NORTH WEST CATHOLIC HISTORY

Edited by

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VOLUME XVII (1990)

ISSN 0956-7550

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THE GERARD FAMILY OF BRYN AND INCE AND THE PARISH OF SS OSWALD AND EDMUND IN ASTON-IN-MAKERFIELD

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THE GERARD FAMILY

The Gerard family can be traced in the direct male line from Otho, a baron of England in the sixteenth year of King Edward the Confessor, whose grandson was Gerard Fitz-Walther, to the present Robert fourth Baron Gerard. It is of particular interest in the history of St Helens since the Gerards were Lords of the Manor of Windleshaw, one of the four manors out of which the town was constituted in 1868. The Gerard family is also especially noted as having at least five of its members so prominent in the Counter-Reformation that one has been beatified and another canonised. Originally the family seats were at Bryn and Ince but, in 1788, their new mansion was built at Garswood Park which adjoined Aston-in-Makerfield. Their dower house was given to the church to serve as the presbytery of a public church erected in 1822 where the 'Holy Hand' of Edmund Arrowsmith, whose mother had been a Gerard, was preserved. Replaced by the present splendid Romanesque church in 1930, the parish of SS Oswald and Edmund Arrowsmith still preserves and venerates this precious relic.

It is the purpose of this article to trace and document the history of this family of landed gentry as a paradigm of the many families who preserved the faith throughout penal times and then played a significant part in the life of the area, especially in the development of the coal industry on the estates.

Otho, a baron of England in the sixteenth year of Edward the Confessor, was the father of Walther Fitzotho who, in 1078, was Castellan of Windsor and Warden of the Forests in Berkshire. His youngest son, Gerard, was generally surnamed Fitzwalter, and became Constable of Pembroke Castle in the reign of Henry I. In his turn, his youngest son, simply known as William Gerard, became a Justice in Cheshire and married his

son, of the same name, to Emma, the co-heiress to Sir Richard Kingsley of Kingsley in Cheshire. Their elder son, William Gerard, did homage to Edward, Earl of Chester, afterwards Edward II, for his lands in Cheshire, and died at Eaton Hall in 1350.

The next stage in the territorial acquisitions of the family was now accomplished by the marriage of William's son, William, to Joan, daughter and sole heiress to Peter de Bryn of Brynhill near Warrington in Lancashire. Thus, finally, their son Sir Peter Gerard de Bryn, Knight of Kingsley and Bryn in 1381, established the lineage of the Gerards of Bryn. Within the Bryn estates was included the manor of Windle so that the Gerard family had, henceforth, an important influence upon the area that later was to grow into the little township of St Helens.'

The following heir, Sir Thomas Gerard, was knighted in 1393 during the Scottish wars and, as a knight, served in parliament for Lancashire. His son, grandson and great-grandson were all called Thomas. The last, Sir Thomas Gerard was knighted in 1428 and conducted the siege of Montereau in 1437, dying without issue in 1440. [2]

In 1435 he had had constructed a small isolated chantry at Windleshaw and endowed it with 14.16s. from his lands in Windle so that a priest could offer Mass there in perpetuity for the souls of the founder's ancestors. In 1517 a settlement and recovery of this advowson occurred when another Sir Thomas Gerard held the estates. [3]

This chantry chapel is the oldest ecclesiastical structure in St Helens. It was the Statute of Mortmain, of 1319, that turned landowners from building priories and monasteries to endowing chantries. These were small chapels, usually added to existing churches or chapels-of-ease, but sometimes constructed as separate entities, where a priest was endowed in perpetuity to say Mass for the repose of the founder's family.

That at Windleshaw, built in 1435 by Sir Thomas Gerard, was situated just over a mile to the north west of the chapel-of-ease of St Ellyn. It consists of a small rectangular nave (34 x 13 feet), originally fourteen feet high, and a stone square tower (12 ft side), thirty-six feet high. The walls consist of three and a half feet thick sandstone. The sanctuary, entered through the

base of the tower, occupied a half of the nave. There were windows in the nave and the roof was leaded.

This chantry was assessed by the Henrician Commissioners in 1538 but they do not appear to have interfered in any way with the resident priest, Richard Frodsham, since he was still in residence when the Edwardian Commissioners visited in 1548.

The senior line having died out in 1440, the head of the family was now another Sir Thomas Gerard (c.1520-1601) who was descended through seven generations from Peter Gerard of Kingsley (d.1380) a younger brother of that Sir Thomas Gerard who had been knighted in 1393. A third line was descended from the youngest brother, John Gerard (d.c.1400), who married Helen, the eldest daughter of Richard de Ince in the County of Lancaster. They were the ancestors of the Gerards of Ince and of Gerard, Earl of Macclesfield.

This Sir Thomas Gerard (c.1520-1601), who had married Elizabeth the daughter of Sir John Port, was made High Sheriff of Lancaster in 1548, but this did not prevent the confiscation to the Crown, in that year, of the endowment of £4.16s. which came from the Windle estate. It is probable that shortly afterwards the Gerard family recovered the chantry, with its original burial ground of forty by fifty yards, by a fine.

In 1611, Catholics were refused Christian burial in consecrated ground so Windleshaw Chantry began to be used for clandestine burials by the Catholics of the area, yet the earliest burial found in a recent survey was as late as 1751, although the Prescot parish church burial registers record them as early as 1701. During the siege of Lathom House nearby in 1644, the Puritan troops stripped the chantry of its lead roof and damaged the structure.

From 1760 to 1778 another problem arose in that the Quakers acquired the approach land and demanded tolls for funerals to pass over it. However, in 1778, a Presbyterian brewer named William Hill bought this land and granted a right of way to the Catholic funerals. His son, in 1824, sold this approach land to Sir William Gerard (1773-1826), whilst in 1835 Sir John Gerard (1804-1854) gave land for extra graves. A wall, gateway and lodges were then constructed. When the parish of St Thomas of Canterbury (the dedication also of the chantry) was founded in 1892, the second Lord Gerard gave

not only the land for this church, school and presbytery but also the chantry and its burial ground to the diocese. Indeed, the tower of the Church of St Thomas of Canterbury was deliberately constructed to copy the style of architecture of the tower of the chantry. [4]

Sir Thomas Gerard (c.1520-1601) was High Sheriff of Lancashire in 1553 and 1558, in the reign of Mary I, and also a Member of Parliament in 1566 and 1567 in the reign of Elizabeth I. He is believed to have conformed to the Elizabethan religious settlement but was committed twice to the Tower of London accused of a design to deliver Mary, Queen of the Scots, out of her confinement. To obtain his liberty he had both to mortgage his property and to sell his estate at Bromley inherited from his great-great-grandmother, Margaret Bromley of Badington, to his kinsman Sir Gilbert Gerard, then the Attorney-General. Indeed, when his son Sir Thomas Gerard (1560-1621) was created the first baronet of Bryn in 1611, at the first institution of that rank by James I, the £1,000 that he gave for it was returned in consideration of his father's great sufferings upon the Queen of Scots account?

The opposition to the Elizabethan settlement was embodied in a number of the members of the Gerard family in these and the following generations. Thus, Nicholas Gerard of Bryn, the brother of Sir Thomas Gerard, Knight (c.1520-1601), refused to conform and when carried into the parish church he sang Latin psalms so loudly that he had to be carried out again being confined to a chair. Nicholas was the father of Margaret Gerard of Bryn who married a Robert Arrowsmith of Haydock, Winwick in Lancashire. This Robert was the son of Thurston Arrowsmith who, in 1582, was imprisoned in the Fleet prison in Manchester for refusing to attend services at the parish church in Winwick. [6]

From this marriage of Robert Arrowsmith and Margery Gerard came a family of four children, the most famous of whom was Brian, born on 11 June 1585. He was educated at a school in Garswood and, in 1605, he was able to enter the English College in Douai. There he was confirmed and took the name of Edmund from his uncle Dr Edmund Arrowsmith who was a professor there. He was ordained on 9 December 1612 at

Arras and was sent, on 17 June 1613, to work on the English mission in Lancashire. There he worked very successfully making many conversions and reconciliations. In 1623 he joined the Society of Jesus in Essex but then returned to work from the Blue Anchor Inn in Brindle. In 1628 he was betrayed, by a man whose marriage he was attempting to rectify, and was taken to Lancaster Castle where he was given a farcical trial by Judge Yelverton. Fr Arrowsmith was hanged, drawn and quartered at Lancaster on 28 August 1628, after making a remarkable speech which was preserved for the edification of posterity. His right hand was brought back to his mother and preserved in the Gerard family until given to the parish of St Oswald in Ashton for public veneration. He was beatified by Pius XI on 15 December 1929 and canonised by Paul VI on 25 October 1970. St Oswald was always the patron saint of the Gerard family so it was fitting that the church dedicated to him in Ashton-in-Makerfield should have the dedication extended to include St Edmund. [7]

The first cousin of Margaret, or Margery, Arrowsmith, and the younger brother of Sir Thomas Gerard, first baronet (1560-1621) was John Gerard who was born on 4 October 1564 at Bryn. He arrived at the English College of Douai on 20 August 1577 and went with it to Rheims in March 1578. However, he matriculated at the University of Oxford at Exeter College in October 1579 but returned home as being unable to accept the religious practices then current. In 1581 he was studying at Clermont College in Paris but returned home because of ill-health. Upon attempting to leave England without permission he was placed in the Marshalsea prison, being released in October 1585.

In 1586 he entered the English College in Rome and was ordained in the Lateran on 17 July 1588. Then, on 15 August 1588, he was admitted into the Society of Jesus and then sent to the English mission. For some time he had much success, disguised as a gentleman. It was noted by the government that 'John Gerard in company with William Wiseman and his servant Richard Fulwood, was at Lady Gerard's house at Bryn, Lancashire, sometime before Michaelmas 1592.' [8] He wrote himself that 'in Lancashire I have seen more than two hundred

present at mass and sermon. People of this kind come into the Church without difficulty but they fall away the moment persecution blows up. When the alarm is over, they come back again.' [9]

However, whilst in London he was betrayed by a servant, and imprisoned in the Tower where he was horribly tortured and almost crippled for life. He then escaped in October 1597, using a rope suspended over the Tower's moat, and continued with his work on the English mission. After the Gunpowder plot he fled in the suites of the Spanish and Flemish ambassadors on 3 May 1606, dressed in livery as a servant. His next appointments were as English penitentiary at St Peter's in Rome and then as deputy-rector in the Louvain novitiate for English Jesuits. Finally he served, from 1614 to 1622, as rector and novice master in the Jesuit college in Liege, and then as director of fertians at Ghent, before being sent back to Rome in 1627 to act as spiritual director at the English College. There he died in Rome on 27 July 1637. [1°]

Another famous martyr, Blessed Miles Gerard, came from the branch of the family settled at Ince-in-Makerfield in Lancashire. Indeed, the use of the Christian name of 'Miles' (from the Latin *mitis* meaning 'merciful') in the Gerard family appears to be confined to this junior line at Ince. In the fourth generation, descended directly from the John Gerard who had married the heiress of Ince, was another John Gerard who married Elizabeth Richardson. Blessed Miles Gerard was their son, being born at Ince near Wigan, in 1549 and, indeed, he later adopted the alias of William Richardson. However, he could be identified since he had only one eye. Miles Gerard succeeded in getting to Rheims by 22 February 1590 and he was ordained on 9 April 1583, being despatched to England on 31 August 1589 together with Fr Francis Dickenson (1565--1590). A great storm drove the ship into Dover where the two priests were immediately arrested. Since 1585 any priest committed treason as soon as they set foot in England. The two were taken to London to be imprisoned first in the tridewell and afterwards in the Gatehouse early in 1590. They were martyred together at Rochester on 13 April 1590 and were both beatified by Pius XI on 15 December 1929. [11]

Bamber, [12] in an investigatory study of great ingenuity has showed conclusively that the pierced skull kept at Catforth, and believed to be that of a Fr Philip Holden martyred there in August 1648 by Cromwellian soldiers, is in fact that of Blessed Miles Gerard. It went to that place because Ellen Gerard, most probably his sister, had married Richard Holden of Crawshaw whilst their father Miles Gerard of Ince in 1590 had conformed in part. In that year his name was noted by the justices amongst those who were 'in some degree of conformity, yet in general note of evil affection in religion, not communicants, and the wives of most of them recusants.' [13] Canon Bamber concluded that, whilst the skull and the martyr's missal were carefully and secretly preserved in the family at Chaigley their attribution over the centuries were forgotten save that they had belonged to one of their own family and name. The martyr was not however of that of the Lords of the Manor of Chaigley, the Holdens, but of that of the Gerards, Lords of the Manor of Ince.

The other two Gerard priest brothers, Alexander (1563--?) and Gilbert (1570-1606) were the sons of a William Gerard of Ince and of his wife Jane Osbaldeston; William being both the son and the father of Myles Gerards. His father was indeed a first cousin of Blessed Miles Gerard and also of the Sir Gilbert Gerard (d.1592) who had acquired Geralds Bromley from Sir Thomas Gerard (c.1520-1601).

Alexander Gerard was ordained at Laon on 5 April 1586 and left for England on 2 January 1587. Together with his brother Thomas he was taken at Preston having been summoned to a man who had pretended to be ill. He was sent to the Tower in May 1588 and sent finally to Wisbech Castle in October. Together with five other priests he escaped from Wisbech on 10 March 1600, going back to Lancashire when he vanished from the historical records.

Gilbert Gerard studied at Rheims and was ordained at Rome on 18 September 1593. However, he suffered from ill-health and left Rome on 8 November that year. He joined the Society of Jesus in London on 2 July 1602 and died at Hoxton in Middlesex in May 1606. [14]

Sir Thomas Gerard (1584–1630), second baronet, married twice; first to Frances Molyneux of Sefton from whom Sir

William Gerard (1612--1681), third baronet, descended, and then to Dorothy Moore. The fourth son by this second marriage was Gilbert Gerard (1614-1645) who was born at Ince Hall. He was thus the great-nephew of John Gerard SJ. He studied at St Omers for five years and then entered the Venerable English College in Rome on 30 September 1634. Gilbert Gerard was ordained on 14 October 1640, entered the Society of Jesus at Watten in 1641 and died on 13 August 1645 at Ghent.'

It is notoriously difficult to trace exact family relationships in the sixteenth century even among the landed gentry. Foster is very reticent about listing children who became priests. The only exception is the reference to John, 'who was several times tortured in the Tower, out of which he made his escape, and was chiefly instrumental in building the college at Liege.' [16] When indicating the children of William Gerard of Ince, only Thomas and Jane are named. The rest are dismissed simply as 'others'. The children of Thomas Gerard and Jane Legh are given only as Sir Thomas Gerard and a Catherine who married William Tatlock Esq. There is no mention of Nicholas Gerard or a relationship with the Arrowsmith family. There would appear to have been a deliberate intention to exclude any reference to the religious members of the family.

The baronets of Bryn lived the normal lives of the recusant gentry; Sir William following Sir William as third to seventh baronets. They took the royalist side in the English Civil War; the third baronet expending £100,000 in the cause of Charles I for which his estates were then sequestrated by Parliament. He also paid £1,261.5.1 1/2d. in recusancy fines about 1686. His grandson, the fifth baronet, married Mary Cansfield of Birchley (1671-1786) in 1696 and thereby acquired the Cansfield estates, some bordering on Windle. The Gerard estates of this Sir William are listed *in extenso* in the 1717 register of estates of Lancashire papists. The eighth baronet Sir Thomas Gerard (1723-1780) married in 1780, Elizabeth Tasburgh and thus acquired extensive properties in Lincolnshire, London, Kent and Ireland. [17]

Sir Rupert Cansfield Gerard (1725-1782), the ninth baronet, married in 1770, Catherine Anderton of Euxton. There were three sons of this marriage, Sir Robert (1771—

1791) tenth baronet, Sir William (1773-1826), eleventh baronet, and John Gerard of Windle Hall. From the latter's marriage in 1803, with Elizabeth Ferrers, came Sir John (1804-1854) twelfth baronet, and Sir Robert Tolver Gerard (1808-1887) thirteenth baronet, who, on 18 January 1876, was created the first Baron Gerard of Bryn. Another brother was William Gerard (1806-1844) who, in 1829, married Mary the sole heiress of Bartholomew Bretherton of Rainhill. [18]

Plant has recorded and illustrated the lives of these and later Gerards, their various residences and their close involvement in the social life of the county with their racehorses and the raising of yeomanry hussars from their tenants. [19]

The family had lived in Bryn Hall, a red-brick manor house, until it was abandoned about 1750 when their residence was at the Old Hall at Garswood. However, towards the end of the eighteenth century, in 1788, they acquired Garswood New Hall which had been constructed by the Launders family in 1692. This New Hall was positioned within a park of 260 acres, and its gardens were the creation of the famous estate improver Humphrey Repton (1752-1818). Indeed, Sir John Gerard, twelfth baronet, extended and improved these gardens at a cost of £30,000, so he was not pleased when the acidic fumes from Gamble and Crossfield's chemical works in St Helens, about 1837, began to destroy his trees' and hedges' growths. Legal proceedings were instituted in 1838 but the question of recompense was settled out of court. [20]

This case was ironic since the base of the Gerard fortunes was now not so much farm rents as the enormous profits made with coal dug from below the estates. As early as the year 1765, Sir Thomas Gerard (1723-1780), eighth baronet, was using the great supply of coal from Garswood to undercut the price of coal until he was established in the market, and by 1769 he had an office in Liverpool dedicated to the sale of coal. The Gerard coalfields had been away from the markets until the Sankey Brook Canal was cut between 1755 and 1760. A horse railway was constructed to connect Garswood to a canal wharf at Blackbrook. Later, of course, steam railways undertook the transportation of coal, and the profits provided the second Lord Gerard with an annual income of about £40,000

in addition to the £43,671 derived from the estates in 1883. [21] Lord Gerard had also purchased Eastwell Park in Kent for £198,000 and, whilst living there, died on 30 July 1902.

He had had two children, Frederick John (1883-1953) who now became the third baron, and Ethel (1881-1966) who married Arnold Maurice de Forest (1879-1968), Count of Bendern in Liechtenstein. One of their sons bears the name of John Gerard. The third baron married his first cousin, May Gosselin, and they had four daughters — two of whom became nuns — but only one son, Robert, the present Lord Gerard, born on 23 May 1918. During the First World War, Garswood Hall was turned into a V.A.D. hospital, by Mary, Lady Gerard, the widow of the second baron, but she died on 23 February 1918 after hearing of the death of a relative in the battle of Cambrai.

Alwyn Gosselin, the brother of May, Lady Gerard, also died during the First World War leaving his estate at Blakesware near Ware in Hertfordshire, to his sister. The Gerards, therefore, decided to leave Garswood Hall to reside at Blakesware in 1921 and the Hall was demolished. During the Second World War American troops were stationed in the grounds which by then had become a golf course. Since then the M6 motorway has been driven through the grounds so that a view from the Ashton exit and entrance (No.24) southwards to the A580/M6 junction (no.23) is a view directly towards where the mansion used to stand. Such was the fate of one of the stately houses of England in the splendid John Nash style.

Robert Frederick Alwyn, sixteenth baronet and fourth baron Gerard Bryn still resides at Blakesware. He never married so that his heir is his second cousin Rupert Gerard descended from the brother of the second baron, Robert Joseph Gerard-Dicconson (1857-1918) of Wrightington Hall in Lancashire.

In addition to the family papers preserved at Blakesware, many documents have been deposited in Preston. [22]

THE MISSION AT BRYN AND GARSWOOD

Immediately after his martyrdom in 1628, the right hand of Fr Edmund Arrowsmith SJ was brought to Bryn and given into the possession of his mother. It remained in the safe keeping of the Gerard family until 1822 when it was given to the parish then constituted. It was preserved originally in a linen bag which was exchanged for another such which the petitioners brought when seeking cures. The earliest relevant document, of 1736, refers to the cure of a Thomas Hawarden and attests to the 'Holy Hand' having been carefully preserved since the martyrdom and states that others had had recourse often to it upon previous occasions. [23]

At first the missions at Bryn and Garswood were served by Jesuits until 1789 and then by seculars. When a chapel was constructed at Wigan in the reign of James II (1685 – 1688), three silver chalices and patens (one gilt) were sent to it from Bryn but after the flight of the king these were restored to Bryn. Bishop John Leyburn (1615 – 1702) confirmed at Garswood on 17 September 1687. The number confirmed is given variously as 345 or 529. [24]

The following list of the priests who laboured on the missions at Bryn and Garswood is based upon the standard references by Foley, Bellenger, Gillow, Plumb and Bracken. A complete list of the early Jesuit chaplains can probably not be completed with certainty. [25]

Family Chaplains — Jesuits

Thomas Tootell was in residence in 1663 but Foley states that this information came from the Blundell correspondence and not from the Jesuit archives.

Cuthbert Clifton served both Bryn and Garswood until his death in October 1675.

Francis Waldegrave resided at Garswood from 1680 to 1682 in his position as superior of the Lancashire District, and died at Lydiate Hall on 28 November 1701.

Thomas Gerard, son of Sir William, fourth baronet, and brother of Sir William, fifth baronet, was at Garswood until his death there in 1715.

John Skinner was a chaplain in Bryn from 1701 until his death there on 16 October 1708. He gave a golden cross to Sir William Gerard which he affirmed was given to the first of his ancestors by Queen Elizabeth whose descendant he was reported to be.

Richard Billings was the Superior of the Lancashire District from 1730 as well as being the chaplain at Garswood from 1708 until his death there in January 1732/33.

Thomas Welton or Weldon was chaplain at Bryn and Ashton until his death there on 15 February 1776.

William Molyneux was a missioner in Lancashire in 1764 serving the missions of Ince Blundell, Stoneyhurst and lastly Bryn where he died on 30 April 1789 aged sixty-three years.

Family Chaplains — Secular

John Shuttleworth became the chaplain at Bryn Hall in July 1789 and was there until his death on 17 June 1839.

William Barnes became the chaplain at Garswood New Hall in July 1796 but left in the same month as Lady Gerard considered him to be too young for her family.

Edward Daniel became the chaplain at Garswood in 1796 and served there until his death on 13 April 1819.

Francis Crathorne became chaplain at Garswood in 1819. Here he remained until his death on 23 May 1822 when, together with John Gerard of Windle Hall and three others, he was drowned off the coast of Southport whilst on a fishing expedition.

Thomas Lupton became the chaplain at Garswood Hall from 1819 until his death there on 29 April 1843.

Parish Priests

Fr Thomas Lupton is also generally considered to have served as the first parish priest for the first two years after the new church of St Oswald was opened in Ashton. The first entry in the baptismal register there is dated 30 September 1822. Although the Dower House was given to serve as the presbytery, Fr Lupton, whose health was failing, continued to live in the Hall.

Fr Joseph Carr was the parish priest from 1824 to 1829.

Fr Walter Maddocks was the parish priest from 1829 to 1846.

Fr Joseph Meaney served as parish priest from 1846 to 1849.

Fr Henry Newsham served as parish priest at St Oswald's from 1849 to his retirement in 1873.

Fr Gerard O'Reilly became the parish priest at St Oswald's in 1873. He died in office on 13 March 1896.

Very Rev. Canon James O'Meara was appointed as a curate at St Oswald's and then became the parish priest upon the death of Fr O'Reilly. During his long service he was responsible for the building of the present church. He retired in 1946.

Fr John Joseph McLaughlin was transferred to St Oswald's in 1946. He served as its parish priest until his very sudden death there on 9 February 1950.

Very Rev. Canon Robert Wilfred Meagher became parish priest at St Oswald's in 1950. He was to serve at St Oswald's until his death there on 19 March 1970.

Very Rev. Canon Francis Joseph Ripley became the parish priest of St Oswald's in 1970.
Canon F.J. Ripley has written many historical and devotional works. Of particular interest in connection with the parish is the fact the he has written two accounts of his life there for the years 1979 to 1980 and 1986 to 1987. [26]

THE CHURCH OF 1822

From an artist's drawing entitled 'Catholic Chapel and the House of Revd. W. Maddox, Ashton', now in parochial possession and presumably dated about 1830, it is apparent that the original church of 1822 was of the conventional Classical style with a stately tower. It was positioned in the same location relative to the presbytery as the present church and probably was of the same rectangular plan (16x28 yds) as the present church of St Mary, Birchley, which was built for £1,400 from the estate of the eleventh baronet and opened in 1828.

When approached along the present drive, with the old cemetery on the left hand side, the entrance porch was

immediately ahead with a window on either side both on the ground floor and above. A triangular pediment extending along the entire width of the church completed the front aspect. The nave had four large windows on either side as also did the base of the tower. The latter, positioned at the rear of the church on the decani side had obviously, from this drawing, been a few yards higher than the roof of the nave and was crenellated. The roof height was also comparable to that at Birchley.

However, from illustrated postcards also in parochial possession, it is apparent that the tower was extended to provide a lofty belfry which had a pitched roof proofed with louvres. This alteration was presumably performed in 1887 since, on 6 November of that year, a new rosary chapel was solemnly dedicated in memory of the first Lord Gerard who was buried in an adjoining vault surmounted by an inscribed cross.

The interior of the church contained the high altar at the far end from the entrance under a large arch and set back in an apse. On the gospel side of this arch was a smaller one and between the two stood the Lady Altar. A side altar stood within the smaller arch. On the wall in the corresponding position on the decani side was a large oil painting of the Assumption. Wooden altar rails were placed in front of the high altar. There was a central aisle with wooden benches to each side and two smaller side aisles each provided with shorter wooden benches against the outer walls. The church was thus typical of the simple rectangular chapels erected at that period. It had been re-floored and re-benched in 1891 when new communion rails were added.

THE CHURCH OF 1930

Pevsner described this new church as follows:

> A Romanesque exterior, the facade with a right hand tower with a pyramid roof and a left hand round turret with conical roof. The interior has two saucer domes and an eastern apse. The domes are framed to west and east by transverse arches. Stained glass: expressionist figures in deep colours by Henry Clark (1931-37). [27]

Murray wrote as follows:

> Rebuilt in Romanesque style by J.K. Brocklesby in 1930. It has a

> beautiful interior, with slender richly carved stone columns and windows of deeply tinted glass. Peter Howe and his brother were the stone masons and carvers. The handsome cast iron entrance gate and stone piers are early 19th century.

Canon Ripley records that

> when the church was begun it was to have been a more or less ordinary Victorian Gothic structure and the foundations were laid accordingly. But the architect went on a tour of France and when he returned pleaded with Canon O'Meara to be allowed to change the style of the church. [29]

The official guide to the church notes that the architecture is essentially that of the French Romanesque churches south of the Loire, of the eleventh century in general, and of the cathedral of Angouleme in the Charente in particular. The church of St Oswald is thirty-two yards wide with a nave one hundred yards long ending in a stilted apse roofed with a semi-dome with a radius of ten yards. The side aisles are two yards wide and are joined around the rear of the High Altar by an ambulatory. On the decani side of the High Altar is the Chapel of Our Lady and the English Martyrs with a finely carved statue of St Edmund at its rear facing towards the side altar. A side door here leads to the cross in the cemetery, inscribed to the memory of the two first Lords Gerard and their wives, and beyond a beautiful Lourdes Grotto erected in 1986. To the gospel side of the High Altar are positioned the sacristies, below them the Chapel of St Joseph, and below this a door to the presbytery, and then the confessionals. The finely carved pulpit adjacent to the St Joseph chapel and the stained glass of the church are justly famous. 30

The 'Holy Hand' of St Edmund Arrowsmith, which after its authentication on 8 July 1934 was encased in a glass dome is venerated every Sunday afternoon after Benediction. After his canonisation in 1970, the dedication of the church was immediately altered to that of 'St Oswald and St Edmund Arrowsmith'.

Since St Oswald was always the patron saint of the Gerard family and St Edmund was a member of that family, this would appear to be the most appropriate point at which to conclude.

NOTES

1. J. Foster, *Pedigrees of the County Families of England,* (London, 1873) I, No.64.
2. Archives of SS Oswald and Edmund, Ashton-in-Makerfield, Descent of Gerards of Bryn 1050–1950; J.J. Howard and F.A. Crisp, *Visitation of England and Wales,* (London, 1901), IX, pp.105-112; *Debrett's Illustrated Peerage,* (London, 1966), p.477; *Debrett's Peerage,* (London, 1977), pp.484-85; *Burke's Peerage and Baronetage,* (London, 1976), pp.1085–1086.
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SIR WILLIAM MASSEY AND THE CIVIL WAR: A STORY OF RECUSANT HARDSHIP

Philip Prodger

The year 1634 was one of great significance for the family of Sir William Massey of Puddington in South Wirral, some five miles from Chester. In that year he chose to stop attending his parish church and was presented in the Visitation report, along with a Dominic Arrowsmith, pedagogue, presumably tutor to Massey's children but more likely to be priest-in-residence. The declaration of faith was a relief to the family who could now openly conform to their natural religious life. During the next few years the children married into other Catholic families and thus cemented the standing of the family amongst its neighbours and friends. By the time the Civil War began in 1642 the Masseys were allied with families from Westmorland down to the Welsh Marches at Montgomery and were well known to the Jesuit Order and to the Holy See. [1]

The outbreak of the war was not welcome to the leading gentry of Cheshire most of whom signed a petition against it save for the recusants — Savage of Clifton, Massey of Puddington and Stanley of Hooton. To add to the misery of the people at this time, plague struck hard at the county, and in 1643 Chester was sorely hit so that by the end of the war almost 25 per cent of the population was wiped out. [2]

After the early skirmishes, the Parliamentarians began to overpower the Royalists, and the Masseys were forced to retire into the city for shelter. By 1644 Sir William Brereton, the Parliamentary commander, had seized Puddington and placed Chidley Coote in command of that garrison, from which the River Dee could be forded and Chester could be surrounded. The records of the city reveal two Massey households at this time, a cousin George and eight others in his house and no provisions, and Sir William with ten in his house in the Northgate ward. [3] Lord John Byron, the royalist commander of the garrison, tells us of the hardships faced by the people: months of growing hardship for citizens and soldiers alike, especially the refugees who found the charity of the citizens `began to be as cold as the weather'. [4] It is little wonder that

finally a general mutiny forced him to surrender on 3 February 1646. Happier days when all the ladies and gentlemen helped to build ramparts to strengthen the walls of the city had given way to despair after the defeat of the King's army in the North West. [5]

Now came the time of reckoning for Sir William and others for, although he took the National Covenant and the National Oath he could not escape the charges of recusancy which were regarded as particularly serious and increased the severity of punishment. In 1647, the Wirral Commissioners for Sequestration drew up a list of delinquents comparing the value of estates in 1640 and 1645 and concluded that they were barely half the pre-war value. Nevertheless, the sum levied on Cheshire was £61,293 and Sir William was called to London to face the National Committee to hear his fate. He was now ageing and the experiences of the siege had clearly taken their toll.' The examiners took pity upon him for we read an order that 'William Massey to be allowed three feather beds well furnished and some chairs and stools or other household goods.' [7] But for all this consideration Sir William could not escape his fate and was fined the enormous sum of £1,414, later reduced on appeal to the still very heavy fine of £1,210 [8] which equalled one-third of the Wirral amount in total and put him on a par with the aristocracy such as the Cholmondelys. In 1649 Sir William died and as his elder son was declared contumacious, his second son Edward succeeded, to the estate and began the long haul to rebuild its fortunes.

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A CATHOLIC CONGREGATION IN THE AGE OF REVOLUTION: ST BENEDICT'S, HINDLEY

J.A. Hilton

In 1789, the year of the French Revolution, the Catholic chapel of St Benedict was opened in Hindley near Wigan in the cradle of the Industrial Revolution, though its origins went back to the Counter-Reformation and beyond.

In the aftermath of the Reformation, Hindley, a township in the parish of Wigan, was in the debatable land between Catholic and Puritan Lancashire. It lay close to the Catholic and Anglican stronghold of Wigan on the roads to the Puritan strongholds of Manchester and Bolton. It was, therefore, on that geographical and social frontier which threatened to divide the county community and where the battles of Lancashire's own Civil War were fought. [2] As a result, the religious divisions were particularly marked in Hindley, though the sense of community seemed in contrast even more strong. This local combination of easy-going neighbourliness combined with intense religious conviction was displayed by the lords of the manor, the Langtons of Lowe Hall, the site of which is preserved (Ordnance Survey, SD 607033). In 1590 Robert Langton was a justice of the peace 'well affected in religion', that is, a Protestant, but of 'mean living' for he spoiled his estate with 'bad company', [3] which Langton probably regarded as good company. By 1595/6 there were six Catholic recusants in Hindley. They included Edward Langton gent (probably Robert's brother) and his wife, the wife of John Culceth esq who owned a moiety of the manor, and Elizabeth, wife of Thomas Abram gent of the neighbouring manor of Abram. Abram Hall is still in use (OS, SD 606 013). One of the daughters of Thomas Abram married Robert Langton's son Philip who was a convicted recusant in 1607. Their son Abraham Langton was a recusant in 1628. Although as Catholic recusants the Langtons and the Abrams stood apart from the local community, they were still willing to play an active part in maintaining good neighbourliness. In 1632 Mary Abram, the Catholic widow of Thomas Abram,

founded Hindley and Abram Grammar School (my old school, and my father's and grandfather's) for the children of the two townships. The foundation stone still preserved in the present school (which is threatened with closure) reads: This School was built by the gift of Mrs Mary Abram, Widow, whose soul I trust triumpheth now among the just. Anno Domini 1632'. [4]

The local community was torn apart by the Civil War and the Glorious Revolution. A chapel of ease to Wigan parish was erected in Hindley in 1641, but in 1643 it fell under Puritan control. In 1698 it was restored to the Anglican Church as All Saints', and the Presbyterians immediately erected their own chapel which still stands. Abraham Langton as a recusant royalist, had his estate sequestrated in the interregnum but recovered it at the Restoration in 1660. His son, Philip Langton, was involved in a fracas with some Protestants in an ale-house after the Revolution of 1688, and more seriously he was involved in the Jacobite Lancashire plot in 1690. Edward Langton, the last of the line, was listed as a Catholic at the time of the Jacobite rising of 1715. [5]

By then Catholicism in Hindley had virtually retreated to the household of the Langtons of Lowe. Their pre-Reformation domestic chapel was served by the Benedictines, like Dom Placid Acton who was there from 1699 to 1727. In 1705, there were only eleven Catholics listed in Hindley, all of them poor. [6]

In 1727 the Langtons were succeeded by their Protestant heirs the Pughs and this involved the closure of the Lowe Hall chapel, though the local Catholics continued to be served by the Benedictines based at Standish and Charnock Richard. They included Dom Robert Edward Houghton, born at Park Hall in Charnock Richard, who served both Charnock Richard and Hindley until his death there in 1757. [7]

About 1774 the Culceth estate passed to the Traffords of Croston who provided their house at Strangeways in Hindley as a residence for the Benedictines and a chapel for the local Catholics who were beginning to grow as a result of the Industrial Revolution. The ruins of Strangeways remain (OS, SD 614036). [8]

In the second half of the eighteenth century Hindley felt the impact of the Industrial Revolution. Already in 1733

Kay's flying shuttle had doubled the output of the hand-loom weaver. About 1764 Hargreave's spinning-jenny brought about a matching increase in the production of cotton thread, and in 1769 Arkwright's water frame created the cotton mill. By 1776 Watt's steam engine was being used to drain coal mines, and by 1784 it was being applied to both spinning and weaving machines. Meanwhile, the first stage of the Leeds--Liverpool canal connected Liverpool to Wigan by 1776, and by 1848 the railway linked Liverpool to Manchester via Wigan. Employment concentrated population in the new industrial towns. Moreover, the social stresses resulting from economic change increased the demands for radical political reform in the wake of the French Revolution.

Hindley, in the middle of the south Lancashire coalfield, was at the centre of all these changes. The Traffords and other landowners like the Catholic Walmesleys of Ince increased the exploitation of coal seams, and Yates's *Map of Lancashire* of 1786 shows a cluster of pits in the south-east of the township, and their spoil heaps, lodges and flashes of water, and shafts, are still scattered through the district. In the 1780s Richard Battersby added a cotton mill to Lowe corn mill, and in 1796 John Pennington came to Hindley and erected several factories, which eventually employed some fifteen hundred workers and virtually monopolized cotton production in the town. In 1836 he moved to Liverpool to supervise his import-export business and left the management of the Hindley mills to his sons. Yates's map shows the water-mills strung along the Borsdane Brook, and their weirs can still be seen. Meanwhile, James Eckersley, born in Hindley in 1781, opened a cotton spinning-mill in Wigan that was to be the foundation of another textile empire. He became mayor of Wigan in 1832, and retired to Hindley in 1837 when his brother Nathaniel left him Laurel House. Nathaniel Eckersley was born in Hindley in 1779, and at the age of eighteen entered the First Royal Dragoon Guards as a private. Nevertheless, he rose through the ranks to become a captain by 1800, and fought in the Peninsular War, acquiring Joseph Bonaparte's duelling pistols at the Battle of Vittoria in 1813. In 1814 he was deputy adjutant-general in Canada, and, after serving with the army of occupation in Paris from 1815 to

1818, he became brigade major of the Manchester district from 1819 until 1827 when he became deputy quarter-master general in the West Indies. In 1833 he retired to Hindley to Laurel House, which still stands, and when he died in 1837 he was buried in All Saints' churchyard. These self-made men formed the ruling class in Hindley in the age of revolution. Their interests were represented by Sir Robert Holt Leigh Bt, of Hindley Hall just inside the neighbouring township of Aspull. This snuff-taking eccentric rebuilt the Hall (which is now Hindley Hall golf club) but forgot to include a staircase. He formed the Wigan Arms Association in 1798 to combat the mob, and was M.P. for Wigan from 1802 to 1820. In 1831 he was assaulted in the excitement over the Reform Bill, and laughed at the liberals who, in trying to kick him, kicked each other. He died in bad repute as having fallen into some unspecified immorality. A more violent collection of Tory reactionaries than Pennington, the Eckersleys, and Leigh, would be hard to find even in the England of Lord Liverpool's repressive government notable not least for the Peterloo Massacre of 1819. [1°]

The Industrial Revolution scarred the landscape of Hindley, turning what had been 'a secluded pleasant village' [11] into a town with a population of 5,458 in 1841. It had been remarkable for its burning wells, though Defoe decided not to visit them when he heard the locals deprecating them. [12] The gas that produced these phenomena was the concomitant of coal, and coal-mining destroyed the wells and the rural charm of the village. It became `a singularly dreary stretch of country'. [13] Even the author of the *Little Guide* could not forbear to sneer at 'an unattractive mining town' 1[4] It remains customary to despise Hindley in centres of environmental and cultural excellence like Wigan, but natives of Hindley know that they are 'a social and friendly people' [15] with a black sense of humour embodied in men such as Sir Robert Holt Leigh. Mr Joseph Hull, ironmonger of Market Street, Hindley, tells how sometime in the last century his grandfather and his friends would go to the Lancashire Union Hotel on Wigan Road next to Amberswood Common every Sunday night to drink and to sing hymns. Eventually the landlord thanked them for their custom, their company, their

singing and their devotion, and begged them to accept a free supper of stew in token of his gratitude. They consumed the stew, and expressed their appreciation of its excellence. He replied that it should be good for it was made from the remains of his old dog Bess which had died that day.

The English Catholic Church was one of the main beneficiaries of the Industrial Revolution. The Catholic clergy realised that the freedom from traditional restraints found in the industrial towns provided them with the opportunity to win converts. The Industrial Revolution certainly provided a function for religion, which Protestant Dissent including Methodism was quick to fill, in the element of protest, the legitimation of improvement, and the amelioration of anomie.'

At the same time the French Revolution, by indentifying hostility to Catholicism with republicanism, benefited English Catholics. The American and French Revolutions and the fear of revolution in Ireland resulted in legislation designed to secure the loyalty of Catholics. The Relief Act of 1778 granted toleration to Catholics, the Relief Act of 1791 permitted them to build public places of worship, and the Emancipation Act of 1829 granted them civil rights. [17]

In Hindley the consequences for Catholics were dramatic. The local Catholic community increased tenfold from eleven in 1705 to 108 in 1767. It was a congregation of young fertile immigrants, predominantly engaged in the textile industry, though none of them were miners. Eighty-two of them (76 per cent) were employed in the textile industry. Seventy-five (69 per cent) were immigrants, whose average age on arrival was nineteen. They were roughly equally divided between fifty males (46 per cent) and fifty-eight females (54 per cent). The average age of marriage was twenty-five, and the average family consisted of 5.5 people including 3.5 children. There were only thirteen people (12 per cent) aged over fifty, but there were thirty-five children (32 per cent) aged ten or less, and forty-two people (38 per cent) in the potentially marriageable age-group of eleven to thirty years old. In the child-bearing age-group of twenty to fifty years, married men numbered sixteen out of twenty-two (72 per cent) and married women thirteen out of seventeen (76 per cent). Their youth and fertility compared

favourably with national average and with other industrial Catholic communities like Birmingham. A typical family was the Harrisons, a married couple in their twenties, who had been living in the town just over a year, and had four children, two boys and two girls, all aged under ten. The husband was a fustian weaver, the wife a cotton spinner. Continuity was provided by the Flitcrofts who were there in 1707 and in 1767 (my paternal grandmother was a Flitcroft by birth but not a Catholic). [18]

This fertile community rapidly increased in size. In the 1780s the average number of baptisms per annum was fourteen, which multiplied by a factor of thirty gives a total Catholic population of 420. In 1784 Bishop Gibson confirmed fifty-nine at Strangeways, when there were 259 communicants. The annual birth rate remained virtually the same in the 1790s, and then increased to fifteen in the 1800s, seventeen in the 1810s, twenty-five in the 1820s, thirty-one in the 1830s, and fifty in the 1840s, which gives an estimated Catholic population of fifteen hundred, 27 per cent of the total population. By 1895 the Catholic population was estimated at 2,200, of whom 753 attended Mass and 840 made their Easter communion."

The growth of the congregation was reflected in its buildings. In 1789, two years before Catholic church-building became legal in England, a new public chapel, St Benedict's, was opened in Market Street by Dom George Edward Duckett. The land was provided by a local Catholic called Marsh. In 1767 the Hindley Catholics included three weavers and an innkeeper called Marsh and the latter is the most likely candidate. Dom Thomas Jerome Marsh was born in Hindly in 1749. Dom Richard Benedict Marsh was born in Hindley in 1767. Dom Richard Marsh was born in Hindley in 1762, and returned to serve as priest there from 1805 to 1807, before becoming president-general of the English Benedictines (his portrait is kept in the presbytery). His nephews were Dom Richard Austin Marsh born in Hindley in 1793 and Dom John Edmund Marsh born there in 1802. A history of the Marsh family would be illuminating. The building and opening of this chapel illustrates the conviviality and culture of Hindley. Money was spent on ale for the builders, as well as on clogs for the man who trod the

mortar, and on dinner for the forty-one members of the Hindley Singers who performed an oratorio at the opening. [20]

A parochial school was built in 1861, and the present church was built by Hansom in 1869 [21] (described by Pevsner as 'without architectural interest outside, but very odd, architecturally poor stuff inside'), [22] and the Lady Chapel was added by Velarde in 1954.

In these revolutionary changes in this industrial village dominated by its reactionary gentry and mill-owners, the pastor of the Catholic congregation from 1806 in the middle of the Great French War to 1836 after the passing of the Reform Act, was Dom Thomas Anselm Appleton. Despite his escape from the French Revolution, after his ordination in 1790, Appleton was an exponent of Radical politics. Born in Preston in 1766, he was a man of uncouth appearance, but charitable, scholarly, intelligent, and agreeable, except on religion and politics, on which his opponents found him bad-tempered. He declared that he would sooner dine with Lucifer in Pandemonium than with the local Tories in their True Blue Club, and in a quarrel over politics on the Manchester stage-coach he spat at a fellow-passenger. Nevertheless, his local political opponents respected his integrity. His Radical sermons earned the complaint of the Vicar-Apostolic, and the remonstrations of his Benedictine superiors. [23] 'The poor expected their priests to speak out on their behalf. Some did.' [24] Appleton was one of them, and he served the Catholics of Hindley for thirty years.

Catholicism in Hindley, like so much else in the village, was largely the product of the Industrial Revolution. In a community dominated by its Tory landlords and capitalists, the Catholic congregation was led by the Radical Benedictine Appleton who looked to the ideals of the French Revolution as well as the traditions of Roman Catholicism to remedy the conditions of his poor people. Appleton and his congregation exemplified the economic, social, and political changes which Catholic Lancashire underwent in the age of revolution.

NOTES

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M.E. HADFIELD AND THE REBUILDING OF ST MARY'S, MANCHESTER, 1844

Nicholas Paxton

M.E. Hadfield's 1844 design for the rebuilding of St Mary's, Mulberry Street, Manchester, was controversial at the time but has since won wide acceptance, so much so that the church is now popularly called 'The Hidden Gem' — 'hidden' because it stands in a city-centre back-street.

The best way to assess the building, its architect, and its design is, I suggest, to look at Hadfield's life and work, the reaction to his design for the church, and the details of the building itself.

Matthew Ellison Hadfield was born in Derbyshire in 1812, the eldest son of Joseph Hadfield of Lees Hall, near Glossop. His mother's brother was Michael Ellison, agent to the Duke of Norfolk; this connection was to bring him important commissions in later years. The young Hadfield went to school at the Woolton Grove Academy in Liverpool; he then worked with his maternal uncle for four years, and in 1831 his father articled him to the Doncaster firm of architects Woodhead & Hurst. After the three years of his indentures, Hadfield went to London for two years of pupillage under P.F. Robinson (1776---1858). Robinson is chiefly celebrated as having been the author of five volumes of *Vitrutnus Britannicus;* it may well have been through him that Hadfield learned the principles of basilican design that were to stand him in such good stead at St Mary's.

Hadfield returned to Yorkshire in 1836 and entered into practice on his own account. He was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of British Architects in 1847. [2] His practice, which eventually became quite lucrative, was joined in 1838 by his friend, and former fellow-pupil, John. Grey Weightman, and in 1850 by George Goldie; from 1850 it became Weightman, Hadfield & Goldie'. Weightman retired about 1858; Goldie retired in 1860, and Hadfield's only son Charles, joined the practice in 1864. Thus the firm finally became known as `M.E. Hadfield & Son'.

The Hadfields designed many public buildings and churches in Sheffield and elsewhere in the North and the Midlands. In Manchester as well as designing St Mary's, M.E. Hadfield also designed the new church, in Cheetham Hill Road, for St Chad's. This is Manchester's senior parish, founded in 1773, twenty-one years before St Mary's; its original church (1776) was in Rook Street. Hadfield's church of 1846-7, in the Perpendicular style, still continues as the parish church. M.E. Hadfield's two most important works were probably the cathedral at Salford and St Marie's, Norfolk Row in Sheffield. The latter was 'based on a study of the fourteenth-century St Andrew, Heckington, in Lincolnshire'.[3] It was certainly Hadfield's favourite church and it has, since 1980, been the cathedral of the Hallam diocese. The Hadfields also did much work in altering and extending large country houses. The service of M.E. Hadfield's maternal uncle in the interests of the Dukes of Norfolk, cannot but have helped the nephew, who worked for no fewer than four of the Dukes in succession, and who came to be patronized widely among the leading Catholic families of the day. He is known to have worked at Arundel Castle, Newstead Abbey and Glossop Hall, among other places.

Hadfield eventually became one of Sheffield's most prominent citizens, serving on the City Council and for three years (1878–1880 inclusive) becoming President of the School of Art, in which he had always taken a great interest. In 1882, however, his health began to fail, and he died in 1885.[4]

St Mary's was one of the most important of Hadfield's early works. He obtained the commission in 1844 at the age of thirty-two, the design being published in *The Rambler*. Cecil Stewart seems to imply that Hadfield had already drawn up and published the design before obtaining the commission for St Mary's; he bases this view on a comment of Hadfield's obituarist in *The Builder* of 11 April 1885, who stated: The [published] design was afterwards carried out with some modifications in Mulberry Street, Manchester'.[5] This design for a new church came exactly fifty years after the opening of the original Catholic chapel on the site; rebuilding was called for because the roof of the former church had fallen in.[6] Why the decision was taken to build anew rather than to repair the old church is

not fully clear, but the building we have now is entirely of the 1840s. All that remains of the old church is the crypt, which served as Manchester's burial-ground from 1816 to 1829 and which was later filled in, presumably to provide a firm foundation for the new building. [7] All that is left as outward evidence of the crypt is the relative steepness of the steps which lead from the pavement to the church's portal and the level of the nave floor, several feet above ground level.

Hadfield's design turned out to be controversial because of its style and, in particular, because of the round arches which were a feature of its windows and interior. A.W.N. Pugin, then the leading apostle of the Gothic style (with its pointed windows and arches) was so infuriated by 'this round-arched horror' that he published a special pamphlet, 'Some Remarks on the Articles which have Recently Appeared in the *Rambler* relative to Ecclesiastical Architecture and Decoration', to voice his opinions. 'As regards the external appearance of the building', wrote Pugin, 'it is even below the ordinary run of nondescript churches'. But he reserved his strongest protest for the tower:

> The spire is of the ugliest possible form, owing to its being practically bad in construction. This kind of spire is peculiar to Germany, and when transplanted among the buildings of an English city it becomes detestable . . . It only shows into what depths of error even good men fall when they abandon the true thing and go whoring after strange styles . . . [8]

The statement 'this kind of spire is peculiar to Germany' is surely false, as the Saxon-English precedent at Sompting, Sussex, shows. Whether this style of tower detracts from an English urban landscape must needs be a matter of opinion, but the first sight of St Mary's tower, on turning the corner of Brazennose and Mulberry Streets in Manchester, has never failed to strike the present writer as impressive.

However, Hadfield remained genially unmoved by Pugin's diatribe, and the church was put up. Its style has been described as 'Byzantine' and alternatively as `Norman'. [9] C.A. Bolton mentiones that the parish priest of the time (Father Matthias Formby) `is supposed to have drawn his inspiration for the style of the church from Spain'. However, it would seem appropriate to treat this with caution, both because, as Bolton says, this is

supposition rather than established fact, and because the design may possibly have been drawn up before Hadfield was commissioned to provide a design for the new St Mary's. (It is possible that Father Formby may have declared his approval of the design, but that is not the same thing.) As to the church's style: except for the tower, 'basilican' would seem to be the most suitable term.

This consists of nave and chancel designed as an architectural unity, with aisles to (ritual) North and South!' Starting with the West facade, left to right: for windows, the north-aisle West wall has a wheel window above and a double-light Romanesque window below, while the West nave wall proper has a larger wheel window at clerestory [12] level, three single-light round-arched windows below and, below those, a wider such window on either side of the portal. The portal itself is a very rich affair of two orders with excellent mouldings. On the two visible faces of the keystone are the hand of God the Father raised in blessing in the Byzantine manner (with the first and seond fingers extended and the third and fourth not) and, on the lower face, the Dove, symbolizing the Holy Spirit. Below, in the tympanum, we see God the Son depicted as a paschal lamb in a roundel, with angels to left and right. Below that, directly over the door itself, is the inscription *Ascendamus in monte Domini et adoremus in loco sancto ejus* (`let us go up onto the mountain of the Lord and worship in his holy place'). [13] To the right, at the West end of the South aisle, is the tower. Its lowest storey has two round-arched recessed windows. Its second storey exhibits a vacant niche, the purpose of which is unclear: the most likely interpretation would seem to be that it was perhaps intended to hold a Marian statue but that it was instead left empty, presumably in order not to arouse hostility and attract vandalism. However, this is conjecture. The tower's third storey, being above the church, has on all sides two double belfry windows within blind arches. Three smaller, single, belfry windows can be seen on the gable which tops each face of the tower.

Turning now to the interior, the true proportions of the nave are not immediately apparent since the two westernmost bays are under a gallery and, on the South side, mostly under

the tower. In fact, the aisled nave is of six bays with clerestory, and a partially glazed dome over the second and third bays. The dome was an afterthought: Hadfield had mistakenly believed at first that the clerestory windows alone would admit enough light. It shows Hadfield at his most resourceful. He was much hampered by the church's site, which was already hemmed in by warehouses: the main ways in which his design reflects this constriction are the square East end (in contrast to the apsidal ending which one might otherwise have expected in a church of this style) with its windowless East Wall, and the absence of windows below clerestory level to North and South. Adequate light had thus to be let into the building higher up. The way Hadfield solved this problem with the dome is both successful and ingenious. The nave columns rise from bulky and rather crudely done bases to very good leaved capitals, and are much more important to the effect of the building than one might at first think. Between the arcades and the clerestory level, a frieze of lettering runs along the North, East and South walls in Roman capitals. This bears the Vulgate text of Luke 1:46-48, which is the beginning of Mary's *Magnificat* and which in translation is:

> My soul extols the Lord
> and my spirit has rejoiced in God my salvation
> for he has looked upon the lowliness of his maidservant.
> For see: from henceforth all generations will call me blessed.

The short chancel is of one bay only. At the junction of nave and chancel are triple-shafted columns: the Western shafts form the East responds of the nave arcades, the inward-facing ones are carried up as pilasters to give added support to the roof at these points, and the Eastern ones act as West responds to the chancel bay. All the sculptures are later. Most seem to date from a refurbishing carried out in the last decade of last century, though one which looks earlier than that is the statue called Our Lady of Manchester in the chapel to the right of the altar. This is by Lane of Preston and is reputed to have won an exhibition prize, though research has failed to establish when and where it was shown. The Stations of the Cross, ranged along the North and South nave walls, are also later, being a set of pictures by the Dublin painter Barff, painted about 1875.

It is unexpected that St Mary's, which is both an early and an unusual work of Hadfield's, should also be one of his most powerful works. But its design contains a wealth of architectural detail and striking features concentrated in a very small area.

When we turn to the assessment of Hadfield's Gothic churches, we find that the failing to which he was prone was to plagiarize actual mediaeval designs in whole or part. For example, the main elements of his design for St John's Cathedral, Salford, were the tower and spire of Newark parish church, the choir of Selby Abbey and the nave of the collegiate church of Howden. Likewise, St Mary's, Burnley (1848) is a copy of St Andrew's church, Heckington [14] (on which, as we have seen, Hadfield also based his design for St Marie's, Sheffield).

The question arises here of whether Hadfield's plagiary was done on principle or for some other reason such as convenience. Did Hadfield represent any group of architects who believed that new Gothic buildings should only consist of new combinations of genuine mediaeval features, in contradistinction to Pugin's view that new work in the Gothic style should be infused with the style's (necessarily mediaeval) spirit but nonetheless be built to new designs? This question is complicated by Pugin's own opposition, not only to Classical architecture, but also to nineteenth-century English Gothic design before he himself came on to the architectural scene, on the grounds that the latter was too superficial: as he put it, 'Architectural features are continually tacked on buildings with which they have no connection, merely for the sake of what is termed effect'. [15]

So far as we can tell: the situation seems to have been that, with the, as it were, new orthodoxy which Pugin in particular had established for Gothic design, it was all too easy to have new work considered unacceptable by the purists of the day and all too tempting to re-use old plans and old details. Plagiary was thus done, not from principle, but from convenience. Stewart explains this so well that we should let him speak for himself:

> To build in the spirit of the Middle Ages was not easy, especially since one was constantly liable to criticism if one's mouldings or tracery betrayed any deviation from accepted standards. It was

> much easier faithfully to reproduce details from published measured drawings, and to avoid any accusation of plagiarism by combining in one design details drawn from a number of different buildings. [16]

Stewart goes on, not just to note that this sort of copying went right against everything that Pugin stood for, but also to mention that Pugin worked with Hadfield, to begin with, on Salford Cathedral and that he later withdrew on the very grounds of Hadfield's plagiary. This plagiary could not be hidden: indeed, one writer in *The Builder,* commenting on the Salford design, deplored the architect's choice of the east window of Selby Abbey as a model to reproduce, thinking it insufficiently good:

> In an original work, trifling mistakes may be excused, but it reflects no credit upon an architect to copy them. By learning from such examples, mistakes may be avoided; by copying them, these faults become more glaring in the transcript, than they were in the original. [17]

On the other hand, at least Hadfield's plagiary-for-the-sake-of-convenience and his own very good capacity to reproduce English mediaeval details accurately combined to keep him comparatively free from that definite stamp of the nineteenth century which appears in varying degrees in the work of the century's leading Gothic architects, such as the Pugins, Street, Waterhouse and the Scotts. Further, Hadfield seems to have been capable of good original design: there does not appear to be any evidence that St Mary's itself is but a *melange* of reproduced mediaeval features.

To sum up Hadfield's work at Mulberry Street: while this small basilica is early and untypical of him, it is also a great success, esteemed as such by generations of Mancunians.

NOTES

1. The chief sources for Hadfield's life are: *Dictionary of National Biography; The Tablet,* 14 March 1885, pp.422-423; *The Builder,* 14 March 1885, p.397, 11 April 1885, pp. 512, 629. The latter issue of *The Builder* gives the obituary read to a meeting of the Institute of British Architects.

2. *The Tablet,* 14 March 1885, p.423.

3. N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England. Yorkshire: The West Riding* (Harmondsworth, 2nd ed. 1967), p.452.
4. As to the exact date of his death, the 1890 edition of the *Dictionary of National Biography* gives this as 8 March. However, *The Tablet* is more specific: its issue dated Saturday 14 March 1885 states in p.422 that Hadfield had died at 'seven o'clock on Monday morning': this means that he died on the 9th. Likewise, *The Builder* of 14 March 1885 states on p.397 that Hadfield had died 'on Monday last'.
5. C. Stewart, *The Stones of Manchester* (London, 1956), p.50; *The Builder,* 11 April 1885, p.512.
6. T. Holland, *For Better and for Worse* (Manchester, 1989), p.243.
7. I am indebted to Father Denis Clinch, the present parish priest of St Mary's, for the information contained in this sentence.
8. Stewart, p.50; *The Builder, 11* April 1885, p.512.
9. 'Byzantine' in *The Builder,* 11 April 1885, p.512; 'Norman' in N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: South Lancashire* (Harmondsworth, 1969), p.279.
10. C.A. Bolton, *Salford Diocese and its Catholic Past* (Manchester, 1950), p.93.
11. The church is not orientated. Ritual, or liturgical, East is in fact approx. North-West. In this section, East refers to ritual East; West, North and South are used likewise.
12. Any readers requiring a glossary of architectural terms are referred to that provided in any volume of Pevsner's *The Buildings of England.*
13. Psalms 23 (24), 3; Psalms 132 (133), 7; Isaiah 2, 3.
14. With, however, the addition of a memorial chapel to the Townsleys, beside the north aisle; and, in execution, the omission of the spire and most of the tower — presumably for reasons of cost.
15. Stewart, p.48.
16. Stewart, p.49.
17. Stewart, p.49. As Stewart notes here, the measured drawings used for the Cathedral plans were taken from *Architectural Parallels* by Edmund Sharpe.

PARISH CHARITY: THE WORK OF THE SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL, ST MARY'S, HIGHFIELD ST, LIVERPOOL, 1867-1868.

John Davies

In 1866 Liverpool's Medical Officer of Health described Exchange Ward as 'the chief fever district of the parish' [of Liverpool] . Large parts of it were 'inhabited by the lowest of the Irish population'. In that year 1,762 people died of cholera in Liverpool between 1 July and 30 November. According to Dr Trench, 'Cholera in its epidemic violence was restricted to the lowest, dirtiest, most crowded and squalid streets of the borough'. [1]

Drs Parkes and Burden Sanderson, who had been commissioned by the town council to report on the sanitary condition of the borough, wrote of this area in 1871:

> The unhappy people seem to know none of the comforts, and few of the decencies of life, and widespread habits of drunkenness, and consequent want of food and their wretched houses all conspire in destroying their health. [2]

Fr Nugent, in his capacity as prison chaplain, commenting on the high percentage of Catholics, compared with other denominations, committed to prison in 1870-71, noted:

> . . . that the most part of them are from the lowest quarters of the town, from densely populated localities, where a number of families are crowded together in courts, and often where several families are huddled together in the same house . . . They are the first to suffer from any check to the trade and commerce of the town, and being ignorant of the habits of thrift and economy, make no provision for the future, but their earnings, no matter how large, are squandered improvidently.3

St Mary's, Highfield Street, originally established in the eighteenth century close to the business quarter of the town to cater for the small Catholic population, found itself in the second half of the nineteenth century catering for the spiritual needs of the largely Irish Catholic population of this 'most squalid part' of the town. The social problems of the area were clearly horrendous. A small group of laymen, organized in the St Mary's Conference of the Society of St Vincent de Paul,

attempted to ameliorate the worst symptoms of acute social distress by providing relief to the most 'deserving' of the Catholic poor.

The minutes of the conference for 1867-68 [5] give some indication of the range of its activities and the attitudes of its members. There is no explicitly stated rationale for the charitable work undertaken but it can be assumed that the intention of its members was to alleviate the suffering of the poor. It was essentially a 'fire brigade' type of activity. There was no attempt to campaign for improvements in social conditions or to use political means, in this year of the extended suffrage, to change the structure of society. The conference was apolitical. Implicitly its members accepted social and political conditions as they were. They merely sought to help those who were most adversely affected by those conditions. Relief of the poor was a corporal work of mercy.

The membership of the St Mary's Conference during 1867 and 1868 consisted of at most a dozen and a half men and for much of the period active membership was much less than that. The largest weekly attendance during the year was on 15 September 1867 when seventeen men were present, and the lowest was on 5 May 1868 when only six were there. [6] Membership of the conference was entirely lay in accordance with the tradition of the Society and there is no evidence even of clerical encouragement let alone of active involvement. It was customary for members of the Society to refer to each other as 'brother' and this practice was maintained at St Mary's. The names of the members, Kelly, Quinn, Ryan and Brady, for example, would seem to indicate that they were Irish or of Irish extraction. This is as one would expect in this strongly Irish district of the town. There are no indications in the minute-book of the occupations of these men. It may well be that they were predominantly lower middle-class or respectable working-class. The secretary, Augustine Quinn, was certainly literate, although he had difficulty spelling 'recommend' which he consistently rendered as `reccommend'. When he was absent, minutes were not kept. This may mean that there was no one else of comparable literacy in the group or merely that there was a reluctance to trespass on the secretary's domain. Although a voluntary group,

the conference expected a disciplined and committed approach from its members. In July 1868 the president formally requested the secretary to write to 'Bro. Harden to ask him if it is his intention to attend the meetings of the Conference'. A fortnight later, Harden, who was the treasurer, duly attended the weekly meeting. [7]

The main duty of the members was to visit the poor and give relief. The conference's weekly meeting allocated visiting duties. Visits once made were reported on and the meeting decided what relief, if any, should be given. Relief was to be given to those who were 'worthy' or 'deserving'. Thus, in September 1867 one of the brothers

> reported the case of Mr Hill and wife and 3 children of 33 Upper Milk St. to be one of deep distress, the family having sustained themselves for 3 days on 1/- worth of bread. It was agreed that they receive for the present 4/- weekly. [8]

In February 1868 Joseph Maloney of Vine Street was found to be 'a person in great distress and deserving of relief' although further enquiries were to be made before any relief was actually given. [9] In March it was agreed that Widow Lodge was 'a person worthy to be relieved' and two tickets were `granted her'." These tickets could be exchanged for food at designated local shops. On occasion exceptional grants were made. Mrs Hoolihan, a widow with two children was given 7/6 `voted to her for the purpose to enable her to buy fruit'. This was a one-off grant in March 1868. " Considerable solicitude was often shown even when no direct application for help had been made. Thus in November 1868 Brother Sheridan was directed to visit Mrs Kenny and her family 'in case the man is out of employment and he is to leave her tickets'. [12]

A tougher line was taken, however, when it was thought necessary. In September 1867 John Cahill was visited and found not entitled to relief, being 'perfectly strong and able to work', while 'Mary Keating had recovered her former strength and was able to work'. Her relief was stopped. 13 In April 1868 as Widow Traynor was 'In constant work and receiving in wages and from the Parish [under the Poor Law provisions] 9/- and two loaves of bread', it was decided that her two tickets be withdrawn at least for the time being. [14] In May, Widow Crowley

had her two tickets withdrawn as she 'is now working'. [15] They were later restored, but in November, Brother Brady visited her `and finds that her son has got work and her daughter a situation'. He, therefore, thought that the relief should be stopped. [16] In June, Mr Walsh, having sent his wife and children to Ireland, had one ticket stopped, [17] and in October, Mrs Tobin was `thought unworthy of relier. [18]

Some of the decisions which were taken strike one as being harsh. Widow McKeown's son worked at McFie's Sugar House where he received a weekly wage of 29/- to 30/-, a substantial sum, but

> when requested to contribute something towards her support his reply was that he would not be bullied by her and if he would do so [contribute towards her support] she would not make good use of it.

Brother McCoy was sent to tell Mrs McKeown that the conference's decision was to recommend her 'to go into the workhouse and let the law make him pay for her support'. [19]

In July 1868 relief to Mrs Cuffe was stopped 'as the conferance *(sic)* was not established for the support of pensioners'. At the same meeting the conference reviewed a number of cases and decided that Patrick Snodden, Mrs Quigley, Mrs Murphy, Mrs Grant, Mrs Lodge, Mrs Tracey, Widow Smith, Widow Devitt, Widow Cusack and the Traynor family should receive no further relief. Mrs McPherson was to receive no relief for a month and as the parish schools were on holiday for three weeks there would be no tickets for the children until they reopened. [20]

One unusual case was that of the Widow McQuilliam who seems to have been involved in a minor form of racketeering with the conference's tickets. Brother Brady had visited her and had given her one ticket.

> When he asked her whether she had got a ticket from anyone today she said not. He then took the ticket from her. She afterwards followed him through the street and she importuned him.

The conference decided to solve the problem by accepting the president's proposal 'that she do bring a note from her Father Confessor'. [21]

Who were to receive relief from the conference? 'Deserving' and 'worthy' cases were recommended by the local clergy. This was well known and it seems, although this is never made explicit in the minutes, that there were sometimes attempts to forge clerical recommendations. On 3 March 1868 the conference's attention was directed to

> A piece of paper with the name Mary Hughes, widow 7 Westmoreland St. bearing the name of the Revd. J. Stephens. The bro. who presented it was directed to call upon her and to tell her that this was no certificate but that she was to call and get a note from the priest to show that she attends her religious duties. [22]

Sometimes relief was given before the letter of recommendation from the clergy was produced. This could also lead to problems. In March of 1868 Bro. Brady visited Michael Finnegan of 5 Court Westmoreland St. 'and [had] requested a note from the priest for weeks without effect. It was unanimously resolved that no more tickets be given to him until he does produce the same'. [23] Those recommended by the local clergy clearly had to fulfil certain conditions. As well as being 'worthy' of relief they had to be regular attenders at their religious duties. Bridget Keefe, leaving hospital in June 1868 was given one ticket, two had been originally proposed, after a note had been received from the Rev. Dillon 'stating that she attends her religious duties'.

Recommendations of deserving cases came also from respectable members of the parish. The parish school teacher, Mr Kelly, in June 1868, sought 'relief of 12 poor children who attend the school'. The conference responded to his appeal by granting him six tickets for that purpose. [25] But as we have seen, these tickets were not given over the period of the school holidays when Kelly, presumably, was not in contact with his charges. How did they fare during that time?

It was common practice for better educated and more fortunate members of the parish to write to the conference suggesting that help be given to poorer parishioners. In May 1868, Mrs Gerard Lynch wrote recommending Catherine FitzGerald as a fit person to receive relief. She was to be given 5/- 'if she be found worthy to receive it'. [26] A few weeks earlier Mrs McGrath had written from St Paul's Square making a

similar plea on behalf of a widow, Margaret Lodge, and her child describing her as 'a person worthy to be relieved'. She was given two tickets. [27]

The poor themselves made direct requests for help, not always successfully. In June 1868 the conference received 'A note from John Marsh . . . stating that he is in great distress and asking for immediate relief'. He was visited by Bro. Hughes who `finds that he has a wife and one child', and three tickets were given to him. Bro. Ryan was to continue visiting him.[28] In July, however, Ellen Cavanagh of Orange Street had her request rejected by the conference. [29] Mary Connor who was 'aged about 18 yrs. and her brother aged 7' applied for relief in September. On visiting them Bro. Hughes found them to be `both orphans'. [3°] The following month in the case of Mrs Kenny's request 'discretional power was granted to Bro. Quinn to visit her ..

It was unusual for requests for help to be met with an automatically favourable response. The usual procedure was for the conference to appoint one of its members to investigate the case. He then reported back to the weekly meeting and his judgement on the worthiness or otherwise of the applicant was usually accepted by the conference, although there were occasions when there were disputes about the level of aid to be given, as was noted above in the case of Bridget Keefe. Reports of investigative visits occur with great frequency throughout the minutes. In April 1868 the case of Mary Dwyer who had four children was discussed.

> She has a daughter that helps her to mend some old clothes she sells in the market. She has 2/- per week from the Parish [poor relief from the civil parish] but it is not sufficient to keep them. She begged the Society to get her son into St. George's School [An industrial school run by the diocese] .

At the same meeting Bro. McCoy asked that 'Peter McEntaggart who with his wife and family live in a cellar' be 'visited by a brother with a view to have them relieved if necessary'. [32] In June Bro. Ryan visited John Walsh and 'found him and his family in Great Distress' but Bro. McCoy having visited Edward Keogh has 'found that he was in no Great Distress'. [33]

These investigative visits were in addition to the regular

weekly visits during which the cases of those receiving relief were constantly reviewed. As part of this process in June 1868, Bro. McCoy had to inform Mrs Goodwin and Mrs Farrell 'not to expect any more tickets for some time'. [34] Such visits must often have been difficult for the members of the conference. The starkly written minutes give no indication of the pressure these laymen must have been under. They were working in the poorest section of the town, the Poor Relief system was clearly inadequate, there was a multitude of demands upon them and their resources were pitifully limited. They could not satisfy all of these demands and they had to decide which cases were the most 'deserving'. Their task was neither easy nor enviable.

The bulk of the conference's financial resources came from church door collections. There are no overall accounts available for the St Mary's conference but from time to time there are references in the minutes to the receipts from collections. At the meeting held on 15 September 1878 they amounted to 11/- and on 18 February 1868 to £1.11s.4d. [35] Receipts of this order did not cover the outgoings of the conference on regular tickets and one-off payments. They were supplemented by grants from the diocesan Central Council of the Society, as in June 1868 when £5 was received by the conference. [36] Presumably the Central Council was able to subsidise conferences working in poorer parishes from levies on conferences who worked in parishes with less pressing problems. Sometimes such grants from the Central Council were made in kind as in November 1868 when,

> The treasurer received a note from Mr. Wright Secty. of the Council informing him that if he should go to Mr. Schoolbred pres. of St. James' Conf Bootle he would give him a piece of Flannell *(sic)* for the Conference. [37]

This gift was gratefully received and within a couple of weeks it was being proposed and carried at the weekly meeting that `Mrs Donnelly do receive as much flannell *(sic)* as will make a petticoat'. [38] In the same month of December 1868,

> Bro. Kehoe informed the meeting that Bro. Kennedy had obtained a certain amount of discretionary permission to supply a certain amount of wine to any of the sick poor of the Conferance *(sic).* [39]

This rather delphic minute, however, does not indicate the

source of the 'discretionary permission' or indeed that of the wine. The wine may have come from a local anonymous benefactor or from Kennedy's employer.

It is certain that benefactors did from time to time give valuable articles to the conference which could be used to raise money. In September 1868 Mrs Phillips of Highfield Street gave a gold watch to the conference which it decided to raffle. It was intended that the draw should take place on the first Tuesday in November." Tuesday was the normal meeting day for the conference. However, the conference found its intention blocked by the law for on 13 October the president, Kehoe, reported 'that the act of Parliament as regards raffles came into effect on the first day of this month and declares that all such things are illegal'. To find a way out of this dilemma and a way around the legal restrictions, Kehoe had contacted 'Bro. Lynch of St. Francis (Xavier) who advised him to have printed on the tickets, a Watch to be disposed off *(sic)* for the benefit of the sick poor of the parish'.

It was decided to have three hundred tickets printed to be sold at one shilling each and that the day 'for the disposal of the watch be 11 December 1868% [41] At the end of October the conference drew up a list of members who had taken tickets for the raffle. Three members had taken forty tickets each, the rest being distributed in varying numbers to the other members of the conference, the lowest number being the five taken by Bro. Ryan. It is not clear whether the individuals named bought the tickets themselves or merely made themselves responsible for their sale. There was obviously some concern to keep a strict check of the tickets distributed, for it emerged that money was still outstanding from a previously held raffle. Bro. Hughes was 'respectfully requested to call upon . . . [no name written in the minutes] formerly a member of this Conferance *(sic)* for 2/- due since the disposal of the last watches'. [42] An account of the raffle ticket money was duly handed to the treasurer at the meeting held on 1 December and it was decided that the draw should now be held on 15 December. In fact, for reasons which are not explained, but presumably because all the money was not collected until then, the draw was actually held on 29 December. Bro. Kennedy was declared to be the winner

and the final accounts were produced. [43] As all three hundred tickets had been sold, the conference's funds had benefited by the substantial sum of £15.

In addition to their works of charity and the prayers and readings shared at the beginning of each meeting, the members of the conference enjoyed at least a restricted number of recreational activities together. At the end of June 1868 the weekly meeting was held on Monday 29 June rather than on the normal Tuesday as

> The excursion of the year for the Society takes place tomorrow to Chatsworth and as the majority of them will be there it was deemed advisable to hold the meeting tonight. [44]

Disappointingly, nothing further appears in the minutes about this trip. Presumably the excursion was a joint one for all the local conferences and it is likely that the members travelled by train. Chatsworth House, the home of the Duke of Devonshire, was open free to visitors at this time and the railway conveniently stopped at Rowley on the fringe of the estate. [45] However, all we get from the minutes is this glimpse of the wider world which was being opened up to Victorians of relatively modest means by the availability of railway excursions.

The work of the Society of St Vincent de Paul was to give relief to the poor, the deserving Catholic poor. In St Mary's parish there was clearly a need for such work. The conference went about this work without commenting on the political or economic causes of the atrocious social conditions under which those 'worthy' of charity lived. The men who gave their time and services to the St Mary's Conference did not see themselves as social or political reformers. Their work was one of the corporal works of mercy. We expect too much of them if we, from our late twentieth-century vantage point, regret that they did not see the connection between political action to change society and corporal works of mercy. Similarly, it would be harsh to criticise them on the grounds that their efforts were narrowly sectarian, being directed solely at the 'deserving poor' of the Catholic community. They were locked into the attitudes of their own times when Liverpool's working-class was bitterly divided along sectarian lines and Catholics saw themselves, if

not as a persecuted minority, at least as a group severely discriminated against.[46] The members of the conference saw it as their duty to minister to the needs of their co-religionists. Their vision may have been a narrow one but their efforts were none the less praiseworthy.

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THE SHREWSBURY DIOCESAN ARCHIVES

E.M. Abbott

The Shrewsbury Diocesan Archives are housed in the Curial Office, 2 Park Road South, Birkenhead.

Materials relating to parishes are kept in boxes.

The manuscript history of the diocese written by Mgr Edward Slaughter in the last century and bound in two volumes is kept in a safe.

Other contents of the archives are letter books dating from the time of Bishop Knight (1884) to that of Bishop Moriarty (1934 -49). All the bishops' pastorals are kept in bound volumes, but those of Bishop Grasar and Bishop Gray have yet to be bound.

There is a set of the *Catholic Directory* from 1851 to the present, with the exception of that for 1882 which is at present missing. There are also some issues of the *Liverpool Diocesan Almanac* and the *Shrewsbury Diocesan Almanac,* and the *Birmingham Diocesan Directory* for 1914--21 and the *Shrewsbury Diocesan Directory* for 1914¯¯21. Accounts of synods are kept, and also all *Ad Clerum* items which are bound up to 1988.

To gain access to the archives, apply to the Diocesan Archivist, care of the Curial Offices, 2 Park Road South, Birkenhead, Wirrall.

CATHOLIC CHURCH ARCHITECTURE:
A Select Critical Bibliography

Denis Evinson

The boom in nineteenth-century studies in recent years has generated new attention towards the architecture of Catholic churches. Once dismissed as a kind of poor relation of Anglican churches, Catholic architecture is at present taken seriously, as a vigorous art form with a character of its own. From the Royal Chapels of the seventeenth and the Embassy Chapels of the eighteenth centuries, through the nineteenth century vicissitudes of the Gothic Revival, and the eventual challenge of the Early Christian and Romanesque revivals leading to the Modern Movement of the twentieth century, their story may be traced. The vigour of the movement derives from various factors — stylistic fashions, the varying tastes of bishops, rectors and lay patrons, the Oxford Movement, Irish immigration, and not least that widespread poverty which served as an insurance against missionary complacency.

As a result of these factors, Catholic churches exhibit the best and the worst of our country's architecture. It may assist the confused Catholic, therefore, to analyse some approaches to the subject and to indicate some literature.

The diligent researcher who succeeds in locating a copy of Kelly's work may find it irritating and helpful by turns. The book contains some twelve hundred entries on missionary foundations, their building history, patronage and the clerical staffing of parishes. Kelly's information tends, however, to be piecemeal, and occasionally inaccurate. Whilst he is strong on dates of church openings, he is inconsistent about naming architects, patrons and the cost of churches. Yet his book gathers together much that cannot be found elsewhere.'

Brian Little treats England and Wales comprehensively. He cites the best examples in outlining stylistic trends, and treats also of patronage, the role of the clergy and monastic developments with insight. There is also a brief introduction to the subject, and a survey of church furnishings. [2]

Some acquaintance with the Gothic Revival is a must for the earnest student of churches. The trail was blazed by Eastlake, and taken up again by Kenneth Clark. [3]

As a pioneer of the Gothic Revival, some knowledge of Pugin's theory and practice is also essential. An attractive figure, historically and artistically, he has been treated by various hands: Ferrey, Trappes-Lomax, Denis Gwynn and Phoebe Stanton. Stanton, the most recent, is a must for those seeking to understand Pugin the designer. [4]

Other Catholic architects have received less attention. Apart from a survey of the nineteenth century and the monumental work on John Francis Bentley, the architect of Westminster Cathedral, no other printed book springs to mind. There are, however, theses on Joseph Hansom and Henry Clutton. [5]

Other works treat Catholic churches in depth in the West Riding, London, and the Brith Isles within various dates. [6] Those interested in area studies may find much of value also in the excellent series of County books, masterminded by Pevsner, which amounts to an architectural Doomsday study. Since Pevsner's death, the editorial team continues to issue revised editions. Volumes on the Celtic fringe have also begun to appear.'

Books on individual churches are comparatively rare. Among the better known are Hadfield on St Marie, Sheffield, Bogan on Southwark Cathedral, Ryan on St Francis Xavier's, Liverpool, and Anderson on St Mary's, Chelsea. [8]

Apart from the foregoing, there are a large number of booklets, guides and short histories, obtainable at the actual churches, or in local libraries. From an architectural viewpoint, these are of variable quality, since they are frequently written by non-specialists. Priests, too, vary in what they wish to sponsor. A recent invitation to write something for a church centenary had to be declined, since the rector specified that there must not be anything on the building history, architectural detail or the art work of his church.

Those engaged on research in depth on parish church architecture of the nineteenth century will find that periodicals constitute a veritable quarry of information. [9] Victorian periodicals are not usually well indexed, however, and the quarry must

be worked with diligence and great patience.

For reportage on the building progress of Catholic work the most useful journals are *The Builder, Building News* and *The Architect.* Among Catholic periodicals reports on church building may be found in the Diocesan News section of *The Tablet;* also useful are *The Universe* and for modern times, the *Catholic Building Review.* [10]

NOTES

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THREE OXFORD HISTORIANS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION:
J.M. Thompson, Richard Cobb, and John McManners

Aidan Bellenger OSB

The French Revolution may or may not be something to celebrate but it is certainly something to remember and, as the bicentenary of the opening of the French Revolution in 1789 is commemorated, the number of books on the subject multiplies. In this short article I shall look at the historical contribution of three Oxford historians who have become celebrated specialists on the history of France and whose writings have established themselves as standard works.

My own interest in the French Revolution goes back many years. As a boy of nine I was confirmed by Cardinal Godfrey in the little chapel of St Mary at Hampstead in North London which had been built the year after Waterloo by an *emigre* priest from Normandy, a province where some of my French ancestors lived. As a sixth former I studied the French Revolution as a special subject and was introduced to the writings of George Rude, Georges Lefebvre' and **J.M.** Thompson. As an undergraduate at Cambridge, I had among my supervisors two distinguished young historians of Modern Europe, Norman Stone and Simon Schama, [2] now professor at Oxford and Harvard respectively, who whetted my appetite for further enquiry into French history. As a research student I turned to the French Revolution in a more professional way which led, after a string of articles and a book on another subject, to the publication in 1986 of my study of *The French Exiled Clergy.* [3] In my years of research I became an avid reader of Richard Cobb and owed an increasing debt to John McManners who was the external examiner of my 1978 **Ph.D.** thesis. At the same time, especially from 1972 to 1975, I discovered the joys (and frustrations) of the old Archives Nationales in Paris and the great diversity of local departmental and ecclesiastical archives. I also explored much of France, town and country, and began to appreciate the country's rich inheritance and variety. This is not an autobiographical essay but I have been too much influenced as a historian by the biographical approach to neglect

some mention of my own background. The study of individuals is a necessary introduction to the study of groups and movements, and all three of the Oxford historians in this article write vividly and personally about the past. Not for them the dry statistical approach to history which so often masquerades today as the real thing. They remain highly individual in their approach and each of them has a different angle of vision.

J.M. Thompson's writings on the French Revolution are still read and most of them have been reissued recently by Basil Blackwell. In 1929 *Leaders of the French Revolution* was published. Thompson penned a series of vivid vignettes which gave life and character to some of the central personalities of the Revolution. These studies were impressionistic and not without factual errors but they were important in that they were Thompson's first experiment in the method of history by personal interview. His life of Robespierre, perhaps the central character in the revolutionary pantheon, was acclaimed as a masterpiece of historical synthesis and it remains the most accessible introduction to Robespierre's career. It could be added that Robespierre's career is the most accessible introduction to the French Revolution itself. Thompson continued his biographical studies with lives of Napoleon Bonaparte and Louis Napoleon and made his vast knowledge of the Revolution open to the public with his general history of *The French Revolution* which perhaps remains the best standard history of the subject in English. [4]

Thompson's erudition and his Wykehamist elan opened up the subject of the French Revolution to the English-speaking world. Along with Alfred Cobban, [5] he probably did most to make the French Revolution comprehensible on this side of the Channel. Thompson's late-found skill as a historian of France was primarily a donnish pursuit conducted in the civilised surrounding of Magdalen and the Bodleian Library where his library now rests. Thompson did not, as it were, get his boots dirty. Richard Cobb, as prolific as Thompson, shares the other man's zest for life, but his scholarship has been pursued in the field, especially in the archives of France, and has in character much more of the café about it than the Oxford common-room

which was Thompson's natural habitat.

Cobb's reputation rests on a variety of firm foundations. He writes interestingly and amusingly in a unique way which incorporates long passages in French and many diverting digressions. He reveals a deep understanding and a great command of primary sources. Most importantly, Cobb has profoundly influenced the way in which many people look at the Revolution. He has underlined the importance of local variations as against national norms. He believes that seeking a synthesis in so diffuse a subject would produce bad history. His subject is chaotic and he admits he has written about it chaotically. Chaotically perhaps, but never vaguely. In his vast impressionistic canvas there is hardly ever a misplaced brushmark.

His first published works were in French and his magnum opus *Les armies revolutionnaires* did not appear in English (translated by another) until 1987. It emphasises, despite its meticulous organisation of material, the omnipresence of revolutionary anarchy and the overriding importance of local knowledge — archival and topographical — for the historian. He has developed these themes in his English books, notably in *A Second Identity, The Police and the People,* and *Reactions to the French Revolution.* In the last book he evokes the character of revolutionary Lyons, not just describing a place but bringing to life its local mentality. Cobb's history is not French history, but French provincial history. He brings the study of the great issue, in his municipalisation, into its proper métier, the town, the village, the quartier. Local history is not always comfortable history. In *Paris and its Provinces, 1792-1802,* for example, he discusses the geography of mistrust, and examines the mutual hatred and suspicion which poisoned relations between Parisians and the inhabitants of the outlying villages. [6]

Cobb always displays a great sense of place but he is aware that places change. Not so people. 'People have not changed much, but places certainly have, and everywhere for the worse. If one wishes to preserve memories that were happy, it is advisable not to go back.' [7] For Cobb, it is through individuals that a fuller understanding of the past can be gained. `To return to the individual does not mean to exclude the

Revolution, to diminish its grandeur, to deny its sometimes universal appeal, it is merely a further effort to put that Revolution in a more human perspective.' Indeed, for Cobb 'the Revolution might be seen as through a prism, magnifying or diminishing according to the angle from which it was viewed.' Cobb's intent is to 'view the revolutionary person' through the study of 'as wide as possible a variety of individual experiences, within the scope of a work that is not exhaustive and that is based on a limited documentation.' [8] The view from below as well as from above is equally telling because 'the Revolution exists as much' in 'narrow, unremarkable lives, or in their violent and bloody enterprises, as in the lives of the great.' [9]

For John McManners, too, the history of society 'is primarily a history of persons'. [10] His principal historical contribution is his series of studies of the French Church in the eighteenth century. His first major study looked at religious history in a provincial setting on the eve of the Revolution, a previously neglected area of study among English-language historians. McManners demonstrates the nuances and tensions of ecclesiastical life with a splendid selection from the Anjou archives. His city emerges as a place of many paradoxes.

> It was [he suggests] real and tangible, patterned with passions and petty strife, injustices and anomalies, comedy and farce — all the dust and gilt with which the ambitious selfishness of man contrives to overlay the solid things in which he sincerely believes.

Alongside 'the magic peals and haunting choirs', he continues, `there are also battles over bell-ropes and tumults in vestries'. This 'angular prickly complex of mingled good and petty evil', he concluded, 'formed a natural community and a spiritual abiding place'. "

McManners, whose first book provided a rare insight into the France which was lost in the Revolution, produced a series of general textbooks which are all characterised by a lightness of touch and carefully chosen phrases. They included a short book on *The French Revolution and the Church* which remains the best English introduction to the subject. He showed how central an understanding of the history of the French Church is

to an understanding of the French Revolution. Thus, for example, he writes: 'If there was a point at which the Revolution "went wrong", it was when the Constituent Assembly imposed the oath to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, 27 November 1790. This marked the end of national unity, and the beginning of civil war.' [12] McManners gave recognition to the ecclesiastical dimension of the Revolution.

If the short introduction to *The French Revolution and the Church* is an invaluable guide to the subject, it is *Death and the Enlightenment* which is, at present, McManners' most important work. [13] It is a large-scale survey of, according to its subtitle, `changing attitudes to death among Christians and Unbelievers in Eighteenth-century France' which reveals the hopes and fears of the people of the period as they faced the shadow of the inevitable. It traces the development of ideas throughout the century and shows the sociological as well as the personal dimensions of dying. Like Cobb, McManners has the ability to suggest a deep understanding of the past through material which might appear on first sight to be arid and unenlightening. McManners, as it were, brings death to life. It is to be hoped that he will do the same for the whole French Church in the eighteenth century when he publishes his projected history.

The French Revolution has appealed to English historians since Burke first castigated it in the 1790s. There have been many good English-language historians of the Revolution which is an essential ingredient of our common European inheritance. Among the best of the writers are the three Oxford historians of this paper. All of them show a true historian's instinct and empathy for their historical subjects, a combination of detachment and commitment which all historians or students of history would do well to emulate.

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STATE OF THE ART: A REVIEW

J.A. Hilton

The last of these reviews concentrated on autobiographies and biographies. The autobiography of the retired bishop of Salford gives a picture of clerical life in the middle of this century. Biography remains the predominant approach to our subject. A collective biography of the earls of Derby provides background to the history of the region. A history of the Ecclestons deals with recusant gentry in what became St Helens. A study of Sir William Massey describes the emergence of his Cheshire family into recusancy. Detail is added to our knowledge of an eighteenth-century Cumbrian riding priest. When the Stendhalion Blanco White arrived in Liverpool, he had ceased to be a Catholic, but his biography throws light on religion in Spain and Britain in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Lingard's work as an historian is examined. A collection of Hopkins's writings on Lancashire gives vivid detail on the county in the nineteenth century and demonstrates the influence of the landscape on the poet. [1]

Research on the entire English Catholic community, especially the role of the clergy, during the Counter-Reformation, is reassessed in a bibliographical essay, whilst the world-wide impact of the Counter-Reformation is surveyed. The commoners who made up the bulk of the Lancashire Catholics are treated to a careful analysis. The role of the Catholic gentry in the origins of the Industrial Revolution in the North East is examined in an article which could be profitably followed for this side of the Pennines. A survey of the sources dealing with the work of the regular clergy in the North West refers to the massive contribution of female religious. An essay outlines the problems involved in working on convent archives and indicates the way forward, whilst another by the same author marks out the progress already made and deals with the work in Manchester of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion. A local study examines the economic and social consequences of Irish immigration, whilst its political consequences for Irish nationalism

and Catholic education are considered. The church buildings of eighteenth-century Manchester and of nineteenth-century Wigan are described.

All this research depends upon the sources, and guides to the sources continue to appear, including those at Stonyhurst (an extended version of an article which first appeared in this journal) and Upholland. There is also a useful guide to listing such records. The second and final volume of the 1767 papist returns includes the diocese of Carlisle, and, although genealogists will be disappointed by the lack of names for this and some other dioceses, historians will welcome the social and economic details. [3]

The state of the art of history is examined in a survey of the discipline. Any local historian would benefit from using a new handbook on the subject, and the Editor's job would certainly be made easier if its lessons were taken to heart, especially on the importance of giving precise references (author, title, place and date of publication, and page numbers for printed sources, and name and place of archive and call-number for manuscripts). [4]

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