

Catholic Archives

2003

Number 23

THE JOURNAL OF

The Catholic Archives Society

CATHOLIC ARCHIVES

| NO 23 | CONTENTS | 2003 |
|---|--------------------------|------|
| Editorial Notes | | 2 |
| Church Documents: Preservation and Access | G. READ | 3 |
| Data Protection and Confidentiality: Civil Law versus Canon Law | K. PAVER | 10 |
| Archives and Archivists in the Spotlight: Principles and Practice of Church Policy in Regard to Access to Sensitive Records | D. SHEEHY | 20 |
| Archival Theory and Standards in Ecclesiastical Archives: Part 2 | J. FLEMING | 38 |
| The Archives of the Carmelite Convent, Darlington, and the Background in Belgium | M. HARCOURT- WILLIAMS | 47 |
| Dispersed Contemplative Communities | M. KUHN-REGNIER | 53 |
| Oscott College Archives | M. ROWLANDS | 56 |
| When the Chalk Dust Settles: The Value of School Log Books | D. S. HAMER CP | 61 |
| Printed Ephemera and Catholic Archives | A. BELLENGER OSB | 74 |
| Father Turner: Some Personal Reflections | P. HARDWICK | 78 |
| XXI Congress of Church Archivists | J. BEZZINA S. FOSTER | 84 |
| Book Reviews | | 100 |
| The Catholic Archives Society Conference, 2002 | | 107 |

Illustrations:

| | |
|---|----|
| Illus. 1 Oscott College | 60 |
| Illus. 2 Mortuary Bill of St Ambrose Barlow | 77 |
| Illus. 3 Architects' Impression, Downside Abbey | 78 |
| Illus. 4 The Arms of Cardinal Weld | 78 |
| Illus. 5 Father F. Turner SJ | 80 |

EDITORIAL NOTES

It is with pleasure that I write these notes, and it is with gratitude that I recall the sterling efforts of Sister Mary Campion McCarren and Mrs Margaret Harcourt-Williams in producing last year's journal in the absence owing to illness of the Editor.

*The first three articles in **Catholic Archives** 23 are particularly welcome in that they deal with the topical issues of data protection, access and confidentiality with regard to ecclesiastical archives. Monsignor Read and Father Paver write as canon lawyers, David Sheehy as an archivist (with both British and Irish civil law in mind). We are also glad to be able to publish the second part of Father Joseph Fleming's study on archival theory and standards.*

The Secretary of the Catholic Archives Society and her predecessor (Margaret Harcourt-Williams and Sister Marguerite Kuhn-Regnier respectively) have contributed articles on the Darlington Carmel (our wonderful printers) and on the dispersed contemplative communities in Britain. Concern for the archival ramifications of the closure and amalgamation of such houses of nuns, as well as the need to catalogue the archives of extant communities, has always been a feature of the Society's work.

Dr Marie Rowlands offers an interesting account of the archives of Oscott College, while Sister Dominic Savio Hamer gives a very practical insight into the value of school log books. Dom Aidan Bellenger's article on printed ephemera will be of great value to archivists who also act as librarians, while Peter Hardwick's memoir of the late Father Freddie Turner, Archivist at Stonyhurst, recalls the very human side of our profession. The Editor represented the Catholic Archives Society at the XXI Congress of Church Archivists at Trent (September 2002), and he and Father Joseph Bezzina of Gozo contribute papers given at that meeting. Finally, the lengthy Book Reviews section bears witness to the ever-increasing volume of publications which relate to or make use of Catholic archival collections in Britain and Ireland. To all our contributors the Editor, on behalf of the Society, offers his warmest thanks.

Father Stewart Foster

CHURCH DOCUMENTS: PRESERVATION AND ACCESS

Very Rev. Gordon Read

INTRODUCTION

A number of queries have arisen about the implications for Church Archives of recent civil legislation, e.g. The Data Protection Act and Human Rights Act, and also, more recently, of the recommendations of the Nolan Report. Clearly the topic could be very wide, and this short paper will focus on general principles, and specific issues relating to what might be described as clergy personnel files.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The term 'archive' covers many different types of material and storage. It refers to material of historical interest, but also to current working files. These comprise not only traditional paper-based documents, but also electronic records of varying kinds, and materials such as microfilm or microfiche. The Catholic Archives Society produced a useful booklet, **Church Archives**, in 1997. This contains the text of a Circular Letter from the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church (2nd February 1997), and extracts from the Code of Canon Law, with commentary from **The Canon Law, Letter and Spirit**, a commentary produced by the Canon Law Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

DIOCESAN ARCHIVES

It is the responsibility of the Diocesan Bishop to ensure that documents pertaining not only to the diocese, but to all the churches and parishes within the diocese, are carefully preserved, and to establish detailed regulations for his diocese (canon 491). In addition there is to be a central historical archive where materials of historical interest are kept.

At diocesan level, each Curia is to have its own archive, which is the responsibility of the Chancellor. He or she may be assisted by a Vice-Chancellor (canon 482), and also professionally trained archivists (Circular Letter, n.2.5). The Archive must be kept locked, and only the Bishop and Chancellor are to have the key (canon 487). Access may be granted by the Bishop alone, or by the Chancellor and Moderator of the Curia jointly. There should be a separate area where documents may be studied under supervision. People are entitled to a copy of documents

“which are of their nature public and which concern their own personal status”, canon 487 §2. This refers to documents such as extracts from baptismal registers. It does not refer to private documents such as letters. Access to these is granted on a discretionary basis.

In addition, there is a Secret Archive. Access to this is granted to the Diocesan Bishop alone. Even when the see is vacant a Diocesan Administrator can have access only in a case of real necessity (canon 490). Certain documents **must** be stored here: criminal cases concerning matters of a moral nature; documentary proof of canonical warnings or reproofs in the context of canonical offences or scandalous behaviour (canons 489 §2 and 1339); acts of a preliminary investigation for a penal process closed without formal trial (canon 1719); dispensations granted from occult impediments in the internal non-sacramental forum; secret marriages. The Bishop **may** use it to store other matters of a particularly confidential nature. The only circumstance in which it is foreseen that documents may be removed from the Secret Archive is when needed to complete a penal process (canon 1719).

PRESERVATION AND ACCESS

In general all documents should be kept indefinitely, though there is no need to retain duplicates, e.g. typed copies and original hand written text or notes. Clearly some discretion is needed in this, and in the absence of concrete guidelines, parishes and Commissions will make their own judgement. However even apparent trivia may be of historical interest in the future.

Documents relating to formal canonical processes have set time scales for retention. These are related to the possibility of appealing or re-opening cases. Cases relating to personal status can always be re-opened, even, in certain situations, by the heirs, when both parties are deceased. The acts of such cases must be kept in perpetuity. Civil suits for damages have a more limited life-span, but are extremely rare. Penal actions are extinguished after ten years, and a statute of limitations prevents action being taken over alleged offences that occurred more than ten years before. They are also extinguished by the death of the accused. In consequence documents kept in the secret archives which relate to moral or other accusations of a penal nature must be destroyed on the death of the person accused, or after a time gap of ten years. All that is to be retained, and only where a penal case has led to conviction, is the text of the judgement and a summary of the facts (canon 489 §2).

Since no one else has access to the Secret Archive, it is the personal responsibility of the Diocesan Bishop to go through the Secret Archive annually, to ensure that such documents are destroyed. The only documents retained indefinitely in the Secret Archive, then, are the registers of internal forum dispensations and of secret marriages.

Access may be granted for legitimate reasons to all other documents, subject to guidelines laid down by the Bishop, or custodian of the archive. The policy of the Chancery is to grant access after thirty years, unless a Commission has set a longer period of reservation on a particular document. A reservation of one hundred years is set on Tribunal files. Each Commission has its own policy as to when working documents are transferred from office filing cabinets to the Diocesan Archive.

CHURCH AND CIVIL LAW

Clearly the provisions of civil and canon law may differ. However, as far as possible, Diocesan Bishops, and all responsible should show respect for the civil laws in these matters, and harmonise their own regulations with these (Circular Letter, n. 2.3). From this it will be clear, that, unless there is a clear contradiction, civil law on the retention of documents, and the granting of access to them should be obeyed, not just because civil law requires it, but also the Church's law. This has relevance to the application of the Data Protection Act, and other legislation such as the Human Rights Act.

Data Protection Act 1998

INTRODUCTION

This is a lengthy and complex piece of legislation, amending previous legislation on this subject. It did not enter into effect immediately. Initially only electronically stored data were covered, but as of **24th October 2001**, the Act applies also to **manual** files. This includes both files in the traditional sense, and also card indexes, registers and similar ways of retaining records. Each Diocese and Religious Order must be registered with the Data Protection Commissioner. The responsibility ultimately falls on the Diocesan Trustees. Legal advice has been sought on this subject on behalf of the Bishops of England and Wales, and also from the Data Protection Commissioner. The response of the latter has been totally non-committal on the matters raised. Legal advice is that, in general the Data Protection Act applies as much to the Church as anyone else. However, certain categories of data may be

covered by various exemptions contained in the Act. Those with access to the internet can study the full text of the Act on: www.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1998/80029-a.htm

MEANING OF THE ACT

Data means information which is being or intended to be processed by automatic equipment, or which is part of a filing system, or forms an accessible record. A **Data Subject** is any living person who can be identified from the data, or additional information likely to come into the possession of the processor. **Processing** means any kind of organisation, adaptation, retrieval, consultation, disclosure, or even destruction of the information. **Sensitive personal data** includes information on religious beliefs, physical or mental health, sexual life, allegations of any offence or proceedings relating to such an allegation.

RIGHT OF ACCESS TO PERSONAL DATA

The Data Controller (i.e. Diocesan Trustees) must inform the data subject whether he is processing any personal data, stating its nature, the purpose for which it is being processed, and to whom it may be shown, the content of the data and its source. However this obligation arises only on the receipt of a written request and the appropriate fee. He is not obliged to comply with the request if this involves disclosing information about someone else without that person's consent. This information must be supplied within forty days of application. If necessary the applicant can seek a court order. The data subject may also require the processor to cease processing such data if this is likely to cause substantial damage or distress. If the processor does not intend to comply, he must give reasons, and again the matter can be taken to court. Note that the court may order the obliteration, amending or destruction of data, or where it is an accurate record of information received, order a supplementary statement of the true facts to be added.

EXEMPTIONS

Personal data processed for certain purposes are exempt from the first principle of the act (see below). This includes: the prevention of crime, apprehension and prosecution of offenders, protecting the public against dishonesty, malpractice or improper conduct, or incompetence on the part of persons authorised to carry on any profession or other activity, protecting charities against misconduct or mismanagement. Data may also be processed for statistical or historical research,

in which case it may be kept indefinitely. Information which is of its nature public is likewise exempt (e.g. sacramental registers). Personal data are exempt from non-disclosure provisions when this is required in connection with legal proceedings, or to establish, exercise or defend legal rights.

THE EIGHT DATA PROTECTION PRINCIPLES

1. Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully and, in particular, shall not be processed unless-
 - (a) at least one of the conditions in Schedule 2 is met, and
 - (b) in the case of sensitive personal data, at least one of the conditions in Schedule 3 is also met.
2. Personal data shall be obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purposes, and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or those purposes.
3. Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose or purposes for which they are processed.
4. Personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
5. Personal data processed for any purpose shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes.
6. Personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under this Act.
7. Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data.
8. Personal data shall not be transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.

DATA PROTECTION ACT AND THE CHURCH

Unfortunately only court cases will establish the extent to which there is any incompatibility between civil and canon law in this area. However, in my view the likelihood of such conflict has been overstated, and can be minimised where the Church acts in accordance with its own laws. For example, in marriage nullity cases both parties

already have the right to inspect the acts of the case and make comments to correct anything that appears erroneous. It seems likely that the actual processing of such data would be covered by the exemptions in the act. A potential area of difficulty might be the transmission of a case to the Holy See. If the Church is entitled to hold the data in the first place, it is likely to be entitled to process it in other ways. A Catholic who left the church would be entitled to insist that his details be deleted from parish records, but not that they be removed from a public record such as the baptismal register. He could only insist on a marginal note being added to update the entry.

What of **clergy personnel files**? Evidently the person in question has the right to know what is in such a file, and insist on the correction or elimination of erroneous or defamatory material. If it is needed for a penal process of some kind then it should be in the Secret Archive, and would be covered by the appropriate exemption under the Act. He would in any case have a canonical right to see the material if it becomes part of a penal process. Should the material not be used for this purpose, the Code already provides for its destruction on an established time-scale, and prevents its disclosure. One would imagine that the Bishop would not, in any case, wish to retain erroneous or defamatory material on file, and that he would wish to obtain the cleric's comments on such matters. Clearly anonymous allegations are of no value, even if the substance should be true, and ought always to be destroyed forthwith.

A cleric, then, has the right to see what is in his own personnel file, and insist on corrections or deletions. He does not have a right to access to the Secret Archive, but if the material in it relates to accusations against him, then he will have a right to see its content in the context of a canonical penal process, and to make appropriate comments. If the case is proven, and he is convicted, then there is a presumption as to the truth of the data retained, and a time-scale set for its destruction. The latter is in accordance with the provision that data be not kept longer than necessary. The data contained in such files are protected from unauthorised disclosure, by appropriate restrictions on access.

THE NOLAN REPORT

The section on records is 2.9.14. The provisions are in accordance with the Data Protection Act and canon law, with the exception of the recommendation that records be kept after the death of the

accused, and for 100 years. It is arguable that the Data Protection Act would allow such records to be kept in order to protect the rights of the Church. However, it would be in clear contradiction to the provisions of canon 489 §2 and canon 1719, which require their destruction, subject to the retention of a summary and the judgement in the case of a conviction. The Bishops would need to ask the Holy See for a derogation from the Code in order to comply with this recommendation of the Nolan Report. Here one must note that at the beginning of October 2001 the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith sent a letter to Diocesan Bishops concerning the processing of such cases. If there seems a *prima facie* case, the Bishop is to refer to the Congregation, who will give precise norms to be followed. It would be appropriate for the Bishop in such a situation to ask for guidance on the question of the retention of such materials in the Secret Archive. It seems unlikely that the Congregation would envisage a general retention for 100 years.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Monsignor Read is Chancellor and Judicial Vicar of the Diocese of Brentwood. He contributed to Canon Law: Letter & Spirit, and his commentary on canons 482, 486-491, 535 appears in Church Archives (CAS, 1997), pp. 41-47.

DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY: CIVIL LAW VERSUS CANON LAW

Rev. Kristian Paver

Not so long ago, it was the accepted norm in the United Kingdom that the state did not intervene in the "internal" affairs of the Churches. However, with the growing interest in human rights in society, together with efforts to set down common fundamental principles for the entire European Union, this has begun to change over the last few years. The two main pieces of legislation which will potentially have the most impact are the Human Rights Act, which made the rights enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights (1951) directly enforceable in British Courts, and the Data Protection Act which superseded the Data Protection Act 1984 and implemented the European Data Protection Directive (95/46/EC), both of which became law in 1998. The HRA came fully into force on 2nd October 2000 and the transition period to allow compliance with the DPA ended on 21st October 2001. The Church is not exempt from either Act, but just how far they will affect it will remain unclear until test cases have been decided by the courts.

These two Acts are clearly of significance for those who handle personal information and records and conserve them in archives, although neither Act makes specific reference to archives as such.

HUMAN RIGHTS ACT 1998

This Act is primarily concerned with the actions of public authorities and of private persons exercising some public function. Traditionally, the Catholic Church has not been regarded as a public body in English law, but rather as a consensual society, a voluntary religious association whose members are organized and bound together as a matter of contract (*Buckley v Cahal Daly* 1990). Therefore, the Act will not have immediate effect on the Church's functioning. However, since the courts are bound to act in accordance with Convention rights, it is now recognized that the Act will inevitably have a "horizontal" effect, since courts will be required to apply the rights when deciding cases between private bodies.

Article 8 contains the right which is most relevant to those who work with archives:

1. Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life,

his home and his correspondence.

2. There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health and morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

The effects of the HRA 1998 are impossible to predict. Much will depend on how broad the courts will interpret "respect for private life".

DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998

The Act is applicable to the holding and processing of personal data by all individuals and groups if the data is contained in a "relevant filing system".

The Act defines a "relevant filing system" as "any set of information relating to individuals to the extent that, although the information is not processed by means of equipment operating automatically in response to instructions given for that purpose, the set is structured, either by reference to individuals or by reference to criteria relating to individuals, in such a way that specific information relating to a particular individual is readily accessible". Thus, information which is unstructured does not fall within the ambit of the Act. However, it would appear that one of the aims of an archive is to have readily accessible material and so would have a referenced filing system of some sort.

Note that, although the 1984 Act only applied to computerized files, the 1998 Act applies to manual files as well.

Data controllers are required to notify the Information Commissioner that they are holding and processing personal data in computerized form and detail the purposes for which data is being held. The notification of data held and processed in manual files is voluntary. In dioceses, the data controller is normally the Trustees or related body. The same would apply to religious institutes. All others are data processors.

Data is divided by the Act into two main groupings:

1. **General personal data:** data relating to a living individual who

can be identified, including any expression of opinion and any indication of the intentions of the data controller or any other person in respect of the individual.

2. **Sensitive personal data:** this data includes information relating to racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, physical and mental health condition, sexual life, the commission or alleged commission of offences, the records of the proceedings relating to the latter.

This division is extremely important since the obtaining of the consent of the data subject to hold information is one of the central planks of the DPA 1998, found in the First Data Protection Principle. According to the above distinction, in some cases, the consent of the individual to hold and process general personal information need not be obtained or can be presumed (cf Schedule 2 of the DPA 1998). It could be argued that the fact of belonging to the Church implies consent to hold appropriate general personal information concerning an individual, provided that it is necessary and correct. That said, it will always be the safest route to obtain consent whenever possible. However, the holding and processing of sensitive personal data requires the **explicit** consent of the data subject in accordance with the First Data Protection Principle and Schedule 3 of the Act.

Pending further clarification from the Government or the Courts, however, it would seem that Church archives will fall within paragraph 4 of Schedule 3 which would therefore mean that the explicit consent of the data subject would not be required. The paragraph reads:

The processing:

(a) is carried out in the course of its legitimate activities by any body or association which:

- (i) is not established or conducted for profit, and
- (ii) exists for political philosophical, religious or trade-union purposes,

(b) is carried out with appropriate safeguards for the rights and freedoms of data subjects,

(c) relates only to individuals who either are members of the body or association or have regular contact with it in connection with its purposes, and

(d) does not involve disclosure of the personal data to a

third party without the consent of the data subject.

Note that here sub-paragraph (d) might be problematic with regards to the access of third parties to archives. Indeed, the access of third parties to archives should be clearly regulated by means of an established policy.

Data must be processed in accordance with the **Data Protection Principles** (see appendix for a simplified version - reference should be had to the Act itself for a fuller explanation of the Principles in Schedule I Part II).

Data subjects generally have **access rights** to the data held concerning them, as long as the rights of third parties are not infringed by the disclosure.

Thus, unless there is an exemption, personal data of living individuals in a relevant filing system must be held and processed in accordance with the DPA 1998. **Consequently, purely historical archives, ie containing information about individuals who are dead, are not covered by the Act.** However, active files concerning living individuals are subject to the Act.

EXEMPTION

Section 33 of the DPA provides for various exemptions in respect of the processing (or further processing) of personal data for research purposes (including statistical or historical purposes) provided that the processing (or further processing) is exclusively for those purposes and, also, that the following conditions are met:

- that the data are not processed to support measures or decisions relating to particular individuals, and
- that the data are not processed in such a way that substantial damage or substantial distress is, or is likely to be caused to any data subject.

Where the exemption applies:-

- the further processing of personal data will not be considered incompatible with the purposes for which they were obtained.

It is important to note that the exemption does not excuse the data controller from complying with that part of the Second Data Protection Principle which

states that personal data shall be obtained only, for one or more specified and lawful purposes.

- personal data may be kept indefinitely despite the Fifth Data Protection Principle, and
- Subject access does not have to be given provided that the results of the research or any resulting statistics are not made available in a form which identifies data subjects.

The exemption will not be lost just because the data are disclosed:-

- a) to any person, for research purposes only;
- b) to the data subject or someone acting on their behalf;
- c) at the request, or with the consent, of the data subject or someone acting on their behalf;
- d) where the person making the disclosure has reasonable grounds for believing the disclosure falls within (a), (b) or (c) above.

Again, this exemption would appear to cover the situation of diocesan/religious archives to some degree, including the access of third parties for research purposes, as long as the results of the research will not be expressed in such a way that a particular individual is identified, unless consent has been obtained of course.

UNLAWFUL PROCESSING

A Court Order can be obtained by a data subject who believes that personal data is being held or processed unlawfully, ie contrary to the provisions of the DPA. This Order can prevent further processing and require the rectification, blocking, erasure or destruction of information. In addition, a data subject may be entitled to compensation for distress caused by unlawful processing.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY IN CANON LAW

Although the 1917 Code contained a number of canons concerning the reputation of individuals, the Second Vatican Council laid the foundations for the present legislation. For the first time, based on the dignity of the human person, the Church formally proclaimed a right to one's good name and to protection of one's private life.

There is also increasing awareness of the exceptional

dignity which belongs to the human person, who is superior to everything and whose rights and duties are universal and inviolable. Consequently, everything should be rendered to a person which is required to lead a truly human life, such as food, clothing, shelter, the rights to free choice of one's state of life and to found a family, to education, to work, **to one's good name**, to respect, **to appropriate information**, to act in accordance with the right norm of conscience, **to protection of one's private life** and to a just freedom, including religious freedom. (Gaudium et Spes 26)

This teaching was codified into the 1983 Code of Canon Law, in the section on the obligations and rights of all Christ's faithful:

Canon 220: No one is permitted to harm unlawfully the good reputation which a person enjoys nor to injure the right of any person to protect his or her own privacy.¹

These two rights, which apply to all members of the Church, whatever their status, are also protected by a sanction:

Canon 1390: §2 A person who offers an ecclesiastical superior any other calumnious denunciation of a delict or **who otherwise injures the good reputation of another** can be punished with a just penalty, not excluding a censure.

§3 A calumniator can also be forced to make suitable reparation.

ARCHIVES

The canon law on archives is contained in canons 486-491:

Canon 486: §2 In every curia there is to be erected in a safe place a **diocesan archive**, or record storage area, in which instruments and written documents which pertain to the spiritual and temporal affairs of the diocese are to be safeguarded after being **properly filed** and diligently secured. **§3** An inventory, or catalogue, of the documents which are contained in the archive is to be kept with a brief synopsis of each written document.

Canon: 487: §1 The archive must be locked and only the bishop and chancellor are to have its key. No one is

permitted to enter except with the permission of either the bishop or of both the moderator of the curia and the chancellor §2 **Interested parties** have the right to obtain personally or through a proxy an authentic written copy or photocopy of documents which by their nature are **public and which pertain to their personal status.**

Canon 488: It is not permitted to remove documents from the archive except for a brief time only and with the consent either of the bishop or of both the moderator of the curia and the chancellor.

Canon 489: §1 In the diocesan curia there is also a **secret archive**, or at least in the common archive there is to be a safe or cabinet, completely closed and locked, which cannot be removed; in it documents to be kept secret are to be protected most securely. §2 Each year documents of criminal cases in matters of morals, in which the accused parties have died or ten years have elapsed from the condemnatory sentence, are to be destroyed. A brief summary of what occurred along with the text of the definitive sentence is to be retained.

Canon 490: §1 Only the bishop is to have the key to the secret archive. §2 When a see is vacant, the secret archive or safe is not to be opened except in a case of true necessity by the diocesan administrator himself. §3 Documents are not to be removed from the secret archive or safe.

Canon 491: §1 A diocesan bishop is to take care that the acts and documents of the archives of cathedral, collegiate, parochial and other churches in his territory are also diligently preserved and the inventories or catalogues are made in duplicate, one of which is to be preserved in the archive of the church and the other in the diocesan archive. §2 A diocesan bishop is also to take care that there is an **historical archive** in the diocese and that documents having historical value are diligently protected and systematically ordered in it. §3 In order to inspect or remove the acts and documents mentioned in §§1 and 2, the norms established by the diocesan bishop

are to be obtained.

(see the booklet **Church Archives**, published by the CAS in 1997 and 2001, for a more detailed explanation of the canons of the Code concerning archives, taken from the commentary prepared by the Canon Law Society of Great Britain and Ireland, pp.41-54)

Thus, in every diocese, there is to be a general diocesan archive, within which there must be a secret archive. In addition, there are local archives and an historical archive.

In terms of access, only the bishop may enter the secret archive. Access to the general archive is subject to permission from the bishop or the moderator of the curia and chancellor together. Interested parties (ie data subjects and others) have the right to a copy of documents which are either public **and** relate to their personal status. Access to local or the historical archives is to be regulated by norms established by the bishop.

The Code is silent with regards to archives in religious institutions but, in accordance with canon 19 they should be structured in a similar way to diocesan archives, the place of the bishop being taken by the major superior or equivalent (for fuller treatment of confidentiality in religious institutes see E. Rinere, 'The Individual's Right to Confidentiality', **Bulletin on Issues of Religious Law**, Canon Law Society of America, vol II, Spring 1995)

CONCLUSIONS AND GOOD PRACTICE

1. The over-riding principle is that personal data should be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Principles whenever possible.
2. Every diocese and religious institute should have a data protection/confidentiality policy setting out basic principles for holding, processing and accessing information.
3. It is important to clarify the distinction between historical and active archives. Historical archives are largely exempt from the provisions of the DPA.
4. Whether active archives are covered by the DPA will depend on whether they contain information which is stored in a relevant filing system, either manual or electronic. Data organized by name will almost certainly fall into this category.
5. Notwithstanding the possible exemptions from seeking the

consent of the data subject to hold and process personal data in accordance with the First Data Protection Principles and Schedules 2 and 3 of the DPA, good practice would require that the individual's consent should be obtained whenever possible.

6. Access to active archives is foreseen both in the Code and the DPA. They disagree as to the nature of the information accessible and by whom. The DPA would seem to provide for greater access to information for the data subject, whilst the Code limits the information but makes it accessible to any interested party.
7. Secret archives, to which the data subject has no access, are not foreseen in the DPA, although there are exemptions relating to the prevention or detection of crime, and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders, which may have some relevance to information relating to child protection issues. Great care needs to be taken in this area.
8. It is imperative that a policy relating specifically to archives is drawn up, making particular reference to the purposes for which the data is held, who has access and under what conditions, how and why data may be transferred between data processors and what data will be retained.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Father Kristian Paver is Judicial Vicar of the Diocese of Plymouth. This article was originally given as a talk at the CAS Training Day, 2002.

APPENDIX

DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998

DATA PROTECTION PRINCIPLES

1. Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully (including central issue of CONSENT).
2. Personal data shall be obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purposes, and shall not be further processed in any manner compatible with that purpose or purposes.
3. Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in

- relation to the purpose or purposes for which they are processed.
4. Personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
 5. Personal data processed for any purpose or purposes shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for those purpose or those purposes.
 6. Personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under the DPA 1998.
 7. Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data.
 8. Personal data shall not be transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.

NOTES

1. *Nemini licet bonam famam, qua quis gaudet, illegitime laedere, nec ius cuiusque personae ad propriam intimitatem tuendam violare.*

ARCHIVES AND ARCHIVISTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF CHURCH POLICY IN REGARD TO ACCESS TO SENSITIVE RECORDS

David Sheehy

PART 1 - PRINCIPLES

ARCHIVES IN THE SPOTLIGHT:

It would be fair to state at the outset that, in general, archives and records have never been more talked about, more the object of public interest and concern and of closer scrutiny than they are today. As recent events have shown, records have recently become the subject of special interest or inquiry whether it be in relation to corporate malfeasance in the United States or regarding the handling by the Catholic Church of allegations of child sex abuse across three continents. One commentator writing about the collapse of the largest construction company in the U.S. had this to say:

The Enron saga and downfall of the company's auditors show that destruction of records can destroy reputations and companies. Even if those responsible can show that the shredding was innocent, or that the documents were not relevant, the damage done by appearing to destroy evidence may be irreversible. Management needs to think about this issue and set down clear policies to guide employees.¹

In recent years records have also become subject to sophisticated legal enactment and regulation, whether it be Data Protection or Freedom of Information legislation, which reflect the increasingly more complex demands which society is making on records and record keeping.

In parallel, the actions of individual archivists have never before taken on such significance or been subject to more critical external examination and none more so in these islands perhaps than Church archivists. What kinds of decisions are archivists taking today in regard to the granting or the withholding of access to sensitive or confidential records? In whose interests are archivists acting when they take such decisions – their own personal interests, corporate interests, or the public interest? Are archivists, and in particular Church archivists, engaged in the deliberate destruction of sensitive records including

perhaps documentary evidence of abuse or evidence of a cover up by persons in authority, in order to protect individuals or to safeguard the corporate interests of the institutions they serve? What moral code or set of ethical or professional standards, if any, informs their actions and decision-making processes? These are just some of the questions being posed urgently today and no archivist, Church or secular, can afford to ignore them.

Professional archivists working in the United Kingdom have, for some time, had to face up to the ethical responsibilities that come with a form of employment that routinely involves issues of confidentiality and decision-making in relation to matters of sensitivity. Since 1983, those wishing to join the Society of Archivists, the professional association for archivists working in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, must formally sign up to and fully and at all times abide by a professional Code of Conduct.

It goes without saying, surely, that the question of access in its broader context and the vexed question of the granting or the refusal of access to sensitive or confidential records are matters of great contemporary concern to members of the Society of Archivists. Yet, remarkably, the Society's own journal, though replete with articles on technological advances to facilitate access to archives, has not featured, in over twenty years, a substantive article on the vexed question of access policy, confidentiality, and the granting or refusing of access to records of a sensitive or confidential nature. In looking back through the relevant issues for that period I could only find a short article, published in 2001, dealing with confidentiality agreements. Nor has access policy featured as one of the five *Best Practice Guidelines* published by the Society in the period since 1993.

With all the pressures of law and regulation, demands made by researchers, media scrutiny and general anxiety surrounding the handling of sensitive and confidential records, archivists, and especially Church archivists, have good reason to be anxious. Some might even be at a loss to know how to make just and reasonable decisions on access to sensitive archives in their custody.

FRAMING A POLICY ON ACCESS TO CHURCH ARCHIVES - FUNDAMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:

(1) The Need for a Policy on Access:

In framing a policy on access to Church archives a number of

fundamental considerations arise. The first and most obvious is whether such a policy is actually necessary. The granting or the refusal of access to its archives, to outside persons, by any institution is an important administrative act with significant ramifications. Such decisions, therefore, should not be taken on a haphazard basis but only in the context of a properly formulated access policy.

It might be thought that professional archivists were unanimous in accepting the need for such a policy. However, an Internet discussion on this topic among business archivists in October 2000 revealed that most of those contributing were of the opinion that general guidelines on access were an unreasonable expectation because of the variety of different types of companies holding different kinds of records. These archivists held to the view that decisions on access should be made on a case by case basis.

Acting on such a premise begs many difficult questions. How do you keep track of your decisions so that all researchers are treated fairly and justly? If as an archivist you are constantly looking over your shoulder in fear of the wrath of company executives at what point do you cease to be a professional archivist and instead become a company public relations officer? These are some of the considerations that should persuade archivists of the value of having decisions on access taken in a broader context rather than a narrow case by case basis.

In drawing up such an access policy a number of relevant considerations ought to be taken into account. These include the nature, purpose, institutional ethos and current operational strategy of the agency that creates the records; internal institutional legal codes and disciplines; civil law; the prevailing consensus in civil society with regard to access to archives; the norms of professional archival best practice; the nature and content of the records themselves and their state of preservation.

(2) Defining Access to Archives

Having established that an access policy is desirable the next step is to define what we mean by access to archives. Access to archives is the process by which researchers are permitted to inspect records, which are made available to them. Access involves the granting of permission to researchers to

- (a) examine and study individual documents or collections of documents held by an archival repository

- (b) extract information from archives for the purposes of research or publication
- (c) use the reference facilities of an archival repository
- (d) avail of reprographic facilities in an archive
- (e) to film or make photographic reproductions of archival documents

(3) Who Should Make Policy on Access to Archives?

Because of its importance, an access policy should always be sanctioned at the highest level of executive authority within religious congregations, societies and dioceses. This is not in any way to denigrate the role of the Church archivist. On the contrary, it is essential that Church archivists should have a significant input into access policy formulation, and not just its implementation.

This is especially critical, as there now exists a real danger that misinformed persons in authority may, in the absence of input from Church archivists, take rash if well-intentioned decisions with disastrous consequences. Therefore it is vital that Church archivists take on a lead role in the drafting of such a policy. For example, Canon Law stipulates that the norms to be followed in regard to access to diocesan archives are those laid down at the discretion of the local Ordinary (can. 491.3). However, diocesan archivists have a key role to play in advising bishops before such norms are promulgated or amended. Whether engaged in a diocesan or religious context, Church archivists should be able to present themselves as authoritative sources of knowledge on a range of relevant issues including ecclesiastical and secular law relating to archives and current professional archival best practice.

It is also vital that once an access policy has been worked out it should be made known to all members of the congregation, society or diocese. Church archivists should be to the fore in disseminating such information in a concise, open and comprehensible fashion. This is not to say that this will lead to complete acceptance by all members of such a policy but at least the rationale behind it will have been clearly explained.

ACCESS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF CIVIL AND CHURCH LAW:

The right of access to information or to records is founded in the concept of natural law. Since the end of the eighteenth century, the notion of a universal civic right of access to archives has been widely

promulgated in Europe. It was first officially given voice in the **Declaration of the Rights of Man** adopted in the first year of the French Revolution and in an ordinance passed in 1794 which has since been called the **Declaration of Archival Rights**. According to the ordinance, access to archives was henceforth to be not a favour, but a civic right.²

In the United Kingdom, government departments are required to make records which are more than thirty years old available to the public through the Public Record Office in London, the National Archives of Scotland and the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland. Similar legislation applies in the Republic of Ireland.

In addition, since 1997 members of the public in the Republic of Ireland have been able to apply to have documents released under the Freedom of Information Act. Similar rights are soon to be extended to citizens of this country under a United Kingdom Freedom of Information Act. Where rights of access have been vindicated by statute in recent times a counterbalancing provision has also been made for the protection of the rights of individuals both within general archival law and specifically under data protection legislation.

As the Catholic Church in the United Kingdom, in purely secular legal terms, is a private institution rather than a public body, it follows that its archives are private records rather than public records. Catholic Church records in contrast to those of the Anglican Church have traditionally been outside the scope of civil law enabling subjects of the Crown to gain access to public records. However, recent legislation relating to records has suggested a trend whereby there may be encroachment by way of extending civil legislation to encompass not only public records but also the records of private institutions including the Catholic Church.

The lead development in this regard has been legislation relating to records, which hold personal information relating to individuals. The most recent relevant statute is the Data Protection Act of 1998. This Act applies to personal information held on hard copy format as well as on computers. Already parish clergy throughout the country have come to grips with this act and have registered as controllers of personal data.

Unlike the Data Protection Act the Freedom of Information Act would appear to be confined to central and local government and quangos and therefore not likely to impinge on Church archives.

However, it may at this stage be prudent to note that solicitors advising the Catholic Church in Ireland have stated that residential child care institutions established by the State but managed by Catholic religious are potentially subject to the Irish Freedom of Information Act. They have also cautioned that Church institutions which are in receipt of State funding may in the future come within the FOI Act. Thus, for example; welfare or educational programmes run by dioceses or religious could come within its scope. It is therefore conceivable that such an argument might also be advanced in the United Kingdom once the FOI Act here has come into force.

External to any considerations about civil law what is most pertinent to note is that diocesan and religious archives are subject to Church law and regulation. Indeed they come under a legal and juridical framework peculiar to the Church itself consisting of the Code of Canon Law, synodal decrees, diocesan regulations and religious constitutions and council decrees.

ACCESS TO THE CHURCH ARCHIVES AND THE NORMS OF PROFESSIONAL ARCHIVAL BEST PRACTICE:

We have seen that in putting together a well-founded policy on access to Church archives cognisance must be taken of the laws of the Catholic Church and of civil society. But another key aspect to be considered, another well to be drawn from if you like, are the norms of contemporary professional archival best practice within the United Kingdom. These standards, as adhered to and promoted by the Society of Archivists, provide benchmarks of best practice which Church archivists should seek to apply, in so far as is practicable, in order to ensure the good management and long-term preservation of their archives. The norms that are applicable to access policy can be reduced to three basic precepts, namely, a predisposition towards openness, a desire not to cause unnecessary distress to persons by the premature release of sensitive records and the application of rules and regulations in a fair and consistent manner. Let us now look at the first of these - a predisposition towards openness.

1. A Predisposition towards Openness:

The predisposition towards openness on the part of professional archivists long predates currently avowed concepts of transparency and openness. It arises from the recognition by archivists that records must not simply be preserved for their own sake but must be made available

and be utilised by researchers.

The Catholic Church for its part endeavours to operate in harmony with civil norms regarding openness and access to its archives. The Church has long been anxious, in so far as is practicable, to facilitate the use of its records for scholarly purposes. In this regard, the Circular Letter issued by Archbishop Francesco Marchisano, President of the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church, in 1997, advised that regulations drawn up by Church archives in regard to access 'should be made known publicly and that norms be harmonised with state or civil ones as much as possible'. Archbishop Marchisano's document went much further for, in clear and bold terms, it identified as a key component of good archival management the promotion of the availability of Church archives for research purposes. This is what Archbishop Marchisano had to say:

Archives, as part of the cultural heritage, should be offered primarily at the service of the community which has produced them. But in time they assume a universal destination because they become the heritage of all humanity. The material stored can not be, in fact, precluded from those who take advantage of it in order to know more about the history of the Christian people, their religious, civil, cultural and social deeds.

Those responsible must make sure that the use of Church archives be facilitated further, that is not only to those interested who have the right to access but also to a larger range of researchers, without prejudice towards their religious or ideological backgrounds, following the best of Church tradition yet while respecting the appropriate norms of protection offered by universal law as well as the regulations of the diocesan Bishop.

Such an attitude of disinterested openness, kind welcome, and competent service must be taken into careful consideration so that the historical memory of the Church may be offered to the entire society.³

A predisposition towards openness should not, of course, be confused with the notion of granting unlimited or indiscriminate access to archives. Professional archivists acknowledge that it is proper to curb any unlimited right of access by the imposition of appropriate restric-

tions to safeguard certain rights and legitimate interests.

2. Protection of the Rights of Individuals:

Archivists strive to balance the interests of the many and those of the few in considering how and when records can be released. It is unprofessional for archivists to release documents without taking into account the likely impact on individuals of the release of such material. In Britain and Ireland protection against distress caused by the release of government records is specifically provided for public archives legislation. For example Ireland's National Archives Act (1986) permits the withholding of departmental records which

would or might cause distress or danger to living persons on the ground that they contain information about individuals, or would or might be likely to lead to an action for damages for defamation.

Thus the National Archives of Ireland, in applying this provision, withholds census records, consular files from the Department of Foreign Affairs, files on prisoners in State custody, Garda crime investigation records, files on mental health patients in state care, and social welfare application files for up to seventy years, subject to periodic review.

Just as civil archival law advances measures to protect the rights of individuals so also does the Catholic Church vindicate such rights in similar provisions, which are found in Canon law. Specifically, canon 220 of the Code of Canon Law decrees that no one may unlawfully harm the good reputation, which a person enjoys, or violate the right of every person to protect his or her privacy.

3. Application of the Principle of Fairness and Consistency

(a) *Role of the Archivist:*

One of the fundamental principles of professional archival best practice is the importance of applying a policy regarding access in a consistent and fair manner; put bluntly, it is unprofessional for any archivist to grant access on a selective basis to any party. To do so places the archivist and more importantly the creative agency that initiates or authorises such access in an invidious position.

A problem sometimes faced by Church archivists is when those in higher authority decide to commission official corporate histories of a diocese, religious congregation or society or biographies of a founder

or foundress. In many cases such projects are attended by promises to the commissioned historians concerned that they will be granted access to previously closed records. Those in higher authority find it surprisingly easy to convince themselves that granting one-off exceptions to the existing archives access policy is a risk-free undertaking. They are seduced by the proposition that a single application for access can be considered in isolation from all others.

The dangers attendant on such decisions are all the greater in times of crisis. For example, a branch of the Church structure may apply to another to gain access to sensitive records in its custody such as those relating to residential institutions e.g. orphanages and industrial schools. If in these instances, permission to consult the relevant records is granted to representatives of the Church body responsible for managing such institutions but equal access is at the same time denied to victims of abuse or alleged victims of abuse, then the Church may find itself open to the charge that it is merely acting to protect its own interests at the expense of compounding the original abuse suffered by its victims.

In all such situations the archivist must act as a moral compass for his or her organisation. Of course it is much easier to say this than it is to stand up to those in higher authority who propose violating a formally agreed access policy. But that is the challenge that the conscientious archivist must take up. The archivist is the one person who is alive to the adverse consequences that follow from the granting of exceptional or privileged access. The granting of such exceptions undermines the justification for the original policy and if the researcher thus facilitated publishes his or her work it will be clear that he or she has enjoyed privileged access. This, in turn, may lead to wild and ill-informed speculation as to how that person was granted such access contrary to the previously publicly stated policy of that congregation or diocese. In all of these cases it is the archivist who is left to pick up the pieces and to face the anger of aggrieved researchers.

(b) Vatican Capers:

Applying the principles of consistency and fairness also requires that your access policy be well thought out and that you are able to follow through on publicly announced undertakings with regard to access. Only last year the Holy See got itself into a terrible spot of bother, largely of its own making, in relation to its archives. In 1999 it

had invited a panel of Catholic and Jewish historians to investigate the role of the Church and of Pope Pius XII during the Holocaust.

The historians, for their part, assumed that they were going to be given access to previously unpublished archives. However, the Vatican set no new material in front of them but merely asked them to review the previously published 11 volumes of **Acts and Documents of the Holy See during World War II**. As Vatican archivists had compiled these volumes the suspicion naturally arose that documents that might be harmful to Pius XII's reputation might have been discreetly omitted. As a direct consequence the frustrated scholars publicly withdrew from the project claiming that a true picture of Pius XII's role could not be given without fuller access to the archives.

The Vatican in its defence stated that it couldn't grant access to the 3 million odd post-1922 documents, as they were as yet uncatalogued. But why then did they think that respected academics would be content to work only on material that had already been in the public domain for decades? Why did it invite scrutiny of such a sensitive portion of its archives when it had nothing new to offer in terms of access? Why did it not make it absolutely explicit from the outset that no previously closed material would now be made available? Thus, through muddled thinking in relation to access to archives, the Holy See turned what otherwise might have been another milestone in the improvement of Christian-Jewish relations into an embarrassing fiasco.

(c) Conflict of Interest:

There are, as we have seen, circumstances where archivists quite justifiably prevent researchers from gaining access to certain records. However, there are also circumstances where it is inappropriate to do so. For example, an archivist shouldn't deny researchers access to records on the grounds that the archivist is currently using those same documents for research purposes. A notorious example of this occurred in Ireland some years ago when a diocesan archivist refused access to all applicants on the grounds that granting access would interfere with the archivist's preparation of a multi-volume diocesan history!

(d) Published Information:

Finally, in regard to consistency, it should be obvious that this also should apply in relation to information that is released. Each Church repository should publish or otherwise make known to poten-

tial researchers its rules governing access to and use of its archives. This can be done in published guides or in information published on the Internet. Moreover, information that is already publicly available about individuals such as published in a directory or yearbook or magazine should never be withheld from inquirers to an archives service but must be accessible to all.

GRANTING AND REFUSING ACCESS TO DIFFERENT TYPES OF RECORDS:

(1) Defining and Identifying Sensitive and Confidential Records:

The first task in dealing with records of a sensitive or confidential nature is, of course, to identify them. The term confidential implies that information in document form has literally been given in confidence. In recent times its meaning has been extended to encompass a wider range of documents containing personal information relating to individuals. The term 'sensitive' in relation to archives thus overlaps to some extent with that of the term 'confidential'.

Taking the two together under a working definition, we can state that sensitive or confidential records can be defined as those which pertain to an individual, the casual or thoughtless release of which might cause distress, or danger, or embarrassment to that person. Such a definition underpins the provisions found in both canon law and civil archival legislation for the proper withholding of particular records of a sensitive or confidential kind.

The important point to remember here is that the concern of the archivist is not whether the individual documents or files are sensitive *per se* but rather to consider the likely impact on an identifiable and limited number of individuals of the release of such material at a particular point in time. There is no magic formula that you can apply. It is a question of using common sense and sensitivity. One must always ask who is going to be affected, to what degree, at any given time, by the release of documents? Are documents or files permanently sensitive? No, sensitivity is a condition, which wanes over time.

The rights of all individuals must be protected but perhaps some must be better protected than others. For instance those in the public eye and their families are better able to cope with the impact of documentary disclosures and often have the confidence and the means to assert their rights. Thus, if anything, archivists should be even more protective of the privacy of people who have no public profile, no experience of exposure to the media and who are more vulnerable to the

hurt that disclosures might bring.

In the archives of religious orders and of dioceses the Church archivist will encounter on the one hand large collections of records of a generally non-sensitive kind but which may contain occasional individual documents of a sensitive or confidential nature and, on the other hand, files which specifically relate to individuals and which are likely to consist mostly of documents of a sensitive nature. The Church archivist is, therefore, obliged to make a careful examination of the contents of all files in a given collection and to judge each file or series of files or individual documents on their merits.

All that having been said, it is possible to identify certain types of records, such as the following, which are to be found in Church archives and which are likely to contain sensitive information concerning individual persons:

- (a) personnel records such as files on individual members of clergy, religious congregations and societies and lay staff in their employ
- (b) files relating to novices or students training for the priestly ministry
- (c) reports on institutions such as orphanages, industrial schools and asylums under Church management written by staff of the institutions, chaplains or medical practitioners, which refer to either residents or staff members by name
- (d) letters written expressly, or implicitly, in confidence to a bishop, provincial, superior or other figure of authority, referring to matters of conscience or letters containing references to named third parties of a defamatory nature or containing information relating to the personal circumstances of named third parties.

What is an Archivist Do With Records Identified As Sensitive or Confidential?

Having identified records that are sensitive or confidential the next question is what are you going to do with them. We have already established that under both civil and ecclesiastical law good grounds have been advanced for refusing access to such material by researchers such as the need to protect the rights of individuals named or referred

to in particular documents or files. There are two strategies by which this can be effected: the outright destruction of such records or their retention for a specified or unspecified period. Let us now look at the first of these.

1 Destruction versus Restriction

Some archivists might argue that in order to deal satisfactorily with confidential records one should not merely withhold them from public scrutiny but rather go one step further and destroy them entirely. Sister Mary Coke of the Society of the Sacred Heart described in a recent issue of **Catholic Archives** how this very question was raised at a conference of archivists of her Order held in France.⁴ One archivist had argued that documents containing remarks made about individuals in letters from local to major superiors should be destroyed as they were damaging to a person's character.

Sister Mary, reflecting on this proposition later, noted that Sister Helen Forshaw, in another article in **Catholic Archives**, this time on the archives of St. John's Seminary at Wonersh, had stated that confidential material, held there, which concerned the assessment of students for ordination was reserved but kept.⁵ Sister Mary drew a parallel between the two sets of sensitive records and quite reasonably suggested that rather than destroying such material it should simply be kept closed well beyond the lifetime of the individuals concerned.

The writer went on to stress the importance of preserving the integrity and authenticity of the archives however uncomfortable in the short-term that might be for some. She argued that it may be a disservice to deceased members of religious congregations for religious archivists to record and then publish information concerning them which does not give the full truth while at the same time giving every assistance to lay persons tracing their family history.

The key point here surely is that the impulse to destroy sensitive or confidential records, as a general rule, is in itself a statement of a lack of confidence by Church archivists in their capacity to prudently and reasonably deal with such records. Of course some documents can quite properly be destroyed. Something of a myth has grown up that says that the role of the archivist is to preserve all documents irrespective of their merits or worth. But this is not what the archivist does. In fact the role of the archivist is to appraise records for their evidential value, to discern, discriminate and where appropriate to discard as well as to

preserve.

It is perfectly permissible and responsible for the archivist to destroy records but – and this must be stressed – only after the right questions have been asked of the material concerned. For example, one may ask whether the document or documents only relate to an individual, such as a letter dealing with matters of conscience, or whether they shed light on the exercise of authority or the handling of disciplinary procedures or other aspects of the administration of a congregation, society or diocese?

2 Methods for Restriction Access to Records Identified as Sensitive

(a) The Use of a General Closure Date:

The best known mechanism by which sensitive records are withheld from researchers is through the use of a general closure date for all files. In the civil sphere this is popularly referred to as the 'thirty-year rule'. The 'thirty-year rule' is enshrined in national archives legislation regulating access to public records in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

It is now standard practices for Catholic Church archival repositories in these islands to also utilise a general closure date to regulate access to their archives. However, thinking on this subject within the Catholic Archives Society has evolved in recent years. The Society published a set of guidelines for its members in 1978 which included the recommendation that Church archives employ a thirty-year closure rule for most material and a one hundred-year rule for personal material. However, a second edition, published in 2000, retreated from such strictures and instead recommended that Church archives should:

decide upon a date beyond which no material will be available to, or copies for, outside enquirers. This will vary and it is not realistic to suggest one date that is appropriate to every organisation.⁶

Possibilities such as following the Public Record Office's 'thirty-year rule', or adopting a fifty-year or one hundred-year rule were mentioned but it was left to each church archival repository to choose a rule that was suitable for its own requirements.

It is likely that, in the period between the publication of the first and second editions of the guidelines, it was discovered that it is not

always practical for Church archives to attempt to rigidly apply a 'thirty-year rule'. For many Church archives, thirty years is just too recent a date for opening up records, especially since many of them are chronically understaffed, and still attempting to clear substantial backlogs in their cataloguing.

There is, in addition, another problem to be confronted when considering applying a 'thirty-year rule' or something like it. A closure date operated in a chronologically advancing manner such as a 'thirty-year rule' may be too crude and mechanistic an instrument to apply to some Church archives. For example, the main holdings in diocesan archives consist of the papers of individual bishops, which are arranged as discrete collections encompassing all records created during a single episcopate. Most diocesan archivists, accordingly, find it makes better sense to open up a complete collection at a stroke rather than be tied to opening a collection in piecemeal and incremental fashion in rigid adherence to a thirty, forty or fifty-year rule.

However dioceses or congregations decide to regulate the opening of their archives, it is desirable that they should operate a general closure date that is not markedly more conservative than the 'thirty-year rule'. Given that, as we shall see, Catholic Church archives can employ appropriate practical measures to selectively withhold files or individual documents of a sensitive or confidential nature while at the same time releasing the vast bulk of a particular collection, the concept of a blanket 'hundred year rule' must now be regarded as outdated and anachronistic.

Sometimes the task of determining the closure period is taken by the agency which deposits the records. In such instances the depositor will specify particular requirements with regard to restrictions on access.

(b) Dealing with a File or Series of Files:

Within a collection can one distinguish between a file or a series of files or even single documents and the remainder of the collection? Can one portion be open while the other remains restricted? Sometimes a file or a series of files presents a difficulty because of the sensitive nature of all or a major portion of the contents of the file or files. In such situations it is appropriate for the archivist to withhold the entire file or files for a fixed period of anywhere from ten to one hundred years or more when the whole file or files can be released, or until a set date in

the future when the status of the file or files can be reviewed with a view to their possible release.

(c) Dealing with a Single Item in a File:

Sometimes a file will contain a single document which presents a problem. In such cases, the archivist might be tempted to close the entire file on the basis that the single offending item has contaminated the whole – but such an action is surely a bit drastic. A far more reasonable solution would be to remove the problem item from the file in order to permit the release of the otherwise non-sensitive file to researchers. When in such circumstances an item has been removed from a file, the archivist should replace it with a withdrawal statement informing researchers that at a particular place in a file a document has been removed and indicating either how long the item will remain closed to inspection or the future date when its closed status will be subject to review.

(d) Dealing with a Portion of a Document:

What can you do where only a small portion of a single document causes a difficulty? For example if a person is identified by name or circumstances in a document which if released might cause distress to them or to others but where the remainder of the document could be of real and legitimate interest to researchers. In such cases the document can be removed from the file and photocopied. Then the name of the person can be blocked out on the photocopy by a felt marker and the photocopy can be returned to the file in place of the original document.

(e) Review of Restricted Material:

As we have seen, where files or documents are closed it is usually either for a fixed period or until a date for further review has been reached. If upon reaching the date for review the material is still of great sensitivity then the archivist can fix upon a future date for a second review. If however, the level of sensitivity has greatly diminished, then the archivist can fix a future date for its release. If the sensitivity has entirely dissipated, then the archivist can release the material immediately.

The archivist should periodically review restricted material that is closed either for a fixed number of years or which has been closed pending a review at a specified date. The closure date thus should not be regarded as sacrosanct. It is merely intended to be indicative of the degree to which material was judged to be sensitive or confidential at

the time it was first examined and catalogued. The archivist should not adopt a rigidly defensive posture regarding previous judgements made as to the restriction of certain documents or files but instead should take into account changing circumstances which may allow material to be released sooner than previously anticipated.

(f) Disclosure of Restrictions on Access to Archives:

Archivists should always endeavour to be open and transparent about decisions regarding restrictions on access to archives. Some archivists might feel tempted to be discreet if not secretive concerning the withholding of sensitive files or documents in their custody. However, I would argue that the frank disclosure of such information helps to maintain trust between the archivist and his or her researchers. Being open about such a delicate aspect of the archivist's work makes it more likely that researchers will be understanding of the decisions which archivists are obliged to take and have greater confidence that such decisions on access are based on proper professional considerations and procedures.

Being open with researchers of course means communicating information through your finding aids. Thus you should briefly indicate in the descriptive list or catalogue where appropriate that the identified material is closed until a specified date, or its status will be reviewed so many years hence, or that a document has been withdrawn.

CONCLUSION:

The Church archivist need not despair or panic when confronted by sensitive or confidential records. Yes, you will on occasion be faced with difficult choices and with challenging situations. But remember that you do not operate in a vacuum. You firstly have to operate within the laws and regulations laid down by the Church, such as the Code of Canon Law and regulations decreed by diocesan and religious authorities. Secondly, you can draw on the principles governing contemporary professional archival best practice and finally, you can apply the kind of techniques, such as I have outlined, to make the task easier.

You don't have to be an expert to successfully navigate in this perilous ocean – but you do have to apply basic common sense, employ a degree of sensitivity towards others, and be flexible in your approach. The critical thing is not to wait until dilemmas confront you and stampede you into precipitous decisions with perhaps grave conse-

quences. You should, in contrast, be pro-active and put in place a comprehensive access policy as the foundation for all the decisions you or others in authority are obliged to make.

FOOTNOTES:

1. **The Irish Times** 26 August, 2002.
2. Lennart Lundquist *Citra* xxxii (1997) p.94.
3. The Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church, **The Pastoral Function of Church Archives**
4. Sr. Mary Coke, 'Reflections of a Religious Archivist' in *Catholic Archives* 21(2001), pp.27-28.
5. Sr. Helen Forshaw, 'The Wonersh Archives' in *Catholic Archives* 20 (2000), p.53.
6. Catholic Archives Society, **Archive Principles and Practice** (2000) p.9.

EDITORIAL NOTE

David Sheehy is Archivist of the Archdiocese of Dublin. This article was originally given as a talk at the CAS training Day 2002.

ARCHIVAL THEORY AND STANDARDS IN ECCLESIASTICAL ARCHIVES: PART II

Rev. Joseph Fleming

LEGAL ISSUES

There are various legal sources that influence the function of archives. They can be deduced from the nature and situation of each archive and thus we may consider European Union, British, Spanish and Canon Law. Unfortunately, given that the archive of the World Council of Churches lies beyond the EU, and as an ecumenical, rather than exclusively Catholic institution, lies also outside the jurisdiction of Canon Law, it must be excluded from detailed discussion¹. Nevertheless, it is to be hoped that many of the general legal trends will be applicable, especially in the field of freedom of information.

The principles of current Spanish legislation flow from the Constitution of 1978, article 46 of which guarantees Spanish citizens the right of access to information and culture². Moreover, Spain is divided into seventeen autonomous regions, each of which has its own legislative assembly ('*junta*'). **Santiago de Compostela** (the Cathedral Archive of which is here under examination) is the capital of Galicia and the seat of its autonomous government. The region comprises the provinces of La Coruna (in which Santiago is situated), Lugo, Orense and Pontevedra. It is a bilingual region, where Spanish and Galician are spoken and bilingualism constitutionally guaranteed. The Diocese of Iria Flavia was translated to Santiago by Bishop Theodomir in 814. It was a suffragan of Braga, but became a metropolitan see in 1120. Today the Archdiocese of Santiago comprises the cities of Santiago de Compostela, La Coruna and Pontevedra. Its suffragans are the Dioceses of Lugo, Orense, Tuy-Vigo and Mondonedo-Ferrol. The ecclesiastical Province of Santiago is almost coterminous with the whole of Galicia, there being merely a fringe of Orense belonging to the Diocese of Astorga.

Both the national and autonomous governments possess the appropriate authority to enact archival legislation. Two fundamental concepts are constantly present: viz. a cultural heritage which is to be preserved; and public access to that heritage and to personal files. A Council of Historical Heritage co-ordinates legislation at both national and autonomous levels. Law 16 of the Spanish Historical Heritage (25

June 1985) defines what comprises such heritage, and Title vii, articles 48-66 deal with documentary heritage. Article 52 states the obligation of conservation, cataloguing and making archives available for research. Article 57 also deals with the classes of documents open to researchers and allows for the possibility of access to restricted material in certain cases. Articles 59-60 concerns the creation of state archives, while article 62 guarantees public access to the same. In Galicia this legislation is complemented by Decree 307 (23 November 1989) which regulates the system of archives and documentary heritage in the autonomous region. Articles 18 and 105b of the national Constitution refer to public access to archives, while Title iv of Law 30 (26 November 1992) of the juridical regime of public administrations and common administrative procedures makes provision for the citizen's right of access to archives according to the Constitution and law. The following article illustrates these rights and determines those categories of records to which access may be denied: e.g. national security and certain personal information.

Data protection is covered by Law 5 (29 October 1992) which regulates the processing of personal data. Article 4 requires that electronic data be accurate and used only for the purpose for which it was gathered. Article 6 stipulates that consent be given before data is collected, except where it is taken from a public source. Article 7 deals with personal details which may not be asked, those that may be asked if the law requires it, and criminal records which may be kept in state files. Articles 8-9 allow electronic medical records to be kept by the relevant institutions and oblige electronic records to be held securely, prohibiting the creation of non-secure data bases. Articles 10-11 require those responsible for the data bases to observe professional secrecy, regulate the transfer of data, and ensure that the ends are legitimate and the subject is not prejudiced. The next few articles deal with the rights of the individual regarding data which refer to him/her. Article 13 allows the subject the right to know if there is an electronic file on him/her, who has custody of it, and why that file has been created. Article 14 permits the subject to see the file, to receive a copy of it, and guarantees that the file will not be shown in code so as to render it indecipherable. Finally, article 15 allows for inaccurate information to be corrected and/or deleted. This law limits itself to electronic data, but in the light of trends with the EU it is probable that it will be extended to all public files. Moreover, given the legal principle of

equality and collaboration between state and non-state archives, even if all such legislation is non-binding on the Cathedral Archives of Santiago de Compostela, it will certainly be carefully considered. The present programme of implementing a gradual computerisation of the archive will naturally encompass Spanish legislation on data protection.

The **Archdiocese of Liverpool** was canonically erected (as a suffragan diocese of Westminster) on 25 September 1850. It was elevated to metropolitan rank on 28 October 1911 and currently has six suffragan sees (Salford, Lancaster, Hexham & Newcastle, Hallam, Leeds and Middlesborough). The Archdiocese consists of Lancashire south of the River Ribble, the Isle of Man, and parts of Merseyside, Cheshire and Greater Manchester. It is a registered charity and has a diocesan archive (originally separated from the curial archive and located at St Joseph's College, Upholland, but now situated in the crypt of the Metropolitan Cathedral).

No specific archival legislation exists for the Catholic Church in England. However, the request of the Registrar General in the nineteenth century that all Non-Conformist records before 1837 be collected has been largely complied with, and thus the majority of Catholic parish registers up to that date can be found in their respective County Record Offices. Moreover, by analogy with the Parochial Registers and Records Measures (1978), many parishes have deposited registers that are over one hundred years old in their respective Local Record Offices. The Liverpool Archdiocesan Archive follows the practice of the Public Record Office and imposes a thirty-year rule on public access to records. The Data Protection Act of 1998 seeks to conform to the EU Directive 95/46/EC. Some of the provisions of the English Acts are an extension of the EU Act to manually-held data if it constitutes a file or data base. It guarantees the rights of the individual to have access to data concerning him/her and prohibits any use of such data in a prejudicial way. The Act allows for compensation to be awarded to individuals in cases of misuse of data, and also gives the categories of records which may be exempted from the Act, e.g. those which relate to national security. The issue of data protection will thus play an important role in the function of archives, and national legislation is following a common pattern at EU level, giving member states the same fundamental rights.

Both the Santiago de Compostela and Liverpool archives are, as

Catholic institutions, subject to Canon Law and the provisions of the Pontifical Commission's circular letter **The Pastoral Function of Church Archives**³. The canonical regulations concerning archives are easily accessible; here I will make just a few observations:

- 1 Canon 487 n.1 gives responsibility for security to the diocesan bishop and his chancellor: the following paragraph is vital when considering data protection, since it gives the right to the parties concerned to see and receive an authentic copy of data which pertains to their personal status.
- 2 Canon 535 n.5 requires that legislation be enacted concerning the preservation of old parish registers. In the Archdiocese of Liverpool registers were deposited with the Liverpool Record Office or the Lancashire Record Office (Preston) depending on geographical location. They are now to be deposited in the Liverpool Archdiocesan Archive and an inventory is to be made of those registers deposited in the record offices.

The Code of Canon Law considers it the norm that a records centre be established in the curial archive and a more permanent historical centre in the diocesan archive. The chancellor has responsibility for the curial archive but can hardly be expected to assume the duties of archivist. Consequently, it is usual to appoint another person as diocesan archivist. At Liverpool the archivist is a laywoman (Dr Meg Whittle) and a professional archivist. However, dioceses must also consider the financial implications of employing a lay person⁴. At the Cathedral Archive of Santiago de Compostela the post of archivist is a canonry within the chapter. Thus, according to canon 503, the Canon Archivist must be a priest. However, this is not say that he is thus absolved from the obligation of professional competence. The archive is also governed by the capitular regulations in accordance with canons 505-506, although the bishop's overall responsibility as stated in canon 491 n.1 also applies, as does his right, respecting the legitimate statutes of the chapter, to determine the conditions of access and lending in accordance with canon 491 n.3.

The Circular Letter of the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church goes beyond the provisions of Canon Law in order to place the ecclesiastical archive within the mainstream of archival practice. The first part of the document gives a mission statement for all types of ecclesiastical archive: viz. the provision of an

historical testimony of the Church existing throughout history as a community of Christ's faithful, and a resource from which the experience of the mission of the Church may be drawn. The second part recommends that an historical archive be established in every diocese in order to gather material from other ecclesiastical bodies, e.g. religious houses, and even gifts or loans from private collections. It also recommends that contemporary records management techniques be used in the curial archive, taking account of the issues surrounding the cataloguing of non-documentary records. The Commission also recommends that Church archivists collaborate with civil archives and national heritage bodies, even to the point of formulating common policies and plans of action, and that the latest techniques be employed and training programmes for archivists be established. Archivists are to be competent, trained professionals and should be given stable employment. The diocesan archivist may also undertake other archival duties within the diocese, and even the curial archive (with appropriate safeguards) may be used for legitimate research. Records are to be kept in suitable conditions and an inventory and finding aids are to be created, especially using the latest advances in technology. Finally, the Commission recommends that norms of access should be uniform and in harmony with civil legislation, and that public use and research should be fostered.

OVERVIEW

Cox has given a recent case study of an ecclesiastical archive⁵. In it he examines the processes of establishing an American diocesan archive on professional lines. He mentions the importance of the records for both ecclesiastical and social history and also their significance for the good government of the diocese. He quotes these reasons as the fundamental justification for the maintenance of a diocesan archive. He then lists six problems faced by an ecclesiastical archive which need to be overcome in order to provide an effective and professional service, viz.: (a) Processing and preservation; (b) Scattered records; (c) Absence of a transfer system to the diocesan archives; (d) Lack of archival assistance for parishes and other ecclesiastical organisations; (e) Lack of funding; (f) Facilities which impede a modern archival programme.

He says that the archive should be at the service of the diocese and the wider community, and that it should thus offer research

facilities and an outreach programme. It should be staffed by a professional archivist with adequate funding and should be a member of professional archival societies. In the case study he recognises that the archive building requires refurbishment, i.e. it should be adapted to meet the needs and standards of a modern repository. Ideally, the archive should contain a repository, a reading room, staff facilities and an exhibition space. Another positive step would be to establish effective record management facilities throughout the diocese. Although this is not the direct responsibility of an archivist, he or she would be able to offer valuable advice to the Vicar General, who would have the primary responsibility to issue norms for the uniform processing of records throughout the diocese. Furthermore, norms must be established for the transfer of records from parishes to the diocesan archives, first defining the classes of documents to be transferred and identifying which possess historical value. This would also entail the creation of a retention schedule with destruction dates. The type of documents that would be transferred to the diocesan archive would be parish registers and other key records, e.g. title deeds, architectural plans, censuses etc.

Cox argues that the archivist should also determine the diocesan 'archival mission' and produce a 'mission statement'. However, before this could be done a survey of the records already on deposit – in the curia, in parishes, and in other relevant ecclesiastical bodies – would need to be taken. The archivist should also devise a scheme for the gradual implementation of the aims of the mission statement. Cox also considers it vital for the diocesan archive to make contact with local academic institutions, especially universities. The chief aims would be to encourage research using primary sources and for students to gain practical archive experience. This would also be beneficial to the archive in the form of volunteer work. Cox is convinced that the diocesan archive should give priority to public use of its resources, seeking to create a high profile. This in turn should attract researchers. The archive should also have an outreach programme and organise occasional exhibitions. Finally, he sets out what he considers to be the principal steps in establishing an efficient archival administration: (a) the archivist must decide on priorities and identify which tasks are the most urgent; (b) a survey of parish archives will then be required, with a view to recommending diocesan records management and transfer policies; (c) adequate reprographic services and an outreach programme

will be required; (d) financial implications must be considered, but because an archive is an important diocesan service adequate funding should be made available.

Cox has offered a case study not dissimilar to that of the Liverpool Archdiocesan Archive. However, there are points which are applicable to all three archives under consideration: e.g. the historical and research value of the deposits and the concept of public service. Moreover, Cox's insistence that the archivist should be professionally qualified and a member of a professional archival organisation implies that he is aware that there are professional standards to be observed for the smooth functioning of the archive. This is also reflected in his desire to have buildings adapted in order to comply with modern archive standards. The fact that he also proposes the implementation of a diocesan records management system is yet another implicit recognition of the need for standards if a professional level of practice is to be achieved.

THE THREE ARCHIVES

The **Santiago de Compostela Cathedral Archive** is the working archive of an ancient institution, whereas the **Liverpool Archdiocesan Archive** is of more recent foundation and deals with records generated by the Archbishop and his curia. Yet another type of ecclesiastical archive is that of the **World Council of Churches**, which serves to preserve the records of an international and ecumenical body. Despite the different parameters within each, we can see that the three archives have many similarities. While it should never be forgotten that all archives serve their creating bodies and have a unique set of records, nevertheless all archives have the function of conserving the records deposited in them, and thus share some basic features, whether they be the archive of an ecclesiastical body or not.

The **Santiago de Compostela Cathedral Archive** defines the nature of the post of Canon Archivist and his relationship to the cathedral chapter, while the **Liverpool Archdiocesan Archive** has an extensive mission statement which sets out the aims of the archive in terms of maximum efficiency. The **World Council of Churches** did not give any details about its one archivist. At **Liverpool** a professional archivist is employed, assisted by volunteers and advised by the Lancashire Record Office, while the Canon Archivist at **Santiago** has more than twenty years' experience and is an active participant in archival

work in Spain, both ecclesiastical and secular. He is also able to employ three assistants, and these tend to be history graduates. Both **Liverpool** and **Santiago** have maintenance staff: the latter employs its own cleaners and uses the services of a conservator.

In terms of intellectual control, each archive identifies its collecting policy with the production of its respective creating body. Thus at **Santiago** the 'Indice de legajos' reveals that the collections of documents reflect the records generated by the cathedral chapter, although not necessarily within the cathedral complex, since some refer to capitular property or benefices elsewhere. However, the method of collection is carefully regulated by a series of explicit norms. At **Liverpool** the mission statement gives a clearly-defined collecting policy and provides for the intellectual control of parish registers deposited in County Record Offices. The archive of **The World Council of Churches** receives records from the various departments when they are ten years old. It is interesting to note that none of the archives has its own appraisal system.

At **Liverpool** the archivist is aware of ISAD(G) as a proposal for listing, but she follows the norms of 'The Scheme of Classification for Diocesan Archives' of the Catholic Archives Society, which in turn is centred on the categories of records usually generated by bishops and the diocesan curia. Like ISAD(G), the CAS scheme arranges records hierarchically. However, it has two weaknesses: viz. it presents a closed list of categories, so that some records which in fact exist in a particular archive would not fit into a category according to the scheme; and the scheme only gives guidance at two levels of the hierarchy as opposed to the six of ISAD(G). **Santiago's** reply does not mention the principle of hierarchy, but it does base itself on that of provenance. Explicit archival norms given by national and autonomous authorities are also followed. Unfortunately the archive of the **World Council of Churches** gives no details of its listing policies. However, the latter is in the forefront of on-line finding aids. Together with the WCC Library, twenty per cent of the collection is indexed on-line and can be ordered via the internet. The **Santiago** archive has produced a series of finding aids as part of its drive towards electronic access. These aids are constructed according to national, international and professional archival norms, and it is also hoped to integrate the cathedral document collections into the autonomous region's on-line service. At **Liverpool**, on the other hand, a word-processed finding aid has been produced and this is available for

consultation in printed form. The mission statement aims to address computerisation in the future.

All three archives concur in providing a public service for researchers both in terms of access and facilities. The **Santiago de Compostela Cathedral Archive** has an outreach programme which involves providing experience for history students. The **Liverpool Archdiocesan Archive** includes the preparation of an educational outreach programme in its mission statement. Finally, the archive of the **World Council of Churches** is also open to all interested parties. In all three archives there is a concern to keep the records in optimum conditions and certain standards have been explicitly followed to achieve this end. Ecclesiastical archives, like all archives, thus have the duty to preserve and organise their collections. To fulfil this duty they should be aware of those archival standards which tend towards an efficient practice which favours public access and makes the best use of technological advances.

To be concluded

EDITORIAL NOTE

This article is a slightly edited version of a dissertation submitted in 1999 and is reproduced with the permission of the Liverpool University Centre for Archive Studies at the University of Liverpool.

NOTES

1. For recent Swiss archival legislation see *Archivium* vol.41 (1996), pp. 202ff.
2. *Ibidem* p.159.
3. Cf. **Church Archives: The Pastoral Function of Church Archives & Archives in Canon Law** (Catholic Archives Society, London, 1997).
4. Cf. R.J.Cox, **Managing Institutional Archives** (New York, 1992), p.17.
5. *Ibidem* pp.239ff.

THE ARCHIVES OF THE CARMELITE CONVENT, DARLINGTON AND THE BACKGROUND IN BELGIUM

Margaret Harcourt-Williams

A few years ago I was asked to visit the Carmelite Convent in Darlington to prepare a catalogue of their archives. This has developed into an ongoing project and I now spend a week there every year.

Most of the Carmelite Convents in England and Wales were founded in the 1920s and 30s by the Prioress of the Carmel at Notting Hill, Mother Mary of Jesus. But there were also three English Carmelite communities founded in the Low Countries in the seventeenth century, that came to England after the French Revolution.

The first was founded in Antwerp in 1619 and dedicated to St Joseph and St Anne. This moved to Lanherne in Cornwall and closed in 2000, when the community and the archives moved to St Helens. The Carmel at Hoogstraten, dedicated to Our Lady of Sichem, which moved to Chichester, was founded from Antwerp in 1678. It closed in 1994 and some of the community and the archives went to the Carmel in Baltimore, USA, which had been founded from Hoogstraten in 1790. Darlington Carmel, which was also founded from Antwerp and which is dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St Joseph, still exists.

By the time St Teresa of Avila died in 1582, her reformed (Discalced) Carmelite foundations extended beyond Spain and into Flanders. In the early seventeenth century an English widow, Lady Lovell, who was living in Brussels, and who had herself twice tried to enter religious life, decided to make her own foundation. Three English girls who had already been professed in Flemish Carmels came together to form an English Discalced community in Antwerp and subsequently many young women came from England to enter there. The numbers were such that in 1648 a group of twelve left Antwerp to found a second English Carmel at Lier, a small town on the River Nethe about 20 miles to the south.

In Lier, the sisters occupied three houses in succession, all of which still stand. The first of these, where they stayed when they first arrived, is now fairly derelict. The second, in which they lived in the later part of the seventeenth century, is now two exceptionally well restored family homes, while the third, which was purpose-built as a convent and in which they lived from 1709 to 1794, is a home for

handicapped children. This last property has a hermitage or chapel in the garden. This is now being restored and the archives in Darlington have been consulted for chapel plans. Additionally, the archives include information on buying, altering and building these properties, together with details of taxes paid and of other relations with the town.

The Carmelites stayed peacefully in Lier until 1794. Despite the deteriorating political climate, as a foreign house they were not affected when the Emperor Joseph II of Austria suppressed some contemplative religious houses in his dominions (which included the Low Countries) in 1782. However, about ten years later, the situation deteriorated further and French Revolutionary soldiers attacked the convent. They were prevented from getting inside by the chaplain, Father Roby, and the door at which he defended the convent can still be seen. In 1794, when the French advanced again, the sisters, in common with many other English religious communities, decided to leave.

When the community arrived in England they stayed in London for a few weeks, then went north, stopping briefly at the Bar Convent. They then lived at St Helen's Hall near Bishop's Auckland for ten years and at Cocken Hall near Durham until 1830, when they finally settled in what was then open country outside Darlington. When they left Lier, it seems they thought that they might return when the political climate was more settled as the archives include many papers on relations with the town as well as the plans and title deeds mentioned above. This never happened as the French Revolutionary Wars were followed by the Napoleonic Wars and Europe continued to be unsettled, so, despite an exploratory visit to Lier in 1802, the return to England became permanent

The Sisters brought with them to England the bodies of Mothers Margaret and Ursula Mostyn, their second and third prioresses, together with vestments, portraits, sacred vessels, books and a lot of archives. Many of the archives have been folded and wrapped into small parcels, presumably for ease of transport in 1794, the wrappings of which survive, with useful notes of the contents.

However, unlike the community, the archives have not stayed in Darlington since 1830. In the early 1950s many documents were sent back to Lier at the request of a local historian who was writing a history of the town. Although he remained in contact, he had been told that he could keep them as long as he needed to and he still had them when he

died in 1970. From 1974 onwards, another Lier historian, M. de Waele, traced as many documents as he could and returned them. But, as there is no comprehensive list of everything that was sent to Lier, it isn't possible to know if it all came back.

In England, community members, chaplains and others have worked on the archives from time to time. Many of the folders and bundles have traces of at least two previous numberings, in addition to the notes made around 1794. These numberings are in red, which are the earlier ones and which sometimes have sub-numbers, and blue. No comprehensive earlier catalogue or list survives although many bundles include useful lists of their contents and many documents have been transcribed and translated into English. Unfortunately, a few of the lists include items that are no longer there. Most of the legal papers and accounts are in Flemish and the correspondence is in English, French and occasionally Latin. In preparing the catalogue, I was, therefore, very dependent on the identification, listing, translating and transcribing done by all my predecessors.

Two professional archivists also began preparing catalogues and generously gave me their notes. Bearing in mind that any original order had long since been lost, I divided the archives into Antwerp, Lier and England and within these categories arranged the bundles chronologically. I made the financial papers into a separate series as the accounts are complete from 1648 to date and are being added to. The Profession Book, begun in 1648, is still in use and therefore is not treated as part of the archives.

The archives consist mainly of accounts, legal papers, correspondence and spiritual writings. They show both the administrative and physical organisation of the community and its spiritual concerns. They begin with some material relating to the community at Antwerp and this is followed by papers on the foundation, establishment and life of the community in Lier. It isn't clear why this Antwerp material is with the Lier archives but its survival is important as there does not seem to be similar material in the Lanherne archives. The bulk of the Darlington archive dates from the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries although there is later eighteenth century material about the return to England and on the various moves that took place before the community settled in Darlington. Coverage of the rest of the nineteenth and most of the twentieth century is sparse and it does not seem

likely that there are more non-current archives elsewhere in the building. However, some papers from recently deceased sisters have been added so a late-twentieth and twenty-first century archive is being assembled.

There are some related papers elsewhere. The diocesan archives in the University of Antwerp contain about one-and-a-half boxes of correspondence between various prioresses and bishops of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The archives of the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle include quinquennial reports to Rome from the 1850s onwards and twentieth century correspondence and papers.

As suggested above, it seems likely that the archives brought to England were those that the nuns thought would be needed to re-establish themselves if they returned to Lier. It is therefore possible that some archives were left behind, possibly to be reclaimed on return or on a future visit or possibly just because everything couldn't be carried and some papers were thought to be less important than others. There are probably also some administrative papers in the Lier municipal archives or in private hands. Some papers may also have been dispersed when the archives were temporarily back in Lier.

There is an interest in Lier in the community they call the English Teresians. I went there in autumn 2001 and met the people involved in the restoration of the garden chapel; I was also taken to the house the nuns had occupied which is now two houses. One of these is another former chapel in which traces can be seen of the Carmelites' grille on the floor and of the altar on the dining room wall. The other had been their convent and the garden had been their cloister. The occupants welcomed contact with the Darlington nuns and hope that it will continue.

THE ARCHIVES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Antwerp, 1620s-40s: letters on the foundation and establishment of the Antwerp community, on disputes with the friars and on the constitutions, list of sisters, spiritual writings.

Lier, 1648-1794: documents of title and supporting papers relating to the community's properties, their relations with the town of Lier, privileges and freedoms eg from some local taxes.

- Accounts.
- Constitutions

- Correspondence on administrative financial, domestic and current affairs.
- Lives of community members, especially of Mother Margaret Mostyn.
- Mass obligations
- Papers relating to disputes with the friars and others.
- Plans, mainly for the convent built in the early 18th century, including plans for the 'garden house'.
- Relic papers
- Spiritual writings

England (Brough, St Helen's, Cocken Hall and Darlington) 1794 - early twentieth century:

- Letters on settling in England.
- Title deeds and supporting papers for the Darlington property, including details of mid-nineteenth century alterations.
- Financial matters: accounts, 1648 onwards and twentieth century financial papers.
- Modern administrative papers (insurance, planning etc.,)

The archives also include a profession book, annals, accounts and correspondence of Wells Carmel, which amalgamated with Darlington in 1972; annals, correspondence and accounts for Branksome Carmel, two of whose sisters moved to Darlington when it closed in 1992; and twentieth century correspondence on foundations in Africa.

The archives from Antwerp and Lier fill eight boxes, the nineteenth century papers fill another three boxes, the Wells, Branksome and Africa papers fill another four boxes and twentieth century papers are being added. They are kept at the Convent and both their physical condition and the storage conditions are good. The sisters will answer enquiries and allow academic researchers access to the older material and the archives have been used recently in a study of the writings of religious women. The pre-1794 papers have been microfilmed for the archives of the Kingdom of Belgium and are described by Pascal Majerus in *Ordres Mendicants Anglo-Irlandais en Belgique: Introduction Bibliographique a l'histoire des convents Belges anterieur a 1796*, 2001.

There are copies of the films in Darlington.

I hope to continue work on the archives and consider that both the spiritual writings and relic papers would repay further study. Additionally, as modern papers are being added, I hope my annual visits to the north-east will continue.

DISPERSED CONTEMPLATIVE COMMUNITIES

Sister Marguerite-André Kuhn-Regnier

Over the past thirty-five years a number of houses of contemplative nuns have either closed or undergone amalgamation with other communities. The care and preservation of the archives of dispersed convents is a matter of the first importance, both for the remaining members of the convents or orders concerned and for the Catholic Archives Society. Indeed, during the whole of its existence the Society has sought to assist communities faced with closure or dispersal in planning for the safe deposit of their archives. There follows below a check-list of dispersed contemplative communities. Any corrections would be gratefully received by the Secretary of the CAS.

| Date of Dispersal | Community | Location of Archives |
|-------------------|---|--|
| 1967 | Dominican Nuns, Headington, Oxford | Dominican Archives Edinburgh/Monastere des Dominicaines, Estavayer-le-Lac, Switzerland |
| 1972 | Carmelite Convent, Wells | Darlington Carmel |
| 1976 | Carmelite Convent, Bridell | Dolgellau Carmel |
| 1978 | Poor Clares, Levenshulme, Manchester | Poor Clares, Darlington |
| 1978 | Benedictine Nuns, Haslemere, Surrey | Downside Abbey |
| 1981 | Poor Clares, Sclerder, Cornwall | Plymouth Diocese |
| 1983 | Augustinian Canonesses (Windesheim) Newton Abbot, Devon | Priory of Our Lady Sayers Common West Sussex |

| | | |
|------|---|--|
| 1983 | Bernardine Cistercians, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex | St Bernard's Convent Slough |
| 1983 | Carmelite Convent, Edinburgh | |
| 1987 | St Scholastica's Benedictine Abbey, Teignmouth, Devon | St Mary's Convent Buckfast, Devon |
| 1987 | Carmelite Convent, Oxford | Archives destroyed |
| 1987 | Olivetian Benedictines, Strood, Kent | Turvey Abbey, Bedfordshire |
| 1988 | Dominican Nuns of the Rosary, Glasgow | Returned to USA |
| 1989 | Carmelite Convent Presteigne, Wales | Downside Abbey |
| 1989 | Dominican Nuns Carisbrooke, Isle of Wight | Dominican Archives Edinburgh |
| 1990 | Carmelite Convent, Yardley | Dolgellau Carmel/ Birmingham Diocesan Archives |
| 1991 | Convent of Adoration Reparatrice, Chester | |
| 1992 | Carmelite Convent, Branksome, Dorset | Notting Hill Carmel (Charter)/Darlington (Annals, correspondence, accounts) |
| 1992 | Carmelite Convent, Salford | Salford Diocese |

| | | |
|------|---|---|
| 1992 | Poor Clares, Edinburgh | Poor Clares, Darlington |
| 1992 | Poor Clares, Liverpool | Poor Clares, York |
| 1994 | Carmelite Convent, Chichester | Sclerder Carmel, Cornwall, Baltimore Carmel U.S.A. |
| 1994 | Carmelite Convent, Tavistock, Devon | Upholland Carmel, Lancashire (no records kept) |
| 1995 | Sisters of Jesus Crucified Castle Cary, Somerset | Prieurè Saint-Joseph Brou-sur-Chantereine F77177 France |
| 1996 | Carmelite Convent, Blackburn | Returned to Holland |
| 1998 | Carmelite Convent, Reading | Falkirk Carmel/ Sclerder Carmel/ Notting Hill Carmel |
| 1999 | Servite Nuns, Begbroke, Oxford | Servite Priory, Benburb, Co. Tyrone |
| 2001 | Carmelite Convent, Lanherne, Cornwall | St Helens Carmel, Merseyside |
| 2001 | Carmelite Convent Oban, Scotland | |

OSCOTT COLLEGE ARCHIVES

Dr Marie Rowlands

St Mary's College, known as Oscott College, was founded in 1794 and located at Old Oscott, Handsworth, Staffordshire, (now part of the city of Birmingham). It outgrew these premises and in 1838 a new college was built on a site two miles away, which became known as New Oscott. The College comprised both a school and a seminary educating both future Catholic priests and future Catholic laymen. Some of the latter distinguished themselves in the army, the professions, especially law, and the civil service.

The seminary was separated from the school in 1873 and removed to Olton, Warwickshire. The school was closed in 1889 and the seminary returned to the main building. In 1897 it became a Central Seminary serving 7 dioceses of southern and midland England including Westminster. In 1909 the Central seminary was dissolved and St Mary's became the seminary of Birmingham Archdiocese. It has continued to accept students from other dioceses.

An important body of archives has accumulated during the two hundred years of the seminary's existence. These have now been transferred to the Birmingham Archdiocesan Record Office where they may be preserved and properly looked after and where they can be made available for scholarly enquiries.

CORRESPONDENCE AND MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS

There are more than 8,000 miscellaneous papers comprising correspondence, correspondence copybooks, rules, examination lists, concert programmes, applications, dimissorials, and memoranda. These date mainly from 1831 but there are some from 1794-1831, and some even earlier from 1684. Papers after 1926 have not been sorted. Essentially the collection covers the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There is ample material for a study of the influence of successive Rectors and Procurators. Much can be learnt of the social interaction of the students with the professors, of the academic works, of the lifestyle of the students, and the culture of what, for most of the period, was a closed and very specialised community.

The building of New Oscott in 1838-1840 and subsequent extensions and additions are well documented and there is some

correspondence from the Pugin and Hardman firms. There is, however, rather more with firms such as Haden and Sons who maintained the boilers. The correspondence and papers before 1897 are mainly concerned with internal affairs of the college. Henry Parkinson was Vice Rector between 1897 and 1924 with full responsibility for running the reorganised Central Seminary. The archive is especially rich during this period. In addition to the day-to-day life and running of the College there are also letters and papers relating to the Catholic Social Guild, the Catholic Truth Society and the Catholic Women's League. The early days of the Catholic Social Guild is particularly well covered. The Rector had regular correspondents abroad, and sought links with the University of Birmingham.

Parkinson was deeply involved with the early phase of the revival of liturgical music both in the College and in the parishes, and was in touch with developments on the continent. The documents relating to St Cecilia's Society are very important in this connection, and former students wrote to the rector describing the improvements in church music they were trying to make in their parishes.

The correspondence of the period 1914-1918 is of especial interest since the College was necessarily engaged in discussion with the War Office about the release and later conscription of College students. Many of the students were on active service, in the armed forces, as military chaplains or as medical workers. They corresponded with the Rector, giving detailed accounts of their experiences. The rector had friends and former students in Belgium and France and followed events there closely. The College took in some Belgian displaced seminary students. It is evident from the correspondence how attitudes changed during the conflict, and the seminary had to adapt to wartime conditions. Some students died on active service and those who returned in 1919 had been through life-changing experiences.

ACCOUNTS

The financial accounts (from 1794), particularly for the earlier years, offer much insight into the costs, sources of income and management of the institution and its relations with local tradesmen, and with its employees. Although there are many gaps in the series, there are ledgers, cashbooks, petty cash books, annual statements, students' accounts and bankbooks showing the management of the College at many levels of administration. There are occasional references to

disputes with Sutton Coldfield Corporation and other local bodies. The college continued to manage Oldford (Holford) farm and the estate accounts (from 1842) throw light on local farming. The farm accounts and rent books are a significant addition to the body of documentation of the locality.

The accounts and some other documents which relate to the Seminary when it was at Olton 1873-1888 are separately grouped and cover all aspects of life there, the studies, the library, the examinations, and the priestly formation.

The Oscott Correspondence continues to be an important source through this period for both the school at Oscott and the seminary at Olton.

STUDENTS

There are records of all aspects of student life, examinations, reports, classes, timetables, and holidays. There is much about student societies, excursions and the records of the public man/dean and the junior common room. There is much information about the family background, social status, and aspirations of the students, especially those who were paid for by various scholarships and bursaries. In addition to the major sequences of material there are some individual survivals such as a library fine book, a sickbay notebook and a few student essays.

LIBRARY

There are accounts and other papers relating to the various libraries in the College, the main library, Little Bounds Library, and the students' common room library. The signing out books throw light on what individual professors and students were borrowing. Most of this section relates to the period after 1888.

LITURGY AND PIETY

Throughout the archive there is much to shed light on liturgical and pious practices and there are 23 volumes and 6 notebooks of the day-to-day carrying out of the offices of the church, which throw light on the practice, and development of the liturgy. There are records of confraternities. Parkinson and his colleagues were deeply committed to the foundation and working of the Apostolic Union of the Secular Clergy; this was both important in Oscott and across the nation. There is plenty of material for an assessment of the significance of this body.

THE OSCOTIAN SOCIETY

The minutes and papers of the Oscotian society (from 1840) offer insights into the subsequent careers of the students, both clergy and laymen. The periodical *The Oscotian* includes much first hand description of Catholic events and controversies and reflects the changing "mindset" of Catholic clergy and laity. It also contains articles on the history of the College, on its architecture and sculptures, church furnishings, stained glass and other matters, together with reminiscences of persons, events and sports. Accounts of the achievements of former students were industriously collected, and memoirs of the more distinguished members were published. Much of this is adulatory as is to be expected but good use can be made of it when it is subjected to critical evaluation.

THE BOARD OF BISHOPS

There are minutes and other records of the meetings of the Board of Bishops for the management of the College, especially during the period of the Central Seminary. In 1897 a detailed survey was made of the work, rules and management of all the seminaries and some other colleges by a sub commission of the Bishops' Committee. The Bishops' correspondence with successive rectors also throws some light on the relations of the seminary with the bishops. The letters of the bishops sending students to the seminary not infrequently refer to the needs of their dioceses. Recruitment from Ireland, especially in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, had its particular problems and opportunities.

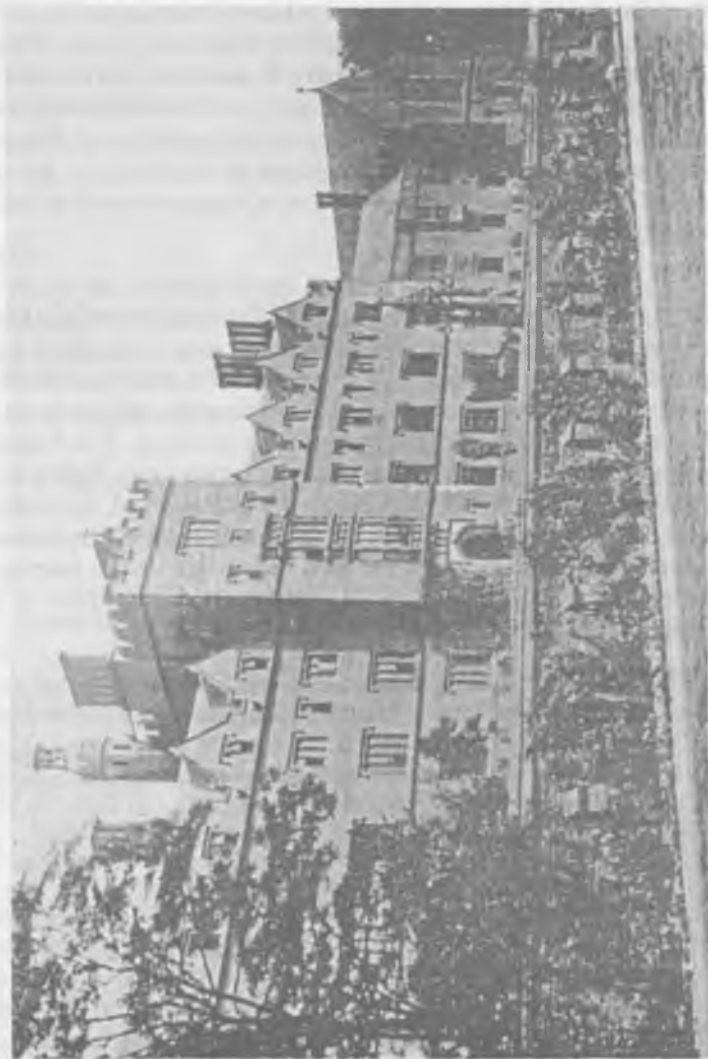
LITERARY REMAINS

There is an accumulation of literary remains (from about 1830), theological notes, lecture notes and a few obituary collections. These provide material for the study of individual professors, and some leading clergy and there is an autobiographical account of life at Sedgley Park and at Oscott. There are lists of students but these add little to what has already been published.

This is a collection that has little to offer the parish or family historian but will be very valuable to scholars researching the history of Roman Catholicism in nineteenth and twentieth century Britain. Taken in conjunction with the diocesan and other seminary collections it will contribute substantially to deepening our understanding of major themes in modern Catholic history.

EDITORIAL NOTE

This article first appeared in The Oscotian 2002, and is reproduced with permission



Oscott College

WHEN THE CHALK DUST SETTLES: THE VALUE OF SCHOOL LOG BOOKS, A CASE STUDY OF SISTER CALASANCTIUS O'SULLIVAN CP

Sister Dominic Savio Hamer CP

Some time ago, when I was writing a little history of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion in Fleetwood, I came across a newspaper account of the funeral of Sister Calasanctius O'Sullivan, who had died there in 1935 after eleven years as headmistress of Stella Maris High School. 'A native of County Cork,' the newspaper read, 'she had a distinguished scholastic career, having been headmistress of schools in several towns in Lancashire.'¹ Intrigued, I set about researching where she had been headmistress and what she had done to merit such a eulogy. Convent records gave me little information and so I turned to school log books and found I had discovered a gold mine. Since their compulsory introduction in 1861-2 school log books have formed an essential item of any school's archives. Examined at regular intervals by both school managers and government inspectors, they have been kept meticulously on a daily basis. Now spanning a period of almost a hundred and fifty years, they present detailed information on the particular school, on the educational system in vogue at any given period and on the policy of each headteacher. Thus I learnt how Sister Calasanctius O'Sullivan's scholastic career was truly distinguished.

Hannah O'Sullivan was born in County Cork on 22 January 1873.² About 1891 she entered the novitiate of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion at Mt St Joseph Convent, Bolton, Lancashire. She received the religious habit, with the name Sister Calasanctius, probably in 1892 and made her vows in 1894. She then seems to have studied for about two years, until, on 4 January 1896, whilst still studying for certification, she was appointed assistant teacher in SS Peter and Paul's Mixed Elementary School in Pilkington Street, Bolton. After successfully sitting her Certificate Examinations in Manchester in July 1897, she left SS Peter and Paul's School on 12 January 1898.³ On the same day, aged almost twenty-five, she became headmistress of St Edmund's Mixed Elementary School, on the opposite side of Bolton town centre.⁴ At first she continued to live in Pilkington Street convent, walking the mile or so to and from St Edmund's each day but on 18 January she went to live at Mt St Joseph Convent at Deane, where she was given charge of the student sisters.⁵ As the annalist in Pilkington Street convent recorded

when she died in 1935, Sister Calasactius 'gave of her best to the Congregation. She taught many years in the old school at St Edmund's and numberless were the difficulties she had to put up with. Then after a hard day's work she toiled home to the Mount and taught with fresh energy the novices and postulants, preparing them for the exams which would qualify them for their teaching career.'¹⁶

Sister Calasactius began her career in St Edmund's by examining the whole school. 'The results on the whole', she recorded on 28 January, 'are not discouraging. Some standards [classes] show weak points. These have been shown up to their respective teachers and entries of the same are made in the syllabus book.'¹⁷ She thought that the attendance that week was only 'pretty fair', although she conceded that a number of pupils were absent through genuine illness. She soon experienced the vicissitudes of responsibility, for on 13 May 1898 a second-year pupil teacher who had already been off ill for a week asked for three more weeks' leave of absence and actually took four. During that time her place had to be taken by an unqualified teacher. Sister Calasactius was beginning to keep her finger on the pulse, however, for on 20 May she recorded, 'While conducting the examination of the different standards, I noticed some very bright children who know the work of their respective standards. I have therefore transferred ten children to higher classes today.' The main problem in the school, in fact, was the shortage of space which meant, as the government inspector had reported at the beginning of 1898, that there was 'an unnatural congestion of backward children in the first standard.' The following July the problem remained, for the HMI then reported that he was pleased with everything except the first standard reading and that the boys wanted self-reliance. 'This class', added Sister Calasactius to her entry of the report, 'has been a continual strain throughout the year being so many in number and some of them being inferior in ability but much has been done and is still being done to improve the class.' Her efforts proved fruitful, for in January 1899 the school was awarded the highest grants with the following report, 'The general discipline of the school is good. The standard exercises are carefully practised and the oral instruction, which is given under difficulty, owing to want of classrooms, produces its effect on the whole fairly well.' The improvements were maintained for in January 1900 the HMI reported, 'There is evidence of well-sustained teaching with some considerable general improvement in the children's acquirements', whilst in December the

report for 1900 read, 'Altogether very praiseworthy work is being done.'⁸ Sister Calasanctius was finding her feet.

St Edmund's School, however, was in a densely populated area, where sickness spread easily. On 10 June 1901, when the school reopened after the Whitsuntide holiday, only 152 out of 240 children were present, because measles was prevalent. Sister Calasanctius contacted the school board officer as well as the Reverend Manager, Father J.C. Averdonk. 'Active steps' were taken to bring the pupils to school. A week later the average attendance was 209. At the same time, Sister Calasanctius took care to promote the children's health and enjoyment. On 3 July she gave a holiday so that the poorest children could go on a trip to Lytham; and when the school reopened on 26 August 1901 she had already arranged for pupils to go out to cookery classes twice a week. On 16 September she gave special attention to punctuality and cleanliness. In December 1902 electricity was installed in the school. The annual report in January 1903 told its own story, 'The school is in excellent order and taught with exemplary perseverance and endeavour. The progress made during the last two years is most encouraging.'⁹ In July 1906 the pupils were taken to Hall-i'th'-Wood, the home of Samuel Crompton on the outskirts of Bolton. In preparation they read **Boys who Became Great Men: The Life of Crompton**. During this visit, she recorded, they saw Crompton's mule and Arkwright's spinning frame and their attention was drawn to the style of furniture, the Tudor wainscoting and the Cromwellian chairs. On 27 July she sent some of the pupils out with a teacher to the neighbouring Queen's Park 'to make observations', presumably of botanical and wildlife specimens but she was probably also taking the opportunity to give them some fresh air.¹⁰

By 1904 she seems to have returned to living in the Pilkington Street convent but on 18 October 1905 she and another sister moved to Clarence Street convent near St Mary's church and school on the Blackburn side of Bolton, which was closer to St Edmund's School.¹¹ January 1907 brought unpleasant encounters with the caretaker, who had not cleaned the school in preparation for its reopening. Moreover, as the month progressed and it was bitterly cold, he did nothing to raise the heating. Sister Calasanctius showed him the thermometer. In the summer of 1908 she introduced swimming lessons with the result that some of the children were able to enter a public competition. Since few if any of her pupils would have had baths in their homes, she was doing considerably more than developing their physical skills. Drama was on

the syllabus, too, for 1908 closed with a school concert. One suspects that when the medical officer of health called at the school on 15 January 1909 it was at the invitation of Sister Calasanctius, who saw that some of her charges merited a little help in healthy living. The school premises, however, continued to be deplorable, with consequences noted in the school report in February 1911:

As the premises have been fully reported on and are, it is hoped, soon to be replaced, it will suffice to recall the fact that work in this school, particularly in the Girls' and Infants' Departments, is carried on under difficulties as to classroom accommodation, noise and lighting. Owing to the inequality of space the whole of Standard I is at present in the Girls' Department, the boys spending a year there instead of passing direct from the Infants' to their own Department. While this arrangement is convenient, for the reason given it does not appear to work very well educationally since the Standard II boys hardly reach the same level as do the girls in the corresponding class.

All parts of the school suffer to some extent from the migratory character of the scholars; and the home conditions of the children, though apparently improving of late, still leave much to be desired. In these circumstances it is gratifying to find that the ages of the pupils in the various classes of the Girls' Department are practically normal, while in the Boys' Department only about 10 per cent are markedly older than the other scholars in their respective classes.¹²

The Diocesan Report, however, received on 21 January 1913, had nothing but praise, 'I was very favourably impressed by this school. A good even standard of efficiency was maintained throughout and the behaviour of the children was beyond all praise', wrote Father R. Walmsley, whilst Bishop L.C. Casartelli added 'Excellent.'¹³ He would no doubt have been aware that in March 1911 several pupils, miners' children, had had to apply for free dinner tickets because of a coal strike and that Dean Averdonk in 1913 was collecting clothes and boots for the poorer children. When King George V visited Bolton on 10 July 1913, however, there was nothing inferior about St Edmund's pupils. 'There

were some novel and tasteful features about the dresses of the young folks', the *Bolton Chronicle* reported, 'For the most part the female section were clad in white but one school - St Edmund's - presented a pretty picture in blue and white with sailor collars.'¹⁴

The outbreak of the First World War in August 1914 soon brought its own sorrows. 'Several children have made application for free dinners consequent on the war', she recorded on 2 October. 'Many parents and brothers have been called to the front.' A fortnight later she had to record the first death touching one of her pupils, 'The sympathy of the teachers and children has been bestowed on Winnie Howley and her little sisters, pupils of this school, whose father died from wounds received in battle last week.' Yet the children continued to maintain a 94 per cent attendance.¹⁵

Sister Calasanctius continued to be vigilant about health. 'The school nurse examined all the heads today', she wrote on 19 April 1915. 'Only one child was excluded and that was not a case of neglect but of slight eczema.' It was one of her last entries in St Edmund's log book for in early 1915 she had been elected as superior in the convent in Middleton, Manchester and appointed headmistress in St Peter's Mixed Elementary School there.¹⁶ She finished her duties in St Edmund's, Bolton, on 18 June 1915.¹⁷

Theoretically, Sister Calasanctius was headmistress of St Peter's, Middleton, from 7 June 1915 but the Bolton Education Council would not release her until the 18th, when she went directly to her duties in Middleton. Both swimming lessons and medical inspections were already part of this school's schedule. The war had also brought its own agenda, for on 29 July St Peter's celebrated French Flag Day. The staff seem to have made two large French flags and smaller ones for sale to the children. By 4 August their flag sales had raised forty-eight shillings for wounded French soldiers. On 10 August 1916 some of the children were taken to nearby Heaton Park for a lesson on trench warfare. As the sergeant major in charge of the military installations was the father of one of the pupils, he took them on a guided tour and showed them several war trophies in a tent. For 2d. each the children were allowed to inspect fire and gas trenches, a dug-out and breast-works, a listening post, machine gun emplacements, a bombing post, a dressing station, French mortar and shell holes and barbed-wire entanglements. On 21 December that year prizes were distributed before the

school closed for the holidays and each child received an orange.¹⁸

Still vigilant about the children's health, when the school medical officer visited St Peter's on 23 March 1917, Sister Calasanctius drew his attention to several cases of deafness. In early July the school held National Baby Week, during which she arranged for special lessons, such as one on Baby's Food and another on Clothing for the Baby, whilst the school nurse gave a demonstration on how to bathe a baby, much to the interest and appreciation of the older girls. In October that year the school won the Swimming Shield in a public competition. On 26 February 1818 a lecture on alcohol and its effects was given to the top classes, whilst two days later, when the school doctor visited St Peter's because of cases of scabies in Middleton, he found only one suspicious case and Sister Calasanctius had already noticed it and reported it to the school nurse. In July - August 1918 all the teachers, including Sister Calasanctius caught influenza. As she recorded on 15 August, 'During the influenza the school has been sprayed and every precaution taken but notwithstanding every one of the staff has been attacked and several of the children. Work has suffered much.' In October, however, St Peter's won the Shield for Swimming for the third time in succession and the attendance at that time was 92 per cent. November proved to be mainly a holiday, first for All Saints' Day; then, on the 11th, for the end of the Great War at 11 o'clock that morning, followed by another half-holiday on the 15th for the peace; and finally from 19 November until 2 December on the orders of the medical authority. On 22 July 1919 no less a person than the Secretary of Education came to St Peter's to present each child with a new sixpence in honour of the peace, whilst on 4 August the Reverend Manager, Father J.F. Hanrahan, treated all the children to an excursion and a nature lesson. 'They also saw some feats of skill and some beautiful animals', Sister Calasanctius recorded. One suspects they went to the circus! Trafalgar Day on 31 October 1919 prompted lessons on Nelson in history, drawing and poetry classes; and at the end of the school term in December all the children took home oranges. They needed them for their families were so poor that on 1 March 1920 it was decided by the Middleton civic authorities that fifteen of St Peter's pupils should be provided with milk and bread and butter every morning at playtime and by 8 April, on the nurse's recommendation, twenty-seven children were being given lunches too. The average attendance continued to be 92 per cent, whilst cookery, woodwork and sports were all part of the curricu-

lum. On 8 April a new lesson was given on eclipses of the sun as there was one that morning. 'Smoked glasses were in readiness', Sister Calasanctius recorded, 'and very good views obtained.' On 5 July, a glorious summer's day, the whole school went to Heaton Park for a nature lesson, tea and sports, with prizes (as well as the tea) provided by Father Hanrahan. The next day, when the Prince of Wales visited Middleton, all the school assembled to see him, to sing *God bless the Prince of Wales* and *God save the King* and to give him a lusty cheer. 'He was very gracious', Sister Calasanctius recorded, 'and shook hands with little Hilda Finnegan in the infants' school.' Finally, during that same week, the news came that six out of the eight children presented had won Lancashire County Council scholarships to secondary schools. The HMI's report in November 1921 was laudatory:

Mixed. The work of this department is carried out under very difficult conditions as there are always four and sometimes five classes in the main room. Notwithstanding this however, the general standard of attainment is satisfactory and a surprisingly quiet tone prevails throughout the school.

The weekly records are up to date, notes of lessons are carefully prepared and the various syllabuses of work are drawn up on comprehensive lines. The desirability of including some drawing in pencil and colour for the Girls should be considered when the new Time Table is being constructed.

One of the best subjects in the school is English which reaches a generally high level: the scholars in the upper classes wrote some very good compositions in a test set during the Inspection. The teaching in Geography, History and Nature Study is carried out intelligently and the children are interested and responsive.

Good work is being done in the junior classes although the primary subjects do not at present reach a very high standard. It must be noted however that the school was closed last year owing to an epidemic for over three months and the work, particularly in Arithmetic, is still suffering from this cause.

Std IV is a weak class but it is in capable hands and may

be expected to improve. The work of the two upper standards is generally very satisfactory. The pupils in Standard VII, who are under the sole charge of the Head Teacher, are acquiring the habit of self-study and the teaching is largely individual; this is the best class in the school.

All the teachers are most industrious and painstaking in their efforts to promote the welfare of the children and it is pleasing to record that a considerable measure of success has been achieved.

The Head Mistress in particular is to be congratulated on the manner in which she has largely surmounted the difficulties under which the school is conducted.¹⁹

As the convent annalist recorded when this report was received on 22 December, 'It was excellent. The school had attained the highest state of efficiency. Sister Calasactius has every reason to be proud of it.'²⁰ There must, therefore, have been deep regret in St Peter's when Sister Calasactius 'ceased her duties', as she expressed it, on 30 September 1922. On 1 October after eight years in Middleton, 'praised by HMIs and religious inspectors', she went to Mt St Joseph, Bolton, to take charge of the students.²¹ In September–November 1923 she did supply teaching in Larne in County Antrim, Northern Ireland.²² Then, at the provincial chapter on 3 January 1924, she was elected superior of the Cross and Passion convent in the fishing town of Fleetwood. This foundation had been made in 1923 at West Holme, 45 Mount Road, in order to provide Catholic secondary-school education in the town and a private school had been opened, under the title Stella Maris, in West Holme on 10 September 1923. At first the pupils had been accommodated in two large rooms on the ground floor, in the garage and in the garden. On 17 September they had been classified according to their ability and the 'usual branches of a sound English education, with science and languages, were being taught throughout.'²³ Then, to provide for the overflow of St Mary's Primary School, Stella Maris had become an all-age school. By 26 October the garage had been converted into a kindergarten, 'nicely fitted with desks, tables and chairs suitable to babies', whilst from 30 November, the children wore a navy and gold uniform.²⁴ By July 1924 the school, with fifty-two pupils, was becoming well known and both the Fleetwood Council of the Knights of St Columba and the Blackpool Education Committee awarded scholar-

ships for admission. This was the school of which, on 8 September 1924, the highly experienced Sister Calasanctius O'Sullivan became the headmistress.

She soon put Stella Maris on the map. On 29 December 1924 the pupils performed R. H. Benson's **Nativity Mystery Play** in the Co-operative Hall. The local newspaper enthused over the performance. 'The pupils attending the Convent High School, Fleetwood', it read,

are to be heartily congratulated on the success which they achieved on Tuesday evening, when they presented Rev. R. H. Benson's mystery play, **The Nativity**, before a crowded and enthusiastically appreciative audience in the Co-operative Hall. It is the first time the pupils have attempted anything of a dramatic nature and the proficiency they displayed reflected the highest credit, not only upon the youthful performers but upon the Sister Superior and her staff who have devoted considerable care and attention to their training.²⁵

The production consisted of a series of 'picturesque tableaux' during which the children also sang Christmas carols. Incidental music was rendered by a small orchestra, whilst the dresses, which were very 'artistic' and of 'excellent colouring', had been made by the pupils and their parents 'under the direction of the Sisters at the Convent'. 'When the curtain fell upon the final scene', the paper continued, 'the audience, who, at the request of Dr Cotton, had previously refrained from applause, testified their appreciation of the efforts of the performers by vociferous cheering.' Dean Cotton, the parish priest, then stepped before the footlights and thanked the audience for their attendance and for the appreciation they had shown. He had a pleasing duty to perform, he told them, and that was to thank all the people concerned and first of all the 'good Sisters', who had spared neither time nor effort to train the children. They would all agree with him, he said, that it was one of the best days' work he ever did when he got the Sisters to come to Fleetwood. They had not only done good work in the parish, but they were doing excellent service in educating the pupils. In training the children for the stage, they were giving them practice in elocution, deportment and enunciation.

The school quickly reached high academic standards. In July 1925 two pupils successfully sat for the Junior Oxford Examination,

whilst another was presented for a music examination and passed in the first class. Twenty-eight pupils were presented for a drawing examination. Twenty-seven of them passed, twenty-one with honours. On 13 April 1926, three other pupils passed a music examination in Blackpool with first class. By 29 May 1926 Stella Maris had eighty-one pupils and so the Congregation bought 6 Harris Street, adjacent to the playground. With more space at her disposal, Sister Calasanctius was able to organise the first public prize distribution, which took place on 21 December 1926, with special prizes being given by the clergy for Latin, Mathematics and English composition, whilst one of the local councillors donated one for excellent work. The little hall was packed with parents, who thoroughly enjoyed the pupils' presentation of *Pearl the Fisher Maiden*. By special request it was afterwards repeated in the Co-operative Hall and proved a huge success. Another success was recorded on 1 July 1927 when Father Moah, the Religious Examiner, awarded the whole school Honours in Religious Knowledge. 'Throughout the examination of the four classes', he wrote, 'the catechism was well known, there being but few mistakes altogether. Doctrinal answers were full and sound. The Holy Eucharist and the Mass were the main theme; the examination in one class in a knowledge of the Sacred Vestments showed a perfect acquaintance with every detail. Scriptural narrative was excellently related. The top class shone brilliantly in the complete and accurate telling of Scripture events. The singing of the hymn and the Plain Chant was tuneful and, above all, devotional.' About ten days later the Oxford Examinations commenced, with Stella Maris recognised as an examination centre. Of the eight pupils presented, one passed Matriculation, three obtained honours and three passed; six pupils who had taken a music examination all obtained first class passes. It was typical of Sister Calasanctius that when, on 28 October 1927, during the half-term holiday, a tidal wave caused by a great storm flooded a large part of the town, making many homeless, she immediately offered them shelter in the school. A few days later, on 2 November, her pupils inaugurated an annual event in singing a Requiem Mass in St Mary's.

In 1928 thirteen pupils were presented for the music examination. They all passed, eleven of them in the first class. In May Father Moah again accorded Honours to the whole school for their Religious Knowledge. On 5 June Professor Willoughby from Leeds University came to examine the Oxford Examination candidates in Oral French

and the Royal Art Examinations were held about the same time. When the Oxford results arrived in September, five senior candidates had gained School Certificates, one of them with Honours and a Distinction in Latin and five juniors had also passed, one with Honours. In December that year the prizes were distributed by His Lordship, the Bishop of Lancaster. The entertainment was provided by four violinists and a pianist, in addition to a three-act play, *A Royal Jester*. No wonder His Lordship expressed his entire satisfaction at the progress of Stella Maris! The examination results were again splendid in 1929 and at the Prize Distribution in December, in the Co-operative Hall, the pupils put on the operetta, *Princess Chrysanthemum*, which was just as much appreciated as its predecessors. It was repeated for a wider audience, again in the Co-operative Hall, on 15 January 1930, when it was followed by a dance organised by former pupils. In his Religious Report in March, Father Moah recorded that parts of the *Missa De Angelis*, the *O Salutaris* and two English hymns were sung excellently, the unison and rhythm in the Plain Chant being almost perfect; and the pupils' doctrinal knowledge was excellent. That summer the school had a one hundred per cent pass rate in the Oxford School Certificate. In December 1931 the Bishop of Lancaster again came for the Prize Distribution and, as the local press reported, 'The pupils, who had been trained by the Sisters of the school, went through an excellent programme, every item of which was greatly appreciated by the large audience. Country folk and other dances were gracefully performed by the senior, middle and junior pupils', with violin music supplied by two girls and a boy. Pupils sang several part-songs, 'with sweetness and expression'; there was a piano duet; a recitation; and 'a praiseworthy rendering' of the *Marche Militaire* and *Standchen* by the school orchestra. Next the audience were treated to a humorous playlet, *Henry VIII and Queen Catherine Parr* and to a presentation of the trial scene in the *Merchant of Venice*. Dr Cotton was again loud in his praises. He said it was not all singing, dancing, music and play at Stella Maris. He was pleased to report that the year had been a very successful one in every department of the school's activities. Former students were now enrolled at Manchester University, at Liverpool Training College and in the Civil Service. In elocution one pupil had been awarded the London College Prize for Outstanding Merit; and the school had also won the Swimming Cup. Following Dr Cotton, Bishop T.W. Pearson OSB said he noted that the Sisters were teaching the children not only to be good inside the

classroom but also on the tennis courts, in the hockey field and in the water and he thought that they as parents and he as the Bishop had every reason to congratulate both Sisters and pupils on their successes.

In 1932 the Congregation was able to purchase 43 Mount Road and by the end of the year they had joined it to the original convent-school to provide themselves with a new refectory, as well as having an extra classroom and more general accommodation. In December Stella Maris gave three public performances of the operetta, *Laila, the Children's Queen*. In the following year, 1933, the school gave another public performance, *The Knave of Hearts*. At the time no-one would have dreamt that that would be the last operetta that Sister Calasanctius would produce but, after only ten days' illness, she died on 19 January 1935. Her remains were taken the next day to St Mary's Church, where a Solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated on the following morning. The pupils of Stella Maris sang during the Mass and afterwards lined the pathway to the church whilst the coffin was carried to the hearse. Sister Calasanctius had worked until the end and, as the Pilkington St convent annalist recorded, 'Her later years were spent with the same energetic devotion' as she had previously shown in SS Peter and Paul's, Street Edmund's and St Peter's. No doubt many would have echoed the sentiments expressed by the annalist in Clarence Street convent, Bolton, 'May the good God reward her munificently for her generous, self-sacrificing life.'

NOTES:

1. Records of the Cross and Passion Convent, Fleetwood, 1923-1951 [Fleetwood Convent Records].
2. Log Book, SS Peter and Paul's Girls' School, 1884-1944 [SS Peter and Paul's Log Bk].
3. *ibid.*
4. Log Book, St Edmund's Mixed School, 1871-1903 [St Edmund's Log Bk, 1871-1903].
5. Records of the Cross and Passion Convent, Pilkington St, Bolton, 1894-1903 [Pilkington St Convent Records].
6. Pilkington St Convent Records, 1933-1963.
7. St Edmund's Log Bk, 1871-1903.
8. *ibid.*
9. *ibid.*
10. St Edmund's Log Bk, 1903-1962.
11. Pilkington St Convent Records, 1904-1920.

12. St Edmund's Log Bk, 1903-1962.
13. *ibid.*
14. *ibid.*
15. *ibid.*
16. Records of the Cross and Passion Convent, Middleton, 1909-1957 [Middleton Convent Records].
17. St Edmund's Log Bk, 1903-1962.
18. Log Book, St Peter's Mixed School, Middleton, 1903-1937 [St Peter's Log Bk].
19. *ibid.*
20. Middleton Convent Records.
21. *ibid.*; Records of Mt St Joseph Cross and Passion Convent, Bolton, 1914-1936.
22. Records of the Cross and Passion Convent, Larne, 1923.
23. Fleetwood Convent Records; Log Book, Stella Maris High School, Fleetwood, 1923-1934.
24. Fleetwood Convent Records.
25. *ibid.*

PRINTED EPHEMERA AND CATHOLIC ARCHIVES

Dom Aidan Bellenger

I

According to **The Concise Oxford Dictionary** (Eighth Edition, 1990) an 'ephemeron' (generally only used in the plural, 'ephemera') is 'a thing (esp. a printed item) of short lived interest or usefulness'. This paper may seem, therefore, to be somewhat otiose, a diversion from the archives and historical records which form the basis of any archive. I would suggest, however, that 'ephemera' are not only worth considering but are an essential category in any archive, especially a Catholic one. Indeed 'ephemera' is a dangerous concept to use as a reason for dismissal – all archivists are aware that it can take a long time for the usefulness of a record deposit to become clear. Catholic 'ephemera' in particular, reflect the special nature of the Catholic community in Great Britain and Ireland; the materials that are preserved and conserved are distinctive to that community. I would suggest there are at least five reasons for this uniqueness.

In the first place, the Catholic tradition since the Reformation has always been somewhat off-centre. The very word 'recusant', used to describe the Catholics of 'the Penal Times', means 'refusal' and the milieu of the recusant is one of circumlocution and secrecy. The priests' hiding places, the equivocation, the private vocabulary all need decoding. So much in Catholic history is hidden and elusive that it is often in the seemingly ephemeral that the kernel of interpretation is discovered. Grand, formal record-keeping is not the way of a persecuted minority lacking in financial strength and political muscle.

Secondly, while being circumspect and concealed, the English Catholic community was (and is) part of an international Church structure which makes it fit into a much wider ecclesiastical world than its Anglican and Nonconformist equivalents. In terms of archival tradition this marks Catholicism out; while being properly grounded in its national and local context, a Catholic community is never narrowly parochial.

Thirdly, within the national historiographical tradition Catholicism has been presented since the Reformation as an essentially alien force, peripheral to the mainstream, its archives and historic

deposit almost by definition ephemeral. The true role of Catholicism in national life is only slowly being rediscovered, not least by such revisionist historians as Norman Davies and Edwin Jones. Catholic historical perspective remains different. A classic case in point is the reputation of Elizabeth I, 'Good Queen Bess' in the Protestant overview, the persecutor of priests and recusants from the Catholic angle of vision. This is symbolised most graphically in the statue of the *Vulnerata* at the English College, Valladolid: the *Vulnerata* is a statue of the Virgin hacked at by Drake's pirates', not, from the Catholic view 'singeing the King of Spain's beard' but violating the Mother of God. Spanish Valladolid, by such activity, is, therefore, more truly English than England.

Such counter-cultural insights underline the distinct nature of Catholic archives and artifacts. Thus, fourthly, the nature of Catholic culture is distinct and has numerous levels. Not only is there the refined, polite, aesthetic counter-culture of English country house Catholicism and the Gothic revival of Pugin but also the manifestations of popular culture ('tough' in Scottish terms) which are both neatly reflected in ephemera.

Fifthly and finally the identity of English Catholicism is found on the margins of society and its very liminality gives it its strength. It is at the edges that power often resides. In folklore, for example, if margins are dangerous they are also creative, 'betwixt' and between considered as important zones of transformation. If it is in the liminal that English Catholicism finds its identity, it is often in the ephemera that this identity is preserved.

II

There are many categories of ephemera and the Catholic historian is often reliant on detritus to reconstruct the past. I was recently working on the Benedictine martyrs of the seventeenth century and found that one of the key documents, a charter of 1619, with portraits of five of the martyrs, only existed now in copy form; a photograph, preserved at Downside. Copies of the documents, especially in an era of easy reproduction, are often dismissed as 'ephemera'; perhaps one should check to see if the original still exists.

In the light of my five considerations on the nature of Catholic Archives I would like now to think of some twelve varieties of ephemera, mainly printed, and chosen pretty well at random, which might be worth preserving:

- (i) **Mortuary bills and memorial cards.** The wording of mortuary bills can tell us much about the person being remembered as well as providing biographical evidence. The mortuary bill of Saint Ambrose Barlow shows how even at his death he was regarded as a martyr worthy of veneration. This item, like all the ones I have chosen, is from the Downside Abbey Archives. More modern memorial cards can illustrate changes in taste from the 'bondieuserie' of the Victorians to the sparer images of today.
- (ii) **Duplicates.** What may appear as duplicates often have telling differences which may be highly revealing.
- (iii) **Postcards.** Important from many angles: the philatelic evidence, the context of the message, the subject matter which might illustrate a lost building or, if it comes to church interiors, a liturgical space which has been re-ordered out of existence. Collections of postcards should, if important, be kept together and not just be listed alphabetically by location; often a collection can impart a message of its own.
- (iv) **Portraits and photographs.** Even when personal identification is impossible a photographic portrait can suggest a way of dress (one thinks here of nuns' habits) or a spirituality which might otherwise go unrecorded. There have been some chance survivors of dolls in nuns' habits, dating from the recusant period (very vulnerable to disposal, I suspect) which now provide similar invaluable evidence.
- (v) **'Holy Pictures'.** Again, style and taste are *highly* relevant, and again, as with postcards, the written messages can be instructive.
- (vi) **Ordination cards.** Ordination cards, which began to proliferate at the beginning of the twentieth century, are important indicators of both style and a theology of the priesthood. There are numerous similar ephemera including jubilee cards and cards celebrating religious profession.
- (vii) **Architectural ephemera.** Bills, sketches and architectural drawings often suggest the physical development of a Catholic context, and in the planning of unbuilt constructions often reveal an imagined ideological or visionary architecture as in the Dunn and Hansom sketch of the Downside transept with its very monastic monks [See page 78 Illus 3].



TE DEVM LAVDAMVS.



NNO DOMINI

1641. die 10. Septembris, flyo veteri, Lancastrie in Angliâ post sanctam vitam, diuturnos 24. annorum labores in colendâ Christi vineâ exantlatos, & copiosum animarum fructum Deo oblatum; pro defensione fidei S.^{ae} Catholice Romanæ Ecclesie Matris omnium, qui Deum habent Patrem, & gloriosum Martyrium subiit Reverendus in Christo Pater cum omni veteratione nobis colendus

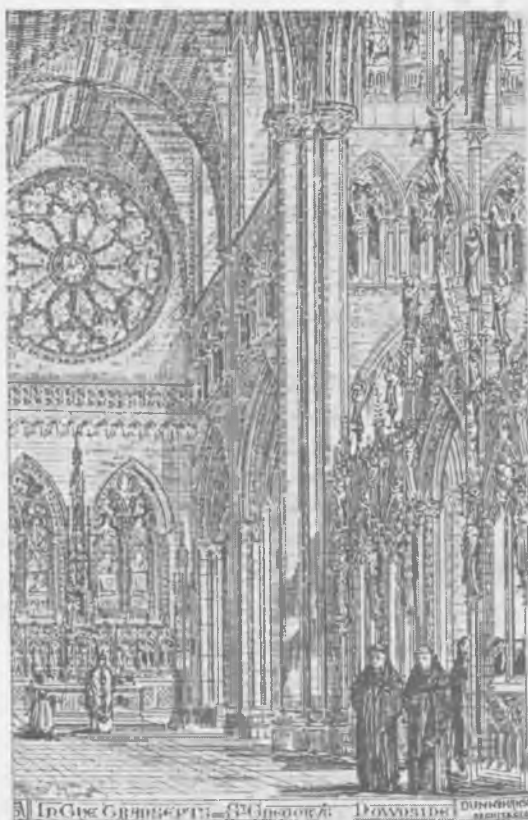
P. AMBROSIVS BARLO,

Congregationis Anglicanæ Ordinis S.ⁿⁱ Benedicti Praesbyter, & Monachus Anglicus, Duaci in Monasterio S.ⁿⁱ Gregorij professus, ætatis suæ anno 55. professionis 17. Sacerdotij verò 24. Quæ ideo omnibus nota fieri desideramus, præsertim Monachis Congregationis nostræ Anglicanæ, alijsque ejusdem Ordinis, ut illi Missas, aliaque preces, quas pro defunctis Confratribus recitare tenentur; in Missas de Sanctissima Trinitate, & in Hymnum TE DEVM LAVDAMVS, &c. in gratiarum actionem convertant (nam orare pro Martyre esset injuriam facere IESV CHRISTO Regi Martyrum) hi verò, & alij omnes Christi fideles unâ nobiscum Deum laudent, orentque quatenus arbor hæc Benedictina Congregationis Anglicanæ ita proficiat semper in virtutibus, ut frequentes hujusmodi fructus Deo valeat offerre. Et ô vniam proximus sit, qui his cum ingenti animi sui lætitiâ subscribit!

Schedulam hanc, propitio Deo, sequetur copiosior
vita, mortisque prædicti Martyris relatio.

*F: Clemens Reyner Congregationi,
Anglicanæ Ordinis S.ⁿⁱ Benedicti
et Praesfes Generalis Ammeritus.*

Gandavi: Typis Ioannis Kerchovij. Anno 1641.



Illus. 3 Architects' Impression,
Downside Abbey

(xi) **Tickets.** Railway tickets, sometimes perhaps the only remnants of a special excursion, are examples of whole ranges of ephemera which can be highly useful but all too easily disposable. In this category come vehicle information, vehicle licenses, passports, wartime memorabilia and similar items, often destroyed

(viii) **Programmes of concerts, parish and school events.** Handbills and posters can suggest early evidence for the activity of an institution or parish and can also, at a less important level, hint at taste and agendas. Newspaper cuttings also can provide much information for the historian.

(ix) **Menus.** Loyal toasts, balance of food, seating plans all tell their own story.

(x) **Book plates.** As well as being interesting as examples of the printer's or engraver's arts they can also be indicators of status or be heraldically instructive (See Illustration four).



Illus. 4 The Arms of Cardinal
Weld

but frequently useful for their social history information.

- (xii) **Packaging.** Archivists can be either hoarders or clearers, but even the hoarders might be tempted to throw away packaging. If a packet is preserved examination might be worthwhile. An empty tobacco cardboard box at Downside was not only the last remnant of a tobacco 'cooperative' run by the community in Ireland but also retained its distinctive smell.

Ephemera continues to accrue and I have not covered here criteria for selection or preservation, on the one hand, and implications of storage and conservation on the other. I have not looked into the place of personal papers and sermons, newsletters and non-executive circulars. What I have tried to do is to suggest that ephemera reflects culture as well as administration, high life as well as low life, the marginal as well as the central, the exotic rather than the administration round. Ephemera deserves a place in all our archives.

EDITORIAL NOTE

This article was originally given as a talk at the Catholic Archives Society Conference 2002.

FATHER TURNER: SOME PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Peter Hardwick

"I have in my time seen a sad decline in manners and morals," – such were the first words I heard Fr Turner utter in public, after which he paused and added, "said Adam to Eve." I came to relish this. The occasion was the Ascensio Scholarum of the bitter January of 1955, and leaving the Academy Room I went to meet the first (and incidentally the ablest) class I taught at Stonyhurst with the warning of the Prefect of Studies still echoing in my head: "If some of them were to pass their exams, Mr Hardwick, it would be administratively convenient; but we must be careful not to over-teach these boys." Fr Turner held by standards in education, but condemned league-tables. High standards encouraged pupils to attain their full academic potential; league tables prompted the distortion of education in the service of prestige and fee-income. In relation to league-tables, undeserved success comes as a lucky break; in relation to standards it is a perversion of truth, hence his response to congratulations proffered on the distinguished results of a moderately able set he had been taking for Ancient History: "This is not a matter of good teaching, Father, but of scandalous examining."

But to return to January 1955: Stonyhurst was at the time a well-disciplined, dull place,



Illus. 5 Father Freddie Turner

heavily imposing but not life-enhancing. It could, despite the breadth of its corridors and the width of its windows, feel narrow and gloomy. In this setting Freddie's eyes and wit sparkled and his learning and human sympathy shed a local light and warmth, but it was not enough to transform the scene. His presence at tea in the Square Library at this stage is exactly captured in a poem by Peter Levi

And I should wish to draw you, caught so
Head on one side, hand on the tea-table,
That nervous posture and those bright eyes able
To relax in accuracy at a window....
or else exhaling aphorisms like brittle
fire of a nineteenth-century rocket,
– by fascination seeming to forget
what this lights up so briefly and so little:....

These last two lines point to Freddie's primary failure: he could not, as Headmaster of Stonyhurst from 1961 to 1963, lift the school from its rock-pool of provincial isolation and ecclesiastical formalism and carry it into the mainstream of contemporary English Catholic life – if failure can be predicated when a task is subjectively impossible. For the inertia of the institution was too great; his own experience and energy were too limited; and perhaps he was too kind and sensitive to take on at once the explosive youth of the sixties and the entrenched positions of the Old Alma Materians. Anyway, he could not do the job and should never have been asked to try, and perhaps was not too sorry to leave for Beaumont in 1963, carrying with him his accumulated possessions in a small attache case.

Returning to Stonyhurst four years later, he entered into a time of unqualified success, for he now came in his proper role, as a teacher; and despite his later reputation as librarian and archivist, it is primarily as a great schoolmaster that he will be remembered. I taught alongside him for forty years, on and off, and in that time came across no boy who would not, if the conversation turned in that direction, say that Freddie Turner was the best teacher he had ever had. He was not inspirational, but he communicated as did no one else the excitement of disciplined learning. Nor is my testimony wholly second-hand, for while I was teaching English Literature in one of the flimsily partitioned classrooms of the New Block, my pupils would from time to time lose the thread, fall silent, and tune in to the vigorous prosecution of Latin

grammar in process next door, and listening myself, I could understand their preference.

Before it can be communicated excitement must be felt, and at times the precious charge seemed visible as it travelled from the bright eye down the quivering finger to chase an elusive etymology across the pages of Liddell and Scott. Yet his enthusiasm could also culminate in calm and happy silence, and I remember a sunny spring morning in 1969 on which a few of us accompanied him on his ascent of the Acropolis. In those days one could wander at will among the ruins and flowers and Freddie's mind so brimmed with happiness that he grew quiet and smiled and answered questions dutifully but did not otherwise speak.

He never returned to Greece, mistrusting travel in general, and not without cause. At the beginning of the trip he had been lost in Venice: by himself on the wrong island with no money in his pocket and very little Italian in his word-hoard ("approaching the man I said 'Son' *perduto*', though fearing what it might convey in the colloquial") and the boat due to leave within the hour. But he made it, and I remember him sitting in the cabin on the edge of his bunk, fanning himself with his famous hat and saying ruefully: "I don't seem to get on very well when I go abroad. The last time I went to Paris it didn't really work out." I asked him how long ago. "That was 1940 ... May," he added after a pause. (For the benefit of doubters I mention that he had been seconded as temporary tutor to the son of the American Ambassador.) In 1969, also, things took time before they started to work out and I recall four of us in a very small cabin sitting in tight formation and taking it in turns to be sick into the basin, with Freddie murmuring, "*Not illustrated in my brochure.*"

(He had a reputation for these one-liners, though some knowledge of his manner and profile is necessary for their full effect. One day whilst walking down the Long Room in the late 60's, past desks decorated with pictures of girls in a not quite critical state of undress, in the style then prevalent, his eye was caught by one desk stuck with glossy reproductions of expensive automobiles. "His father sells cars," a colleague explained. "One wonders what some of the other fathers sell," observed Freddie through pursed lips.)

The recollection of 1940 was one of the few small windows he opened onto his early life. Others were travelling down to Whalley by horse-drawn wagon in the dark of a December morning, memories of

Henry John, Christopher Devlin, James Monaghan and other Stonyhurst contemporaries of the early 20's, the benign and civilizing influence of Fr Henry Garman, unhappy impressions of clerical life in Rome in the late 30's, and walking from University College, Oxford, up to London in a day. Asked what it had been like, he said, "It was really rather dull."

Yet he kept on walking till the end of his life. His daily round, which used to take him up onto the fell road when I first came to Stonyhurst, was later shortened to the length of the avenue and then to the white gates and back. But he always went. Indeed in this and in other ways his habits were reassuringly constant. He read Jane Austen annually, and when such high midsummer pomps as reach the north came on, it was **Thyrsis** and **The Scholar Gipsy**. But above all he loved the Greek classics. The one day of his life passed in Istanbul he spent in his cabin reading **The Republic**. Homer he read continually, and well on in the last year of his life he was, I think, expressing gratitude rather than self-satisfaction when he confided, quietly, "I think I know more Greek now than ever before."

The last time but one I saw him was about a fortnight before his death. I was looking for a book which I knew to be in the Ryan collection but could not trace. I walked down the Bay Library from the far end and came across him sitting at the first desk, asleep. Seeing Freddie asleep in a library, one knew that the end could not be far off. A few days later, still in pursuit of the same book, I found him in the corridor outside his room. He roused himself one last time for the chase, took down the details and said he would find it for me but it might take time. He ran it down of course, but when I took the volume from my pigeon-hole, together with an undated note, which I shall keep, Freddie was already dead and his librarian's knowledge, so many years in the gathering, lost to us.

The Monday after I saw him, New Year's Day, he was taken to Clitheroe Hospital suffering from angina. In the afternoon he was visited by a fellow Jesuit. Freddie requested the last rites. Asked which of the considerable selection he thought appropriate, he replied, "I think I'll have the lot." After which, said his confrere, "he asked for his walking-stick to be brought next day and then started to talk so volubly that I could see that the only way of ending it was to go". It seems that the same thought touched Freddie himself a little later, and shortly after midnight he died.

EDITORIAL NOTE

*Father Frederick Turner (1910-2000) was Archivist and Librarian of Stonyhurst College from 1967 until his death. In 1993 he had the honour of guiding Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on a tour of the library during her visit to Stonyhurst. This article first appeared in **The Stonyhurst Magazine** and is reproduced with permission. The author taught English at Stonyhurst College.*

XXI CONGRESS OF CHURCH ARCHIVISTS

Revv. Joseph Bezzina and Stewart Foster

The XXI Congress of Church Archivists of Italy was held at Trent from 16 to 20 September 2002. In addition to the delegates from dioceses and religious orders in Italy, invitations had been issued to representatives from ecclesiastical archivists' associations from a number of other European countries, including Hungary, Austria, Portugal, the United Kingdom and Ireland, Poland, Malta, Croatia and Spain. The non-Italian participants were the guests of the Associazione Archivistica Ecclesiastica, and grateful thanks must be paid to that society for its hospitality, and especially to its President Don Salvatore Palese. Archbishop Francesco Marchisano, President of the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church, attended the Congress.

The theme of the Congress was 'Archival Training for Church Archivists'. The opening paper was delivered by Dr Paola Carucci, Superintendent of the Central Italian State Archives in Rome, in the magnificent Castello di Buonconsiglio in the presence of Archbishop Luigi Bressan of Trent. It was a reflection on the role of the archivist in the third millennium. Other speakers were: Don Carlo Chenis SDB, Secretary of the Pontifical Commission, who spoke on new models and methods of training archivists; Dr Francesca Cavazzana Romanelli, Director of the State Archives in Padua, who addressed the issue of ecclesiastical archives as cultural centres; and Professor Vitantonio Russo of the University of Bari, who took as his theme 'The new place of archives within the local cultural scene'. Together with Mass celebrated in the cathedral which formed the meeting-place of the great Council of Trent, a tour of the city, and a final dinner held in a spectacular mountain restaurant, the most memorable part of the Congress was the marvellous opportunity afforded to make and renew contacts and friendships among Church archivists from all over Italy and Europe. It was a happy coincidence that the Congress coincided with the local apple strudel and wine festival.

The overseas delegates were asked to contribute two papers to 'round table' discussions. Those presented by Rev. Joseph Bezzina, Archivist of the Diocese of Gozo, and Rev. Stewart Foster, representing the Catholic Archives Society, were given in Italian but are reproduced overleaf in their original English form.

ARCHIVES AS CULTURAL CENTRES the Malta experience

Rev. Joseph Bezzina

- ARCHIVISTS or RECORD KEEPERS are responsible for culturally valuable material and for this reason archives are to be transformed into cultural centres. Besides identifying, acquiring, and preserving evidence of lasting value, the archivist is to widen his mission by making the documentation and information that it conveys available for continuing use, turning, in this way, the archives into a place for the dissemination of culture.

- This new FRAMEWORK is necessary to reinvigorate archives:
 - it is clear that culture will continue to grow in its economic significance, though it is still difficult to measure, describe, value, and mobilise this economy of ideas and imagination;
 - as a result, archives and similar institutions will become more needed, vital, and respected because they play a more central role in the economic and social life of a community;
 - such a transformation will help to overcome the many obstacles in the relationship between the main body and the archives that it funds;
 - a new framework that should be based on mutual trust.

- The task of turning archives into cultural centres or centres inspiring learning is to take into consideration FOUR AREAS OF ACHIEVEMENT or key principles: people, places, policies, and partnerships:
 - *people*: providing effective learning opportunities: by identifying needs, maximising access, stimulating and supporting learning, involving users, and reaching out to new users;
 - *places*: creating a welcome that inspires and supports learning;
 - *policies*: plans, and performance: identifying how your work contributes to the wider world and ensuring that your organization has learning at its heart;
 - *partnerships*: working creatively with partners to deliver learning opportunities.

- The designation of this new framework and the fulfilment of this mission cannot be achieved without understanding **ADVOCACY** – the arsenal of expertise that positively influences the destiny of (a) host organizations, (b) the collections themselves, and (c) the archivists' professional career. Advocacy is an integrated process that motivates people to achieve particular goals. It is thus of the utmost importance to communicate the value and explain the consequences of record keeping to management and to the community in the dissemination of culture; to the first in order to finance programmes, to the second to instill interest in them. Failing to understand advocacy will result in a cultural programme that *struggles or fails* to fulfil its aim.

- Advocacy initially provides a framework of attitudes and infrastructural tools which are then applied to create **PUBLIC PROGRAMMES** and **OUTREACH ACTIVITIES** that help in turning archives into cultural centres. The following is a portrayal of the Malta experience.

(1) Those *forming the archives* and working within (conscious that without internal support no cultural programme will succeed) are trained and urged:

- to increase knowledge that is to be applied in research activities, and
- to broaden the benefits of research results and the base of support.

(2) *Those interested in research* and the eventual diffusion of culture are provided with:

- welcoming and comfortable centres,
- helpful staff, and
- a *proper* guide to all deposits; a short, clear, and precise descriptive hand-list.

(3) *Students* are initiated in the knowledge of archives:

- by arousing interest in the past in social science lessons through the now standard write-up of a life-history, basing themselves on an old family photo and an interview with their elder relatives. This is followed:
- by promoting knowledge *on* archives as cultural institutions; that is their meaning, role, and function, with special reference to the complexity of research. This knowledge is further widened
- by visits *to* archives. The ensuing surprising shock of shelves crammed

with dustladen volumes is used as a springboard for deepening the students' knowledge of the actual deposits and explaining the rewards of research.

Except for step one, the process requires specially trained teachers, that in the majority of cases are wanting. Archivists are obliged to take the initiative to promote such knowledge and culture.

(4) The *general public* is being made aware of the cultural value of archives by:

- exhibitions that aim to educate, inform, entertain, and delight; exhibitions that are held on special occasions and anniversaries;
- talks illustrated with documents from the archives;
- special television documentaries;
- tours within archives, popular with older people;
- by employing special interest in a theme, for example, genealogy, to widen interest in other themes, for example, expanded genealogy of local history.

(5) The *cultural-minded tourist* is being satisfied by:

- archival itineraries that point out the most significant possessions;
- publications that answer related queries.

(6) *Web surfers* are helped:

- by virtual cultural guides
- by descriptive hand-lists, and
- by providing the possibility of downloading documents of a great historic and cultural interest.

• It is important that, from time to time, the archivist REVIEW the developing framework:

- by analysing the overall performance in order to identify its strengths and development needs;
- by seeking feedback from peers and users on how well they are doing;
- by developing and improving their practice to build on their strengths and minimising any weakness;
- by documenting the activities undertaken to facilitate evaluation procedures and generate evidence.

EUROPEAN CONFERENCE
Association of Ecclesiastical Archivists
GENERAL PROPOSALS

Rev. Joseph Bezzina

The following general proposals attempt to endorse developments in archival science in the past years, as well as to include norms relative to the archives of the future.

1 • Statutes of archives

It is suggested that statutes are to be based on the TWO-FOLD SCOPE of an archives:

- a repository for an organized body of records and papers produced or received by, in this case, an ecclesiastical entity, in the transaction of its affairs and preserved by it or its successors; and
- the accessibility of the material and information therein available for continuing use both by the entity itself, as well as by any interested party.

• From this two-fold scope follows the two-fold mission of the ARCHIVIST or the RECORD KEEPER, the professional responsible:

- for the identification, selection, protection, organization, and description of archival records and papers and, eventually,
- for making the material and information that they convey accessible to any user.

• The term ARCHIVAL RECORDS AND PAPERS encompasses:

- all recorded information, regardless of physical format or type of creator (public or private), that is created or received by an individual or organization carrying out its activities and that is set aside for preservation and future use;
- all media, that is paper, digital, audio, and visual, and in any format.

• As regards the first scope and mission, that is IMPROVING RECORDS MANAGEMENT, statutes should lay down that the repository is:

- to meet building code standards,
- to have adequate storage needs, for current and future records,
- to ensure long-term preservation of records housed therein, and
- to provide for an *electronic record archives* (ERA), the archives of the future, so as to preserve the rapidly growing number of electronic records and provide access to such documents to anyone, anywhere, anytime.

- As regards the second scope and mission, that is INCREASING RECORDS ACCESS, statutes should lay down;

- the introduction of an automated pull-and-refile tracking system at the archives;
- the consolidation of finding aids in researcher-assistance areas,
- the hiring of more reference specialists to provide research-room assistance;
- the description of more records in automated formats; and
- the publication of catalogues and guides relative to the deposits.

- Statutes should emphasise that archives are ESSENTIAL in a democratic and educated society.

- Without a careful selection of records, social, cultural, institutional, and individual heritages will be lost.
- Without the preservation of legal documents, individual and institutional rights cannot be preserved and protected.
- Without the proper management of administrative records, church and organizations cannot be held accountable.

Archival records and papers are instrumental for evidence and accountability as well as for social and cultural memory.

2 • Effective record management

Effective management needs professional archivists to manage the archival records and papers.

- The archivist or record keeper is fulfilling a very IMPORTANT MISSION:

- helping to secure society's cultural heritage,
- protecting legal rights and privileges, and
- contributing to the effective management of a wide range of institutions.

• So as to fulfil this important mission, archivists are to be TRAINED in both:

- *core archival knowledge*, that provides the theoretical and practical basis necessary to work as a professional archivist; and
- *interdisciplinary knowledge*, that introduces one to other disciplines; knowledge of which will deepen the understanding of archival work and will allow one to specialize in specific aspects of archival work or to function in truly cross-disciplinary settings.

• TRAINING PROGRAMMES should achieve the following goals:

- provide participants with a solid foundation in the theory, methodology, and practice of archival studies, and in the scholarship of their discipline;
- strengthen this foundation by giving them the opportunity to acquire knowledge from other relevant disciplines;
- assist them in developing critical thinking and decision-making skills for records and papers as part of the larger cultural heritage;
- prepare them to conduct and communicate scholarly research for the enrichment and development of their own discipline; and
- inculcate them with the sense of their professional and social responsibilities and the knowledge of ethical and legal dimensions of their work.

• Effective management is to take into consideration the FOUR MAIN OUTPUTS or resources that archivists have identified to be on offer for exploitation by its clientele:

- *holdings*, the bodies of records and information contained therein;
- *services*, the storage, preservation, reference, disposal activities, and facilities equipment;
- *expertise*, technical consultancy, training, advice, and assistance;

- *experiences*, learning to use sources, equipment and facilities to solve problems or perform tasks, thereby gaining new benefits, knowledge, insights, and enjoyment.
- As regards *holdings*, the archivist-manager, in line with the two-fold mission of archivists, is:
 - to identify, acquire, and preserve evidence of lasting value;
 - to make material and information therein available for continuing use.
 - As regards *services*, one point is to be emphasised: disposal activities due to the sheer volume of records produced. So as to cope with the growing quantities of records, the archivist-manager is to see to:
 - the necessity of records analysts
 - the necessity of a comprehensive re-evaluation of records, and
 - the necessity of a disposal schedule.
 - As regards *expertise*, the archivist-manager has to seek more and more expert advice in the field of modern technology. This is indispensable:
 - in solving electronic record problems
 - in assessing electronic generated records for preservation or disposal.
 - As regards *experiences*, the archivist-manager is to employ his *savoir-faire*:
 - *within* the archives to preserve records that are now at risk and to improve public access to records; and
 - *outside* the archives, to help entities manage records better, especially records that will eventually finish in the archives.
 - It is of the utmost importance that the archivist-manager records results through STATISTICS and other measurable indicators:
 - accurately, to reflect and document the work done;
 - efficiently, so that the information gathered can be accessed easily, preferably automatically; and
 - clearly expressed, to be understood by those that supervise and fund.

3 • Harmonization of on-line Systems

The age of digitized information poses two problems: (1) the preservation of such records both as regards contents as well as appearance and (2) their harmonization.

- There is no doubt that an unknown amount of potentially valuable records are being lost. For while neglected papers could sit around in boxes for centuries, neglected electronic records can disappear in seconds. The enormous challenge of the PRESERVATION OF ELECTRONIC RECORDS is brought about.
 - by the sheer volume of such records;
 - by the special problems that these records pose: they are easily deleted; tapes and disks quickly deteriorate; hardware and software systems rapidly become obsolete; and systems crash.

- Solutions are to be found by working in ACTIVE PARTNERSHIP with the archive makers, the entities producing such electronic records:
 - to assure that essential evidence is created, identified, maintained, and appropriately scheduled for as long as needed;
 - to work with agencies to make current scheduling and appraisal processes more effective and timely;
 - to ensure that electronic as well as paper records are created and preserved for access as long as needed.

- It is only when the problem of preserving digitized information is solved, that it would be possible to pass to the next step: some form of HARMONIZATION OF THE WEB-SITES of, in this case, ecclesiastical archives on-line. Such web-sites should, ideally, have at least five basic parts:
 - a description drawn on the model set by the Conseil International des Archives;
 - a list of norms governing that particular archives, such as the Code of Canon Law and particular legislation;
 - a historical outline of the entity or entities that produced the archives, for without this background it is not easy to comprehend and describe archival records and papers;

- another historic outline, for the same reason, of the single entities, administrations, and groups that actually produced the different sections of the archival records and papers;
- a descriptive hand-list.

4 • Partnership Church-State and Church-local authorities

Any partnership to be successful and fruitful is to be based on mutual trust. This should overcome the sense of intrusion of two autonomous bodies in each other's affairs that many times prevail in such circumstances.

- A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE STATE is to reflect this trust, as far as archives are concerned, through periodical reports:

- with detailed information on what is being done; and
- with clear evidence of the accomplishments and benefits achieved: it is important to emphasise the worth gained, the savings achieved, and the risks that have been minimised in the administration of an archives.

- A partnership is welcome and even sought if it promotes an INSPIRING LEARNING FRAMEWORK. So, in such reports, it is necessary to point out:

- *outcomes*, the effect that work carried out in an archives has had on learners in general;
- *indicators*, suggestions on how the organization and staff of an archives are likely to deliver and better these outcomes; and
- *evidence*, the tangible results of the activities undertaken and the further promotion of a learning strategy.

- The information conveyed and the evidence put forward promotes state partnership. Seeking financial support through this partnership would also need ENLIGHTENED MARKETING, an adaptive form of strategic planning and marketing that is to exhibit the following characteristics:

- inclined towards relationship, rather than transaction oriented;

- innovative;
- striving for value;
- tied to a sense of mission;
- societally responsible.

• A PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES is to emphasise the idea of *expanded genealogy* that cuts transversally through the linearity of the sources and open as many *windows* as the lives, environments, and situations it encounters. Ecclesiastical archives that, in several cases, are of an earlier origin and better preserved than those of local authorities, can be instrumental:

- in recovering the memory of lived experience;
- in instilling a nostalgia for creating and supporting structures and activities;
- in enhancing publications and books on local histories.

NEW MANAGEMENT OF ECCLESIASTICAL ARCHIVES: CULTURAL CENTRES

Rev. Stewart Foster

cf. **The Pastoral Function of Church Archives 4.**

In England and Wales the majority of **diocesan** archives function on a limited financial budget, and for this reason the development of archival-cultural links is often minimal. However, the Bishops' Conference has recently undertaken an initiative (in which the Catholic Archives Society is/will be much involved) to compile an inventory of ecclesiastical archives. Also, in some individual dioceses, there are schemes to list the architectural, liturgical and printed treasures of parishes, churches and institutions. From the wider cultural perspective, this will enable the Catholic Church to become more conscious of its patrimony (archival and otherwise), and will also help to prevent any recurrence of instances of illicit sale or destruction of papers, artefacts etc.

'The archive as cultural centre' is still in its infancy in many respects. Individual archives and archivists have co-operated with scholars, researchers, organisers of exhibitions etc. to convey to a wider public, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, the cultural and historical importance of the Church's patrimony. The Bar Convent at York (Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary), which is the oldest religious house for women in England, dating from the seventeenth century, has opened its own museum and exhibition area in conjunction with its archival collection. A number of **religious congregation** archives (e.g. the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul, Mill Hill, London) have developed heritage rooms adjacent to their archive storage areas and search rooms, while some of the monastic houses (e.g. the Benedictine abbeys of Downside and Ampleforth) have a long tradition of co-operation with local and national cultural institutions. But the overall picture is somewhat uneven.

The archivist's contact with individual researchers is often the principal means to developing cultural links on a wider scale. In my own diocese (Brentwood) we have been co-operating with the editors of a national series of published architectural guides, and documents relating to diocesan buildings (churches, schools etc.) and their architects have been an important part of the archival research for this project.

Exhibitions of a national importance have been staged at Westminster Cathedral: e.g. the bicentenary of Bishop Richard Challoner (1981).

The cultural use of archives is also the concern of the Catholic Central Library in London. Not only does this library have close links with various other libraries and archives, but it acts as an information centre for researchers, the media etc. Some diocesan and religious archives have good printed collections on Catholic and local history, or have access thereto. In Preston (Lancaster Diocese) there is a specialist Catholic library (the Talbot Library) which also acts as a cultural centre for matters of historical and archival interest in North West England.

In my own diocese I am working with our Liturgical Commission to list and note the treasures (artefacts, archives, printed material) belonging to each parish. This will be a lengthy task, but one of great importance, not only with regard to making inventories of property, but also the cultural implications of being able to share with a wider public the patrimony of the Church. The diocesan archive will therefore be a point of reference for those interested in the various aspects of diocesan historical and artistic patrimony.

There is a need in England and Wales to educate clergy and laity alike in the pastoral and cultural aspects of archives. It is essential that the understanding of archival work is not restricted to that of 'repository' or 'storage facility', but that the whole Catholic community recognises the part it plays in the task of preserving and publicising the unique archival and cultural heritage of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, which emerged in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries from more than two hundred years of active (martyrdom) and passive (financial and legal) persecution and restriction, and from the mid-nineteenth century witnessed an unprecedented expansion. Although there is now the experience of retraction and restructuring in many places, there is still a great wealth of cultural and archival activity worthy of the Church's participation.

REPORT FROM CATHOLIC ARCHIVES SOCIETY (UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND):

Rev. Stewart Foster

Although the Catholic Archives Society (founded in 1979) exists to promote the care and preservation of the archives of the dioceses, religious foundations, institutions and societies of the Catholic Church in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland, in this report I will confine my remarks to the situation pertaining to **England and Wales** (Scotland and Ireland are separate ecclesiastical jurisdictions and likewise civil law varies between each country).

1. **Regulation of Archives:** The Catholic Archives Society, although a separate body, works closely with the Patrimony Committee of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales chaired by Bishop McMahon of Brentwood (my own diocesan bishop). The Society and the Committee are jointly involved with ensuring that steps are taken to see that each diocese and religious order is aware of the need for an archives policy. The CAS is willing to provide expert support and advice to individuals and institutions. The Catholic Record Society (founded in 1904), although primarily an academic and publishing entity, has a keen interest in the preservation of archival material of post-Reformation Catholicism in Britain and Ireland, and in its annual Newsletter (contained in one of the bi-annual editions of the CRS journal **Recusant History**) publishes information on the accession and migration of archives of Catholic interest. The Association of Diocesan Archivists of England and Wales, drawn from members of the CAS (and often the CRS as well) meets annually to discuss common interests and to recommend specific archival policy to the Bishops' Conference as and when required. Although archives are but part of the cultural and historical heritage of the Church, in England and Wales archival material and related artefacts are assuming an ever increasing importance in the awareness of the episcopate and its advisers. The CAS also works in conjunction with the Canon Law Society of Britain and Ireland in matters of common interest: e.g. in the question of preservation and access of archival material relating to moral or legal cases. At the local (diocesan) level there exist a number of Historical Commissions and Societies (some official, others voluntary) which also assist in the collection and preservation of archives.

2. Management of Archival Heritage: This is very much a local (diocesan and religious) issue, although lately there have been suggestions for a central repository to be established in order to house the archives of small and/or dissolved religious institutes and lay associations. At present a number of diocesan archives (especially Westminster) have custody of the archival collections of defunct lay societies. The problem of (especially single-house) contemplative religious foundations is also a priority: some diocesan archives have taken custody of the archives of disbanded enclosed convents (e.g. Salford: Salford/Manchester Carmel, closed 1993), while other closed houses have amalgamated with larger communities and their archives have been likewise incorporated. The Catholic Archives Society, in its journal **Catholic Archives**, regularly publishes information regarding the migration and present location of the archives of religious houses which have closed. A number of dioceses (e.g. Middlesborough, Brentwood) have instituted a system of inventories which list the archives/objects of art/architectural features of their various parishes and ecclesiastical buildings. This is in keeping with the decision of the Bishops' Conference Low Week Meeting 2002. The Diocese of Middlesborough issues an 'Archives Profile' summary document to each parish. The training of archivists is also promoted by the Catholic Archives Society via workshops and conferences at which expert speakers are provided.

3. The Co-Ordination of Management Systems, especially via electronic media and the internet are still very much in their initial stages in England and Wales. Some dioceses (e.g. Salford) have had a professional archival website for some years. Others do not as yet have either the facilities or the expertise for such a resource, although it is recognised by individual dioceses, religious congregations and lay societies that use of the w.w.w. is an essential feature in modern archival management. There is, however, a national Catholic History website on which the CAS, CRS etc. have pages. The production, purchase, installation and training for use of an integrated system of archival software designed to accommodate a Catholic archival collection is an urgent priority. Again, it is the cost, expertise and personnel required which are the chief obstacles to the realisation of this task. Moreover, relatively few dioceses or religious congregations or lay associations in England and Wales have a full-time archivist.

4. Relations between the Church and State/Local Government: At national level in England and Wales the Royal Historical Manu-

scripts Commission is the principal body charged with the oversight, regulation and guidance of archival matters, supported in many instances by Acts of Parliament. The Public Record Office (London) and the Local Record Offices (counties and metropolitan boroughs) provide the main statutory archival services. The HMC also maintains the National Register of Archives. Although the Catholic Church is not officially represented on the HMC, nor on the British Records Association (in contrast with the Church of England), nevertheless, a close relationship exists via those Catholics who work on such statutory bodies and individual Catholic archivists who belong to the BRA and/or attend its meetings on behalf of the CAS. Other national bodies, e.g. the Royal Historical Society, have Catholics (clergy and laity) who hold fellowships or who are members. At local level the County Record Offices provide a close and invaluable form of support to the diocesan and religious/lay archivists. County Record Offices will provide free advice and consultation to ecclesiastical archives in order to assist them in drawing up plans of management. Expert advice on preservation and conservation is also available. Individual dioceses (e.g. Liverpool, Lancaster) have sometimes made major deposits of records in their local record offices. The Catholic Archives Society has several of its members employed as professional archivists in local record offices and such members provide a very important link between ecclesiastical and civil archive administration. Finally, the Religious Archives Group of the Society of Archivists (the professional association for archivists) includes a number of Catholics among its members and the Catholic Archives Society is always represented at the annual meeting of the RAG.

BOOK REVIEWS

Plots and Plotters in the Reign of Elizabeth I (Four Courts Press, Dublin, 2002: pp.296) is the ninth major book published by Father Francis Edwards, the former Archivist of the English Jesuit Province (1959-86) and Director of the Central Archives of the Society of Jesus in Rome. His expertise in the Elizabethan and Jacobean period is once again exemplified in a clearly written and closely argued study of eleven controversial incidents (‘plots’ in common parlance) between 1571 and 1601. His list of archival acknowledgements and sources reads like a ‘Who’s Who’ of secular and ecclesiastical repositories: the Vatican Archives and Library; British Library; Public Record Office; Institute of Historical Research; Lambeth Palace Library; Society of Antiquaries; Rawlinson MSS (Bodleian Library); Venerable English College Archives, Rome ... This volume is an important addition to Anglo-Irish Elizabethan studies.

The present Archivist of the British Jesuit Province, Father Thomas McCoog, has edited **A Guide to Jesuit Archives** (Subsidia ad Historiam S.I. 12: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, St Louis/Institutum Historicum Societatis Jesu, Rome, 2001, pp.xii+178). This is an invaluable work of reference because it lists the contact details and gives a brief description of the provinces and regions of the Society of Jesus throughout the world. The format is in response to a questionnaire sent to each province in preparation for a conference of Jesuit archivists held in Rome in October 2001. Moreover, the publication of the Circular Letter **The Pastoral Function of Church Archives** was a key factor in the instigation of this project.

Mark Vickers, a native of Louth in Lincolnshire, a convert and student of the Venerable English College and newly ordained for the Archdiocese of Westminster, has published **St Eustace White: Elizabethan Priest and Martyr** (St Michael’s Abbey Press, Farnborough, 2002, pp.139: £13.95). Eustace White was also born in Louth, and was a convert who studied at the Venerable. He was martyred at Tyburn in December 1591. The author has pieced together the details of the saint’s life, and in a beautifully produced volume has made use of the Westminster Diocesan Archives, the Lincolnshire and Dorset County Record Offices, and the archives of the Venerable English College. This book will surely act as a model for further biographical studies of the English Martyrs.

Another venerable Roman institution, the Scots College, celebrated its fourth centenary in 2000. **The Scots College Rome 1600-2000**, edited by Raymond McCluskey (John Donald, Edinburgh, 2000, pp.xiv+177: £12.99) and with a Foreword by the late Cardinal Winning (an alumnus of the college) is a well-researched collection of essays arranged in terms of the chronology of the college. There are also six appendices, the fourth of which is a register of the Scots College Archives (pp.164-167). I quote from the introduction to the appendix: 'The document archive of the Scots College Rome is relatively small in comparison with many other institutions of similar antiquity. What now exists of pre-nineteenth-century material is only a remnant of what must have existed before the troubles of the Napoleonic invasion. The archive takes the form of box files with ribbon ties. Supplementing these is a heterogeneous collection of account-books, diaries, photograph albums, and so on. All of this material is on high shelving in the working office used for College administration. Mgr Philip Flanagan, Rector between 1960 and 1967, completed the burdensome task of re-filing and re-numbering the whole collection. He also produced a comprehensive handwritten list of items, as well as an index of names.' The list runs to 106 boxes as well as 160 registers and account-books.

The archives of Oscott College are now housed in the Birmingham Archdiocesan Archives at St Chad's Cathedral. In **Oscott College in the Twentieth Century** (Gracewing, Leominster, 2001, pp.xi+194) Monsignor Michael Williams, the acknowledged historian of English seminaries, has made use of both the above-mentioned repositories in an informative account of the life and work of the seminary of the Archdiocese of Birmingham. The book also contains a very useful list of Oscott's clerical students from 1888 (the date of the closure of the lay school) to 2000. The author has also made good use of the photographic archive of the college in selecting appropriate illustrations for his study.

Two books on the architecture of the Catholic Midlands include material on Oscott and other institutions in the Archdiocese of Birmingham. Roderick O'Donnell's **The Pugins and the Catholic Midlands** (Gracewing, Leominster/Archdiocese of Birmingham Historical Commission, Leamington Spa, 2002, pp.xviii+124) and the more localised **Pugin-Land: A.W.N. Pugin, Lord Shrewsbury, and the Gothic Revival in Staffordshire** by Michael Fisher (Michael J. Fisher Publishing, Stafford, 2002, pp.202: £14.95) are both excellent examples of the use of

archival material, both written and photographic, combined with an enthusiasm for the master of England's Gothic Revival. O'Donnell's comprehensive study is replete with illustrations in both colour and black and white taken from many collections, notably Ushaw College, Handsworth Mercy Convent, Mount St Bernard Abbey and the Myers Family Trust, as well as from individual sources. There is a very useful gazetteer of Pugin's work in the Archdiocese of Birmingham. Fisher's book concentrates on Staffordshire, and in that sense can afford to be more detailed. It also brings out the particular role of Lord Shrewsbury as the architect's chief patron in that county. As with O'Donnell, the author has made good use of the Birmingham Archdiocesan Archives, as well as the Birmingham City Archives, the Staffordshire Record Office, and the Pugin collections in the House of Lords Record Office and the Victoria and Albert Museum. The book is also very generously illustrated.

The Midlands was also the setting of the life and work of Edward Ilsley. In **Edward Ilsley: Bishop of Birmingham 1888-1911, Archbishop 1911-1921** (Burns & Oates, London & New York, 2002, pp.xxv+411) his great-great niece Mary McNally has produced an exhaustive study of a man whose life was centred on the extension of Catholicism and the provision of clergy for Central England. The Metropolitan Chapter of Birmingham enabled the publication of this book, and for this gratitude must extend far beyond the Archdiocese. Archivially the author has obviously relied heavily on the Birmingham Archdiocesan papers and those of Oscott College. However, other repositories have been utilised: Westminster, Southwark, Northampton, Sedgley Park and Cotton Colleges, Father Hudson's Homes (the Birmingham Rescue Society), the Mill Hill Missionary Society, the Rosminians, Oulton Abbey and the author's own family archives.

Kester Aspden's first book is an important contribution to our understanding and appreciation of the social and political involvement of the Hierarchy of England and Wales. **Fortress Church: The English Roman Catholic Bishops and Politics 1903-1963** (Gracewing, Leominster, 2002, pp.x+353) surveys the period from the beginning of Cardinal Bourne until the death of Cardinal Godfrey. With chapters on topics such as Ireland, the Labour Party, and the bishops' response to the totalitarian regimes, this study, based on the author's Cambridge doctoral thesis, is a fascinating investigation into intra-episcopal relations as well as the issues confronting the Church at home and abroad.

Its archival pedigree is a 'Who's Who' of Catholic Archives Society membership, as well as exhibiting a breadth of research in ecclesiastical and secular repositories in Britain, Ireland and Rome. Moreover, the 'Manuscript Sources' section in the bibliography lists the specific files or boxes where the author's material is to be found. The present reviewer has made note of sources in other collections relevant to his own (diocesan) archives and hitherto unknown to him.

Broadly the same chronological period is approached from a different perspective by June Rockett in **Held in Trust: Catholic Parishes in England and Wales 1900-1950** (St Austin Press, London, 2001, pp.x+164). This is a study which has as its focus the life, worship and traditions of Catholic parishes, their people and their clergy in the first half of the twentieth century. Indeed, it complements Kester Aspden's work in a most useful fashion. The author has quarried information not only from diocesan archives and those of religious houses, but also (and most importantly given her subject) from over fifty published parish histories ranging from Aberystwyth to Chelmsford and Bristol to Morpeth. She also includes material from the various immigrant communities, notably the Polish Catholics. This book is precisely the type of publication which proves how essential it is to preserve, catalogue and make available the archives of ordinary parishes.

A Roman Miscellany: The English in Rome 1550-2000 edited by Nicholas Scholfield (Gracewing, Leominster, 2002, pp.xiv+202) is a collection of essays, amply illustrated, which have appeared as articles in **The Venerable**, the house magazine of the Venerable English College. The contributions include memoirs of cardinals associated with the college (Allen, Philip Howard, the Duke of York, Newman, Edward Howard and Hume), as well as contributions concerning the English Martyrs (by the late Bishop Foley), Papal Zouaves, Pugin, Monte Porzio (the College villa from 1820 to 1920), and the wartime College in exile at Stonyhurst. Many of the contributions have utilised the Venerable's archives, and the editor of the volume was himself until recently the Archivist of the College.

Edwin Jones' **The English Nation: The Great Myth** (1998) caused something of a stir in historical and historiographical circles. The same erudite approach is once more exhibited in the author's **John Lingard and the Pursuit of Historical Truth** (Sussex Academic Press, Brighton/Portland, 2001 pp.xv+308). This is a full-scale study of Lingard and his

historical method – a topic necessarily confined to but one chapter in the previous work. However, this is Jones' **tour de force** in favour of a priest and scholar who was remarkable among nineteenth-century historians in that his use of original sources resulted in a proto-revisionism which has remained severely neglected until the efforts of the author (together with Father Peter Phillips) have now happily issued in a 'rediscovery' of a truly great figure in the writing of English history. Archivially there is a wealth of material used from seven principal repositories: Ushaw College (the main collection of Lingard's letters and papers); Cambridge University Library; St John's College, Cambridge; Corpus Christi College, Cambridge; the Bodleian Library; the British Library; and the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth.

Staying in the North of England, **Ampleforth: The Story of St Laurence's Abbey and College** (St Laurence Papers V, Ampleforth, 2001, pp.v+223) by Dom Anselm Cramer is a scholarly, yet readable and well-illustrated chronicle of a great Benedictine monastery and its school, containing as appendices some very useful lists of abbots, headmasters, significant dates in the history of the community, etc. The author makes good use of the Ampleforth Abbey Archives, of which he is the present custodian. The book will surely act as a model for other Catholic institutions when seeking to produce a one-volume summary of their past.

A previous Archivist of Ampleforth, Dom Placid Spearritt, is now Abbot of the Benedictine monastery at New Norcia, Western Australia. **New Norcia Studies** 10 (September 2002) is the fruit of the labours undertaken by the Abbey's Archives, Research and Publications Committee. The journal is a worthy testimony to the principle that archives should be used for the spiritual, historical and cultural benefit of the community (and the wider world). Of particular interest is the article on St Gertrude's College for Girls and a study of Rosendo Salvado (the founding abbot) and the introduction of coffee and coconut into Western Australia in 1869. Ross Harvey's article on printed book collections in the electronic age is also very apposite.

Alfred Gilbey: A Memoir by Some Friends edited by David Watkin (Michael Russell, Wilby, Norwich, 2002, pp.144: £15) is a collection of essays by some of those close to Monsignor Gilbey, who for one hundred terms (1932-1965) was Catholic Chaplain at Cambridge and who thereafter operated a unique apostolate from his base at the

Travellers' Club, Pall Mall. Although not a biography of Gilbey, and indeed such needs to be written using the archival collections at Cambridge, Brentwood (of which diocese he was a priest) etc., nevertheless for those who knew this great priest the present work is a welcome addition to the late Monsignor's own publications.

Fools for Christ's Sake by Francis Leonard (available from MEL Publications, 5 Darley Court, Plawsworth, Durham DH2 3LQ at £8.95) is a detailed study (pp.195) of the work of the Catholic Evidence Guild. Although not an academic account with the usual critical apparatus, nevertheless this book makes for very stimulating reading in that it is based on oral history, memoirs and impressions as well as the archives of the Guild. It is a model for the recording of the history of societies and movements which are now in decline or which have changed their original scope. The format adopted is one of a diocese-by-diocese study as well as an account of some of the famous personalities, lay and clerical, associated with the CEG.

Reflecting on Catholic Archives (Catholic Archives Society, 2002, pp.72) is a collection of essays, edited by Robin Gard (the first Editor of this journal), on the character and value of Catholic archives. The contributors are archivists (Ailsa Holland, Donal McCartney, Timothy McCann, Kathryn Byrne, Anthony Dolan) and historians (Michael Williams, John Davies, Carmen Mangion), many of whom are members of the CAS. The topics covered include the identity of the archivist, the archivist-historian relationship, the spirituality of archives, and religious and diocesan archives. The volume is a veritable archivist's 'bedtime reading' and the editor is to be congratulated on his achievement in presenting such a ready-to-hand source of inspiration. The Society has also produced **Church Museums**, being an edition of the recent letter on ecclesiastical museums by the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church (for further details of CAS publications see inside end cover).

Finally, it is with great pleasure that we notice two recently-published studies from Ireland. **Irish Church Records** edited by James G. Ryan (Flyleaf Press, Glengeary, Co. Dublin, 2001, pp.208, 28 euros) is a new version of the original (1992) title. It is a compendium of information and contact addresses concerning the archival holdings of the various religious traditions represented in Ireland. In addition to the Catholic Church, the book offers detailed information on the records of

Quakers, the Church of Ireland (Anglican), the Presbyterian Church, Methodists, Jews, Huguenots and Baptists. The particular focus is that of the family historian and/or genealogist who is seeking to locate and make use of registers and other records. The publishers specialise in Irish family history resources, and this volume is a most welcome addition to the ever-increasing list of books which aim to assist those engaged in genealogical research. The editor, who is a writer on Irish family history, has contributed the chapter on Catholic records. **The Diocese of Elphin: People, Places and Pilgrimage** (Columba Press, Blackrock, Dublin, 2000, pp.403) is a truly monumental work, well-illustrated and carefully researched, under the editorship of Father Francis Beirne, who is the Chairman of the County Sligo Heritage and Genealogical Society and the Elphin Diocesan Heritage Society among many other organisations. He has brought together both the history and details of archival interest relating to the diocese from its early Celtic roots to the present day. Although not a definitive history of the diocese (by the editor's own admission), nevertheless it is a splendid production with a full archival-bibliographical appendix which can only assist the author(s) of a future history of the Diocese of Elphin.

S.F.

THE CATHOLIC ARCHIVES SOCIETY CONFERENCE, 2002

The twenty-third annual conference of the Catholic Archives Society was held at St Gabriel's Conference Centre, Ditchingham, near Bungay, Suffolk, from 27 to 29 May 2002.

The first talk was given by Emma McKenzie from Harwell Drying and Restoration Services. The speaker dealt with methods of coping with archival emergencies and stressed the importance of drawing up a disaster plan in each repository. T.E. Muir gave a paper on the preservation of Catholic musical heritage in England in the period from 1829 to 1962. In addition to providing a concise history of Catholic liturgical and devotional music, the speaker gave some very useful tips on using computers for rescuing, preserving and recording musical collections. Dom Aidan Bellenger spoke on the importance of non-archival printed material and ephemera (his paper is reproduced elsewhere in this volume). He illustrated his topic with examples from the Downside Abbey Archives. Matthew Festing of Sotheby's (North of England), who is also Prior of the Order of Malta in England, gave a very informative presentation of current developments in the world of art and antiques as it affects religious artefacts. He paid particular attention to the custodianship of the Church's patrimony and referred to the Pontifical Commission's documents on ecclesiastical archives and museums.

Visits were made either to the East Anglia Diocesan Archives at St John's Cathedral, Norwich, or the Norfolk County Record Office and Stranger's Hall. This year, for the first time, the Open Forum occupied two slots in the agenda, and as usual provided a very useful opportunity for delegates to exchange news and opinions. A full report on the Conference is to be found in **CAS Bulletin** 24 (September 2002)