From the Fylde to Rome: Two Essays on the Life and Influence of William Allen includes a survey of Post-Reformation Catholicism in the Fylde and an account of Rome, its architecture and music, in the later sixteenth century.

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Two Essays on the Life and Influence

of

William Allen

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The cover-illustration is a portrait of William, Cardinal Allen,
from a print in the possession of the author.

The cross on the title-page is derived from the arms of
Willliam, Cardinal Allen.

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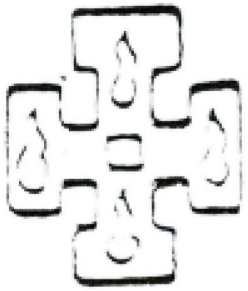

J. A. Hilton

North West Catholic History Society

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Preface

In 1994 events were held to commemorate the four hundredth anniversary of the death of William, Cardinal Allen. Canon Thomas Dakin and the late Canon Alban J.Cochrane organised a series of lectures at Cardinal Allen School, Fleetwood: the Rev. M.E.Williams lectured on 'William Allen: The Sixteenth-Century Spanish Connection', which was published in *Recusant History,* XII(2) (1994), pp.123-40; Mr Leo Warren lectured on the Continental English Seminaries, and a much condensed version of this lecture appeared as 'The Continental Seminaries: A Bibliography' in *North West Catholic History,* XXII (1995), pp.34-35; and I lectured on the Catholic Fylde, and a version of this lecture appears here. The North West Catholic History Society organised two concerts of sacred music contemporary with Allen, at which I talked about the music and architecture of Allen's Rome, and a version of this lecture appears here. One concert was arranged at St Mary's, Warrington, by the Rev. Augustine Measures OSB and Mr Brian Plumb, and was given by St Mary's choir under their musical director, Mr Howard Barlow; the other was arranged at St John's, Wigan, by the Rev. Francis W.Tillotson and Mr Bernard Dorgan, and was given by the Lydian Singers under their musical director, Mr John Naylor.

I am grateful to Mr Brian Plumb for his remarks on the draft of 'The Catholic Fylde' and to the late Bishop Brian Charles Foley for his remarks on the draft of 'William Allen's Rome' (Bishop Foley's collection of books on Rome is now at the Talbot Library, Preston).

The delay in publishing these two papers is because of circumstances beyond my control.

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2002

The Catholic Fylde

J. A. Hilton

At the opening of St Joseph's, Wesham, on 21 March 1886, the Rev. John Bilsborrow, a native of Kirkham, rector of Upholland College, formerly priest of St Mary's, Newsham, and later to become bishop of Salford, declared:

> Lancashire was the backbone of Catholicity in England ... and the Fylde was the backbone - the cream of Catholicity in Lancashire.[1]

He was right about Lancashire, and his claim for the Fylde is certainly arguable. This paper is an outsider's view of the Fylde's Catholicism, its medieval origins, its response to the Reformation, and its growth, following toleration and the Industrial Revolution.

The Fylde is, of course, a peninsula, bounded on three sides by the Irish Sea and the Rivers Ribble and Wyre. Its landward boundary is less distinct. It hardly extends as far east as the Pennine fells. It probably runs along the Preston-Garstang road (the A6). However, old maps, such as Saxton's of 1577, Speed's of 1610, and Camden's of 1695, give the prominence of a boundary to Woodplumptom brook, which flows north from Woodplumpton to join the River Brock, which in turn joins the Wyre at St Michael's. [2] Whatever its eastern frontier, the Fylde certainly forms a distinct sub-region, sometimes nicknamed 'Windmill Land'.[3] It may be defined as consisting of the six medieval parishes of Bispham, Lytham, Poulton, Kirkham, St Michael's, and Woodplumpton, if we ignore that part of St Michael's north of the Wyre and the detached portion of Kirkham to the east around Goosnargh. Like certain other districts such as Furness and Blackburnshire, it amounts to what the French call a *pays,* a distinct sub-region. Although it was remote from London, the Fylde was on

Preston's doorstep, but it was isolated behind its rivers, marshes, and mosses. Until the Industrial Revolution, it was thinly populated. In 1664 there were only 30 houses in Hambleton, 40 in both Weeton and Newton-with Scales, 42 in Great Eccleston, and 59 in Pilling.[4]

Before the Reformation the Fylde was part of the archdiocese of York. Its liturgy, therefore, was the elaborate use of York, similar to the better-known use of Sarum, with its chanting and processions. The church administered the sacraments, including the rites of passage at birth, adulthood, marriage, and death, and Mass was celebrated in the parish churches on Sundays and the numerous holy days, including the great feasts which marked the cycle of the agricultural year. Perpendicular parish churches at St Michael's and Woodplumpton survive from the late middle ages.[5]

The traditions of a thousand years were swept away by the Reformation. Under Henry VIII royal supremacy replaced papal supremacy over the English Church, the monasteries, including the Benedictine priory of Lytham, a cell of the monastic cathedral of Durham, were dissolved, and Lancashire was included in the newly created diocese of Chester. Under Edward VI England became a Protestant country, the chantry chapels, where Mass was said for the families of the founders, were dissolved, and a new Protestant English liturgy was imposed. Queen Mary I restored Catholicism, but Elizabeth I re-imposed Protestantism. Meanwhile the Council of Trent (1545-62) defined the controverted doctrines and revived the discipline of the Catholic Church.[6]

The Catholic challenge to the Elizabethan Settlement was led by a native of the Fylde, William Allen. The son of John Allen of Rossall, Poulton-le-Fylde, was born in 1532, he went up to Oxford University in 1547, the year that Henry VIII died. He took the degree of M.A. in 1554, the year of the

Marian restoration, and in 1556 he became principal of St Mary's Hall. In 1559, rather than accept the new dispensation in religion, he resigned and later went to Louvain in the Spanish Netherlands. He returned briefly to Lancashire, Oxford, and Norwich to rally support, and then returned to the continent. Ordained priest in 1565, he established the English college at Douay (Douai) in 1568. The original purpose of this college seems to have been to train priests ready to return to England if Catholicism was restored once again. However, in 1574 he began to send his seminary priests to work on what became known as the English Mission. English people were under social and legal pressures to conform to the Established Church. The parish church remained the centre of religious and social life, and, despite religious conservatism, Protestantism became widely accepted. An increasingly severe penal code enforced conformity to the Church of England. Nevertheless, Allen and his seminary priests urged Catholics not to conform. We know little of what went on in people's minds and hearts, but we can know something about their behaviour. That there were Catholics who refused to conform to the Anglican Church, Catholic recusants as they were known, who came to form a distinct Catholic community, was largely the result of the work of Allen's seminary priests. 'Our aim', he declared, 'has always been to train Catholics to be plainly and openly Catholics, to be men who will absolutely refuse any kind of spiritual commerce with heretics'.[7] Allen went on to found the Venerable English College in Rome in 1580. He was made a cardinal in 1587 and appointed archbishop of Malines in 1589. When he died in 1594 he left his vestments to the parish churches of St Michael's and Poulton in the event of the restoration of Catholicism.[8]

That this Counter-Reformation English Catholicism was strongest in Lancashire and particularly in the Fylde may owe more than any other factor - remoteness, large parishes, the personalities of provincial officials - to the personal influence of William Allen exerted through his family and friends. His

brother George married Elizabeth Westby, who eventually fled to Douay, taking with her two of her daughters who became nuns at Louvain. A third daughter, Mary, married Thomas Worthington of Blainscough, Standish, whose uncle became third president of the the English college at Douay Elizabeth Allen's brother John Westby of Mowbreck entertained William Allen in the 1560s and became an obstinate recusant. John Westby's second wife was Catherine Southworth of Samlesbury and his third wife was Ann Molyneux of Sefton. Westby's sister Helen married Ewan Haydock of Cottam. The widowed Ewan Haydock became a seminary priest, as did his son Richard, who became chamberlain to Cardinal Allen, and his son George, who suffered martyrdom. Their nephew Andrew Haydock, whose mother was a Hoghton of Hoghton, became a Benedictine monk of Compostella, went on the English mission, became superior of the Anglo-Spanish Benedictine mission, and was one of the architects of the revived English Benedictine congregation. The Catholic Fylde and indeed Catholic Lancashire were the extended family (the Catholic cousinage) and social network of William Allen.[9]

Whilst the gentry and the clergy, often the sons of the gentry, were the leaders of the recusant community, they were supported by commoners who themselves might fall foul of the penal laws. In 1623 Richard Hurst, a yeoman of Broughton, was convicted of recusancy, and a pursuivant was sent to apprehend him. In the ensuing fracas one of the pursuivant's assistants fell over and broke his leg, which proved eventually to be fatal. Although the dying man solemnly declared that his death was accidental, Hurst was charged with murder and found guilty. He was ordered to attend church to hear a Protestant sermon. When he refused, he was dragged there by the legs. In church he thrust his fingers into his ears. At the gallows he was offered a pardon if he would take the anti-Catholic oath of allegiance, and when he refused he was hanged.[10]

Throughout the penal period the gentry were the pillars of the Catholic community, and their houses contained the chapels where the rest of the community worshipped. There was a chapel at Lytham Hall from 1625 until 1764 when it was replaced by a larger tithe-barn in the grounds. There was also a chapel at Mowbreck Hall, which was re-built about 1731 with a purpose-built chapel and quarters for the priest. At Great Singleton in 1618, however, the Catholics bought a disused pre-Reformation chapel to use for Mass. Morever, provision was made by the clergy for independent clerical missions. Thus George Crooke, one of the Crookes of Bank Hall, Broughton, who was ordained in 1661 and worked on the Lancashire mission until his death at Bank Hall in 1709, left money for the maintenance of the mission.[11]

During the Civil Wars the threat of a Puritan victory caused the Catholic gentry to throw themselves wholeheartedly into the royalist cause. Sir Thomas Tyldesley of Myerscough, Garstang, raised regiments during the First Civil War, and during the Second Civil War he and Lord Derby landed at the mouth of the Wyre to recruit a force which was defeated at Wigan, where Tyldesley was slain (the Monument there commemorates the event). Six of the Westbys served in the royalist armies.[12]

After the overthrow of the Catholic King James II in 1688 the recusant gentry were amongst the Jacobite supporters of the exiled king and his heirs. Sir Thomas Clifton was involved in the Lancashire Plot of 1694. Edward Tyldesley joined the 1715 rebellion and James Tyldesley the 1745.[13]

Building up a clear picture of this early modern Catholic community is fraught with difficulties. The sources are patchy and inconsistent, and raise all sorts of problems of interpretation. A detailed study of Lytham points out the difficulty of identifying Catholics.[14] All we can know is what the sources tell us, and we must beware of our own assumptions and of speculating about what the sources do not

tell us. The majority of the population conformed to the Church of England, and even in the Fylde Catholics were never more than a minority, whilst there were also Protestant Dissenters of various sorts. As the vicar of Kirkham explained to the bishop of Chester in 1669: 'There are three sorts of conventicles, viz. Papists and Quakers and Fanatical or Mixed Multitude'.[15] The Compton Census of 1676 was compiled by the Anglican clergy and churchwardens. It put the total adult population of Bispham parish at 385, including only six Catholic recusants, and two Protestant Dissenters; it listed 242 Catholic recusants in Kirkham, where Catholics attended Mass in hundreds; Lytham contained a total of 181 adults, including twenty Catholic recusants, although Sir Thomas Clifton was listed among the conformists, and no Dissenters. The more detailed return made for Broughton gave the number of adult inhabitants as 636, including 192 Catholic recusants, approximately one third of the population, and no Dissenters. In Broughton about a third of all households were headed by widows, who thus achieved a certain independence in a largely patriarchal society. Moreover, in Broughton there were several households with Catholic heads and Protestant servants and vice versa, belying the expectation of denominational households. The register of recusants compiled two years later in 1678 by the magistrates, as a result of Titus Oates's Popish Plot, reveals a community headed by the gentry like Sir Cuthbert Clifton, but consisting mainly of common people engaged in agriculture and domestic industry: yeomen, husbandmen, labourers, weavers, carpenters, blacksmiths, shoemakers, and so on. When in 1687 Bishop Leyburn came to administer confirmation to Catholics for the first time since the Elizabethan Reformation, he confirmed 442 at Myerscough, 397 at Clifton, and 1,143 at Preston and Tulketh. In 1705 the parochial authorities listed 21 Catholics in Lytham parish, including Thomas Clifton, his chaplain, steward, butler, groom, coachman, and head servant. They also listed 479 Catholics in Kirkham parish, including many tenants of Thomas Clifton. By 1755, Kirkham had 1,177 families of whom 868 were Anglican, 229 Catholic, and

40 Nonconformist. In 1767 the parochial authorities listed 1,259 Catholics in the parish of Kirkham.[16] The vicar of Kirkham advised the bishop thus:

> We find with regret the advantages Popery is continually gaining over us, and should be glad to see laws made to prevent the growth of it. That thereby Papists might not be allowed to marry with Protestants. That they might not be allowed to take Protestant servants into their families. And it would be a very salutary provision if the children of Papists that fall chargeable to parishes or towns might be educated in the established religion – such provisions as these could not be complained of, for their severity, by the Papists who are favoured with so many indulgences; and would soon approve their utility by the continual visible decrease of the individuals of a dangerous and incroaching set of people.[17]

There were also 373 Catholics listed in the parish of Lytham, again headed by the Clifton household including its Jesuit priest. There were 275 Catholics listed at St Michael's, 282 at Woodplumpton, 146 at Poulton, and 313 at Broughton. This return of 176, supplemented by the published Catholic registers, contains the information for a detailed demographic analysis of the Catholic community.[18]

Widespread poverty was endemic in early modern England, and the Catholics of the Fylde were actively engaged in trying to remedy the problem. The Broughton Catholic Charitable Society was formed in 1787. One of its founders was Peter Newby, the 'friend to all mankind',[19] a former pupil of Dame Alice Harrison's school at Fernyhalgh, who kept a school at Great Eccleston. Meanwhile from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century the Catholic priests at Lancaster were concerned to provide apprenticeships for poor Catholics in the Fylde and elsewhere in the region.[20]

By the end of the eighteenth century the Agrarian Revolution was changing farming in the Fylde with the draining of the marshes, as the Industrial Revolution in nearby Preston provided an expanding market. The Relief Act of 1778 removed the legal restraints on Catholic landowning, and the Relief Act of 1791 permitted the opening of public Catholic chapels. Meanwhile the letters of the Rev. Robert Banister, who resided at Mowbreck Hall until he retired to Dodding Green in Westmorland in 1803, provide a vivid picture of English Catholic life in general and in the Fylde in particular, ranging from a Squire John Clifton's passion for hunting to the poor women who slept with their children to keep them warm but were in danger of crushing them to death.[21] Then in 1829 the Emancipation Act allowed Catholics to hold public office. Dom Richard Pope, the Benedictine priest at Lytham, was riding his pony to Chorley when he was overtaken by a group of gentlemen who included Towneley Parker, a Catholic recently appointed a justice of the peace. When they jokingly advised Pope to exchange his pony for a donkey, he replied 'I would, but, unfortunately they are very hard to get, as they have all been made J.P.s'.[22]

Despite Catholic Emancipation Thomas Clifton conformed to the Church of England in 1831, and closed the Catholic chapels on his estates. Fortunately the Catholic community was now strong enough to manage without his seigneurial support, and in 1839 built St Peter's in Lytham in the fashionable Gothic style.[23]

In the mid-nineteenth century more fundamental economic and social changes were brought about by the coming of the railways, as the line was extended from Preston to the new port of Fleetwood. Agriculture flourished, and the cotton, sailcloth, and fishing industries were developed in the Fylde. Industry brought immigrants, including Irish Catholics. Thus the Catholic population of Kirkham increased from 621 in

1851 to 1,016 in 1855. Above all, the new seaside resorts, Blackpool and Lytham St Anne's,[24] developed on a coast 'devoted to the art (or craft) of pleasure',[25] and splendid new churches, such as Sacred Heart, Blackpool, were built and enlarged. The English hierarchy was restored in 1851, and Ultramontanism, which subjected the laity to the clergy, the clergy to the bishops, and the bishops to the pope, was triumphant. Bishop Brown had already suppressed the lay trustees who had set up the mission in Fleetwood. James Sharples, coadjutor bishop of the Lancashire district and the last prelate to die as an English vicar apostolic, is buried at St Mary's Great Eccleston. Papal infallibility was defined by the First Vatican Council in 1870, and the diocese of Lancaster was created in 1924. The previous year, Thomas Holden entrusted to St Robert's church at Catforth the relics of persecution that turned the church into a shrine. Leadership of the Catholic community passed completely from the gentry to the clergy, men like Canon Joseph McKenna, who was awarded the M.B.E. for organising relief during the Fleetwood flood in 1927.[26]

Meanwhile the Cliftons returned to the Catholic faith with the conversion of John Talbot Clifton, but in 1979 on the death of Henry Talbot de Vere Clifton, the estate was sold. By that time, despite the Renewal initiated by the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), the Catholic population of the diocese of Lancaster began to decline from 133,567 in 1966 to 116,731 in 1993, and new social changes were threatening the Catholic Fylde with dangers more insidious but just as dangerous as those which had challenged William Allen.[27]

Notes

[1] F.O.Blundell, *Old Catholic Lancashire* (3 vols, London, 1915-29), II, p.148.

[2] F.J.Singleton, 'Recusancy in the Fylde: A Select Critical Bibliography', *North West Catholic History,* XIII (1986), pp.31-34; J.J.Bagley and A.G.Hodkiss, *Lancashire: A History of the County Palatine in Old Maps* (Manchester, 1981), pp.12,18,28.

[3] A.Clarke, *Windmill Land* (London, 1916); Clarke, *More Windmill Land* (London, 1917).

[4] Blundell, II, pp.129-234; H.C.Collins, *Lancashire Plain and Seaboard* (London, 1953), pp.86-128; F.Braudel, *The Identity of France* (2 vols, London, 1989), I, pp.41-50; A.C.Parkinson, *A History of Catholicism in the Furness Peninsula* (Lancaster, 1998); R.Smith, *Ye Chronicles of Blackburnshire* (Nelson, 1910); D.Foster, *Excursions in Fylde History* (Nelson, no date), pp.7-8; C.Willoughby, *Transcription of Documents concerning Land Ownership and Apprenticeship in the Fylde Community* (Lancaster, no date), pp.1-21; J.Porter, *History of the Fylde in Lancashire* (Fleetwood, 1876).

[5] *Catholic Encyclopedia* (15 vols, London, 1906-14), XV, p.735; D.Rock, *The Church of our Fathers: A Selection* (Wigan, 1992); J.Bossy, *Christianity in the West* (Oxford, 1985); C.Haigh, *English Reformations* (Oxford, 1993),pp.25-39; E.Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (London, 1992), pp.9-376; N.Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Lancashire, The Rural North* (Harmondsworth, 1969), pp.215, 264.

[6] Blundell, I, p.121; Foster, p.7; Dufy, pp.373-593; Haigh, passim; P.Collinson, 'The Late Medieval Church and its

Reformation (1400-1600)' in J.McManners, *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity* (Oxford, 1992), pp.233-66.

[7] P.Hughes, *The Reformation in England* (3 vols, London, 1963), III, p.285.

[8] Hughes, III, pp.282-303; M.A.Mullett, *Catholics in Britain and Ireland, 1559-1829* (London, 1998), pp.1-26; G.Anstruther, *The Seminary Priests* (4 vols, Great Wakering, 1968-77), I, pp.4-5: T.F.Knox (ed.), *The Letters and Memorials of William Cardinal Allen* (London, 1882), pp.370-71.

[9] Singleton, *Mowbreck and the Willows* (Kirkham, 1983), pp.13-16; Anstruther, I, pp.157-60, 387-88; Blundell, II, pp.220-23; H.N.Birt, *Obit Book of the English Benedictines* (Edinburgh, 1913), p.31; J.A.Hilton, *Catholic Lancashire* (Chichester, 1994), pp.6-9, Bossy, *The English Catholic Community* (London, 1975), p.91.

[10] Blundell, II, pp.167-69.

[11] Mullett, pp.70-96; Blundell, I, p.121; Bossy, *Catholic Community,* p.126; Singleton, *Mowbreck,* pp.17-20.

[12] Blundell, II, pp.164-67; P.R.Newman, 'Catholic Royalist Activists in the North, 1642-46', *Recusant History,* IX(1) (1977), p.30; B.G.Blackwood, *The Lancashire Gentry and the Great Rebellion* (Manchester, Chetham Society, 3rd series, XXV); *Dictionary of National Biography* (21 vols, Oxford, 1907-17), XIX, pp.1344-45; Singleton, *Mowbreck,* p.18; G.Phillips, 'The Tyldesley Monument, Wigan', *NWCH,* XX (1993), pp.71-72.

[13] Blundell, II, p.29; *Victoria County History of Lancaster* (8 vols, London, 1906), VII, pp.139-40; P.K.Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People, 1688-1788* (Cambridge, 1993).

[14] B.Miller, 'Lytham Catholics in Restoration Times: A Statistical Analysis', *NWCH,*XXVII (2000), pp.14-19.
[15] *VCHLancs,* VII, p.149.

[16] Mullett, pp.138-61; P.Laslett, *The World we have lost* (London, 1979); Bossy, *Catholic Community,* p.126; M.Panikkar (ed.), *The Compton Census of 1676: The Lancashire Returns* (Wigan, 1995); N.Gardner (ed.), *Lancashire Quarter Sessions Records: Register of Recusants 1678* (Wigan, 1998), pp.87-137; *Lancashire Quarter Sessions Records: Register of Recusants 1682* (Wigan, 1999), passim; Hilton, A.J.Mitchinson, B.Murray, and P.Wells (eds), *Bishop Leyburn's Confirmation Register of 1687* (Wigan, 1997), pp.117-38, 283-84, 305, 307; Mitchinson (ed.), *The Return of the Papists of the Diocese of Chester, 1705* (Wigan, 1986), pp.31-38; *VCHLancs,* VII, p.149; E.S.Worall (ed.), *Returns of Papists 1767* (2 vols, London, 1980-89), I, pp..111-17, 122-24.

[17] Worrall, I, p.117.

[18] Worrall, I, pp.130-37, 144-46; *Lancashire Registers I (The Fylde I)* (Catholic Record Society, XV, London, 1918); *Lancashire Registers II (The Fylde II)* (CRS, XVI, London, 1919).

[19] Blundell, I, pp.92-118; M.Whitehead, *Peter Newby* (Lancaster, 1980).

[20] Willoughby, pp.166-223.

[21] Foster, p.8; Anstruther, IV, p.17; Blundell, II, pp.182-83; Singleton, *Mowbreck,* pp.22-24; L.Gooch (ed.), *The Revival of English Catholicism: The Banister-Rutter Correspondence 1777-1807* (Wigan, 1995), p.61.

[22] Blundell, I, p.128.

[23] *VCHLancs,* VII, pp.164, 219; Pevsner, p.173.

[24] *VCHLancs,* VII, p.237; J.K.Walton, *Wonderlands by the Waves* (Preston, 1992); Pevsner, pp.68-72, 172-76; Singleton, *Mowbreck,* p.61.

[25] K.Parry, *The Resorts of the Lancashire Coast* (Newton Abbot, 1983), p.7.

[26] Hilton, 'Catholic Congregationalism in Fleetwood, 1841-42', *NWCH,* XXVI (1999), pp.62-69; B.Plumb, *Arundel to Zabi: A Biographical Dictionary of the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales (Deceased) 1623-1987* (Warrington, 1987); Blundell, II, pp.229-34; J.E.Bamber, 'The Secret Treasure of Chaigley', *RH,* XV(4) (1985), pp.307-329; P.Runaghan, 'The Chaigley Martyr: Another Candidate', *NWCH,* XXIII (1996), pp.1-4; Plumb, 'The Founding Fathers of Lancaster Diocese' in Hilton (ed.), *Catholic Englishmen* (Wigan, 1984), p.56; O.Chadwick, 'Great Britain and Europe' in McManners, pp.341-83.

[27] *VCHLancs,* VII, p.164; *Lytham Hall* (Lytham, 1981; Plumb, *Catholic Englishmen,* p.56; *Lancaster Diocesan Directory 1995* (Preston, 1995), p.62; Hilton, *Catholic Lancs,* pp.122-32.

William Allen's Rome

J.A.Hilton

For the last nine years of his life William Allen, the leader of the English Counter-Reformation, resided in Rome, the centre of the Catholic Reformation. Its institutions, architecture, and music survive to this day. Allen himself was responsible for the organisation of the Venerable English College, founded in a city re-built by Pope Sixtus V as a setting for the papal liturgy, ornamented by the polyphony of Palestrina.

The Reformation began partly as an attempt to reform abuses, such as simony, within the Church. However, the Protestant Reformation, which swept through Northern Europe and into England, attacked some of the central tenets of traditional Catholic Christianity, not only the papal primacy, but also the role of the clergy as priests offering sacrifice and forgiving sins, traditional belief in the sacraments and purgatory, and the veneration of saints and their role as intercessors, as well as the religious life of monks and nuns, and traditional devotions and ornaments. The response of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, codified by the Council of Trent (1545-62) was not only to reform abuses but also to emphasise the very doctrines that the Protestants attacked. Reform was embraced by the papacy, the curia, the hierarchy, the clergy, and the religious, and new religious orders, pre-eminently the Jesuits, were formed to lead the Counter-Reformation in Europe and to take Catholicism to the Indies. Meanwhile, the survival of a remnant of the Catholic Church in England, especially in Lancashire, owed much to the leadership of William Allen.[1]

William Allen, the son of John Allen of Rossall, Poulton-le-Fylde, was born in 1532. He was educated at Oriel College, Oxford, and in 1556 he became principal of St Mary's Hall. He refused to accept the Elizabethan Protestant Settlement of the Church of England in 1559, and resigned. He later went to

Louvain in the Spanish Netherlands, and after a brief return to England, he went again to the Spanish Netherlands where he was ordained priest in 1565. In 1567 he visited Rome, and in 1568 he established the English College at Douay (Douai) to train English priests, sending the first on the English mission in 1574. In 1576 he returned to Rome, and drew up the plan that turned the English Pilgrim Hospice there into the Venerable English College, like Douay, a seminary for the education of English priests. However, although it was established to train secular priests, it was soon placed under a Jesuit rector.[2] After 1585 when it was made treason for them to enter England, the seminary priests going on the English mission went in danger of death. St Philip Neri, the founder of the Oratory and the apostle of Counter-Reformation Rome, lived opposite the college at San Giraloma della Carita and would greet the students with 'Salvete flores martyrum' [Hail flowers of the martyrs].[3] On their way back to England, the seminary priests would call on St Charles Borromeo, another leader of the Counter-Reformation, at Milan. Then in 1585 Allen went to Rome again, and remained there for the rest of his life. In 1587 he was made a cardinal (his titular church was San Martino ai Monti), and in 1589 was appointed archbishop of Malines. In 1591 he was appointed prefect of the English mission. He died in Rome in 1594, and was buried in the Venerable English College, to which he left his books.[4]

In Allen's day Rome was being re-built as the worthy capital of the Catholic Church. Since the decline of the Roman Empire the city had fallen into ruin, and the process had accelerated during the Avignonese Captivity (1309-77) when the papacy had been removed to Avignon by the kings of France, and during the Great Schism (1378-1417) when rival popes had claimed authority. Since then successive popes had attempted to restore the glories of ancient Rome in response to the Renaissance in learning and the arts.[5] For Pope Sixtus V (1585-90) Rome was the 'capital of the world'.[6] It was to become the image of the heavenly Jerusalem, a microcosm of the Catholic Church, and an

outward and visible sign of the papal claims to universal supremacy. Officials came to Rome on business, temporary or permanent, bishops came to make their visits *ad limina* [to the thresholds of the apostles], and pilgrims came to visit the shrines, especially during the jubilees or holy years, including those of 1575 and 1600. New Rome was being built to impress these visitors. At the same time, it was to be made safe, healthy, comfortable, efficient, and prosperous.[7]

Sixtus V entrusted the planning and creation of this new Rome to his architect and engineer, Domenico Fontana (1543-1607). Together they created a network of wide straight roads connecting together the main basilicas with their piazze and marking them with obelisks. For the erection of the obelisk at St Peter's, so the story goes, silence was imposed on the onlookers on pain of death, and the silence was kept until a sailor cried out that the ropes would snap unless wetted, for which happy fault he was not only spared but offered a reward: he asked that his home-town be allowed to supply St Peter's with palms for Palm Sunday. *Se non vero e ben trovato* [if not true, it is well discovered]. From the piazza, marked by its obelisk, at one end of St Mary Major, where Sixtus V was buried, roads radiated to St John Lateran and Santa Croce. From the other end of St Mary Major, also marked by an obelisk, roads radiated towards the Capitol past Santissima Trinita dei Monte, marked by another obelisk, to the Piazza del Popolo with another obelisk. It was these new vistas of Sistine Rome that opened before William Allen.[8]

Meanwhile the new basilica of St Peter's, was nearing completion with its lantern and dome symbolic of Christ the cornerstone and Peter the rock. At the same time over fifty new churches were built during the sixteenth century, including the Jesuit church of the Gesu completed in 1584. Allen's own church of San Martino ai Monti had been rebuilt in the ninth century and was, therefore, in the Romanesque style. It was to be rebuilt again in 1650 in the new Baroque style. These new churches were in effect theatres, where the

faithful witnessed the priest perform the miracle of the Mass, and where, in a practice begun by St Philip Neri, the Blessed Sacrament was exposed for the Quarant' Ore [Forty Hours] devotion in church after church, so that this worship became continuous. The new churches were built in the revived Classical style of the Renaissance with its orders of columns, its arches and domes, as laid down by the ancient writer Vitruvius and revived by the Renaissance architect Palladio. For Renaissance scholars, architecture was a form of sacred geometry, an expression of Platonic philosophy and the Hermetic mysteries, whereby mathematics made visible the secret harmonies of the universe.[9]

Music was also a mathematical representation of the order of the universe, capable of expressing and evoking emotion. In the later middle ages alongside the traditional plainsong of the liturgy with its simple plainsong melodies there had developed the elaborate form of polyphony. A choir was divided into a number of voices - trebles, altos, tenors, and basses - and each voice was given its own melody, all of which were sung simultaneously, and indeed one or more voices might be divided into separate sub-choirs each with its own melody. Developed in France and Flanders, polyphony had spread to England and to Italy. During the Counter-Reformation polyphony aroused opposition on the ground that the elaborate music obscured the words. The Council of Trent appointed a commission, which included St Charles Borromeo, to look into the question of liturgical music, and the Council decreed that the words of the Mass, apart that is from the Canon, which was whispered *sotto voce* by the priests,[10] 'should be uttered clearly and perfectly and sink quietly into the ears and hearts of the hearers', not 'contrived for the empty delight of the ears'.[11] Polyphony was, therefore, approved, as long as the words were audible and intelligible to those who understood Latin. Meanwhile the Oratory was developing the musical form that became oratorio.

The champion of the approved Roman style of polyphony was Giovanni Perluigi da Palestrina. Born in 1525/6, probably at Palestrina in the Sabine Hills overlooking Rome, he made his career as a musician in the Roman basilicas. He was trained as a choirboy at St Mary Major, and he became organist at the cathedral of Palestrina. When the bishop of Palestrina became Pope Julius III in 1550, Palestrina became maestro of the Cappella Giulia in St Peter's, then of the Capella Sistine, then of St John Lateran, then of St Mary Major, and again of the Cappella Giulia. His first compositions appeared in print in 1554, and have remained in the repertoire ever since. There is a story (also *se non vero e ben trovato*) that his *Missa Papae Marcelli* was the test-piece that persuaded to Council of Trent to accept polyphony. He died in Rome in 1594, the same year as Cardinal Allen.[12]

At the centre of the Catholic world, Rome attracted a cosmopolitan crowd of musicians. Tomas Luis de Victoria was a Spaniard, born in 1548 at Avila, where he became a chorister of the cathedral. In 1565 he entered the German College in Rome as a singer, became organist to Santa Maria di Monserrato, the Aragonese church, and in 1573 *maestro di cappella* (choirmaster) of the German College. In 1575 he was ordained priest by Bishop Thomas Goldwell, the last survivor of the old English hierarchy, at the English College, and joined the Oratory. In 1587 he returned to Spain as chaplain to King Philip II's sister, the Dowager Empress Maria, in the Carmel in Madrid. Orlando di Lassus was born in Mons in the Spanish Netherlands in 1532, and went to Italy, where, like Palestrina, he was for a time *maestro di cappella* at St John Lateran. He then entered the court of the duke of Bavaria, and died in Munich, also in 1594 like Palestrina and Allen. Philippe de Monte was also born in the Spanish Netherlands at Mechlin in 1521. Having been a choirboy at Mechlin, he went to Naples and Rome, and then went by way of Antwerp to England, where he became *chori praefectus* [choirmaster] in the chapel royal of King Philip of Spain, consort to Queen Mary. He then returned to Rome, and

in 1568 became *kappelmeister* [choirmaster] to the Emperor Maximilian II in the Imperial Court at Vienna and Prague. He was the friend of Lassus and the English composer Byrd. He died at Prague in 1603.[13]

Meanwhile in England the polyphonic style survived the Protestant Reformation. William Byrd was born probably at Lincoln in 1543. He was the pupil of Tallis, and became organist of Lincoln cathedral, and then, despite his Catholicism, he became a gentleman of Queen Elizabeth's chapel royal. In 1593 he moved to Essex to play and compose for the recusant household of the Petre family. He died in Essex in 1623.[14]

Peter Philips combined the English and Roman traditions. Born in London in 1560/61, he was a choirboy at St Paul's cathedral, but in 1582 he went to Douay and then to Rome, where he became organist at the Venerable English College. In the 1590s he entered the service of the Archduke Albert, the governor of the Spanish Netherlands.[15]

In their music we can hear the authentic voice of the Counter-Reformation, and in that of Palestrina we can listen to music which William Allen himself might well have heard in the basilicas of Sistine Rome.

Notes

[1] P.Collinson, 'The Late Medieval Church and its Reformation (1400-1600)' in J.McManners (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity* (Oxford, 1992), pp.233-66; M.Mullett, *The Counter-Reformation* (London, 1984); Mullett, *Catholics in Britain and Ireland 1558-1829* (London, 1998), pp.1-16; J.A.Hilton, *Catholic Lancashire* (Chichester, 1994), pp.1-15.

[2] P.Hughes, *The Reformation in England* (3 vols, London, 1963), III, pp.xxi, 282-301; G.Anstruther, *The Seminary Priests* (4 vols, Great Wakering, 1968-77), I, pp.4-5; M.E,Williams, *The Venerable English College, Rome* (1979), pp.4-6.

[3] Williams, p.9.

[4] T.F.Knox (ed.), *The Letters and Memorials of William Cardinal Allen* (London, 1882), pp.335-36, 379.

[5] C.Hibbert, *Rome* (Harmondsworth, 1985),pp.81-178; P.Hetherington, *Medieval Rome* (London, 1994); L.Partridge, *The Renaissance in Rome* (London, 1996); R.Salvatori, *Architect's Guide to Rome* (London, 1990), pp.11-16; C.Woodward, *The Buildings of Europe:Rome* (Manchester, 1995), pp.49-92; V.F.Pardo, *Roma: La citta dei papi, dal 1417 al 1870* (Milan, 1994), pp.4-85.

[6] Partridge, p.21.

[7] B.C.Foley, *The Story of the Jubilee Years* (Lancaster, 1998), pp.49-64.

[8] Hibbert, pp.165-78; E.Bowen, *A Time in Rome* (London, 1960), pp.110-16; Partridge, pp.20-21. 32-34; Salvatori, pp.14-17; Wodward, pp.17-21; Pardo, pp.37-69.

[9] Partridge, pp.43-59; Mullett, *Counter-Reformation,* pp.15-22; Salvatori, pp.72-98; Woodward, pp.67-98; Pardo, pp.37-69; J.Summerson, *The Classical Language of Architecture* (London, 1980), pp.7-62; J.F.Arenas, *The Key to Renaissance Art* (Tunbridge Wells, 1990), pp.6-32; N.Pennick, *Sacred Geometry* (Chievely, 1994), pp.131-46.

[10] S.Sadie (ed.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (20 vols, London, 1980, XIV, p.122,, XV, pp.70-71; Mullett, *Counter-Reformation,* p.19.

[11] G.Abraham, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Music* (Oxford, 1979), pp.207, 244-46.

[12] Sadie, XIV, pp.118-21; Abraham, p.245.

[13] Sadie, X, pp.480-81, XII, pp505-508, XIX, pp.703-709.

[14] Sadie, III, p.537.

[15] Sadie, XIV, pp.654-57.