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CONTENTS

Editorial Notes		2
Sorting Religious Archives	P. HUGHES	3
The Archives of the English Province of the Servite Fathers	S. FOSTER, OSM	17
The Church Missionary Society Archives: or Thirty Years Work in the Basement	R. KEEN	21
Association of Church Archivists of Spain		31
My Browne Heaven: The Father Browne Collection	E. E. O'DONNELL, SJ	32
The Records of the Converts' Aid Society	R. RENDEL	39
Catholic Archives in the Netherlands: The Legacy of 'Glorious Roman Life'	J. VANVUGT	42
The Archives of the Company of Mary Our Lady (O.D.N.)	M. SMITH, ODN	49
Course for Monastic Archivists, 1991	E. R. OBBARD, OCD	52
Some Nineteenth Century Papers in the Sydney Archdiocesan Archives	F. CARLETON	56
The Religious Archives Group Conference, 1991	L. E. BOSWORTH	58
The Catholic Archives Society Conference, 1991		59
Address by the Pope to the Sixth International Church Archives Day in Rome, 1991		60
Association of Church Archivists of Ireland	LEO LAYDEN, CSSp	61
Book Reviews:		62
<i>Historical Archives of the Company of Mary Our Lady 1607-1921, Pilar Foz y Foz, ODN</i>	T. G. HOLT, SJ	
<i>Irish Church History Today, R. O Muiri</i>	J. A. WATT	
<i>Illustrations:</i>		
The Feast of Corpus Christi, Warley Barracks, 1919		34
Children at Dorling Downs, New South Wales, 1925		36
Course for Monastic Archivists 1991: cartoon sketches		53, 54.

EDITORIAL NOTES

The Society can perhaps reasonably claim, even after only thirteen years' work, to be the principal body representing the interests of Roman Catholic Church archivists in the United Kingdom. To a large extent it has succeeded by adhering to its main objectives, namely the care, preservation and use of the Church's religious, diocesan and other archives, and by responding to the expressed needs of its members. However, as its membership expands, wider horizons can be perceived and the responsibilities of leadership also become apparent. This year being a leap year encourages thoughts of possible, perhaps even necessary, new initiatives.

It was not long before the Society realized the similarity of the problems faced by archivists of all Churches, both in this country and abroad. In this country, a promising start to inter-Church action in archival matters has been made by the Religious Archives Group of the Society of Archivists, while Miss Keen's article on the records of the Church Missionary Society, printed in this issue, demonstrates not only the similarities of Anglican and Catholic missionary records but also our Society's ecumenical spirit. Abroad, the Society so far has had only fitful contacts with national associations of Catholic Archivists. Many benefits would surely derive from sharing common experiences. Perhaps one of the longer established associations in Europe could be persuaded to set up a central information bureau. Both ecumenical and international roles of church archivists were underlined in the Pope's message to the Sixth International Church Archivists Day in Rome last September, also printed in this issue. Being assured that they are 'protecting the cultural value of the written memory' of the Church will hearten many archivists in their solitary labours.

A practical project currently in progress is the survey of the records of lay societies in the Church. This was first suggested by Miss Rendel in her report on the records of the Converts' Aid Society in 1988, and a preliminary list of lay societies active between the two Vatican Councils appeared in the 1990 edition of Catholic Archives. It is feared that the records of some of these societies, certainly of defunct bodies, may be in danger of dispersal or destruction. There is already a need to find homes for records of closed religious houses and the survey of lay societies may well reveal a like problem. A similar situation has already been addressed, and partly remedied, in the Netherlands, as Mr van Vugt describes in his article.

The use of archives is such a valuable stimulus to their preservation that the Society should perhaps do more to encourage research into the Church's history. It is hoped that the hundred or so articles already published in Catholic Archives will prompt such research and that the Index promised this year will help to reveal the scope of the original material available.

All leaping begins and ends on the ground and, happily, the Society continues to fulfil another of its primary functions of advising and instructing novice archivists. Dr Hughes supplies valuable practical advice in an excellent article which will surely become essential reading for all new religious archivists. Similarly, Fr O'Donnell, in his article on the Fr Browne Collection gives sound advice on the treatment of photographs and imparts much needed status to this important category of records found in almost all archives.

All contributors are warmly thanked for their articles and reports. Similar material is earnestly solicited for future issues.

R. M. Gard, Honorary Editor

SORTING RELIGIOUS ARCHIVES

Peter Hughes

INTRODUCTION

I begin by entering the caveat that the written version of a talk must inevitably omit much of the detailed illustration and spoken nuance of its original utterance. I was given a wide brief 'to speak about the practicalities of working on archives, how one sets about one's task, what 'original bundles' are, and so on'. Though such a brief evokes a practical bias towards the earlier stages of archival work, it will also be necessary to address some other matters. I hope my comments will resonate with your own experiences as archivists. If I sometimes stray into counsels of archival perfection, I remain very sensitive to the restrictions of budget, equipment, and space, within which so many archivists of religious institutes have to work. I have worked on the archives of a number of religious organisations, both Roman Catholic and Anglican, but the examples in this paper are very largely taken from my work with Catholic religious institutes. I have done my best to preserve a prudent degree of anonymity.

My personal route into archives work has been through academic historical research. This can be used as a strength. One already knows how searchers work, how they approach archives, and their needs for access to records. Perhaps the time has come when we Catholic archivists might make a more sustained address to the needs of searchers, whether these be members of our own dioceses or institutes, or others. Perhaps we confuse institutional secrecy with a prudent access policy. An academic background can also be a strength in making one sensitive to the canons of historical evidence, bringing a ready willingness to be either accurate or agnostic when deciding difficult issues of arrangement. Even so, there may be a danger that an historical research background might lead one to be *unduly* interested in the substantive historical content of the papers, thus impeding the progress of the archival work. I have tried to be aware of the strengths and weakness that I have brought from my past work experience into my tasks as an archivist. I have tried to use them positively by balancing commitment with objectivity. However we came to be appointed religious archivists, it is useful to review our existing skills and their degree of transferability into archival work. Such a review should not absolve us from a need to match our growing archival experience with such in-service training as we can reasonably acquire. It is equally important to retain a sense of proportion, and not become unduly discouraged or seduced by professional jargon and the more esoteric realms of archival theory.

I have ordered this account by following the stages through which archival work normally proceeds. It is important to note at the outset that any description tends to make each phase appear more neat and discrete than is actually the case. In practice there may often be some overlap and movement

back to earlier stages. Occasionally, phases which are here described sequentially may readily be carried out at the same time.

AN UNSORTED COLLECTION OF RECORDS

An unsorted collection of records might range from one packet of papers to the entire surviving material of a diocese or religious institute. I remember one collection which was typical of records I have encountered in the course of my work with a number of institutes, both at general and provincial level. The greater proportion of the material consisted of correspondence, documents, registers, financial accounts, academic dissertations, plans, maps, and the like dating from around the 1850s. Also, there were about sixty printed books dating from 1732. These were largely concerned with the history of the institute, although some of the earlier ones were printed versions of constitutions and other significant documents. As well as books, there were runs of journals and printed circulars and pamphlets. The collection contained a substantial quantity of visual records dating from about 1870, mainly photographs and slides, but with some film and videotapes as well. There were also quite a number of audiotapes. A very large quantity of artefacts completed this accumulation, among which were religious relics and the equipment for making them, military medals, jewellery, crockery, Mass vestments, parts of old style religious habits, and sacred vessels, to name but some.

Even a cursory examination usually reveals that some items were self-consciously preserved from the days of the earliest members of the institute as specially significant to their history. In this category it is not uncommon to find a bundle of the early letters requesting the foundation. Some other items, like trust deeds and audited accounts, had been retained to meet legal or financial requirements. Records like old bills and invoices often survived through inertia or accident. In recent years a lot of artefacts have come to light from the lumber rooms of closed houses. Some have been kept because they seem to provide evidence of pre-Vatican II religious taste and practice, which would otherwise be lost to history in the sweep of renewal. Such is a fairly typical unsorted collection of records. At first encounter they are usually to be found packed up in suitcases, trunks, and large cardboard boxes of the sort discarded by any large grocery store or supermarket.

PRECURSORY TASKS

Before beginning any direct work on such records it can be very helpful to read something of the history of the Institute which generated them, as well as about its more general historical context. This is essential for someone like myself who is brought in to do the archiving, but it is also a useful preparation for the inside archivist new to the work, or whose historical accuracy may be dulled by familiarity. This tentative outline history is best derived from a good critical work, but even less reliable histories can provide a basic working chronology. Do not be surprised if the original documents occasionally contest

the written history. It may be a name or a date, and we may need to revise our working outline. I stress that the outline is merely a tentative tool for the ordering of the records, and constantly subject to revision as the work proceeds. Where no history is available, a chronology can be built as one is making the initial inventory of the papers, and here a knowledge of the broader historical context is particularly useful.

Next try to find out how, when, and why the unsorted collection of records came into being. These are important questions for the archivist confronted with an accumulation of unsorted material. The answers may throw light on the origin of the records, where they have been, and why they have survived. These may seem historian's questions, but they relate crucially to key issues in the conservation and archival arrangement of the papers.

Finally, it is prudent to make an initial assessment of the environmental conditions of the room in which the collection is currently housed. This is particularly important if the room is intended to be the permanent record store. Even if it is a temporary location provided solely for the work of arranging the collection, an early survey of the ambient conditions may help to avoid deterioration in the condition of the records. Such an assessment is largely a matter of common-sense, although it can be done very exactly with modern devices. One such try to avoid damp, damaging sunlight, excessive heat, and lack of ventilation. The aim is to achieve reasonably constant temperature and humidity. User-friendly thermo-hygrometers are available at reasonable prices. With such an instrument it is possible to monitor regularly. Then action can be taken to approximate to the recommended standard of a temperature between 13° C and 18° C, and a relative humidity between 55% and 65%. Photographic materials, films, and magnetic tapes are best conserved at the low end of these ranges. There are more precise standards for such non-paper materials which can be referred to if necessary. Compromise is always required, if only because most religious archivists have to undertake their archival work in the same room as that in which the records are stored. If anxiety overcomes common-sense, or there is some serious problem, then one can seek advice from an experienced archivist in the C.A.S. network, or from a nearby county record office.

MAKING AN INVENTORY

Making an inventory elides into accessioning, but for present purposes it is useful to consider the two tasks discretely. Before making a detailed inventory, it is advisable to cull information from the larger containers. Note carefully any labels or identifying marks which give a clue to provenance and contents. Record accurately the location and arrangement of these large containers within the room. This information can be surprisingly helpful in identifying documents. One might find, for example, a box of untitled registers adjacent to a large box of records associated with a certain house, institution, or locality. It is not unusual to find registers left untitled because their purposes were so

obvious to the original users. They would not envisage that such documents would eventually be archived in a distant location. The proximity of the boxes, or even that both are labelled 'For the Archives' in the same handwriting, may help to identify the registers at a later stage of the work. Such information can easily be lost by immediately re-arranging the room to make it tidy enough for work. Still trying not irrevocably to disturb the received arrangement of the large boxes, unpack their contents. Note very carefully the order in which the smaller parcels are packed. Repack these smaller packets, even though this may present some problems to be noted later. Then, and only then, should one move the larger containers for ease of working, or to improve their ambient conditions. It is not uncommon to find these large boxes stacked against hot radiators or in damp corners. As I record all this information from the large containers, I mark each very clearly with a number or some such code.

One can now start the inventory or outline accessioning of the packets, files or smaller bundles contained in the larger boxes. At this stage, however, I normally take a sample of two or three of the larger boxes to accession in more detail than the whole collection requires. The purpose of doing this is to gain some detailed feel for the material early in one's work. It is a matter of chance whether one has derived a representative sample. However, it has been my experience so far that one can gain a fairly good idea of the quality of the whole collection by this method. In one instance there were thirty-one large boxes of papers and registers, of which I chose two for this kind of detailed inventory. Besides some registers, the two boxes contained thirty-three packets or bundles of papers. A close examination of these packets revealed a heavy emphasis on official papers associated with the apostolate of the institute. There were some very scholarly papers on the history of the institute written by two sisters, together with their research material. A great deal of personal correspondence that seemed of historical significance was mixed with such ephemera as picture postcards and religious cards. Much of the packaging, and some of the letters themselves, suggested that they had been gathered together over a few years by one person in the institute. The survival of records sometimes depends on such a serendipitous magpie! Sets of material collected together by such a person can present an archival problem which I will address later. The detail revealed by this close examination later proved to be an accurate reflection of the quality of the collection as a whole. The feel thus gained can be of great help when one is immersed in the detail of arranging the collection. It is during this detailed sampling that the tentative chronology and outline history may first come into effective play as an archival tool.

ACCESSIONING

Once information from the larger containers has been accurately recorded and the contents of some of them sampled, the proper accessioning task can begin. What is required now is an accurate list of the contents of the packets, giving only sufficient descriptive information to identify the material. Normally

it is sufficient to note the type of record, the date, the name of the person or organisation, the subject, and the locality. It is sensible to note any original labelling, taking care not to rely upon it. A hurried packer might have erroneously titled the whole bundle on the basis of the top paper. Sometimes a label can help make sense of an apparently disparate set of papers. When one comes to arrange and list the collection, this information may help us to understand the principle of collection. It is advisable to add against an item appropriate comments such as 'conservation required', 'potential for weeding', '2 copies of this in packet 1/10'. and so on. As one proceeds, each packet, bundle, or document is provided with its own accession number. I tend to number the records serially through the whole collection, while also relating each to the larger container in which it was packed. Thus 4/89 would indicate that the particular item had been in the 89th bundle on which I had worked, and this had been packed in the 4th large container. Numbering in this way helps one to link earlier identifying information to a difficult item during listing. The accession number remains permanently with the item and is independent of the eventual reference coding of the archival list. An entry in the accession register or list might look something like this:

4/66: Correspondence re chaplain 1810-1850; Mgr. Lewis, Cardiff.
[Torn and damp - needs conservation]

As one proceeds with the accessioning, there is an opportunity to do some conservation first aid. At least one can remove damaging housings and fastenings such as rubber bands, sellotape, plastic folders, metal clips, tags, and pins. Sometimes it is possible to restore records damaged by careless packing. The careful smoothing out of folds in paper is one example. However, it is very important to recognize one's limitations in conservation first aid, knowing when to call in a conservator, or to leave well alone. Usually it is best to leave a damaged record as it is until specialist advice and help can be obtained. Most institutes can only afford this for items of very special historical or sentimental significance.

As soon as I have finished with a packet, bundle, or single document, I repack the items as I found them. I replace the letters and papers in their envelopes, packets or files, and put them back into their original large containers. There are a number of exceptions to repacking the material as found. In the first place, one is not always likely to emulate the ingenuity and space economy of an original packer uncluttered by archival sensibilities! So one supplements with additional large containers cross-referenced to the original boxes. In the collection referred to, the original thirty-three large boxes increased to forty-seven by the end of the accessioning. But such an increase is also accounted for by some of the other exceptions to repacking. These include the items most seriously in need of conservation, especially where repacking would damage them further; books and registers which constitute series, such as annals, profession registers and the like; artefacts; and items of unusual size and shape.

Finally, I set aside items which will be of use as reference material while archiving. In this category, lists of houses with their foundation dates, necrologies, and the like, come readily to mind. Even if they contain some errors, they can serve as useful aids. As each item is marked with its own accession number, there is no difficulty when the time comes to re-integrate it into the collection. While I am accessioning I build up a personal working index of persons, subjects, houses, and reference notes.

Careful accessioning serves a number of important purposes. Primarily, it enables us to take formal and accurate physical possession of the collection. Furthermore, such detailed knowledge facilitates our understanding of the way the records was created and ordered. In this way we come to take intellectual possession of the collection. That is essential if we are to arrange and order it in a manner that is reasonably consistent with its own character and internal logic.

SOME PROBLEMS

Three major problems can arise quite early in the work: The accrual of further material; the thinning of the existing material; and requests for access. To cite the first as a problem might seem paradoxical in a situation where one is trying to build up an archive. The second can be very controversial. Dealing with the third can be very difficult in human terms. Although I am concerned now with these problems arising while the work on an unsorted collection is going on, they remain matters which have to be addressed once the archive is established. I raise the issues for discussion, as we need to clarify our thinking and practice as more religious institutes establish archives, and as more external users become aware of them.

Many religious archivists tend to be divorced from records management issues. Administrations, as well, tend to view current or semi-current records as wholly distinct from the records housed in the archive. In reality, the letter written today and the earliest surviving letter represent two ends of a record continuum. At the centre of this continuum are the transitional records. Sometimes an administration uses an archive as a convenient store for non-current material that may be required later. The archivist is expected to do no more than house or retrieve these records, with no guidance as to their subsequent accession, weeding, or destruction. Conversely, when administrations insist on retaining substantially earlier material, it can make access very difficult, and listing problematic or incomplete. Another awkward situation can arise when new collections of unsorted material arrive unannounced and are dumped in the record store or archive room. The poor archivist is torn in two directions; wanting both to retain the new hoard *and* to reject it as impeding the work in progress.

When a sharp distinction is made between the historical record and the current record, the transitional nature of many records is denied. The recent impetus to establish archives owes much to the Vatican II imperative that

religious institutes return to their roots. One of the unintended effects has been to reduce sensitivity to the selective care and retention of contemporary records. We may easily forget that most records are created by administrations for the purpose of directing the life and apostolate of the institute. We must always acknowledge that the final decisions on the dispositions of records are, quite properly, a matter for the administration. For their part administrations might note the need for a more explicit articulation between the records currently held and those deposited in the archive. The key to these problems rests in the development of an agreed policy for the transfer, retrieval, and retention of records. This is not the place to go into details, save to say that each deposit would be accompanied by a transfer list, which would also serve as the basis for accessioning. It is wise to have a relatively ordered and agreed system of transfer and deposit, remembering that few archives are ever ultimately ordered, neat, and complete. To think that would be to forget that records are created, that they have a life, and that they die. Whether records find a permanent resting place in the archive, reside in the limbo of the semi-current record, or go to a fiery end, can be a matter of policy as much as of chance, or indeed of providence. Orderly transfer is often a neglected aspect of acquisition policy in the world of Catholic archives. An archivist might prudently bear in mind that building up a truly representative archive for the future may be considerably enhanced by a realistic transfer policy.

Thinning records, can cause anxiety in some archivists, as it seems so contrary to notions of historic value and guardianship. Many religious archivists play safe and keep everything that is deposited with them. Yet when they collect material from houses themselves, they will often discriminate what they will actually keep, discretely disposing of items they consider to be of no archival merit! Many retain an understandable reluctance to thin out a deposit under arrangement, or a deposit made by the administration. If one returns to the unsorted collection, the best time to thin is when one is accessioning. Thinning does not necessarily involve destruction, but can mean deposit elsewhere, or even sale. Prudent thinning can save space, boxing, and time. It is therefore a sensible economy. When the thinning involves the sale of material, it can enhance a limited budget. If a prudent transfer policy has been agreed, then many files will have been thinned before they are deposited, and difficult decisions are averted or reduced.

Many sets of financial and legal records can be thinned down after the expiry of the statutory period of retention. At the same time as a transfer policy is agreed, it might be useful to establish a retention schedule. To take an example: Under the Limitation Act of 1980 contracts for major building can be discarded after twelve years. After the expiry of that period one might keep a few basic documents and plans for permanent retention, discarding all the rest, as well as all the estimates that may have survived. Statutory requirements apart, there are a few basic rules that one can follow in deciding what documents to thin

out. There is no need to retain information held in another form in the same archive, unless the document is of some intrinsic merit. I once found several boxes full of baptismal certificates and faculties for the reception of converts. The baptismal and confirmation registers for the institution were extant and recorded the same information. The children and adults were long since dead, so there seemed no particular case for retaining the certificates and faculties simply on the ground that they were old. At best they might be retained for issue to any enquiring relative. To trace descendants for that purpose would be far too expensive and time-consuming. There is no need to retain information already held in another archive, unless you are thoroughly convinced that the integrity of a set of papers requires its retention. In a number of places I have found runs of government administrative circulars or official publications relating to particular apostolates. Most of these may be found in any major library or the Public Record Office, so there seems no special reason to keep them. Spare copies of papers and documents might also be thinned out and housed separately for loan, or transfer elsewhere.

It may be that religious archivists should be wary of a bias towards older material, or against records associated largely with temporal administration. Why is it, for example, that a leather covered bank pass book of 1884 is retained, while a computerised bank statement of 1984 is discarded? Both are likely to duplicate information held elsewhere in the archive, so both could be discarded. The religious archive is not a banking archive, and unless our imaginary passbook contains unique information relevant to the history of the institute, it need not be retained. Indeed, it might profitably be sold to a dealer in financial history collectables. We need to try and develop a prospective historical imagination when we are assessing the disposition of relatively contemporary records, and a retrospective record efficiency when assessing those from the past.

It remains to consider the vexing problem of providing access while one is working on the unsorted collection. This is not an intractable problem, if one is already operating under an agreed access policy. Even at an early stage, the orderly inventory or the transfer list ensures that an item can be retrieved quickly and accurately returned to its place. If someone needs to consult a record at this stage, then it is wise to stress that the archival description is tentative. In some cases it may be necessary to deny access to a document badly in need of conservation. As the work proceeds through accessioning to listing, the improving controls on the material make it easier to provide access with precision. But all this assumes that an access policy has been agreed, with a set of rules for searchers. There is a broad consensus in the archives world about such matters as closure periods for various classes of record and searchroom practice. It is not difficult to arrive at a policy and a set of rules which meet the need of a particular institute.

One of the most difficult situations that religious archivists have discussed with me is informal entry to the archive room and unauthorised

borrowing of material by members of their own institutes. It requires great tact and patience to maintain the normal standards of archival practice in such circumstances. A clear policy and well advertised rules can go far towards reducing these problems. Sometimes a lot of diplomatic work is required to make members of the institute understand that it is still possible to retain confidentiality for certain records, while also according access to outside users. It is worthwhile reflecting that we may appear eccentrically possessive to those who wish to use our archives. Sometimes we may need to remind ourselves that we are guardians of a common patrimony of Catholic history. We should try to make our archives open rather than exclusive, and this need not be inconsistent with the proper physical control of the records, nor with any appropriate need for confidentiality.

ARRANGEMENT AND LISTING

Accurate and systematic accessioning, together with detailed sampling, make it possible to look at the material as a whole, and so to determine the arrangement, with its classification and listing. By now one should have a real feel for the collection. The truly crucial point is that one must be led by the material. This allows our arrangement to reflect, so far as possible, the way the records were created, and the way they have been gathered together over the years. When first commissioned to work on some collections of records, I am often asked to catalogue or classify the records. This seems to imply that there is some pre-existing classificatory system analogous to a library classification such as Dewey or the Library of Congress. This is not the case with an archive. Each collection is unique in what has survived the passage of time, and in the order and purpose of its original creation. We need to be very cautious about imposing a schematic arrangement on our records. We should avoid a slavish copy of models such as those published in the 1981 and 1985 editions of *Catholic Archives*. In each case the authors quite properly comment that their schemes are guidelines only and not blueprints, that there is no scheme of general application, and that *each archive shapes its own order*. This fundamental notion cannot be repeated often enough.

Paradoxically, therefore, our work as archivists is ideally the opposite of what the title to this paper might seem to suggest. We are not so much sorting as trying to preserve or restore the original order in which the material was created. Archivists sometimes call this the natural or structural order. We are trying to preserve as much as we can of the long-term ways in which the records were arranged, for this reflects their use over time. Such a well established ordering reveals much of the life of the institute, and its perception of its own history. In approaching the archival arrangement we must be led by the records themselves, and our draft archival list needs to be flexible. The material itself will suggest modifications to the draft arrangement as the work proceeds.

In many cases the natural order is quite readily discerned. Registers, community annals, minutes books, correspondence files, and the like, are all

readily linked to the person or entity which created them. These in turn can be linked to each other in the context of the institute and the wider Church. The arrangement and the list should reflect these organic relationships. The natural order can also reflect the way in which a set of records may have come down to us. On one occasion I discovered a hoard of neatly tied bundles of correspondence and documents spanning the period 1840-1890 in a locked bureau which had not been used since the turn of the century. These neatly tied bundles covered the whole range of business conducted by one provincial superior who had been in office for an exceptionally long term. The cache included many of the paper records prior to her time. To have dispersed these records into the classes then evolving for the main collection would have fractured the integrity of a group which uniquely reflected the work of a nineteenth century provincial superior. They showed the manner in which business was conducted by Mother X, the way she managed her records, and the way she developed her own historic archive. They were listed and described just as she arranged them, under some such title as 'Mother X's Papers'. The earlier material which she had preserved might be split off under the title 'Original Historic Archive', but preserving its arrangement by Mother X. I am emphasising the point that so far as possible we must respect the records as they have naturally evolved.

A most difficult problem is presented by the collecting activities of the type of person I referred to earlier as a serendipitous magpie. They were around long before archivists arrived on the scene! Such persons collect or have sent to them almost anything and everything; and it is through their activity that such a rich array of material survives. Often the only logic inherent in the bundles is that the contents have been collected by that one person. When letters survive which reveal him to have been a well-known collector, then we probably have a range of everyday material considered by contemporaries to be of significance in the life of the institute. Postcards, badges, personal correspondence, holiday souvenirs, and more conventionally historic material are all packed up together. Given such a diversity of material accumulated by one person, what is to be done? In this case a compromise may be appropriate. Some bundles may be retained intact to indicate Father Y's collecting role in the province or diocese, while the contents of others are dispersed to the appropriate categories. The accession number will continue to indicate the provenance of the dispersed items.

Such an instance leads us to consider the artificial or contrived arrangement, which archivists sometimes designate a devised order. Sometimes a set of records does not provide any ready evidence of a natural order. This may be the result of a number of factors. The papers may have been packed in a hurry, leaving no discernible order or logic other than getting the most into the box. It may be that over a period of long storage, the papers were rearranged to save space. Sometimes a user has been given *carte blanche* to forage an unarchived collection for the purposes of writing a thesis or book, with the result that

records are disarranged or removed. It may be remarked that this kind of disarrangement and loss of original records has also been occasioned by the zealous promoters of the causes of saints, especially during the late nineteenth century. Though some would readily concede that this was a natural process in the life of the institute which is reflected in its records. Evidence of a natural order might be lost or distorted by straightforward accidental loss or damage. Sadly, it may also be difficult to determine an original order due to well-intentioned but ill-informed archiving in the past.

In such circumstances we may need to devise an order. It may be possible to do this with a modest confidence that one is reflecting the original order to some degree. The use of such guidelines as those published in *Catholic Archives* may be particularly appropriate in this instance, as they are abstracted from empirical cases of archived records similar to those the institute itself has created or acquired. Where a part of the records has been lost, it may be possible to infer an original order from that part which has survived. It is in precisely this situation that our knowledge of the historical context may help. It may be that we can make prudent use of a history based on some of the records now lost or discarded. There are many possibilities, but in the end one has to trust one's own judgement in discerning themes and devising structures.

A problem that arose while working on the records of a major church organisation may suffice as an illustration of devised arrangements. The General Secretary's correspondence and papers had been accumulating since the beginning of the nineteenth century. On several occasions in the past fifty years, large amounts of these records had been extracted, rearranged, and filed in a new system. We do not know whether any records were discarded at the same time. Although there was a substantial quantity of correspondence left, it was nevertheless a residue of the original collection. In the more recent past the residual bundles had been reboxed in chronological order. They were in their original format, folded and tied together by subject or correspondent, this information being written on the outermost letter. They seemed to cover a very wide range of subjects from workhouse children to forms of conveyancing. This was to be expected in bundles that were the residue of some major rearrangement of the original records. It is not known in which order the bundles were originally filed. On much closer scrutiny it was discovered that these letters and papers were largely concerned with education legislation and the associated political and pressure group activity, especially that relating to church schools and training colleges. It was decided to devise an order which grouped the papers into sets relating to particular parliamentary bills and acts. The papers were not originally ordered so thematically, but they had initially been evoked by such legislative events. It was felt that this arrangement would reflect the actual work of the organisation, and order the material in a useful and accessible way for searchers. The papers that remain outside the devised order would simply be listed as the General Secretary's miscellaneous papers and boxed alphabetically by subject with a person index.

Once the draft arrangement has been decided, one can proceed to list and box, using reference codes which are as simple as possible. This will help the searcher to cite and requisition a record accurately, and the archivist to produce it efficiently. The records of religious institutes are often arranged on a locality basis. This arises naturally, and sometimes reflects an institute's early history as a very loose federation of autonomous houses. This can be retained in the archival arrangement of a group of records, and the material ordered around houses. In one case CA represented Cardiff; CA/L signified the records of the local community at Cardiff; while CA/A indicated those of the apostolate that the institute conducted in Cardiff. When the institute re-structured itself into provinces, Cardiff became the provincial house for many years, and this was represented in the coding as CA/P. Within sub-groups such as these R might stand for a series or class of registers, D for documents, M for minute books, or whatever the nature of the material requires. Within each class of records, items such as bundles or volumes may then be numbered. Sometimes it may be necessary to further distinguish a single document, and a further number will suffice. On the archivist's master copy of the list, it can be useful to cross reference to the accession number. An item might be reference coded thus:

CA/L/D/1 1810-1825 Letters from Bishop Collingridge, [5/81]
Vicar Apostolic of the Western District
to Mother St David Evans.

The complete list puts before the user the totality of an arrangement, and its representation of the organic unity and history of the records in a group. A searcher cannot gain an overall view of the holding from an index. It is only the list which can provide such a conspectus. It is not possible to reproduce an entire list in a paper of the present compass. The completed list should be provided with an introduction which very briefly outlines the history of the institute. It is also helpful to cite any problem or aspect of the arrangement which may affect a searcher's use of the records.

I cannot now deal in any detail with the boxing, item packing, and labelling which goes on as one is listing. It is generally better to eschew expensive and permanent labelling, to use pencil, and to work across boxes using the reference codes rather than giving boxes their own discrete numbers. In this way one can economise on money and space, as well as allowing more readily for the insertion of later accruals. An index is very much a second stage finding aid, which can be added as the work load permits. With a computer or a word processor, however, it is possible to construct an index as one proceeds with the listing. I use an Apple Macintosh LC and Portable with Microsoft Word 4.0 for document processing, and FileMaker Pro for making databases. A dedicated computer such as an Amstrad wordprocessor will suffice just as well for most purposes. It may be helpful to remark that most of the tasks described in this paper are greatly facilitated by the use of such tools, which are much easier to use than the pundits might have us believe. It is also pertinent to remark once

again that in practice some of the archival stages described here as discrete may sometimes appropriately be combined.

When I have completed an assignment, I put my working notes in order and leave them with the collection. Should you move to different work, you might consider doing likewise. There are circumstances in which subsequent archivists may need to revise arrangements and dating. This can arise when missing parts of a group of records comes to light, or when work on other sources calls a chronology into question. An archivist may find old working notes of great value in determining such issues, and in resolving minor archival queries. All archivists have their own ways of working within the current consensus of best practice. The arrangement of a collection is there for all to see and judge, but our notes might explain why it came to be that way.

SOME CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

When I feel daunted by a complex set of records, or I am concerned whether I will ever complete an arrangement, I can find myself unwittingly pondering on the qualities which might be most useful to an archivist. My personal choice would fall on patience, accuracy, discretion, and diplomacy. Another archivist might make different choices. Often our work can be boring, repetitive, and trying, especially if we are checking a long series of documents, or coming to terms with the illegible handwriting of a bundle of letters. If we are not patient, or do not persevere, an item may be misunderstood or remain unaccounted. Accuracy is essential. Where there is doubt, we must seek to verify dates and names. Never guess, but leave undated or unattributed those items whose time, provenance or identity cannot be verified. Leave inferences on such matters to those who use the records, and do not intrude your own into the archival list without exceptional cause. Discretion is needed in so many areas of our work. We come to know much that is personal and confidential. It requires discretion to balance confidentiality with access, seeking to avoid undue secrecy and a personal possessiveness of the records. It requires discretion to gather in from houses long treasured items that now require proper archival care. It can require almost infinite discretion to postpone or deny access to one of the brethren who finds it hard to accept the ordinary archival controls of the common patrimony of records. The situations are legion, and in each one needs diplomacy and tact to give discretion its best effect.

There are other occasions amid the records, when it is borne in on me that our documentary residues are mere shades of the lives of those they record. To see several hundred years of a community's life and work recorded in but a dozen or so boxes is a sobering image. They stand on the shelf like funeral urns. The irony at the heart of our work is that the historic records we tend with such care and affection are no more than the traces of real lives and relationships. There are lesser ironies, but they are no less human for that. In annals we often read of the generosity of past lay benefactors, and of the struggles to make earlier

foundations. Does anything tangible remain? Perhaps there are just a few papers, books, or artefacts. All mere things, but they are things which reveal something about past lives. They are all we have, so we should treasure them. I remember once working on some registers specially maintained for the annual renewal of vows. In the early years the signatures were bold and strong. As the years went by they settled into a mature and habitual hand, until towards the end they began to fade and waver. Then for a further year or so a cross was scrawled instead. Finally, 'Requiescat in pace' and a date was scribbled in the margin. That was the only continuous record of that person. Our records tell us much, and yet nothing, about the hidden lives; about the majority who quietly sustained the lives of our institutes. It is a paradox. We only know that they were faithful. It is a fidelity to which we can respond through the quiet care and guardianship of our Catholic archives.

Note:

This article is the revised text of the talk which Dr Peter Hughes gave at the Society's annual conference in May 1991.

THE ARCHIVES OF THE ENGLISH PROVINCE OF THE SERVITE FRIARS

Stewart Foster OSM

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Servite Friars trace their origins to thirteenth-century Florence and the Seven Holy Founders. One of the orders of mendicant friars, from Italy they spread to France, Germany, Spain and Austria-Hungary, but did not make a foundation in Britain until 1864. A number of individual friars enjoyed links with the British Isles before that date, but it was not until Fathers Philip Bosio OSM and Augustine Morini OSM arrived in London in October 1864 that the friars may be said to have attempted a foundation across the Channel.

The immediate reason for the arrival of the friars was to act as chaplains to the Sisters of Compassion at Cale Street, Brompton. This community was aggregated to the Servite Order in 1864, having been founded at Cuves, Haute Marne, in 1840 and thereafter establishing itself in London where it worked alongside the Oratorians. The friars first lodged in a property adjacent to the Servite Sisters, but gradually relocated themselves in a variety of properties in Chelsea. In 1867, their numbers having doubled, they were assigned part of the London Oratory parish as a separate mission. In 1874 the present church of Our Lady of Dolours, Fulham Road, was opened. The friars administer the Fulham Road parish to this day.

However, there were other factors involved in the coming of the friars to England. The 1860s witnessed Garibaldi and the Risorgimento: church property and ecclesiastical institutions were penalized or suppressed, and, together with a number of other orders and congregations with strong Italian links, the Servites realized that their future survival necessitated secure foundations abroad. Curiously enough, it was Protestant England that offered the greatest prospect of security, together with opportunities for missionary work. A number of prominent English Catholics had visited Servite houses in Italy, and Faber himself was a Servite tertiary. Funds were transferred to London bank accounts on behalf of the Order in Italy, and the establishment of a priory in the city offered fresh hope for vocations and the training of young friars. By the end of the century Fulham Road had received novices from Italy and France as well as from Britain and Ireland. In 1870 Father Morini left London to establish the first Servite Priory in the United States, whilst in 1891 the first Servite community in Brussels was given its obedience from Fulham Road.

In addition to London, the Servite Friars have founded the following houses, many of them with parish apostolates attached: Fordingbridge, Hampshire (1872-75 and 1888-1909); Bognor Regis (1881-); Begbroke, Oxford (1896-); Todmorden (1914-75); Kersal, Salford (1923-); Newbury (1947-75); Dundee (1950-); Glasgow (1974-88). In 1895 the English houses were erected into a Commissary Province, and a full Province of the Order in 1914. Today the friars

are engaged in a variety of apostolates: parochial ministry; retreats; hospital chaplaincy; training and formation work; and other specialized ministries. Friars from the Province also live and work in Rome, Swaziland and Hungary.

PROVENANCE

In addition to the archival material generated by the arrival of the Servites in England and their subsequent history, the Provincial Archives at St Philip's Priory, Begbroke, contain a number of items that pre-date the 1864 foundation. They comprise papers belonging or entrusted to the founding group of friars. Moreover, because so many friars were trained in London, attending St Thomas's Seminary, Hammersmith, or passing from the novitiate to Servite places of learning abroad, the archives of the English Province are especially rich in information relating to the wider order. Such material has proved very useful to scholars in our General Archives in Rome, where copies of the documents have been placed.

Although not strictly archival, there is an important collection of Servitana rescued from the continent and brought to England for safe keeping after 1864. 'The Servite Collection' is housed in a separate room but provides a useful aid to archival research. Dating from the sixteenth century onwards, the books and pamphlets in question were once part of Servite libraries in Italy and Austria. Modern works have been added to this collection so that there now exists an important resource for study of the history and spirituality of the Order.

PHYSICAL LOCATION

The archives are housed in a ground-floor room at Begbroke. Although not a large space (the room measures 7'x20'), there is a floor to ceiling height of 10' which has permitted placement of shelving above the steel cupboards, filing cabinets and open steel shelving that form the basis of the storage equipment. In common with most Provincial Archivists operating on a modest budget, we have had to improvise to some degree with regard to equipment and materials, only gradually progressing to superior products. Nevertheless, the archives utilize every inch of available space, including two large chests for maps and outsize photographic material. Moreover, the map drawers also allow the storage of exhibition material that can be produced with ease at short notice.

The archives were gathered at Begbroke in the mid-1970s and were first housed in an inferior location, a room that left a great deal to be desired with respect to physical conditions and working environment. With the availability of a ground-floor room such matters as natural light and constant temperature have been tackled, together with greater security. The chief tasks facing us at present are as follows: the repair and conservation of early material from London damaged by water some twenty years ago; the provision of a detailed list for each box of material; the sorting of as yet untouched boxes; the gathering of material from other houses so as to consolidate the Provincial holdings. Such tasks and problems will be familiar to archivists of other orders and congregations.

CONTENT

There follows a brief description of the structure of the archive, together with some notes on the more important sections. The system of classification adopted has been tailored to suit our own needs, but is broadly in keeping with the classification schedules of other orders. It has also been important, in drawing up and adapting the schedule, to keep in touch with the General Archives in Rome, both for advice and information.

Part I of the collection pertains to material from and about the Servite Friars world-wide. An introductory section houses MS histories of the Order, necrologies, biographies, etc; it is followed by a substantial Constitutional section which gathers together material relating to the government of the Order at the level of General Chapters and Constitutions. This section is arranged in chronological sequence. This is made easier by the fact that it is the General Chapter of the Order which is the highest authority for governmental change.

The third section of Part I is an important collection of official letters and reports issued by the various governmental, administrative and academic commissions and institutes of the Order. Much of the material in this section is post-Second World War, but among earlier holdings is a collection of circulars from Priors General beginning in the 1880s.

Part II of the collection pertains to the English Province itself and is divided into sixteen sections. Of these the most important are as follows: a general section containing MS histories of the English foundation, biographical registers, press cuttings and necrologies; a constitutional section housing material relating to Provincial Chapters, Council Meetings, etc; a section covering the activities of various provincial offices and ventures (e.g. finance, training, communications). A fifty-year rule is operated with regard to access to such material as the correspondence of Provincials, and matters relating to personnel. These papers are kept in a separate cabinet.

Part II continues with material relating to the foundation of the Order in England. The principle followed here has been to gather together papers pre-dating 1864 and thereafter pertaining to the London community until 1874. This latter date, that of the opening of the church in Fulham Road, acts as a rough division, whilst care has been taken to keep intact collections to which a particular theme or issue is integral even beyond 1874, e.g. relations with the Servite Sisters. A further section comprises documents relating to benefactors, trusts and wills.

Another major section is that of material pertaining to each house beginning with the oldest foundation. At present only a preliminary sorting has been achieved, but it is intended that each foundation will be further subdivided into such headings as 'community', 'parish', 'schools', etc. Part II also includes sections covering relations with the Holy See and bishops, the Servite Sisters and Enclosed Nuns, the Servite Secular Institute and lay groups, as well as a growing

photographic collection from the English Province. The photographs themselves are sorted according to house, with a large collection of photographs of individual friars or groups of friars. As far as possible each photograph is identified, and it is intended that each will be numbered and described.

Part III of the collection pertains to other jurisdictions of Servite Friars and other branches of the wider Servite family. Thus, here one would find material relating to the Piedmontese Province of the Friars or the activities of the tertiary groups in the Philippines. Pictorial records of the wider order are housed here, as opposed to with the main photographic collection pertaining to the English Province. Here, too, is a collection of postcards and prints of Servite art, iconography and architecture from around the world. In particular, this latter section has proved most valuable in mounting displays and exhibitions. Thus the Provincial Archives have a public face, and can act as a useful, educational resource.

This has been but the briefest of descriptions. However, in common with other religious groups with limited time and resources, we have tried to devote as much time and energy to the consolidation of the archives as has proved possible. By way of encouragement to others, and with the benefit of having worked full-time in archives some years ago, it is my experience that once one has begun to gain an intellectual control of one's collection, i.e. when one's mental 'map' of the collection is sufficiently complete so as to facilitate sorting and listing in some detail, then the fruits of one's labours begin to show. Archival work is for the most part hidden, and is often little appreciated. Nevertheless, with a careful management of resources, judicious use of time, and a quietly-pursued policy of educating one's brethren as to the value of archives in general and one's own collection in particular, then much of our work is rewarding.

Enquiries concerning the archives should be addressed to The Archivist, St Philip's Priory, 2 Spring Hill Road, Begbroke, Oxford, OX5 1RX.

THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY ARCHIVES: OR THIRTY YEARS WORK IN THE BASEMENT

Rosemary Keen

WHAT IS CMS

The Church of England, unlike the Baptist and Methodist Churches, does not have one official body to organize and effect its missionary activity. The overseas work of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (established 1698) and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (founded by Royal charter in 1701) was to minister to the British settlers abroad. So, in the last decade of the eighteenth century, when some members of the Eclectic Society (an Anglican discussion society) began to discuss 'foreign missions' they realized that there was scope for a society to evangelize the indigenous people.

On 12 April 1799 a group of these Evangelical clergy and laymen met at the Castle and Falcon Inn in Aldersgate in the City of London and the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East was formed. At that meeting John Venn, rector of Clapham (and member of the Clapham sect), laid down the guidelines which the Society continues to follow. The basis was that CMS should be loyal to the leadership of bishops and to the Anglican pattern of liturgy, but that it was not to be dominated by the clergy. It emphasized the role of laymen and laywomen and was and is primarily a membership Society, with every member having equal rights. (John Henry Newman was a member while at Oxford and preached a sermon on behalf of CMS in 1830). The Society is basically run by its committees, each Secretary to the main committees being in charge of a department at headquarters. The General Committee (now General Council) is the most important and is responsible for overall policy. All CMS members are represented on General Committee and can play their part in shaping the role and work of the Society. Because it is an autonomous body within the Church of England, CMS has achieved a greater freedom of action than some other societies. Yet at the same time, because it is organized and run by its members in Britain, its leaders, particularly the Secretaries at the London headquarters, have had tremendous control over the work abroad.

This work began in Sierra Leone in 1804, but spread rapidly to India, Canada, New Zealand and the area around the Mediterranean. Its main areas of work are Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda and Sudan in Africa; India and Pakistan, Sri Lanka, China and Japan in Asia; Palestine, Jordan, Iran and Egypt in the Middle East. It has also worked extensively in New Zealand 1809-1914 and Canada 1822-1930, with smaller missions in Abyssinia 1830-42, Asia Minor (Smyrna) 1830-77, Greece 1830-75, Madagascar 1863-74, Malta 1815-43, Mauritius 1856-1929, Seychelles 1871-94, South Africa 1840-43, Turkey 1819-21, 1858-77, Turkish Arabia (Baghdad 1883-1919, Mosul 1900-1919), and the West Indies 1819-61.

THE ARCHIVES OFFICE

I was appointed as archivist on the CMS staff in 1959 but the history of the office goes back to the autumn of 1951. Scholars had for many years realized the great value of the CMS archives for the early history of the countries overseas in which the Society worked, notably West Africa. CMS agents reached Sierra Leone and many parts of Africa before any government officials arrived and their letters and journals are the first Western accounts of life in those countries.

The Pilgrim Trust gave a grant to CMS in 1951 for the express purpose of providing the means to make the early mission archives available to researchers. In the autumn of that year the first professional archivist, Mr Harry Cobb, was appointed for a three-year period. He faced a formidable task. The books and papers were in a strong-room in the sub-basement at the Salisbury Square, London, headquarters. The series of volumes were in a very confused state and many of their bindings were disintegrating, while the letters were in brown paper parcels piled high to the ceiling. Mr Cobb rapidly began to bring order from the chaos, helped by a retired missionary, Miss Grace Belcher, who typed his lists and catalogues. ¹ When he left in 1953, Miss Belcher kept the office open for researchers and dealt with staff and postal enquiries, while continuing to sort the many hundreds of packets into order and put them into folders and boxes.

The Society had celebrated its third jubilee in 1948/9 and it wanted to have its history written. There was a splendid three-volume work covering 1799-1899 by Eugene Stock, Editorial Secretary at the time of the Centenary. Stock had also written a supplementary volume for 1900-1910 but this new needed to be brought up to date. In 1959 Rev. Gordon Hewitt was chosen as author, but when he undertook the task he enquired about the availability of the more modern archives. The answer was that practically all the twentieth century material was still in cupboards in the various departments! So CMS decided to appoint a qualified archivist to the headquarters staff and I started work in 1 June 1959, having had the advantage of some years' experience under Dr Felix Hull at the Kent Archives Office.

My first office was a little space just outside the strong-room, which I shared with the research students. I was fortunate, however, in being granted an initial budget large enough to buy some adjustable racking (to complete the replacement of the old fixed metal shelves which Mr Cobb had begun) and to get some archive boxes (3,000 as a first instalment!). For the first three months Miss Belcher and I and the other two voluntary part-time staff unwrapped and boxed the piles of paper parcels which filled the quarter of the strong-room on the right of the entrance. I was able to dispose of some of the modern finance ephemeral papers which we found and thus made space for the loads of material sent down by the various headquarters' departments, notably from the General Secretary. A year or so later the office was moved to the basement level and then to a couple of light airy rooms in the Whitefriars Street premises at the back of the Salisbury

Square block. The only disadvantage to this was that it was a good three minutes walk from the office, down three flights of a spiral staircase and along a subterranean corridor to the basement, and then down another staircase to the strong-room. It kept us fit!

CMS had been negotiating a move from the City of London for some years and in 1966 we crossed the river to 157 Waterloo Road, to a building designed and built for us on the site of a bombed warehouse. The General Secretary was anxious to develop the research and information services of the Society and it was decided that the archives and library should work together. The Librarian and I designed the library to provide a large research area opposite the main book-cases, with an inner office for staff, which had glass partitions so that we could supervise the researchers while still being able to converse privately ourselves. There were many students, on average 80 to 100 a year, many of them working daily for weeks or months. For some years we were very busy.

By 1975, however, there were incipient problems. The strong-room was in the basement and had allowed some space for expansion; but as the archives continued to grow rapidly I initiated a discussion on their long-term future. There had been a change of General Secretary by this time, too, and the emphasis was no longer on information and research services. There were two possibilities. Either we kept the archives on site and they gradually took over the entire basement floor, or we deposited part of them away from the headquarters building. Everyone agreed that the main task of a missionary society was evangelism and not to provide research facilities for academics, however worthy. So it was decided that we should seek for a place where the material open for research would be looked after and made available for students. A long-term contract was duly made between CMS and the University of Birmingham and the first transfer of material to the Heslop Room (Special Collections) in the Main Library took place late in 1979 and 1980.

In 1981-83 the entire headquarters administration was restructured. The Library and Archives, which had been part of the General Secretary's Department joined a new Communications Division as part of the Information Services Department. Following the transfer of the pre-1949 archives to Birmingham, the number of research people working at Waterloo Road on the history of CMS had begun to diminish. The opportunity was therefore taken to prepare the library for its new role. Traditionally, one of the library's functions had been to offer back-up material to archive users. In fields other than mission, comparative religion, or church history, this material was now 'weeded' and offered to other appropriate libraries. The space freed enabled the amalgamation of the information office with the library and the servicing of CMS personnel became the library's prime task. The information office moved into part of the library space and the archives office moved out.

Shortly afterwards, there was a further major change. For a long time,

overseas Churches of the Anglican Communion had commented on the lack of any central place in London where all the missionary societies and mission bodies of the Church of England could be consulted. This discussion arose again at the moment when the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel was seeking an alternative headquarters and when CMS was anxious to reduce its headquarters size. Canon Simon Barrington-Ward, CMS General Secretary, suggested that we should consider all coming 'Under One Roof'. The scheme involved much discussion that eventually resulted in our present Partnership House.

To prepare for this new order, 157 Waterloo Road had to be changed to open plan, in effect the whole building being gutted floor by floor. The effect on the staff was traumatic. Half moved over to share USPG's offices in Tufton Street, Westminster. The other half, including the archivist and librarian stayed in Waterloo Road. All the archives had to be packed up and stored off-site and we had only three weeks or so to do this. Birmingham University Library came to the rescue. The Heslop Room staff took that section of the archives that was not due to transfer until 1990, but was already prepared, plus 250 tea-chests full of other precious books and papers. The remaining archives (other than the section I was working on) were transferred to a strong-room at Tufton Street.

As so often happens, the refurbishment took months longer than was expected. We moved our temporary office three times before reaching our final position, which was, not surprisingly for archives, in the basement. The office-cum-workroom is immediately opposite the store-room, now shared amongst all the societies in the building. Any research students work in the library which is on the ground floor.

The amount of storage space on site for the archives is approximately 400 footrun of mobile shelving, compared to 1,900 footrun before refurbishment. This meant that initially we moved the archives which had been stored at Tufton Street back to Waterloo Road and then on to an official off-site store. Then the tea-chests came back from Birmingham and their contents were sorted and the majority sent off-site. Having had just under two years with archives in half a dozen places and with no access whatsoever either to the material at Tufton Street (we had had to pack the gangways as well as the shelves in the store) or to the contents of the Birmingham tea-chests (which were stacked four or five high), it was an improvement to have only three storage places, however scattered. The impossibility of personal access to the London off-site store was so great a difficulty, however, that we searched for an alternative. In 1990 we were able to negotiate a short-term contract for a small portion of the Church Commissioners' store at Bermondsey. At long last I was able to get everything unpacked and shelved in a place where I was personally dealing with it. The final objective appears to be in sight. This is, that the material available for research is at Birmingham, the current decade (i.e. 1990s) is at 157 Waterloo Road and the intervening decades (at present 1950s-1980s) are at Bermondsey.

WHAT ARCHIVES DO WE HOLD?

The main bulk of the archives for which I am responsible consists naturally of those of CMS itself. These include not only minute books, ledgers, etc., and vast quantities of correspondence, but also the Society's publications (annual reports, periodicals, books and pamphlets) and historical audio-visual material (films, tapes, videos, photographs and slides). Then there are records of local CMS Associations [supporting groups of CMS members] and the archives of other societies with which CMS has been linked or amalgamated over the years. There are also the deposited family papers of CMS missionaries and other agents connected with the Society and other material relating to CMS or CEZMS.

We hold the archives of three other missionary societies. Of these the most important is the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society with which we amalgamated in 1957. CEZMS is an Anglican society founded in 1880 when it separated from the interdenominational Indian Female Normal School Society (founded 1852). Its main aim was to evangelize the women of India by means of normal schools [teacher training colleges], zenana² visiting, medical missions, schools for Hindu and Muslim girls and the employment of Biblewomen. It was unusual in that it was run entirely by women and only employed women. The only man in any way connected with it was a clergyman who undertook deputations for the Society in those parishes which insisted on having men as preachers. CEZMS worked in North and South India, Sri Lanka (from 1889), China (1884-1950) and Japan (1885-92). Its archives suffered badly from numerous changes of headquarters and also from severe flood damage during the Second World War. The correspondence with the missions overseas survives only from 1921. The minute books are complete, though entries are brief. Fortunately, their periodical *India's Women* together with their *Annual Reports* provide a rich and vital source of information.

The Society for promoting Female Education in China, India and the East (commonly known as the Female Education Society) was founded in 1834. It was interdenominational, was staffed by women and employed only women agents. Its object was the establishment and superintendence of schools in China, India and the countries adjacent. It also gave schools grants of money and boxes of work for sale. Its work began in India, China and Singapore; it also spread to Palestine and Syria from the 1860s and Japan from 1877. It had shorter-lived work in South Africa (1848-92), Lebanon (1859-71) and Mauritius (1860-81). Its support for schools was widespread throughout India and China as well as Sri Lanka, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Burma, Penang, Greece, Turkey, Algeria and throughout the Levant. In 1899, following the death of the Secretary, the Society was closed down and the work was divided amongst missionary societies of various denominations. CMS accepted twenty-four of its missionaries and their work in Palestine, China, Japan and India. The Singapore schools were handed over to CEZMS. The archives are very incomplete, comprising merely six

minute books, ten finance volumes and a few printed papers. The incomplete set of the *Annual Reports* may be augmented by material in the British Library, which holds the reports for 1895-99 and a complete set of their periodical *The Female Missionary Intelligencer*.

The Loochoo Naval Mission was begun in February 1843 by a small group of naval officers who wished to send a missionary to the Loochoo Islands (Ryukyu Islands), aiming thereby to reach Japan. When their application for help from CMS was refused, they set up an independent fund and sent out Dr Bernard Jean Bettelheim, who was succeeded by Rev. G. H. Moreton. When Moreton's health failed the mission came to an end. In 1861 the balance of the funds was given to CMS as a basis of support for evangelistic work in Japan when that should be possible. CMS began work in Japan in 1869. The very small archive comprises the secretaries' papers and correspondence as well as the lengthy journals of Bettelheim and Moreton. The archive is enlivened by the naval connection, not only by the briskness of some of the comments from the secretaries, but by the inclusion of such odd items as the 1842 designs and plans for 'gangway annular scupper mouths' for use in frigates.

HOW ARE THE ARCHIVES ARRANGED AND CLASSIFIED?

The Society is basically run by committees and the Secretaries to the main committees are heads of departments at headquarters and in many ways act as a board of directors. The archives of each department have been allocated a letter to signify the department, e.g. F Finance, C Candidates, M Medical, etc., and then all the departments use basically the same classification scheme. The one exception is the work of the Africa and Asia departments. In other words, for cataloguing I have divided the work of the Society into two parts, overseas and within the British Isles.

The overseas part of the work was originally the responsibility of the Committee of Correspondence. It was to seek out prospective missionaries, to prepare them for service overseas and to be responsible for them from then on. In effect, its role combined the tasks of what were later to be the Candidates, Medical, Africa and Asia departments.

The two other committees set up when the Society began were the General Committee, which directed the overall policy, and the Committee of Accounts (later the Finance Committee), which was responsible for administering the funds. Both these committees' archives have been treated as part of the work within the British Isles.

The Society was blessed at the start with an excellent method of record-keeping. When it began, all the incoming letters were kept together, while the most important of the outgoing letters were copied into books. In June 1803, when the first mission (West Africa) was started, one of the missionaries was designated mission secretary and the correspondence with overseas was separated from the home correspondence (within the British Isles). Further missions

were begun and on each occasion that a mission secretary was appointed the correspondence between that mission area and London was again separated until by 1813 each mission had its own series of papers and volumes. From the present appearance of the archives it seems probable that at some point between about 1805 and 1810 the entire early correspondence series for the missions was collated, bound and indexed. Incoming and outgoing correspondence was kept together and the series continued until 1820. From 1820 until 1880 the copies of outgoing letters were pasted into letter-books and the incoming papers were kept in bundles. Clerks at headquarters copied the incoming papers for each mission area on to quires of paper which were then bound into volumes (called mission books). They thus provided a legible copy for committee use. Until 1849 everything, including journals, was copied in full, but later only the letters were so copied. From 1880 until 1934 the letter-books continue, the incoming papers were kept year by year in a sequence numbered for each year, while a summary of them was kept in the precis books (which also acted as agenda for the committee meetings). From 1935 onwards there is a completely new filing system with incoming and outgoing correspondence kept together. The files themselves for each mission area comprise correspondence with the mission secretary, correspondence with the bishop and diocesan authorities, and separate files for each institution or place in which CMS missionaries worked. This method continues to the present day. For all these archives the 'overseas' classification system has been used.

The Africa and Asia departments have some files on general subjects and also a massive series of personal files for each missionary. For these papers I have used the 'home' method of cataloguing and classification, so that the catalogue of the Africa and Asia files from 1935 onwards has the same classification system as the Candidates department, the General Secretary's department, etc.

For all these departments I have divided the files and papers into broad groups allocating a letter to each: A Administration, C Committee work, E Education, F Finance, O Outside Organisations, Y Correspondence with overseas mission areas, etc. Where necessary, notably within the administration section, there are further subdivisions. The files in each group or subdivision are then numbered, so that each can be individually called up for reference. For the pre-1880 incoming papers of the mission series, and occasionally for certain series in other departments' papers, each individual item has its own number. For the most part, however, the reference is for a group of papers comprising a file. For the most recent papers, where the files have been divided into decades, I have indicated the decade by using numbers after the department letter. For example, G/AP 1 is the General Secretary's general policy file up to 1949. The same file for the 1950s is G59/AP 1, then G69/AP 1 for the 1960s, and so on for succeeding decades.

RECORDS OF THE HEADQUARTERS' DEPARTMENTS

When I first began work on the CMS archives I was amazed and almost overwhelmed by the amount of correspondence. This was particularly true of the Africa and Asia departments. Because the Society was in independent body it kept a very tight hold on what its agents did and had strict rules about its organisation. All the missionaries had to keep diaries, preferably detailed, and they were encouraged to describe not only what they did, but what they saw (even if they disapproved of it). These journals were to be sent back to headquarters every quarter by the mission secretary. The secretary in fact saw everything, for no missionary was allowed to write directly to London. Letters would be sent to the mission secretary who normally sent them on, after having read them, but sometimes kept them and sent copies or notes instead. Headquarters' permission was needed for practically everything, from the purchase of a bicycle to the transferring of an agent from one place to another. As a result, the mission archives at headquarters are a very rich source, not only for Church and mission history (mainly Anglican but also for the other Christian bodies working in the same fields, e.g. the Catholic work in Uganda), but also for the student of anthropology, politics, sociology, geography and economics. The papers retained by the mission secretary overseas formed the nucleus of the earliest diocesan archives of the developing churches.

The archives of other departments, though not so great in volume, also contain much of interest. The General Secretary's department is the most important, partly because the General Committee was ultimately responsible for CMS policy. Although the Secretaries have always acted as a group, the Honorary Clerical Secretary [or General Secretary as he was known from 1922 onwards] was *primus inter pares*. It was his task to correspond with bishops, so there are files for the appointment of overseas bishops and on the constitution of the growing churches of the Anglican Communion. He was also considered chief Candidates Secretary, so the department's papers include the records of Islington College (the CMS missionary training college) and private and confidential correspondence about prospective missionaries. As he was also ultimate arbiter these confidential letters also include much on private matters for all the staff, as well as notes of interviews with bishops, archbishops and, of course correspondence with the Society's President (a distinguished and influential layman) and its Patron (the archbishop of Canterbury).

The Medical department was set up in 1891 and served both the Medical Committee, which was responsible for the administration of medical missions overseas, and the Medical Missions Auxiliary Fund Committee whose task was to arouse support within the British Isles to enable the MMA 'to increase the number and equip thoroughly the medical missions of the Society'. The department's archives contain correspondence with all the hospitals and other medical institutions founded and staffed by CMS. There is also a medical periodical called *Mercy and Truth* which contains articles about the institutions

and the medical work (though emphasis is on evangelistic opportunities rather than purely medical details).

The Candidates department's papers mainly comprise the application papers of prospective missionaries. Unfortunately, it was this department that suffered when an incendiary damaged headquarters in the Blitz. The committee minutes survive, though many volumes have charred edges; but for the correspondence there is one set of bound volumes of letters for 1846-65 and then a horrible gap until the early 1890s. A small tin trunk full of the 'blue packets' of application papers was all that survived for the period up to 1940.

The Finance department has the usual financial volumes, papers about property, etc. There is also interesting correspondence with the Foreign Office and other government departments such as the Post Office 1876-1900, and a packet of papers on the slave trade in Zanzibar 1866-84 (in which the Finance Secretary of the day, Edward Hutchinson, had a special interest).

There remain the papers of what used to be called the Home Division (our present Britain Region and Communications Division). Its heyday was the 1950s. Rev. Max Warren, one of our most famous General Secretaries was appointed in 1942 and set about immediately to formulate and prepare the Society for its role in a post-war, post-Empire Britain. He gathered a brilliant team of Secretaries, of whom Rev. Leslie Fisher was appointed Home Secretary. He was in charge of every aspect of work within the British Isles. He had four departments (headed by Under-Secretaries), each with many sections under them. The four comprised the Deputy Home Secretary (responsible for deputation work and the field staff), Editorial Secretary (in charge of all the Society's publications), Publicity Director and Education Secretary.

CATALOGUES, LISTS AND INDEXES

There are catalogues and lists in both Birmingham and London for all the pre-1949 archives (i.e. those available for research in Birmingham) and in London there are lists for the 1950s-80s archives. There are also many card indexes.

The main indexes (name, place and subject) contain entries from all the mission catalogues, plus the usual mass of useful information found by people when listing or browsing in the archives. They will eventually cover all the catalogues. As the pre-1880 mission catalogues list the missionaries and agents in alphabetical order and also give their mission stations, I have been able to incorporate in the place index an alphabetical list of agents (with dates) for each station. This is often a useful short cut for staff and students. In a similar way there are lists of the CEZMS mission stations with their agents.

There are also working indexes, such as those for retired and dead missionaries which will probably always be kept apart from the main indexes. There are several indexes, however, at present kept individually, which will be incorporated in the main indexes after they have been copied onto microfiche

separately for easier reference. For names, these include lists of CEZMS and FES missionaries, authors of articles in the CMS periodicals *C.M. Intelligencer* and *Mercy and Truth*, and obituaries in the *Intelligencer* and the *C.M. Gleaner*. For both names and places, there are indexes of the illustrations in the periodicals *C.M. Gleaner* and *Mercy and Truth*. These indexes in particular are invaluable for answering enquiries, as nearly always the presence of an illustration means that there is something else about the subject in the contents of the periodical. The index to the photo collection is kept separately, but comprises names and places.

The whole archive, I suppose, is name-orientated, which may in part reflect that the Society is a membership society. Provided you have a name to start your research, we can pretty well guarantee to tell you whether or not the archives will contain interesting material for you. The problem of how to discover that name in the first instance is one with which I am still struggling!

AVAILABILITY FOR RESEARCH

The CMS manuscript archives operate a 40-year 'closed' rule for research. At present the material up to 1949 is available. There are two exceptions to this rule. The unofficial and deposited archives (family papers of missionaries and agents and material relating to CMS but not part of the official archive) are made available to researchers in accordance with the wish of the depositors. This often means that more recent material can be studied. The second exception applies to the official mission series for mainland China (not Hong Kong). The CMS missionaries left China in 1951 and therefore these two additional years 1950/51 have been opened now.

From the 1950s onwards, files have been arranged and listed by decades. Files for the 1950s will be opened in 1999 and so on for each decade.

Catalogues of all the series will be available in Birmingham from the time of transfer. The Heslop Room also holds sets of the *CMS Proceedings/Annual Report/Yearbook 1801-1985*, the *CMS Historical Record 1919, 1922-1956/7*, and the *CMS Annual Letters* (reports from missionaries sent annually to headquarters), together with *Stock's History of CMS*, Charles Hole's *Early History of CMS*, Gordon Hewitt's *Problems of Success: a History of CMS 1910-1942* and Jocelyn Murray's *Proclaim the Good News* (which takes the history of the Society up to the 1980s).

Any researcher should write in advance to Miss C. L. Penney, Special Collections, Main Library, University of Birmingham, PO Box 363, Birmingham B15 2TT. A formal letter of introduction from an appropriate person (Supervisor, Head of Academic Department, etc.) is necessary, and it is helpful if you can indicate which particular series you wish to study. For those nearer London there are sets of catalogues at Waterloo Road. The mission catalogues are for sale (at headquarters) and copies may be found in the copyright libraries and elsewhere.

I should conclude by saying that until I retire I shall be very happy to be

consulted by anyone seeking further information about our archives. Archivists are always partial to their own archives, but I feel that I have been most fortunate to have been able to spend my entire professional life working on and cataloguing such a very fine collection.

NOTES

1. Mr Harry Cobb published an article on CMS archives in *Archives*, Vol. II, No. 14, Michaelmas 1955, pp. 293-299. Although some of it is now out of date, it provides further details about the main classes of records.
2. Women's apartments.

Editorial Note:

Miss Rosemary Keen is the Archivist of CMS, and general enquiries may be addressed to her at Church Missionary Society, Partnership House, 157 Waterloo Road, London. SE1 8UU.

ASSOCIATION OF CHURCH ARCHIVISTS OF SPAIN

The Association of Church Archivists of Spain is the Institution of the Spanish Episcopal Conference and dependent on the Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church.

The aims of the Association are to encourage and facilitate the work of ecclesiastics, both regular and secular, who are in charge of church archives so that they may recognize and solve common problems.

It is concerned with the conservation, organization and cataloguing of Spanish church archives following the directions of the church authorities and maintaining contact with the civil authorities in the matter of archives.

It also aims at promoting the scientific and technical activities of its members by encouraging the compilation and publication of inventories and catalogues of the ecclesiastical documentary heritage of Spain.

In addition, it also promotes meetings and conferences whereby archivists can make known the scientific projects in which different archives are engaged and contribute to the training of persons who are in charge of archives.

One of the most important scientific activities of the Association is the publication, either on a regular and occasional basis, of the results of different projects undertaken by the Association, either on its own or in collaboration with other civil or ecclesiastical bodies.

Editorial Note

The above note is translated from the preamble of a leaflet advertising the publications of the Association. Further details may be obtained from the Editor, or direct from: Rvdo. D. Agustin Hevia Ballina, Archivo Historico Diocesano, Palacio Arzobispal, Corrada del Obispo, 33003 Oviedo, or Rvdo. Matias Vicario Santamaria, Archivo Diocesano, Palacio Arzobispal, Martinez del Campo, 18, 09003, Burgos, Espana.

MY BROWNE HEAVEN: THE FATHER BROWNE S.J. COLLECTION

The Rev. E. E. O'Donnell S.J.

In the year 1897 two Irish youths set sail from Queenstown (now Cobh) in the south of Ireland bound for mainland Europe. Seventeen-year-old Frank Browne was accompanied by his older brother, William, and clung fast to a parting gift from his Uncle Robert - a camera. The first photographs that Frank took during his Grand Tour of France, Switzerland and Italy were the opening shots of a salvo of photography that would still be reverberating nearly a century later. When Field Marshal Earl Alexander of Tunis went to Dublin to visit Frank on his deathbed in 1960, he knew he was seeing for the last time not only "the bravest man I ever met" but a man who would one day be recognised as one of the greatest photographers of all time.

When I was working in the archives of the Irish Jesuit Provincialate in 1985, I unearthed an old trunk which had been buried there for a quarter of a century. To my amazement I discovered that it contained no less than 42,000 negatives of photographs taken by Frank Browne during his sixty-three years of life as a Jesuit. Now, as Curator of the Father Browne S.J. Collection, I would like to give you some idea of the scope of Frank Browne's work and to describe the preservation work that was essential for its survival.

SCOPE OF THE COLLECTION

The most interesting way for me to tell you what the Collection contains will be to give you a biographical sketch of the photographer's life, emphasising the features of most importance to you as British and Irish ecclesiastical archivists.

On his return from Europe in 1897 Frank entered the Jesuit novitiate at Rahan in County Offaly. If he bought his camera with him, he would have had to turn it in as a 'superfluity'! His brother, William, likewise went on for the priesthood and was for many years secretary to his Uncle Robert who was Bishop of Cloyne from 1894 to 1935.

After his first vows, Frank moved to Dublin in 1899 and studied classics at the Royal University for three years. One of his fellow students there was James Joyce. Since Jesuit students were still not allowed to have cameras, we have no Browne portrait of the literary artist as a young man. For his philosophical studies Frank was sent to Chieri, near Turin, from 1903 to 1906. He was able to borrow a camera for the summer holidays, one which was spent in Venice and another in Monte Carlo.

On his return to Dublin, he taught at his old *alma mater*, Belvedere College, for five years. He became founder-editor of *The Belvederian*, the school annual which still retains the format established by Frank during its first five years of publication. Then, and subsequently, it contained many of his own photographs: in 1906 he had founded the Camera Club, thus acquiring his first

camera as a Jesuit. In the early issues of the annual we can see some fine examples of his skill and of the subjects that interested him. The monastic ruins of Ireland (Cistercian, Dominican, Franciscan and Augustinian) feature prominently in his Collection at that time. During this period - in 1909 to be precise - he went on a voyage to Rome, via Lisbon, with his Uncle Robert. Frank's sister, Mary, was a nun in the papal household so Bishop Browne and his nephew were able to have breakfast with His Holiness. Afterwards, Frank was able to take some snaps of the Pope (now Saint) Pius X.

In 1911 he began his theological studies at the Milltown Park in Dublin where he was ordained a priest by his Uncle Robert on 31 July 1915. Before that significant day, however, the Bishop was instrumental in occasioning an even more memorable event in his nephew's life. It was April 1912 that he bought Frank a first-class ticket for the first leg of the maiden voyage of R.M.V. *Titanic*.

In a recent feature on the Father Browne Collection, *The Independent* newspaper (London) reckoned that his *Titanic* album would fetch at least two million pounds sterling at auction. The archivist is not selling it! It is indeed a remarkable album. Beginning with a portrait of the millionaire, Mr J. J. Astor, boarding 'the first and last *Titanic* Special' at Waterloo Station, it contains the last picture taken of Captain Smith and the only photograph ever taken by anyone in the liner's Marconiroom.

Father Browne became a military chaplain in 1916 and spent the best part of three years on the front line in France and Flanders with the Irish Guards. His fellow-chaplain, Father Willie Doyle S.J. was killed. In his biography of that saintly man, Professor Alfred O'Rahilly makes frequent reference to Father Browne and to his ministry among the horrors of the Somme, Wytschaete, Ypres and Passchendaele. Injured five times and gassed once, he won the M.C. and bar and the Croix de Guerre. In 1919 he returned to the trenches to take photographs for an illustrated lecture on the last days of Willie Doyle.

Recently, I visited the GHQ of the Irish Guards at Wellington Barracks in London to see if they had any wartime photographs taken by Frank Browne during his years as their chaplain. From their meticulously-kept files, the archivist was able to produce two albums with 'Major F. M. Browne M.C.' embossed in gold letters on their covers. These contained pictures taken mainly at Warley Barracks, Essex, and during 'The Watch on the Rhine' at Cologne in 1919.

On being demobilized from the Irish Guards, Frank returned to teach at Belvedere College until he was appointed superior of St Francis Xavier's Church in Dublin in 1922. Because he went nowhere without his camera, it is not surprising to find 4,600 photographs of Dublin in his Collection. Many of these were used to illustrate *The Annals of Dublin* (Wolfhound Press, 1987).



THE FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI AT WARLEY BARRACKS, ESSEX (1919): BISHOP KEATING GIVING BENEDICTION.
THIS WAS THE FIRST PROCESSION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT IN AN ENGLISH BARRACKS SINCE THE REFORMATION.
© THE FATHER BROWNE S.J. COLLECTION

Due to ill health - presumably the aftermath of his gassing - he was sent to Australia for two years in 1924. Sailing from Falmouth on the S.S. *Orama*, which had been a troopship during the war, he broke his journey to Australia by stopping over at Cape Town and took many photographs of Irish priests and nuns working in the Cape Province of South Africa.

In Australia itself he photographed all the major cities and travelled for thousands of miles in the outback. He recorded Test Cricket at Adelaide and Brisbane, horse-racing at Melbourne, gold-mining at Ophir Creek and the sheep-shearing competition at Kangarooie. His photographs of the former prison colony at Botany Bay and of Sydney Harbour without its bridge are among the more important items in his Collection. He also took photographs of nuns, priests and brothers: one example shows the novices taking their vows as Sisters of Mercy at Nymagee, New South Wales. His last Australian pictures were taken at Perth and Fremantle whence he took ship for Ceylon via the Cocos Islands. He photographed churches and convents in Ceylon and took two self-portraits entitled 'Me and the Elephant' (Colombo) and 'Self in Rickshaw' (Kandy), 1925.

The return voyage to Plymouth brought Fr Browne to Aden, Yemen, Somaliland, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Crete, Greece, Italy, France, Gibraltar, Spain and Portugal. Clearly, this added an important international dimension to his work.

For the rest of his life he worked on the Missions and Retreats Staff of the Irish Province of the Jesuits. For most of this time (1931-57) he was based at Emo, County Laois, but his work took him to every county in Ireland and all over England, Scotland and Wales. The missionary's work included the giving of retreats to convents of nuns. Fr Browne gave hundreds of such retreats and usually took photographs of the convents and of the Sisters. Gorey (Loreto), Kylemore (Benedictine), Maryborough (Presentation), Newtownbarry (F.C.J.), Newry (Carmelite), Portlaw (St Joseph of Cluny) and Rathdowney (St John of God) are mentioned on a single page of his records.

Famous pilgrimages, such as those at Walsingham and Dunwich in England, at Lough Derg and Tubbercurry in Ireland, came under his careful scrutiny. At Walsingham, for instance, in four successive years in the 1930s, he shows Fathers Vernon Johnson S.J., Ronald Knox, Fabian Dix O.P. and Martin D'Arcy S.J. preaching to throngs of pilgrims in the open air.

Since Parish Missions were preached in the evenings, Frank Browne had plenty of time during the day to pursue his quasi-professional hobby. As he became more and more expert with the camera, and as cameras became more and more sophisticated, he began to concentrate on particular themes and to submit his work for publication in specialist periodicals. The *Tatler* & *Sketch* presented illustrated features on Country Houses, the *Kodak Magazine* ran a series on English Cathedrals, and *Irish Travel* published many gems of the Irish countryside, to give but three examples. As he became better known as a photographer,



CHILDREN AT DORLING DOWNS, NEW SOUTH WALES (1925)
© THE FATHER BROWNE S.J. COLLECTION

he was commissioned by various organizations to submit photographs for archival purposes. Two instances: The British Museum asked him to photograph antiquities of England, and the Governing Body of the Church of England asked him to photograph its churches in East Anglia during the late 1930s - lest they be damaged in the forthcoming hostilities. The Photographic Society of Ireland invited him to judge competitions on its behalf and - supreme accolade - the Society of Jesus had him photograph each of its houses in Ireland. He even photographed the Jesuit burial-plot in Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin, where he now rests in peace.

CONSERVING THE COLLECTION

What makes the Father Browne Collection most valuable is the fact that Frank scrupulously dated and captioned each of his negatives. If you, as an archivist, are in possession of old photographs, the first thing to ensure is that they are dated and captioned. If nobody in your organization can help, a professional outsider will be able to give you approximate dates, based on dress and furnishings. It is important that the names of any people in the photographs be recorded: Fr Browne kept an alphabetically-indexed notebook where he kept the names of anyone he pictured. A glance at this will tell you, for instance, that he photographed 'Most Rev. Leo Parker, Bp. of Northampton, 17 April, 1949'. This record goes on to say where in the Collection the portrait of Bishop Parker is to be found.

The sad news about the Browne negatives is that they are mostly on nitrate-based film. All such negatives, anywhere in the world, are rapidly deteriorating in quality and the images will have disintegrated by the turn of the century. If you have any such negatives, you are hereby informed that they are highly unstable - even dangerous! This is not simply being alarmist. If you tell your insurance company that you keep nitrate negatives on the premises, it will not only refuse to insure them but will withdraw its cover from your building until the offending items are removed.

The only solution is to have the negatives transferred to safety-film, an expensive operation. To give you some idea of cost, the work of transferring the 42,000 Browne negatives to safety-film came to IR£60,000. I am happy to say that Allied Irish Bank picked up the tab. This was a very worthy and enlightened exercise in sponsorship for which the Irish Jesuits are extremely grateful.

At the same time as each negative was being 'saved', its caption and date were recorded on computer. The computer programme also included one hundred 'key' words so that one could enter items such as 'children', 'trains', 'nuns', 'army', 'bridges', 'convents' and so on. This, of course, was a time-consuming business, taking three years in all. Over 39,000 negatives have now been saved and catalogued; the task is due to be completed - on schedule - by the end of this year (1991).

As a result of the computerization, you will be able to write to me (at

Gonzaga College, Dublin 6) and ask, say, if the Browne Collection has a photograph of Mr T. M. Bourke of Melbourne, taken in 1919. Within minutes, I should be able to tell you, having drawn a blank under 'Melbourne', that there is indeed a picture of Mr Bourke taken, not in Australia, but in Wellington Barracks (London) while he was serving in the army that year. I shall also be able to tell you how good a photograph it is: the programme includes a 'star scale' of one to five, ranging from the pathetic to the brilliant.

Whereas the nitrate negatives of Frank Browne varied from postcard-size through demi-postcard-size to 35mm, all the new negatives on safety-film are standard 35mm. This has facilitated storage. One can purchase transparent, acetate 'envelopes' that accommodate seven strips of 35mm film, with six images on each strip, i.e. forty-two images per page. One can also purchase loose-leaf binders that hold one hundred of these pages each. The 42,000 Browne negatives will thus fit neatly into ten of these binders.

The computer can also do print-outs by request. If you wanted a list, say, of all the Catholic bishops that Fr Browne photographed in England and Wales between 1910 and 1939, the computer - given a little time for 'thought' - will instruct the printer to run off a list of the required captions.

As regards the 'positives' in the Browne Collection, and there are over a thousand of them, these are going to be kept separately in acid-free envelopes. The experts tell me that ordinary paper envelopes (whether white or brown) will destroy any photograph in the course of a few decades. The 'positives', of course, have been incorporated into the computer's index as described above.

The story does not stop here, although it would if you had no intention of giving public access to your photographs. The Irish Jesuits are aware that in the Father Browne Collection they are in possession of a treasure-trove of national, indeed international, significance. The publication of *Father Browne's Ireland* and *The Genius of Father Browne* (Wolfhound Press, Dublin, 1989 and 1990 respectively) has elicited an enormous response from the public and from the media. *Father Browne's England*, mentioned in a splendid feature on Father Browne in the February 1991 edition of the prestigious *British Journal of Photography*, will be published in 1992, and *Father Browne's Australia* is to follow. In order to make the Collection available to research-students and to libraries, the next step will be to have the new negatives transferred to Optical Disks. When this transfer has been effected - the technology for so doing is still at the experimental stage but is expected to be available in less than twelve months' time - you will be able to sit at a Visual Display Unit and ask a computer about that Australian, Mr Bourke. Instead of assuring you that his picture exists and telling you where to find it, the Optical Disks will whirl for a few seconds and then, lo and behold, T. M. Bourne of Melbourne will be staring at you from the screen. This may not be Heaven - but it will be an archivist's paradise.

THE RECORDS OF THE CONVERTS' AID SOCIETY

Rosemary Rendel

There comes a time in the life of any society when the records of its history need to be organized - usually after its first fifty or seventy-five years in operation. In the case of the Converts' Aid Society, this has never yet been done. This need to establish a record is partly due to the realization that other people can benefit from the society's experience and partly due to pressure of space; when cupboards and filing cabinets become filled with non-current files and paper parcels (which *may* contain information on the founding organization or merely trivia about which day a committee should meet) action has to be taken! It appears, from what is left, that a big clear-out of material took place during the second world war. It may be, of course, that the work was done in a more informal way before that time and there was little build-up of paperwork beyond the bare minimum.

There is a complete set of annual reports through this period, but only back to 1914, whereas the Converts' Aid Society was founded in 1896, at the request of Leo XIII; but the reports for 1918-23 are missing. Should anyone reading these paragraphs have copies of early twentieth-century material, it would be much appreciated if they felt able to donate it to the society's archive.

The sorting of the Converts' Aid Society's records and organization of an historic archive has been made possible by the fortunate existence of a large loft in the Converts' Aid Society house. Once the un-piling and identification of brown paper parcels, their labelling partly obscured by soot and dust, had been achieved, it was possible for slatted wood shelving to be fixed round three walls; archive boxes were then ordered to hold the case-files dealing with each individual helped by Converts' Aid Society, these being the most damaged and illegible of the records because they had been wedged in many cases, into small pigeon-holes. But the loft is now quite an effective archive room with access by a strong and easily-sloping folding wood staircase.

In establishing an archive, one usually has two objectives: First, there is the historical and, secondly, there is the back-up to current work. In the case of Converts' Aid Society, although one is thinking chiefly in historical terms, it might well be necessary to look up earlier statements of expenses when deciding current levels, or to look back to surveys and maintenance schemes for various properties over a period of years, when deciding the future potential of a house, so one keeps more of these sorts of detailed record than one might otherwise do.

From the historical point of view, one has to try and visualise the sort of history that might be written, because the principle of selection underlies the building up of an archive, unless space is unlimited. How much one can keep depends on the space available and on the time and manpower that present or future staff can provide, because archives have to be added to every five or ten

years; and to keep within a fixed space, they have to be 'weeded' or reduced at the same time, so that more recent papers can be included. If mountains of paper are allowed to accumulate unselectively, they become virtually unusable and it is this which produces the panic reaction of the bonfire or the pulping machine.

Apart from the complete set of annual reports and accounts (though with the gaps mentioned above), there are the minute books of the executive committee from 1915-35 and from 1941-60 with typed, unbound minutes from 1974-77. The early minute books include the League of Prayer and the League of English Martyrs as existing or earlier societies which were incorporated into the Converts' Aid Society. There is a whole shelf of committee papers, starting about 1946 and including several sub-committees. There is another whole shelf of very fat brown paper packets dealing solely with the house Top Meadow, and this does not include a cupboard in the office, full of similar Top Meadow parcels. Further sorting is needed here. The bulkiest items in terms of space are the case-files of individuals, helped by or applying to the society, which fill one whole wall in their archive boxes; but the largest item in terms of weight is the pile of cash books, day books and ledgers of expenses. These are not of quite the interest they might be as they seem to have survived by chance rather than by plan, and in most cases cover only a year or two; the statements of accounts given in each annual report are more useful. One need not detail other items at this stage. They are labelled and there will need to be a list.

One short wall has been given over to Freddie Chambers' personal papers. These include his reminiscences running through a good many issues of the *Southwark Record*, fortunately complete. There is also his obituary pamphlet by Bishop Gordon Wheeler and his own memorial pamphlet to Mgr Ronald Knox, both of which give a good many details about the Converts' Aid Society. The various Catholic Truth Society pamphlets on Mgr Vernon Johnson would, I think, add further information. There are various albums or early family photographs, but unfortunately few of them are described or identified. It is, however, slightly misleading to call these papers simply personal papers as there was obviously no clear dividing line, for him, between his personal papers and Converts' Aid Society papers, as far as correspondence was concerned.

The Converts' Aid Society papers give a fascinating picture, among other things, of a group of dedicated people running a national charity in a wholly personal way so that its work remains always on the level of one to one assistance, an achievement of which I had no idea until I began going through the papers; and this interpretation of its work continued by each succeeding secretary, so well-founded has the tradition become.

Yet I do not think that a really comprehensive, fully detailed history of the Converts' Aid Society is likely to be written, if only because not many people with the right expertise could find the time and finance to attempt it.

But an outline history to include the many personalities involved,

seems quite possible. I think, also, that a social/devotional history of the Church (using the word 'devotional' in the sense of 'spiritual and corporal works of mercy') in the first half of the twentieth century or, better perhaps, between Vatican I and Vatican II, would now be very useful; it would cover the numerous specialized and collective activities of the Church started in this period, all of them sustained by unusual individuals whose lives became inseparable from the work they were doing. A mere catalogue of these societies, of which the Converts' Aid Society is one of the most important, would be illuminating. In most cases, they achieved a success far beyond what their size would suggest but their records are scattered throughout dioceses and parishes all over the country. Some of them were short-lived or were a response to a short-term need; others gathered momentum to become national institutions; but as a phenomenon of direct action by the Consensus Fidelium in response to a seen need, or in obedience to a papal suggestion, they would well repay study.

Note:

This account of the records of The Converts' Aid Society was first published in the Society's Annual Report of 1988. At that time the records were housed in the Society's offices at Twickenham. They are now held in the Society's new offices at The Old Vicarage, Upper Wolvercote, Oxford, OX2 8AH. The records are not open for research but enquiries may be addressed to J. S. Nightingale, Secretary of the Society. Information about any records referring to the Society, particularly minutes and missing annual reports, would be welcomed. This article is re-published by courtesy of Miss Rendel and Mr Nightingale. Miss Rendel is Secretary of *The Catholic Record Society*.

CATHOLIC ARCHIVES IN THE NETHERLANDS: THE LEGACY OF 'GLORIOUS ROMAN LIFE'

Joos van Vugt

According to the latest statistics (of 1 January 1990) there are 5,550,389 Catholics in the Netherlands, equalling 37.3% of the total population of 14,892,574. These statistics, however, suggest a greater number and a greater unity than Dutch Catholics can muster nowadays. Their community is no longer the self-assured monolith it was – or pretended to be – up till the 1950s. How different things were in the first half of the century, when in many regions more than 90% of all Catholics went to church each weekend; when the same percentage voted for Catholic politicians and when dissident voices were seldom, if ever, heard. The change took place in the 1960s, when in many respects an era came to an end. Inevitably, this development has affected the care for Catholic archives, as will be described below. But first let us take a look at the developments which led up to the present situation.

CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION

From the early nineteenth century onward there has been a steady build-up of Catholic institutions in the Netherlands, marking the emancipation of Dutch Catholics from a subdued and relatively indigent minority into a self-assured (and sometimes even overbearing) and well-to-do community. The first half of the nineteenth century saw a reorganization of the ecclesiastical organization itself. The second half of the century was remarkable for the unprecedented expansion of Catholic education and charitable institutions: schools, orphanages, hospitals, homes for the elderly, institutions for the physically or mentally handicapped, etc.

It was this phase that religious institutions of sisters, brothers and priests came into prominence and, in some respects, had their heyday. Even under the Calvinist Dutch Republic (c. 1648-1795) a few religious orders like the Jesuits and the Franciscans had maintained a precarious foothold in the Netherlands. Some small contemplative convents also survived, due to the fact that they were situated in enclaves which were exempt from the political authority of The Hague. But apart from these exemptions, at the French occupation of the Netherlands (1795-1814) convent life was virtually extinct. But then it experienced a remarkable come-back. In the wake of an upsurge in religious enthusiasm – a reflection of an international revival of Catholicism – the decades after 1820 saw the birth of several religious institutions of Dutch origin. Their number was supplemented by a large number of institutions of Belgian, German and French origin, many of which sought refuge in the Netherlands from political repression. In this way the years 1870-80 saw an influx of German institutions, driven out by the *Kulturkampf*. The years 1880-90 and particularly the first years after the turn of the century saw many French institutions

establishing houses and schools in the south of the Netherlands, after they had been made jobless and penniless by French anticlericalists. In all, some 170 orders and congregations of sisters, brothers and regular priests found a place among Dutch Catholics. Both Dutch and foreign institutions succeeded in attracting a fair number of Dutch novices. During the nineteenth century they enjoyed a steady if seldom spectacular growth.

'PILLARIZATION'

From about 1890 onward a new phenomenon came into being. Within the Catholic community a host of new explicitly Catholic organizations were founded in every conceivable field of social activity. Every trade or craft, every social, political or cultural ambition was catered for. Furthermore, the new organizations, though usually under rather strict clerical supervision, were characteristically manned and run by laymen and not by priests or religious.

By the 1920s the Dutch Catholic minority had turned into a largely self-sufficient subculture, displaying both the pros and cons of such communities: solidarity and strength on the one hand and narrow-mindedness and self-satisfaction on the other. Since Dutch Protestants, liberals and socialists all to some extent chose the same course, the result was a wholesome division of Dutch society into denominational and ideological groups or 'pillars'. This system of 'pillarization' was by no means confined to the Netherlands alone—countries like Belgium, Austria, Switzerland have had their share – but here it went to extremes.

The consequences for the religious institutions were ambivalent. On the one hand they no longer constituted an elite as laymen became educated and more self-assured. On the other hand convent life flourished in the favourable religious and political climate. Most institutions saw their membership growing happily. In the 1930s no less than 90 congregations of sisters totalled 30,000 members: 2% of the Dutch female population of about 1.5 million! The majority of the many thousands of Catholic primary schools, colleges, hospitals, asylums and other social institutions – even the Catholic University – were managed and in many cases exclusively manned by religious. Dutch missionary efforts too reached a peak in this decade.

It is this interwar period that has been ironically described as the decades of 'glorious Roman life', pointing as much at its real glories as at its recurring fits of arrogance.

THE CRISIS OF DUTCH CATHOLICISM

After the Second World War 'glorious Roman life' seemed in a position to continue on a prewar footing as if nothing had happened, but appearances were deceiving. Wartime experiences had confronted many intellectuals with the shortcomings of their own Catholic milieu. They no longer accepted the thesis that perfect isolation was necessary to preserve Catholic faith. The internal unity of Catholics threatened to be broken as individuals started to put their

political and social preferences above religious solidarity. In 1954 a pastoral letter by the Dutch episcopate, simultaneously threatening and imploring Catholics to keep to the old ways, succeeded merely in causing irritation. As the Netherlands embarked upon a vigorous program of industrialization a generally faster pace of life was introduced which boded ill for the stability the bishops would dearly have maintained. Last but not least, influences from abroad played their part. *Nouvelle théologie*, democratic fervour, the mere announcement of the second Vatican council, all incited Dutch Catholics with an enthusiasm for change which, for some time, gave them quite a reputation for modernism in the Catholic world at large.

In the early 1960s the huge system of Catholic social organizations started to totter. Within a few years the 'pillar' crumbled under countless liquidations, mergers and reorganizations. So far these developments could easily be interpreted as beneficiary and positive, but soon they turned into a real crisis. The Catholic community was eroded by a secularization process stronger than in most other European countries. Nowadays, the non-religious, many of them former Catholics, represent some 40% of the Dutch populace. A large percentage of Dutch Catholics has slipped into a mere nominal membership without any substantial ties with their Church and parish. The remaining faithful have become divided into conservative, progressive and moderate factions which find it hard to keep on speaking-terms with one another.

For orders and congregations these developments put an end to an era of uninterrupted growth and success. The first bad sign was the tendency of recruitment results to decline. At first many institutions suspected that the cause might be found in their own peculiar situation but they soon realized that all ecclesiastical institutions, both secular and regular, suffered from an almost universal 'vocational crisis'. This crisis took a dramatic turn after 1965, when recruitment came to a virtual standstill.

As early as the 1930s the congregations of brothers and sisters, which did not possess the prerogatives of priesthood, had felt the pressure of the rapidly growing number of laymen in education and nursing. After the war the situation changed dramatically to their disadvantage. The number of laymen active in the traditional hunting-grounds of congregations rose sharply while the religious institutions saw their (wo)manpower diminishing by the ageing of their membership and by the many cases of members leaving convent life, especially in and about 1970. Since the 1960s orders and congregations have been forced to hand over many schools, hospitals, asylums and the like to new boards and foundations which are dominated by laymen. But there were positive developments too. The renewal of religious life, stimulated by the Vatican council, has given new spiritual and social elan to many priests, brothers and sisters who were in danger of ending up in a rut. Many orders and congregations have been very successful in their missions in Indonesia and Africa and have succeeded in founding prospering communities there, which in the long run will no doubt

take over from their Dutch founders. In the Netherlands they have developed many new activities, less visible and less impressive perhaps than their huge institutions in the old days but nonetheless of great value to many people. All this does not alter the fact that, as things stand, within twenty of thirty years many institutions will have disappeared from the Dutch scene.

THE CATHOLIC DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

In the 1960s there was a general awareness that an era in Catholic history had come to an end. Very few Catholics found reason for regret in this. Emotionally, they had been prepared by publicists and cabaret artists who did much to clear the air by humorously exposing the anomalies and peculiarities of 'glorious Roman life'. The large majority enjoyed their new spiritual freedom and did not care to be reminded of the recent past. Dutch Catholicism seemed about to make a fresh start. For historical research, however, this mentality held an acute danger. Many Catholic associations, unions and similar organizations took this fresh start very literally by stowing their archives in damp cellars or by dumping them into containers.

The alarm was sounded in 1967 by Dr Adrian F. Manning, professor of contemporary history at the Catholic University of Nijmegen. He proposed the foundation of an institution, based on Nijmegen university, to provide a central agency for the collection and study of documentation and archives on the history of Catholicism in the Netherlands in the nineteenth and twentieth century. He argued that much material of great historical interest was on the verge of disappearing for ever. In his view a Catholic University was morally obliged to prevent such a catastrophe from taking place and to provide an information centre for future historians interested in the history of the Dutch Catholic community. In 1969 his proposal was realized by the official opening of the *Katholiek Documentatie Centrum* (Catholic Documentation Centre), which under the directorship of Dr Jan Roes has become the undisputed centre for anyone studying Catholic subjects in the Netherlands. Housed in an unappealing but efficient corner of the University's library, it has a proud 800 personal and institutional archives in its care, altogether more than three miles of records. Such crucial collections as the archives of the *Katholieke Volkspartij* (Catholic People's Party) and the *Katholieke Radio Omroep* (Catholic Broadcasting Association) can be found here. Furthermore visitors are free to use an impressive library of *Catholica* and an up-to-date documentary collection on every conceivable subject of recent Catholic history. For the benefit of its clientele the centre has made considerable progress in preparing its assets for on-line consultation.

In the twenty-two years of existence the Documentation Centre – popularly referred to as the 'KDC' – has promoted numerous historical studies and documentary publications on Catholic history, including many in series of its own. It also publishes a journal, the *Jaarboek van het Katholiek Documentatie*

Centrum (Yearbook of the Catholic Documentation Centre), which over the years has offered students and senior staff members an opportunity to publish articles on Catholic topics. The existence of the KDC has without doubt been a crucial factor in making the Catholic community by far the most extensively studied denomination in the Netherlands. Its success is confirmed by the fact that it has been copied both in the Netherlands and abroad. In Amsterdam in 1971 a very similar institute to the KDC was founded for the collection and study of archives of Protestant provenance: the *Historisch Documentatiecentrum voor het Nederlands Protestantisme* (Historical Documentation Centre for Dutch Protestantism). In Belgium, at the Catholic University of Louvain, the *Katholiek Documentatie- en Onderzoekscentrum KADOC* (Catholic Documentation and Research Centre KADOC) was established in 1976. At first it was much inspired by its Dutch forerunner, but since then it has developed its own structure and its own approach. It is beautifully housed in a former Franciscan convent.

THE SERVICE CENTRE FOR CONVENT ARCHIVES IN THE NETHERLANDS

There remained one sector of the organizational and spiritual life of the Catholic community that could not be served by the KDC: the religious orders and congregations. Apart from personal archives, the KDC collects archives of organizations which have either been liquidated or which in one way or another have gone through an institutional change of life which enables them to transfer the non-current part of their archives to the KDC. In other words: as a rule the KDC receives archives which represent a closed phase. The majority of KDC archives are of a purely organizational character. Persons may (and do) appear in their records, but these records are not about their personal lives but about their organizational activities. In both respects, the archives of orders and congregations fall into a different category. So far, no order or congregation has been formally liquidated. Hardly any have disappeared from the Netherlands. So far, their history has not come to an end, even if in the long run their prospects are not bright. Their archives therefore do not represent any well-defined past phase and ideally still serve to strengthen the community of their organizations. Furthermore, they not only contain the reflection of the organizational history of their institutions but also that of the personal lives of many people who lived or still live within their communities. Convent archives are organizational archives as well as personal archives. Reasons of privacy weigh heavily with the institutions. Usually they are reluctant to turn their archives into more or less public possession by handing them over to municipal or provincial services or to an institution like the KDC, which primarily serves historical research. The seven diocesan archives in the Netherlands might offer a possible depository, but they are all one-man facilities, not intended for the handling of external archives or for receiving researchers on a daily basis. In case many orders and congregations should nevertheless decide to transfer their archives to the nearest address willing to take them, the results would be highly unsatisfactory

from the viewpoint of historical research. Convent archives would become as widely dispersed as the archives of most private organizations. In view of their importance and of the spiritual and practical affinity between them, that would be regrettable indeed.

But many institutions are themselves poorly equipped to manage their archives, especially if they have a higher ambition than to store them in a dry place. In the past some have been fortunate in having among their members a deserving individual with marked historical interests who, in many cases, literally saved their archives from disarray or destruction. In most institutions the archives have remained a secondary duty of their secretary, whose attention lies principally with current affairs. When the need for a separate archivist is felt, the larger communities usually succeed in finding a member who is sufficiently interested and knowledgeable – often a retired teacher-but for many smaller institutions this often poses a problem. Those who are willing to undertake this task often feel unequal to it because they lack the necessary know-how. Inevitably, they resort to a common sense approach which produces widely varying results. The fact that their work is often carried out in remote basements or attics and in relative isolation from fellow members and confreres, adds to their discomfort.

Apart from the problems of the institutions and the archivists themselves, historians – especially those specialized in ecclesiastical history – perceive problems too. One of these is the possible transfer of archives to foreign destinations. Since many Dutch convents are branches of French, German or Belgian congregations there is some likelihood that their archives will be claimed by their central institutions should their Dutch membership decline substantially. It is easy to see that archives of Dutch provenance – written in Dutch-will stop functioning once they are stored somewhere abroad. It is even conceivable that some congregations will consider to move their archives to more vital missionary branches in Asia or Africa. This may be laudable as an act of adjustment to the changing times, but it would be fatal for the accessibility of the archives involved.

To help the religious institutions in the present management of their archives and to warrant the preservation of their records in the future, the *Dienstencentrum Kloosterarchieven in Nederland* (Service Centre for Convent Archives in the Netherlands) was founded in 1989 on the initiative of Jan Roes who, as director of KDC, was in an excellent position to recognize the existing problems and needs. A preparatory committee proposed that the centre should be an independent foundation – though closely affiliated with the Catholic University in practical matters – and, moreover, an institution controlled and directed by representatives of the participating orders and congregations themselves. In this way the centre would avoid the impression of acting as an outside agency imposing itself upon the religious institutions. Membership is open to all religious institutions of Dutch origin or with branches in the Netherlands.

After a trial period and an inaugural meeting in December 1990, the centre has taken up its activities. It is staffed on a part-time basis by a professional archivist who provide on-the-spot advice and regular training sessions for the archivists of the institutions which have applied for membership. Furthermore several special projects for the (re)-organizing of specific archives have been undertaken.

All activities aim at enabling the institutions to manage their archives as long as possible on their own, by their own personnel, in their own buildings. Nevertheless the centre has facilities for holding archives in depository (e.g. if an institution should no longer have an archivist at its disposal). Fortunately none of its members has so far been obliged to make use of this possibility but, in view of the hard facts, one must expect that in the not too distant future some of them will. For the centre's members this possibility is a guarantee that their archives will be cared for even when they themselves are no longer able to do so. Perhaps in fifteen or twenty years time the centre will have evolved into a kind of mini-KDC, specialized in the management and study of convent archives. But that is still a matter of crystal ball gazing.

Membership is expected to have reached thirty at the end of 1991, which means that the Centre will then serve seventy-odd archivists and their assistants. There is no reason to be satisfied, however, since eventually the centre aims at enlisting at least eighty religious institutions. It turns out to be difficult to attract the smaller institutions which are often less aware of the value of their archives and which balk at the inevitable costs of membership. This is illustrated by the fact that in terms of members the centre has already reached 50% of all sisters and brothers in the Netherlands but just under a quarter of the number of institutions. It is hoped that eventually continuous propaganda and tactfully proffered discounts will have the desired effect. Sometimes it takes quite a lot of convincing. Particularly, contemplative communities often consider their archives to be unimportant and uninteresting since, after all, they never managed schools or hospitals. It is one of the centre's self-imposed tasks to make them change their mind.

Note

The addresses of the institutes in the Netherlands and Belgium referred to in this article are:

Dienstencentrum Kloosterarchieven in Nederland

Erasmuslaan 36

6525 GG Nijmegen

The Netherlands (Tel. 080 - 61 24 45)

Katholiek Documentatie Centrum

Erasmuslaan 36

6525 GG Nijmegen

The Netherlands (Tel. 080 - 61 24 12)

Katholiek Documentatie- en Onderzoekscentrum

Vlamingenstraat 39

3000 Louvain

Belgium (Tel. 016 - 28 35 00)

KADOC

THE ARCHIVES OF THE COMPANY OF MARY OUR LADY (O.D.N.)

Sister Mary Smith, ODN

This brief title enfold the story of how one religious institute responded to the fascinating but awesome commission given to religious congregations by Vatican 11 to return to their sources. Since the roots of this particular Order were put down into the rich terrain of the Church in 1607 the task was formidable. Wars, revolution and persecution - with the resultant destruction and dispersal of personnel - wrought havoc in the religious family founded by Jeanne de Lestonnac in Bordeaux, France, in the early seventeenth century.

Under the guidance of a Jesuit, Father Jean de Bordes, the foundress had begun her apostolic work for the education and instruction of girls and young women at a time when Calvinism was gaining momentum. She had many difficulties to encounter because of the prevailing laws of enclosure, but her Institute gained the approval of the Holy See under Pope Paul V in 1607, by the Brief *Salvatoris et Domini*.

The number of titles by which the new Institute was known can be quite confusing to the researcher. Being dedicated to Our Lady, its glory lay in its initial title 'l'Ordre de Notre Dame' (Order of Our Lady). But, as one of the first religious institutes to adapt the Ignatian Constitutions to women religious, it was equally referred to as 'the Company of Mary Our Lady', with an eye, no doubt, to the Jesuit title 'Company of Jesus'. To add to the researchers' problems, the foundress called her religious the 'Daughters of Mary Our Lady'.

Her insistence on using the term 'Mary Our Lady' on every possible occasion, and designating each of her Convents as 'la Maison de Notre Dame' (the House of Our Lady), has given rise to confusion over the years. Since 1607, many religious congregations of women have been founded with 'Notre Dame' as part of their title. Mary never ceases to be 'Our Lady', the model and guiding star of countless women dedicated to the following of her Son 'Our Lord'.

It was not until the establishment of the Generalate in 1921, and the subsequent conferring of a common title by the Holy See, that the entire Institute was officially named 'the Order of the Company of Mary Our Lady', a combination of both names.

In the light of this explanation, anyone who has had to research the history of a long-standing religious institute - which has spread its branches across the Continents - will understand the problems facing an archivist on beginning the work of returning to the sources. The Houses of Our Lady had been, perforce, autonomous, many had disappeared, records had been dispersed, lost or destroyed. Fortunately for us, a farseeing Superior General saw the importance of appointing an archivist at general level who would use all her historical expertise and dedication to accomplish this important task. Some excellent groundwork had already been done by a few Sisters but further

investigation and expansion were needed.

In 1975, timely help came in the shape of the International Congress of Church Historians of France, which was held in Bordeaux - cradle of the Order. This was attended by the general archivist and some Sisters from the French Houses. They became acquainted with the Classification Scheme for Monastic Archives¹ and promptly set to work to adapt it to an apostolic religious institute of women. Because of the Order's long historical span, they agreed to confine their research from the foundation in 1607 to the establishment of the Generalate in 1921. A tentative schema was sent to all the Provinces with a view to testing it and receiving feedback from the various Houses. At the same time, a common designation was given to the archives of the entire Institute, namely, *Archivum Ordinis Dominae Nostrae*, with the Latin acronym 'A.O.D.N.'

The work was slow and laborious, material was not always easy to locate or identify. Many modifications were made to the original schema and the General Archivist - Pilar Foz - set more than one deadline for the compilation and publication of the findings! Finally, in 1989, the fruit of all of this effort appeared in a book entitled: *Primary sources for the history of the education of women in Europe and America* with the sub-title *Historical Archives of the Company of Mary Our Lady 1607-1921*. A review of this book will be found on pages 62-63.

In order to acquaint the Institute with its rich heritage, a history seminar, based on this book, was held in the Generalate, Rome, that same year. Present at it were the Superior General and her team together with thirty-eight archive representatives from Europe, North and South America, Asia and Africa. The seminar lasted two weeks, after which the representatives were commissioned to return to their respective countries and share this knowledge with their communities.

One of the results of this seminar was to highlight the need to clarify roles within the Provinces and to streamline information. For this purpose, the Provincial Archivists, Secretaries and Administrators were asked to meet in the summer of 1990. They had to discover a way of applying the Standard Type of Classification to their respective areas of responsibility. A daunting task lies ahead of them, requiring genuine selflessness and dedication. It is not easy to change from familiar ways of working! However, when it is accomplished, it is hoped that this will facilitate the exchange of vital information, safeguard the patrimony of the Institute, and contribute to the history of religious institutes within the Church.

The Order founded by Saint Jeanne de Lestonnac in 1607 has spread to many parts of the world, but it might be appropriate to identify the Sisters of the Company of Mary Our Lady in Great Britain in this their centenary year.

A few Sisters came from France in 1892 and settled at Penzance, Cornwall, with the blessing of the Bishop of Plymouth, William Vaughan. Their stay was short-lived; they moved to the Capital in 1895 and settled at Tollington

Park, North London. They remained there until after World War II when they transferred to Cobham, Surrey, where the novices had gone for safety.

Over the years, the Sisters branched out to such places as Harworth and Stainforth in Yorkshire, Wincanton in the West Country; they have worked in the East End of London and are now concentrated in Surrey at Cobham, Walton-on-Thames and Hersham, with a small community in Dublin, Ireland. Wherever they go, they endeavour to exercise their apostolic ministry not only in the field of education and in the faith but in pastoral work in the various parishes.

Like most religious institutes in this country, the lack of vocations is keenly felt, but diminishing numbers have not diminished the Sisters' enthusiasm for spreading the word of God and prolonging the charism of their saintly foundress, Jeanne de Lestonnac.

NOTE

1. See 'Standard Type of Classification for Archives of Religious Congregations of Women', *Catholic Archives*, No. 5, 1985, pp 56-61

April 16-18 of this year saw the first meeting, arranged by Sister Marguerite Kuhn-Regnier, for monastic archivists. We were a mixed group - Poor Clares, Carmelites, Benedictines, a Bernadine Cistercian and an Anglican Franciscan. We had all come, too, for a variety of reasons: some to begin archive work, some to update or train to take over from previous archivists, some to discover how to make sense of and put into order cupboards filled with papers, letters, bills, artefacts, and community memorabilia . . . wondering what to keep and what could be consigned to the dustbin. One or two admitted to a proverbial trunkful of old documents kept under the bed!

Of the participants, two of us, myself included, came from the Carmel of Walsingham, a recently founded monastery. I was keen to keep proper records from the start so that posterity would have a full account of our beginnings and not inherit a muddle of unrelated and unsorted material. Also, I am, and always have been, an historian at heart. Here then was my chance to be involved in history-in-the-making. The course was very intense, but that made it worthwhile. It would have been no use travelling a long distance for only a couple of talks. Indeed, there was something interesting to learn at every moment.

All of us were amateurs when it came to organizing records, so the seminars were geared to helping us on a practical as well as theoretical level. Sr Jean Bunn, archivist for the English Province of the S.N.D.s, opened the meeting by defining an archivist, and followed this by a most interesting display of papers, photographs, and artefacts from her own Archives. Surely such items as a hand-made box to hold a sister's bonnet, if not kept, would soon be lost to posterity once the mode of dress for the sisters had changed! Sr Jean continued her lectures with a very full account of her own methods of collecting, conserving, and collating material: we learnt how important it was to have all names clearly on the back of photographs or, within a generation, there would be no knowledge of 'Who's who'; we heard of different systems for filing and retrieving information. One point Sr Jean made strongly, and with which we could all identify, was that records of one's community history are always interesting and instructive for the whole group, and make for unity among members in their discovery of common roots. Symbols which can be shared aid in the growth towards a common future, based on an unique past. It was important, in this respect, not to destroy documents that might show up a community or individual sister in an uncomplimentary light. We have a duty to preserve for posterity *all* that is part of our heritage, so that ultimately the true story of past events and a complete picture of times and circumstances can emerge in due course.

Alfred Callander spoke to us on a project he had recently completed, sorting and cataloguing the papers of a contemplative house (which shall be nameless!). As most of us came from similar autonomous monasteries, his



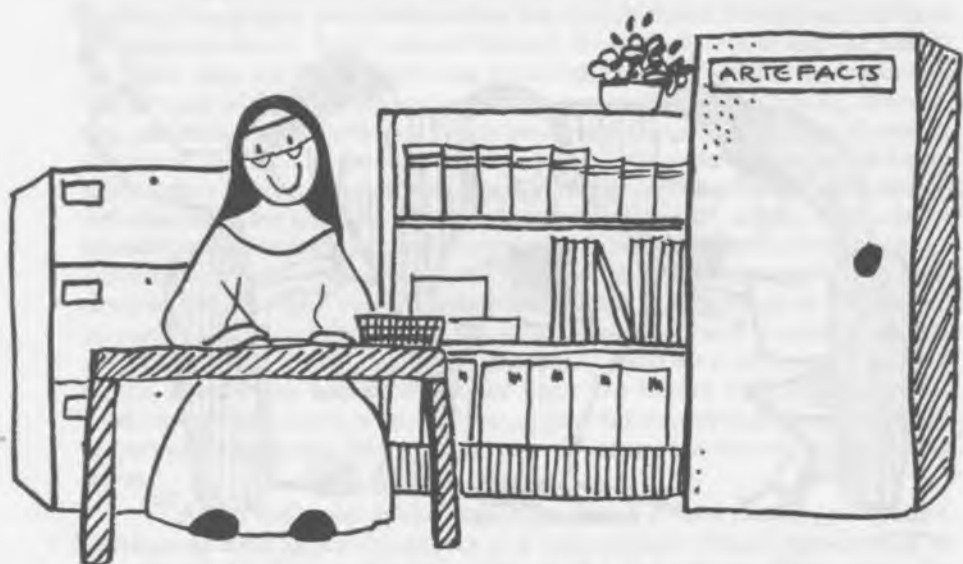
St. Peter's Grange · Prinknash - Arrivals and Introductions



...Talk and discussions far into the night



Where to begin ?



The 'Compleat Monastic Archivist'

suggestions and methods were particularly valuable. He had been invited into a room filled with boxes of papers, etc., etc., and asked to get these into archival order. This he managed to do, taking home a box at a time, and painstakingly assembling a hundred years or so of community history. His comments found an echo in many hearts which hardly knew where to begin yet wanted to sort and catalogue documents of historical interest for future generations.

One afternoon (our only afternoon, as the course included only one full day) was spent at the Gloucestershire County Record Office. Here, we were made very welcome and found out all that such a centre can offer to researchers and archivists. It was an unique opportunity for contemplatives, who otherwise have no idea of how to obtain or use such information, or even of the variety and scope of records in existence, to which the public have access.

The displays (including one of some Dominican archival material by Sr Marguerite), the seminars, the informal talks, the discussions, were all held in the beautiful house and surroundings of St Peter's Grange, Prinknash Abbey. As usual with contemplatives 'out and about', we made the most of the opportunity to meet and talk with others who shared our interest in archives, and exchanges between participants, and between participants and lecturers, went on far into the night.

We celebrated Morning and Evening Prayer together in the Grange chapel, where we also had a special Mass 'for ourselves', celebrated by Fr Anthony Dolan. To close the course we were invited to the Abbey church, where we were escorted into the monks' stalls in choir (shades of equality for women at last!).

It seemed unbelievable that in such a short time we had forged such strong bonds of friendship and shared interest, as well as accumulating a body of practical knowledge. We all left for home determined to get at the trunks and boxes stored in odd corners, and to put our archives into such order that even the Bodleian Library would be envious!

Did we? Did I? Well... not really... not yet... But I most certainly will... and at least I know now how to go about it. Thank you C.A.S.

Sister Elizabeth Ruth Obbard OCD,
Carmel of Walsingham, Langham, Holt, Norfolk, NK25 7BP

Editorial Note:

The sketches illustrated are all by Sr Elizabeth.

SOME NINETEENTH CENTURY PAPERS IN THE SYDNEY
ARCHDIOCESAN ARCHIVES:
ENTRIES IN THE *GUIDE TO COLLECTIONS OF MANUSCRIPTS
RELATING TO AUSTRALIA*

In early 1991 another supplement (Series E, Part 1) to the National Library of Australia's *Guide to collections of manuscripts relating to Australia* on microfiche was issued. All five series (A - E, Pt. 1) are available with a consolidated name index of collections and sub-groups within collections included. Contained in the latest supplement are five entries for early clergy and other nineteenth-century papers in the Sydney Archdiocesan Archives at St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney.

All the papers concerned were arranged and described in 1987 during the first six months of the two-year New South Wales Bicentennial Archives Program at the Cathedral. The Cathedral project was funded by a \$100,000 grant from the NSW Bicentennial Council and committed to the management of the Archives Authority of New South Wales.¹

The five summary *Guide* entries are referenced below. They include papers of the two first official Catholic chaplains in New South Wales, the Irish priests, Fathers Philip Conolly (1786-1839) and John Joseph Therry (1790-1864) who arrived in Sydney in 1820. There are also entries for the correspondence of the layman, John O'Sullivan (1802-1876) who was Father Therry's business agent, some papers of Father Daniel Power (c. 1790-1830), Therry's short-lived clerical confrère in Sydney of the late 1820s, and surviving private and official papers of Roger Bede Vaughan OSB (1834-1883), the second and last English Benedictine Archbishop of Sydney.²

All are partial holdings only, fortuitous survivals of much larger original groups of papers. For example, Father Philip Conolly, who moved from Sydney to Van Diemen's Land in March 1821, is represented solely by five quarterly returns of baptisms, marriages and deaths furnished in accordance with Governor Macquarie's written instructions to both priests of 14 October 1820 which specified conditions under which they would exercise their pastoral role. The final return of 10 November 1822 may be the only surviving contemporary documentary evidence of Father Conolly's only return visit to the mainland in 1822 when he journeyed to the penal settlements of Newcastle and Port Macquarie in the north accompanied by Columbus Fitzpatrick (1810-1878), a twelve-year-old boy. Fitzpatrick recalled the journey in his published reminiscences of Catholic religious and social life during the Macquarie era which appeared as a series of lengthy letters in the press in 1865.³

The largest holding consists of 372 items from the Therry papers. These estrays were long ago separated from the Therry group of papers, probably around the turn of the century. The group was deposited in the Mitchell Library in

Sydney by the Jesuit Fathers in 1969. A guide to the Therry papers, which was first issued by the library in 1980, is still available. ⁴The estrays at St Mary's Cathedral are also described in a guide which was issued by the Archives Authority of New South Wales in late 1988. ⁵It is an anonymous compilation which contains no details of the provenance of the estrays. ⁶Copies are available gratis (at the time of writing - September 1991) from St Mary's Cathedral, but not from the public body which published it. ⁷

GUIDE ENTRIES (Series E, Pt. 1)

CONOLLY, Rev. Philip (1786-1839) *Papers*, 30 Dec. 1820-10 Nov. 1822, 1 folder (5 items)

O'SULLIVAN, John (1802-1876) *Correspondence*, 1834-1868, 5 folders (105 items)

POWER, Rev. Daniel (c. 1790-1830) *Papers*, 2 Nov. 1825-29 Dec. 1829, 1 folder (15 items)

THERRY, Rev. John Joseph (1790-1864) *Papers*, (c 1822-1864), 372 items

VAUGHAN, Roger Bede, Archbishop (1834-1883) *Papers*, 1848-1888, 35 folders (287 items)

NOTES

1. The original suggestion in 1987 by John Bourke, a driver of the Bicentennial Archives Program vehicle, that description of the holdings of the Sydney Archdiocesan Archives be contributed to the *Guide* is gratefully recalled. A lengthy and sometimes hilarious correspondence with Dr Kenneth Knight, a sometime Vice-President of the Society of Genealogists, concerning the disposition of the holdings, is also acknowledged.
2. A full description of the Vaughan papers is included in Carleton, Frank 'Some archives of Benedictine provenance at St Mary's, Sydney' *Tjurunga: an Australasian Benedictine review* 37, Sept 1989 pp 62-77 (III. The Vaughan Papers, pp 66-77).
3. *Catholic religious and social life in the Macquarie era as it is portrayed in the Letters of Columbus Fitzpatrick (1810-1878)*. Ed. by C. J. Duffy, Sydney: Sydney: Catholic Press Newspapers, 1966, p 21.
4. Mitchell Library, *Sydney Guide to the papers of Rev. John Joseph Therry in the Mitchell Library, Sydney*. Sydney: Library Council of New South Wales, 1980, (rev. 1985) ii, 50p (Mitchell Library manuscripts guides, no 4).
5. *Guide to the records of Rev. John Joseph Therry and related papers held in the archives of St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney. Including Rev. Philip Conolly, Rev. Daniel Power, John O'Sullivan*. Sydney: Archives Authority of NSW., 1988, iv, 36p.
6. An examination of the provenance of the Therry papers estrays is contained in Carleton, Frank 'The Therry papers estrays in the Sydney Archdiocesan Archives: some details of provenance' *Church Archivists' Society Newsletter* 74, April 1989, pp 3-4.
7. Errata and addenda sheets for this guide totalling 4 leaves, which detail its anonymous editor's errors of omission and commission, were lodged in the National Library, the New South Wales legal deposit libraries and in the Australian Catholic Documentation Centre in the Veech Library at St Patrick's College, Manly, during 1989.

Frank Carleton

Project Archivist, St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney

THE RELIGIOUS ARCHIVES GROUP CONFERENCE 1991

September's conference was held in the Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham; an ideal setting for the third meeting of the Religious Archives Group of the Society of Archivists. Few people seemed to have had difficulties in reaching Birmingham, and I for one welcomed the opportunity to get away from our London-dominated culture. The meeting was well attended, but at the same time was small enough to create a friendly and informal atmosphere; and there was ample time over tea and coffee to meet other members. As a newcomer to the group I was favourably impressed by the variety of people and jobs that I met with. Specialist Repositories were represented, as were the County Record Offices, and there were also a few members of Religious Orders present; giving the group an 'ecumenical' flavour which is one of its most pleasing aspects.

It is the group's intention to retain as far as possible an inter-faith dimension to their meetings. The first session provided this in the shape of an exceptionally interesting talk by Dr Jorgen Nielsen on the history of Muslim Organizations in the UK. Rev. Penelope Rundle gave a talk which, although on a subject familiar to most of us, was equally informative: the use of Religious Archives in a County Record Office.

A display of publications, lists and guides had been scheduled to take place over lunch; unfortunately not many participants had contributed to the selection. This was slightly disappointing, as it would have been an interesting opportunity to see the varieties of material which members work with, as well as comparing their different methods of listing. Perhaps in future there will be more contributions to this display.

As in previous years, the afternoon session began with workshops, a popular feature of the conference. Three subjects were on offer: 'Introduction to Computer Applications,' 'The Administration and Conservation of artefacts and other non-manuscript materials' and 'Polemical Archives.' I had opted for 'Polemical Archives' as the group with the most intriguing title. This session proved to be a lively discussion, although the group never actually arrived at a definition of polemical archives upon which everybody could agree! The afternoon was completed with a panel discussion, with questions put by participants, on 'Confidentiality and Religious Archives.'

At present the annual conference is the main activity, although the Steering group is still considering the possibility of compiling a guide to Religious Archives. The conference proved to be a thoroughly enjoyable and useful experience; one that I would strongly recommend to anyone who works with or has an interest in Religious Archives.

Lucy E. Bosworth, New College, University of Edinburgh.

CATHOLIC ARCHIVES SOCIETY CONFERENCE, 1991

The twelfth annual conference, held at All Saints Pastoral Centre, London Colney, on 27 - 29 May, was attended by over seventy members.

The conference was opened on Tuesday afternoon, 27 May, by *Fr Anthony Dolan* (Chairman) and the first talk was given by *Fr Francis Isherwood*, Portsmouth Diocesan Archivist, who described the history and content of the archives, including records of the Channel Islands. In the evening, *Dr Rory O'Donnell* gave a talk, generously illustrated with slides, on 'Church Architecture as a primary document for 19th century Catholic History'. The next morning, 28 May, *Dr Peter Hughes*, consultant archivist, gave a talk, full of very practical advice, on 'Sorting Religious Archives' (see pp 3-16), and this was followed by a presentation by *Mr Mark Vine* of Conservation Resources on 'Aspects of Conservation', in which he described the range of basic archive storage products and their technical and practical advantages.

During the afternoon, members went to St Edmund's College, Ware, and were guided over the museum and chapel by the *Librarian* and by *Fr Ian Dickie*, Archivist to the College and to the Westminster Archdiocese, the archives on display in the museum including the Douai diaries. The evening was fully occupied with group discussions of diocesan archives, provincial newsletters of religious congregations, work in progress, computers for advanced users and beginners respectively, lay organizations, and the archives of religious communities.

Reports from these discussion groups were made to the Open Forum on Wednesday morning, 29 May, and prompted many useful comments and suggestions for Society or individual action. *Sr Marguerite Kuhn-Regnier* (Secretary) reported on the seminar for monastic archivists at Prinknash in April (see pp 53-56), *Sr Dominique Horgan OP* referred to the formation of the new Association of Church Archivists in Ireland, which was likely to obtain wider support than the Association of Religious Archivists of Ireland which it replaced, and several members spoke about their special interests, and solicited or exchanged information. The AGM of the Society concluded the conference. The Chairman introduced *Bishop J. O'Brien*, who complimented the Society on its work and conveyed the greetings of *Cardinal Hume*, the Society's patron. The Chairman reviewed the activities of the preceding year, the officers gave their annual reports (and were duly thanked for their services, especially the conference secretary), and the officers and council were elected for 1991/2 (see inside front cover).

A full report of the conference appears in the *CAS Newsletter, Autumn 1991, No. 13*, obtainable from the Secretary. The 1992 conference will be held at Upholland Northern Institute, on 25 - 27 May 1992.

ADDRESS BY THE POPE TO THE SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CHURCH
ARCHIVES DAY IN ROME, 1991

On Monday, 16 September 1991, in Castel Gandolfo the Pope received the participants in a congress on Church archives. The Holy Father addressed the group in German.

Your Eminence,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a special joy to me to welcome you to Rome on the occasion of the Sixth International Church Archives Day. The joint conference of the Church Archives of Germany and the Association of Archives and Libraries in the Evangelical Church, to which you belong, is a praiseworthy and exemplary initiative, as well as an expression of the Church's consciousness of her responsibility for learning and culture. You have made it your task to protect the cultural value of the 'written memory' and to make research available.

Since the earliest Christian centuries the Popes have also had concern for the care of important writings and documents. The historian Eusebius already reported about the *Chartarium* or *Scrinium Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae* and at that time religious archives were already being used for research. Since 1880, as you know, the doors of the Vatican Archives have been open to scholars from all over the world. In this way the Church offers an important contribution to science and learning and thus provides for the historical, spiritual and cultural development of humanity.

The religious archives which you represent also have an ecumenical meaning and function. On the one hand they contain source material about the regrettable division of the Church; and on the other hand they bear witness to the ceaseless efforts to overcome that division. Not least of all, the ecumenical significance is expressed through this International Church Archives Day which has brought you together here in Rome with the desire of meeting the Successor of St Peter as a culmination of it.

I gladly take this opportunity to thank you for your work in religious archives. At the same time, I would like to encourage you to carry on your fruitful collaboration in order to continue your important tasks in shared responsibility. For this I cordially offer you and all your collaborators God's blessing and protection.

ASSOCIATION OF CHURCH ARCHIVISTS OF IRELAND

The Association of Religious Archivists of Ireland came into existence some ten years ago, to meet the needs of some Religious Order, Congregations and Societies in Ireland. It succeeded better than its founders anticipated. Archivists have now been appointed to most of the groups mentioned above and courses have been provided to give those archivists an introduction to good archival management. But not all of them are Religious. Still they are anxious to be members of A.R.A.I. - which apparently was founded to cater only for Religious, or so the title of the Association suggested.

The Association itself decided to resolve this problem at its last AGM (in April 1991). When the question of membership was discussed, it was found that there was general agreement among those present that admission should be granted to anyone interested in pursuing the ends of the Association. After consideration of a number of options the following motion was formally proposed and seconded: 'That the name of the Association be changed to the "Association of Church Archivists of Ireland".' The motion was then adopted by all present.

The way is now open to expand membership. Lay people will feel more welcome - and not just tolerated. It is hoped especially that Diocesan Archivists will apply for membership.

There was another dimension to the debate at the AGM. It was felt that the new title would be wide enough to leave membership open to anyone working with any kind of religious archives. To quote from the minutes of the AGM: 'Contact with other traditions in our country could not but be enriching and beneficial'. In line with this thinking, the executive committee of A.C.A.I. has now issued invitations for a meeting with interested parties. It remains to be seen how much interest there is in wider membership.

Officers of A.C.A.I. this year (April 1991-April 1992) are:

Frisby, Sr Magdalena, (Hon. Treasurer), Convent of Mercy, Lr. Baggot St., Dublin 2.

Gethins, Br Patrick, OSM, Elm Park House, Grange Wood Estate, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16.

Horgan, Sr Dominique, OP, 38 Iona Rd., Glasnevin, Dublin 9.

Layden, Fr Leo CSSp, Temple Park, Richmond Ave. Sth., Dublin 6.

Lowe, Sr Francis, (Hon. Secretary), Convent of Mercy, Lr. Baggot St., Dublin 2
Stack, Sr Mary, MMM, Our Lady of Lourdes, Drogheda, Co. Louth.

A meeting of the A.C.A.I. with other interested groups, including other churches, was held in December 1991.

The Rev. Leo Layden CSSp.

January 1992

BOOK REVIEWS

Historical Archives of the Company of Mary Our Lady 1607-1921.

Fuentes Primarias Para La Historia De La Educacion De La Mujer En Europa Y America. Archivos Historicos Compania De Maria Nuestra Senora 1607-1921. Pilar Foz y Foz, ODN, in collaboration with Estela Mejia Restrepo, ODN. Tipografia Poliglota Vaticana, Roma, 1989. Price £25 sterling. Available from Convent of Notre Dame, Burwood House, Cobham, Surrey, KT11 1HA.

The Archives of the Company of Mary Our Lady are a primary source for the history of the education of women in Europe and America. Sister Pilar Foz y Foz, ODN and her collaborators have produced in Spanish a massive collection of documents illustrating the Company's history. An introduction in English provides guidance to the contents and arrangement of the documents from the Company's archives.

As the introduction states: 'Mother de Lestonnac's ideas represent the vindication of a very important concept, that of making women responsible for their own education', and again: 'the compiling, cataloguing and publishing of the guide to all existing documents . . . open wide possibilities to the historian'. Here is evidence of the spiritual and theological trends in the houses of the Company, of the social profile of its members, of their educational objectives and of the functioning of the houses as religious institutions. The work is a catalogue of the contents corresponding to the 157 houses founded between 1607 and 1921.

The first section deals with the origin and development of the Company, beginning with the personality and mission of the foundress, Jeanne de Lestonnac, the establishment of a congregation 'dedicated to the education of girls under the protection of the Virgin Mary' and the approval of the Institute by Pope Paul V in April 1607. The ideas of the foundress about education were influenced by Michel de Montaigne, her uncle, and the *Ratio Studiorum* of the Jesuits. She had to plan the schools in such a way that religious enclosure and the apostolate were not incompatible. The documents show how rapidly the Company expanded in France, Spain and Latin America. Much later it came to England.

Dispersed in France at the Revolution, the Company achieved a recovery, and early in the nineteenth century studies were begun with a view to promoting the beatification of the foundress. Problems arising from the losses during the Revolution made it very difficult to continue gratuitous education and authorization was obtained from Rome for charging 'some slight remuneration'.

The documents show the progress made in Spain in the nineteenth century amid difficulties caused by the policy of the State towards education. Several new foundations were made; there was progress, too, in Latin America - in Mexico, Argentina, Chile and Colombia.

The second section of the documents listed deal with the problem of the

government of the Company and the approach to the establishment of the generalate in 1921. Jeanne de Lestonnac had planned a centralized form of government, but the Brief of Foundation had subjected each house to the local Ordinary. After the Revolution, the need for centralizing the government was felt more strongly and this feeling became more widespread when the Company established a house in Rome in 1834; but it was not universal. When Pope Leo XIII issued the decree *Quemadmodum* in 1890 ordering Orders and Congregations to revise their constitutions, the need for centralized government became more evident. In the twentieth century, the Company faced difficulties in several countries and there were difficulties within about the form of government; but advance came in the pontificate of Benedict XV. By a decree of March 1921, a General Chapter was to be held and as a result a Superior General was elected.

The volume is beautifully produced and is furnished with maps, diagrams, illustrations and useful appendices and indexes.

The introduction in English is an informative and valuable guide to the documents printed (most of them in Spanish). The collection includes lists in English of documents preserved in the Company's houses in England.

The result is an abundant collection of material for the history of the Company and is evidence of the painstaking and scholarly efforts of all those concerned in the production.

T. G. Holt, S.J.

Irish Church History Today

Edited by Reamonn O Muiir. ISBN 0 951 1490 a 6. Pp. 123. Published by Cumann Seanchais Ard Mhacha/the Armagh Diocesan Historical Society, 1991. Price £10.00 (Ir £11.00). Postage and packing £1.50. Available from Mr Damian Woods, St Patrick's Grammar School, Armagh, BT61 7QZ.

It was a happy thought to commemorate the foundation, 150 years ago, of Armagh Catholic Cathedral with a seminar on 'The current state of ecclesiastical history in Ireland.' The speakers were briefed to review past scholarship, present research and future prospects; they were apparently confined to the history of the Catholic Church. It was an even happier thought for the Armagh Diocesan History Society to publish the seminar papers, for the result is a richly informative and often stimulating historiographical survey.

The book falls readily into three parts. The first, comprising well over half of it, sees four historians, each a leading authority in the field, work exactly to the brief they had been given. Cardinal Tomas O Fiaich, in what alas must be his last contribution to scholarship, covers 'The Early Period'. This is defined in the conventual Irish periodisation of history as from St Patrick (modern research has blown 'the traditional St Patrick into so many pieces that no one has

succeeded in putting them all together again satisfactorily') to St Malachy ('Carbon 14 dating did not succeed in separating the bones of St Malachy from those of St Bernard because they were born within five years of each other'. And buried alongside in Clairvaux.) Art Cosgrove appraises intelligently and objectively the bad press generally accorded 'The Medieval Period' because of its lapses from the highest standards of clerical discipline and lay morality. Colm Lennon brings to 'The Sixteenth Century' his own particular expertise in the key role of Dublin in the survival of Irish Catholicism with both an awareness of how Irish ecclesiastical history has been enhanced by the striking advances in general Tudor history and of the importance of siting Ireland in the context of Europe as a whole. There follows Benignus Millett, sole survivor of a heroic group of Franciscan scholars whose work especially in the Vatican archives has done so much to lay foundations for seventeenth-century Irish ecclesiastical history. His survey of that century is just as fully comprehensive and authoritative as one would expect of him. These are four top class contributions.

There follows two articles which though well worth publishing sit rather inappropriately in this particular context since they are not, nor were they intended to be, primarily historiographical. Kevin Whelan writes interestingly on 'Catholics, Politicisation and the 1798 Rebellion'. Thomas G. McGrath argues a very persuasive case in 'The Tridentine Evolution of Modern Irish Catholicism: a Re-Examination of the "Devotional Revolution" Thesis', an absorbing essay, which in an incidental way, at least partially produces a review of the current state of Catholic history in nineteenth-century Ireland. A field, one feels, in need of much more intensive cultivation.

Finally, two articles which though very different in aim and tone succeed, probably quite accidentally, in being in an important way complementary. David C. Sheehy, the Dublin diocesan archivist, considers the state of 'Archives of the Catholic Church in Ireland.' This is at once a plea, studiously moderate in tone, for the introduction of serious archival accumulation in the dioceses ('in the majority of cases dioceses hold records in poor or even perilous conditions with no qualified personnel available to conserve, describe or administer the records') and a blueprint for short-term remedial action. Dermot Keogh, in 'Church and State in Modern Ireland' reveals in some detail how much more could be achieved in this field were ecclesiastical archives better organized and more open. Keogh is concerned about an ethos of secrecy with regard to access to sources which he thinks is a problem in both Church and State and about 'defensive, protective' Catholic history. He will have none of it: 'The truth shall set you free is not a platitude to my way of thinking. It is short-sighted and cowardly to want to safeguard the people of God from the truth about the immediate past.' Amen to that!

J. A. Watt,
Professor Emeritus of Medieval History,
University of Newcastle upon Tyne.