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## EDITORIAL NOTES

The Catholic Archives Society was founded in 1979 but as its formation was actively promoted for at least a year before, it is now some ten years old, in conception if not in birth. Its main objects were and are to promote the care and use of the archives of the Roman Catholic Church in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. Even though this is essentially a secondary role, the Society may claim a little credit for a better recognition of the value of religious archives, for appointments of archivists even, for improved facilities, standards and training, and, through *Catholic Archives*, for a wider appreciation of the character and content of religious archives.

Many religious archivists new to their duties or in relatively new congregations are dismayed by the paucity of actual documents and often have to rely for information on secondary sources when investigating the origins of their congregation. Then; a few photographs and cuttings are found, later, some accounts, diaries, letters, a house journal maybe, and so the archives slowly come to light. But the difficulties of finding the archives, collecting them together, finding accommodation, acquiring professional skills, justifying expenditure, and so on, can be very demoralising.

Several articles published previously have borne witness not only to the struggles of the founders of congregations as revealed in the archives but also to the perseverance of the archivists who have made the historians' work possible. Vatican II urged religious orders to examine their present vocational work in the light of the inspiration of their founders. This alone gave immediate status to the archives. Now, happily, if courage momentarily fails, religious archivists can remind themselves of the essential meaning and worth, of archives and of the vocational nature of their work by referring to the litany of phrases quoted by Sr Mary Angela Molloy in her article on the archives of the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions in the 1987 edition, and particularly to the words of Pope Paul VI in 1963, repeated by Pope John Paul II in 1980:

. . . our pieces of paper are echoes and traces of the passage of the Lord Jesus in the world. Therefore, treating these papers with reverence means, on reflection, treating Christ with reverence . . . and preserving for ourselves and those who come after us the history of the *transitus Domini* in the world.

Although it is important to publish articles about major archives, it is also useful to describe those of relatively new congregations, especially when the experiences of the contributing archivists may be valuable to others in like circumstances. It is equally gratifying to publish research based on new-found archives, not least if it tells a story deriving from seemingly trivial material or on the chance survival of the papers. The present edition includes all three such articles. It is hoped, too, that the articles will encourage historians to look at Catholic archives as a potential source of original information for their research, whether ecclesiastical or secular. If so, the promoters of the Society will consider that their presumptuous efforts ten years ago were in some measure justified.

The contributors of the articles in this edition are warmly thanked for their hard work and generosity and, as ever, the Honorary Editor solicits copy for 1989 and beyond.

## A SURVEY OF SOURCES FOR INFORMATION ON THE EIGHTY-FIVE MARTYRS

The Rev. Roland Connelly

The beatification by Pope John Paul II of another Eighty-five Martyrs has provoked a remarkable surge of interest among English Catholics and much has been written in the Catholic Press and elsewhere to ensure that reliable information is readily available to all. For most people, such outline accounts are sufficient, but for those who wish to know more and especially for those who desire a firmer historical base for their devotion and appreciation, a few simple signposts towards the more fruitful libraries and archives may be of some value. Experienced researchers in recusant history, of course, need no such guidance and each might well offer a different approach. This simplified survey of sources is not intended for them but is rather a gentle reassurance for non-specialists that the Cause of these Martyrs is firmly based on historical fact and the scholarly interpretation of contemporary documents.

It should, however, be acknowledged at once that the 16th and 17th centuries are not periods of history that are well-documented. It was not an age for prolific writing and with the passage of the years much of what was written has been lost or destroyed. Gaps in continuity appear fairly frequently in official records and personal papers have fared little better.

These factors, of course, also have their effect on Catholic records of the Martyrs, but, in addition, conditions of life for a persecuted people militate against the keeping of copious records. A man in danger for his life is not disposed to commit himself to Writing. Prudence and common sense demand caution; only essential information is conveyed in letters and papers. Word of mouth was a much safer method of communication and, if letters had to be written, then they were brief, frequently anonymous, non-committal and full of hidden meanings. Every care would be taken to avoid any detail which could be used as evidence against the writer or his friends, and, if the risk were taken of including such information, then the letter would be destroyed as soon as it was read.

Such conditions of secrecy were not required within the community of the Catholic exiles on the Continent. Visitors and refugees from England brought over much first-hand information about the Martyrs to the seminaries at Douai, Rheims and Rome. Sometimes they brought smuggled documents; more usually they just talked of what they had seen and heard. In the safety of exile, all could be written down and carefully preserved. Papers were printed and circulated; books were written. A valuable series of archives was inaugurated and many eye-witness accounts of martyrdom were included.

The Catholics of the time understood very well that a martyr is a martyr because of the manner and purpose of his death and these accounts therefore paid great attention to the details, often gruesome, of the deaths of the martyrs and said very little about their lives. Such treatment is perfectly valid and fully theological but it is disappointing for the modern researcher who wants to know more about the life and character of those who suffered so bravely for their faith. Sometimes this imbalance of information gives the impression that the biography of the martyr begins as he ascends the scaffold.

In all these circumstances then, it is surprising that today we have so much sound documentary evidence about the Martyrs. No doubt much more awaits discovery in various secret places and much work remains to be done in co-ordinating and assessing the various accounts of a very complicated people at a very complicated time. The modern researcher should have no fears of failure but should be ready to encounter the frustrations of many lacunae.

#### THE DOCUMENTS OF THE CAUSE

Much valuable work has been accomplished in recent years by the Vice-Postulator of the Cause of the Martyrs. Building on the researches of his learned predecessors and working with scholarly assistants, he has produced a detailed dossier of information about the Eighty-five Martyrs. The evidence and arguments of this dossier are the basis for the beatification of these Martyrs. The case was formally presented by Cardinal Basil Hume to the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of the Saints and this Sacred Congregation accepted after due deliberation that 'the cause, fact and constancy of martyrdom had been fully proved.' They were accordingly declared to be 'Blessed' by Pope John Paul II on 22 November 1987.

This dossier prepared by the Vice-Postulator of the Cause has been printed for limited circulation. Technically, in canonical terms, it is a *positio*. Its full title is 'Cause of Beatification and Canonisation of the Venerable Servants of God, George Haydock, priest and Companions put to death in England Wales and Scotland in defence of the Catholic Faith (1584-1679)'. Copies have been distributed to all the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales and should be available for consultation by researchers in most Diocesan Archives.

It should be stressed that this document (*positio*) is a most impressive work of scholarship and shows the results of extended and intensive academic research of the highest quality. Every fact is fully supported by contemporary evidence either by direct quotation from the original document or from authenticated copies. No attempt is made to cover up or fill in the inevitable gaps in information, and the assistance of other scholars, Catholic and non-Catholic is acknowledged.

Unlike the similar document on the Forty Martyrs, this one is written in English. It has been prepared in seven volumes and consists of 2,738 pages

of typescript. In due time, there is no doubt that it will be recognised as a standard work of reference for all who seek further information about the Eighty-five Martyrs.

Again, some students may well be satisfied by what they find in the *positio*; others will wish to go further either by following up the references or by launching out independently. For the latter, the following simplified synopsis of sources may be of assistance.

#### A. GOVERNMENT SOURCES

First, there is much valuable information about the Martyrs to be sought in the Public Record Office. Such papers and records, written from the official State point of view are often hostile to Catholics, or at least neutral, and are therefore possessed of special worth in the Catholic cause.

The following Government records are useful for the ardent Catholic researcher.

##### 1. RECORDS OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL

From 1540 onwards, the Privy Council kept its own registers and most of the minutes of its meetings have been preserved. These are prime sources for information about the Government's policy and action against the Catholics.

##### 2. CHANCERY RECORDS

The Chancellor was in effect the King's private secretary and confidential adviser, and the Chancery Rolls therefore contain much information about the King's attitude to Catholics and his actions against them.

##### 3. EXCHEQUER RECORDS

Twice a year, the Sheriffs and other officers of the Crown were obliged to present their financial reports to the Exchequer. These reports frequently refer to the fines and confiscations imposed on individual Catholics. Of particular value are the Recusant Rolls and the Tower Bills for Catholic prisoners.

##### 4. STATE PAPERS

From the time of Henry VIII, the Secretary of State was the centre of the Crown's administrative organisation and all domestic and foreign business passed through his hands. It should be noted however that not all State Papers are in the Public Record Office; many have been kept by the families of some of the Secretaries of State, e.g. the very important Cecil papers are at Hatfield House; the Lansdowne papers and the Harleian papers are in the British Library.

B. LAW REPORTS are disappointing and provide little information about the Martyrs.

1. *COURT OF THE KING'S BENCH*

This was the Crown's personal court and its records are today in the Coram Rege Rolls in the Public Record Office. Only Father George Haydock of the Eighty-five Martyrs was tried in this court.

2. *COUNTY ASSIZES*

Of the Eighty-five Martyrs, thirty-eight were tried at the County Assizes but many of the trial records have been lost or accidentally destroyed. What little remains is in the Public Record Office, London.

3. *NEWGATE SESSIONS*

The county of Middlesex and the city of London had no County Assizes and nineteen of the present Martyrs were tried at the Newgate Sessions in London. Unfortunately, most of the London records were destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666 and the Middlesex records are incomplete.

4. *GREAT SESSIONS OF WALES*

Only two of the Martyrs were tried in Wales. The trial records for Blessed Charles Meehan are in the National Library of Wales at Aberystwyth, Dyfed, but the records for Blessed William Davies are missing.

5. *THE COUNCIL OF THE NORTH*

According to Rachel R. Reid, (*The King's Council of the North*, 1921) this Council was in practice 'the supreme court of justice north of the Trent, exercising the whole of the Crown's criminal and equitable jurisdiction with its ecclesiastical jurisdiction to boot' (page 285). During most of the reign of Queen Elizabeth it exercised in the northern counties a jurisdiction which 'substantially duplicated and occasionally conflicted with' that of the Assize Judges. Of the 24 Martyrs who were tried at York, 15 appeared before the Council of the North and the other 9 before the Assize Judges. It would seem that all the records of the Council of the North were kept in St Mary's Tower outside the city walls and all perished in the Parliamentary bombardment of 1644. The Assize records are fragmented and contain no information about the Martyrs.

C. PARISH REGISTERS

Information from Parish Registers is also very limited. There were no Catholic parish registers prior to 1657 and only in the middle of the eighteenth

century did they become common. Some Church of England registers date from 1538 and many from 1598. Of necessity, Catholic names are frequently recorded in Anglican registers of baptism, marriage and burials, and this may cause some confusion unless it is remembered that co-operative Anglican clergymen frequently recorded Catholic baptisms in their own registers and that of necessity Catholics had to present themselves at the Church of England for legal marriage and be presented for burial.

#### D. UNIVERSITY RECORDS

At least thirteen of the Eighty-five Martyrs were members of Oxford University and another four were members of Cambridge University. Information about the Catholic undergraduates is plentiful in university and college records but their subsequent careers cannot always be traced because the Oath of Supremacy of 1559 obliged many Catholics to leave university before taking a degree.

These university records are readily accessible in most reference libraries in the books *Register of the University of Oxford*, by Boase and Clark, and for Cambridge in *The Book of Matriculations and Degrees*, by J. A. Venn.

#### E. CATHOLIC SOURCES

These consists of the many letters and papers written by or about the Martyrs, and also various reports on the state of the Mission which were sent to ecclesiastical authorities in Rheims or Rome. Some of these accounts have been lost; the remainder are scattered in several different archives today.

#### F. SEMINARY RECORDS

From the establishment of the English College, Douai, in 1568, careful records were kept of all students preparing for the priesthood. This practice inaugurated by Cardinal William Allen, the first President, was followed in the other English seminaries on the Continent: Rome 1579, Valladolid 1589, and Seville 1592.

The archives of the English College, Seville, were confiscated by the State in 1773 and have unfortunately disappeared, but the registers of the other seminaries have been published by the Catholic Record Society in volumes X and XI for the Doai Diaries, in volumes XXXVII and XL for the Venerable English College, Rome, and in volume XXX for the English College, Valladolid.

Jesuit records have been carefully preserved in Rome, Stonyhurst and Farm Street, and Brother Henry Foley used them extensively in his *Records of the English Province SJ* (published 1877-1883).

#### G. CATALOGUES OF MARTYRS

These are lists of the names of those people who were regarded by the



Catholics of their own time as true martyrs. They were compiled from the accounts of eye-witnesses and are powerful testimony to the immediate honour that was shown to those who died for their faith. This recognition of martyrdom by popular acclaim still plays an important part in the formal acceptance of the Universal Church and the name of each of the Eighty-five Martyrs is included in most of these Catalogues.

The earliest known *Catalogue of Martyrs* is that of Dr Nicholas Sanders and is dated for 1585. At least eighteen such Catalogues were in print by 1630. Most are still in manuscript form but John Gerard's *Catalogue* of about 1594 has been published by the Catholic Record Society in volume V.

#### THE COLLECTION AND PRESERVATION OF DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION

The collection and preservation of State documents is the responsibility of the State and all archivists and historians are aware of the success and failure of the Government officers engaged in this important work.

For Catholic papers and writings however, there was no comparable system. The organisation and structures of the Church in England were in disarray for most of the martyr period. In the early days, the lack of bishops and the practical absence of authority prevented the appointment of any responsible officer to safeguard the archives. It was left to individuals to do what they could on their own initiative and the result is that much has been lost and what has been preserved has to be sought in various places.

#### *CARDINAL WILLIAM ALLEN (1532-1594)*

Cardinal William Allen as Prefect of the English Mission and President of the Douai College did what he could to collect together relevant historical documents but his efforts were limited by the exigencies of other responsibilities. His original collection was augmented by his successors as President of Douai and by members of staff through the years.

This collection of historical papers is now in the archives of the Archbishop of Westminster at Our Lady of Victories, Kensington, London W8 6AF.

#### *THE CHALCEDON CATALOGUE (1628)*

This is perhaps the most valuable of all the Catalogues of Martyrs. It was compiled by Richard Smith (1568—1655), Bishop of Chalcedon and the second Vicar Apostolic of England, and was submitted to the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda in 1628 in response to a direct request from Pope Urban VIII for information about the English Martyrs.

The importance of the Chalcedon Catalogue is the authenticity of its detail. Bishop Smith was helped in his research by his Notary Apostolic, Father William Harewell, who had produced his own Catalogue, known as the Paris Catalogue, a few months earlier. Together they not only investigated all the known Catholic sources of information but also they had access to law reports which have subsequently been lost. As all sources are quoted, Bishop Smith's work establishes the fact that of the Eighty-five Martyrs, 11 are mentioned in the Newgate Prison Register, 18 in the York Assize Register and 4 in other County Assize Registers.

The Chalcedon Catalogue can therefore give for each Martyr who suffered between 1570 and 1616 not only his place of birth but also the charge on which he was condemned and the place and date of his execution.

A copy of the Chalcedon Catalogue is in the Archives of Westminster at Our Lady of Victories, Kensington, London W8 6AF.

#### *THE GRENE COLLECTIONS*

Father Christopher Grene SJ (1629—1697) spent thirty-three of his life at the English College, Rome, where on his own initiative he devoted himself to the collection of documents about the Martyrs. His major work was to make careful and accurate copies of the originals, and Father John Morris SJ (1826—1893) has maintained that Father Grene did 'more than any other man to save the records of their sufferings from perishing and to transmit to us materials for the history of the time of persecution in England' (*Troubles of our Catholic Forefathers*, III, p.3).

Father Grene produced ten volumes of these *Collectanea* and distinguished each by a different letter of the alphabet. Some of his work has been lost, but most has survived and, although somewhat rearranged, is now preserved in three archives.

In the Archives of Stonyhurst College, Blackburn, Lancashire BB65 9PZ, are Collections lettered B, C, M, N, and P. These include letters and papers addressed to Father Robert Persons SJ in Spain, 1588—1594; transcripts of contemporary papers on the English Martyrs and in Collection P two volumes of more than 600 ff., consisting chiefly of the letters and other writings of Father Robert Persons SJ, as well as some letters of Father (Saint) Robert Southwell SJ and Father Henry Garnett SJ.

Collection E is in the possession of Oscott College, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B73 5AA, and consists of six papers by different writers from the end of the sixteenth century. Two papers are general accounts of the persecution in England, one is an account of the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots in 1587, and three refer to the persecution in the north of England and especially in York.

Collection F is at the Venerable English College, Rome, and is made up of sixteen documents. Some are written in different hands and some are printed. The documents numbered 1, 2 and 3 are of particular interest because, although of unknown authorship, they are probably the oldest. They are dated respectively for about 1588, sometime in the 1590s, and probably 1595.

#### *BISHOP RICHARD CHALLONER*

Another important collector of historical information was Bishop Richard Challoner (1691—1781), but unlike Father Grene he was also a writer. He spent twenty-six years at the English College, Douai, and for his last ten years there was Vice-President. During this time he used the extensive Douai Records to compile his own Catalogue of Martyrs.

He returned to the English Mission in 1730 and became in 1740 Coadjutor Bishop to Bishop Benjamin Petre the Vicar Apostolic of London. He succeeded as Vicar Apostolic in 1758.

Bishop Challoner published his *Memoirs of the Missionary Priests* in 1741—2 and his work remains a classic to this day. He was a meticulous scholar, always careful to check his references and quote his sources and his book was so popular that there were fourteen editions or reprints between 1803 and 1879. Much new information about the Martyrs has come to light since the time when he was writing but these fruits of more modern research are additions to his information rather than corrections and he still enjoys a high reputation for historical accuracy.

In his own preface to Part II of the *Memoirs*, Bishop Challoner acknowledges that much of his information has come from the Archives of the English College, Douai, and from the Archives of the Jesuit College at St Omers, as well as from the records of the English Benedictines and the English Franciscans formerly at Douai. He pays tribute also to Mr Cuthbert Constable, M.D. of Burton Constable near Hull, who provided him with 'useful books and manuscripts'.

The *Memoirs of the Missionary Priests* was written in London by a busy bishop, but Father Alban Butler was commissioned to search the overseas archives for the requisite documents and then copy them for the Bishop's use. These transcripts are now in the Archives of the Birmingham Archdiocese at Cathedral House, Queensway, Birmingham, B4 6EU.

#### *VICE-POSTULATOR OF THE CAUSES*

Reference has already been made to the importance of the *positio* produced by the Vice-Postulator of the Causes of the Eighty-five Martyrs and accepted by the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Saints in 1987.

In fact, the formal process of enquiry into the Causes of the English

Martyrs began shortly after the Restoration of the Hierarchy in 1850. Petitions were presented to Rome by the third Synod of Westminster in 1859 and again by the Synod of Westminster in 1866. Both petitions were refused as they were not made in proper canonical form.

From such experiences it became evident that if the Causes of the Martyrs were to prosper in Rome, then a scholarly organiser was required in England. What was needed was a man of experience and ability, a man familiar with Canon Law and the intricacies of the Roman Curia, a historian with a special enthusiasm for the Martyrs. Such a man presented himself in the person of Father John Morris SJ (1826—1893) and in 1874, with the permission of the Jesuit authorities, he was officially appointed to be the first Vice-Postulator of the Causes.

Father Morris was a convert with all the enthusiasm of a convert of his day. He had become a Catholic while still an undergraduate at Cambridge University in 1846. Ordained for the Diocese of Northampton in 1849, he became a canon of the Diocese in 1852. The following year he was appointed Vice-Rector of the Venerable English College, Rome, where he gained experience in Roman ways. By 1861 he was a priest of the Westminster Archdiocese and served first as Cardinal Nicholas Wiseman's personal secretary and then performed the same duties for Cardinal Henry Edward Manning. In 1867, Canon John Morris became a Jesuit.

During all these years of his priesthood, Father Morris maintained his great interest in the Cause of the Martyrs and, despite the demands of his exacting ecclesiastical responsibilities, he continued his study and research. His earlier work has been described by Joseph Gillow:

**In the Cause of the English Martyrs, he addressed a statement to Cardinal Wiseman before the Second Council of Westminster, May 12, 1855; documents prepared by him were embodied in the petition of the Third Council of Westminster, July 16, 1859; he drafted a new petition to Rome from the English Hierarchy, January 19, 1871 (*Bibliographical Dictionary of the English Catholics*, Vol. V, p.129).**

And to all this must be added Father Morris's writings, the most important of which were the three series of *The Troubles of our Catholic Forefathers*, which began publication in 1872.

From 1874, Father Morris worked in a part-time capacity as Vice-Postulator of the Causes, but in 1886 he suffered a breakdown in health and his Jesuit Superiors released him for full-time work. In 1890 he became the leader of the team of writers based at Farm Street, but Oratorians, Benedictines, Redemptorists, secular priests and laymen were involved as well as Jesuits. The Cause of the Martyrs benefited considerably from the researches of such eminent scholars as Father J.H. Pollen SJ, Brother Henry Foley SJ, Joseph Gillow, Father T.E. Bridgett C.Ss.R., Dom Bede Camm OSB, Father E.H. Burton, and J.S. Hansom.

Father Morris' historical papers and transcripts are in the Archives of the Vice-Postulator for the Cause of the English and Welsh Martyrs, at 114 Mount

Street, London, W1Y 6AH. In the same Archives are the papers of his successors, Father J.H. Pollen SJ, who was Vice-Postulator from 1900 until 1923, and Father C.H. Newdigate SJ, who was Vice-Postulator from 1923 until 1937.

#### *THE CATHOLIC RECORD SOCIETY*

In 1855 Lord Acton and some of his friends attempted the foundation of a Lingard Club with the purpose of publishing a catalogue of documents of interest for English Catholic history, but the project failed to gain support.

It was not until 1904 that a further attempt was made when Archbishop Francis Bourne of Westminster presided over a gathering of Catholic scholars and founded the Catholic Record Society. The Society's objects were stated to be 'the transcribing, printing, indexing and distributing to its members, of the Catholic Registers of Baptism, Marriages and Deaths and other old records of the Faith, chiefly personal and genealogical, since the Reformation in England and Wales.'

In 1952, a new constitution was adopted and the aim of the Society was now defined as 'the advancement of education in connection with the history of Roman Catholicism in England and Wales since the Reformation.'

With such terms of reference it will be noted that there is ample opportunity for the publication of original documents as well as writings on the Martyrs and other aspects of Catholic history, and in fact the subject of the Martyrs is extensively covered in the annual volume of records and in the journal of research, entitled *Recusant History*.

The Catholic Record Society also states that although it 'directs its main efforts to making historical materials available in print, it also helps researchers in a number of other ways, especially by offering the use of its own rich collection of books, manuscripts, microfilms, indexes and slides', now housed by courtesy of the Society of Jesus in its library at 114 Mount Street, London, W1Y 6AH.

#### CONCLUSION

This survey makes no pretence to be precise or comprehensive. It can serve only as a broad outline of what is available and where it is situated. Some archives of value and importance have not been mentioned and specialists on the history of the Martyrs might deplore some of the omissions, but even this very generalised survey of sources should suffice to convince the hesitant that our knowledge of the Martyrs is based on sound historical research and if doubts should still persist, then the original documents in their various archives await inspection.

*Note:* Fr Connelly is the author of *The Eighty-Five Martyrs*, published by McCrimmons, Great Wakering, Essex, 1987, containing a short biography of each of the martyrs, available through C.T.S. and other bookshops, price £4.75p.

## THE GENERAL ARCHIVES OF THE MARIST FATHERS

The Rev. Anthony Ward, SM.

The congregation of the Marist Fathers, officially known as the Society of Mary, is one of a number of religious groups resulting from a sequence of acts of foundation that date, according to one's viewpoint, to the years 1812 or 1816. On 23 July, 1816, a group of companions from the major seminary of St Irenaeus in Lyons made their way up to the prominent Marian shrine of Fourviere and there made a solemn pledge to found the Society of Mary, which was conceived as a multi-branched entity open to priests, men and women lay religious and lay people.

In 1836 the Society of Mary received its canonical approbation as a congregation of pontifical right, but the name had in its canonical sense been restricted by Rome to the branch of priests, otherwise known as Marist Fathers. The canonical nature of relations between them, the flourishing branch of teaching brothers now known as Marist Brothers of the Schools, and the branches of the Marist Sisters and the Third Order of Mary remained ambiguous for some years. The same was to be true of the congregation now known as the Missionary Sisters of the Society of Mary, who in the course of the latter half of the century emerged in complex fashion, initially as a Third Order Regular for the Missions of Oceania. All these are now independent congregations of pontifical right, bound together by a common origin and history, and common spiritual tradition. They possess their own centres of administration at various levels and maintain their own archives.

### Development of the Marist General Archives

From their formal establishment as a religious congregation on 24 September 1836, the Marist Fathers have maintained a general archive. For the first half-century the superior general operated out of the city of Lyons, which with the neighbouring episcopal seat of Belley represented one of the twin locations of the first foundations. In 1880 the Marist Fathers shared the fate of other religious congregations in France, and for a time the archives were harboured by lay benefactors. When, after some easier years, the religious discrimination intensified at the beginning of this century, the general archives were despatched to the house of Differt in Belgium. The administration remained in Lyons in scattered apartments on the hillside of Fourviere, its activities giving rise to a new fund of documents which were sent by rail from Lyons to Differt in early August 1914. Some were lost in the flames of a railway carriage at Longwy en route. During the War the general archives suffered no loss. In 1922 the General Administration established itself at Moncalieri on the outskirts of Turin, taking with it current papers. A part no longer urgently needed for con-

sultation was despatched to the house at Via Cernaia, Rome, surviving with very minor losses another railway fire on the way.

In 1925 the present general house at Via A. Poerio 63, on the hill of Monteverde Vecchio, was built and included a locale for the archives, the various elements of which were transported without loss from Differt, Moncalieri and Via Cernaia, and given a first organisation by the competent efforts of Father Henri Beaune. The Second World War brought no losses. From 1950 Father Louis Schwehr began a second process of organisation in modern metal furnishings and endowed the general archives with their present shape.

In the process of this vast work, some mistakes of policy were made in the amalgamation of fonds but the steps were recorded with care and no insuperable problems resulted. Two further sections were reunited from Lyons in the 1950s and 1960s, one of the archives of the procurator for the missions of Oceania at Lyons, the other a trunk containing very significant materials forming part of the archives of the bursar general which had been forgotten in an attic in the city since 1880. In the 1970s a small section of pre-1898 materials from the archives of the procurator for the missions at Sydney was also annexed.

#### Recent Organisation

In the mid-1950s, interest in the history and spirituality of the Marists prompted the first published scientific researches. Critical editions of the Fathers' Constitutions appeared in 1955. The twelve years that followed were given to the preparation of an exemplary and exhaustive edition in four ample volumes of documentation on the history of the Marist Fathers to September 1836, *Origines Maristes*. At that point the rush of activity connected with the renewal called for by the Council caused a reorientation in the activity of personnel assigned to duties in this area. While the archives continued to be administered with high competence, and critical research undertaken, the immediate demands of a spiritual assimilation of material at grass roots level had to be given considerable priority. The chief protagonist in all these efforts was Father Jean Coste, for much of the period 1955—1982 archivist general, principal editor of all the critical publications, and a scholar of first rank with noted contributions prior to this work in Septuagint textual study and, concomitant with it, in medieval Roman topography.

A change of incumbent coincided with the preparation of major renovations in the house which necessarily encompassed the archives. One major problem was damp in the otherwise very pleasant semi-basement location. The decision taken was to change location and construct a new locale in a large library at first-floor level. To cope with problems of weight, a heavily reinforced floor had to be introduced and other adaptations made. The work was recently completed, the result being a compact depository area with considerably increased storage capacity (1000 linear metres), together with a pleasant and spacious consultation room.

## Classification and Arrangement

There is nothing revolutionary or exceptional in the classification scheme of the Marist general archives. One major block covers the various departments of the central government, the acts of the various legislative and consultative bodies within the congregation, and its dealings with the Roman Curia, dioceses, and other religious congregations and orders. A second covers by province, region and house the establishments of the Society around the world and their activities insofar as they involve the general administration. Finally, a third section consists in the individual files on Marist novices and religious.

All these sections are organised by a combination of decimal classification and code letters, the subdivisions repeating themselves as far as the nature of the material permits. The first section is arranged by a six-figure scheme alone, 000.000 to 999.999, the second by a geographical code (e.g. A for Anglia, or ONC — Oceania, Nova Caledonia for the mission of New Caledonia) followed by a repeated five-figure numerical scheme (e.g. 52.018), and the third section is arranged alphabetically by name of person within certain categories, such as *Professi Clerici*, *Non Professi*, *Egressi*, *Episcopi*. At times the more developed scheme is a little *a priori*, but on the whole it works quite adequately. A problem arises with expansion and at some stage it may be necessary to add either an umbrella scheme, of which with necessary intercalations the current scheme would supply the subdivisions, or to add a system of parallel pragmatic codes of less obvious mnemonic value but easily processed by computer.

### The Oceania Material

Probably the most significant, and certainly the most frequently consulted part of the archives consists in correspondence sent to either the superior general or the various mission procurators at Lyons, Paris, London, Sydney and elsewhere from the island territories of the Pacific evangelized by the Marist family. Although all branches of the latter have been involved in the common enterprise, naturally only material from members of our congregation is held in this major subdivision of the second section referred to above. The territories involved include the present states of Fiji, New Zealand, New Caledonia, Samoa (Western and American), Solomons, Tonga, Vanuatu, Wallis-Fortuna, and the Bougainville province of Papua-New Guinea.

In an area where colonial Western presence was often slow to establish itself in organised fashion, where colonial administrations were at minimum staff levels, or where for one reason or another colonial officialdom might be suspected of a certain bias, the value of this correspondence is very high indeed. We find an interest shown in it by linguists, anthropologists and ethnologists, philatelists, geologists and meteorologists, historians of the colonial powers, of particular events, of commerce and shipping, all this apart from its value for directly ecclesiastical history.'



One of the problems is how to make it suitably accessible. The writings of St Peter Chanel, protomartyr of Oceania, were published in critical edition in 1960, and extracts of correspondence have been published by the Marist Missionary Sisters. Some transcriptions of important material have been made recently. Some microfilming has been done, and though at the moment it covers only a part of the holdings, it is hoped to carry this forward in collaboration with university institutions in the next few years. A persistent underlying problem is the lack of anything approaching comprehensive indexing, which tends to make the kind of consultation that is usually necessary, with quick cross-checking and comparison, very cumbersome. Traditional access risks damage to materials often in a delicate state, and moreover the conditions in which they were penned in their cramped nineteenth-century French script and the vicissitudes of their journeyings make rapid skimming more or less impossible.

There are additional problems. With a view to edification, and the solicitation of support for the missionary effort, many of the letters were published, but nearly always in edited and not rarely in 'improved' form. Some of the published letters have no obvious manuscript equivalent, which may mean that the original was lost, that authorship was re-ascribed for publication, or a fictitious letter compiled from composite sources.

The preservation of archives in the Pacific territories themselves cannot be said to have been accorded special priority by the first generations of missionaries, and it is an area that today presents considerable preservation problems, even for the archival services of the governments. In the last decade especially, Fr Theo Cook has been responsible for rescuing materials and setting up depositories for the various diocesan and Marist jurisdictions that are the modern successors of the old prefectures and vicariates apostolic. There was no alternative to a thorough simultaneous programme of microfilming, and copies of these films are available in the general archives, of which they represent the partial but indispensable complement. Father Cook is due to succeed as archivist general in 1988, an appointment which should ensure cohesion of effort with regard to the Oceania material, and carry forward the programme in other sectors.

In the meantime, a beginning has been made in the production of computerized indexes, which is the only hope for tackling the question of safe and increased access within a reasonable space of time. We are watching with interest the development of commercially available automatic precis programmes and techniques for digitalization of video-images and the reading of typed and printed material. In the next years, this area of activity will have to be given close consideration. The pressures are not merely conservational, since political, religious and cultural developments in the Pacific show that the good of the peoples of the Pacific and the young churches established there requires that open facilities be available as a matter of urgency to the resource material on their complex histories.

### The Mayet Writings

The Marist archives house one particular item which is of capital importance for the history of the Society.

In the October of 1837, Gabriel-Claude Mayet, a young priest of the diocese of Lyons took a concrete step towards the implementation of advice given to him by the Cure d'Ars in 1832 and entered the Society of Mary as a postulant. Some six weeks later he met in person Father Jean-Claude Colin, founder and first general of the Marist Fathers, and was so taken by the impression that the encounter made upon him that he made extensive notes of the advice he received at the time. Further contacts led him to make further jottings until the point where the idea dawned upon him that these notes of Father Colin's remarks might be of interest to others among the brethren. From that moment, Mayet revamped his enterprises, procured himself other notebooks, and set himself to make his notes no longer for purely personal consumption, mixed with his own spiritual journal, but for a wider potential audience. This in turn led to a wider selection and great bulk of material recorded.

For some years Mayet had been dogged by a malady of the throat, which became a cause for great concern in the early summer of 1839. A year's convalescence with his family gave him the leisure that germinated the idea of reshaping his enterprise of notes yet again. He prepared a scheme covering a whole series of stout notebooks, recopied material already collected and laid himself ready to become a chronicler of the words and deeds of Father Colin on a considerable scale. Even the redistribution of material already gathered required recourse to friends as assistant copyists. On his return to community he was practically mute and remained so for the rest of his life. An experimental two years as studies supervisor in a small boarding-school revealed the practical impossibility for him of exercising any pastoral functions and left him with complete leisure to dedicate to his self-appointed task as chronicler.

Mayet established around himself what can only be described as a veritable industry, with copyists, reports from third persons, consultations, revisions, amplifications, commentaries, verifications of fact. The result was a series of initially nine volumes and then supplements, concentrating on the Society and its founder, with other notebooks on the side for the assembling of parallels from the history of other founders, for the gathering of biographical materials on various admired confreres within the Society, and suchlike. Upon the resignation of Father Colin in 1854, Mayet considered that his own principal mission was complete, though he continued to revise and have recopied his acquired materials. Much of his effort in this later period was directed towards biographical studies, and he published several, and prepared others in manuscript including one of his close friend and former fellow-Marist, St Peter Julian Eymard, who had become the Founder of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament Fathers.

Mayet's material is at times uneven, and strewn with banal or lengthy

excursus on various points of piety. Yet it must be said that over a short period of time he trained himself to be a most reliable noter of Colin's remarks and an astute and accurate observer not only of his strengths but of his weaknesses, reported in confidential sections of the Memoirs with a candour, integrity and lack of either bias or sensationalism that is deeply impressive. On the question of accuracy there are a number of comparisons possible with surviving documents which he heard merely read or independent transcriptions of conversations or discourses. All cases examined show Mayet displaying considerable fidelity to his oral source and missing little of substance.

All in all, the Mayet manuscripts are a vast quarry of lively and accurate historical material concerning the central government of the Society and covering the crucial period of the generalate of the founder, a period for which other written sources in terms of acts of the central administration are meagre. They have been extensively drawn upon in critical edition to provide anecdotal material on the period prior to 1836 and make up the major part of one volume of the work *Origines Maristes*, and have provided the material for two other stout volumes on the words and deeds of Father Colin entitled in French *Entretiens Spirituels de Jean-Claude Colin* and *Quelques Souvenirs sur Jean-Claude Colin*, and translated into English as *A Founder Speaks* and *A Founder Acts*.

Apart from internal Marist history, the Mayet writings report much material echoing as it were blow by blow contemporary events, penned as they often were a few minutes after recreation conversations. They also incorporate lengthy private reporting of various Marists on their participation in, say, negotiations with the Roman Curia in the heat of an 1842 summer, in pastoral preaching in Lyons in the 1840s, the events of the 1848 uprisings in that city. Substantial material on the bishops and administrations of the two dioceses of Lyons and Belley is also to be found there.

The three volumes mentioned above as drawing on Mayet represent only a fraction of the historically useful material, as is clearly demonstrated by an exhaustive systematic index prepared in the late 'fifties by Father Gaston Lessard. This index is now being computerized and plans are under way to undertake a critical transcription of the entire Mayet material on a computer word-processing program.

#### Further Materials Indexed

The shocks of the anticlerical outbreaks in France in the early 1880s and 1900s and the subsequent movements of the general administration provoked a certain limited measure of decentralization. In the 1880s and 1890s this led to formal division of provinces which once again reduced the administrative dependence on the general administration and the process was carried further with national provinces and vice-provinces in the years between the Wars. Thus, the most ample coverage is concentrated largely on the fifty-year

period from the approbation in 1836, though for Oceania the dependence on the administration and thus the bulk and quality of documentation continues for some areas at least until the First World War and even after.

There remain other prime sources for the Society's general history and that of its development in France. The Mayet material is joined by some 600 extant letters of Jean-Claude Colin, of which the critical transcription on to computer word-processing program is well advanced and will permit extensive new indexing to replace the partial traditional card-indexes that already exist.

Other material, such as the minutes of the general council (where these exist) already have traditional indexes, while many documents have only schematic guides or none at all. The profession records have been computerized, and the 'obediences' or postings, are soon to be also. The overall cumulative result is that, despite the present gaps, it is becoming possible to do computer-based searching of considerable quantities of material by proper names, dates, and other terms chosen at random. This holds out great promise for future research, the more so as the general administration is committed to further transcription and indexing programmes.

#### Subsidiary Library

Because of the concentration on a congregational level over many years on the mission territory of Western Oceania, it is not surprising there has been gathered a considerable quantity of published material whether produced by the Society itself, by the other Marist congregations, by their individual members, or by others. This, together with a good collection of material on the historical context of our origins and early development in France, is constituted as a subsidiary library. Insofar as finances and circumstances allow, this material is backed up with current purchases that serve better to shape coherent support collections. All these publications are classified according to a modern system and their catalogue is on computer database.

Among such book materials, an almost complete collection of the publications of the mission presses in the various vicariates are of especial interest, not least to those studying the languages of the region.

#### Pages Library

The Society received in 1841 an ample private library collected by Monsieur l'abbé Etienne Pages, dean of the state theological faculty in Lyons. These books stem in large part from various private and semi-public libraries in the Lyons area before the Revolution, and treat of ecclesiastical subjects, with extensive additional sections on topics such as secular history and travel. Unfortunately, in the course of its voyagings (which paralleled those of the general archives) further sections on natural history, medicine, mathematics and physics were lost. Pages was a moral theologian with a fanatical interest in the question

of usury, and as would be expected gave considerable attention to this in his acquisition of books and pamphlets. This library (currently 12,000 vols) is enormous interest for a range of topics connected with research appropriate to the materials of the main archival deposits, and is consulted steadily in its own right for areas such as the anthropology of travel, the history of patristic studies, general history of thought, of moral theology, and by those preparing scholarly bibliographies, as well as for its bindings.

#### Special British Interest

Apart from the question of colonial history, there is a largely unexplored fund of material concerning early Marist contacts in London in the 1840s, prior to the establishment of a Marist community at Spitalfields in the East End in 1850. Additionally, of course, there is material documenting the Marist Fathers' activities in England — from the early years of this century, especially in the field of education. A stronger presence, of course, was developed in Ireland already from the 1860s, including the Catholic University School in Dublin. Note that from 1889 to 1952 there was a single Anglo-Irish province, preceded by a vice-province of England, Ireland and America, from 1876 and an Anglo-Irish vice-province from 1879. Prior to 1876 Marist houses in the British Isles were attached to the Paris Province.

#### Advice and Consultation Facilities

The Marist Fathers are fortunate in having either among the archives personnel or among collaborators within the city a considerable resource of linguists, practised historians, people who know well especially the Pacific territories mentioned above, and others with lengthy experience of the actual archival materials and their arrangement. Moreover, there is an increasing network of scholars in a range of fields who have based research at least in part on these materials, and with whom contact is maintained.

While clearly the staff cannot undertake researchers' work for them, they accord scholarly hospitality and facilitation of research a high priority. Advice is willingly given on the shaping of research projects and their feasibility from the point of view of likely yield of relevant materials. Obviously, this kind of personal service provided makes it essential for intending researchers to make clear arrangements well in advance of a proposed visit — i.e. weeks beforehand rather than minutes — and to wait for confirmation replies. In restricted circumstances it is possible to consider granting small study burses to support cost of research.

Experimental programmes of short 'research apprenticeships' for small groups of postgraduate students have been arranged with various university institutions, and are likely to be developed for the future.

It goes without saying that access to the archives is subject to the sole

restrictions that the research project is scholarly and that the researcher undertakes to respect conventional regulations.

The postal address of the archives is: Archivista, Via A. Poeri 63, 00152 ROMA, Italy, and the telephone number (Italian time 8.30 — 12.30 a.m., 4.00-7.00 p.m.) is Rome 58.99.041.

The other Marist congregations maintain their historical archives at the following addresses:

Marist Brothers: Fratelli Maristi, Piazzala M. Ghampagnat 2, 00144 Rome, Italy.

Marist Sisters: Soeurs Maristes, 'Bon Repos', 01300 Belley, France.

Marist Missionary Sisters: Suore Missionarie della Societa di Maria, Via Cassia 1243, 00189 Rome, Italy.

#### **PUBLICATIONS WITH RELEVANCE TO MARIST ARCHIVES**

##### **Publications drawing upon archival materials:**

**(Jeantin, Jean), *Le T.R.P. Colin, fondateur de la Societe de Marie*, Lyon, 1898 (8 vols in 6).**

*Series Fontes historici Societatis Mariae:*

**\*1. *Antiquiores Textus Constitutionum Societatis Mariae*, Rome 1955, 7 fascicles.**

**\*2 *Ecrita de S. Pierre Chanel, etablis, presentes, et annotes per Claude Rozier SM*, Rome 1960.**

**tr: An adapted translation of the documents themselves is in preparation.**

**3. *Origines Maristes (1 786—1836)*, J. Coste, SM & G. Lessard, SM (edd.), Rome 1960-1967, 4 vols.**

**4. *Correspondance de Mere Saint-Joseph, Fondatrice des soeurs maristes (1 786—1858)*, Rome-Anzio, 1965.**

**tr: *Correspondence of Mother Saint-Joseph, Foundress of the Marist Sisters (1786—1858)*, Rome-Anzio, 1966.**

**5. *Recueil Mere Saint-Joseph, Fondatrice des soeurs maristes (1786—1858)*, Rome-Anzio, 1966.**

**tr: *Recollections: Mother Saint Joseph, Foundress of the Marist Sisters (1786—1858)*, Rome, 1974.**

**6. *Index Mere Saint-Joseph, Fondatrice des soeurs maristes (1786—1858)* /*Index Mother Saint-Joseph, Foundress of the Marist Sisters (1786—1858)*, Rome, 1977 (bilingual edition).**

**7. *Lettres des Marcellin Jean-Baptiste Champagnat (1789—1840, Fondateur de l'Institut des Freres Maristes)*, presentes per Frere Paul Sester, FMS, Rome, 1985 (2 vols in publication).**

**In addition:**

\* *Entretiens Spirituels de Jean-Claude Colin, choisies et presente per Jean Coste SM, Rome, 1975.*

\* **tr:** *A Founder Speaks: Spiritual Talks of Jean-Claude Colin, selected and introduced by Jean Coste, SM, translated by Anthony Ward SM, Rome 1975.*

\* *G-C Mayet, Quelques Souvenirs sur Jean-Claude Colin, choisies et presente per Jean-Coste SM, Rome, 1981.*

\* **tr:** *A Founder Acts: Reminiscences of Jean-Claude Colin by Gabriel-Claude Mayet, selected and introduced by Jean Coste, SM, in an English translation by William Joseph Stuart, SM, and Anthony Ward, SM, Rome 1983.*

*Soeurs missionnaires de la Societe de Marie, Nos Pionnieres d'apres la correspondance (1836—1885, Rome 1973— (5 vols to date).*

**tr:** *Missionary Sisters of the Society of Mary: Our Pioneer Sisters from correspondence (1836—1885, Rome 1973 — (5 vols to date).*

**Some basic accessible studies:**

**Jean Coste SM, *Cours d'histoire de la Societe de Marie 1784—1854, Rome 1965.***

\* **tr:** **Jean Coste SM, *Lectures on Society of Mary History (Marist Fathers) 1784—1854, Rome 1965.***

**Marie-Cecile de Mijolla SMSM, *Les Pionnieres maristes en Oceania: aux origines des soeurs missionnaires de la Societe de Marie (1845—1931), Rome 1980.***

**tr:** **Marie-Cecile de Mijolla SMSM, *Origins in Oceania: Missionary Sisters of the Society of Mary (1845—1931), Rome 1980.***

**Note that only the works marked \* can be purchased from the Marist Fathers' general archives, the others being out of print or available from the general houses of the other Marist congregations.**

**FURTHER PUBLICATIONS RELATING TO THE OCEANIA:**

**A detailed archival guide (including bibliography) is to be published within the general series *Guides to the Sources for the History of the Nations*, in volume of the 3rd series, *North Africa, Asia and Oceania* dealing with the material conserved in Vatican City and ecclesiastical archives of Rome. Please note that a translation of this guide in English will be supplied to potential researchers on request.**

**Claude Rozier, 'Les missions d'Oceania' in *Histoire universelle des missions catholiques*, t. 3, Paris 1957, pp. 355—374.**

**Ralph M. Wiltgen SVD, *The Founding of the Roman Catholic Church in Oceania 1825—1850*, Australian National University Press, Canberra 1979.**

**Robert Streit OMI & Johannes Dindinger OMI, *Missionsliteratur von Australien und Ozeanien 1825—1950, (= Bibliotheca Missionum 21) Freiburg 1955.***

**For general bibliography on Oceania, see for example C.R.H. Taylor, *A Pacific Bibliography*, Oxford, 2nd ed. 1965; Diane Dickson & Carol Dossor, *World Catalogue of Theses on the Pacific Islands*, Canberra 1970; Sally Edridge, *Solomon Islands Bibliography to 1980*, Suva, 1985.**

The publications of the Societe des etudes historiques de la Nouvelle-Caledonie of Noumea, including its *Bulletin* and those of the Societe des Oceanistes at Paris including its *Journal*. The *Journal of Pacific History* has carried a number of rapid surveys by Hugh Laracy and K.R. Howe on the archives of the Marist Fathers in Rome and Suva, and their interest for Pacific history.

The principal Marist bibliographer of the Pacific has been a Frenchman, Fr Patrick O'Reilly, author (among a vast output) of the following:

*Imprints of the Fiji Catholic Mission including the Loreto Press (1864—1954)*, London-Suva, 1958.

(with Hugh Laracy) *Bibliographie des ouvrages publies par les missions maristes des iles Salomons*, Paris, 1972 [includes mission of N. Solomons, now diocese of Bougainville in N. Solomons Province of Papua New Guinea].

(with Joseph Allais SM) *Bibliographie des publications de la mission mariste des Samoa, 1862—1976*, Paris, 1977.

'Premiere travaux des presses de la mission catholique a Wallis, 1845—1849', *Journal de la Societe des Oceanistes*, 19 (1963) pp. 119—128.

*Bibliographie de la Nouvelle Caledonia*, Paris, 1955.

[completed by Georges Pisier, *Bibliographie methodique, analytique et critique de la Nouvelle Caledonie 1955—1982*, Noumea 1983.]

*Bibliographie des Nouvelles Hebrides*, Paris, 1958 [includes mission press material].

'Bibliographie methodique analytique et critique des iles Wallis et Futuna', *Journal de la Societe des Oceanistes*, 19 (1963) pp. 231—296.

*Hebridais, repertoire bio-bibliographique des Nouvelles Hebrides*, Paris, 1957.

*Caledoniens, repertoire bio-bibliographique de la Nouvelle Caledonie*, 2e ed. Paris, 1980.

For New Zealand, Lillian Keyes published two lives of bishops associated with the Society of Mary, *The Life and Times of Bishop Pompellier* (Christchurch, 1957); Philip Viard, *Bishop of Wellington* (Christchurch, 1968). See also Mary Catherine Goulter, *Sons of France, a Forgotten Influence on New Zealand History*, Wellington, 1957.

See also two recent works in English from Australian National University Press, Canberra: Hugh Laracy, *Marists and Melanesians, a History of Catholic Mission in the Salomon Islands*, 1976; K.R. Howe, *The Loyalty Islands. A History of Culture Contacts, 1840—1900*, 1977.

For older works, see Patrick O'Reilly, 'Bibliographie des missions maristes en Oceanie occidentale' nella *Revue d'Histoire des Missions* IX (1932), pp. 234—263.

*Note:* Fr Anthony Ward, B.D., M.A. (Cantab) has been archivist general since 1982 and will be succeeded by Fr Theo Cook in 1988.



THE CORRESPONDENCE OF GUIDO GEZELLE:  
ITS VALUE FOR THE HISTORY OF THE  
CHURCH IN ENGLAND

Piet Couttenier

1. The correspondence of the nineteenth-century Flemish poet and priest Guido Gezelle (1830—1899) comprising some ten thousand letters, mostly written to Gezelle, represents an important source for the history of Catholicism in England and, especially for the investigation of the relation between the Church in England and Flanders, or Belgium, it constitutes one of the records which cannot be overlooked.

The archives, first in private possession, then from 1930 preserved in the birth-house of Gezelle (Rolleweg, Bruges), which was adapted as a museum, and now lodged in the city library of Bruges ('Biekorf', Kuiperstraat 3), have frequently been used by several critics and researchers of the life and work of Gezelle, notably his first biographers, C. Gezelle, nephew of the poet, and A. Walgrave,<sup>1</sup> and the editorial team of the first (partly) critical and complete edition (1930—1939) of the work of Gezelle, the so-called *Jubileumuitgave*. However, only a part of the correspondence was included: the great bulk was left undiscussed. Only in the 1960s, when a new society for the investigation and promotion of the work, the *Guido Gezelle-Genootschap* (1961), was founded, was interest in the correspondence aroused. Christine D'haen drew up a first inventory.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile, at the University of Antwerp (U.F.S.I.A.), the *Centre for the Study of G. Gezelle* (founded in 1966 by R.F. Lissens, dir., J. Boets) started with a systematic processing of the archives by microfilm copies.<sup>3</sup> Starting from this base, four students at the University of Ghent (A. Deprez) worked on an edition of the letters written in English.<sup>4</sup>

2. The importance of the Gezelle correspondence for the Church in England is connected with historical and biographical coincidences. The life and work of Gezelle were closely bound with important developments of Catholicism in England. By a conjunction of circumstances you can, as it were, follow in it the ups and downs of the 'anglophilia' in Flanders between 1850 and 1900. In the meantime, the letters do provide us with different facts about the situation of Catholicism in England.

The spectacular revival of Catholicism in England (1829—1850) caused an intense interaction between England and the Continent (France, Belgium, Germany and Italy), further increased after the restoration of the hierarchy in 1850, which accelerated a revolution already started. The revival involved a great need for schools for the growing Catholic population and, hence, a promotion campaign from 1840 onwards of especially French and Flemish schools

providing a fashionable Catholic and 'French' education on the Continent. The Continent also supplied the great need of priests, seminaries, schools and convents. Flemish Orders founded convents or schools (to mention two of them where our priest Gezelle was known or visited: the Xaverians at Clapham and the Deaf and Dumb Institute of Boston Spa), and numerous (Flemish) priests left their homeland to go on mission in their second country. <sup>5</sup> Flemish priests such as Canon P. Benoit (Manchester), P. de Blon (id.) and L. Maes (Westbury) worked as intermediaries or promoting agents for new recruits. In this way an intense correspondence came about between Flanders and England. In England several important priests developed a keen interest for continental countries, e.g. G. Spencer, Cardinal N. Wiseman, Th. Grant (Southwark), W. Turner (Salford), many of them correspondents of Gezelle. On the other side, in Belgium, and especially in the diocese of Bruges, <sup>6</sup> some leading priests and dignitaries showed an anglophilia which spread very rapidly among young Catholics including Guido Gezelle, already a student in Bruges in the 1840s, Mgr Malou, Felix de Bethune (later Secretary of the Bruges diocese and intimate friend of Gezelle), D. De Haerne (founder of Boston Spa) and Mgr Faict. Also in Louvain and Brussels (abbe Donnet), English-minded priests were working for the 'Crusade' of England.

In this context of an anglophilian movement on the Continent, reaching its high point between 1840 and 1870, we have to place the activities (and the 'English' correspondence) of Gezelle as priest (ordained in 1854), as teacher and leader of the English boys at the minor seminary of Roulers (1854—1860), as director of the English College and vice-rector of the Anglo-Belgian Seminary at Bruges (1860—1865), as curate and as chaplain of the English Convent at Bruges (1865—1899). And, as a covering element and a thread running through his life, we should mention especially his overwhelming and idealistic desire to 'conquer' England (and the world) himself. This hope inspired his life (and that of many others), and likewise his work as artist, as he was deeply influenced by the English spirit, the way of thinking and literature of that time — he was acquainted with the works of Faber, Moore, Burns, Keble, Neale, Newman and others, and his own famous translation of *Hiawatha*, written by the American poet H. Longfellow.

3. The priestly career of Guido Gezelle had a rather modest character. In spite of his uncommon capacities, he never occupied an important ecclesiastical place or held a high office in the education field. In fact, all records about Gezelle are only important because of his exceptional qualities as poet. That does not alter the fact that his English correspondence contains many pithy details for anyone interested in the daily life of nineteenth-century Catholic England.

The number of letters of important people in the English ecclesiastical hierarchy is limited. Only during his time as vice-rector of the Anglo-Belgian

Seminary at Bruges did he write directly to dignitaries in England responsible for the interchange of students and priests between England and Flanders. We know that Gezelle had a close friendship and affiliation with Cardinal Wiseman. Their first contact dates back to 1858; Wiseman visited Gezelle in Bruges in 1862, 1863 and 1864. Nevertheless, only few letters of Wiseman to Gezelle are known and few of these are significant. The special interest of Gezelle's English correspondence should rather be looked for in the letters of and to Gezelle as *teacher*, and in the second place in letters of artists (such as J. Weale), working in the spirit of the Gothic revival of Christian Art, and then of English middle-class citizens, for whom Gezelle was responsible as parish-curate in Bruges (1865—1870) and later on, in Courtrai (1872-1899). In particular, the letters of students of Gezelle, old students, parents of students (mostly staying in England) and parishioners of Gezelle provide us with a direct and unsuspected lively insight in the daily life, beliefs, problems and emotions of the average English Catholic in the middle of the nineteenth century. We also get, almost accidentally, information on the progress of religion in the different dioceses, the character of small Catholic communities, relations with Anglican churches, and the differences between Catholics and Protestants, as well as information on churches, description of cults, devotions, and traditions of Catholic life. There are also letters of old students of Gezelle, continuing their studies in their homeland, telling their old teacher about educational life in England and noticing the differences in atmosphere and character of education from that in Flanders. Casually, we get facts about the organisation of such institutes as Mill Hill, St Cuthbert's College (Ushaw), Old Hall (St Edmund's, London), St John's Institute (Manchester) and Oscott (St Mary's).

4. We have to mention once more two elements of special importance in the life of Guido Gezelle: his vocation for England and his visits to his 'land of freedom'. Gezelle cherished an extreme enthusiasm for the English world. In a letter of 10 October 1861 his phlegmatic English friend and convert, Joseph Algar, old colleague of Roulers, warns Gezelle about an excessive 'anglomania'. The word is not exaggerated. Gezelle — reading English daily and speaking it very well — lived in a very special affinity with what a critic once called, his mythical homeland.

For outsiders, it sounds very strange that he could never fulfil his wish to go on the mission to England and to leave Belgium 'not however for a few weeks but for a life' (in a letter of 17 October 1862). In innumerable letters we read invitations from priests (English and Flemish), summoning Gezelle to join them in the conversion of the great country: 'Your heart is in England' (18.7. 1862) they write, again and again. In this matter, the most interesting letters come from Salford (P. Benoit) in 1855, Westminster (Crombleholme) in the same year, Southwark (Mgr Grant) in 1857 and, in a last attempt, Westminster (by Wiseman himself) in 1864. Other letters from the Oblates of St Charles,

Bayswater, London (C. Robinson), Mill Hill and from Oscott (F. Searle) contain similar invitations.

In spite of all these efforts and of his own repeated demands to his bishop (expressing his own *'besoin irresistible'* to devote his life to the mission of England, as he put it in a letter to Mgr Malou (28 September 1857), he was kept in Flanders for educational, political and ecclesiastical tasks. During his life he could make only six short visits to England (from 1861 to 1899, the last one in company of his bishop, G. Waffelaert, to Clapham and Haywards Heath). In 1863 he supplied for John Butt, vicar of Arundel and chaplain of the duchess of Norfolk at Arundel Castle. From there Gezelle wrote some interesting letters, one of them to his old student and (for the Church 'lost') friend, E. Van Oye. (See Appendix I, letter of September 1863.)

5. Undoubtedly, the most interesting period in the life of Gezelle and the most important one for his relations with England, is the time of his teaching profession, first in Roulers (1854—1860) and later on in Bruges (1860—1865). From 1848 onwards the minor seminary of Roulers opened a special course for English pupils. In 1849 a division of philosophy was started giving students the possibility of a direct preparation for an ecclesiastical career. This made Roulers popular with English Catholics, increased by the nomination in 1849 of the Oxford convert, Joseph Algar. Additionally, from 1851, English candidate-missionaries were sent to Roulers from the Salford diocese. Propaganda was stimulated by the English-minded Superior, J. Faict. In 1854 the young priest Gezelle was made responsible for the English and Irish boys at Roulers. He became their confessor, duty-master and spiritual leader. The 'English lads' — a small group with inner rules and rather eccentric, 'wild' habits for the other residents in the college — also found in Gezelle an extremely devoted and scrupulous father. The relationship between them became familiar and confidential. This was even emphasized by the special character of the educational principles demanding a personal relation between leader and pupil, and furthermore, devoutness, personality-training, strong virtue, obedience and honesty.

Special attention, too, was paid to a sort of hidden spiritual training, organized by confraternity in the spirit of F.W. Faber. The correspondence which originated around this relation was very intimate. The special interest of the letters of English boys to 'father Gezelle' (and vice versa) lies in this character and they give a surprising insight into the pious character of Catholic education in the nineteenth century, especially of English boys in continental institutes. Letters from the boys, or from thankful mothers, are always very personal, although they may contain trifles or details. Of special interest for the English situation are also letters of cherished English students leaving for England or on vacation at home telling their leader of open-hearted scenes of daily life in Catholic families. We also read letters of young convert Catholic boys returning home to a Protestant family and writing about their difficulties.

6. The correspondence of Gezelle also contains many echoes of the mission-work of England. Gezelle, inspired with a zealous proselytizing spirit (conformable to his time and entourage), stimulated the propaganda for the missions among his students at the minor seminary of Roulers. Especially England, next America and the North, were favourite regions, as they were convinced that the conversion of England was tantamount to conquering the world. With great enthusiasm, which caused even criticism with some of his superiors, Gezelle tried to convince the boys to join in the great work of the evangelization of England. He conducted correspondence with clergymen in England asking them for suitable missionaries and wrote to agents abroad in order to stimulate contacts. Reading the letters, especially to Gezelle, in the period 1855 to 1865 we get an idea of the 'mission-atmosphere' in a Belgian seminary: the propaganda, the resistance and difficulties with parents, the idealistic fervour of the young boys pondering their vocation, and finally the actions of the superiors to control fevered enthusiasm. From England we get information and news from seminaries as St Saviour's Retreat (Broadway) and St Joseph's Retreat (Highgate Hill, London), its staff and schooling programme. Gezelle corresponds, too, with different Orders asking for priests or with old students working in convents in London, Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, Dublin and many other places. Of great interest are the letters of W.J. Crombleholme, to mention one of Gezelle's old students. In 1858 working in St Anne's, Ashton-under-Lyne, he writes Gezelle in some personal letters about his 'great work ... in the Lord's vineyard', his projects, ambitions and first (small) results. We also refer to a series of letters (written in Dutch in this case) of a young recruit and protege of Gezelle, Jan Deneve (who died as a Passionist in the new convent Retreat of St Mungo's, Glasgow), arriving as novice at St Joseph's Retreat, London, and writing his leader about his confrontation with a strange, Protestant city (indifferent to *Te bon Dieu*) and witnessing his first sight of English Catholics and (for instance) their striking devotional behaviour in church. Other letters of old students and missionaries in England are interesting for their detailed picture they give of missions (see Appendix 2: letter of Alphonse Devos—who died as bishop in Mongolia, 1888—working in the mission of Melton Mowbray, 1864).

This correspondence with the missionary world of England increased still more after Gezelle's appointment as director of the English College in Bruges (1860), and as vice-rector (1861—1865) of the Anglo-Belgian Seminary in the same city. The college lasted only six months, but the experiment for an independent English minor seminary on the Continent—ending in misunderstanding and disorder—throws light on the typical character of the English educational system. The English Seminary of Bruges<sup>7</sup> (founded in 1859 by the English convert baron and maecenas, John Sutton, and till 1873 assuring missionary-schooling to English and Belgian students) had a more durable, though uncertain, existence. In this period, Gezelle, giving himself fully to his

cherished case, viz. providing valuable missionaries, writes to English clergymen involved with the matter, e.g. his predecessor Dr Leadbitter,<sup>8</sup> and to some important members of the English ecclesiastical hierarchy (Wiseman, Grant, Searle, Robinson) on matters of organisation and recruiting. Several items are under discussion: enlistment, advice from Wiseman, financial support from English dioceses, problems of discipline, order of the day, difficulties with failures, etc.

7. The 'English correspondence' of Gezelle after 1865 has a totally different character. No more responsible in educational matters nor for the mission-work in England, Gezelle's working field changes completely. Leaving aside the very last months of his life, being chaplain of the English Convent (or 'Dames Anglaises') of Bruges and returning to his former occupation of confessor, spiritual leader and religious teacher,<sup>9</sup> from 1865 to 1899, his activities shift to another world: as vicar at Bruges he becomes responsible for the parishioners of St Walburga, among whom were many Englishmen. He gets to know some refugee English families (writing to vicar Gezelle — on visits abroad — about Catholic life in England), and gets involved, too, in their spiritual, emotional and (even) financial problems. From this time also date his contacts with A. Robinson, who founded an orphanage at Bruges (St Vincent's), and with artists living in the old town. With one of them, the historian and art-lover, J. Weale, he even founded an 'English-inspired' weekly, *Rond den Heerd*, in which Gezelle wrote much about Catholic traditions in England. Out of his friendship with the family of J. Weale, there arose a fairly extensive correspondence with special accents on the cultural and spiritual background of this English art historian and of his family.<sup>10</sup> As a whole, these letters show the privileged position Gezelle was placed in to have such a deep understanding of the English Catholic world. His correspondence can amply prove this statement.

#### NOTES

1. C. Gezelle, *Guido Gezelle 1830-1899*, Amsterdam, 1918. and A. Walgrave, *Het leven van Guido Gezelle. Vlaamschen priester en dichter*, Amsterdam, 1923-24.
2. See Chr. D'haen, *Archivalia. Inventaris Gezelle-archief, Brugge*, in *Gezellekroniek* 8 (1973), pp. 204-208, and 10 (1974), pp. 145-151.
3. *Centrum voor Gezellestudie*, U.F.S.I.A., Prinsstraat 13, 2000 Antwerpen. Description of the material was made by I. Tilley and M. Welvaert.
4. *Cultureel Documentatiecentrum*, University of Ghent, Rozier 44, 9000 Ghent. An edition of some 700 letters is in course of preparation. See P. De Wilde, letters of William Leadbitter (1832-1863), curate of St Mary's Cathedral, 1861, in *Northern Catholic History*, 15 (Spring 1982), pp. 15-18.
5. See P. Allossery, *Onze West-Vlaamsche zendelingen. Proef van Eerelijst*, Brugge, 1925.
6. On this matter, original research was done by a Louvain student, Eric Derluyn (1966).
7. See L. Schepens, 'Het Engels Seminarie te Brugge', in *Handelingen Societe d'Emulation Brugge*, 1967 (104), pp. 172-197..

8. See P. De Wilde, op.cit.
9. Recent investigation on this matter was done by R. Lagrain (*Gezelles Godsdienstliessen in het Engels Ktooster*, Brugge 1983).
10. An article on this correspondence is written by Lori van Biervliet in *Biekorf*, 1980. pp. 254-278.

#### APPENDIX 1

Letter from Guido Gezelle to his old pupil E. Van Oye, from Arundel, Sussex, (September 1863).

Catholic Chapel, Arundel, Sussex.

My dearest child!

I did not mean the phrase God will prevail etc. in the sense you took it. I mean and I continue in the same persuasion that God will in his kindness prevail in bringing you to some better state than you are in now. I cannot see how you will ever be a good doctor, not on account of the state of doctor, but on account of your own disposition, see how you have succeeded till now, you are not the man for that sublime but most arduous and dangerous vocation into which people in the country you inhabit are thrown so to say without any consideration. The doctorship seems to be made for the men or boys, not the boys for the Drship. enough of that, the rest to God and the B.V.M.

I am in the very place where 'Ethel' lives, at the residence of the duchess of Norfolk, the mother of the child for whom Ethel's book was written. I have dined with Ethel, spoken to her, heard her speak. I know the houses where the real children lived that are described by Faber; I know the history of Ethel's book. O this is a place! a catholic duchess in England is something indeed! I enclose a little sprig of a Wellingtonia Gigantea, planted by Father Faber's own hand in the Park, where Ethell [sic] used to play and plays still, where I have seen her play with her sisters Philippa, Lady Mary. *Lady Ethel* they call her here. Lady Mina the eldest is now a *carmelite nun* in Paris; she has *left* the world in the most brilliant shape I ever saw it, she has left a palace, a mother like a queen, a province of a garden, the see [r. sea] at sight from her window, she has left *all for Jesus*. Dear Lady Mina as the poor call her here. Her portrait is in every poor cottage.

Do take care of your eyes and try to keep a good deal of yourself to consecrate to God when the time comes.

The Doctor was exceedingly proud when I told him of you.

The little sisters have gone to Edinburgh since you saw them: go and see them at Louvain. The little flemish sister, sr. Madeleine, I saw depart without a tear, laughing at the Dr. who was crying abundantly out of his old eyes, poor fellow. They have a Polish soldier now. The little protestant is a catholic.

I am the pastor here for another week, then I come back to Bruges for a years emprisonment to come back to England, I hope. Do not say where I am, it is not necessary.

Do you know any one who has a vocation to be a carmelite monk in England under Father Herman, the *convert Jew*, the great *pianist*. He is my great friend and he asked me for a flemish novice. How beautifully he plays the harmonium in his little [sic] improvised church! His mount Carmel, *mein[e] kleine Karmel*, wie er sagt. He speaks french, Engl., spanish, german, has a great number of splendid young fellows that come to hear him preach, play and to confess their sins to him. He will take novice[s] even without latin, he will teach them himself he says, the novice master is a lovely Spaniard, the next father is a beautiful young Maltese who hears confession in Maltese (a kind of Arabic), he will even receive one who has not the full consent of his parents. I am perfectly sure after a year you would be happy here and a thousand times happier when a priest, playing singing preaching etc. under such a man as Herman for the glory of God and the reconversion of England.

Adress of Father Herman

Kensington Square, London

God bless you pray for me

Guido Gezelle

(Edited in *Jubileumuitgave van Guido Gezelle's Volledige Werken. 17. Brieven I, 1939, pp. 138-190.*) .

## APPENDIX 2

Letter from Alphonse Devos to Gezelle, from his mission in Melton Mowbray, England, March (?) 1864.

Dear Mr Gezelle,

I experienced what you told me one day that when we are in England and have a mission to ourselves we have hardly any time to think of Belgium. I have had plenty of business these last seven or eight weeks in my dear poor little mission of Melton Mowbray. The congregation is small and poor, but the town is a pretty fine old catholic place, anciently called Medeltune, Meltone, and afterwards Melton Mowbray from a baron who during the reign of Henry the first assumed the name of Mowbray. The country is hilly and the town is pleasantly seated in an open vale 15 miles N.E. of Leicester and more than hundred miles N.N.W. of London. A railway joins the Midland Railway at Syston junction, and the Great Northern at Peterborough by Stamford.

In olden times Melton Mowbray was provided with all kinds of religious institutions of which we meet almost at every step ancient-catholic remainings. The protestant church formerly dedicated to the Bl. Virgin I think, at least it was called St. Mary, is one of the largest and handsomest in the Country of Leicester. The porch at the West end has a fine doorway with ogic [read-, ogival] arch, two niches — empty niches — on each side, two ornamented windows and four singular openings in the wall rather low and which had gratings and shutters;



they have recently been glazed. It appears they were confessional windows for the lepers who passed through the town on their way to Burton Lazars, a hospital founded in 1135 by Roger de Mowbray under the care of Augustinians and which had a very celebrated well for the cure of diseased.

The other places of worship are new buildings, among others, the chapel of the independants, the chapel of the Wesleyan Methodists, — of the primitive methodists, — of the Calvinistic Baptists and perhaps some others which I do not know. There is none like Our Catholic chapel of St. John the Baptist. It was built, from a design by Pugin, by a rich convert of Eastwill, Mr Exton — (Eastwill is a place about 7 miles from Melton). Unfortunately the Congregation is small and poor and they have had these last seven years rather an old priest who did not take great care of things and who moreover has not left his bed for the last two years. So that the chapel and sacristy was a complete ruin(e) with damp, dust and mould. The house was in no better state. The old man had no house-keeper: an old woman came every day to prepare his meals and make his bed, and when I came first to Melton the house was in such a destitute state that I had no bed to sleep on. A kind of sack filled with something like wool did for the purpose. There was plenty of broken jugs, broken basins, broken plates etc. It was rather amusing for the first start. Another job was to find out the Catholics: they are not many, but they are so scattered about in the country and neighbouring villages that it takes you sometimes half a day to call on one family; and then it is very fortunate if you find them at home. Some time ago I walked seven miles up the hills and down the vales, through rather unpleasant weather, for I was caught by hail and rain on the way, and when I came to the house the children were at school and father and mother were out at work. They were the only Catholics of the village. There are many villages about Melton without any Catholics: I could not tell how many, because I do not know the limits of my parish; in fact there are no limits I think. On one side I have a neighbour not far off: Eastwill 7 miles and Ratcliffcollege 10 miles [;] but on the other sides Nottingham 20 miles and Stamford 24 I believe. I have made a list of the Catholics I found out: I expect more than 60 for their Easterduties: there are many I cannot rely on; however there are several who seem well disposed, only they want rousing. How different those people are to what we are used to in Belgium. I called on several whom I know not attending the church for 12 or 15 years; they were most kind, and tell you strait-of [read: straight-off]: I have been a wicked man; — I have not been as I should; — I have neglected my duties these last 10 years etc. — Some of my Irish are very good particularly during the winter when they have no money. One of them said some time ago: I will tell you, Your Reverence, Irishmen are best when they are poor. And the reason he gave was that as soon as they had some money, it was used for drinking. There are a good many converts among our Catholics; but they were not made lately: Melton Mowbray is known for its bigotry and when the Catholic chapel was first built the priest was often insulted and laughed at in the street; I have met nothing as yet. Several protestants attend our chapel regularly: I hope they will come over some day. I recommend especially one to your prayers: she is an oldish lady, pretty well of, living at 3 miles from Melton. I went several times to give her instruction; she has no objection against the Cath[olic] relig[i]on

she says, and still she cannot determine herself to come over: may Alm[ighty] God's grace help her!

I recommend also several others who were once members of the Church and who left it, most of them in consequence of mixt marriages, which are a pest for a congregation. When we have been sometime in England we can see how great the effects are, and how abundant the grace of the sacr[amen]t of Matrimony.

Since I am here I have had all kind of business in repairing the chapel and the house: carpenter, painter etc. The vestments were in a dreadful state, stained and torn and mouldy: a good cath[olic] woman was mending them and was whole week at it. There is no black vestment: would you be so kind as to order one at Grosse's: I cannot afford anything expensif [sic], I want many things and can but expect little from my poor Catholics. I would be exceedingly obliged to you if you could find some good person who can do something towards it. I know you have many calls of this kind, but that only proves that they know your charity.

Order also a set of Altarcards, if you please. You might send these things by De Kiere Emile; this good gentleman promised to come and see me on his way to the North: I should say his time will be soon up. I will be exceedingly pleased if he comes.

I would have liked to write some time ago but I had no time. I have had so much work in the church, and much running about to make them come to their duties and besides my sermons require a pretty long preparation. They must not be grand but I have two every Sunday and this week they expect a sermon almost every day. I try to get out as well as I can: I wish I had studied more English.

I hope the old friends are getting on very well: the *Theological Club* MM Bonte, Pycke and Smith. I have no time left to write to them now: this letter I have begun four days ago.

Mr. Moore is at Oscott College.

How is Mr. Martens getting on?

Would you be so kind as to ask Molhant about the medale and scapulaire he promised me. — And send me the little books of the Sacre Coeur, if they were sent to the college.

My kind regards to the Rector and friends.

Sincerely yours in the Sacred Hearts  
of Jesus and Mary  
Alph. Devos.

Pray for me dear Mr. Gezelle and for my mission.

Edited in *Jubileumuitgave van Guido Gezelle's Volledige werken*. 18. Brievenll, 1939, pp. 127-129.

## THE ARCHIVES OF THE DIOCESE OF CORK AND ROSS, IRELAND

Sister M. Angela Bolster

In 1964, by a strange concatenation of events, I became official historian of the Diocese of Cork and Ross. In response to my immediate request for access to the diocesan archives, Bishop Cornelius Lucey (1954—1980) explained:

**We have no archives; this is because we had no bishop's residence in the diocese until my predecessor [Dr Daniel Cohalan, 1916—1954] built this house [now the Diocesan Office] in 1930. Prior to that time, the bishops of Cork lived in various places. When they died, their papers were either destroyed or became family possessions . . .'**

Twenty years and two published volumes of diocesan history later, Bishop Michael Murphy asked me 'to establish our diocesan archives. I'll show you what we have.' What we had was similar to, if not worse than, the descriptions of archival origins which have appeared in this journal since its inception: a big room into which one had literally to phase oneself and there be confronted with a phantasmagoria of junk comprising crazy shelving, dirty envelopes, bulging cartons, books which disintegrated upon touch, a plethora of now unidentifiable photographs and an angry colony of spiders, moths *et al.*, which disputed the termination of an uninterrupted reign of more than half a century in 'our diocesan archives'. Still, like all junk, this unlikely heap had its own special nuggets; and since it is my good fortune — as Vice-Postulator for the Cause for Beatification of Catherine McAuley — to visit Rome quite frequently, my pursuit of research there for diocesan history has enabled me to fill in many gaps in our archives with microfilmed material from Propaganda Fide.

### PURPOSE-BUILT ARCHIVE

While I knuckled into the task of clearing the big room, Bishop Murphy had the basement of the Diocesan Office transformed into a modern purpose-built archive area which meets all the archival demands of the experts in that it is fireproof, damp-proof, rust-proof, etc. It is fitted with dehumidifiers and temperature-control gauges; and in addition to the usual manual-controlled type of fire-extinguisher, it has suspension-extinguishers on the ceilings, each fitted with a piston which goes into action once the temperature gets too high. The main archive room is fitted with mobile shelving which affords about forty thousand cubic feet of space which would be impossible with wall shelving. In this room also we have a large ten-drawer map and plan chest and we are on the look out for a display cabinet. The second archive area, fitted with wall shelving constitutes the Reading Room; and we have also an area designated 'Secret Archive'. To my knowledge, ours is the first purpose-built archive in Ireland,

and I'm happy to report that our architect has got other contracts because of it. I might also add that while this archive was a-building, I was beavering away upstairs and, knowing little of possible danger, I did not take necessary precautions, with the result that I contracted a nasal fungus which has kept me under medical supervision since October 1986 and which eventually entailed surgery. So, archivists beware!

### THE ARCHIVES

The main source material in our archives falls into the following categories, of which those marked with an asterisk will be given fuller attention subsequently in this article: Roman documents\*, episcopal correspondence\*, Synodal Statutes and *Relationes Status*\*, the Diocesan Chapter\*, Parish Returns\*, diocesan boundary matters, Ordination Lists, Dimissorial Letters, notices of permissions granted to parish priests to administer Confirmation, diocesan appointments and necrologists; Pastorals\*, Parish Registers\*, old account and rent books. We have files on every religious order/congregation in the diocese and copies of Rules and Constitutions for all except two. There are files on education at all levels (not yet fully sorted or arranged); similarly with legal and financial files and those coming under the heading of 'Secret Archive'. Then there are files on hierarchy meetings and their associated commissions; likewise our own diocesan commissions\*. We have maps, plans, photographs, estimates and costings of new churches which continue to be a pastoral priority for developing areas in the outer city. Artifacts, episcopal memorabilia and relics form part of our 'store'; as do newspaper cuttings and what I like to term miscellanea\*. Finally, and very importantly, we have a constantly growing section on our Diocesan Mission in Peru which was initiated by Bishop Cornelius Lucey in 1964 and of which our present bishop, Dr Michael Murphy, was first superior. It was he who directed the mission towards the particular pastoral pattern which has developed. He was a builder of churches, schools and clinics and his experience in Peru of the importance of parish Sisters has translated itself into many new pastoral ventures in his diocese of Cork and Ross.

#### *Roman Documents*

These include decrees and rescripts from the Holy See on such matters as episcopal and coadjutorial appointments; indulgences and jubilee proclamations; seminaries, religious houses — including important documentation on the approval of the Rule of the Presentation Sisters; secularizations and dispensations; the Peru Mission since its inception and — in particular for my own congregation — the acceptance of Peruvian subjects, the establishment of a Novitiate in Trujillo and, more recently, a House of Formation in Lima. This file also includes correspondence from the Apostolic Nuncio and an as yet incomplete dossier of Roman replies and remarks on the *Relationes Status* of the various bishops.

### *Episcopal Correspondence*

BISHOP JOHN BUTLER, 1763-1786. Insofar as actual letters (as against microfilms) are concerned, this correspondence begins with Bishop Butler for whom we have just two letters, each a letter of appointment. That dated 1775 is interesting in that it measures 18½" x 12" and contains three letters in one: a) an appeal from parishioners of St Finbarr's for the appointment of Rev. E. Synan as their pastor; b) Butler's reply giving as his only objection to this appointment (a speech defect Fr Synan retained after an illness he contracted in pursuit of his pastoral ministry — however the bishop would willingly appoint a 'coadjutor' who would preach instead of Fr Synan, *if the parishioners would subsidise this arrangement*); c) the affirmative response of the parishioners. John Butler ruled as bishop for twenty-three years: a time when Catholics were gradually emerging into public affairs. Within three years of his accession he had three chapels built, that of St Finbarr's (1766) being the first post-penal church to be constructed in the diocese. Bishop Butler was involved in most of the matters then pertaining to Church and State; he took the Oath of Allegiance in Cork in 1775, supported the Catholic Committee, but he was pro-British in his affiliations and was less than supportive of Nano Nagle whom he felt should seek permission from the Protestant Bishop for the introduction of the Ursulines into Cork! In January 1786 Butler inherited the title of Baron of Dunboyne, in default of male heir. His subsequent resignation and apostacy has obliterated much of the actual good he did during his 23-year episcopate. He was reconciled to the Church before he died and the Dunboyne Institute in Maynooth is a lasting monument to his beneficence to continuing generations of students.

FRANCIS MOYLAN, 1787—1815. Translated to Cork from Kerry on 3 June 1787, following the defection of Butler, Moylan's education and his pastoral and episcopal career involved him in the great historical occurrences and controversies of the period 1775 to 1815. He had been appointed Bishop of Ardfer-Aghadoe (Kerry) on 10 April 1775. His correspondence (on microfilm and already edited)<sup>2</sup> and letters in the diocesan archives (not hitherto published) range over subjects like Defenderism and the Riot Acts, the proceedings of the Catholic Committee, the Volunteers, the Catholic Relief Bills and Orde's Proposals; the establishment of Maynooth (1795) and the student riots there. Moylan, a supporter of the *status quo*, had little sympathy with the United Irishmen and for a while he supported Pitt on the Legislative Union. However, Vetoism brought out the bishop's latent nationalism and in his closing years Vetoism and Catholic Emancipation loom large in his correspondence. He was principal spokesperson for the hierarchy in this particular area.

Moylan's correspondence also reveals more than a modicum of 'ecclesiastical politics' and the extent to which Church affairs were referred to certain influential laymen; in particular Viscount Kenmare. By 1810 Moylan was 'the

Grand Old Man' of Irish politico-ecclesiastical diplomacy; he was the first Bishop of Cork to envision a seminary for the diocese and perhaps his greatest achievement in church building was St Mary's Cathedral which was dedicated on 22 August 1808 and which was the venue on 20 May 1814 for a vociferous anti-Veto meeting following the Quarantotti Rescript approving such a measure. In 1812 he had purchased a site near the Cathedral where he opened St Mary's College in the following year: thus the beginnings of Farranferris Seminary, 1887, which celebrated its centenary last year. As a young curate in St Mary's, Moyland befriended and encouraged Nano Nagle in her work and, as bishop, he brought the Christian Brothers to Cork in 1813, following negotiations with Edmund Ignatius Rice. Our collection of letters gives little airing to these momentous events. Similar lacunae occur in the correspondence of Bishops Murphy, O'Callaghan and Lucey.

JOHN MURPHY, 1815-1847. In the main, Bishop Murphy's letters cover the same ground as those of Dr Moylan on the Veto, in the context of which Dr Murphy with Archbishop Daniel Murray of Dublin were envoys of the Irish Hierarchy in its dealings with Rome. Dr Murphy was also agent for the hierarchy in investigating Irish Burses and the administration of ecclesiastical property in France, as attested to by a 25-page unsigned document in our archives. The National Education System (1831) occupies much of the Murphy correspondence; as do the foreign missions and the Great Famine. We have a record in his own handwriting of all marriages performed by him during the Jubilee Year (1842) in Cork's main churches: Cathedral, St Finbarr's, St Patrick's and SS Peter and Paul's. Also, in his handwriting, we have an incomplete memorandum on the procedure to be followed in episcopal elections.

Following his own election as bishop, he studied Irish in order to be more pastorally effective, and like his immediate predecessors, he was an enthusiastic builder of churches — fifteen in all. When recommending ways and means of raising funds among the farming community for rural churches, he signed himself 'your attached Bishop' in his letters *Ad Clerum*. An Essay on Ecclesiastical Finance, published in 1834 by a former parish priest of the diocese evoked a heated response from the Irish bishops, who wrote it off as 'stuffed with abominable propositions . . . a farrago of impudent scurrility and wretched sophistry'. Bishop Murphy's response was less heated but contained severe criticism of his renegade cleric. Among the most interesting letters from the bishop is his excommunication 'with bell, book and candle' of those who made a mockery of the annual pilgrimage to Gougane Barra <sup>3</sup> by drunken orgies and by bringing along sick cattle to be 'dipped' in the Holy Well there for remedial purposes!

Apart from conventual sources, little correspondence remains of Bishop Murphy's success in bringing the Sisters of Charity to Cork on 13 November 1836 and the Sisters of Mercy on 6 July 1837. One of the greatest bibliophiles of his time, he was known as 'the bishop who liked books and nuns'! For

all that, his treatment of the Regular clergy (microfilm) was harsh; in fact, most religious communities found him a hard nut to crack. A member of the Murphy brewery family, he had less than disdain for the total abstinence crusade launched with tremendous success in the diocese by Father Theobald Matthew! All such to the contrary, Bishop Murphy has a place in history as a great patron of learning; he encouraged local Schools of Gaelic Poetry and our archives contain some excellently scripted MSS which were executed in response to his expressed wish to preserve such material for posterity.

**WILLIAM DELANY, 1847—1886.** This is our most comprehensive episcopal file to date, containing 151 letters of general correspondence, 15 on the establishment of the Diocesan Chapter *de novo* and 15 pastorals. Topics dealt with in the Delany correspondence are Famine relief, education at all levels: Primary (1831), Intermediate (1878), the Queen's ('Godless') Colleges (opened, 1845), endowed schools, Catholic Industrial Schools and Model Schools which he thoroughly abhorred. The evils of the Poor Law System and of Landlordism are also here; likewise the Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland, the tithe question and tenant right.

There are very many letters concerning boundary matters relating to the diocese of Ross: a very disputatious topic at synodal meetings of the Province of Cashel.<sup>4</sup> In fact, the Ross question has festered since as far back as the Synod of Rathbreasail in 1111! Bishop Delany had strong opinions on clerical non-involvement in politics, on the opening of shops on holydays of obligation and he was a vigorous proponent for the appointment of chaplains to the Irish Catholic Regiments in the Crimean War; the ratio for Protestant as against Catholic chaplains to the forces left much to be desired. Sisters of Mercy from his diocese were an important feature of the military nursing done in the hospitals of Scutari and, more particularly, of Balaclava.

Bishop Delany's pastorals deal with revolutions in Europe (1848), and the fate of the Holy Father; concern for the poor; exhortation to prayers and the Eucharist, education and subscriptions for the Diocesan Seminary; Fenianism, concerning which he mentioned in 1867 that 'all is reasonably quiet here — allowing for some Fenian madness'.

Five new communities of Sisters came into the diocese during the Delany episcopate; as did the Society of African Missions in 1878. Of the Sisters, one was a community of Discalced Carmelites under Mother Gabriella de Mousset (1873) who claimed to have been professed by Francois of Sussex in the Basilica of Loreto and who for a decade caused more disruption than any bishop of Cork has had to suffer. The convent was closed by order of the bishop in 1884. My 'discovery' of this Carmelite foundation came from some very old receipts dated 1875 and made out to the foundress. These aroused my curiosity and subsequent research revealed a most intriguing story . . .

THOMAS ALPHONSUS O'CALLAGHAN OP, 1886-1916. There is little variety in Bishop O'Callaghan's extant letters, some of which carry references to current politics, to the Plan of Campaign, Anti-Parnellism and the Great War, regarding which his Lenten Pastoral of 1915 quotes Pope Benedict XV as describing it as 'the darkest and saddest hour in all human history'. The remainder of the correspondence deals with parish debts and glebe loans and a reminder that 'Church collections are allowed only under specific conditions'. There is a fairly comprehensive folder of letters indicating unforeseen problems for both diocese and African Mission Father through the actions of Father Joseph Zimmerman as executor of the will of a Cork diocesan priest. There were other problems for the bishop in the chaplaincy dispute between the Daughters of Charity in Dunmanway and the local parish priest.

A letter from Rome on 22 January 1911 acknowledged O'Callaghan's *Relatio*, praised his administration of the diocese and directed that the *Acta* of his Visitation Returns be lodged in the Archives. They are not extant, but we do possess a valuable set of parish returns from the 1890s. I continue to hope that *some* day, *somewhere* more of his correspondence will come to light. He was the first of the more modern bishops to set his sights on the north side of the city for a permanent episcopal residence and he lived for a time in a portion of Farranferris Seminary still referred to as 'the Palace'. It was during his episcopate that the Little Sisters of the Assumption, the Bon Secour Sisters and the Poor Clare Colettines came to Cork.

DANIEL COHALAN (1916-1952), CORNELIUS LUCEY (1952-1980). I have not yet compiled a full inventory of this correspondence, but that of the former is more comprehensive and very much politically orientated, especially for the first fifteen years of the Cohalan episcopate. Bishop Cohalan had a habit of writing replies on the back of letters received; his response was then issued by his secretary who invariably began by saying, 'The Bishop wishes me to say . . .'

Exclusive of official correspondence which was typed in duplicate, the bulk of Dr Lucey's extant letters are handwritten; those written to his priests in Peru are very special indeed. Most of his incoming mail was carefully replaced in the delivery envelopes, on many of which one finds such cryptic statements as: 'Answered; said *Yes* . . . Answered; said *NO*.' Our archives contain a number of valuable addresses delivered by Dr Lucey during the various sessions of Vatican Council II, when he was appointed spokesperson for the hierarchy: *Loquar pro Episcopis Hiberniae*. We are fortunate in having the handwritten originals — with glosses — as well as the typed versions of these documents. We have, in addition, handwritten statements on sociological topics dating from his years as professor in Maynooth and covering also the years of his tenure as Bishop of Cork.



### *Relationes Status and Synodal Statutes*

Our earliest *Relatio Status* is dated 1778 and belongs to the episcopate of Bishop Butler; it is a short but very important document and is on microfilm. To Dr Butler also are accredited the first Synodal Statutes of the diocese which he issued in 1768; these were subsequently enlarged upon and printed by Bishop Moylan in 1814. So far, I have come upon only two of Moylan's *Relationes*. The same is true for Bishop Murphy, whose Synodal Statutes more than compensate for the absence of *Relationes*. We have both *Relationes* and Statutes from the episcopate of Bishop Delany; and for both of these bishops we have an important collection of Deanery Conferences. Bishop O'Callaghan's printed Statutes of 1896 replaced the earlier Butler/Moylan ones, while Bishops Cohalan and Lucey added their own to this collection. Our present bishop, Dr Michael Murphy, prefers to issue 'Directives' rather than Statutes. In addition to the foregoing, we have several volumes of Maynooth Statutes; these constitute a valuable section in our archives.

### *Pastorals*

Our collection of pastorals dates from Bishop Moylan's episcopate (1787—1815). Unless I discover Vatican equivalents of others, Moylan's collection is confined temporarily to three. We have 19 from the episcopate of Bishop Delany and 10 from that of Bishop O'Callaghan; and there are pastorals — Lenten and otherwise — for every year of Bishop Cohalan's episcopate except for the year in which he died (1952). We have handwritten originals and typed equivalents of virtually all of Bishop Cohalan's published pastorals. Comparatively few of Dr Lucey's originals have been preserved. Fortunately, we have an almost complete set of his Lenten Pastorals which were published each year in the Diocesan Magazine, *The Fold*, which he established in 1954. The pastorals and statements of Bishop Michael Murphy form an important growing archive in our overall collection.

### *Parish Registers*

The keeping of parish registers was begun by Bishop Richard Walsh (1748—1763) and the first entry in both marriage and baptismal registers for St Mary's is 10 July 1748. These early records of the older Cork churches are apparently transcriptions from private notebooks kept by vicars, or, as we call them today, curates. Such a system can give but indifferent returns. Hence, baptisms performed by Father Daniel Hickey from 1 June to 12 July 1762 are missing 'because I lost my notebook'. In the same way, baptisms of Father Michael Falvey are missing from August to December 1763, 'as my Registry [sfc] was taken out of my pocket in the Cornmarket'. From the early registers of St Mary's it emerges that baptisms were mostly administered in private houses, though references also occur to the Bishop's House as location. In these penal times, location depended on the selection of areas of greatest safety.

After 1750 baptisms were recorded as having been performed *in capella* or *in capella parochiali*; and sponsors were recorded as *Susceptores de sacre fonte*, *Sponsores* or *Patrini*. Taking St Mary's as exemplifying all parishes, the early registers are an important and interesting extant index of old Cork families and a guide to place-names, many of which are now extinct.

In all, we have 66 parishes in Cork and 11 in Ross; the Cork total includes many new parishes created by Bishop Lucey and an ongoing number for the present episcopate. For these new parishes the task of computerization of the registers is virtually negligible. The older parishes have been entrusted to a Co-Operative Society in Bandon who have government funding as a Youth Employment Agency (however long that funding will last!), and while they produce very good results, the pace of delivery is disappointing. Naturally, in view of the many quests for genealogical information that come our way, we are agitating for a more regular output.

### ***Parish Returns***

Under this heading come responses from all parish priests to annual questionnaires from the bishops, together with Visitation Returns, which together constitute an important source of religious, educational, social and statistical history for the years returned. Some few of these returns date back to Bishop Delany's time (1847—86); there are some special ones for the years 1889 to 1891, when Dr Thomas A. O'Callaghan was bishop. I term them 'special' because they are more comprehensive than those issued by his predecessor and they give otherwise unavailable data as to when churches were opened, consecrated, etc., and the dates on which early titulars were assigned to these older churches. The Parish Return format was less comprehensive under Bishops Cohalan and Lucey (1916—1980), but these too had — and have — their own importance. Three years ago Bishop Michael Murphy introduced what is by far the most comprehensive questionnaire to date; fortunately this won't become archival for some time to come.

### ***Libri Ordinandorum***

Our existing files for these begin at 1833 and generally speaking, there is a *curriculum vitae* for every priest ordained. Some entries are more comprehensive than others and I am endeavouring to fill gaps with information gleaned from Catholic registers and directories; while for the pre-1833 period, such parish registers as I have had occasion to consult, have enabled me to compile a new typed file in which I hope to have, at least, the names of parish priests from as far back as possible.

Under Bishop O'Callaghan, diocesan changes (clerical appointments) were first entered systematically into a special register. These entries begin in 1887 and continue, virtually unbroken, to the present time; the only difference being that successive bishops had their own 'whims' where this exercise was

concerned. Thus we have different registers and even loose pages, and sometimes the local newspaper is our only source of catching up with appointments! Furthermore — and unaccountably — an unusual system obtained in this diocese, in that on the death of a priest, *a line was drawn through his name and his various appointments*. Thus, the task of compiling a typed necrology is a MUST, which I tackle from time to time and which is both slow and frustrating. At least I have insisted that the old system be discontinued.

To this section also belong: Dimissorial Letters, notices of faculties given to parish priests to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation and of Regulars being appointed to parish or to pastoral commissions within the diocese. Here, too, is an old Fraternity Fund file, a file on Foundation Masses and a collection of Death Certificates.

*Hierarchical and Diocesan Commissions, Appointments, etc.*

These are fairly 'young' files but their scope is an indication of things to come for future archivists. In this respect there is one particular aspect of our own diocesan administration which will constitute an ongoing source of episcopal pronouncements. This is Bishop Murphy's appointment (September 1987) of a priest to work full-time as Director of Communications. The appointment is the first of its kind at diocesan level in this country.

*Miscellanea*

This most interesting section contains, *inter alia*:

- a) A set of *Notebooks* compiled by a young clerical student during his years in Maynooth. Michael A. Murphy's aim was to write a diocesan history but he died within a few years of his ordination. Some of his notebooks contain biographical data on some parish priests; also some humorous verses culled from —of all places — the Diocesan Registers!
- b) The *Account and Rent-Books* already mentioned which complement the Parish Registers in their value as a street directory of places that have since been re-named or bulldozed out of existence in the name of progress.
- c) *Old Receipts*, of which hundreds littered the place when I began sorting; and having learned from experts that ten years is the limit beyond which it is unnecessary to keep such items, I proceeded on an all-out policy of destruction. I am now convinced that some benevolent providence urged me to look more benignly on the older receipts, and in so doing I unravelled two important items of history. The first discovery referred to the Carmelite foundation of 1873 already noted. Prior to my discovery, information on the Cork Carmelites was confined to a few references in copies of the old *Catholic Registry* (forerunner to the present *Catholic Directory*), but local historians had never succeeded in getting beyond that point. Furthermore, no Carmelite community in this country or in England had any account of 'Cork Carmelites' in their annals.

A second discovery through old receipts had direct implications on ownership of the convent attached to the South Infirmary of this city, where our Sisters were first admitted as visitors c. 1839/40 before the death of Catherine McAuley. From 'visitors' they eventually became members of the nursing staff and a convent built for them in 1903 was believed to have been the gift of Countess Alice Murphy who was benefactress to many other religious congregations in the city. In the absence of records — as against oral tradition — our Superior General asked me if the Diocesan Archives contained any deed which might throw light on the subject for her. The 'light' was as follows: For the years 1903 to 1905 I found receipts from builders acknowledging money received from Bishop Thomas A. O'Callaghan 'for building the Convent of the Sisters at the South Infirmary'. On each receipt the bishop had written the name of the bequest from which he had taken this money. A further search showed that by this bequest the bishop was to receive annually the sum of £100 '*for whatever charity he considers most deserving*'. Finally, I found the will of Countess Murphy. She had the *chapel* built for the South Infirmary and she arranged also for the chaplain's salary, but there was no mention of the convent. Bishop Murphy was more than happy to discover that he had hitherto unknown diocesan claims; his advice was that I should go ahead and delve for other possibilities! So, old receipts can be quite valuable.

- d) A very large strongly-bound volume entitled *Summary of Documents* which is a catalogue of Roman and P.R.O. references to Ireland for the years 1066-1800.
- e) A typescript *Annals of the Diocese*, the work of Dean Dominick Murphy, Vicar-General of the Diocese (1847—53). This is more a minute book than a full historical account, but it contains much data not otherwise available and it complements the deanery conferences held during his years of writing.
- f) An *Index of Townlands*. This handwritten ledger-style book contains the names of *every* townland in *every* parish of *every* Irish diocese. The writer remains anonymous. Complementary to this is an unbound dossier, pencil-written, giving the etymological derivations of the parish townlands in our own diocese, and which is as fascinating as it is historically valuable.

This is the extent to which I have arranged some of the material in our archives; there are still many cartons and tin trunks to be attended to. However, a beginning has been made and what has been sorted augurs well for what is yet to come. So far, no material has come in from any of our parishes, but this is not from any lack of goodwill or interest and I know that when I address the various deanery conferences any material available will be generously forthcoming.

Enquiries concerning the archives may be sent to the Diocesan Archivist, Diocesan Office, Bishop's House, Redemption Road, Cork.

#### NOTES

1. Bolster, Evelyn, *A History of the Diocese of Cork*, from the Earliest Times to the Reformation. Irish University Press, Shannon, 1972; *A History of the Diocese of Cork: from the Reformation to the Penal Era*. Tower Books, Cork, 1982.
2. Bolster, Evelyn, 'The Moylan Correspondence in Bishop's House, Killarney', *Collectanea Hibernica*. No.2, 14, 15, 1971/1972.
3. *Gougane Barra*. near the headwaters of the river Lee, was a hermitage used by Saint Finbarr, patron of the Diocese of Cork, prior to his being told by an angel to follow the course of the river 'to the place of many waters' where eventually the city of Cork developed.
4. The Cashel Province includes the following dioceses: Cashel/Emly, Limerick, Kerry, Cork/Ross, Waterford/Lismore and Cloyne.

#### BOOK REVIEW

*Archivo Historico Diocesano De Albacete: Inventario y Microfilm.*

*Volumen 1. Seccion Parroquias, 1490—1900.* Antonio Diaz Garcia, 1985.

The Diocese of Albacete (Spain) was established in 1950, when an Archive was set up to house documents collected by the Bishop at his visitations. In 1975, a new archivist was appointed to collect parish material earlier than the present century, to make an inventory, and to arrange and microfilm the documents. This volume of 533 pages lists in great detail some 3,300 individual items, mostly books, but some bundles also, is the fruit of ten years of his devoted work.

The inventory is arranged in three sections: Geographical, pp.1—145; Chronological, pp.147—384; and by Topics, pp.385—533. Each parish collection is described under four headings: sacramental records; fabric, juridical and pastoral; finance; and confraternities, sodalities, feasts, etc. Each parish has a three-letter code and each document is individually numbered under this code and is also given a separate number in the diocesan inventory.

The volume, which thus describes and identifies each parish document in the diocesan archive, is an impressive work. While its value as a working tool is obviously restricted to Albacete Diocese, it may well serve as a model for other diocesan archivists to emulate, and perhaps to copy.

A copy of the book is held by the Editor who will be pleased to send it on loan to any diocesan archivist interested.

THE SHARPE PAPERS : MORE HALL,  
PRINKNASH ABBEY, AND FATHER SHARPE

Donald A. Withey

On the edge of the Cotswolds, at Cashes Green, Randwick, to the north-west of Stroud, is More Hall Convent, a house of hospitality for the frail and elderly. Today the visitor sees a bright modern home, with old and new buildings tastefully blended, and set in attractive grounds. Little is known of the origins of More Hall, except that there was a house there in 1449. This house was replaced or reconstructed in 1582, the date being recorded on the headstone of a side window.

More Hall is a fine Tudor house built of Cotswold stone. Parts are of two storeys, others of three, in each case with gabled attics. There are stone mullioned windows with drip-moulds, and the diagonal chimney-stacks are arranged in clusters with their angles turned towards each other. During the nineteenth century the building became very dilapidated and neglected. From at least 1839 it was divided into two residences which were let, surprisingly, to farm labourers and their families. <sup>1</sup>

From October 1901 to April 1905, More Hall was the location of St Mark's Home for Boys. This Home had been founded by the Rev. the Hon. James Adderley, well known as a preacher and as an advocate of socialism and social reform. During his time as priest-in-charge of Berkeley Chapel, a stronghold of Anglo-Catholicism, he became a good friend of a small community founded by Aelred Carlyle in 1896. The two brothers used to attend Berkeley Chapel for Sung Mass on Sundays during the brief period in 1898 when they resided in the Cowley Fathers' house in Great Titchfield Street. Adderley was vicar of St Mark's Church, Marylebone, from 1901 to 1904, and he presumably named the Home after his church. St Mark's Home was in the charge of a Miss Wright. Four years later, 'owing to difficulties connected with house tenure',<sup>2</sup> it was decided to move the Home to Small Heath, Birmingham. Adderley had himself moved to Birmingham the previous year, and was vicar of Saltley from 1904 to 1911. In April 1905 Miss Wright took twelve boys from More Hall to an address in St Oswald's Road, Small Heath.

Here they occupied a house next to a similar institution, St Benet's Home for Boys. The latter had been founded by Bro. Austin Green and Bro. Bede Vetch who were monks of Painsthorpe Abbey in Yorkshire. This was the Anglican Benedictine community, founded by Benjamin Fearnley Carlyle in a house on the Isle of Dogs in 1896, which had served the Sung Mass at Berkeley Chapel. After a number of moves, the community settled at Painsthorpe Hall in 1902. By 1904 the monks were beginning to outgrow their accommodation, and

it was decided to make a second foundation and to devote the new foundation to active work, namely a home for boys in need of care. Abbot Carlyle and his companions had carried out a similar apostolate from their house on the Isle of Dogs during the years 1896 to 1898. With the help of the Rev. C.N. Long, vicar of St Aidan's Church, Small Heath, the use of a house in Whitmore Road was obtained, and here St Benet's Boys' Home was founded on 20 September 1904. In 1905 the Home was moved to a more suitable house in St Oswald's Road. The association of the Home with Painsthorpe was short-lived. The Home passed into lay control in 1905, Bro. Austin having relinquished his monastic status (he died of pneumonia at the age of twenty-eight on 11 February 1905) and Bro. Bede having left the community. The two houses were then merged under Miss Wright with the title of St Mark's and St Benet's Home for Boys.<sup>3</sup> The subsequent history of the Painsthorpe Benedictine monks is of some interest. They were settled on the island of Caldey, near Tenby, in 1906. In 1913 they joined the Roman Catholic Church as a community and in 1928 moved to their present home at Prinknash.<sup>4</sup>

The story now reverts to More Hall and to a closer link between it and Prinknash Abbey. From 1906 the parliamentary electoral register gives only one entry for More Hall, namely the Rev. Charles Heriry Sharpe. Sharpe was born about 1859 at his family's home at Longhope Manor, Gloucester. He was a student at Hertford College, Oxford, taking his B.A. degree in 1883, and after being ordained deacon in the Church of England in 1884, served his title at St Helen's, Ryde, where he remained after his ordination as priest in 1885. Two years later he became curate at St Mary's, Southampton, then Acting Chaplain to the Forces at Aldershot 1890 to 1893, and Diocesan Missioner, Diocese of Gloucester, 1893 to 1912. During his years as a priest he moved from an Evangelical to a High Church position. He lived a very active life, conducting missions and retreats throughout Great Britain. At the same time, this well known missionary led the life of a contemplative monk in the privacy of his own home. A friend of Robert Meux Benson, founder of the Cowley Fathers, and also of Abbot Carlyle, he was a strong supporter of attempts to revive monastic life in the Church of England. He first visited Caldey several years before the community joined the Roman Catholic Church, and remained friendly with them after the conversion.

His interest in monastic life led him to found a small brotherhood at More Hall, known as The Evangelist Brothers of the Common Life. The brotherhood was in existence from 1912 to 1916. Like Sharpe himself, the brotherhood (usually known as the E.B.C.L.) combined a monastic life with the conducting of missions in parishes. Sharpe had been inspired to some extent by the example of the Brethren of the Common Life, a community founded by Geert de Groots at Deventer in Gelderland in 1340. Groote's brothers took no vows, and they neither asked for nor received alms. They cultivated the interior life and worked for their upkeep. Their work was to travel round preaching

repentance, drawing men to God in an age of great laxity, and combating the widespread ignorance of Christian teaching by setting up schools all over Germany and the Netherlands. Sharpe's brothers followed these ideals of missionising wherever it was needed, but he adopted the Benedictine Rule in order to give them a modified monastic way of life. In a letter to an enquirer, Sharpe described their life as follows:

**We aim at the Religious Life, perhaps especially for Laymen, 3 months probationship before novitiate, 2 years novitiate before Profession, Life vows not before 30, — though exceptions may be made for exceptional circumstances. We rise at 5.45 a.m., all the seven 'Hours' are said during the day, and Compline — the last service — is at 9 p.m. Professed can give themselves to lives of prayer, or prayer and study, or to mission and parochial work. 5**

Sharpe gave a fuller account of his view of the religious life in an article in the *More Hall Magazine* in 1912.<sup>6</sup> This magazine, which replaced a monthly newsletter called *Current Events*,<sup>7</sup> first appeared in May 1912 and ran through nineteen numbers until it came to an end for financial reasons in October 1916. Its circulation grew to nearly five-hundred. The Magazine was sub-titled 'The Quarterly Review, Messenger and Journal of the E.B.C.L.', and each number had three distinct sections: articles of general interest, articles on spiritual matters, and notices and reports concerning the brotherhood. There are occasional references to missions which the brothers had conducted in various places in London and the South West. A very memorable mission is reported in the fourth issue: 'A Visit to St Columba's Church, Kingsland Road, N.E. By one of the E.B.C.L.' — an enthusiastic account running to twelve pages.

A particularly valuable feature of the magazine for the historian is the series of eight photographs of various parts of More Hall as it was in the time of the brotherhood. It is known that the Hall was in a poor, dilapidated condition when Sharpe acquired it, and the photographs show how extensive was his refurbishment of the house. He must have devoted large sums of his own money to this task.

The first twelve numbers of the *More Hall Magazine* contain in the section headed 'Journal Letter' the beginnings of an account of the foundation of the More Hall Brotherhood. Sharpe sets this out in a leisurely, rambling way, and it is disappointing to find that the articles tell us very little in precise detail about the setting up of the brotherhood, and nothing at all of its subsequent history. In fact, the series came to an end without reaching the foundation, and we are left with tantalisingly little information about the brothers.

Sharpe related that he had had strong religious instincts from an early age due to his upbringing. A 'conversion experience' as a deacon first turned him towards mission work, and this was followed by the chance discovery of a life of Pere Lacordaire, which impressed him with its account of the latter's prowess as a preacher and the advantage to a missionary of belonging to a religious



order. These experiences took place in the Isle of Wight. Before moving on to a curacy at St Mary's, Southampton, he spent Lent in London. On the advice of a friend, he attended the courses of special preachers in London churches, knowing that he would probably never have such an opportunity again. He was greatly impressed by each of the three preachers whose talks he attended: Fr Stanton, Canon Body, and Fr Ignatius. Their cumulative effect was to show him how to reconcile 'conversion' with sacramental religion.

He owed much to his rector, Canon Wilberforce, and to the evangelical spirit which prevailed at St Mary's, Southampton. He found the Keswick Convention of 1887 inspiring, especially the (non-sacramental) confessing of sins and the spiritual direction offered. He seems to have been disedified, however, by the absence of talks on the Holy Eucharist, due (he was told) to the controversy they would have aroused. More impressive still was a visit to Llanthony where he experienced the religious life for the first time at this Benedictine monastery established by Fr Ignatius. As the idea of the religious life began to grow on him, he felt irresistibly that he must begin to live it in some way. When Canon Wilberforce offered him the use of a house for his residence, he removed carpets and furniture to make the rooms as bare as possible and turned one of the rooms into an oratory where he could chant the hours of the Divine Office. Soon after this, taking the first celebration of Holy Communion on Easter Day, 'he felt strongly led to ask God if He would allow him to lead the dedicated life and for his sake to renounce property and marriage. He felt this offering was drawn out of him and there and then accepted.'

When the resolution of Archdeacon Farrar in Convocation for encouraging the formation of brotherhoods in the Church of England was accepted in 1889, Sharpe recorded his feelings thus: 'I felt that the vision which for so long had been before me was now coming nearer and taking a more tangible shape.' Now followed a rather strange episode. Sharpe wrote a letter of support to *The Guardian* in which he outlined his ideals concerning the monastic life and its revival in the Church of England. To his disappointment, the letter was returned the following day by the editor.<sup>8</sup> He had written the letter on 14 July 1889. On 21 July he had to preach in the absence of Canon Wilberforce. He took the letter with him into the pulpit. After preaching on the texts for the day, the 5th Sunday after Trinity, texts which seemed particularly relevant to the idea of religious community life for mission work, he went on after a brief hesitation to read out his rejected letter. This left him downcast and dispirited. He had preached too long: the choir left the church at the end of the sermon, thus robbing the congregation of the choral celebration of Holy Communion. Afterwards, amidst general gloom in the sacristy, a young man came in to see him and asked to borrow the manuscript. This man was the acting editor of a provincial newspaper, and he sent Sharpe a letter supporting his views on the foundation of brotherhoods in the Church of England. In his reply, Sharpe declared that a monastic order was needed to prevent the Church being torn

to pieces by the contending parties within it, especially if disestablishment took place.

The acting editor printed an article on this in his paper, *The Hampshire Advertiser*, and many other papers reported and discussed it, both in London and in provincial and colonial papers. It became the current topic of various meetings, including the Winchester Diocesan Conference. *The Newberry House Magazine* asked him to write an article on it and *The Ecclesiastical Gazette* offered a prize for the best essay on the subject.

*The Guardian* dealt with it in a leading article, declaring,

Again, the Rev. C.H. Sharpe in *The Newberry House Magazine* describes with attractive enthusiasm a scheme of itinerant missionaries, almost identical with the original plan of the Franciscans. They are to go out 'two by two', begging their way if need be, preaching the gospel, and returning to their 'cloister' for occasional rest and retirement.

The article in *The Newberry House Magazine* led to some criticism in certain periodicals and newspapers, and Sharpe was asked to speak on the subject in various places. One such meeting, in Norwich in June 1890, was to be of importance to him. Fr Maturin of the Cowley Fathers spoke first, and made some good-humoured criticisms of Sharpe's article without realising that the author was present. This incident led, happily, to friendship and collaboration with Fr Maturin.

Not surprisingly, Sharpe submitted an essay on Brotherhoods to *The Ecclesiastical Gazette* and won the prize of ten guineas. By now his rector, Canon Wilberforce, had become interested and had written to Archbishop Benson on the subject, as a result of which the two men were invited to Addington Park. Sharpe arrived to find that Wilberforce had not appeared and to his consternation he had to speak to Benson without his rector's support. There were some penetrating questions and Sharpe became awkward and confused. However, Wilberforce turned up while they were walking in the garden, perceived from Sharpe's face how things were going, and saved the situation with his customary assurance and persuasiveness, winning the Archbishop's keen interest.

After dinner, there was a long and amiable conversation, mainly between Benson and Sharpe, the latter's confidence now fully restored. The following day, Benson gave him a memorandum on the discussion, part of which Sharpe quoted. The Archbishop indicated that he could not sanction any initiative immediately, but that this was not to be regarded as a check but as a guidance to further consideration and prayer. Sharpe described this document as 'strangely prophetic', but from this point we are left in the dark about subsequent developments as this instalment of the narrative, in the *More Hall Magazine*, no. 12 (mid-June 1915), was the last. The following issues contained no historical material and the magazine closed after no.19 (mid-October 1916). The War had

led to a great increase in the price of paper, and in addition the magazine had always been subsidised with the rent (£100) received annually in respect of a house which belonged as a life interest 'to one of us'. The War had taken away the tenant and the house was now unlet.

Probably another reason for the discontinuance of the magazine was the folding up of the brotherhood which occurred in 1916. What the precise circumstances were will probably never be known. Wartime conditions, including conscription, presumably caused problems. No doubt the brotherhood lacked stability: numerous Anglican communities have failed to survive for more than a few years. Perhaps a significant number of brothers left, either because they lacked a vocation, or because they felt called to join the Roman Catholic Church. It is possible that the 'conversion' of the Caldey community on 5 March 1913 had an influence on the More Hall brotherhood. It is known that two of Sharpe's brothers joined the Caldey community, Joseph Woodford in 1910 and Maurus Gater in 1912. On 1 March 1913 Abbot Aelred Carlyle wrote in a letter to Sharpe: 'your two late brothers, Woodford and Gater, are heart and soul with the community'.<sup>9</sup> Both became Catholics along with the majority of the community at Caldey. In the letter to Bishop Gore dated 19 February 1913 which was the preliminary to the Conversion, Woodford signed as a monk in simple vows and Gater signed as a novice.<sup>10</sup> The latter did not take vows, joined the Forces and was killed in the War of 1914—18, but Fr Joseph went with the Caldey community to Prinknash in 1928 and moved to Farnborough Abbey when Prinknash took over this house from the Solesmes monks in 1947. Fr Joseph was known to a wide circle of Catholics as the Master of Oblates for Prinknash and Farnborough. He died in 1955.

Apart from these two names, little is known of the membership of Sharpe's community at More Hall. The *More Hall Magazine* is unhelpful on this score, but perhaps Sharpe wanted to maintain some privacy for the brothers. There is a mention of a Bro. Hampton in no.2 (July 1912): he was in charge of the More Hall Literature Stall at a Sale of Work in Northgate Mansions, Gloucester, on 6 June. In the same issue Sharpe reported the accession of two oblates to the community. The first, not named, was 'an old Gloucester Cathedral chorister and afterwards a master at Handsworth Grammar School'; the second was a man named Ernest V. Alderdice. It may be deduced that they were intern oblates (there is no record of Sharpe receiving any laymen as extern oblates) as he remarked that Alderdice 'lives . . . in a separate department of the house where possible . . .' <sup>11</sup> Nothing more can be gleaned from the magazine. Leonaj<sup>^</sup> Green published a description of the 'monastery' in his book *Dream Comrades* and referred to 'a little bearded man in the habit of a lay-brother' who opened the door to him and also to brothers working at the printing press. Ronald Knox stayed at More Hall for three weeks during August 1914 and recorded that there was a lay brother who looked after his wants.<sup>13</sup> A photograph of Sharpe and his community in 1914 was in existence in 1983 but has since disappeared.

Leonard Green, and the reviewer of *Dream Comrades*, as well as Ronald Knox, all bore witness to the kindness of Fr Sharpe. He was always willing, it would seem, to show visitors around his monastery if they seriously desired to learn something of the life lived by his band of brothers. Leonard Green's romanticised account of the house and grounds conveys clearly an atmosphere of peace, prayer and work. Knox also remarked on this atmosphere. He described it as 'a beautiful country house, the centre of a religious community and an admirable place for retreats'. He had arranged to make up a reading party with some undergraduate friends, but because of enlistment the others did not arrive and Knox therefore used the time for an individual retreat:

**. . . I lived in complete solitude (apart from the presence of a lay brother who looked after my wants) corresponding with my friends and devoting my prayers on their behalf. About six hours of the day I spent over my devotions; for the rest I was writing or taking long, lonely walks through the path-ridden woods that crown those admirable hills.**

The friendly interest taken by Fr Sharpe in Abbot Aelred Carlyle and his monks has already been noted. From time to time rumours circulated that the Anglican Benedictine community, which had moved in 1906 to the Island of Caldey, was 'going over to Rome'. Each time the rumours proved to be false, but in 1913 after much heart-searching and discussion, matters came to a head. Before official recognition within the Church of England could be considered, the community was required to abandon certain practices which it maintained were 'vital to our conception of the Catholic Faith'. The abbot and twenty-six of his community therefore signed a letter stating that they could not accept these preliminary requirements which were 'so decisive that we are forced to act upon what we believe to be God's Will for us'. On 5 March the Bishop of the Roman Catholic diocese of Menevia, Monsignor Francis Mostyn, received the abbot and twenty-two members of his community into the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>14</sup>

The Abbot had issued an official announcement of the action they had decided to take on 26 February. It was quickly taken up by the press. The *Daily Express* carried a graphic report on 28 February, having sent a reporter to pick up (and embellish) as much picturesque material as possible. On the same day the *Church Times* carried a leading article and an editorial on the subject, both highly critical of Carlyle's action. Sharpe was most concerned at the news. The following morning he sent a telegram to Carlyle: 'Church Times seems unfair if I can do anything please tell me'. While not unsympathetic towards Carlyle, he showed particular concern for those members of the community who had not decided to join the Roman Catholic Church. He sent a second telegram the same day: 'Please let any not following you come to More Hall and continue their life there without a break until things settled'.<sup>15</sup> Thus began a campaign by Sharpe to attract to More Hall what has often been referred to as the 'remnant'. He persevered with his efforts for some two months.

Sharpe may not have known in the first instance how many of the community at Caldey had not 'gone over' to Rome, namely eleven. Carlyle wrote to Sharpe on 1 March in reply to the first telegram (and perhaps to the second also) sent that day:

**Thank you so much for your kind thought and sympathy. Yes, the Church Times has printed a most vindictive and unfair attack, but it really is not so bad as I expected . . . I think it is best to let things alone . . . I am sending you herewith a copy of the whole correspondence which has been the means of revealing God's Will to us.**

Carlyle did not respond specifically to the offer of a home at More Hall for the monks who had remained in the Church of England. In fact nine had already made their separate departures: the remaining two became Catholic by mid-April.

Sharpe must, however, have been encouraged to continue with his plan by a letter he received from the Rev. Stanley Monnington, a priest at Clapham, offering to join the 'remnant' at More Hall, together with another unnamed priest, if they could be of assistance. Sharpe then drafted a lengthy letter taking up seven pages of manuscript to the *Church Times*. This was published on 7 March. In it Sharpe intimated to

**. . . my recent Caldey brethren who have not at present any definite plan before them, that I should be very pleased to welcome them to our Community House at More Hall if they would like a quiet place in which to continue their life while they look around them, and until they clearly see their way and come to some conclusion as to their future course. One of the brethren has already decided to make our home his for the present, and there may be others . . . who might like to do the same.**

The brother in question was Raymund Weekes, an intern oblate, who had signed the letter to Bishop Gore but had not followed the others in joining the Roman Catholic Church. It is known that Weekes was still at More Hall in mid-April, <sup>16</sup> but there is no information available of how long he remained with Sharpe.

Sharpe next directed his efforts towards Fr Denys Prideaux, an intern oblate, who had been Warden of the Guest House at Caldey. He wrote to him at Cowley offering the use of More Hall:

**If you see your way to continuing the Benedictine Life at More Hall, there it is, and it might become its permanent property. It is mine absolutely to give or bequeath . . . Why not now come and try things out. Weekes is coming on Tuesday.**

He renewed his offer in a further letter on 13 March and outlined his hopes for a community with a Benedictine nucleus of oblate students, writers and preachers, the Benedictine principles to be specially recast for this proposed brotherhood. Fr Denys' replies, if any, are not extant. In fact, the 'loyal remnant' (Fr Denys and two others) were not lacking in offers of accommodation from well-wishers.

Lord Halifax offered Painsthorpe Hall and the Cowley Fathers suggested Mailing Abbey which was vacant.<sup>17</sup> Properties near Tenby and in Cheshire were also proposed. One offer was eventually accepted: the Abbey House at Pershore which had been given to Caldey Abbey in 1910 by its owner, Henry Wise. It had remained empty because the community was not numerous enough to man another foundation. After the 'conversion', the property was returned to the donor, who considered that it belonged to the 'loyal remnant'.

At this time, Sharpe was also trying a third approach in his sustained attempt to bring the 'remnant' to More Hall. The Rev. A. Blaker wrote to him on 7 March giving the name of Dom Anselm Mardon as the one who might be able to rally the 'remnant' together to resume the Benedictine life in a new community and conveying the announcement by Henry Wise that Pershore belonged to those who had remained Anglicans. On 8 March Sharpe received a letter from Anselm in response to the letter in the *Church Times*. He told Sharpe that he felt incapable of organising a new community himself, but would like to be put in touch with others who were interested. He also mentioned that Lord Halifax had offered a house in Cheshire. Sharpe thereupon wrote to Anselm on 11 March, offering him More Hall for the formation of a new community on Benedictine lines but adapted to contemporary needs. Sharpe even offered himself as a member of this proposed community.

Sharpe next approached Lord Halifax. In a letter of 14 March he gave his arguments in favour of More Hall being taken over by the 'remnant'. He and his brothers would become intern oblates under Anselm. He enclosed for Halifax a copy of the *More Hall Magazine* and pointed out the facilities available, especially the good chapel, the fine library, and the printing department. Two days later he wrote both to Halifax and to Anselm proposing a conference of the 'remnant' and others having an interest in their future, at More Hall. This suggestion was not taken up. Halifax replied to Sharpe that it was useless to attempt anything until it was known for certain who had not followed Carlyle into the Roman Catholic Church. He enclosed a letter from Anselm dated 17 March explaining the impossibility of reconstituting an Anglican monastic community. Two potential recruits, Bro. David Tugwell and Bro. Augustine Hurlstone-Jones, seemed likely to join the Roman Catholic Church, leaving only Anselm himself and three former oblates. 'Personally, I feel quite incapable, now that I have lost the support of the priests who left Caldey with me, of attempting to continue to carry on our life.' He stressed that he needed to find suitable employment, and employment which would permit him to continue with his office and other observances. Anselm had joined Caldey in 1907 and was the only fully professed monk not to 'go over' to Rome.

Sharpe did not give up his efforts yet. On 24 March he wrote again to Halifax, hoping perhaps that Halifax might be able to persuade Anselm to take up the offer of More Hall. Characteristically, he enclosed copies of letters he had written to Anselm and to Denys. On the same day he wrote to Anselm offering

him money for his fare and free lodging at More Hall if only he would give it a trial for a few months. He stressed how much he wanted to save Anselm's vocation and how his example would have heartened others. Anselm replied on 28 March: he was grateful to Sharpe, but the situation was hopeless; there was no 'remnant' left, and Anselm himself was looking for work. '. . . personally, without the help of the others I feel quite unable to take upon myself the responsibility of attempting any kind of revival of our life.'

Letters written by Sharpe during April show that he was still trying to bring together a 'remnant' at More Hall, still urging that a conference be called, and still pressing his views on Lord Halifax (and enclosing yet again copies of various letters). No further letters are extant, but Sharpe presumably abandoned his campaign when in September 1913 Dom Anselm Mardon, Fr Denys Prideaux and another who had been an intern oblate at Caldey, Bro. Charles Hutson, took up residence at Pershore. Anselm returned to Caldey on 1 September 1915, was received into the Roman Catholic Church, entered the novitiate, and shortly afterwards took simple vows. He left the community in 1919. The two monks at Pershore persisted in their monastic vocation, and after many vicissitudes the community grew into the well known monastery of Nashdom.

Meanwhile, as we have seen, Sharpe's brotherhood seems to have folded up during 1916. A factor in this may have been developments in Sharpe's own convictions, because in 1917 he joined the Roman Catholic Church, becoming very friendly with Bishop Burton of Clifton and Abbot Cuthbert Butler of Downside. He did not become a Catholic priest, but Bishop Burton gave him minor orders and allowed him to continue to be known as 'Father' Sharpe. Thereafter he lived the life of a recluse, devoting himself to prayer and study. He had built a chapel on the north-west corner of More Hall for the brotherhood and he continued a lone monastic life. Despite this way of life, however, he seems to have endeared himself to the inhabitants of the neighbourhood and to have been noted for his scholarship if the obituary notices in local newspapers are to be trusted.<sup>18</sup>

When the Catholic monks of Caldey moved to their new home at Prinknash Park in 1928, he was able to resume his friendship with the community. On 1 March 1932 he was visited by the Prior, Dom Benedict Stuart, who was accompanied by Dom Joseph Woodford and Dom Dyfrig Rushton. According to Abbot Dyfrig,<sup>19</sup> Sharpe discussed the possibility of bequeathing More Hall and the library to Prinknash Priory. The Prior demurred at the offer of More Hall, but expressed interest in the library. Sharpe was apparently displeased with this response, and in the end left neither the Hall nor the library to Prinknash. The same night he suffered a stroke, from which he did not recover. He was nursed by the 'Blue Nuns' at Clifton and died on 11 March. In his will he left More Hall and its furniture to the 'Blue Nuns' and, after certain bequests, the residue of his estate was left in trust for the maintenance of students for the Roman Catholic priesthood.<sup>20</sup> Sharpe's library was presumably



Father Sharpe at the front door of More Hall with Abbot Cuthbert Butler on his right and Dom Benedict Steuart on his left. Behind the abbot is Dom Joseph Woodford. Dom Columba Stenson is in the centre and Dom Theodore Baily behind the prior. The two in black are unknown.

*Photograph by courtesy of Peckhams of Stroud.*



disposed of under the final provision as noted above. It was a valuable library, and there was some regret at Prinknash that it did not come to them. Among many items they would have liked to have inherited was Migne's *Patrologia*. Many of these books were acquired by Downside Abbey, about fifty books being purchased on 30 July 1932 and about forty others at various times down to 1934. It is believed that some of these books went to Worth Priory which was founded from Downside in 1933, including the Migne.<sup>21</sup>

From 1932 until 1968 the Sisters of the Temple, a French nursing order founded at Dorat, Haute-Vienne, in 1858 and known popularly as the 'Blue Nuns', conducted a nursing home for ladies at More Hall. They made various internal alterations and it is not always easy to envisage the rooms as they were during the occupancy by Fr Sharpe's brotherhood. On 22 August 1968 More Hall was taken over by the Benedictine Sisters of Our Lady of Grace and Compassion and made into a home for the elderly and frail. More Hall is one of twenty-four such houses organised by these sisters. They are a new and developing order, established in 1959 when Bishop Cyril Cowderoy of Southwark invited Mary Garson and her small band of lay helpers to form a Congregation with a lay branch. Miss Garson had founded the first 'House of Hospitality', as each of their houses is called, in Brighton in 1954. She was then an educational psychologist, and was appalled to find on visiting a house in Brighton a partially-sighted lady in her seventies trying to look after two bed-ridden friends, all in dreadful conditions. The congregation has grown rapidly and in addition to their houses in England, they work in India and Sri Lanka.

In 1978 they adopted the Benedictine Rule. Fr Sharpe would surely have approved of the way in which they combine a full monastic life, with sung Divine Office and time for *lectio divina* and personal prayer, with their busy and active apostolate of conducting houses of hospitality. Their life reflects in many ways his own ideals of monastic life combined with active work. Further alterations have been made to the house at More Hall as well as additions. The accession of Mother Mary Garson's sisters to the Benedictine family provides us with yet one more link between More Hall and Prinknash Park. Naturally enough, the older community has assisted the newer in such ways as giving talks on the Rule of St Benedict, and helping with liturgical music. The Master of Oblates has helped the sisters to establish their own extern oblates, an activity to which the sisters attach considerable importance because the work of their congregation is conceived fundamentally as carried on with lay helpers and associates.

At the end of 1982 the 'Blue Nuns' from Bristol brought to Prinknash a packet of papers which had accompanied them when they left More Hall. These were the letters and cuttings which Sharpe had kept, which form the basis of this account and provided the motive to investigate the history of More Hall.

#### NOTES

1. For further details of More Hall and the descent of the ownership, see an unabridged text of this article, in the Prinknash Archives.
2. *St Mark's and St Benet's Home for Boys: Report for the year* (190S), p.4. Prinknash Archives 101. This slim pamphlet is the only source available for the occupation of More Hall by St Mark's Home. The Home is not mentioned in the biography *Father Adderley* by Thomas Primmitt Stevens (London: T. Werner Laurie, 1943) or in *The Times* obituary of Prebendary Adderley on 8 June 1942. Disappointingly, Adderley made no reference to St Mark's Home in his book *In Slums and Society: Reminiscences of Old Friends* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1916).
3. *St Mark's and St Benet's Home for Boys: Report . . .* p.4. Cf. also: Peter F. Anson, *Abbot Extraordinary* (London: Faith Press, 1958), p.83; obituary of Brother Austin, *Pax* 7, p.295; account by Austin of his work in Birmingham in *Pax* 1, pp.14—17 and 2, pp. 47-50.
4. For the earlier history of the community, Peter F. Anson, *The Benedictines of Caldey* (Gloucester, Prinknash Abbey, 1944).
5. Letter to K.Y. Morgan, Eastertime 1913. Prinknash Archives 102/6 Sharpe Papers folio 27.
6. 'The E.B.C.L. Pulpit: The Religious Life. An Instruction given to some who are preparing for the Religious Life' (June 1912), *More Hall Magazine*, vol. 1 no.2 (July 1912), pp. 72-77.
7. No copies of *Current Events* are known to be extant. There is a complete set of the *More Hall Magazine* in the Gloucester Collection in the County Library, Brunswick Road, Gloucester.
8. Sharpe reprinted this letter in full in the *More Hall Magazine*, vol. II no.5 (April 1913).
9. Letter from Aelred Carlyle to Sharpe 1.3.1913. Prinknash Archives 102/6 Sharpe Papers folio 4.
10. The letter is reprinted in Anson, *The Benedictines of Caldey*, opat., pp 175-6
11. *More Hall Magazine*, vol. I no.2 (July 1912), pp. 96-7, 152-3.
12. Leonard Green, *Dream Comrades* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1916), ch. 'An Old Home in the Country'. Also reprinted in *More Hall Magazine*, vol. III no.9 (mid-April 1914), pp. 12—15. Cf. review of Green's book and lengthy quotation on More Hall in *Stroud Journal*, date not recorded, Gloucester Collection 14610.
13. Ronald Knox, *4 Spiritual Aeneid* (London: Burns Oates, new ed. 1950), p.152.
14. Detailed accounts of the 'conversion' of the Caldey community are given in Peter F. Anson's books, *The Benedictines of Caldey*, op.cit., *Abbot Extraordinary*, op.cit., and *The Call of the Cloister* (London: SPCK, rev. ed. 1964), pp. 177-181. Cf. also Bede Camm, *The Call of Caldey - The Story of Two Conversions* (London: Burns Oates, 1940), and *Correspondence between Abbot Aelred and the Anglican Bishops*, published as a pamphlet.
15. The two telegrams and the letters to and from Sharpe concerning the Caldey monks who did not join the RC Church are in the Sharpe Papers, Prinknash Archives 102/6.
16. Letter 17 April from Sharpe to Henry W. Spurling of the University Mission, Zanzibar, who had written requesting news of the 'remnant'. Prinknash Archives 102/6 fol.36.
17. Anson, *The Call of the Cloister*, op.cit., p. 184.
18. Obituaries appeared in the *Stroud Journal* (18.3.32), *the Stroud News* (date of cutting not recorded), and in an unidentified cutting dated 15.3.32 in Sharpe Papers, Prinknash Archives 102/6 fol. 53.
19. Oral evidence given to the present writer on 21 October 1986 by Dom Dyfrig Rush-ton OSB, retired Abbot of Prinknash.

## THE ARCHIVES OF THE CORPUS CHRISTI CARMELITES

Sr Louis Marie, O.Carm.

### THE CORPUS CHRISTI CARMELITES

The Sisters now known as Corpus Christi Carmelites, emerged from a little group of three women who came together in a rented house at 134 New Walk, Leicester, in September 1908. They were a mother and two daughters. One of the daughters, Clare Ellerker, was the inspirer and leader. She had been accepted by Bishop Brindle of Nottingham into his diocese to undertake some educational and social work.

Clare was born at Handsworth in Birmingham in October 1875 and was baptized in St Mary's Church of England, Handsworth, in January 1876. As a small child she one day heard a conversation between her father and a visitor, one of whom said,

**As a child I learned the Bible well. I do not believe nowadays in what it says, but I do think that these Catholics and people like Newman are in a way sensible. They take Our Lord's words literally when he says 'This is my Body'. And that is what Catholics believe — that God is really there in everyone of their churches.**

The little girl noted this and decided that when she grew up she would belong to the church which had God in it. She later consulted the Bible until she found the relevant text and she then announced to her startled family that she wished to become a Catholic. They were able to keep the burning problem in hand until she was about fourteen, when she confided in a friend of the family who was a Catholic. This friend got the advice of a solicitor as to the legal position of a minor in the situation. She was told that if the girl left home and was supporting herself she would be outside her father's jurisdiction. When she now announced her intention of going out as a domestic servant, her father rather than face the prospect of the disruption which this would cause in the family and the further unpleasantness which would ensue if he got a court order to compel her to return, allowed Clare to go to a Catholic school. She was taught by the Assumption Sisters at Kensington and at the age of sixteen-and-a-half was received into the Church by Fr Hugh Pope at the Oratory, Birmingham. The family name was Perrins, but Clare got her name legally changed to that of Ellerker, a Catholic ancestor on her mother's side of the family, one member of the Ellerkers, a Yorkshire family, had taken part in the Pilgrimage of Grace.

Clare continued her education and as an extern student of St Andrew's University was awarded a Diploma which gave her the title of L.L.A. (Lady Literate of Arts). She taught for some time at the Assumption College, Kensington, as well as at the school run by the Servite Sisters at Dorking, Surrey. She later also taught at St Mary's, Hampstead.

In 1903 she became Head Mistress of the Catholic College at Olton, Birmingham, run by the Sisters of Our Lady of Compassion. She entered their Novitiate at St Denis, France, in 1906 and was for some time a novice there. By mutual agreement, it would seem, it was decided that she was not suited to their way of life. Hence, in 1908, we find her approaching Bishop Brindle of Nottingham with a suggestion that she would like to do some apostolic work in his diocese. Dr Brindle asked her to come to Leicester to open a Secondary School as there was no such Catholic School in the town. It was understood that this was to be undertaken by a group of Religious women living in community.

Some years previously Miss Ellerker's mother and two sisters had also been received into the Church. One sister was already a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of St Paul of Chartres at Selly Park, Birmingham. The father had apparently now left the family. The first three who were to begin this adventure in Holy Cross Parish, Leicester, were Clare, her mother and sister, Ethel. They very soon came under the care of the parish priest, Fr Vincent McNabb. He was protector, supporter, friend and spiritual adviser of the group for the next six years. After a few months some others had come to join the little group.

In January 1909 they opened a school at 8 West Walk. It was not confined to any age group as whole families came (aged six to sixteen), and it was non-denominational. Clare and all that first group were converts. From the beginning they had for their particular aim the reunion of Christendom.

They also began to take an active part in the life of Holy Cross and surrounding parishes. They had religious instruction classes for intending converts as well as children. They visited prisons and hospitals. A member of the Community was on the executive of the Health Council, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and the Catholic Social Guild. She also held office on the Board of Guardians. The sisters sat up at night with the sick and the dying.

It should be stated before all this account of activities, that they were being formed in the religious life under the spiritual direction of Fr Vincent McNabb, who also introduced them to the recitation of the Divine Office. Their spirituality was Dominican in character — prayer always as a foundation whose natural fruit was apostolic work. They had a regular way of life with set times for community prayer and silence. They were officially a Chapter of the Third Order of St Dominic — Dominican Oblates of the Blessed Sacrament. They lived in community and after some years assumed a religious habit — the black and white of the Dominicans. Many years were to elapse before they were accepted by the Church as Third Order Regular Sisters with the three vows. They took private vows and had ceremonies of Reception and Profession, with a training time as postulants and novices.

One of their great works was providing retreats, first for women and girls, later for men and boys. Their first venture into a retreat for boys caused some little confusion and worry. Having arranged for Fr Bede Jarrett OP to come, the Sisters, as the date drew near, thought 'supposing only a few turn up and this is such a noted preacher'. They wrote and asked him for how many did he think it was worth his while to turn up — and the reply came back, 'One, I could not come for less than one!' In fact, they had a record attendance.

Another work undertaken under the auspices of the Catholic Missionary Fathers, whose head was Fr Herbert Vaughan, was known as the Motor Missions. If a Mission was to be preached in a particular area in any part of the country, a band of women under Miss Anstice Baker would prepare the ground for the Missionaries. They would visit the area beforehand, put out posters announcing the Mission, and visit each in the town or village inviting the people to attend the lectures. The Sisters were privileged to be invited to take part in this work. They helped in Missions at East Dereham, Wymondham, Baldock, Stevenage, Pershore, Tenterden, Fowey, Sea View, Treorchy, and Church Stretton, the last-named at the outbreak of the First World War.

The talks were usually attended by some of the Protestants in the area and the visiting team were everywhere received with courtesy. Motor Mission is a literal description. The chapel was the inside of a motor vehicle and van. The



Motor Chapel, c 1910

chapel car was drawn up in a field and there each morning the priests said their Mass.

From 1916 to 1919 the Sisters had a house at 47 Parkhill, London which was largely used for retreat work. They also had a small foundation at Rothley, Leicester, where they conducted a school and evangelised the local district, helping and encouraging many lapsed to return to the practice of their religion.

Another mission, undertaken at Aylestone, Leicester, was on the lines of the Motor Mission. Two Sisters visited this area and found numbers of people who had lapsed and children not baptized. These were brought on Sundays to be baptized at Holy Cross. The Sisters had the great joy of preparing a room over a bakery for the first Mass to be said in Aylestone since the Reformation, attended by forty-one people.

In 1919 Archbishop Dowling OP, Port of Spain, Trinidad, asked the Corpus Christi Sisters to go there to undertake some apostolic work. Three went in 1919. Their first work there was the care of the elderly in a hospice. That work is still being carried on by the Sisters on the same site. In 1920 three further pioneers took up missionary work in Duluth, Minnesota. They were engaged in parish work and later they had a home for delinquent girls. Further foundations were made in both the U.S.A. and Trinidad, as well as other West Indian Islands. The original Leicester foundation had engaged in new works as the needs arose, e.g. accommodation for students and clubs for working girls.

Through the years the Sisters had sought canonical status — as religious with three public vows. All avenues were closed however. They were a group of Tertiaries living in community known as the Corpus Christi Chapter — using a modified form of the Dominican Constitutions. Their position, particularly in the U.S.A., was becoming somewhat outdated. Other similar groups who were engaged in pastoral activities had been recognised by the Church as religious. Therefore, when the opportunity arose of being thus recognised, the Sisters were pleased to accept. An invitation was received in 1926 from the Carmelite Fathers in Chicago to affiliate with that Congregation as Third Order Regular with the special mission to propagate the Little Way of St Therese. The Congregation had wanted to form such a group and they found in the Corpus Christi Sisters the foundations for such a work — people who were already striving to live a life of prayer and union with God and had also a particular devotion to St Therese. The foundress was herself very committed to the Little Way and had communicated it to her religious family. An indication of the wishes of the Sisters and the necessary Rule Books and existing Constitutions were submitted to the Generalate at Rome in March 1927 and on the Feast of St Simon Stock, 16 May 1927, the Corpus Christi Sisters were formally affiliated to the Carmelite Order with the title of Corpus Christi Carmelites.

In 1929 the Sisters in Trinidad and the U.S.A. made their first vows as Religious and Corpus Christi Carmelites. The Leicester house had to be given up in 1927 and the remaining Sisters transferred to Trinidad. There was no house of Corpus Christi Carmelites in England until 1952 when a Children's Home was opened in Kirby Muxloe, Leicester, and a novitiate house at Shorne, Kent, in 1954.

The final formalities of affiliation, such as deciding on the location of the Mother House and getting the approval of the Sacred Congregation of Religious, were not completed until 1929, but the Sisters were still amazed at the ease by which they became fully fledged Religious and Carmelites after all the strivings and disappointments of the years. 'After years of trial and waiting — twenty years for some of us — God has placed the seal of His Church on our dear Corpus Christi' (from Mother Foundress's letter, 11 February 1929).

The Congregation had previously consisted of American and English Sisters only but in 1927 the Trinidad houses began to accept the local girls, first as a type of lay Sister called Oblates of St Therese but now all the Sisters belong to the one group. The position at present is that the West Indian Sisters are filling the needs in other countries especially in England.

This then is an account of the beginnings, the early birth pangs of a religious group, and the realization of a dream of a woman of whom it was said that she was sixty years ahead of her time. Her ideas did not accord with the existing pattern of religious life. She was therefore a misfit in the Congregation which she first joined and a thorn in the side of some bishops and priests. Her approach to active apostolic work was also forward-looking. She and her Sisters were prepared to go anywhere and do any work that would serve the people of God. The questions they were asked were, 'If you are not Religious, what are you? If you are Religious, why are you doing these things?'

The inspirer of this work and the Foundress was known as Mother Mary of the Blessed Sacrament — affectionately called 'Little Mother'. She died in 1949.

The facts related in this account have been taken from letters, chronicles, early minute books and some primary source material from the notes of one of the pioneer Sisters.

## **THE ARCHIVES**

When I was appointed Regional Archivist in 1979, I had no predecessor. On the principle that 'work begun is half done', or that one must begin somewhere, I got an envelope and in it I put a pamphlet which had been written by Fr Aloysius Mullins on our Congregation, one of our little vocation leaflets, and I think a photograph. I listed the contents on the envelope. I should have kept this as an archive. Unfortunately, I had not yet heard of the Catholic Archives Society, and had not learned that a good archivist does not destroy but preserves.

However, in time I accumulated some more material — circular letters, copies of our Mother Foundress's first letters to Bishop Brindle, and some of our early chronicles. I have found myself playing the part of detective, historian and archivist in turn. I had to dig and search, and go to record offices, etc. to try to find information about the life of our Foundress and other material. There was not one central place where any reasonable amount of information was stored. Our Mother House had been moved on three separate occasions, perhaps that accounted for the confusion.

After a few years, I was asked to consider myself General Archivist. Our Mother House is now in Trinidad so most of the records are kept there. I have spent six weeks there trying to get some order into the material. This task is by no means finished. I was fortunate in that I had a predecessor in that area. One of our older English sisters who had been in Trinidad for many years had a sense of history and accumulated quite a lot of useful information and papers. The collection here at present comprises early foundational documents, notes on Mother Foundress's life, some of the books written by her, and circular letters of subsequent Superiors General. These items are arranged in acid-free cardboard boxes, with a catalogue of contents listed on the cover. As we are such a small group and of comparatively recent foundation, the contents are small. Moreover, the material is not all together in one place. There is a lot of the material proper to the general archives at the Mother House. The Archivist resides here and wings are expensive. The position, therefore, is that the archives are at present only at the halfway stage.

### *Catalogue and Index of the Archives*

#### **BOX A.**

#### **FOUNDATION**

- (a) Early correspondence of Mother Foundress with Bishop Brindle.
- (b) Later correspondence with Fr Prior and Bishop McNulty.
- (c) Affiliation to Dominican Order, 1915; Commendation from Fr Hyacinth, 1911; 2 letters from Fr Vincent McNabb, 1917, 1918.
- (d) Fr Vincent McNabb's letters to Mother.
- (e) 2 pamphlets re origins.
- (f) Misc. re beginnings, status and affiliation to Carmelite Order.
- (g) Notes (short summary) re dates of beginnings, etc.

#### **BOX B.**

#### **MOTHER FOUNDRESS'S LIFE AND WRITINGS**

- (a) Birth and Baptismal Certificates, and re educational career.
- (b) Correspondence with Our Lady of Compassion Sisters and other personal details and tributes.
- (c) Personal letters to Sisters.



*Box B continued*

- (d) Mother's circular letters (some)
  - (e) Some souvenirs.
  - (f) Misc: — One page of an itinerary, 1920;  
letter from Fr Finbar Ryan, 1924;  
letter from Sr Monica Hague OSB re sale of 'Little Mother's' books in  
India, 1934;  
letter from Catholic Social Guild, 1910;  
copy of newspaper article by Marie St S. Ellerker — Boy and Girl life  
in Leicester and account of a retreat for girls at Corpus Christi  
House, no dates.
- BOX C.** Family history, Perrins/Ellerker.
- BOX D.** Some early photographs — England.
- BOX E.** Photographs — England and Caribbean.
- BOX F.** Circular letters - Mother Teresa Johnson, 1950-1968.
- BOX G.** Circular letters — Later Superiors General.
- BOX H.** Shorne (Kent) —Documents and Correspondence: re purchase (1954)  
and sale (1978) of St Katherine's Novitiate House and re St Joseph's  
Home for the Elderly purchase and sale, 1960—1980.
- BOX I.** Correspondence re purchase (1952) and Diaries. Kirby Muxloe —  
Carmel Children's Home.  
Other material not in boxes;
- OTHER MATERIAL NOT IN BOXES:  
Leicester: Council Minutes, 1909—1921.  
Trinidad: Council Minutes, 1923-1928.  
Leicester: Books of Clothings and Professions, 1908—1926.  
U.S.A.: Books of Clothings and Professions, 1921-1927.  
Leicester: Children of Mary — Lists of members, and Study Circle  
Holy Cross, 1912-1914.  
Account of Converts, visits to the sick, etc., 1912—1914.  
Visitation Book (Mother Foundress), 1931-1932.  
Account Books, Leicester, 1908—1917.  
Account Books, Shorne and Kirby Muxloe, 1952.  
Diaries (Log Books): Shorne and Kirby Muxloe, 1952-1980.  
A History of the Corpus Christi Carmelites *A Great Adventure,*  
*A History . . . With God and two Ducats.*  
Fr Vincent McNabb's Conferences and Retreats.  
Constitutions, 1958.

## THE CORRESPONDENCE OF

### MARGARET PHILLIPPS DE LISLE AND W.E. GLADSTONE

Bernard Elliott

Margaret Phillipps de Lisle was born on 31 May 1855, the seventh daughter and fifteenth child of Ambrose and Laura Phillipps de Lisle. Ambrose was born in 1809, while Laura was born in Germany two years later. Ambrose was a convert, being received into the Church by Fr Macdonnell at Loughborough in 1825. But Laura was a born Catholic, a member of the old Catholic family of the Cliffords of Ugbrook, Devon. Ambrose and Laura were married in 1833 and in 1834 their first child, Ambrose Charles, was born and in 1860 their last child, also a boy, Gerard, was born, and between these two boys they had seven other boys and seven daughters.

Margaret was educated first at home by private tutors and then at the age of thirteen she was sent to continue her education at the Ursuline Convent at Boulogne. There she remained for the next three years and then she returned home to assist her parents. She was a brilliant scholar and a considerable theologian and corresponded with many eminent people, such as Newman, Manning and W.E. Gladstone. She began her correspondence with Gladstone in March 1878 and over the next five years letters were regularly exchanged by them and, though Gladstone became Prime Minister in 1880 and so was greatly concerned with matters of great moment, he always answered her letters courteously.

The first letter in the correspondence was written on 19 February 1878 when Margaret informed Gladstone that her father was still very seriously ill with gangrene in the foot. She also said that Ambrose valued Gladstone's friendship most highly. The next day Gladstone replied that he hoped that Ambrose



MARGARET PHILLIPPS DE LISLE

*Reproduced by courtesy of the Squire de Lisle*

would continue to improve. On 22 February Margaret again wrote to Gladstone: 'Your kind and beautiful letter gave my father much pleasure'. Then Margaret referred to the election of the new Pope, hoping that he might do much to promote the great work of reunion, for which Ambrose had striven throughout his life. Then Margaret said that she would give Gladstone a report every few days but did not expect him to answer each letter, since he had so much to do. Margaret's next letter followed on 27 February in which she stated that on the previous evening Ambrose had spoken to various members of his family giving all of them appropriate advice. He also prayed especially for Gladstone, asking the latter's pardon for any misunderstanding that may have occurred between the two in discussing Church matters. On 4 March Gladstone replied to the effect that in a long course of years no misunderstanding had ever occurred between them and Gladstone added, 'May the Almighty in all his care and love be with you all at this juncture'. The next day, 5 March, Margaret wrote that her father had died on 4 March: 'To-day about 9.30 he entered, I trust, into the peace of God, never more to be broken or taken from him.' Gladstone replied on 6 March:

Even I, who knew him only as it were from afar, have a feeling of the loss and void which follows the removal of something so difficult to match. [Gladstone finished by saying:] I cherish the hope that he may have learned the news of the peace in the east before he passed into a deeper peace.

A week later, on 12 March, Margaret gave Gladstone news of her father's funeral: 'On Saturday last his earthly remains were laid to rest in the Church of the Monastery he founded and loved so well.' She then went on to say how her father had hoped and prayed that Gladstone would one day be led to see and embrace the Truth: 'So I implore him to pray earnestly for light and if I should be admitted into the Divine Presence I will continuously beg of God to grant him the greatest of blessings — True Faith.'

Gladstone replied to Margaret's letter on the next day, 13 March, and the reply contained Gladstone's view of the Church of England: 'I do not optimise about the Church of England. Long and dispassionate reflection have shown me that it is not difficult to make good various and serious charges against her.' Then Gladstone went on to say how, in his opinion, what are called conversions and the strife connected with them have tended very largely to the profit of scepticism, unbelief and indifference. He ended this long letter as follows:

Proselytism in any direction has not for me the charm that it might once have had and my prayer is that the tendency of the little I can say or do may be to build up in their most holy faith those who believe in Christ.

In her reply, on 18 March 1878, Margaret thanked Gladstone for stating so courteously his views of the Church of England, and then went on to say: 'As a Catholic I cannot of course share it but I think that I can understand it.' Then Margaret informed him that a few days ago her mother had received

from the President of the A.P.U.C. a copy of resolutions passed at their last meeting expressing condolence with her and their own regret at the great loss sustained by all who work for and desire the reunion of Christendom. Margaret ended her letter by expressing the hope that Gladstone would continue to share with her the friendship which Gladstone had with her father. Gladstone did not reply until 12 April and then it was very short: 'In much haste many thanks.'

Margaret's next letter was written on 8 June, St William's Day, in which she informed Gladstone that Mass had been offered for him in various places. Then she gave Gladstone news that North Leicestershire was in the throes of an election, but though she was as strong a Liberal as ever she would refrain on this occasion from working for the Liberals. Gladstone does not seem to have answered Margaret's announcement that she was abstaining from politics for a while, for her next letter was written on 24 August when she informed Gladstone that she was sending him a short sketch of Ambrose's life and that they were thinking of having a longer life written later on. On 27 August Gladstone acknowledged receipt of the sketch and was glad to hear that a longer life was planned, since Ambrose's life formed a sensible portion of the religious history of this country at a most interesting and critical period.

Margaret continued the correspondence on 2 December in a letter in which she first congratulated Gladstone upon the influence he had exerted to modify the Government's policy in regard to the Treaty of Berlin. Then she reminded Gladstone that, though he had renounced the title of the leader of the Liberal party, yet he still had the power and the duty to lead it so that the country could again become united under his banner. Then she criticized Gladstone for an article which he had written in the *October Contemporary* in which he had stated that the French writer Montalembert died in mental resistance to the decree of papal infallibility passed at the Vatican Council. According to Margaret, however, a few days before his death Montalembert stated that he would accept the dogma if the Council should decree it. So, Margaret argued that it was a case of mental admission rather than mental resistance.

Within a few days of receiving Margaret's letter, Gladstone replied in which he thanked her for her kind words about the Treaty of Berlin. Then he stood by his previous statement in regard to Montalembert's attitude to papal infallibility, though he wrote that he would be glad to have the opportunity to discuss the matter with her. On 10 December Margaret replied. She thanked Gladstone for his kindness in suggesting that they might meet to discuss various matters, but she felt that the opportunity was remote, since she now went so little to London. Then she returned to the question of Montalembert and reiterated what she had written in her previous letter that Montalembert had not at any time the remotest intention of resistance or rebellion against the Holy See. On 30 December Gladstone replied, thanking her for her letter, wishing her a happy New Year, but not pursuing the question of Montalembert any further.

On 27 April 1879 Margaret wrote from Biarritz, informing Gladstone that she wished to lay before him a family matter of importance in which she would like to have the benefit of his opinion. Then she said how pleased she was to learn that he had consented to contest Mid Lothian. Gladstone replied on 1 May by postcard, asking Margaret to write at once and fully and her letter would have his prompt and most willing attention.

On 5 May Margaret wrote a long letter to him laying before him the family matter of great importance. Her sister, Alice, had married Arthur Strutt, the second son of Lord Belper and a Protestant, but he had agreed to leave the religious upbringing of any children of the marriage to Alice and upon the strength of this undertaking Alice obtained the dispensation necessary for the marriage. In 1874, Alice gave birth to a boy, Edward, whereupon Lord Belper informed Arthur that the boy had to be brought up as a Protestant, threatening to disinherit him if he did not comply. So Arthur reneged on his word and Edward was baptized as a Protestant. But after a few months Arthur had second thoughts on the matter and allowed a Catholic priest to baptize the boy. And when a daughter was born in the following year she too was baptized as a Catholic. When, however, Lord Belper heard of his grandchildren being baptized as Catholics, he was furious and once more threatened to disinherit Arthur unless he made a will insisting that the children should be brought up as Protestants. Accordingly, Arthur made a will to that effect. But once more Arthur began to have second thoughts on the matter, when he was suddenly killed in February 1876 by falling into a wheel at his factory at Belper. At once Edward's two guardians took care of the boy insisting that the terms of Arthur's will should be carried out and that the two children should be brought up as Protestants. But Alice maintained that Arthur's will did not represent his real wishes at the time of his death and that the guardians were in equity bound to regard his wishes rather than the mere statement of a will which he had intended to change. But the guardians stated their intention of making the boy a ward in Chancery so as to obtain the necessary power to enforce the carrying out of the will. Moreover, the guardians had forbidden Alice to take the boy with her to church or to teach him Catholic doctrine. Consequently, Alice had taken the boy to Spain and Margaret stated that it would be of great use to Alice if she could quote Gladstone's opinion in her favour. On 12 May 1879, he replied. He stated that this particular question was one of a very delicate and complex character and he had consulted several eminent lawyers, as a result of which he suggested that Alice should point out to the Court the possibility of her husband's change of mind over the will which might make the Court direct that the boy should be brought up as a Catholic. On 14 May Margaret replied in a letter written from San Sebastian in which she stated that she was sending Gladstone's letter to her brother-in-law, Lord Edward Howard, for his perusal. On 24 May Margaret wrote another letter to Gladstone in which she stressed once more that Arthur Strutt was intending to alter his will but that death prevented him from doing so. In

this letter Margaret referred to the elevation of John Henry Newman to the cardinalate hoping that it would prove the means of bringing his old Church for which he always felt so much love nearer if only by one step to the Church he felt it his most sacred duty to adhere.

A further letter to Gladstone followed on 5 June, written also from San Sebastian. It seems that Lord Howard had an interview with the guardians in the hope that they would agree to the children being brought up as Catholics, but the guardians took the view that nothing had occurred since the making of the will to invalidate it in any way. Accordingly, Alice would have to stay abroad for the present, beyond the jurisdiction of the English courts and that she could return to England when Edward was fourteen when he could choose his own religion. In conclusion, Margaret renewed her expression of gratitude to Gladstone for all that he had done. On 4 August 1879, Margaret wrote another letter to Gladstone in which she spoke of the great debt which Ambrose owed to the Evangelical school of the Church of England: 'His earliest religious training was given him by an uncle of Evangelical tendencies who died young, but Ambrose never ceased to consider him a saint.' Another Evangelical cleric who exercised considerable influence upon Ambrose was Bishop Ryder. Ambrose, however, did not rest content with Evangelical teaching but 'hastened on his journey to the Eternal City.' On 14 September Gladstone replied:

My correspondence always in hopeless arrears is now brought to a head by a start for the continent. On Wednesday I hope to reach the Tegernsee to spend a few days with Dr Dollinger, Lord Aston and his family; thence to the Dolomite country and afterwards to Venice. [Then Gladstone referred to the difficulties facing Alice] I am truly sorry that this controversy continues with its painful accompaniments and consequences.

Margaret next wrote to Gladstone on Christmas Eve 1879 in which she stated that she was sending him Fr Tondini's book on the Supremacy of St Peter. She hoped that she could count upon his great influence to further the work of peace in religious matters as well as in things political. Then she congratulated him upon the speeches he had lately made in Scotland. On 27 December Gladstone replied from Hawarden. Fr Tondini's book had arrived and he had read part of it but he was reluctant to argue with Margaret about it, telling her that when he had the happiness of meeting a man like Ambrose, little did he care for the secondary matters in which they might not have the same point of view. He concluded this letter as follows: 'Do not suppose I presume to take it upon me to condemn proselytism, but my sympathies do not lie in that direction. May we all make some little way to the work of knowing Christ.'

Margaret replied on 29 December and informed Gladstone that she was sending him a photograph of Ambrose: 'As you know, my father had older friends than you but not one I think whom he loved more dearly or admired more.' Next day Gladstone wrote back: 'I accept the photograph most

thankfully. Fr Tondini's translation will not hold water for a moment: a school-boy who held to it would be in great danger.' On New Year's Day 1880, Margaret replied. She regretted that Fr Tondini was guilty of inaccuracy of translation and then she confided to Gladstone the great debt which she owed him:

When you came here in 1874, I was passing through a stage of infidelity and was first roused to a sense of its folly by the strong impression made upon me by your intense religious earnestness. You spoke too in glowing terms of Newman and that was my first practical introduction to his writings which God has designed to use as His chief instrument in confirming my faith.

On 3 January 1880 another letter from Margaret followed. She thanked him heartily for the copy of his Glasgow address which had arrived that morning. Once more she thanked Gladstone for having been instrumental in saving her wavering faith.

In April 1880 there was a general election and Margaret's letter to Gladstone written on 13 March contains references to it. She hoped that he would not prove obdurate when the time came for him to resume the place which was obviously his. Margaret told him that she was striving to enlighten many of her neighbours, though she admitted that the country gentry were hopeless. Nevertheless, in her opinion, the contest in North Leicestershire would be close. But Margaret confided in Gladstone that she had her difficulties, since her brother Ambrose Charles, was a rabid Tory, 'Having started in life as a radical, he now shows all the proverbial bitterness of an apostate.'

The next letter in the series was written on 4 November 1880 by Margaret who informed Gladstone that her brother Ambrose Charles was marrying Lady Violet Sandys, whose family were Liberals. Unfortunately, the lady was far from rich and Ambrose Charles had only £2,000 a year for his personal use. It would seem therefore that Gracedieu might have to be sold. So Margaret asked Gladstone's opinion whether he thought that Ambrose Charles should sell at once or wait. The next day Gladstone replied to Margaret's letter to the effect that land would not depreciate in value despite the agricultural depression and therefore Ambrose Charles should wait before selling Gracedieu.

On 6 November Margaret replied thanking Gladstone for his prompt reply and on 27 November she wrote another letter in which she stated that she was sending him a book written by Abbe Martin on Anglican Ritualism. She also mentioned that she and her sister Winifred had come up to London for their brother's wedding and that they had ventured to call at Downing Street in the hope of finding them at home, but unfortunately they were out.

On 7 December 1880, Margaret wrote another long letter to Gladstone in which she referred to his pamphlet *The Vatican Decrees*, which Gladstone had written in 1874, and in which Gladstone had urged his fellow Roman Catholic citizens to oppose the decree of papal infallibility. According to Margaret,

Ambrose had begged Gladstone not to publish it but, when Lord Acton had advised its publication, Ambrose had withdrawn his opposition to the pamphlet. One good effect of the pamphlet was to force the Catholic prelates of England to solemnly repudiate the exaggerated views of papal infallibility. On 12 December Gladstone answered Margaret. According to him, Ambrose had never opposed the pamphlet and Gladstone had never solicited Acton's approval of it. At the Reformation, Gladstone wrote, an anti-papal clause was inserted into the Litany, which showed how much the reformers were acting against the Pope, little realizing that they were severing the Church in England from the Western Church at large.

On Christmas Eve 1880, Margaret wrote her reply in which she thanked Gladstone for his explanation of the part taken by Ambrose with regard to the publication of Gladstone's pamphlet and acknowledged the fact that she had been in error over the matter. Then she mentioned the difficulties with which Gladstone had to deal, especially in regard to Ireland: 'The remedy you are preparing for Ireland seems to be sorely needed and I suppose will be as fully opposed.' A few days later, on 28 December, Margaret sent her best wishes to Gladstone on his 71st birthday, hoping that God would preserve him in health for many years to come.

In the early part of 1881 Margaret went to stay with her sister Winifred at Glossop Hall, the home of Lord Edward Howard, whom Winifred had married, though he was some thirty years older than she was. From there on 4 March Margaret wrote to Gladstone: 'To-morrow is my father's third anniversary. You will not forget to say some short prayer for him. Myself, I pray rather to him than for him.'

The correspondence ceased for a while in the summer of 1881, for during that time Margaret went on pilgrimage to Lourdes. So, when she wrote to Gladstone on 23 August she stated that she was sending him a little rosary of Pyrenean blood-stone which she had bought at Lourdes: 'I think if you went to Lourdes you would not fail to be struck by the amount of evidence to be found there of both physical and spiritual cures.' On 1 September Margaret sent Gladstone another letter in which she thanked him for accepting the rosary and then on 25 November she sent him another letter in which she referred to the outcome of the negotiations about the education of Arthur Strutt's children. At long last the guardians had agreed that they should be brought up as Catholics and for the time being they were to remain in Spain with their mother.

On 9 May 1882 Margaret wrote to Gladstone congratulating him on his efforts to improve the Irish situation, to which Gladstone replied on 31 May: 'I can assure that I am not unhopeful about my work in Ireland.'

On 2 June 1882, Margaret wrote to Gladstone about a course of lectures to be given by Fr Hyacinthe Loyson, on Catholic Reform. She asked him not to give any encouragement to this priest who favoured bringing up children as



atheists rather than ultramontanes. Gladstone was too busy at this time to reply personally, so his private secretary, E.W. Hamilton, replied on 6 June to the effect that pressure of business prevented Gladstone from paying any attention to Fr Hyacinthe's visit to London.

On 8 June Margaret replied, thanking Gladstone of his intention not to notice Fr Loyson's visit, as the latter was utterly unworthy of all sympathy whatsoever. On 18 June Gladstone replied: 'It is now a relief to me that official cares keep me outside the precinct of religious controversies.' But Gladstone added that he thought Fr Loyson was a very serious and loyal soul. Then Gladstone referred to a book that he was reading, *The Reminiscences of Rev. T. Mozley*, in which there was much about Cardinal Newman which had never appeared before.

When Margaret replied on 6 July, she wrote that she had recently acquired the *Reminiscences* and was eagerly reading it: 'I know few things more interesting than the Catholic revival in the Church of England and can quite agree with you that the hand of God was there.'

On 17 September 1882, Margaret wrote to Gladstone congratulating him on the outcome of the Egyptian campaign and the last letter from her in this correspondence was written on 29 December 1882. In this Margaret expressed the opinion which most people in Victorian Britain thought of Gladstone: 'You have done throughout good service to God's cause by word and example and you have upheld reverence for religion so that you have stemmed the rising tide of unbelief.' Then Margaret went on to say that the last time she had seen Cardinal Newman he was eloquent upon what Gladstone had done for religion by his constant profession of faith, so rare among English statesmen.

The last letter in the correspondence was written by Gladstone on New Year's Day 1883 from Hawarden Castle: 'In haste inevitable from great and constant pressure. Had I my free choice I would abjure from henceforth until my dying day in every sphere of thought and action every thing polemical.'

Gladstone's letters to Margaret are to be found in the British Museum Add. MSS. 44456—44481 and three other letters are also to be found in the archives of the Flintshire Record Office. Margaret's letters to Gladstone were at one time kept in the archives of Mill Hill Convent, London, but have now been transferred to the archives of the Squire de Lisle at Quenby Hall, Leicestershire.

THE CENTRAL ARCHIVES OF  
THE SOCIETY OF CATHOLIC MEDICAL MISSIONARIES  
Sr Mary Leonora Major

I believe we should approach our work with archives as being right at the centre of things. In these archives we can expect to find thoughts, ideas, achievements and failures of the past. We can trace our roots and what these roots are made of. This is the place where the vision of our sisters and brothers can be found, food for fresh insights savoured, and ongoing vision continue to be kindled.

All of us in one way or another have reflected on the roots of our mission, whether that be a religious congregation, local government or whatever, and know that a fresh stimulus can be given to our thinking and work through going back to our beginnings. It is in this atmosphere of freshness, new life emerging from the old that I share with you today.

Mother Anna Dengel, an Austrian by birth, was the foundress of our Society. It was founded in 1925 with the help of an American Holy Cross priest, Fr Michael Mathis. However, the person who gave the impetus to the Society was a Scottish woman, Doctor Agnes McLaren. Agnes was born in Edinburgh in 1837 and died in 1913. Both Agnes and Anna were pioneers in mission and medicine. They never met in person, only through letters, but were united by a special bond — their vision and their commitment to the Cause of Women.

Agnes McLaren became a doctor at the age of forty, being the first woman to study medicine in Montpellier in France. She became a Catholic at the age of sixty, and having heard of the great health needs of the women of India, went there when she was seventy to see those needs for herself. Agnes had come to know a Fr Dominic Wagner, a Mill Hill priest. He had been Prefect Apostolic in Rawalpindi, India (now Pakistan) for twenty-six years and in all of that time had never seen the face of a Mohammedan woman. Because of purdah, the women of India were not allowed to be seen by a man other than a close relative. In those days, doctors in India were nearly all men which meant that women and children were virtually without medical care. With the help of Fr Wagner, Agnes founded St Catherine's hospital for women and children in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. She would have liked a religious congregation to take charge of the work but at that time Canon Law did not allow religious to engage in obstetrics and surgery, so, although Agnes found a congregation of sisters willing to allow their young sisters to study medicine, Canon Law forbade them to do this.

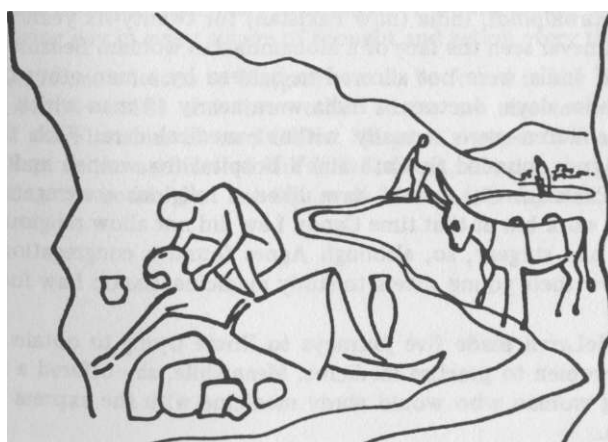
Dr McLaren made five journeys to Rome trying to obtain permission for religious women to practise medicine. Meanwhile, she offered a scholarship to any young woman who would study medicine with the express purpose of going to India.

The young woman who answered this call was our foundress, Anna Dengel. Anna was born in the Tyrol, Austria, and studied medicine in Cork, Ireland. For a while she practised in Clay Cross in Derbyshire, and after about one year went to India to fulfil her promise to Agnes McLaren.

But it was not only a promise to Agnes that had brought her thus far. For many years Anna had shared a common concern with her for the suffering of women. She felt she had always had a missionary vocation and had, in fact, studied several languages to prepare for her future work.

After working for four years among the people in India, Anna Dengel realised that what was needed was a group of dedicated women, perhaps sisters, to care for the health needs of the Indian people. Several lay women doctors had gone to India to work but the lack of a suitable social environment made it very hard for them to persevere and they returned home. Anna Dengel had felt the call to religious life herself but how was she to reconcile this with her great desire to work in the medical mission field?

To cut a long story short, our Society was canonically erected in 1925 as a community with a public mission oath and private vows. The Church called us a 'Holy Experiment'. Mother Dengel, desiring our Society to become a fully-fledged Religious Congregation in the Church continued the dialogue with Rome that Agnes McLaren had initiated. Then in 1936, the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide issued an instruction encouraging religious women to study and practise medicine in its full scope. In 1941 we became a fully-fledged religious congregation with public vows and in 1959 received the Decree of Praise, Papal Approval. We now work in Asia, Africa, Latin America, North America and Europe. At present we are 692 professed sisters, 63 of whom are in temporary vows. We also have 25 candidates, the majority of whom have their origin in the Third World.



Perhaps if we take a moment to dissect the name of our Congregation word by word you will understand somewhat more of our charism and of the vision which nourishes our life and mission.

Sisters' word indicates that we are religious women. But also, beneath that word, lies a deeper sense which is integral to our charism. It means that we are 'women for women'. From the pre-foundation days until the present, one of the primary concerns has always been the emancipation of women. Certainly, Mother Anna Dengel felt for the plight of women and in her early writings she continually refers to the 'raising up of womankind.' So, whether it is the Muslim women who are enslaved by purdah to whom Anna Dengel addressed her energies in the early days, or later awarenesses and movements, one of our primary focuses has been women. (Just a special word to the men — though our primary focus was women, we have always taken care of men, too!)

Mission<sup>anc\* wor^</sup> emanates from a world vision and a sense that the world is one. Although the actual content of the apostolate has taken different forms in different epochs, there has always been a marked effort to live our internationality and to link peoples together across the globe; to link peoples together in their suffering and in their efforts to form a just society. We do not want people to feel that they are only the object of our care but that they become the subjects of their own future. We are presently sharing life and mission in twenty-one nations of the world and we are of twenty-one different nationalities.



Medical<sup>anc\* wor^</sup> this term does not, in fact, communicate the full extent of our work.

50 per cent of our sisters are involved in direct health care but life experience has taught us that what we are really talking about is *healing*. Healing the enslavements of women and healing injustices that leave three out of four people on our earth in a situation of bare survival. In most areas health care serves as an entry point, but if we listen to reality it leads us deeper and deeper into the lives of people and encourages us to ask the question 'What is the *real* cause of suffering?' and then to respond accordingly.

Our archives and record management are set up and used in such a way as to help us touch into the different epochs in our history. Thus, for us, archives facilitate our being able to observe the growth and development of our 'corporate person'. If we would put this in medical terms we could even refer to:

- a) The *Pre-natal Period* — before we were born as a society — the many factors which influenced our foundress.

— our ancestors — people like Agnes McLaren and Monsignor Wagner.

— the reality of the time — the events, understanding of mission, church.

- b) The *Birth Process*. What was the actual content of foundation and the early years?
- c) Later *Growth and Development*. How has it evolved?

Our Society marks its history by epochs which correspond to the period of time between General Chapters.

System: The system we use is the subject-numeric one and I keep it as simple as possible.

Inventory: An inventory is kept of our holdings and updated as necessary. The files in the Secretariate are set up as far as possible in the same record groups as are in the archives and there is a good rapport between other departments and myself.

### ***Mother Anna Dengel***

Two areas of Mother Dengel's papers have been archivally arranged:

1. The many talks that she gave, mainly to our novices and professed sisters. Articles that Mother wrote for various magazines, especially in the early years of our Society.
2. Awards and Degrees given to Mother Dengel. There are twenty awards listed and more to be added. We possess the awards themselves and the scrolls that go with them.

There is a great wealth of *Correspondence* of Mother Dengel: with ecclesiastics, our sisters, and with other Congregations, men and women, friends and benefactors.

Emerging from the many and varied papers surrounding Anna Dengel's life and work, I see three distinct but overlapping areas taking shape:

Mother Dengel — personal, e.g. early childhood, study years, medical school, early years in Pakistan, etc.

History of our Society.

History of Medical Missions.

Under Medical Mission History some of you may be interested to know that we have a file on the Wurzburg Institute, a Catholic Medical Mission Institute in Bavaria. It was founded in 1922 by a Fr Christopher Becker, a Salvatorian priest, and a great friend of Mother Dengel.

This section also contains 'Recommendations by mission bishops for medical mission work', dated 1910.

Apropos of letters from priests and bishops, we have in our Society History files hundreds of letters from bishops and priests in every continent asking us to send some of our sisters to their dioceses. These letters are arranged geographically and from a brief perusal I'm certain that they contain a vast amount of historical information as to the various types of medical needs in different countries. The letters date from the late 1920s, perhaps earlier.

As I mentioned earlier, **Dr Agnes McLaren** is one of our ancestors. Most of the material we have on her and some of her Associates has been archivally arranged and a Preliminary Inventory is available for this very interesting group of records.

It includes:

*Biographies of Agnes McLaren.*

*The Annual Reports of the London Committee from 1913 to 1965.*

(The London Committee were a support group of women in England who raised funds to open a hospital in Rawalpindi and recruit women doctors to care for women and children especially. In fact, a 16-bed hospital, St Catherine's, was opened in 1908 and run by the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary. Agnes McLaren was the founder of this work along with Fr Dominic Wagner, the Dutch Mill Hill priest whom I mentioned earlier.)

The *Correspondence* of Monsignor Wagner with Agnes McLaren and others from 1900 onwards.

Among Agnes McLaren's associates were:

**Antoinette Margot** who was one of the most remarkable lay women in the United States. She was a friend of Clara Barton who was one of the founding members of the American Red Cross. This folder contains the Red Cross Insignia used in the Franco-Prussian War and some letters picked up on the Battle of Worth battlefield in 1869.

**Dr Margaret Lamont.** Another of Agnes' friends was a great and well-known advocate of Medical Mission Service. She was a medical officer in countries like China, Egypt, Mesopotamia and we have several of her writings about these different countries.

#### CHRONICLES

From 1925 to 1969 each house kept a chronicle and sent a six-monthly resume to the Generalate. So, in many instances we have both the chronicle and the resumes for a given house/hospital. They are marvellous sources for research, especially the early ones.

In 1969 it was decided to replace the chronicle summary with an Annual Report from each District (geographical area). This report is sent to the Central Communications Department who put it together in the form of two bulletins and this is shared with the whole Society.

The Annual Report reflects the major events of the country in any area of life, gives community statistics, gives evaluations of projects in the light of goals, reflects the direction of new involvements, life-style of sisters, relationships and contacts with the environment, and so is a valuable area for research.

Our hospitals also send yearly reports to the Secretariat which I subsequently receive. These are available from 1926 onwards depending on when an involvement began.

#### PUBLIC RELATIONS

A magazine or newsletter to which people subscribe is sent out from some of our houses.

We have the Medical Missionary magazines that were published in the United States from 1927 onwards, in England from 1947 onwards, in Holland from 1949 onwards, and in Germany from 1966 onwards.

#### NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters for internal sharing come to us from many Districts of the Society in several parts of the world. These provide a lot of local colour.

#### FILES AND TAPE CASSETTES

We have *four old films* — the last one being made in 1953; *tape cassettes* of interviews with some of the very early members of our Society made in 1974 as we made preparations to celebrate our 50th birthday; an internal *video-cassette* made in 1975 in honour of our 50th birthday; and a *video-cassette* made by the Austrian TV in 1985 in honour of our 60th birthday. The script is in German but an English translation will be made.

#### PHOTOS

Our archives house many albums and pockets of photos from all over the world including several historic ones of the early days and of Anna Dengel before the Society was founded.

We also have the old lantern slides that were used by Anna Dengel while she was giving talks in the United States. And yes, we also have the old projector to show them on!

The Secretariat has a *Kardex* on which all relevant information on our sisters is kept. It is an old system but on looking for a more efficient one we found that it was not possible to buy anything better — the next step would be a computer. For several reasons we now have a computer. For those of you who may be interested, the software programmes that we have so far are: a word processor programme, an accounts programme, and several data base management programmes.

We purchased a basic data base management programme called D-Base and with

the help of a consultant have so far developed two programmes, one to hold our *Kardex* files and to also do our membership and address list, i.e. our Directory. And the second one which will eventually index our archives or anything else we want to cross-reference. The second programme is a 'limited scope context retrieval system', limited in the sense that each record can have up to fourteen lines only. This was bought through RGS Consultants.

At the present time all of our documents and archival material are on paper. It is remotely possible that we might move into microfilming of some materials at a later date but for the moment this is neither economically nor practically feasible. At present we have one sister working on the basic research related to the history of our Society. In her work she traces the history of persons, trends and themes as related to our growth and development. The extensive bibliography and references which are being catalogued as she works will be put into the computer and thus be available with easy access for future research.

Our holdings include a goodly number of theses, articles and books written by our own sisters. These are mainly on health, hospitals and their management, medicine, mission, scripture and liturgy.

From Mother Dengel's documentation there is a wealth of uncatalogued material, articles and some books of a very wide variety including: women, health, medicine, healing, theology of healing, ecumenism, communism, mission, etc. And in addition to this, we have a resource library which contextualises the different moments of our history. This consists of books, background material of articles, etc., by which we are able to place our own history in the context of the world around us.

**Archives Policies:** We have written archive policies for researchers and these are adhered to. They were updated in consultation with our Superior General and Assistant General in 1985.

**Signing Out Register:** Anything taken from the archives for research or reference is entered into a book with the date and description of the material taken, plus the name of the person borrowing it. This not only helps to keep track of where material is but indicates the reference/research value of a given document.

***What kind of challenge does the Central Archivist of an International Congregation face?***

I should mention that our first archivist had put the archives on their feet, given them a very good start. She had designed the Record Groups and some of the series and sub-series. Sister had also prepared a general inventory and sorted a tremendous amount of material, archivally arranging some. The plan was that sister would train me into the work but because of sickness this became impossible.

So, one of the first challenges was facing it all on my own — this enormous



amount of unclassified material and the variety of its content. I can still remember that awesome feeling of 'What shall I tackle first?' I'm sure that feeling is known to quite a number of you here, too! But once I had decided what to do, the day-to-day work, which now and again included archival requests, helped me to become familiar with the contents and, equally important in my opinion, I began to get the feel of what 'our archives' were all about. In the early days of my work I had many questions. I had taken a very good Archives Administration and Record Management Course, but no course has all the answers. It was a real comfort, therefore, to know that I had people behind me like Miss Joan Gibbs and Miss Elizabeth Poyser who have been an invaluable help and support for me. From them I gained in archival knowledge and in the gift of friendship.

One of my responsibilities is to be able to guide our District and Sector Superiors who need to know what they should keep archivally and what may be destroyed and when.

Each Hospital/Clinic/House has its own file: for example, under Sector Africa there is a separate file for each involvement we have in that continent. There are preliminary inventories available for about twenty such involvements, mainly from the hospitals from which we have withdrawn. A tremendous amount of work waits to be done but internal research is not too difficult because of each 'house' being treated as a 'case file'. These files contain a wealth of interesting historical information about the countries in which we work as well as about the history of our own sisters and the healing mission in which they are involved. When we withdraw from a hospital, other involvement or a house, the material that is considered archival for the Central Level is sent to me.

It might be fitting at this point to explain briefly that from 1967 we have moved from a centralised mode of government with a hierarchical structure to a participative model with organic structure. Consequently, we have accepted interdependence as one of the basic principles and so the autonomy which is often characteristic of the Provincial level in other Religious Congregations is not so clearly marked in our own Society. Each continent or sub-continent is designated as a Sector. Within the Sectors there are Districts which correspond to countries or regional clusters. The Districts and Sectors have their own way of keeping records and thus in time develop their own archives. However, one of my roles as Central Archivist is to keep the lines of communication open with the Sectors and Districts so that exchange of material can take place when indicated.

Our first archivist was appointed in 1969. In that same year she prepared an Archives Management Book which was sent to each house of the Society. This has been a wonderful guide over the years.

We find that our sisters are becoming much more conscious of their place in our history and are keen to know how they can help to preserve this. Their questions in this field sometimes reveal the need for more clarity, so as time

goes on the formulation of new policies and guidelines is worked out. This is done with the help of the Central Level. Eventually, an updated Archives Management Book will be prepared.

I have mentioned that we are a relatively new Congregation. Our foundress, Mother Anna Dengel, died in 1980, in fact I was present at her death. Much material came to the archives after that date. So our archives are in their early stages and there is still much to be done. It is obvious then, that my work is not only the maintenance of existing records and adding to classified material but primarily continuing to organize and set up the whole system. From this you can probably see that one of my immediate challenges is trying to find the best way to incorporate into the existing Record Group outline all the new material that has come to me from Mother Dengel's documents plus the existing unclassified material. I realise that new Record Groups with their series and sub-series may need to be created, also that a good system of cross-referencing needs to be devised so that researchers can be helped efficiently and as fully as possible.

Another delicate challenge was how to tell sisters in a nice way that an archives department is not a community dumping-ground for 'no longer needed' material! The answer, of course, is experience, diplomacy and mutual help and understanding, but that does not happen overnight. It is very important, also, not to discourage people from sending material even if they do not have time to weed it beforehand.

I think it is important to break the heaviness that lots of steel files bring to a room. I do this with some posters, a mobile, etc. Among other things I have a little Austrian crystal hanging in the window. When the sun catches it and reflects the colours of the rainbow on my walls and work it reminds me that God is present in everything — even the old papers, because they reflect the hard work, prayer, play, the sheer commitment of so many of our sisters and brothers.

Although our archives are not open to the public at this stage, I would be willing to answer any enquiries. They should be addressed to: Sister Mary Leonora Major, Central Archives, Medical Mission Sisters, 41 Chatsworth Gardens, Acton, London, W3 9LP (Tel: 01-992 6444).

*Note:* This article is the text of a talk given to the Catholic Archives Society's annual conference at Swanwick in May 1987.

*continued from p.57*

20. There was a full report of Sharpe's will in *The Times* Wednesday 11 May 1932 and in the *Stroud Journal* and *Stroud News* on 13 May.
21. Evidence from Downside Abbey Library Accessions Book, kindly supplied by Dom Philip Jebb OSB, Archivist, 4 December 1986.



Pope John Paul greets Fr Anthony Dolan, Vice-Chairman of the Society, and receives a gift of copies of *Catholic Archives*, on the occasion of the Beatification of the Eighty-five Martyrs, November 1987.

THE ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC DIOCESAN ARCHIVISTS:  
A REPORT FROM AMERICA

The Association of Catholic Diocesan Archivists (ACDA) was established in 1982 and is committed to the active promotion of professionalism in the management of diocesan archives in the United States. The main goals of the ACDA are to:

- 1) work for the establishment of an archival program in every diocese, as outlined in the Bicentennial Document on Ecclesiastical Archives issued by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and to assist bishops and chancellors in the development of such programs;
- 2) promote a regular system of education and training programs including both basic archival training for newly appointed archivists, and continuing education for those who are further advanced in the field;
- 3) provide a channel for personal contact, communication, and information for all diocesan archivists;
- 4) develop guidelines for the management of diocesan archives according to professional standards and in a unified way;
- 5) provide a forum for discussion and action in technical matters that are unique to the administration of diocesan archives;
- 6) promote contact and co-operation between diocesan archivists and others in the archival profession, both nationally and regionally; and
- 7) to represent diocesan archivists before organizations such as the NCCB, the Canon Law Society, ecclesiastical archivists in other countries, as well as researchers and the Catholic public; and to raise the consciousness of others as to the necessity and value of diocesan archives.

The ACDA meets annually in conjunction with the larger Society of American Archivists' meeting. During these meetings members make formal presentations on topics as Records Management for Diocesan Archives. At the 1986 meeting, the ACDA toured the Chicago Archdiocesan Archives and Records Center and in 1987 the group hopes to tour both the Records Center for the Diocese of Brooklyn and the New York Archdiocesan Archives.

Activities sponsored by the ACDA thus far have included a workshop specially designed for diocesan archivists and reprinting and distributing David Gray's manual *Records Management for Parishes and Schools*, originally written for the Diocese of Bismarck, North Dakota. In 1985, the *ACDA Bulletin*, the Association's bi-yearly newsletter made its debut.

Projects in the planning stages include a survey of diocesan archives to study how the ACDA can best attain its goals and serve its membership which now numbers over one hundred persons; a manual on establishing and managing a diocesan archival program; and a bibliographic guide to the holdings in all diocesan archives in the United States.

The current and third president of the ACDA is Rev. Harry M. Culkin, Archivist for the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York. For further information about the ACDA, please write Ms. Elizabeth Yakel, Association of Catholic Diocesan Archivists, Newsletter Editor, 1234 Washington Blvd., Detroit, MI 48226 (U.S.A.)

Elizabeth Yakel

#### THE CATHOLIC ARCHIVES SOCIETY CONFERENCE, 1987

The eighth annual conference, held at the Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick (Derbyshire), on 25—27 May, was attended by forty-one religious and professional archivists, including several new members.

After the customary introduction by the Chairman (*Miss Judith Close*), the *Rt Rev. Mgr Cummins*, Vicar-General of Nottingham Diocese, welcomed the Society to the Diocese, referring particularly to the valuable work of *Fr Anthony Dolan*, Archivist, and Mrs L. Loewenthal, on the Nottingham archives. In the evening (25 May), Mr Leo Warren gave an absorbing talk on 'Processions, Guilds and Bazaars', covering many aspects of Catholic religious, parish and social life in Lancashire in Victorian times, and stimulating many members to recall memories of similar, if later, experiences.

The next morning (26 May), *Fr Michael Sharratt*, Librarian, Ushaw College, spoke informally about the preservation and ordering of the Lisbon College Archives (described in *Catholic Archives, No.1, 1981*) transferred to Ushaw in 1973. This was followed by a joint talk and demonstration by *Fr Francis Isherwood* (Portsmouth) and *Fr David Lannon* (Salford) on the use of computers in archives. The conference's expedition this year was to inspect the Nottingham diocesan archives and to visit the Cathedral. Members spent part of the evening in groups discussing computer applications, religious archives and research, diocesan archives, and parish records.

After the conference Mass on 27 May, there was a useful 'open forum', including reports from the discussion groups, notes about diocesan publications on the Eighty-five Martyrs, and various notes and queries. The conference was concluded by the AGM, at which the Chairman (*Miss Judith Close*) reviewed the previous year's activities, referring in particular to the successful one-day seminar on 25 April. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Editor, and the Council members were all re-elected, and *Sr Patricia Moran* was elected Treasurer in place of *Sr Winifred Wickins*, who was generously thanked for her hard work. Members were saddened by the death of *Sr Grace Hammond RHCJ* on 11 May and prayed in thanks for her work, not least as a founder member and first Secretary of the Society.

A full report of the conference is given in *CAS Newsletter, No.8, Autumn 1987*. The 1988 conference will be held at High Leigh Conference Centre, Hoddesdon (Herts.), on 30 May to 1 June.