-evaluation of the Catholic position.

The Vicars Apostolic were not always at ease with the activities of the Board but it was the doughty Bishop Milner who provided the embodiment of opposition, distancing himself both from the Board and, at times, from his fellow bishops, whom he considered too conciliatory. Milner, formerly missioner at Winchester, and consecrated Vicar Apostolic of the Midland

District in 1803, always had his suspicions of the Board as one issue after another was drawn into the dispute. Milner, privately railing against the impossibility of 'surrender[ing] his crosier into the hands of a knot of lawyers and foxhunters',[2] had set his sights against the landed interest which had nurtured the Catholic community through penal days; he sought also to preserve an independence from domination by the newly emerging middle class and to assert a strong measure of clerical control. Charles Butler was singled out for repeated and intemperate criticism. For Milner, this became a lifelong pursuit. A couple of years before his death we find the bishop writing, not altogether in humorous vein, to Butler's fellow lawyer, the antiquary John Gage, who, rather unusually, retained Milner's favour:

> There is one place in which I should have no objection to meet Mr Butler. It is in the Dead vault of Cossey Castle [Jerningham's family home]. There with a glimmering taper placed upon poor Edward's lead searing [Edward Jerningham had died in 1822], I would pray that the Almighty would permit him for a moment... to declare whether I or his other Counsellor had advised him right.[3]

Shades of Mrs Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho*, and the tradition of the gothic novel, which Jane Austen had satirised so delightfully in *Northanger Abbey*! As we shall see, George Silvertop was not to escape the sharp point of Milner's pen any more easily.

Popular versions of the Bible were but one of the constellation of issues lying at the heart of the dispute. Bernard Ward is probably correct in suggesting that the intention of this group of Catholics was merely 'to show the 'liberality' of their sentiments and practice'.[4] Amongst their fellow Christians, there had been a movement from the first years of the century to encourage Bible reading by the distribution of cheap Bibles, and it seemed appropriate to show that the Catholics were not as hostile as was often thought to Bible-based Christianity. The Vicars Apostolic were a little more uncertain.

A junior chaplain at the Spanish Embassy Chapel in London, Peter Gandolphy, suggested about the same time that, if Protestants were to print an edition of the Douai-Rheims Version, Catholics might be happy to accept it, and some Protestants did indeed inaugurate a Catholic Fund for this very purpose, offering to print the Douai-Rheims text, but without notes. This goaded the Catholic Board to take up the issue for itself and, in

a resolution of March 1813, proposed that 'it is highly desirable to have a subscription entered into by Roman Catholics of Great Britain for the purpose of promoting a gratuitous distribution of the Holy Scripture'.[5] A few days later The Roman Catholic Bible Society came into being with the object of facilitating 'the distribution of the Holy Scriptures, and particularly the New Testament among the poor of the Catholic Community'.[6]

George Haydock, missioner at Ugthorpe in Yorkshire, used the opportunity of the publication of a new Catholic journal, the *Orthodox Journal*, to welcome the Bible Society in a judicious and thoughtful letter.[7] This was not the general tone of the journal, set up by William Eusebius Andrews, a rather fiery Catholic publisher from Norwich, to be dismissed by Bishop Baines as a 'vulgar pugilist'.[8] Bishop Milner and Andrews were soon close allies and the *Orthodox* became a stage for some of Milner's most intemperate attacks on the Catholic Board and its doings. For Bishop Milner the whole idea of a Catholic Bible Society was as provoking as a red rag to a bull: 'in its very title a departure from the Catholic *Rule of Faith*'.'[9] Here was yet another of the grounds for dissension between Milner and Bishop Gibson of the Northern District: Milner claimed that the latter had patronised 'at least by connivance, the Bible Society, now condemned by the Pope, and Bishop Poynter's corruption of the Rheims Testament in complement to that Society.'[10]

Bishop Poynter, Vicar General of the London District, was throughout cautiously supportive, and, attempting to steer the Catholic Bible Society on a safe course, became its president. He played an important part in guiding a New Testament through the press. Butler had at first suggested that the edition be printed without notes but was prepared to compromise and eventually the Board published a version of Challoner's first edition of 1749 with only a slight abridgement of the notes. Stereotype plates were cut to allow cheap reprinting, and the edition was eventually published in 1815 in both octavo and duodecimo form; it was to be reprinted several times in the course of the nineteenth century.[11] One anonymous writer in the *Orthodox* was still to claim that the edition was too expensive at 7s 6d for an octavo, or 12s 6d for a deluxe version: 'the price of each is so very extravagant that there is no chance of their coming into circulation for a long time'. He could well have been right. Nevertheless the unknown writer goes on to reveal the edge of his cynicism: with its intention 'to make *gentlemen* of us poor barbarous Catholics, it was

natural enough that everything *unpolite* should be left out, or so fashioned, as to prove that we as well as our neighbours, have some notion we are living in an age of good manners'.[12]

In March 1813 Milner issued a pastoral letter to be read in the Midland District, sharply warning against 'the prevailing *Biblio-mania'* and 'the promiscuous reading of the Bible'. [13] For Milner the Bible should remain firmly in the context of tradition mediated by good preachmg, and was not to be distributed amongst the illiterate:

> Who could have imagined that Catholics, grounded upon quite opposite principles, should nevertheless show a disposition to follow the example of Protestants, in this particular; by forming themselves into *Bible Societies,* and contributing their money for putting the mysterious letter of God's Word into the hands of the illiterate poor, instead of educating Clergymen, even in the distressing scarcity of Clergy, to expound the sense of that word to them.[14]

Letters followed month by month in the *Orthodox,* pseudonymous, as was the custom, but fortunately identified for us by Milner's admirer and biographer, Canon Husenbeth.[15] As late as the issue of January 1819, Milner is to be found railing against the mutilation of the Challoner notes:

> It is plain that the *cancelled part* of our former Catholic notes is precisely *the part which is wanted* at the present day... to render an *English translation* of the sacred text *safe* and profitable in the hands of the British laity, and that the notes, which were left remaining in the stereotype, were only left for *form sake* and to avoid the censure of the index; to the Congregation of which the stereotype ought to have been denounced, as its progeny ought to be at the present day. [16]

Though warm hearted and enthusiastic, there is no doubt that, in the heat of a crusade, Milner was not adverse to bending the truth to fit his purposes. As Hugh Pope's careful analysis makes clear, for the most part the notes were in fact retained in the Catholic Board's Bible: Pope records that 226 notes of the 240 found in the 1749 edition of Challoner were still present. [17]

Tension was heightened by a meeting, subsequently endorsed by the Catholic Board, and chaired by George Silvertop in Newcastle two days after Christmas 1815. The formal part of the meeting over, members retired for a dinner held at The Queen's Head, where the toast was to civil and religious liberty. This had been the theme of the meeting itself: an offer of support for the Huguenot communities in southern France whose

disaffection for the Bourbon cause had been intensified to fever-pitch by the return and ultimate defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo. The subsequent rioting had been put down with considerable and unnecessary violence and with the acquiescence, it was said, of the French Government.

By a curious turn of history, George Silvertop might himself have been a contributory factor in the unfolding drama played out on the European stage in 1815: Napoleon's escape from Elba, the adventure of the Hundred Days, and the final confrontation with Wellington. Silvertop, at Douai until May 1792, completed his education at Old Hall, rather than Crook, and returned to the Continent for the Grand Tour in 1814. During the trip he visited Napoleon on Elba and an indiscreet remark, suggesting that the French Government would soon renege on its promise to continue Napoleon's pension, was, Napoleon himself relates, one of the reasons Napoleon sought to regain his position in France and a prelude to the battle of Waterloo. [18]

Be this as it may, Silvertop was to assume a significant role in North East Catholicism. He was to be chosen by Lord Liverpool's cabinet to negotiate with the Holy See and was to be nominated as High Sheriff of Northumberland in the year after the passing of the Act of Emancipation. All this remains in the future. The 1815 meeting in Newcastle received full coverage in a rather inflammatory report provided for the *Orthodox Journal* by Eusebius Andrews himself. [19] Andrews set the scene by setting the discussion in the context of the recent 'phrenetic disease, called the *Biblemania*, and Silvertop himself gives warrant for this, his opening words expressing:

> his anxious and sincere hope that education and science, and *scriptural knowledge* might spread themselves over the regions of the earth, and that mankind might learn from such inestimable resources, that liberty of conscience is the inalienable right of all[20]

The meeting went on to pass unanimously a series of ten resolutions in support of the Huguenots on France concerning 'the right of *every* individual ... to *judge* of the *reasonableness* of his belief as a 'sacred, inalienable right without *injustice* or *oppression*". [21] Milner and Andrews were aghast and they fuelled a controversy which continued in the pages of the *Orthodox Journal* from January to August 1816, filling more than fifty pages. Here was the inevitable outcome of Biblio-mania.

Amongst these letters, a Northumberland priest wrote to defend

George Silvertop in a long and carefully argued letter about religious freedom, defining his terms by way of Edward Hawarden's *Rule of Faith Truly Stated* (1721).[22] Hawarden, professor of theology at Douai at the beginning of the eighteenth century and falsely accused of Jansenist leanings, was a significant figure in the attempts at refining the self-definition of late eighteenth century English Catholicism. It was a matter of steering a fine line between an unbounded assertion of the rights of private judgement, which no Catholic would be prepared to accept, and a way of upholding a reasonable submission to Church authority. Silvertop and other members of the Catholic Board were searching for a way towards an expression of this position and a Northumberland priest provided good grounds for doing just that. Milner would have none of it.

Under the pseudonym, 'Consistency', he identified the writer of the letter as Henry Rutter, George Silvertop's chaplain at Minsteracres. Whether he is right in his identification I do not know: perhaps Andrews had betrayed the author's anonymity, perhaps the bishop was incorrect. Milner dismisses him, none the less, with a trenchant rhetorical flourish, penned as the imaginary words of Rutter's uncle, Robert Banister now several years in his grave:

> The writer's illustrious uncle would not have applauded this among his publications, but rather would have sternly said to him; H--y, when thou writest in the cause of true Religion, spare no false doctrine, or profane novelty, whether it is broached by a friend or a stranger, whether by a Mr SILVERTOP or a Mr COPPER-BOTTOM. And, after all, what signifies, H--y, thy perverting the meaning of our master Harwarden, to gloss over latitudinarian decisions passed by Fox-hunting laymen, amidst the orgies of Bacchus; when thou knowest well that is the practice of the Catholic Church to qualify propositions IN SENSU AUCTORIS, and when it appears, from thy friend's Speech, as well as from his Resolutions, that he thinks, (or at least that he thought so at the Tavern in Newcastle) all articles of religious belief to rest upon private opinion, and that every individual, whether Protestant or Pagan, has the same natural and even SACRED (that is to say, DIVINE) right to believe his Religion to be the true one, as thou hast to believe this to be so.[24]

Just a few pages later in the same number of the *Orthodox*, Milner returns to his attack on the Catholic Board's Bible in another letter, signed this time 'Col. Ang. Duac. Alumn.'. He accuses the Board's New Testament as having been 'falsely published' and suggests a more appro-

priate title page:

> A Liberal and Gentlemanlike Edition of the New Testament in English, for enlightening the Catholic Poor, to frame their own religion by the bare text of it, published at the desire of certain Protestant Biblemen by —.[25]

Clearly this sort of thing could not go on. There was a marked lack of dignity in a Catholic bishop entering the lists repeatedly and in such an intemperate manner, although John Lingard was also to experience the wrath of Milner's pen before he was finished. The Catholic Board privately requested George Silvertop and Henry Howard of Corby to travel to Rome to make its case against Milner and the *Orthodox*. Bishop Poynter also wrote to Rome, sending copies of the *Journal* for October and November 1819 as soon as they were out.[26] Rome's intervention was decisive. On April 29th 1820, the Prefect of Propaganda wrote to Milner ordering him, on pain of dismissal from his Vicariate, to cease his contributions to the *Orthodox*. That December the *Orthodox Journal* ceased printing. The underlying issue of religious freedom was to rumble on for the next hundred and fifty years, reconciled only with the work of the American philosopher John Courtney Murray and the declaration on Religious Freedom of the Second Vatican Council, to which he had contributed so much. With the solemn promulgation of that document, and the accompanying documents on Divine Revelation and on Ecumenism, Silvertop had indeed been rightly vindicated.

NOTES

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2 John Milner to John Gage, 1821, Hengrave Deposit 21(1), Cambndge University Library

3 John Milner to John Gage, March 25 1824, Hengrave Deposit 21(2).

4 *Eve* vol 2, 192.

5 *Eve* vol 2, 191.

6 *Correspondence on the formation, objects and plan of the Roman Catholic Bible Society...*, 1813, cited in Hugh Pope, *English Versions of the Bible,* London 1952, p.401.

7 *Orthodox Journal,* Aug, 1813, pp.103 - 106.

8 Bishop Baines to Bishop Milner, Aug 28th 1823, cited in Bernard Ward, *The Eve of Catholic Emancipation,* Longmans, London, 1912, vol 3, p.338.

9 John Milner, *Supplementary Memoirs of English Catholics,* Keating and Brown, London, 1820, p. 239.

10 Milner to Gibson, April 14th 1818, cited Ward *Eve* vol 3, p.186. This letter, though private, seems to have been circulated somewhat freely.

11 Marlow Sidney from Cowpen Hall, Northumberland, was to reproduce this version almost exactly in association with Richard Horrobin in 1818 *(See English Versions of the Bible.*, p.407: Gillow, *Bibliographical Dictionary of English Catholics,* vol 5, Burns & Oates, London, no date, p.505)

12 'Q-Z Investigator', in *Orthodox Journal,* February, 1816, p.70.

13 Pastoral Letter of March 30th 1813, in John Milner, *Supplementary Memoirs,* pp.302 - 305.

14 *ibid.*, p.303.

15 See F.C.Husenbeth', *The Life of Bishop Milner,* James Duffy, Dublin, 1862.

16 *Orthodox Journal,* January 1819, p.14

17 *English Versions,* p.404.

18 See J. Lenders, *Minsteracres,* Orphans' Press, Rochdale, 1932, p.31.

19 *Orthodox Journal* Jan 1816, pp.8 - 15

20 *ibid.*, p.8.

21 *ibid.*, p.10.

22 *Orthodox Journal,* February 1816, pp.57 - 60.

23 See, Joseph Chinnici,*The English Catholic Enlightenment,* Patmos Press, Shepherdstown, 1980, pp. 61-67. It would have to wait for John Courtney Murray to suggest a solution by moving from the controverted ground of liberty of conscience to the assertion of the dignity of the human person (See his letter to Paul VI, May 8th 1965, cited in Peter Hebblethwaite, *Paul VI,* Fount 1984, pp.419-420).

24 *Orthodox Journal,* March 1816, p.98.

25 *Orthodox Journal,* March 1816, p.103. Collegium, Anglorum Douacensis Alumnus: that is, a former student of the English College, Douai.

26 See Haile and Bonney, *Life and Letters of John Lingard,* Herbert & Daniel, London (1911) pp.179-180.

IRISH CATHOLICISM IN SUNDERLAND IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Vivienne Fetherston

The Catholic Church in Sunderland has a rich history, which is very much intertwined with the lives of the Irish Catholic people. I recently had the opportunity to study the extent and influence of the Catholic Church upon the lives of the Irish Catholic immigrants in Sunderland in the first half of the nineteenth century, for my history degree dissertation. Sunderland was different from many other towns and cities that have previously been the subject of church historical research. It transpires that the expansion of the Catholic Church did not in fact take place primarily around the time of the Restoration of the English Roman Catholic Hierarchy, when there was significant growth of the Catholic Church in this country, but some twenty years earlier, following the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829. Coincidentally, the late 1820's were a time of increasing Irish immigration numbers due to the first failure of the Irish harvests in 1821-2 and the subsequent famine. In the case of Sunderland, 1829 was to be a very significant year with the arrival of an energetic priest from Ireland, Philip Kearney.

Many studies of church growth have been centred on data from census returns, regarding Irish Settlement patterns. However I did not want my study to be a statistical profile, but a study of the Irish Catholic community in Sunderland, centred on the relationship between church and people.

Before 1829, two Catholic Relief Acts were passed (in 1778 and 1791), granting some religious freedom for Catholics, though falling well short of full civil rights and liberties. The third Emancipation Act in 1829 was to enable Roman Catholics to be admitted to the British Parliament and to most public offices under the crown. Catholic interests were now directly represented in the government for the first time since the Reformation. The Emancipation Act of 1829 can be seen as the first step in the revival of Catholicism.

Irish Catholics were coming into a country where the Catholic Church was starting actively to develop. The Irish had been travelling to, and settling in, England for centuries, the numbers increasing from the seventeenth century. The Irish migrated for economic reasons, as the

industrial revolution was providing an increasingly wide range of employment opportunities. From the 1780's the pace of migration was to quicken, especially after the wars with France in 1815. This was followed by the first of the Irish potato crop failures in 1821-1822. What was a *'trickle in 1790'* was to become *'a stream in the 1820's, a river in the 1840's and a flood from the late 40 's*[1].

The years between 1820 and 1830 brought not only quicker transport by steam ship, but also cheap crossings. For a day labourer in the 1830s, a 2d deck passage to Glasgow or Cardiff was more realistic than the £20 that it would cost for a family to travel to America.[2] This encouraged more people to travel to the northern towns of England. However it was the great famine starting in the autumn of 1845 that caused the greatest numbers to emigrate. [3] Potato blight devastated the crops, and continued to do so until 1849. The Irish potato harvests failed partly or completely each year, and a million people died of starvation. Emigration became for many their best hope of survival. Poorer families with young children were more likely to choose to travel to England rather than America. This was due to the cost of fares for several people and also the danger of crossing the Atlantic Ocean.

As there was no direct sea link between Ireland and the North East the Irish would have landed at Liverpool and walked, travelling through Lancashire, Yorkshire and Durham. Some also landed at a Scottish port and walked across southern Scotland to Berwick-on-Tweed and from there, down into Northumberland along the Great North Road. [4] The Irish travelling into Sunderland were mainly from the provinces of Connaught, Ulster and Leinster. [5]

In writing about the relationship between the church and the Irish in Sunderland it is necessary to understand how and to what extent the Irish practised their faith in Ireland, and what influence the church had upon their lives. How they practised their faith in Ireland would influence their relationship with the church in Sunderland, and its growth.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, although Irish Catholics did not attend Sunday mass on a regular basis this did not mean that they were not devoted to their faith, their practice just did not follow orthodox lines. Baptism, marriage and death were still seen as important rites to be performed by the Church. Attending mass, confession and communion

were seen as not being so important.[6] Many Irish defined themselves as Catholic without following the formal practices of the Church. Expressions of faith were often mixed with pre-Christian ritual, superstitions and magic. Belief in fairies, ghosts, witchcraft, and magical healing were all widespread in the West of Ireland, as well as customs specific to the Irish, such as the wake.[7] At this time also the Irish Catholic Church was a weak, disorganised and ineffective establishment. The Church was very short of money, churches and missions. Priests were few in number and there was little time to teach people, which meant a low level of participation in the life of the Church as well as an ignorance of orthodox Catholic doctrine. People's faith was therefore family-centred, around prayers or visiting a local shrine or Holy Well.

This meant that the Irish Catholics coming into Sunderland up to about 1850 were part of the pre-famine generation of Catholics who would bring with them many of the traditional folk beliefs and superstitions, mixed up with Catholic orthodoxy.[8]

In 1829, the year of the Catholic Emancipation, Father Philip Kearney arrived in Sunderland. He was one of the first priests to be trained in Kilkenny College in Ireland for the English mission, to work among the Irish in the industrial North. He would have been very aware of the needs of these people and the difference in the understanding and practice of their religion. He understood the minds, faith, and culture of the people amongst whom he was coming to work. He may well have understood the Gaelic language, though it is not certain. Philip Kearney would have been well aware of the growing famine situation and that many more Irish Catholics would be coming into England, and would be attracted to the work opportunities that Sunderland presented. Father Kearney seems to have been determined to establish a proper Catholic Church within the town. He was well aware that people coming from Ireland would have had no real attachment to the Church, which could now become a symbol of their Irish culture.[9] A real potential existed for the Church to become a reliable, useful social institution, and a befitting church building in Sunderland could be the means of restoring these people back to the practice of their faith. On arriving in Sunderland he was to find

> 'a fast increasing congregation, cabin 'd cribb 'd
> and conf'd in a dreary loft'.[10]

The congregation was obviously poor consisting of people who worked in the shipping yards.

VERY REV. PHILIP CANON KEARNEY
First Pastor of St. Mary's, 1829-1856

Various studies refer to the phenomenon of the social influence of the Church. W. J. Lowe found that the Church exerted *'a powerful and pervading influence on the lives of the immigrants', in* Lancashire.[11] Lynn

Lees [12] found that in London the first step in the transformation of the religious behaviour of the Irish was to provide the proper setting for Catholic devotions. These factors reflect Fr Kearney's determination to build St Mary's church. He seems to have been a man of great resourcefulness and a born organiser, and he was somehow able to find the money to buy a piece of land between Green Street and Bridge Street from the Earl of Durham. The land was subject to an annual rent of £27.12s.6p. [13] By this contract the church became the owner of several houses adjoining the main church building site. Although these had to be kept in good repair they would have contributed to the finances of the church. [14]

On September 15th 1835, Bishop Briggs, Bishop of the Northern District, opened St Mary's Church. A detailed description is recorded in the local paper, as this was the first public Catholic religious ceremony to take place in Sunderland since the passing of the Emancipation Act.

NEW CATHOLIC CHURCH

THE OPENING OF ST MARY'S NEW CATHOLIC CHURCH, Bridge Street, Bishopwearmouth, will take place on TUESDAY the Fifteenth instant - Service to commence at half-past ten.

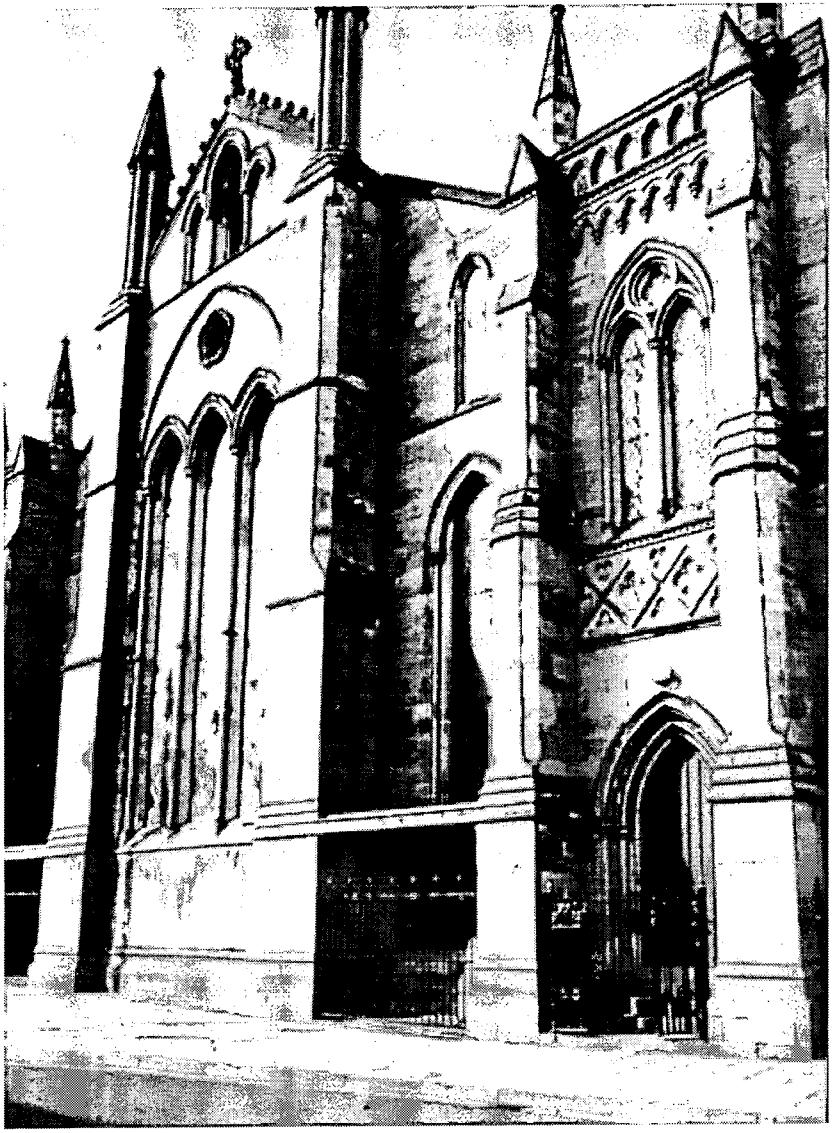
The Service will be opened with a FULL BAND and the celebration of PONTIFICAL HIGH MASS.

Tickets of Admission price 3s. 6d., Gallery 3s. may be had at the Herald Office, Messrs. Rochester and Sheraton, and Mrs Bulman, Sunderland: Mr Heaton, Printer, Sandhill, and Mr John Young, Dean Street, Newcastle; Mr Fummers, Market Place Durham; and of Mr John Hedley, Druggist, corner of Ferry Street, South Shields.

Sunderland, September 8, 1835.

Copy of *Sunderland Herald,* September 12th 1835

The ceremony obviously attracted a significant number of people and may well have encouraged many people to come to the church.



St Mary's Church, Sunderland, opened 1835.

Fr Kearney must have been a man of uncommon vision, as the numbers of Catholics in Sunderland at this time did not warrant the building of a church to seat 1200. Kelly records 600 Catholics in 1844. [15] How Fr Kearney found the money to pay for the building of the church is unknown. [16] An article commemorating the centenary of St Mary's Church says as by way of explanation, that Fr Kearney was

> 'regarded as a madman. Where was the money to be obtained for such a costly edifice? Where was the congregation to fill it when built? Father Kearney was a man of unbounded faith and resolution... and he began collecting money throughout the district'.[17]

Most priests led frugal lives. They had no salaries and drew what living expenses they needed from the church collection boxes. [18] A fascinating insight into Father Kearney's day to day life can be seen in his Visitation record, dated 1840. This is an inventory of the parish assets for the periodic Bishop's visitation. He records that he has two chalices, two missals, two albs, one surplice, and eleven 'suits' of vestments. The furniture and other items in the presbytery belonging to the parish comprised three beds, five card tables, two wash stands, two looking-glasses, two chests of drawers, two 'slight' book-cases, two dozen 'bad chairs' (six hairbottomed and 18 cane bottomed), three fenders and three sets of fire irons, one kitchen table and dresser, while the kitchen equipment comprised four dishes, three plates, four knives and four forks, and the bedlinen was given as simply '9 blankets (old)'. One gains the picture of a selfless commitment to his vocation, with few personal comforts,very little money coming in, and a massive debt.

To survive, many clergy with largely Irish immigrant congregations lived by their wits, raising money through:

> 'piteous advertisements in the Catholic Directories,begging letters to newspapers, to harassed clerical brethren, and to a equally harassed Catholic *gentry*.'[20]

Italian Spanish and Irish priests would also seek help from home. Collections in Ireland were a popular means of revenue for slum priests.

A Catholic church is not formally consecrated until the debt for its construction has been paid. All churches are traditionally built with crosses embedded or engraved in the walls around the church. Usually, a fixed candleholder is placed below each cross, only when the church has

FORM OF SCHEDULE

Which having been properly filled up, is to be presented to the BISHOP, on the day previous to CONFIRMATION being given, or the VISITATION made.

CONFIRMED.

	Males.	Females.	Adults.	Children.	Converts.	Total.
No.			[redacted]	—	43	143

DURING THE PRECEDING YEAR.

Baptisms.	Easter Communicants.	Children attending Catechism.
No. 80	320	70

HOURS OF PUBLIC SERVICE ON SUNDAYS AND HOLY-DAYS.

Mass.	Vespers.	Catechism.	Evening Service if any.
Half past 10		3	Half past six

CHILDREN ATTENDING THE CHARITY SCHOOL, OR SCHOOLS.

Males.	Females.	How is the School supported?	Is there a Congregational Library?	What number of Volumes?
No.		vide next page —		

FOUNDATION.

Of what Tenure?	Where are the Deeds?	What Fund?	Who pays the Interest?	If any debt to what Amount?	To whom due?
Copyhold — To Lord Bath — £27.10 a year.	Mr. R. Tod: Bitton	£ 1 D 4 1 4 & do	Trog vic:	£1000 on the School —	£ 700 to Mr. Hilton 300 to Mr. Atkins —

CHAPEL FURNITURE.

Chalices.	Ciboriums.	Plate.	Vestments.	Copes.	Albs.	Altar Linen.
No. Two			11 sets		Two	One Surplice

Missals.	Volumes in the Library.	House Furniture belonging to the Mission, specifying the articles in another Paper.
No. Two		

☞ *The Vestments, Altar Linen, Pixes, Oil Stocks and Registries, to be arranged in a convenient place for the Bishop's inspection.*

(Signed) Note 19

INCUMBENT.

Philip Kearney

been formally consecrated. [21] It is therefore interesting to note that St Mary's was built in 1835, but only consecrated on the 24th September 1947, [23] some 115 years after the debt was incurred.

Father Kearney was undoubtedly a man of determination, single-mindedness and commitment to the Irish community in Sunderland, and was known to have had sincerity and charm [24] He was to invite the Society of St Vincent de Paul, a devotional guild described as a *'welfare state within a state'*, to start a conference in Sunderland in 1846. A major part of the societies work was almsgiving, especially during times of unemployment or during epidemics.

With a church built, Fr Kearney now built a school behind the church in Pann Lane. An important way for the Catholic Church to expand, to bring non-practising Catholics back to its congregations, was through education. Schools were crucial for the faith to prosper within a Protestant society. The aim was to produce *'useful citizens, loyal subjects, decent members of the working population and good Catholics'*. [25] In 1829 the final restrictions on Catholic education were repealed, and the number of Catholic schools were to expand.

The new school in Sunderland consisted of two schoolrooms, one above the other, with over 300 children - all boys. To recruit teachers, Father Kearney approached Brother Edmund Rice, founder of the Christian Brothers, asking him to send two Brothers to Sunderland. The Christian Brothers were at that stage a small group of about 150 men, mostly Irish, who lived the religious life and worked mainly as teachers among the Irish Catholic poor in London and the industrial towns. [26] A Brother P.S. Carroll, recalls that Fr Kearney would not accept a polite letter of refusal,

> 'He (E. Rice) also told me that there was an Irish priest called Fr. Philip Kiearney [sic] who built a chapel in Sunderland, Co. Durham. This priest called on our founder for two Brothers... but our superior regretted he could not comply... Fr. Philip pressed hard and said many things about his distressed mission where he had no one to take care of his scattered flock. Still our superior could not be moved. Then Fr. Philip stood up and walked to the door, and raising his voice, looked at our superior and said: "Mr Rice, I will not leave this room until you promise me two Brothers". Our superior, when he saw he was determined, gave his promise...' [27]

In June 1836 two Brothers arrived in Sunderland, Francis Grace and Lewis Moynihan. A local newspaper was to report that *'Two Irish Monks were teaching 250 Protestant boys and converting them to the Popish religion.'* This report suggests that the majority of the 300 boys in the school were not Catholic. Firstly there were few schools in Sunderland for the poor, but also the Catholic population was still small. One of the Brothers recorded the tolerance of the Protestant parents:

> 'We told their parents that we would not teach them Protestant prayers. No matter, Protestant parents would say, teach them what you please. I know you will teach them nothing but what is good."[28]

The Brothers came in 1836 and stayed until 1848.[29] In 1848 Fr Kearney was having serious financial problems. He had bought shares in the Sunderland and Durham Bank, the income from which paid for the Brothers' upkeep. However the bank was now in financial trouble and the shares were worth very little. Government aid was now the only way to support the school. After a school inspection the government would decide the grant to be given. The Brothers however were against the school being associated with government control and the inspection that was necessary. They felt that working with the government in Westminster would compromise their teaching principles. This had been their experience previously in Ireland, when the government had criticised their teaching methods. [30] The Brothers left just after Christmas 1848 at Fr Kearney's request. The parents of the children must have valued the work of the Brothers, as they were presented with a silver Ciborium and folio missal in *'recognition of their excellent work.'*[31]

In 1849 the Presentation Brothers from Cork, who did not oppose government aid and inspection, came to run the Boys school until 1858.

Father Kearney soon realised that he would be unable to manage the growing parish alone. He also needed to provide an education for the girls of the parish. His superior, Bishop Mostyn, advised him to contact the Sisters of Mercy (an Order recently established, by a Dublin-born woman, Catherine McAuley, in Baggot Street, in 1831). Part of her vision for the work of the sisters was in education, *'Let us fit the children for earth without unfitting them for heaven.'*[32] Fr Kearney asked both the Dublin and Cork Sisters of Mercy for volunteers -*'Labourers in this part of the Lord's Vineyard'*. Five sisters from the Cork Mercy Community arrived in Sunderland on October 15th 1843. The sisters lived in a residence near to St Mary's

church, until Fr Kearney had bought and prepared a house for them using a legacy of £1000, which had been left by a Lady Peat, a local benefactor (commonly regarded as being eccentric), when she died in 1843. This new Convent in Green Street was to be called St Bede's. 'The Walking Nuns' as they were known locally, had arrived. Due to existing penal legislation the sisters were not allowed to wear a religious habit in public, so they would wear a black cloak and bonnet with a thick gossamer veil over their faces. In keeping with the vision of their founder, Catherine McAuley, the sisters' ftrst priority was to teach the children. They took over the running of the parish school and opened up a middle school when the Presentation Brothers left in 1858. As well as St Mary's school they ran a private school, which they started in a room in the Convent. This was for parents who could afford fees, but who would not or could not send their daughters to an expensive boarding school. This school was to be the origins of the present-day St Anthony's School, which is still run by the Order today, though at that time it was known as St Bede's. The school was renamed St Anthony's in 1902.

The Sisters were involved in many aspects of the life of the Sunderland Irish population, quite apart from the provision of Education. Visiting the sick at home or in the hospital in Church Walk, supporting families in need, comforting the bereaved and giving Catholic instruction, were among many of the tasks performed by them.

The attitude of Fr Kearney was important in the relationship between church and Irish community. Other communities vital to the work of the church were also to come from Ireland - the Christian Brothers and the Sisters of Mercy. Without doubt their efforts within Sunderland were to give stability and an identity to the Catholic Irish community.

The name of Philip Kearney is all but forgotten in twenty-first century Sunderland. No plaque or physical memorial of him exists. Perhaps, given his obvious devotion and humility, that is what he would have wished. Yet his work, and that of his collaborators has left a more fitting, living memorial - a strong Catholic community and education system that remains vibrant today. His selflessness deserves to be remembered.

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THE CATHOLIC EVIDENCE GUILD IN DURHAM AND NORTHUMBERLAND, 1925 - 1970

Francis Leonard

INTRODUCTION

The Catholic Evidence Guild arose out of the work of the Guild of Our Lady of Ransom. This had been founded in 1887 by Fr Philip Fletcher, a convert Anglican clergyman, and Lister Drummond, a young barrister and also a convert. The origins of the Catholic Evidence Guild are well described in a letter sent by Fr Fletcher to the Guild's Annual Conference in 1927. 'He (Lister Drummond) and I, together with a few like-minded men, saw the need of defenders of the faith in the open spaces where orators held forth. These orators were, with few exceptions, out to insult the Catholic religion, especially priests, nuns and convents. These needed defenders, and the Guild of Our Lady of Ransom became their champions in such places as Hyde Park, Clapham Common, Victoria Park, Mile End Waste, Newington Green, Highbury Corner and Finsbury Park. Here the Ransomers fought, and fought alone for 25 years before others came to their aid. Now we have fellow-workers in every diocese, and few Associations are so well known as the Catholic Evidence Guilds . . .'

The ground described by Fr Fletcher had already been prepared some decades earlier by two Italians missionaries, the Rosminian Luigi Gentili, and the Passionist, Dominic Barberi, and continued by Barberi's Passionist successor, George Spencer, in religion Fr Ignatius of St Paul. The Guild of Ransom's work was extended by that of the Catholic Missionary Society, founded by Cardinal Vaughan, but it was his successor, Cardinal Bourne who was, in effect, the founder of the Catholic Evidence Guild. It was he that first authorised Catholics to speak from the platform and laid down the conditions for acceptance as a speaker, the need for each Guild to have a Spiritual Director, the training required before a speaker mounted the platform, and the further condition that the Guild was to eschew politics. Each Guild would have a Constitution and Rules, most diocesan Guilds basing these on rules adopted by the Guild of Ransom.

EARLY DAYS

One would expect the Evidence Guild to get off to a good start in the far North-East (as indeed was the case) with its strong Catholic population mainly of Catholics from Ireland who came for jobs in the coal mines of Durham and Northumberland and the heavy industries along the River Tyne. An inaugural meeting was held in the Connaught Hall, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, with Bishop Thorman presiding, in June 1925. Maisie Ward was the chief speaker and at the end of the meeting 40 people gave in their names. Three months later Maisie returned to give the first talk at the pitch in the Bigg Market. In those first few months there were crowds ranging from 200 to 700, the latter number large enough to fill most of the Bigg market area. Nevertheless there were few active members in the early days. The Guild Report for 1926 explains the paucity of numbers -10 effective speakers in 1925, 7 in 1926 - by the fact that the Guild meetings were held almost three miles from the city centre at St Cuthbert's Grammar School, Benwell.

The Guild continued to speak from its pitch in the Bigg Market, the ancient central city area, until its closure in the Eighties. In 1926 the meeting place was changed from St Cuthbert's to St Andrew's School close to the city centre and the market-place and that combined with an appeal in the Catholic papers resulted in a substantial increase in membership. Throughout 1926 meetings continued in the Bigg Market where attendances were good and the crowds courteous and attentive. To quote from the 1926 Guild Report, 'It is remarkable how many young men attend, who stay the full 2½ hours of the meeting.' Because of the General Strike when the police forbade all public meetings in the city centre, the meetings were held on four occasions on the Town Moor, a mile to the north, and large crowds gathered but it was considered advisable to stick to the Bigg Market because of its central location and that it allowed for winter meetings.

By 1927 the number of effective speakers was 14 and another pitch had been opened in the Felling area of Gateshead across the Tyne. Both pitches operated on Sunday evenings. One task of the Guild was the free distribution of leaflets and pamphlets for which the Guild was given a donation of £10 from the Newcastle Branch of the Catholic Truth Society. Of the literature freely available the greatest demand was for the penny catechism.

There was a close connection between the C.T.S. and the Guild because the first Spiritual Director of the Guild had also been the first Secretary of the C.T.S in Newcastle, Fr George Jefferys. He was to remain Spiritual Director for many years along with Fr Edward Avery D.C.L. as his assistant. Fr Jefferys was born in 1874 and ordained in 1903. As a student at Ushaw College he was noted as an actor of outstanding ability. After ordination he was often asked to preach at other churches or meetings; it was typical of his humility and painstaking attention to detail that he would submit his written sermons to a colleague for criticism. He was appointed Headmaster of St Cuthbert's Grammar School and as Headmaster was given charge of the Evidence Guild. It was a surprise for many of his colleagues that, to quote from his Obituary in the Ushaw Magazine, 'a man of his sensitive temperament and almost monastic reserve should have thrown himself so wholeheartedly into this work that he actually enjoyed preaching in the Market-place.' As well as chairing the outdoor meetings on a Sunday he set aside two other evenings every week after schoolwork to train Guild speakers.

In its early days the Guild had as Master Mr Holohan and as Secretary Miss J. St Clair. By 1929 there were 19 licensed speakers. But the Felling pitch had been abandoned in favour of one at the sea coast, Whitley Bay, where a platform was erected during most of the summer months. The coast was a popular holiday resort especially for many Scots from Glasgow and this led to some interesting platform meetings until the 1 950s when, through a change in holiday habits, with people preferring Costa Brava to Tynemouth for their vacation, the pitch was gradually abandoned.

Other pitches had in the earlier years been set up including Byker along the Tyne where shipyards proliferated and Blaydon to the west of the city. No doubt they would have remained open longer but, as ever, there was a shortage of speakers to man more than one or two pitches successfully. In South Shields at the southern side of the mouth of the Tyne a pitch was established in the early Thirties and a Spiritual Director Father C. Cronin appointed but it never really prospered, possibly for the same reason as Whitley Bay although there was a promising start with 12 speakers soon after it opened in October 1934 increasing slightly every year with 16 in 1937. The Guild Secretary, Mr Bradley, in 1934 wrote, 'As yet we have no Chairmen of our own, but support was given by Newcastle.

By 1936 South Shields had 4 qualified chairmen and 15 effective speakers. The town centre pitch in the winter was not always well attended but the summer pitch at the sea front attracted large and orderly crowds. This was also the experience to a lesser extent of Sunderland both before and after the War, namely, that a dearth of local Chairmen can destroy the confidence of speakers, and perhaps their disenchantment results in further loss. The Sunderland branch of the Guild, established in 1934 with Fr Edward Avery D.C.L. as Spiritual Director was also helped by the active support of Miss J. St Clair who had been the Newcastle Secretary. The Sunderland Secretary was Miss Josephine McGahan. By 1936 there were 11 active members with class attendances averaging 25. The outdoor platform was well positioned just off the town centre and met on Sunday evenings when Father Wright CSSR and Father Clarke S.J. helped out on several occasions. Father Avery preached the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday and Guild members attended the week-end retreats organised by the Newcastle Guild. Meanwhile Newcastle continued as the premier Guild in the area and Mr Stanley Cairns reported at the 1936 Annual Conference on the papal honour bestowed on Fr Jefferys, now Mgr Jefferys. That year a Diocesan Inter-Guild Conference was called for Sunday 11th October with Maisie Ward and Fr Vincent McNabb as speakers.

Until the outbreak of War the 3 Guilds continued to flourish with South Shields opening a pitch across the River Tyne at North Shields with the help of speakers from Newcastle. However war clouds were looming and life was changing for many young people who would otherwise have become speakers. In fact after the war South Shields never reopened and the Sunderland Guild had to wait until the mid Fifties before being reopened largely through the efforts of the Newcastle Guild Master, Mr Morris, and a former Sunderland Guild member, Miss Sabina Casey.

AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR

After the war the Newcastle Guild began speaking in the Bigg Market again. It had 16 members, 6 of whom held Chairmen's licences. The Guild was thus still comparatively strong and was looking for new members. A Beginners class was formed in 1947 and meetings were held on Friday evenings, the pitch being manned on Sunday evenings starting at 7.30 pm. as usual in the Bigg Market. The Secretary was Mr Jimmy McCann who had also been Secretary just before the War and together with one or two

stalwarts had kept the Guild ticking over. The Spiritual Director Mgr. Jefferys had retired and after some years as parish priest in Thornley died on Ash Wednesday, 2 March 1949 aged 75. Fr Wadsworth had taken over as Spiritual Director. He also helped out at the Carlisle Guild. After him came Fr Thompson followed later by Fr Devine. Throughout the Fifties the Guild flourished with a fair sprinkling of younger members anxious to gain their tests and speak on the pitch. However in the Sixties and Seventies the average age of the outdoor speaker was becoming noticeably higher with few if any young speakers. A promising sign was the re-formation of the Sunderland Guild, as noted above, but there was never more than a handful of dedicated speakers who, until a pitch could be established in Sunderland, went to help out at the Bigg Market. Two notable members of the Guild, both now deceased, were Miss Sabina Casey and Miss Cecilia Gilby. Miss Casey, teaching in Sunderland at the Catholic Girls Grammar School, was the link with Newcastle having come from that Guild to form the Sunderland Branch. Cecilia Gilby (who on marriage became Mrs Bradshaw) also taught at the same school. Jack Lumley, another member, was well over seventy when he joined the Guild. He was a large, robust man, a fearless and devout Catholic whose presence at the pitch inspired an air of confidence and reassurance, Jack being rather like a 'minder' to the more placid Guild members. There were high hopes for the Guild, Cecilia in fact on her visits to the Newcastle pitch being congratulated on her fluency and expertise on the pitch both by the Master, Mr Morris, and by the Dominican Fr Romuald Horn, a regular speaker at The Bigg Market.

Fr Romuald spoke at the pitch whenever he could. Though educated by the Jesuits at St Francis Xavier's, Liverpool, he decided he would like to be a Dominican and received the habit at Woodchester in 1929 and was ordained at Hawkesyard in July 1935 returning for a year to Woodchester after which he came to St Dominic's Priory at Newcastle where he was to spend half of his life as a priest. Here he delighted to visit the Bigg Market to spread the Gospel much as other Dominicans such as Frs McNabb, Pope, Proudman and Cheales had done at Hyde Park and elsewhere. To quote from his Obituary, Fr Romuald followed the example of St Dominic who talked of God, or to God. And he did that in the Bigg Market, Sunday evening after Sunday evening. He died in 1992.

Efforts to open other pitches continued. In 1955 a pitch was opened at Bedlington, a large mining town in Northumberland, and an effort was

made to re-start the Guild in South Shields but as the Guild Handbook states, it was 'abandoned after a brave effort.' An attempt, also abortive, was made in 1957 by Dr Fewster, a lecturer at the University, to establish a training class at Durham University Catholic Society but, to quote from the 1958 Handbook, 'The recruits from the Durham University Catholic Society have failed to arrive and our beginners class is very small.' However, by 1959 the Sunderland Guild was beginning to hold regular meetings opposite the Railway Station on a Saturday afternoon. Although there were never large crowds - most passers-by were shoppers - there was always a fair number of people interested enough to linger. In the early Sixties the Sunderland Guild was rejuvenated by the arrival from Leeds of Fr Charles Skelley S.J. to look after the Jesuit Retreat House at Corby Hall. He gave much-needed encouragement to the novice speakers by chairing the meetings at the platform.

Unfortunately a warning signal can be read into the 1963 Inter-Guild Report. The Newcastle Guild had been strong enough to host the Inter-Guild Conference in 1961 but over the next few years there was a large and sudden drop both in Associate and Active members. Licensed speakers numbered 17 and the pitch could always be manned but there were scarcely 10 effective speakers. The burden on these was heavy. Another sign was that only 6 licences were awarded during the year, and 4 were to Durham members. The Sunderland Guild was continuing its progress under Father Skelley. The preaching of the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday, started a few years earlier, had continued and was an accepted part of the Guild work. New licences were obtained but a mixture of promise and sadness is seen in the following quotation from the Handbook: 'Two members have received their first licence and have spoken regularly but we are soon to lose these; one is joining the Dominican nuns and one is returning to America.'

So gloom was now descending on the Sunderland Guild and there were further blows. The redevelopment of the town centre meant that the traditional pitch was no longer available and there were only two effective speakers. Cecilia Bradshaw (née Gilby) had left temporarily to attend to her young family. Father Skelley had left the area for Manchester and later for Scotland and the immediate desperate need of the Guild was for another Spiritual Director. Things got worse; Sunderland lost not only invaluable speakers and the outdoor pitch but also its indoor meeting place, Corby

Hall, which was sold to the developers. The few remaining members continued to hope against hope and met regularly at the Catholic Club in the town, and managed for a few more years to send delegates to the Inter-Guild Conferences. But it was a forlorn hope. Associate members no longer attended either through death, illness, or old-age and Sunderland's demise was finally accepted when without pitch, Spiritual Director or sufficient effective speakers, the Guild, like so many others just faded away. The flickering flame of survival might have been rekindled if the few remaining members had had deep pockets and some support from Associate members.

Suddenly, Newcastle, once the premier Guild in the North-East which could help and advise the junior branches of Sunderland, Gateshead, South Shields, Blaydon, and Byker, was in a parlous condition. Some of its most effective speakers such as May Lee had long since retired and some had died. And no replacement stepped into their shoes. Eventually the Guild strength was down to Jimmy McCann, now old and frail but always cheerful and ready to mount the platform, and Kathleen O'Rawe who in the Eighties realised how forlorn the task now was as she was confronted by a different kind of audience in the Bigg Market, not the vociferous but respectful crowd of former years but no crowd at all or a mob which knew only how to hurl abuse. She related her last experience on a hopeful note. After the Guild had closed she met a former heckler, a Communist who had frequented the pitch. He told her that he was now a Catholic. 'Was it the talks on the platform that convinced you?' she asked. 'Not a bit,' was the reply. 'My daughter died tragically a few months ago and no-one came to visit me to express sympathy except the local Catholic priest.'

This article is an extract from Francis Leonard's history of the Catholic Evidence Guilds in England and Wales, published under the title *Fool's for Christ's Sake*, by MEL Publications, 5 Darley Court, Plawsworth, Durham, DH2 3LQ, from whom copies can be obtained, price £8.95, post free. This extract is re-printed with the author's permission.

A RURAL RIDE: AUTUMN EXCURSION TO SWINBURN

The Rev. David Milburn

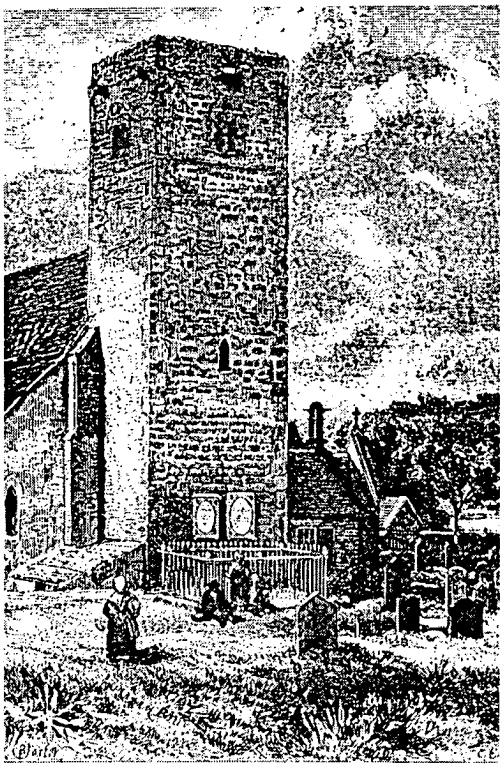
Last year, thought by the western world to have been such an *annus horribilis,* our three customary annual outings of the Society were rather disappointingly reduced to one, due in large measure to circumstances beyond our control. Understandably, the spread of the foot and mouth epidemic to Yorkshire brought about the cancellation of our scheduled May outing to Rievaulx and Byland Abbeys. As for the visit to Vindolanda in June no one has been able to account fully for the lack of interest- seventeen bookings for a fifty seater coach - which necessitated the cancellation of our second outing. If we look for reasons, no doubt the foot and mouth epidemic again had an adverse impact, most people probably fearful of adding to the farmers' difficulties. But third time lucky, we finally enjoyed a breath of Northumbrian air in September, though the outing was not without its own problems. First, it had to be put back a week because of a family wedding which took the Riddell family at Swinburn to London on the day we had hoped to make our visit. Those few days in turn brought about a recurrence of the foot and mouth disease in the very area of Northumberland that we intended to visit, including Heavenfield, and we willingly acceded to our Swinburn hosts' request not to bring our coach on to their estate. So it was a mystified group of travellers who set out from Newcastle city centre on Saturday, 22 September, for a journey into the unknown, an excursion akin to the primary definition of the word as a deviation from an intended goal.

RYTON AND OVINGHAM

The first surprise came when, instead of joining the A69 Hexham road, we followed the south bank of the Tyne. Shortly after crossing Scotswood bridge we passed by the site where the Blaydon Races were first run. A plaque marking the spot is affixed to the riverside wall not far from the almost hidden entrance to the Catholic church at Stella, and overlooked by the 18th century summer house of the Widdrington family who inhabited the long demolished Stella Hall. Designed in the Gothic style by J. J. Green and built in 1831-2 the church is unusual in that its south facade

was intentionally masked by the presbytery. In the 1840s John Dobson made substantial alterations, including re-placing its north entrance by a porch to the west.

Our route took us off the main road to old Ryton village, its many 18th century houses giving it a graciousness which has earned it the title of the prettiest village in County Durham. The autumn day's warm sunshine undoubtedly helped us to believe the claim. Shortage of time as well as the difficulty of parking nevertheless prevented us from visiting the parish church of the Holy Cross which stands so majestically at the village's west end overlooking the river. Essentially a 13th century structure with an unusually wide nave, the 19th century additions are not at all obtrusive. Inside the building are several pre-Reformation artefacts.



Ovingham church, 1888

Re-gaining the main road, we discussed the merits of crossing over to the north side of the Tyne at Ovingham, but decided in favour of the bridge at Wylam, a wise decision, for we soon saw that the bridge at Ovingham was built for the use of pedestrians only. The mistake raised quite a laugh.

Ovingham's parish church of St Mary is famous for its late Saxon tower. Parking difficulties again prevented us from leaving the bus, but a few minutes wait by the roadside allowed us to take a closer look at its exterior. Tall for its time , with bell openings of a type common locally, the unbuttressed tower is in fact dwarfed by the 13th century well proportioned nave, transept and chancel, neatly complemented by long lancet win-

dows. Both transepts have an aisle, giving a spaciousness which Simon Jenkins was thrilled to mention in his personal selection of *England's Thousand Best Churches* (1999). The same author reminds us that the Tyne valley is blessed with a number of 13th century churches, the happy by-product of a lack of late-Gothic wealth to rebuild them! Luckier still, he claims, are we in having had local Victorian restorers with a good deal of sensitivity, particularly the expertise of William Wailes who proved to be such an excellent interpreter of Gothic Revival glass. (p.512)

BYWELL

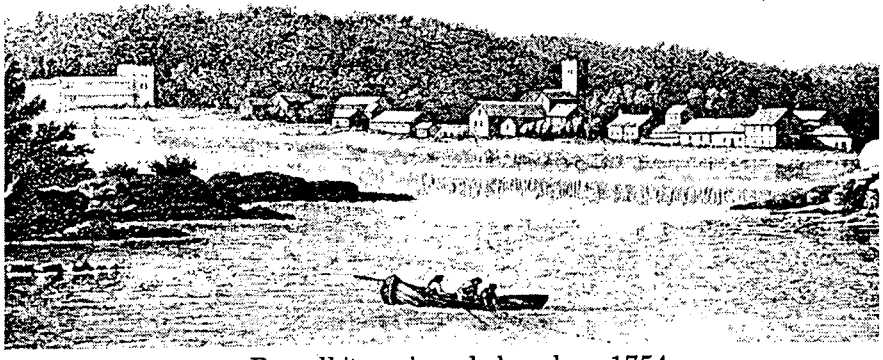
Over the years we have paid a number of visits to Bywell, and some of us had reservations about going there yet again, but, as we passed so close to this delightful spot on our way to Hexham, it was a risk well taken, for we soon discovered that many in the afternoon's group had never been there before. Bywell really is a treat. In days gone by this quiet corner was one of the busiest places in the whole of the Tyne valley. In 1570 Royal Commissioners reported that 'the town of Bywell is builded in length all of one street upon the river or water of Tyne, on the north and west part of the same; and it is divided into several parishes and inhabited with handicraftsmen, whose trade is all in iron work for the horsemen and Borderers of that country, as in making bitys, stirrups, buckles and such others, wherein they are very expert and cunning.' There were in fact fifteen shops at that date. The dense oak forest in the neighbourhood provided excellent fuel for the many smiths. The town had its share of vandalism, too; the inhabitants obliged nightly to make their street a compound for their sheep and cattle by creating barriers at either end against the regular incursions of the Tynedale reivers. That was in the 16th century, and the population apparently fared no better the following century for it is on record that when the judges made the journey from Carlisle to Newcastle, the lords of the manor of Bywell regularly had to protect them from attack by an ever-present marauders.

Long since depopulated, and standing beyond the tidal waters of the Tyne which attracted the heavy industries of the last two centuries, Bywell has remained a peaceful backwater ever since a ruthless programme of landscaping was carried out in the mid-19th century. All that remains of its medieval castle is a roofless rectangular gatehouse tower, built early in

the 15th century for Ralph Neville, second Earl of Westmorland. When his 16th century namesake lost his estates as well as his head for joining in the Rising of the North of 1569, the Bywell estate passed into the hands of the Fenwick family. Other remains of the castle are incorporated into the 19th century Bywell Castle House. Bywell Hall itself is an 18th century villa built in the grand style by James Paine for the Fenwicks. With its interesting houses and the walls of its castle encompassed by a loop in the river, Bywell is , even without its ecclesiastical history, a little gem. Add its two churches and it becomes one of the jewels of the county.

Yes, two churches within a stone's throw of each other. Until recently I had never heard the story that these twin churches were built by two rival sisters in a bid to out do each other. The *cognoscenti* used to maintain that the churches could not possibly be twins because of the age difference, the one, St Andrew's, clearly showing signs of Anglo-Saxon construction and the other, St Peter's, belonging to the post-Conquest period. But in the last fifty years the supposedly later church has been shown to possess many Anglo-Saxon features, and therefore is likely to have been contemporary with the other after all. In the medieval period, St Andrew's came into the hands of the the White Canons (Premonstratensians) of Blanchland which led to its being dubbed the White Church, whereas St Peter's, appropriated by the Black Monks (Benedictines) of Durham Abbey, became known as the Black Church.

St Andrew's possesses the best Saxon tower in the whole of Northum-



Bywell 'town' and churches, 1754

berland. Its upper parts may be as late as AD 1000, but the base, of different coloured stone, is likely to be earlier. On its south side above the belfry is a typical Saxon high level doorway, access to which would have been by an external staircase. Some Saxon masonry forms part of the nave walls, otherwise it is a 13th century church altered at least three times over in the course of the 19th century. Though the squat 14th century tower of St Peter's bears no comparison with that of St Andrew's, the main body of the church has a number of interesting early features. The north nave wall and parts of the chancel side walls are thought to have belonged to a large 8th century church, perhaps that in which Bishop Egbert of Lindisfarne was consecrated in AD 802. The four windows high up in the north wall of the nave are also Saxon. They now form a sort of clerestory, but originally they would have served as the single source of illumination on that side of the church. The blocked-up door in the north wall of the chancel reminds us of the square-headed doorway at Escomb. Escomb church itself may shed light on the history of the Bywell churches. Though not mentioned by Bede, it is undoubtedly late 7th century or early 8th century , and likely to have been built privately for the use of the local landowner. Anyone visiting Bywell is bound to be struck by the close proximity of its two churches on a spit of land above the river. The explanation which one hears occasionally that they were built by two different medieval religious Orders obviously needs to be corrected. Both structures belong to the early Anglo-Saxon period, well before the building spree of the later Orders. Rivalry between two religious groups perhaps, or more likely two landed families, each wanting its own church.

A notable feature of St Peter's is that its Saxon nave was much longer than its later counterpart, for some the medieval west tower rests on part of the Saxon wall base. Statistically, St Peter's Saxon church was perhaps twice the size of Benet Biscop's church of St Peter at Monkwearmouth. Who could have been responsible for such a large structure? One man of the time who always thought big and at the same time relished rivalry was St Wilfrid. His church at Hexham, built c. AD 675-80, was claimed by his biographer to be the largest this side of the alps. Could Wilfrid have had a hand in the building of Bywell St Peter's I wonder?

HEAVENFIELD AND SWINBURN

Crossing the stylish stone pannelled Bywell Bridge into Stocksfield

we followed the road through Riding Mill to Hexham, using the journey to determine the shape of things to come later in the afternoon. The original plan had been to seek refreshments in Hexham and then journey via Heavenfleld to a rendez-vous with the Riddell family and parishioners at Great Swinburn for an evening Mass in the small, simple 1841 chapel. The recent unexpected re-introduction of foot and mouth restrictions now forced us to a parting of the ways. Mrs Katie Stewart (Riddell) took me by car from Hexham to Swinburn to ensure the evening Mass there at 5.30p.m., while the the rest of the party, with time in hand, decided to pay their respects to St Oswald at Heavenfleld before going on to Corbridge for the 6.00p.m. Mass. Though prevented by the restrictions in force from entering the field to visit the lonely little church of St Oswald-in-Lee, the visitors drew some satisfaction from viewing the wooden cross by the roadside, which tradition identifies with the site where St Oswald prayed before his victorious battle against the pagan King Penda and the Christian King Cadwalla, surely one of the strangest alliances in our history. Bede relates the story in chapters 1 and 2 of Book III of his *Ecclesiastical History* . It is generally thought that the battle itself took place at nearby Hallington. Here, high up on the Military Road at Heavenfield, the county of Northumberland rolls out like a map, and there could not have been a better day to appreciate its distant beauty.

All but one of the party having failed through no fault of their own to fulfil the main purpose of the afternoon's excursion they have already been assured by the Riddell family of a welcome at Swinburn in the near future. For which many thanks. The Society, as far as is possible on its annual outings aims to visit places of Catholic interest. We cannot let Swinburn go by default, can we, situated as it is within the boundaries of our own diocese of Hexham and Newcastle?

PROGRAMME 2001 - 2002

The meeting on the 5th September will be held at St Andrew's, Worswick Street, Newcastle upon Tyne (Mass at 7.00 p.m., A.G.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. The Society welcomes non-members at its lectures (fee, 50p.)

5th Sept. 2001	Mass 7.00 p.m., followed by A.G.M 7.30 p.m.
3rd Oct. 2001	Mrs Vivienne Fetherston: *Irish Catholicism in Sunderland (1829-1870)*
7th Nov. 2001	Dr Leo Gooch: *The Short Episcopate of Henry O'Callaghan*
9th Jan. 2002	Mr Michael Cullen: *An Historical Tour of Post-Reformation Catholic Newcastle*
6th Feb. 2002	Mr Matthew Festing: *Catholic Artefacts*
6th Mar. 2002	Mr Paul Richardson: *The Early English Catholic Periodical Press*

COACH EXCURSIONS

22nd Sept. 2001	Heavenfield & Swinburn
18th May, 2002	Holyrood, Edinburgh
15th June 2002	Furness Abbey

(2002 dates are subject to change)

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